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“Knowledge Will Be Manifold”: Daniel 12.4 and the Idea of Intellectual Progress in the Middle Ages

By J. R. Webb

Je l’offre [ce livre] surtout à mes critiques, à ceux qui voudront bien le corriger, l’améliorer, le refaire, le mettre au niveau des progrès ultérieurs de la science. “Plurimi pertransibunt, et multiplex erit scientia.” (Jules Michelet, *Histoire de France*, 1, 1833)

Thus wrote Michelet to open his monumental history of France. By deploying this prophetic line from the book of Daniel in support of a positivistic approach to historical science, he was participating in a discourse on this perplexing passage that spanned nearly two millennia. He perhaps surmised this, though he probably did not know how deeply the passage penetrated into the intellectual tradition of the West or that he was favoring one interpretation of it over another.¹ It is the trajectory of the interpretations of Daniel 12.4 in the Latin West from their first formulation in late antiquity that concerns the present exploration.

Daniel 12.4 was an essential authority for those interested in the state of knowledge (*scientia*) in the past, the present, and especially in the future. However, the ambiguity of the Latin of the Vulgate, that is, precisely how *multiplex scientia* was to be understood, led to divergent interpretive traditions on both the progressive and the multifarious aspects of knowledge. Knowledge can either progress vertically towards the understanding of fundamental truths, or it can expand laterally through the increase in the interpretations of these truths. These two explanations of the meaning of Daniel 12.4 vied with one another for dominance in medieval intellectual discourse. Writers of the Middle Ages and beyond drew from the passage to justify a range of ideas, and the interpretive tradition of Daniel 12.4 illuminates intellectual developments and perspectives in fascinating and unexpected ways.

This study resulted from my year as a Mellon Fellow at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in 2010–11. I thank the permanent and temporary fellows at PIMS both for their insights and for their encouragement of this project. After the completion of this article, there appeared another treatment of Daniel 12.4 by Robert E. Lerner, “*Pertransibunt plurimi*: Reading Daniel to Transgress Authority,” in *Knowledge, Discipline and Power in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of David Luscombe*, ed. Joseph Canning et al., *Studien und Texte zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters* 106 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 7–28. While there are certain areas of overlap, for example, in twelfth-century authors, Lerner’s approach to the problem and the scope of his treatment differ considerably from mine. I have added citations to Lerner’s erudite and engaging work in the appropriate notes, but rather than rewrite the following text in light of Lerner’s discussion, it seemed more beneficial to leave it in its original form in order to show both the strengths and the limitations of my approach.

¹ Michelet would later come across Dan. 12.4 in the writings of Joachim of Fiore: see Warwick Gould and Marjorie Reeves, *Joachim of Fiore and the Myth of the Eternal Evangel in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 82–94, esp. 91. On Joachim see below, pp. 333–36.

As the strongest example of apocalyptic literature to be incorporated into the Old Testament, the book of Daniel was an endless source of difficult and confounding passages. Exegetes grafted its extensive dreams and prophecies onto the fulfillment of historical or future events. Most shared Jerome's sentiment that the predictive calculations in Daniel surpassed all other Hebrew scriptures.² Danielic imagery and expressions appear often in the New Testament, and their use by the author of the book of Revelation ensured that Daniel would be frequently consulted by the many interpreters of the Apocalypse. The predictions of future events in the book of Daniel—if decoded correctly—provided nothing short of the key to God's plan for history and its culmination.

This complex and composite book, with original sections in both Hebrew and Aramaic, tells of Daniel's sojourn at the court of the Babylonian kings, where he interprets dreams, survives execution, and receives visions of things to come. The book's culminating twelfth chapter abounds with enigmas.³ Towards the end of Daniel's final vision, an angel recounts future wars that will lead to the rise of Michael and the resurrection of the faithful to eternal life. The angel then gives an admonishment to Daniel to remain reticent about these things and to seal up the scroll on which they were written until the appointed time, noting that "many will pass through, and knowledge will be manifold." Jerome rendered it thus in the Vulgate: "Tu autem Daniel claudere sermones et signa librum usque ad tempus statutum; pertransibunt plurimi et multiplex erit scientia."⁴ The different ways in which the latter part of this single passage was interpreted throughout the Middle Ages reveal a vibrant and dynamic tradition in tune with larger intellectual developments. It was invoked often during the medieval centuries, in a range of authors and genres: biblical commentaries to be sure, but also sermons, letters, saints' lives, legal statutes, and theological treatises. As is the case with many oft-quoted biblical passages, some writers kept it within the context of the book of Daniel, while others detached the phrase to stand on its own. Either way, it

² E.g., regarding the information in Daniel about the Incarnation, Jerome writes, "Nullum prophetarum tam aperte dixisse de Christo: non enim solum scribit eum esse venturum, quod est commune cum ceteris, sed quo tempore venturus sit docet": *Commentarii in Danielem* prol., ed. François Glorie, CCSL 75A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1964), 772. This belief was easily extended to include calculations about the coming of the Antichrist.

³ E.g., the unequal calculations of days in Dan. 12.12–13 opened the door for medieval theologians to imagine a period of earthly refreshment. See Robert E. Lerner, "Refreshment of the Saints: The Time after Antichrist as a Station for Earthly Progress in Medieval Thought," *Traditio* 32 (1976): 97–144. I call Dan. 12 the "culminating" chapter because Dan. 13–14, the stories of Susanna and Bel and the dragon, are later apocryphal additions unconnected to the main narrative.

⁴ Though beyond the scope of this study, part of the problem in understanding Dan. 12.4 may have resulted from an early confusion in the original Hebrew between *הדעת* (knowledge) and *הרעת* (evils), whose second letters look nearly identical. See Arthur Jeffery in *The Interpreter's Bible*, 12 vols. (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1951–57), 7:544–45; and A. A. Bevan, *A Short Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1892), 202–4. The translation as knowledge (*γνώσις*) is the reading of Theodotion, which, as Jerome attests, was preferred over the Septuagint translation of Daniel: *Commentarii in Danielem* prol., p. 774 (cf. below, n. 16). The much rarer Septuagint renders the same word as iniquities (*ἁδικίας*): ed. Joseph Ziegler, *Septuaginta* 16/2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1954), 211. The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible has changed the last phrase to "evil shall increase."

was viewed as a prophecy that needed elucidation and, if not corroboration, then at least the promise of some future corroboration.

That Daniel 12.4 was subject to differing explanations is quite fitting, given that one of the main traditions saw it as predicting precisely that—a multiplicity of interpretations. Each of the key words in the passage could lead to varied meaning, foremost being the ambiguity of *multiplex* (an ambiguity retained in the English “manifold”). And what exactly will be “passed through” (*pertransire*) by many people? The two main currents of interpretation were established by the church fathers Jerome and Gregory the Great. Jerome viewed *multiplex scientia* as denoting the “multitude of opinions” that would result from those who try to understand Daniel’s vision of how the world would come to an end. Gregory, on the other hand, saw the passage as signifying the gradual increase from generation to generation of knowledge of divine matters. Writers of subsequent centuries were by and large subscribing to either a Hieronymian or a Gregorian interpretation of Daniel 12.4, though they often employed the passage to justify highly original thoughts. Some did not always retain the apocalyptic tenor of the prophecy and used it to support an optimistic view of human epistemological achievements and potential; they were advocating in some form an idea of intellectual progress.⁵ It must be stated at the outset that the nature of Daniel 12.4 as a direct prophecy meant that writers believed it had one specific meaning. Even when the passage could serve to justify drawing multiple senses or meanings from other passages of scripture, not a single author subjected Daniel 12.4 itself to multiple modes of biblical exegesis. This is an essential point to bear in mind in what follows.

A generation ago the endeavor to trace the use of Daniel 12.4 over the medieval centuries would have taken a very considerable research effort, one only made possible by a vast reading of various source types (all edited and well indexed) over many years.⁶ Previous studies that have traced particular biblical passages or pericopes have understandably tended to limit their analyses to biblical commentaries.⁷ New tools in digital-text searches now enable one to explore

⁵ Even this view was hard to divorce from its eschatological roots, since many maintained that the advancements in knowledge of their own times were themselves harbingers of the end of the world. See, e.g., Johannes Fried, *Aufstieg aus dem Untergang: Apokalyptisches Denken und die Entstehung der modernen Naturwissenschaft im Mittelalter* (Munich: Beck, 2001), 69–74.

⁶ Philological scholarship focusing on the development of specific words is too extensive to be mentioned here. When, in previous studies, single quotations have been isolated and explored in the context of a variety of medieval writers, notions of intellectual progress seem to have been given pride of place. See, e.g., Hubert Silvestre, “*Quanto iuniores, tanto perspicaciores*: Antécédents à la querelle des anciens et modernes,” in *Recueil commémoratif du Xe anniversaire de la Faculté de philosophie et lettres* (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1968), 231–55; or the treatments of the overly quoted remark of Bernard of Chartres: e.g., Édouard Jeuneau, “*Nani gigantum humeris insidentes*: Essai d’interprétation de Bernard de Chartres,” *Vivarium* 5 (1967): 79–99.

⁷ The impressive study by Philippe Buc, *L’ambiguïté du Livre: Prince, pouvoir, et peuple dans les commentaires de la Bible au moyen âge*, *Théologie Historique* 95 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1994), explores the commentary tradition on specific passages, such as Gen. 1.24–30 (creation of beasts and man), and certain verses stressing egalitarianism in the New Testament, e.g., 1 Cor. 15.24 (the extinguishing of earthly power). One of the strengths of Buc’s study is its engagement with the glosses from the original manuscripts. Other studies that have traced specific biblical verses include Werner Affeldt, *Die weltliche Gewalt in der Paulus-Exegese: Röm. 13,1–7 in den Römerbriefkommentaren der*

the medieval legacy of a given biblical passage—or indeed, any passage—over a massive number of texts of various genres in a few keystrokes.⁸ Whereas several scholars have noticed the importance of Daniel 12.4 in individual contexts, no one has pursued its interpretation closely over many centuries.⁹ The general trajectory of this tradition can then help to reilluminate individual contexts. This exploration demonstrates a method only newly available, which can furnish interpretive legacies of significant passages quickly and relatively completely.

I have found over one hundred references to Daniel 12.4 from over seventy-five Latin writers from the third through the thirteenth century. It would be tedious to go through all of these instances; I have arranged the references in the Appendix to this study. I will instead examine the most significant uses of Daniel 12.4, that is, those from writers known to have made a considerable impact on their own time, those that reflect a new or different approach to the passage, or those that show a particular insistence on the importance of the passage. Daniel 12.4 was used by some of the most important thinkers of the Middle Ages. The Gregorian, or progressive, interpretation was the more frequent choice for authors in the ninth and twelfth centuries, periods upon which historians have often bestowed the label “renaissance.” Jerome’s interpretation dominated the commentary tradition and, through it, came to be the preferred reading in the thirteenth-century university.

lateinischen Kirche bis zum Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969); Guy Lobrichon, “La femme d’Apocalypse 12 dans l’exégèse du haut moyen âge latin (760–1200),” in *Marie: Le culte de la Vierge dans la société médiévale*, ed. Dominique Iogna-Prat et al. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1996), 407–39; and Georges Folliet, “La *Spoliatio Aegyptiorum* (Exode 3:21–23; 11:2–3; 12:35–36): Les interprétations de cette image chez les pères et autres écrivains ecclésiastiques,” *Traditio* 57 (2002): 1–48, who adds further references to the earlier lists of Henri de Lubac and others, though still apparently without the use of digital tools. On specific verses in Daniel: Ingrid Heike Ringel, “*Ipse transfert regna et mutat tempora*: Beobachtungen zur Herkunft von Dan. 2,21 bei Urban II,” in *Deus qui mutat tempora: Menschen und Institutionen im Wandel des Mittelalters*, ed. Ernst-Dieter Hehl et al. (Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke, 1987), 137–56; Matthew Gabriele, “The Last Carolingian Exegete: Pope Urban II, the Weight of Tradition, and Christian Reconquest,” *Church History* 81 (2012): 796–814; and now Lerner, “*Pertransibunt plurimi*” (cited in the prefatory note).

⁸The main databases utilized in the following study are the CETEDOC Library of Christian Latin Texts (CLCLT-5) available through Brepols Publishers, brepols.net (now referred to as LLT-A); the *Patrologia Latina* database available through ProQuest LLC, pld.chadwyck.com; the *Monumenta Germaniae historica*, now full-text searchable at the MGH website, www.dmgd.de; and the *Corpus Thomisticum*, www.corpusthomicum.org. I have also employed Google’s book search. As my research progressed, I came to discover a fair number of references the old-fashioned way. The current cost of the proprietary databases of Brepols and ProQuest is beyond the means of many individuals and institutions. This hampers the very progress in knowledge to be discussed and will need to change in the coming years.

⁹A hint of the larger tradition behind Dan. 12.4 appears, e.g., in a work by Amos Funkenstein, as he discusses Hugh of Saint-Victor, Otto of Freising, and others (see below, nn. 51 and 86); by C. Stephen Jaeger, again in the context of Otto of Freising (below, n. 102); and by Gian Luca Potestà, in the context of Joachim of Fiore (below, n. 107). Joachim and his prophetic successors are also the main focus in Lerner, “*Pertransibunt plurimi*,” 19–28. The most scholarly attention to Dan. 12.4 has been in discussions of its use by Francis Bacon, on which see below, pp. 343–46.

JEROME

At the beginning of the fifth century, Jerome undertook the task of commenting on the book of Daniel.¹⁰ His linguistic facility, translation work, and knowledge of earlier exegesis made him a master commentator and often the first recourse for medieval churchmen. His Vulgate translation of the book of Daniel reached back to the original Hebrew and Aramaic—even while he was cognizant of the Greek translations in the Septuagint and Theodotion. The portion of the commentary for which Jerome was best known, by medieval and modern scholars alike, was his explication of the vision of the alloyed statue in Daniel 2 and the four beasts in Daniel 7, which established the main lines of the subsequent interpretation of these parallel pericopes. From here stemmed the concept of the *translatio imperii*, the succession of the four world empires: Babylon, Persia, Macedonia, and finally Rome, which would persevere until the end times.¹¹ Of course, Jerome was not the first Christian writer to treat the book of Daniel; a number of others sought to defend Daniel against the attack of the Neoplatonist Porphyry (d. ca. 305), who had argued that the text was written after the events that it claimed to predict.¹² Jerome shared this aim and drew liberally from earlier Christian commentators.

When Jerome came to Daniel 12.4, he interpreted it in the context of the lines and chapters preceding it, and indeed, of the book as a whole. Daniel had just received an important vision of things to come, most of which was seen as fulfilled in the successor states of Alexander the Great and the Maccabean revolt of the mid-second century BC; however, the last portion of the prophecy (Daniel 11.24–45) was also seen as prefiguring the Antichrist and the end of the world. The prophecies did not need to be limited to specific events in history but could denote multiple parallel episodes. Jerome favored this interpretation and employed it as the centerpiece of his refutation of Porphyry.

¹⁰ Jerome wrote the commentary ca. 407, after he had commented on the minor prophets and before tackling Isaiah. See J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London: Duckworth, 1975), 298–302; and Régis Courtray, *Prophète des temps derniers: Jérôme commente Daniel*, *Théologie Historique* 119 (Paris: Beauchesne, 2009), 23–27.

¹¹ Jerome, *Commentarii in Danielem* 1 (Dan. 2), pp. 794–95, and more fully in book 2 (Dan. 7), pp. 837–50. Augustine himself directs the reader to Jerome's commentary in *De civitate Dei* 20.23, ed. Bernard Dombart and Alphonse Kalb, CCSL 48 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), 742. Jerome was not the first exegete to elaborate on the visions in Dan. 2 and 7 as representing successive historical empires. For the long and rich legacy of this concept, see Werner Goetz, *Translatio imperii: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Geschichtsdenkens und der politischen Theorien im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1958).

¹² Jerome, *Commentarii in Danielem* prol., pp. 771–72, and passim. Porphyry's interpretation is the general view of biblical scholars today. Jerome's main point against Porphyry is that he misunderstands certain prophecies as pertaining to Antiochus IV Epiphanes (d. 164 BC) when in fact they also foreshadow the Antichrist. See, e.g., *Commentarii in Danielem* (Dan. 7.14 and 7.25, pp. 848–49; 11.24, pp. 915–17; and 11.44–45, pp. 931–35). Jerome's editor, François Glorie, has even suggested that the fourth book of Jerome's commentary originally constituted a separate work, the *De Antichristo* (see pp. 757–61), though cf. Courtray, *Prophète des temps derniers*, 27–29.

Jerome views the angel's instruction to Daniel to "shut up the words and seal the book until the appointed time"¹³ as an admonition of secrecy. The *multiplex scientia* of the next line signifies the diversity of opinions that will result when people try to read this sealed scroll. (The seal seems meant as something of a figurative encryption placed upon the book, a seal of obfuscation.) According to Jerome, many will read this scroll in search of the "truth of history" (*historiae veritas*), that is, its fulfillment in history, either in connection to events that have already come to pass or, more importantly, those yet to come. Their opinions will diverge greatly "on account of the magnitude of the obscurity" of the vision.¹⁴ For Jerome, the *scientia* in Daniel 12.4 was not objective truth or reality, but rather the interpretations and opinions that would be drawn from the prophetic message.

Jerome justifies his interpretation on philological grounds, noting the subtleties in the semantic field of the verb *pertransire*, which assumed a particular meaning when referring to books and reading: "*Pertransibunt plurimi* signifies the reading of many, for we are accustomed to say: I have run through (*percurri*) a book or passed through (*pertransivi*) a story."¹⁵ Jerome therefore explains the word in the sense in which he was accustomed to understand it as a scholar.

Jerome is clear in his exegesis of Daniel 12.4, but he seems to have made a conscious decision as to what the passage meant already in his initial Latin translation, since he rejected *Vetus Latina* readings—which were fairly literal renderings of the Greek—and added ambiguity. Before Jerome, Daniel 12.4 had been used in demonstrations of the fulfillment of the Old Testament in the New and the failure of the Jews to recognize this. What Jerome rendered as *multiplex scientia* was—for writers such as Irenaeus of Lyon and Cyprian of Carthage, who isolated the passage from its larger context in Daniel—the recognition (*agnitio*) of Christ in the Hebrew scriptures.¹⁶ Jerome thus broke with earlier tradition and

¹³ Biblical translations throughout this article use the Douay-Reims Bible (1582–1610) as a guide, though not without modifications where appropriate. For Dan. 12.4 in sixteenth-century English Bible translations, see below, n. 146.

¹⁴ Jerome, *Commentarii in Daniele* 4 (Dan. 12.4), p. 938: "Ut legant plurimi et quaerant historiae veritatem et, propter obscuritatis magnitudinem, diversa opinentur." Cf. Jerome's statements on the obscurity of the vision in Dan. 8.26, pp. 858–59, and Dan. 9.22, p. 864.

¹⁵ Jerome, *Commentarii in Daniele* 4, p. 938: "Quod enim ait: pertransibunt (id est percurrent) plurimi, multorum significat lectionem: solemus enim dicere: percurri librum et pertransivi historiam."

¹⁶ Irenaeus of Lyon, *Adversus haereses* 4.26.1, ed. Adelin Rousseau et al., *Sources Chrétiennes* 100/2 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1965), 712–14: "Absconsus vero in scripturis thesaurus Christus quoniam per typos et parabolas significatur. Et propter hoc Danieli prophetae dicebatur: *Muni sermones et signa librum usque ad tempus consummationis, quoadusque discant multi et adimpleatur agnitio* (Dan. 12.4). *In eo enim perficietur dispersio, cognoscent omnia haec* (Dan. 12.7). Sed et Hieremias ait: *In novissimis diebus intelligent ea* (Jer. 23.20). Omnis enim prophetia, priusquam habeat effectum, aenigmata et ambiguitates sunt hominibus; cum autem venerit tempus et e venerit quod prophetatum est, tunc prophetiae habent liquidam et certam expositionem. Et propter hoc quidem Iudaeis cum legitur lex in hoc nunc tempore, fabulae similis est: non enim habent expositionem omnium rerum pertinentem ad adventum Filii Dei, qui est secundum hominem, a Christianis vero cum legitur, thesaurus est, absconsus in agro, cruce vero Christi revelatus est et explanatus et ditans sensus hominum." Irenaeus's original Greek survives only in fragments, though the Latin translation of Dan. 12.4(b) is a literal rendering of Theodotion: "ἕως καιροῦ συντελείας, ἕως διδάχθῶσι πολλοὶ καὶ πληθυνθῆ ἡ γνῶσις." Irenaeus's argument and the corresponding biblical passages were used by Cyprian, *Testimonia*

suppressed a “progressive” element latent in Daniel 12.4 in order to strengthen his refutation of Porphyry. He did so, not through a complete alteration of the text, but through a more ambiguous translation that allowed for his interpretation alongside others. It was the resulting ambiguity in the Vulgate that helped make the subsequent interpretation of Daniel 12.4 so dynamic.

By glossing Daniel 12.4 as an indication of a multiplicity of interpretations of the preceding vision, Jerome gets to the heart of his refutation of Porphyry. While Porphyry could attack the book of Daniel for describing events that had already taken place, Jerome could emphasize its revelatory worth through the multiple events that it was meant to denote, including, most importantly, the coming of the Antichrist. Nevertheless, even as he co-opts most of its explanatory force by having it refer only to the preceding vision, Jerome cannot completely suppress the underlying progressive element of the passage. For further biblical support he turns to passages in Isaiah and Revelation, where reference is also made to sealed books. The book with seven seals in Apocalypse 5.1–7, generally seen as the Bible, can only be opened, that is, truly elucidated, by Christ, “the lion of the tribe of Judah.”¹⁷ Though Jerome seems to distinguish “that book” mentioned in Apocalypse 5 from the scroll sealed by Daniel, he left the door open for later interpreters to be less insistent on this distinction.

GREGORY THE GREAT

Two centuries later, Pope Gregory the Great proposed a completely different interpretation of Daniel 12.4. Gregory never wrote a commentary on Daniel, nor did he write one on Revelation, and this fact may have influenced his conception of the passage. Unlike Jerome, Gregory divorces the two components of the verse and retains only the second part: “pertransibunt plurimi et multiplex erit scientia.” In so doing, he hazards a new interpretation.

The fullest exposition of Gregory’s thinking on Daniel 12.4 appears in his Ezekiel homilies, where he elucidates the argument that knowledge of divine matters increases throughout the course of history. This claim comes amidst Gregory’s allegorical explanation of the complicated temple measurements revealed in Ezekiel’s vision. For example, he sees the dimensions of ten and thirteen cubits given in Ezekiel 40.11 as representing how the adherence to the Decalogue gave

1.4, ed. Wilhelm von Hartel, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (henceforth CSEL) 3/1 (Vienna: C. Geroldi filius, 1868), 42, who added further biblical proofs. Cyprian was in turn used in the fifth-century *Altercatio ecclesiae et synagogae*, ed. J. N. Hillgarth, CCSL 69A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 47, which occasionally circulated pseudonymously under the name of Augustine. This *Vetus Latina* tradition of Dan. 12.4 is interesting in its own right, especially its inclusion alongside Dan. 12.7 and Jer. 23.20, which both contain progressive elements in *Vetus Latina* readings that Jerome also restrained in the Vulgate. However, this tradition did not influence medieval writers, who exclusively quoted Jerome’s Latin on Dan. 12.4.

¹⁷ Jerome, *Commentarii in Daniele* 4, p. 939: “*Ecce vicit leo de tribu Juda, radix David, aperire librum et solvere signaculum eius* (Apoc. 5.5)—librum autem istum potest solvere qui scripturarum sacramenta cognovit, et intellegit αἰνύγματα [aenigmata] et verba tenebrosa propter mysteriorum magnitudinem, et interpretatur parabolas, et occidentem litteram transfert ad spiritum vivificantem.”

way to the recognition of the Trinity by virtue of the New Testament.¹⁸ History was a gradual revelation of knowledge about God, and Daniel 12.4 announces this reality. Gregory proceeds to show why his interpretation makes sense, justifying it through the examples of Abraham, Moses, the prophets, and the apostles.¹⁹ Each surpassed the preceding in knowledge of God. When God revealed his name, Adonai, to Moses, he reminded Moses that he had not done this for Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob (Exodus 6.2–3). From Psalm 118, Gregory takes the claims “I have understood more than all my teachers” and “I have had understanding above the elders (*super seniores*)” (Psalm 118.99–100) to show that knowledge of divine law had surpassed that of Moses.²⁰ And lastly, Gregory invokes Jesus’s statement in Luke (10.24) that “many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear and have not heard them.” Gregory reveals an awareness of his own break with the traditional (that is, with Jerome’s) interpretation of Daniel 12.4 in his statement, “Unless I am in error, scripture itself speaks of this,” and shortly thereafter in attempting to explain the passage “if we are able” through references elsewhere in the Bible.²¹ Many subsequent writers drawing on Daniel 12.4 would retain this series of supporting biblical proofs marshaled by Gregory.

This advancement in spiritual knowledge was not restricted to the moment of the Incarnation—it was an incremental process that had begun with Abraham. Was it a progression that would continue after Christ? Gregory answers this essential question in the affirmative, stating that the closer the world comes to its terminus (*extremitas*), the more fully the access (*aditus*) to eternal knowledge will be granted.²²

In his homily on Ezekiel, Gregory does not overtly retain the eschatological context of Daniel 12.4 but rather sees the *multiplex scientia* as a gradual process occurring throughout history. It is clear, however, that Gregory saw some connection between the increase in knowledge and the end of the world, a connection made even more explicit in his use of Daniel 12.4 in the *Moralia in Job*.²³

¹⁸ Gregory I, *Homiliae in Hiezechibelem prophetam* 2.4.11, ed. Marc Adriaen, CCSL 142 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1971), 266. Gregory also believes that the *spiritalis patres* had a perfect knowledge of the Trinity prior to the Incarnation, which was hidden from the *multitudo magna Synagogae*.

¹⁹ On Gregory’s tendency to peg biblical passages to reinforce a particular theological idea, see Paul Meyvaert, “Gregory the Great and Authority,” *Spode House Review* 3 (1966): 3–12, at 5; repr. in *Benedict, Gregory, Bede, and Others*, Collected Studies 61 (London: Variorum, 1977).

²⁰ Cf. Vulgate for Psalm 118.100 (*super senes*).

²¹ Gregory I, *Homiliae in Hiezechibelem* 2.4.12, p. 267: “Fallor si haec ipsa scriptura non loquitur, *pertransibunt*. . . .” This language demonstrates that Gregory is not merely reviving a progressive reading of Dan. 12.4 from writers before Jerome; see above, n. 16. Otherwise, it seems likely that Gregory would have referred to the *Vetus Latina* reading, which he frequently did in order to explain other difficult passages. He affirms this method in his preface to the *Moralia in Job* (*Epist. ad Leandrum* 5), ed. Marc Adriaen, CCSL 143 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1979), 7: “Novam vero translationem dissero; sed cum probationis causa me exigit, nunc novam nunc veterem per testimonia adsumo, ut, quia sedes apostolica cui Deo auctore praesideo utraque utitur, mei quoque labor studii ex utraque fulciatur.”

²² Gregory I, *Homiliae in Hiezechibelem* 2.4.12, p. 268: “Quia quanto mundus ad extremitatem ducitur, tanto nobis aeternae scientiae aditus largius aperitur.”

²³ Both the *Moralia in Job* and the Ezekiel homilies were initially preached to monastic audiences, the *Moralia* during Gregory’s stay in Constantinople (after 579) and the Ezekiel homilies in the early

Here Gregory treats Job's resigned acknowledgment of God's justice and power (Job 9) as an allegory for the spread of Christianity and the punishment of the Jews for their refusal of the preaching of the apostles. God's moving of mountains in Job 9.5 reflects the removal of the apostles from Judea in order to bring the message to the gentiles. Gregory interprets Job 9.9, where Job names several constellations, as also pertaining to the progression of Christianity. Arcturus, a bright and perennial star, is the universal church, which endures until the end; Orion, a winter constellation, represents the martyrs during the persecutions of the church; the Hyades, which appear in the spring, are the doctors of the church, whose preaching is like the spring rains come to nurture humanity.²⁴ Through these doctors, heavenly knowledge (*scientia caelestis*) is shown to grow greater and greater with each day, just as the "new sun" planted within the soul of the individual believer shines brighter daily: "With the end of the world beckoning, heavenly knowledge is made more bountiful with the passage of time." Daniel 12.4 immediately follows this statement for corroboration.²⁵ Like Jerome before him, Gregory continues with reference to the sealed books in Revelation, though he contrasts the admonition to seal the book in Apocalypse 10.4 with the order *not* to seal the book in Apocalypse 22.10 in order to reiterate the claim of spiritual progress: whatever remained hidden in the church's beginning is revealed in the end day by day.²⁶

Gregory advocates this idea of gradual spiritual growth and understanding, for both the individual Christian and the church at large, elsewhere in the *Moralia*.²⁷ This correlation between individual and collective progress was a well-known concept from Augustine, who drew parallels between the days of Creation, the ages of the world, and the ages of man. Essential for Augustine is progress leading up to the Incarnation, which signified the creation of the new spiritual man in his old age, the sixth age of the world.²⁸ He gives no weight to any progress

590s. Because Gregory later reworked these texts for publication, it is difficult to discuss them in strict chronological terms. But as regards Dan. 12.4, the fact that Gregory felt the need to explain his reading of the passage in the Ezekiel homily, only to take its progressive interpretation for granted in the *Moralia*, suggests that this portion of the *Moralia* may have been worked over later. For the dating, see Carole Straw, *Gregory the Great*, Authors of the Middle Ages 4/12 (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996), 49–52.

²⁴ Gregory I, *Moralia in Job* 9.11(15), p. 466. Gregory retains the Greek etymological connection of the Hyades to rain.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 467: "Urgente etenim mundi fine, superna scientia proficit et largius cum tempore excrescit. Hinc namque per Danielelem dicitur: *Pertransibunt plurimi et multiplex erit scientia.*"

²⁶ *Ibid.*: "Pars quippe revelationis anterior signari praecipitur, terminus prohibetur, quia quicquid in sanctae ecclesiae initiis latuit, finis cotidie ostendit."

²⁷ He speaks of how the soul is led gradually (*per incrementa*) to the heights of virtue and invokes Daniel himself, who was brought up from his knees to stand (Dan. 10.9–12), to illustrate individual spiritual development: *Moralia in Job* 22.20(47), pp. 1126–27. To buttress this progress of the individual he uses a *Vetus Latina* reading of Psalm 47 (p. 1125): "*Deus in gradibus eius dinoscitur dum suscipiet eam* (Psalm 47.4) neque enim, sicut dictum est, repente ad summa pervenitur, sed ad virtutum celsitudinem per incrementa mens ducitur." Cf. Gregory, *Homiliae in Hiezechibelem* 2.3.3–5, p. 238.

²⁸ See, e.g., Augustine, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* 1.23–25(33–43), ed. Dorothea Weber, CSEL 91 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1998), 104–14. Cf. R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 22–44; Auguste Luneau, *L'histoire du salut chez les pères de l'Église*:

after Christ because nothing further is to be revealed before the Second Coming. The Gregorian perspective imagines otherwise: spiritual understanding continues to progress in the post-Pentecostal church. Perhaps the fact that the bishop of Hippo never chose to comment on the *multiplex scientia* of Daniel 12.4 is itself significant.

DANIEL 12.4 IN EARLY-MEDIEVAL APOCALYPSE COMMENTARIES

The similarities between the books of Daniel and Revelation assured their close association in Christian thought. Both contained visions of destruction, sealed books, and, at Jerome's insistence, information on the Antichrist. The interpretation of Daniel 12.4 prior to the ninth century—largely found in Apocalypse commentaries—shows considerable variation.

Even before Gregory, the sixth-century African bishop Primasius used Daniel 12.4 at two points in his Apocalypse commentary.²⁹ Though he presents no clear cribbing from Jerome on this particular passage, his whole commentary was based on Jerome's own observation on the book of Revelation, that "manifold meanings lie hidden in every word."³⁰ Primasius views the *multiplex scientia* of Daniel 12.4 in terms of diversity, specifically, the multiple ways in which all of scripture is to be read. The scroll sealed with seven seals from Apocalypse 5 permits Primasius to expound at length his sevenfold hermeneutic theory, which is then corroborated by Daniel 12.4.³¹ The use of Daniel 12.4 to justify the interpretation of scripture according to various hermeneutic senses would appear again in the later twelfth century, though without any direct influence from Primasius. He cites Daniel 12.4 again in connection with the order to seal the utterances of the seven thunders (Apocalypse 10.4). The seal on both of these books was the seal of allegory, to be understood differently depending on the time and the capacity to understand.³²

La doctrine des âges du monde, Théologie Historique 2 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1964), 285–331; and Theodor E. Mommsen, "St. Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress: The Background of *The City of God*," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12 (1951): 346–74.

²⁹ On the influence of Primasius's commentary—which incorporated much of the now-lost commentary of Tyconius—on later writers, see E. Ann Matter, "The Apocalypse in Early Medieval Exegesis," in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 38–50, at 42–45.

³⁰ Primasius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* prol., ed. A. W. Adams, CCSL 92 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985), 3, directly quoting Jerome, *Epist.* 59, ed. Isidor Hilberg, CSEL 54 (Vienna: Tempsky, 1910), 453: "Apocalypsis Iohannis tot ibi sacramenta quot verba . . . in verbis singulis multiplices latent intellegentiae."

³¹ Primasius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* 2.5 (Apoc. 5.1), pp. 62–77, esp. pp. 64–65 and 76–77. On Primasius's hermeneutics, see Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*, trans. Mark Sebanc and E. M. Macierowski, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998–2009 [original French ed., 1959–61]), 1:85–88. Primasius continues (pp. 77–81) by relating his seven hermeneutic modes to Augustine's seven ages of the new man and proceeds to quote the *De vera religione* (26.49) and Augustine's *Epist.* 171A, both of which refer to the progress of the individual.

³² Primasius, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* 3.10, pp. 161–62: "Signa, inquit, tibi et ne scripseris ea (Apoc. 10.4), ut signo allegoriam indicaret, non pastum intellegentiae denegaret. Merito et Danihel dicit: *Signa librum* . . . (Dan. 12.4), id est, aut differenda tempore, aut pro capientium distribuenda qualitate." From fragments, it appears that Tyconius also used Dan. 12.4 to explain Apoc. 10.4, but he

By following this explanation with John 16.12, “I still have many things to say to you: but you are not able to bear them now,” Primasius hints at the progressive element that underlay any comparison with the sealed book in Revelation.

Moving from the southern to the northern edge of Christendom, one finds Daniel 12.4 among the voluminous writings of Bede. Bede knew the interpretations of both Jerome and Gregory. He apparently wrote a Daniel commentary drawing from Jerome’s, and he used Jerome’s explanation of *pertransire* to refer to a thorough reading of a text in his commentary on the Song of Songs.³³ But in his only full discussion of Daniel 12.4, Bede opts for Gregory’s reading.³⁴ In the course of his treatise on the Tabernacle, he expositis Exodus 25.18–21 and describes the two gold-fashioned cherubim that formed part of the covering of the Ark of the Covenant. Bede dwells on the meaning of the word “cherubim,” which he takes from Jerome to mean “multitude of knowledge.”³⁵ According to Bede, these two cherubim reflect the Old and New Testaments and are rightly called thus because the knowledge of the truth increased throughout biblical history—it grew through time. Bede then uses Gregory’s argumentation for the progression of knowledge revealed by Daniel 12.4, though he does not cite him. Most significantly, Bede adds a further two passages to Gregory’s supporting biblical proofs, both from the Gospel of John, in order to emphasize how knowledge continued to increase after the Resurrection and will continue to do so in the future.³⁶

employed only the first portion of the verse: ed. Francesco Lo Bue, *The Turin Fragments of Tyconius’ Commentary on Revelation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 307, p. 133. Primasius himself added Dan. 12.4(b). On Tyconius, see Kenneth Steinhauser, *The Apocalypse Commentary of Tyconius: A History of Its Reception and Influence* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1987), esp. 71–88.

³³ Bede, *In Cantica canticorum* 2.3, ed. D. Hurst, CCSL 119B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1983), 232: “Nam et librum, quem ad finem usque perlegimus, pertransisse dicimus.” Bede only takes Jerome’s definition of *pertransire*; he does not here subscribe to Jerome’s overall interpretation of Dan. 12.4. Bede lists a Daniel commentary culled from excerpts of Jerome’s among his own works in his *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* 5.24, ed. Charles Plummer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), 358.

³⁴ This is not surprising, given Gregory’s enormous intellectual impact on Bede, elucidated by Paul Meyvaert, *Bede and Gregory the Great*, Jarrow Lecture, 1964 ([Newcastle, UK]: Rector of Jarrow, [n.d.]; repr. in *Benedict, Gregory, Bede, and Others*); now see Scott DeGregorio, “The Venerable Bede and Gregory the Great: Exegetical Connections, Spiritual Departures,” *Early Medieval Europe* 18 (2010): 43–60.

³⁵ Bede, *De tabernaculo*, ed. D. Hurst, CCSL 119A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), 18: “Interpretatur autem cherubim sive cherubin scientiae multitudo vel scientiae intellectus.” Cf. Jerome, *Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum*, ed. P. de Lagarde, CCSL 72 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1959), 74: “Cherubin: scientiae multitudo aut scientia et intellectus.”

³⁶ Bede, *De tabernaculo*, p. 19: “Sed et eisdem post resurrectionem ascensionemque suam maiorem adhuc scientiae gratiam promittit dicens: *adhuc multa habeo vobis dicere, sed non potestis portare modo, cum autem venerit ille spiritus veritatis docebit vos omnem veritatem* (John 16.12–13); quibus et in futuro maius omnibus quae in hac vita cognosci possunt revelaturum se esse pollicetur dicens: *qui autem diligit me diligitur a patre meo, et ego diligam eum et manifestabo ei me ipsum* (John 14.21). Recte ergo cherubim scientia multiplicata dicitur quia in utroque testamenta fidelibus magis ex tempore magisque cognitio veritatis innotuit.” Bede also adds Psalm 50.8 to Gregory’s proofs and prefers Matt. 13.17 to Gregory’s citation of Luke 10.24. Bede’s whole discussion of the cherubim seems indebted to Gregory’s *Homiliae in Hiezechibelem* 1.6.15, pp. 75–76. Cf. Bede, *Homiliarum Evangelii libri II* 2.15, ed. D. Hurst, CCSL 122 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), 280–81, where Gregory’s claim of progressive knowledge is taken up again, though without reference to Dan. 12.4.

One notion that Bede did not take from Gregory was a belief that the end of the world was particularly near.³⁷ In his widely read *De temporum ratione*, which contained his world chronicle, Bede makes a point of stressing the Augustinian view that discouraged speculation about the end times.³⁸ Bede's use of Daniel 12.4 in his *De tabernaculo* therefore appears less connected to eschatology than it is in Gregory, and it is telling that Bede chose not to address the issue of *multiplex scientia* in his own widely read Apocalypse commentary.³⁹

The only early-medieval Apocalypse commentator to read Daniel 12.4 as a clear indication of abundant knowledge in the future was Ambrosius Autpertus.⁴⁰ He incorporated the earlier commentaries of Jerome and Primasius into his own, though he also included relevant citations from various works of Gregory.⁴¹ But Autpertus's view of Daniel 12.4 is not one of gradual progression as envisioned by Gregory: the order not to seal the book in Apocalypse 22.10, in contrast to earlier admonitions of secrecy, prompts Autpertus to restrict the *multiplex scientia* to the end times. Knowledge will abound in the last preachers (*in extremis praedicatoribus*) who will bring illumination to many more, including the Jews. This manifold knowledge anticipated at the end even provided a contrast to the lack of knowledge in Autpertus's own time.⁴²

Like Bede, the Spanish monk Beatus of Liébana (d. 787) was familiar with both interpretations of Daniel 12.4. In his Apocalypse commentary, when he came to discuss the confusion and heresy that often resulted from overly literal interpretations of the Bible, he drew verbatim from Jerome to explain the passage.⁴³ But in his anti-Adoptionist tract against the archbishop of Toledo, Beatus explained the passage differently, borrowing directly from the *Moralia in Job*.⁴⁴ For Beatus, the

³⁷ Bede did reproduce one of Gregory's most eschatological letters, addressed to King Æthelbert in 601, in his *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* 1.32, pp. 67–70. For Gregory's letter, see P. Jaffé, *Regesta pontificum Romanorum ad annum 1198*, ed. S. Loewenfeld (JL), F. Kaltenbrunner (JK), and P. Ewald (JE), 2 vols. (Leipzig: Veit, 1885–88), JE 1827.

³⁸ Bede, *De temporum ratione* 68, ed. C. W. Jones, CCSL 123B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1977), 537–38.

³⁹ Like Tyconius, Bede included the first part of Dan. 12.4 to provide context for Apoc. 10.4: Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* 2.15, ed. Roger Gryson, CCSL 121A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), 363.

⁴⁰ Initially from Provence, Autpertus became abbot of San Vincenzo al Volturno in the late eighth century: see Ursmer Berlière, *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, 2 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1914), 1115–16; Jacques Winandy, *Ambroise Autpert, moine et théologien* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1953), 13–30; and Matter, "The Apocalypse in Early Medieval Exegesis," 47–48.

⁴¹ Autpertus mentions these sources in his prologue, *Expositio in Apocalypsin*, ed. Robert Weber, CCCM 27 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1975), 5.

⁴² *Ibid.* 10, p. 857: "Ecclesia enim, quae nunc in rectoribus suis obmutuit, tunc magnis clamoribus contra inimicos intonabit, et quae nunc ignorantia tenebrescit, tunc scientia fulgescit." Immediately preceding his citation of Dan. 12.4, Autpertus reproduces Gregory's statement of caution ("Fallor, si haec ipsa quae dico, scriptura non loquitur"), showing his familiarity with Gregory's Ezekiel homily.

⁴³ Beatus of Liébana, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* 8.1, ed. E. Romero-Pose, 2 vols. (Rome: Typis Officinae Polygraphicae, 1985), 2:226–27.

⁴⁴ Beatus of Liébana / Eterius of Osma, *Adversus Elipandum* 1.130–31, ed. Bengt Löfstedt, CCCM 59 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1984), 100–101; cf. Gregory, *Moralia in Job*, cited above, n. 25. Though written in the names of both Beatus and the bishop of Osma, most credit Beatus with the bulk of the writing: see John Cavadini, *The Last Christology of the West: Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul, 785–820* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 46.

choice of interpretation depended on the circumstance. A dominant interpretation of Daniel 12.4 had yet to be established.

THE CAROLINGIAN WORLD

This situation would change in the ninth century, when citations of Daniel 12.4 increased significantly; it was Gregory's interpretation of intellectual progress that carried the day. This reflected, in some small way, the intellectual optimism exuded by the court school and major monasteries during the Carolingian revival of the ninth century.

Though Carolingian writers had access to the writings of Gregory and Bede, it was the papal curia that directly exposed them to the progressive view of Daniel 12.4 as an argument for a specific theological position. In the last decade of the eighth century, churchmen at the Frankish court were busy trying to humiliate the Byzantines by pointing out how foolish their recently expressed opinions regarding icons were. Before these refutations were completed, in a work known as the *Libri Carolini*, an outline of their form and argumentation was sent to Pope Hadrian I.⁴⁵ The pope's extensive reply to these "talking points," which ended up *defending* the iconodule stance taken at Nicaea in 787, must have shocked the Carolingian court. Having founded their ecclesiastical reform on a return to the model and authority of Rome, Charlemagne and company could not simply ignore Hadrian's official position.⁴⁶ What was supposed to have been the ultimate expression of Franco-papal doctrinal unity ended up as an embarrassment for Charlemagne and his court.

The papal response invoked Daniel 12.4 at a critical point, under a heading that asked for biblical or conciliar evidence in support of image veneration.⁴⁷ There were no explicit statements or decrees to this effect, but the papal curia sought to support the innovation nonetheless by appealing to the examples of earlier popes.⁴⁸ The pope then cites Daniel 12.4, along with Gregory's statement about increasing knowledge (lifted directly from the Ezekiel homily), to defend the notion of increased theological sophistication through time. The papal curia thus took that essential step of applying the Gregorian notion of intellectual progress to a specific matter and used Daniel 12.4 to defend the idea of doctrinal innovation, a stance for which the papacy was not exactly well known.

⁴⁵ On all of this see Ann Freeman, "Carolingian Orthodoxy and the Fate of the *Libri Carolini*," *Viator* 16 (1985): 65–108; and more recently, Thomas F. X. Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm, and the Carolingians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 162–80.

⁴⁶ Indeed, the *Libri Carolini* affirms the pope as the ultimate arbiter of these matters, thereby sealing their fate in the face of Hadrian's letter: *Libri Carolini* 1.6, ed. Ann Freeman, with Paul Meyvaert, MGH Conc. 2, Suppl. 1 (Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1998), 132–37.

⁴⁷ Hadrian I, *Epistola ad regem Carolum (Responsio ad capitularem adversus synodum)*, ed. K. Hampe, MGH Epp. 5 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1899), 49–52. The chapter (2.19) addresses the point posed by the *Capitulare*: "Ut scientes nos faciant, ubi in veteri vel novo testamento aut in sex synodalibus conciliis iubeatur imagines facere vel factas adorare."

⁴⁸ Taken from the *Liber pontificalis*; Hampe provides the citations, p. 50. At the end of these examples, Hadrian invokes Prov. 22.28: "Ne transgrediaris terminos antiquos quos posuerunt patres tui."

The rising educational standards of the palace school and royal monasteries in the first decades of the ninth century helped foster a more favorable intellectual climate. Some of the most famous names of the Carolingian “renaissance” drew from Daniel 12.4; all did so in order to express a view of intellectual progress. By the mid-ninth century, Daniel 12.4, along with Gregory’s interpretation of it, had gained something of an intellectual vogue. When Paschasius Radbertus, one of the more original minds of the ninth century, sought to justify his own attempt at the exegesis of Matthew after many venerable Fathers had done the same, he noted Daniel’s prophecy of bountiful knowledge.⁴⁹ Hilduin of Saint-Denis deployed Daniel 12.4 to support the claim that enough knowledge had accumulated for him to illuminate further the identity of Saint Denis of Paris as the Areopagite from Acts 17.34.⁵⁰ Walafrid Strabo saw the gradual additions to the liturgy over time as the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy of *multiplex scientia*.⁵¹ And Ermenrich of Ellwangen heaped praise upon the abbot Grimoald by seeing in his learning the fulfillment of the progress of knowledge.⁵²

Ninth-century churchmen seized on this theme of progress to join Daniel 12.4 to an argument that they sought to stress in particular: the celibacy of the clergy.

⁴⁹ Paschasius Radbertus, *Expositio in Matheo* prol., ed. Beda Paulus, CCCM 56 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1984), 4: “Neque enim putandum est nulli nunc temporis gratiam intelligentiae largiri cum pateat illud propheticum: *pertransibunt*. . . .” Radbertus went further than his contemporaries in identifying the *multiplex scientia* of Daniel with an increase in rationality. In a commentary written a couple of decades later, he appends Dan. 12.4 to a statement borrowed from Ambrose, where the pools of Esebon in Cant. 7.4 are likened to reason and doctrinal riches: *Expositio in Lamentationes Hieremiae* 3.49–51, ed. Beda Paulus, CCCM 85 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1988), 210: “Quid enim sunt piscinae in Esebon nisi rationabilitas et abundantia doctrinarum in cogitationibus, quae est in partibus ecclesiae cui merito defertur multitudo doctrinae? Filiae enim multitudinis posteritas est plurimarum scientiarum quoniam propheta inquit: *Pertransibunt*. . . .” Cf. Ambrose, *Expositio Psalmi 118* 16.8.1–2, ed. M. Petschenig, CSEL 62 (Vienna: Tempsky, 1913), 355.

⁵⁰ Hilduin of Saint-Denis, *Epistola ad cunctos fideles* (Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina [henceforth BHL] 2174), ed. E. Dümmler, MGH Epp. 5, no. 21, p. 336. This letter appears in most manuscripts of Hilduin’s *Passio Dionysii* (BHL 2175), which added some further “proofs” of the identification initially made in a *Passio Dionysii* (BHL 2178) written some years earlier. See Raymond-Joseph Loenertz, “La légende parisienne de saint Denis l’Aréopagite, sa genèse et son premier témoin,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 69 (1951): 217–37; and David Luscombe, “Denis the Pseudo-Areopagite in the Middle Ages from Hilduin to Lorenzo Valla,” in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter*, Schriften der Monumenta Germaniae Historica 33, 6 vols. (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1988–90), 1:133–52, at 137–40.

⁵¹ Walafrid Strabo, *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum* 23 ed. and trans. Alice L. Harting-Correa, *Mittellateinische Studien und Texte* 19 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 136: “Nec mirum videri debet, quod paulatim aucta narratur officia, dum adhuc multa in rebus necessariis defuisse, cum videamus usque hodie et lectiones et collectas et diversas laudum species iam paene abundantibus omnibus superaddi, ut et in hoc illud propheticum videatur impleri: *Pertransibunt plurimi et multiplex erit scientia*.” In this particular case, the Hieronymian interpretation of a diversity of opinions might have worked as well, but Walafrid ultimately wants to stress the increase in liturgical offices, not their diversity. See Amos Funkenstein, *Heilsplan und natürliche Entwicklung: Formen der Gegenwartsbestimmung im Geschichtsdenken des hohen Mittelalters* (Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagsanstalt, 1965), 62–63.

⁵² Ermenrich, *Epistola ad Grimaldum*, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH Epp. 5, p. 564. After excerpting the relevant passage from Gregory’s Ezekiel homily, Ermenrich adds, “Quapropter non est multum mirandum, si et tu plus gnoscis quam Plato et Maro, quorum neuter ad tantam scientiam pervenire potuit, ut sciret Deum.”

Advocates of clerical celibacy would always have to deal with the fact that the doctrine is found in neither the New Testament nor in any early Christian documents, but was first promulgated in fourth-century councils.⁵³ Like knowledge, the “virtue of chastity” was also something that Gregory the Great had viewed as gradually increasing over time, and, as in his exegesis of Daniel 12.4, he supported the idea with biblical proofs.⁵⁴ The level of sexual purity required of those who ascended into heaven had increased over time, as demonstrated by the examples of Enoch, Elijah, and Jesus. Gregory’s argument here is taken up by Hrabanus Maurus and Haimo of Auxerre; the latter appended Daniel 12.4 as a further element of proof.⁵⁵

The most frequent use of Daniel 12.4 in the Carolingian period comes from Hincmar of Reims, for whom it was a favorite passage, used in six works. Fittingly, the legally minded archbishop applied the increase in knowledge to canon law, first employing the passage in a lengthy *capitulum* to the priests of his diocese (ca. 852) prohibiting clerical cohabitation with women. For Hincmar, Daniel 12.4 predicted growing legal sophistication—the increase in the clarity (*subtilitas*) as well as the quantity (*multiplicatio*) of precepts.⁵⁶ Replete with various authorities on clerical celibacy, Hincmar’s analysis continues with the same passage of Gregory on the claim that celibacy, too, had increased through the ages.⁵⁷

Like Beatus a century earlier, a couple of Carolingian churchmen saw the interpretation of Daniel 12.4 as malleable and dependent on their current interests. Several years after the writing of the *capitulum*, when Hincmar considered the contradictions in earlier canon law regarding the translation of bishops from one see to another, Daniel 12.4 served to reinforce the diversity of opinion found in his legal authorities. Thus he seems to be verging on the Hieronymian interpretation—

⁵³ Proponents of clerical celibacy had to get around Paul’s letter to Timothy, which clearly stated that the bishop was to be a man with only one wife (1 Tim. 3.2). This was in part accomplished by stressing the bishop as the bridegroom of his church: see Jean Gaudemet, “Note sur le symbolisme médiéval: Le mariage de l’évêque,” *L’année canonique* 22 (1978): 71–80. Recent studies on clerical celibacy have tended to treat the Carolingian period very sparsely, though one exception is Mayke de Jong, “*Imitatio morum*: The Cloister and Clerical Purity in the Carolingian World,” in *Medieval Purity and Piety: Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform*, ed. Michael Frassetto, Garland Medieval Casebooks 19 (New York: Garland, 1998), 49–80.

⁵⁴ Gregory I, *Homiliae in Evangelium* 29.6, ed. Raymond Étaix, CCSL 141 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 250: “Per incrementa temporum virtus castitatis excresceret.” The first to do this, Enoch, was born through procreation and had his own children. The second, Elijah, was at least celibate in life (an assumption based on his lack of wife or offspring). And Jesus, of course, was neither created through sex nor did he procreate. This all emerges from commentary on Mark 16.19, where Jesus is taken up into heaven.

⁵⁵ Haimo of Auxerre, *Homilia in die sancto ascensionis Domini* 96, PL 118:547C: “Ubi notandum est quia per incrementa temporis munditia excrevit castitatis, iuxta illud quod per Danielem dicitur *pertransibunt*. . . .” Cf. Hrabanus Maurus, PL 109:223 (*In libros IV Regum*) and PL 109:1102 (*In Ecclesiasticum*), who reproduces the Gregorian passages on increasing chastity, though without reference to Dan. 12.4.

⁵⁶ Hincmar of Reims, *Capitula* 2.21, ed. Rudolf Pokorny, MGH Capit. episc. 2 (Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1995), 52–53.

⁵⁷ Hincmar also cites the Council of Nicaea and the Theodosian Code, identified by Pokorny (53–54).

a rarity in the Carolingian period.⁵⁸ More directly, while Haimo of Auxerre incorporated the progressive view of Daniel 12.4 into his point on increased celibacy, in his own Daniel commentary he drew exclusively on the Hieronymian interpretation.⁵⁹

As the case of Haimo highlights, already in the ninth century we can see the beginnings of a break between the proclivities of those commenting on or glossing the book of Daniel (where Jerome's exegesis dominates) and those drawing from Daniel 12.4 in a range of other genres (where the Gregorian reading was preferred). This gulf will have consequences in the following centuries.⁶⁰ But even the ninth-century commentary tradition lacked consistency on this matter. A manuscript containing the book of Daniel with marginal glosses reproduces Jerome's interpretation.⁶¹ On the other hand, Hrabanus Maurus incorporates Gregory's analysis nearly verbatim into his own commentaries on Ezekiel and Daniel.⁶² Finally, a Carolingian Daniel gloss/commentary sometimes attributed to Remigius of Auxerre (d. 908) contains the contradicting interpretations of both Jerome and Gregory, with no attempt to reconcile them, but this approach seems to have been unique in the entire tradition on Daniel 12.4.⁶³

⁵⁸ Hincmar of Reims, *Epistola de translationibus episcoporum*, PL 126:222B: "Cogunt, inquit Augustinus (*Epist.* 185), multis invenire medicinas multorum experimenta morborum. Et quia, ut Daniel dicit: *Pertransibunt plurimi, et multiplex erit scientia*, pro temporum diversitate, et morborum varietate, atque hominum sanitate, quaedam conceduntur." But even here Hincmar ultimately argues for a progressive development in canon law, that is, to settle the issue once and for all (222C): "Quapropter quod licitum fuit, necessitate vel utilitate, de transmigrandis episcopis ab ecclesiis ad ecclesias ante sacrarum regularum praefixionem, postea intantum fuit, est, et erit illicitum contra easdem sacras regulas usurpare." Cf. Walahfrid, above, n. 51. For the context of Hincmar's treatise, see Mary Sommar, "Hincmar of Reims and the Canon Law of Episcopal Translation," *Catholic Historical Review* 88 (2002): 429–45.

⁵⁹ Sumi Shimahara, "Le succès médiéval de l'*Annotation brève sur Daniel* d'Haymon d'Auxerre, texte scolaire carolingien exhortant à la réforme," in *Études d'exégèse carolingienne: Autour d'Haymon d'Auxerre*, ed. S. Shimahara, Collection Haut Moyen Âge 4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 123–64, at 163 n. 154, where Haimo's explanation of Dan. 12.4 is cited: "Id est pro diversitate exponentium diversus erit sensus."

⁶⁰ Shimahara discusses the influence of Haimo's *Annotatio brevis* on the *Glossa ordinaria* for Daniel, "Le succès médiéval de l'*Annotation brève sur Daniel*," 146–55. See also below, n. 117.

⁶¹ Sankt-Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 41, p. 374 (saec. IX 3/4), gives Jerome's commentary on both *pertransibunt* and *multiplex scientia*. One can consult the manuscript online: www.e-codices.unifr.ch/de/csg/0041/374.

⁶² Hrabanus Maurus, *Commentaria in Ezechielem* 14.40, PL 110:905. Hrabanus's Daniel commentary is unpublished, but see Mark A. Zier, "The Medieval Latin Interpretation of Daniel: Antecedents to Andrew of St. Victor," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 58 (1991): 43–78, at 58–59, in reference to Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, MS Aug. perg. 208, fols. 59r–60v. (Zier indicates at n. 42 that Hrabanus borrows from Gregory's *Moralia* when commenting on Dan. 12.4; I have not myself examined the manuscript.)

⁶³ This brief commentary appears in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS nouv. acq. lat. 762, fols. 125v–128r, and Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 3704, fols. 166v–170v: see Friedrich Stegmüller, *Repertorium biblicum medii aevi*, 11 vols. (Madrid: Instituto Francisco Suárez, 1950–80), no. 7220 (cf. no. 8377). (Unless otherwise noted, subsequent references to Stegmüller indicate this repertory, available online at repbib.uni-trier.de/cgi-bin/rebihome.tcl.) On this commentary's gloss for Dan. 12.4, see Régis Courtray, "La réception du *Commentaire sur Daniel* de Jérôme dans l'Occident médiéval chrétien (VIIe–XIIe siècle)," *Sacris erudiri* 44 (2005): 117–87, at 144. (I have not myself examined the manuscripts.) For the only other commentary to have both Hieronymian and

Scientia in the Carolingian world was very much identified as an aspect of the past that was to be preserved. Literary reforms were structured on the authority of ancient grammarians, and ecclesiastical reforms were always styled as a return to Roman orthodoxy. In the consolidation and reorganization of information that made up the Carolingian “renaissance,” churchmen often found contradictions as they endeavored to establish correct doctrine and practice. Even when churchmen were deriving their argumentation from others, they often made a choice on which conceptual points to follow. Seen in this light, it is somewhat surprising that Jerome’s take on Daniel 12.4 as predicting an inevitable multiplicity of opinions did not reach far beyond the commentary tradition. The best minds of the ninth century were using Daniel 12.4 to justify innovation. That they would support their own additions to the accumulation of knowledge by using the reasoning posited by the one figure who best combined intellectual sophistication and Roman authority, Pope Gregory the Great, demonstrates well how this reform looked to both past and present for inspiration.

TWO MINDS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE YEAR 1000

After the ninth century, no reference is made to Daniel 12.4 for nearly a century.⁶⁴ The sole writer of the tenth century to consider it was the Lotharingian monk Heriger of Lobbes. This is fitting, since it was mostly Lotharingia (along with neighboring Reims) that bore the mantle of learning in late-tenth-century Europe. In what first appeared as a letter introducing a saint’s life and later became the general preface to the episcopal history of the diocese of Liège, Heriger ventures to describe the entire course of human history in opposing terms of progress and decline. He does so by juxtaposing two conflicting explanations of intellectual development, one pagan, the other Christian. He leads with the notion of decay, for which he quotes Cicero, though he immediately follows this statement with Daniel 12.4, which suggested the contrary: “‘All antiquity,’ says the greatest of orators, ‘insofar as it was closer to the origin and the divine progeny, perhaps perceived better those things which were true.’ But we know from the angel who told Daniel that ‘many will pass through, and knowledge will be manifold.’”⁶⁵

Gregorian readings—though with an attempted harmonization not evident here—see the Franciscan Jean Michaelis, below, p. 340.

⁶⁴ Canon 9 of the 909 Council of Trosly repeats a longer passage from Hincmar (*Capit.* 2.21) that includes Dan. 12.4: ed. G. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, 31 vols. (Florence and Venice: Antonio Zatta, 1759–98), 18:289B.

⁶⁵ Heriger, *Epistola ad Werinfridum*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SS rer. Merov. 5 (Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1910), 109: “‘Omnis antiquitas,’ ut ait oratorum maximus, ‘quo propius aberat ab ortu et divina progenie, hoc melius ea fortasse quae erant vera cernebat’ (Cicero, *Disput. Tuscul.* 1.26). Verum, angelo Danieli narrante novimus, quia *pertransibunt plurimi, et multiplex erit scientia.*” On this complex passage, cf. Fidel Rädle, “Zur Bewertung der Antike in den hagiographischen Werken des Heriger von Lobbes,” in *Gli umanesimi medievali: Atti del II congresso dell’Internazionale Mittelemerkomitee*, ed. Claudio Leonardi, *Millennio Medievale* 4 (Florence: SISMEL, 1998), 539–50, at 542–44, with whom I differ on precisely the import of Heriger’s use of Dan. 12.4. This particular Ciceronian quotation was one of Heriger’s favorites: he used it decades later in his *Epistola ad Hugonem*, PL 139:1131. It appears at a crucial point in the *Disputationes Tusculanae*, where

Heriger never quite pinpoints where he stands on this conceptual spectrum, though he continues by noting how the ancients' command of reason enabled them to penetrate the mysteries of nature and even of the future, whereas Heriger and his contemporaries had to be content with preserving the wisdom of the past.⁶⁶ Given these comments and Heriger's admiration for ancient poetry and proverbs, it is possible that he found Cicero's explanation of intellectual decline a plausible view. But, for Heriger, the "divine progeny" had entered history, and the forward looking of the ancients and the backward looking of the Christians might reflect this view. The decline in knowledge could be countered, or at least slowed down, by the diligent preservation of ideas and events of the past, thereby justifying Heriger's work as a historian.

On the other side of the year 1000, at the southeastern edge of Latin Christendom, the Venetian missionary Gerard of Csanád (d. 1046) ruminated extensively on Daniel 12.4 in his only surviving theological treatise.⁶⁷ In contrast to Heriger, Gerard is much more pessimistic about worldly knowledge. His reading of Daniel 12.4 is Hieronymian, and he cites Jerome directly on the multitude of opinions predicted in the prophecy.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, here we can see how even those drawing from Jerome's interpretation could still make a claim for the progression of divine knowledge up to the advent of Christ. The sealed book and diversity of opinions in Daniel 12.4 permit Gerard to enter into a more general discussion of the incompleteness of knowledge before the Incarnation, when many tried to excel in knowledge without success. Solomon is a case in point, though Gerard groups all philosophers as those who tried to know everything but could not.⁶⁹ By making the easy connection of Daniel's sealed scroll to the seven-sealed scroll in Apocalypse 5, opened by Christ, Gerard restricts the meaning of Daniel 12.4 to the coming of Christ: what was sealed and hidden before is laid open through the Incarnation, and he who knows Christ knows everything. Thus, by the end of Gerard's discussion, *multiplex scientia* has become the "fullness of all

Cicero brings in evidence from earlier philosophers for the immortality of the soul. It is surprising that in the earlier edition of the *Epistola*, Köpke opted for the bad reading of Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, MS 2738 (76.14), fol. 49rb, which has *sententia* for *scientia*, thereby altering the meaning of the entire opening paragraph: MGH SS 7 (Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Aulici Hahniani, 1846), 164.

⁶⁶ Heriger, *Epistola ad Werinfridum*, p. 109: "In antiquis utique vigente ratione veritatis indagatrice et perspicacia futurorum, in modernis vero fide credulitatis quam primum pollente cum plurima scientia praeteritorum. Illis diurnitas vitae vetustatis obducens callum, cognitionem praestitit omnium rerum, nobis econtra, 'quod calidus sanguis, quod rerum inscitia versat' (Horace, *Epist.* 1.3.33), utinam non avolet ob brevem vitam et curam sollicitudinum antiquorum memorare inventa virorum." He follows this with another quotation from Horace (*Carm.* 4.9.25–28) on the lack of knowledge of events prior to the arrival of epic poetry.

⁶⁷ Gerard of Csanád, *Deliberatio supra hymnum trium puerorum* 8, ed. Gabriel Silagi, CCCM 49 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1978), 151–65. The *Hymnus trium puerorum* deals with Dan. 3, where three Jews survive in a fiery furnace, their punishment for not honoring the gold statue erected by Nebuchadnezzar; the hymn is their prayer while in the fire. It does not appear in the original Hebrew/Aramaic text of Daniel.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 155–56. Gerard reproduces Jerome's entire exegesis on the verse.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 165: "Omnia sapit? . . . Olim multi conati sunt facere, sed non potuerunt, et philosophi dicebantur."

divine knowledge” instead of diverse opinion.⁷⁰ There is no gradual progression of knowledge for Gerard; it is not the prophets who are compared with Moses, but only the apostles. Peter, James, and John ascended into the mist, just as Moses had before them, but they came away with greater knowledge because they had the light of Christ.⁷¹ As a result of this view, Gerard does not address any progress in knowledge that might occur subsequent to the Incarnation. His continual stress on Christ as the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies may reflect his missionary mentality, where convincing pagans of Christian truth took precedence over all else.

THEOLOGY AND HISTORY IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

Daniel 12.4 was not used in the polemics of the eleventh-century reform movement.⁷² It was not the time to lend scriptural support to the very real multitude of opinions that then abounded among ecclesiastics, nor was it a time to reflect on any progress the church had made throughout its history. Rather, it was a time to reach back to earlier examples to justify claims about the right order in the world. Both sides in the Investiture Controversy were arguing conservative positions. But already in the first years of the twelfth century we find a resurgence in authors drawing from Daniel 12.4, many of whom had been intellectually conditioned by the ideological struggles of the preceding decades.⁷³ The debates on how to interpret the *multiplex scientia* of Daniel’s prophecy take us to the heart of the intellectual trends of the time, and especially to the new optimism of early Scholasticism, as well as to the reactionary efforts to question the value of these advancements in knowledge.

Many writers contributed to the “new awareness of history” that typified the twelfth century, but of those reform-minded theologians who were wont to periodize the history of the church and speculate about its present and future course, Rupert of Deutz stands out in his use of Daniel 12.4.⁷⁴ The progressive

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 163: “*Multiplex erit scientia, ostenditur evidentissimae, quia quod prophetae praedixerunt, apostoli confirmaverunt de plenitudine totius divinae scientiae . . . plena scientia demonstranda erat in veniente Christo et ceteri scirent, quod novi accitiores essent veteribus.*”

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 162: “*Moises in caliginem ascendit (cf. Exod. 20.21), Petrus et Iacobus et Iohannes cum luce ad eandem caliginem. Verum plus cognoverunt postremi quam primus.*”

⁷² We know this because most of the polemical tracts are edited, well indexed, and accessible to full-text searches in the MGH *Libelli de lite* (Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1891–97).

⁷³ The canonist Ivo of Chartres ended an analysis of the Mass with Dan. 12.4, very much in the same vein as Michelet—to invite later writers to improve on his ideas: *Sermo V, sive opusculum de convenientia veteris et novi sacrificii*, PL 162:561.

⁷⁴ Rupert belonged to the liégeois intellectual tradition of Heriger of Lobbes. In general, see John H. Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz*, Publications of the UCLA Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies 18 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); on his historical reading of the Apocalypse, see Wilhelm Kamlah, *Apokalypse und Geschichtstheologie: Die mittelalterliche Auslegung der Apokalypse vor Joachim von Fiore*, Historische Studien 285 (Berlin: Verlag Dr. Emil Ebering, 1935), 75–104. Alois Dempf, *Sacrum imperium: Geschichte- und Staatsphilosophie des Mittelalters und der politischen Renaissance* (Munich: Oldenberg, 1929), 233–61, begins his discussion of several theologians under the rubric of “German symbolism” with Rupert; more recently, see Brett Whalen, *Dominion of God: Christendom and Apocalypse in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009),

interpretation of Daniel 12.4 fit well with theologies of history that claimed subtler divisions than merely the time before and after the Incarnation or the three-fold division “before the law, under the law, and under grace” (*ante legem, sub lege, sub gratia*). Rupert quoted Daniel 12.4 in seven texts, and while he used the verse in different ways, he favored the Gregorian view of progress in divine knowledge.

Rupert presents his historical theology in clearest relief in his massive *De sancta Trinitate et operibus eius*, his most important work, written at Liège in the 1110s. In the third and final portion of the work, Rupert describes the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (derived from Isaiah 11.2–3) and aligns each gift with a corresponding moment in the history of the church. The Passion revealed wisdom (*sapientia*), Pentecost, understanding (*intellectus*); the conversion of the gentiles, counsel (*consilium*); the time of the persecutions, fortitude (*fortitudo*); the doctors of the church, knowledge (*scientia*); the conversion of the Jews, piety (*pietas*); and the Last Judgment, fear (*timor*).⁷⁵ It is in the time of the learned men (*doctores*) of the church, who faithfully explained sacred scripture, that Rupert sees the fulfillment of the *multiplex scientia* of Daniel 12.4.⁷⁶ Because the benefits of the sixth gift, *pietas*, had yet to result in the conversion of the Jews, perhaps Rupert believed that his own age was a continuation of the reign of *scientia*, with the approach of the next epoch imminent. Rupert may even have conceived of his exegetical skill as on par with that of the church doctors. This was, after all, the same monk who defended his right to turn over the field of scripture with the plowshare of his own talent.⁷⁷ Rupert’s “symbolist” mentality—especially as it pertained to reading the Old Testament and the Apocalypse in light of current events—would be seized on by later writers. But even as he was innovating, Rupert’s methods were still

72–99, who prefers the term “reform apocalypticism” to describe a similarly minded group. To single out Rupert here in no way diminishes the highly progressive historical perspective of someone like Anselm of Havelberg. The quoted phrase is from Marie-Dominique Chenu, “Theology and the New Awareness of History,” in *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century*, trans. Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 162–201 (originally published as “Conscience de l’histoire et théologie au XIIe siècle,” *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 21 [1954]: 107–33).

⁷⁵ Rupert may have been influenced by the *De septem sigillis*, which pins the gifts mentioned in Isaiah to the life of Christ. Cf. E. Ann Matter, “The Pseudo-Alcuinian *De septem sigillis*: An Early Latin Apocalypse Exegesis,” *Traditio* 36 (1980): 111–37.

⁷⁶ Rupert of Deutz, *De sancta Trinitate et operibus eius* 34.31 (= *De operibus Spiritus Sancti* 1), ed. Rabanus Haacke, CCCM 24 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1972), 1860: “In sanctis patribus atque doctoribus nostris, qui Scripturas sanctas fideliter tractando exposuerunt, ita ut in ipsis veraciter impletum sit illud propheticum: *Pertransibunt plurimi, et multiplex erit scientia*, sanctus nobis scientiae Spiritus digna cum gratiarum actione venerandus est.” On this work and its importance, see Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz*, 81–95. The same list of gifts from the Holy Spirit in time appears already in Rupert’s *Liber de divinis officiis* 10.30, ed. Rabanus Haacke, CCCM 7 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1967), 366–68, though instead of *fortitudo* signifying the time of the martyrs, Rupert uses it to characterize the time of the pseudoprophets and heresiarchs. Rupert uses Dan. 12.4 slightly earlier in this text during a discussion of the *multiplex scientia* given to the church, which Rupert likens to the Gospel miracle of the loaves and fishes.

⁷⁷ Rupert of Deutz, *In Apocalypsim*, PL 169:827: “Et alios fodere puteos proprii vomere ingenii, dummodo vivam.” See Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz*, 275–82.

part of the old monastic tradition, not of the newer methods of dialectic that were sweeping across the cathedral schools.⁷⁸

Among these new dialecticians, and surpassing Rupert in fame as well as intellectual self-regard, was Abelard. Of the several versions of his major theological treatise on the Trinity, Abelard employed Daniel 12.4 only in the earliest, a text condemned and burned at Soissons in 1121.⁷⁹ The main purpose of the work, as Abelard himself states, was to demonstrate the unity of the Trinity through dialectic; this led him to much discussion on how ancient philosophers, especially the Platonists, characterized divinity and how they had hashed out a rough notion of the Trinity centuries before Christ. For Abelard, in the progression of theological understanding the time of the philosophers provided a contrast with the earlier time of the Hebrew prophets. Daniel 12.4 expressed the progress in the “understanding of the creator” (*creatoris intelligentia*) that had occurred from the time of the prophets to the time of the philosophers, an understanding made possible by the zeal with which the philosophers inquired into truth.⁸⁰ The pagan philosophers had advanced beyond the Jews in knowledge about God! Elsewhere Abelard states that God had intended these philosophical advances in order to pave the way for Christianity to reach the gentiles.⁸¹ Though not explicitly condemned for this point, the role given to pagan philosophers likely fueled some of the hostility towards the work, and it is significant that in later versions of his *Theologia* Abelard eliminated this particular comparison of pagan and Jewish understanding.⁸²

Slightly later in his career, in writings to the nuns of the Paraclete, Abelard twice appealed to the progress predicted in Daniel 12.4. At one point he uses it to account for Jerome’s uncertainty about the Assumption of Mary, which by

⁷⁸ The new masters of the early twelfth century, at Laon, e.g., criticized Rupert for his lack of sophistication in dialectic: see R. W. Southern, *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995–2001), 2:7–24.

⁷⁹ Abelard describes the condemnation at Soissons in the *Historia calamitatum* 9–10, ed. J. Monfrin (Paris: J. Vrin, 1959), 82–89.

⁸⁰ Abelard, *Theologia* “*Summi boni*” 3.66–67, ed. E. M. Buytaert and C. J. Mews, CCCM 13 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1987), 185–86. Now see Lerner, “*Pertransibunt plurimi*,” 16–19. Abelard joins Dan. 12.4 with a line from Psalm 47 attesting to the progression of knowledge: “God is known in steps (*Deus in gradibus dinoscitur*),” though he must preface this quotation with “*teste Gregorio*,” since this passage reflected a *Vetus Latina* reading: *Theologia* “*Summi boni*” 3.67, p. 186. This reading of Psalm 47.4 also had an interesting tradition of interpretation, including of course Gregory the Great (see above, n. 27) as well as Ambrose, *Explanatio psalmorum XII*, ed. M. Petschenig, CSEL 64 (Vienna: Tempsky, 1919), 349. Cf. Vulgate, Psalm 47.4: “*Deus in domibus eius agnitus est in auxiliando*.”

⁸¹ Abelard, *Soliloquium*, ed. Charles Burnett, “Peter Abelard *Soliloquium*: A Critical Edition,” *Studi medievali* 25 (1984): 857–94, at 889, where Abelard notes the rapidity with which Greece became Christian to support his idea that philosophers had prepared the ground, just as the prophets had done among the Jews (Dan. 12.4 is employed for corroboration). Cf. Abelard, *Collationes* 69–70, ed. John Marenbon and Giovanni Orlandi (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 86–88.

⁸² See Constant J. Mews, “Abelard and Heloise on Jews and *Hebraica veritas*,” in *Christian Attitudes toward the Jews in the Middle Ages: A Casebook*, ed. Michael Frassetto (New York: Routledge, 2007), 83–108, at 87–88. If later versions of the *Theologia* can be said to contain substantially the same arguments with further scriptural proofs, then it is all the more significant that Dan. 12.4 and this particular discussion about philosophers and prophets are absent.

Abelard's day was known to be true,⁸³ and at another to urge that continuing improvements be made to translations of the Bible.⁸⁴ *Multiplex erit scientia* was so much in line with Abelard's confidence in his own abilities and in the method of dialectic to penetrate theological problems that it is perhaps surprising that he did not cite the verse even more frequently. Abelard may have shied away from the passage in later works intended for the schools after Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of Saint-Victor effectively employed it in arguing against him on a specific theological point: the nature of faith prior to the Incarnation.

Hugh of Saint-Victor is rightly considered the most historically minded theologian of the early twelfth century.⁸⁵ While Hugh was considering arguments about the development of the sacraments throughout history, he came to dispute some of the ideas of Abelard.⁸⁶ He apparently felt unequal to this task on his own and called upon Bernard of Clairvaux, then at the height of his influence, for advice on how to respond to some arguments put forth by an unnamed person, almost universally recognized to be Abelard or at the very least one of his pupils.⁸⁷ Hugh solicits Bernard to respond to several questions, among which was whether the just of earlier times had a complete foreknowledge of the Incarnation. "Abelard" was arguing for this position and Hugh against it. Bernard states that the points already put forward by Hugh provided a sufficient refutation but that he would add his own.⁸⁸ Bernard lays out his own refutation—in a proto-Scholastic

⁸³ Abelard, *Sermo* 26, PL 178:543. In fact, it was not Jerome but Paschasius Radbertus writing in the name of Jerome who made this claim: see Albert Ripberger, *Der Pseudo-Hieronymus-Brief IX, "Cogitis me": Ein erster marianischer Traktat des Mittelalters von Paschasius Radbert*, Spicilegium Friburgense 9 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1962); or idem, in CCCM 56C (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985).

⁸⁴ Abelard, *Epistola ad moniales Paraclitenses* 9, ed. Edmé Renno Smits, *Peter Abelard, Letters IX–XIV* (Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit, 1983), 235. Abelard's main example here is Jerome's improvement on the Septuagint, but he is careful to state that where confusions remain one should examine the original language ("Quisquis ergo de his certus esse desiderat, non sit contentus aqua rivuli, sed puritatem eius de fonte inquirat et hauriat"); and, indeed, the point at the end of this letter (p. 236) is that the nuns of the Paraclete should endeavor to improve on Jerome's translation: "Defecit iam dudum hoc peregrinarum linguarum in viris studium et cum negligentia litterarum scientia periit earum. Quod in viris amisimus, in feminis recuperemus et ad virorum condemnationem et fortioris sexus iudicium rursum regina austru sapientiam veri Salomonis in vobis exquirat."

⁸⁵ The *Didascalion*, Hugh's most widely read work, emphasizes the historical development of the arts. See R. W. Southern, "Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing, 2: Hugh of St Victor and the Idea of Historical Development," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 21 (1971): 159–79.

⁸⁶ Hugh of Saint-Victor, *De sacramentis Christianae fidei* 1.10.6, PL 176:337. See Funkenstein, *Heilsplan und natürliche Entwicklung*, 52 n. 7, where he notes Hugh's use of Gregory the Great.

⁸⁷ See David Luscombe, *The School of Peter Abelard: The Influence of Abelard's Thought in the Early Scholastic Period*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, n.s., 14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 185–87; and Chenu, "Theology and the New Awareness of History," 172–73.

⁸⁸ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistola de baptismo* 77, ed. J. Leclercq and H. Rochais, *Sancti Bernardi opera*, 8 vols. (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1957–77), 7:192: "Ut nil addendum penitus putem, et paene quid addi possit non inveniam," and again, 7:196: "Arbitror enim, ut ante iam dixeram, me quoque non respondente, ea potuisse sufficere quae tua super hoc epistola continet. Sed hoc addidi, ne intactum quid praeterirem ex omnibus quae petisti." Because Hugh's letter to Bernard does not survive, it is impossible to know precisely what Hugh's original counterarguments to Abelard were. Heinrich Weisweiler, "Die Arbeitsmethode Hugos von St. Viktor: Ein Beitrag zum Entstehen seines Hauptwerkes *De sacramentis*," *Scholastik* 20–24 (1949): 59–87 and 232–67, at 63–64, views Bernard

form—against this notion of perfect faith before Christ. To do so required a notion of a gradual progression of faith through time, and Daniel 12.4 was the ideal passage for this type of claim. Bernard voiced the opinion of Gregory (citing him directly): Daniel was indicating that greater information (*amplior rerum notitia*) would be made available to posterity.⁸⁹ Hugh was sufficiently impressed with Bernard’s reasoning and examples to incorporate this portion of his reply on the changing nature of faith nearly verbatim into his own section on faith in the *De sacramentis*. Hugh clarifies Bernard’s argument by adding that, while the nature of faith remains unchanging, the recognition of the faith (*agnitio fidei*) developed—that is, increased—in the periods leading up to the Incarnation.

Perhaps due to Hugh’s influence, the use of Daniel 12.4 continued among the Victorines, who stood at the forefront of the literal interpretation of scripture. This practice led to a more systematic hermeneutic, greater philological skill, and increased dialogue with Jewish traditions in Europe.⁹⁰ Accordingly, when Hugh’s student Richard invoked the Daniel prophecy, he did so to justify his own efforts to explain the complicated book of Ezekiel according to its literal sense. Although not a historical argument, like Bernard’s, Richard’s use of Daniel 12.4 is one of the clearest examples of an attempt to justify one’s own endeavors and the intellectual advancement of one’s own time: “For our part, however, let us take with all greediness what the Fathers have discussed; let us investigate eagerly what they have left untouched; let us offer with all generosity the fruits of our research, that we may fulfill what is written: *pertransibunt*. . . .”⁹¹ Richard warns his readers not to be scandalized if they find something not already in the glosses, and he challenges them to consider not whether what he says is new but whether it is true.⁹² The previous exegete of Ezekiel with whom Richard was contending was of course Gregory the Great, who made no effort to explain or understand the literal sense of Ezekiel. When we remember that the progressive interpretation of Daniel 12.4 ultimately stemmed from Gregory’s deeply allegorical take on the temple in

as the originator of these examples, as does Hugh Feiss, “*Bernardus scholasticus*: The Correspondence of Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of Saint-Victor on Baptism,” in *Bernardus Magister*, ed. John R. Sommerfeldt, Cistercian Studies 135 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1992), 349–78.

⁸⁹ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistola de baptismo*, p. 195: “Sed et propheta Daniel: *Pertransibunt*, ait, *plurimi et multiplex erit scientia*, ampliores scilicet rerum notitiam promittens et ipse posteris. Si ergo, ut ait etiam sanctus papa Gregorius, secundum incrementa temporum crevit et scientia spiritualium patrum.”

⁹⁰ One of the many insights of Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983; original ed., 1941).

⁹¹ Richard of Saint-Victor, *In visionem Ezechielis* prol., PL 196:527D. The translation is from Smalley, *Study of the Bible*, 108–9. In this respect Richard echoes Paschasius Radbertus, who used Dan. 12.4 to justify his exegetical contribution to Matthew some three centuries earlier. Cf. Pier Cesare Bori, *L’interpretazione infinita: L’ermeneutica cristiana antica e le sue trasformazioni* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987), 83–85, who notes Richard’s use of Dan. 12.4 but overestimates Richard’s novelty because he thinks that Gregory’s use of the passage was only meant to describe the progression of knowledge from the Old to the New Testament.

⁹² Richard of Saint-Victor, *In visionem Ezechielis* 10, PL 196:562: “Sed tu vis honorare, et defendere veterum auctoritatem, sed nunquam verius honoramus veritatis amatores, quam quaerendo, inveniando, docendo, defendendo, diligendo veritatem. Attende ergo non utrum dicam aliquid novum, sed verum.” This passage is also pointed out by Smalley, *Study of the Bible*, 109.

Ezekiel 40, we are in a unique position to appreciate the irony of Richard's use of Daniel 12.4 to argue for treading where Gregory had not.

If Bernard of Clairvaux is to receive the credit for the incorporation of Daniel 12.4 into the debate between Hugh and Abelard, then in other writings the abbot would change his tune, expressing well his contradictory attitude towards learning.⁹³ Not long after his letter to Hugh, Bernard and his friend William of Saint-Thierry would place themselves as the opponents of twelfth-century "progress" in theology and bear the mantle of conservative theological thought for their new Cistercian order. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the public opposition of William and Bernard to Abelard, which exemplified their consternation at the rise of Scholastic thought and the "interdisciplinarity" to which theology was increasingly becoming subject.

Even though both would use Daniel 12.4 in the progressive Gregorian sense, their ideological bent made them interpret the prophecy somewhat differently from Gregory. Their treatments of Daniel 12.4 led them to delineate different types of knowledge, with varying benefits to society and the individual soul, and place *scientia* more clearly in the realm of human reason. Gregory had, of course, originally meant the *scientia* of Daniel 12.4 to refer to knowledge about God, but William and Bernard stressed the distinction between *scientia* and *sapientia*. They were ultimately wary of worldly knowledge, which they distinguished from self-knowledge and wisdom, the true knowledge of God.

In his *Expositio super Cantica canticorum*, William distinguishes knowledge from wisdom, both mentioned as treasures of salvation in Isaiah. Knowledge consists of the rational portion of the human soul; wisdom is the piety that can bring the soul to a higher level.⁹⁴ This pairing had a corresponding social setting: the pursuit of knowledge is a social enterprise, while the search for wisdom requires solitude and even secrecy; together they represent the respective attributes of the active and contemplative lives.⁹⁵

Knowledge has its pitfalls; there is no shortage of biblical passages warning of this. The ideal authority of this sort was Ecclesiastes, a veritable storehouse for proverbs on epistemological crisis. For example, Ecclesiastes 1.18 notes that "in much wisdom there is much indignation, and he that increases knowledge, increases labor." But because wisdom and knowledge are conflated here, William

⁹³ See John R. Sommerfeldt, *Bernard of Clairvaux on the Life of the Mind* (New York: Newman, 2004), 81–103; and, more generally, Stephen C. Ferruolo, *The Origins of the University: The Schools of Paris and Their Critics, 1100–1215* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 47–92.

⁹⁴ William of Saint-Thierry, *Expositio super Cantica canticorum* 4(24), ed. Paul Verdeyen, CCCM 87 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 31: "*Divitiae salutis sapientia et scientia* (Isa. 33.6). In cellariis scientiae abundantia designatur, quae etiam ideo plurali nomine censentur, quia sicut dicit alius propheta: *Pertranseunt tempora et multiplex fit scientia*. Sapientiae enim quae per cellam vinariam designatur, non nisi unum necessarium est. Scientia autem haec Christianae pietatis est, non inflans, sed in caritate aedificans: in intellectu scripturarum, et circa fidem moresque ac vitam docta prudentia. Haec est in anima humana portio rationalis, fidei ac spei propria officina, nec caritatis omnino expers, quamvis cella vinaria propria eius habitatio sit."

⁹⁵ William of Saint-Thierry, *Expositio* 27(132), p. 94, explains Cant. 1.11 by likening the right and left hands to rational knowledge and efficacious wisdom, respectively.

and Bernard alter the text when they quote the passage. William even uses it to champion wisdom once more.⁹⁶

Bernard devoted one of his famous sermons on the Song of Songs specifically to the pitfalls of knowledge. Here one's purpose in acquiring knowledge serves to test its usefulness to the soul. Those who seek knowledge for money and fame clearly have the wrong motivation, as do those seeking knowledge for its own sake, which Bernard dismisses as shameful curiosity (*turpis curiositas*).⁹⁷ Bernard finds acceptable only knowledge with the aim of edifying oneself or one's neighbor. In his *Sententiae*, Bernard repeats these delineations between the good and bad types of knowledge seeking along with a definition of wisdom. He introduces his lament that knowledge was increasing while wisdom diminishes with a modified quotation of Daniel 12.4: "*The times pass and knowledge will be manifold. Every day, wisdom is diminished and nearly ceases, but knowledge is multiplied, propagated, and increased. Knowledge for its own sake is curiosity; for display, vanity; but to edify another, it is charity; and to love God and shape one's life, wisdom. Wisdom is, however, not supported with the aid of writing or memory, but rather by the disposition of a pious mind and a good conscience.*"⁹⁸ William and Bernard both change the phrase *pertransibunt plurimi* to *pertransibunt tempora*, thereby solidifying its meaning as pertaining to knowledge over historical time. Thus, even though they used Daniel 12.4 to denigrate knowledge when compared to wisdom, they adhered to a Gregorian interpretation of progressive knowledge.

A more positive view of the benefits of knowledge is presented by Otto of Freising, the most sophisticated historian in a century of many. Although a fellow Cistercian, he was defined less by his order than by his high lineage, his training in the Parisian schools (towards which he was much more sympathetic than Bernard or William), and his later promotion to the episcopate. Otto's prologues to each of the eight books in his world chronicle offer precious reflections on his theology of history. Midway through his universal history, Otto reflects on intellectual progress through the ages. He begins with the ancient grammarian Priscian's quip about the increased perspicacity of the young.⁹⁹ His following observation is a

⁹⁶ Eccles. 1.18: "Eo quod in multa sapientia multa sit indignatio et qui addit scientiam addat et laborem." Cf. William of Saint-Thierry, *Expositio* 4(26), p. 32, and 24(118), p. 85: "Sicut apposita scientia apponit dolorem, sic apposita sapientia apponit amorem." Eccles. 1.18 too had a long tradition.

⁹⁷ Bernard, *Sermo* 36, in *Sancti Bernardi opera*, 2:4–5 (Eccles. 1.18 is quoted at p. 4). Bernard, in a way that only he could, quotes the ancient satirist Persius in support of his critique of those seeking knowledge only to impress others with it, p. 5: "Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter" (*Sat.* 1.27).

⁹⁸ Bernard, *Sententiae* 3.56–57, in *Sancti Bernardi opera*, 6/2:97: "*Pertransibunt tempora et multiplex erit scientia. Sapientia quotidie minoratur et paene deficit; scientia vero et multiplicatur et propagatur et crescit. Scientia propter se: curiositas; ut ostentetur: vanitas; ut frater aedificetur: caritas; ut Deus ametur et vita formetur: sapientia. Haec autem non scripturae vel memoriae tenentur auxilio, sed piae mentis affectu et conscientia bona.*"

⁹⁹ Priscian, *Institutiones grammaticae (Epistola dedicatoria)*, ed. Martin Hertz, in *Grammatici Latini*, ed. Heinrich Keil, 7 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1857–80), 2:1, on which see Silvestre, "*Quanto iuniores, tanto perspicaciores*," 237–38. Silvestre notes that Otto's citation of Priscian along with Dan. 12.4 parallels Heriger of Lobbes's, though he notes that the latter used Priscian's quotation to

clarion call for a historical approach to knowledge:

We are shaped by the writings and institutions of our predecessors, who pursued wisdom before us, and by the passage of time and the experience of events; we are trained the more quickly the more advanced the age of the world is in which we live; likewise, after grasping those things that were discovered before us, we can devise new things with the same inspiration as those of old. The prophet foresaw that, in the old age of the world (for the reasons that I have stated), wisdom is to be multiplied; he said *many will pass through and knowledge will be manifold*. That is why, though our ancestors were men renowned for wisdom and of notable ability, the causes of many things lay hidden from them, which have begun to be revealed to us through the progress of time and the course of events.¹⁰⁰

Later generations benefit from the accumulated examples of the past; Daniel 12.4 attests to this belief. It is important to consider where in Otto's history this reflection comes: the fourth book had just concluded with the abdication of Romulus Augustulus and a brief introduction of the Franks. This was a big caesura for Otto, whose own nephew would soon become the largest proponent of imperial *renovatio* in the twelfth century. But things were less certain when Otto was writing in the 1140s, and the Roman empire is the precise example that he uses to illustrate his point about historical insight being granted to those with historical distance: an institution once thought eternal by the pagans and even "almost divine" by the Christians was now reduced to such a poor state.¹⁰¹

Otto believed that he was living at a time when the world was nearing its end, "taking its last breath," as he puts it. Regardless of whether Otto thought of this as necessarily a bad thing—he would detail the many tribulations in store before the ultimate vindication of the righteous in his eighth and final book—his view of the progression of knowledge here is a positive one.¹⁰² The same prologue to book 5 is

slightly different effect, in order to express the idea that the moderns *must* be more observant since they are further from the origins.

¹⁰⁰ Otto of Freising, *Chronica sive historia de duabus civitatibus* 5.prol., ed. Adolf Hofmeister, MGH SS rer. Germ. [45] (Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1912), 226: "Dum et priorum, qui ante nos sapientiae studerunt, scriptis et institutis informamur ac processu temporum et experiētiis rerum tanto maturius, quanto in proveciori orbis aevo positi edocemur, per nos quoque his quae ante nos inventa sunt, comprehensio eodem, quo et illi, spiritu nova invenire possumus. Haec in senio mundi ex his, quas dixi, causis sapientiam fore multiplicandam propheta previdit, qui ait, *perstransibunt plurimi, et multiplex erit scientia*. Hinc est, quod multae antecessores nostros, preclarae sapientiae ac excellentium ingeniorum viros, latuerunt causae, quae nobis processu temporum ac eventu rerum patere ceperunt." The above translation is adapted from Charles Mierow, *The Two Cities: A Chronicle of Universal History to the Year 1146 A.D.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928), 322. Note that Otto has not held to the *sapientia/scientia* dichotomy of William and Bernard.

¹⁰¹ Otto of Freising, *Chronica*, p. 226: "Proinde Romanum imperium, quod pro sui excellentia a paganis aeternum, a nostris pene divum putabatur, iam ad quid devenerit, ab omnibus videtur." While writing the *Chronica*, Otto's half brother, Conrad III (d. 1152), reigned in Germany though he never attained the imperial title. The different tone regarding the fortunes of imperial power in Otto's second historical work, an account of the deeds of his nephew, Frederick Barbarossa, continues to fascinate those who study him. See, e.g., Hans-Werner Goetz, *Das Geschichtsbild Ottos von Freising: Ein Beitrag zur historischen Vorstellungswelt und zur Geschichte des 12. Jahrhunderts*, Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 19 (Cologne: Böhlau, 1984), 275–99.

¹⁰² Cf. C. Stephen Jaeger, "Pessimism in the Twelfth-Century 'Renaissance,'" *Speculum* 78 (2003): 1151–83, at 1167, who claims that "[Otto] understands this trend as fulfilling the prophecy of Daniel

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where Otto lays out the theory of *translatio studii*, or translation of learning, which paralleled the east-west movement of the *translatio imperii*. The development of power and learning shared a strong geographical component. (Otto would later speak of a *translatio religionis* along similar lines.)¹⁰³ The center of learning, which Otto also traces back to Babylonia, now rested in Gaul and Spain.¹⁰⁴ Imperial power may have been declining, but it did so as the earthly power of the church increased (and did so at the expense of empire). More importantly, the mere fact that those living now can perceive the decline of empire shows that for Otto, knowledge cannot be said to have undergone a similar decline, if only because the course of events has allowed further historical understanding. Mutability and decline characterized his view of the secular world, but the spiritual and intellectual realms witnessed progress.¹⁰⁵

Greater historical insight granted to those with historical distance, and therefore a better ability to perceive God's plan for humanity—this was a perspective on the past that was to have a real future. The idea of an intellectual advance through history found its strongest voice, in terms of both insistence and influence, in the Calabrian monk Joachim of Fiore, whom scholars have long appreciated as a crucial figure in the theology of history and apocalyptic thought. Like Otto, Joachim believed that the world as known was nearing its end, but instead of awaiting the Last Judgment, his new Trinitarian-based historical scheme effectively drew “most of the final act of the drama back into time.”¹⁰⁶ It should come as no surprise, considering the exegetical tradition of Daniel 12.4 discussed thus far, that the notion of either a gradual increase in knowledge or some future period

that a proliferation of studies would mark the period of decline before the Last Judgment.” Jaeger insists that Otto understood the phrase *pertransibunt plurimi* to denote a “scurrying” or “inane busyness,” and to translate it as “many shall run to and fro” (from the King James Bible), but this particular meaning of *pertransibunt plurimi* was not part of the medieval Latin tradition. Rather, Otto sees *pertransibunt plurimi* in the Gregorian sense of the intellectual progress of successive generations, and at least this portion of Otto's prologue is less pessimistic than Jaeger claims. Cf. Funkenstein, *Heilsplan und natürliche Entwicklung*, 94–113; Goetz, *Das Geschichtsbild Ottos von Freising*, 133–34; and Verena Epp, “Ars und scientia in der Geschichtsschreibung des 12. Jahrhunderts,” in *Scientia und ars im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter*, ed. Ingrid Craemer-Ruegenberg and Andreas Speer, *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 22/2 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994), 829–45, at 839–40. On the (re)introduction of a geographical component to the *pertransibunt* of Dan. 12.4, see below on sixteenth-century Bible translations, p. 344.

¹⁰³ Otto of Freising, *Chronica* 7.prol, pp. 372–73.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 5.prol., p. 227. Otto borrows the statement that Abraham had transferred mathematical and astronomical knowledge from Babylon to Egypt from Josephus (*Antiquitates Judaicae* 1.16): see A. G. Jongkees, “*Translatio studii*: Les avatars d'un thème medieval,” in *Miscellanea mediaevalia in memoriam Jan Frederik Niermeyer* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1967), 41–51. The most famous statement of this movement comes from the prologue of Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligès*.

¹⁰⁵ Though it should be noted that Otto is not always consistent in clearly separating power and knowledge: cf. *Chronica* 1.prol., p. 8: “Et notandum, quod omnis humana potentia seu scientia ab oriente cepit et in occidente terminatur, uti per hoc rerum volubilitas ac defectus ostendatur. Quod in sequentibus Deo annuente plenius ostendemus.”

¹⁰⁶ The phrase is from Marjorie Reeves, “History and Prophecy in Medieval Thought,” *Medievalia et humanistica* 5 (1974): 51–75, at 59. The literature on Joachim is massive; in North America it has been spearheaded by Robert E. Lerner and Bernard McGinn. On Joachim and Dan. 12.4, now see Lerner, “*Pertransibunt plurimi*,” 19–22.

of *multiplex scientia* greatly supported Joachim's vision of history. He uses the passage at several key points in his writings, and one might even be tempted to see it as a linchpin in his own justification of his hermeneutic approach.¹⁰⁷

Joachim's fullest employment of Daniel 12.4 and its designation of the progression of spiritual understanding appears in his major work, the *Liber de concordia Novi ac Veteris Testamenti*, a historical concordance between the Old Testament and the history of the church (insofar as the latter was reflected in the book of Revelation). This work contains the fullest exposition of Joachim's tripartite division of history into different *status* based on the Trinity. Daniel 12.4 appears in the preface of the *Liber de concordia*, where Joachim reflects on the earlier exegetical tradition and lays out his justification as to why he is able to penetrate into mysteries hidden from the Fathers. Though this was by then a familiar refrain for medieval exegetes drawing on Daniel 12.4, Joachim's hermeneutic well surpassed the others in novelty. The argument is of course historical: these insights have come to Joachim himself, but the possibility of perceiving them could only be realized at this specific point in the world's development.¹⁰⁸ It is not so much that Joachim had received prophetic insight into the scriptures as that the world had progressed enough to unlock the secret of the concordance.¹⁰⁹

Joachim's reinterpretation of the visions of world empires in Daniel shows how this belief functioned in practice. The final book of the *Liber de concordia* was an extended spiritual exegesis on the Old Testament, with much attention given to the book of Daniel. In the often-referenced visions of Daniel (Daniel 2 and 7) that denoted the succession of world empires (the *translatio imperii* so important for Otto's philosophy of history), Joachim changes the standard scheme through the inclusion of lessons from the more recent past. In his reinterpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the alloyed statue, Joachim changes the scheme by grouping together the earlier empires of the Babylonians (Chaldeans), Medes, and Persians; allotting the next slots of silver and bronze to the Macedonian and Roman powers, respectively; and reserving the final, iron legs of the statue for the kingdom of the Saracens. Likewise, in Daniel's subsequent vision of the four beasts emerging from the sea, Joachim reserves the final beast to symbolize the Saracen people.¹¹⁰ Earlier exegetes were unable to interpret these visions in Daniel correctly

¹⁰⁷ Gian Luca Potestà, "Intelligentia scripturarum und Kritik des Prophetismus bei Joachim von Fiore," in *Neue Richtungen in der hoch- und spätmittelalterlichen Bibelexegese*, ed. Robert E. Lerner, Schriften des Historischen Kollegs, Kolloquien, 32 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), 95–119, at 109–12, does well to notice the importance of Dan. 12.4 in its Gregorian-progressivist sense for Joachim. Potestà states (111), "Nur eine vertiefte Untersuchung über die Verwendung von Dan 12,4 in der frühmittelalterlichen Theologie wird es ermöglichen, die Reichweite der Gregor-Lektüre Joachims richtig einzuschätzen."

¹⁰⁸ Joachim of Fiore, *Liber de concordia Novi ac Veteris Testamenti* praefatio, ed. E. Randolph Daniel, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society 73/8 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1983), 14; see also *Enchiridion super Apocalypsim*, ed. Edward Kilian Burger, Studies and Texts 78 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1986), 46.

¹⁰⁹ On Joachim's denial of prophetic status, see Potestà, "Intelligentia scripturarum und Kritik des Prophetismus," 105–9.

¹¹⁰ Joachim of Fiore, *Liber de concordia* 5.112 (for the fifth and last book of the *Liber de concordia* one must consult the Venetian facsimile edition of 1519, repr. Frankfurt: Minerva, 1964), fol. 128ra. Jerome had viewed this vision in exactly the same way as the statue in Dan. 2: *Commentarii in*

because the final piece of the puzzle—the Saracen kingdom, whose people Joachim sees as spreading like locusts—had not yet arrived onto the scene of history.¹¹¹

Daniel 12.4 not only supported Joachim's novel exegesis, it could also serve to support the idea of the third *status*, the age of the spirit, when the contemplative vocation of the monk would supersede that of the priest, and a new, perfect understanding, gained directly from the Holy Spirit, would transcend—though not contradict—the doctrines of scripture. Joachim claimed to know more about the transition to this third *status* because of its proximity in time. Indeed, when Joachim quoted the full verse of Daniel 12.4, the “appointed time” (*tempus statutum*) denoted Joachim's own day, when the sixth seal was about to be broken.¹¹² The imminent third *status* will witness increased spiritual understanding and the fruition of the intellectual progress contained in Daniel's prophecy: “In this third *status* all the mysteries will be laid bare and revealed to the faithful, for knowledge is increased through each age of the world, just as it is written, *pertransibunt. . .*”¹¹³ Though this transition was coming soon, Joachim still believed that Daniel 12.4 was a prophecy more aptly applied to his own time. In his last composition, the unfinished *Tractatus super quatuor Evangelia*, he equates each Gospel with a period in universal history. Joachim's own age is represented by the Gospel of Luke, an age that began with John the Baptist and will continue until the return of Elijah. It is characterized by the incremental increase in the teaching of the suckling church (*doctrina lactentis ecclesie*); there was no better way to express this than through the progress in divine knowledge foretold in Daniel 12.4.¹¹⁴

Danielem 2.2–8, pp. 838–44. Joachim, however, gives an altogether different set: the lioness is the synagogue of the Jews, the bear is the Roman people, the leopard is the various kingdoms of the Arians, and the fourth beast (*terribilis et dissimilis*) is the Saracen people.

¹¹¹ Joachim of Fiore, *Liber de concordia* 5.111, fol. 127rb: “Hanc statuum tam dissimilem tanquam multiplicem in metallis ita exposuerunt quidam patrum ut imperio Romano tanquam dominantanti regna omnia tribuerent ferrum. Non enim erat aliquid illo in tempore regnum Saracenorum, per quod iam pene et conteruntur quotidie aurum et argentum et aes, et ideo ut ego existimo, quod ex parte pro tempore predicabant: unde et aliqua opinando scripserunt, aliqua retractando emendaverunt: aliqua reliquerunt intacta exponenda singula in temporibus suis. Nos autem qui in fine sumus, multa possumus colligere de fine rerum, que latebant antiquos, dicente ut iam meminimus in hoc opere angelo Danieli: *pertransibunt plurimi et multiplex erit scientia*.” (The likening of the Saracen race to locusts, an allusion to Jer. 51.14, is at fol. 127va.) The phrase “que latebant antiquos” does not appear in the Venetian edition but is included by Potestà, “*Intelligentia scripturarum und Kritik des Prophetismus*,” 109 n. 45, where he seems to be drawing from Herbert Grundmann's famed Arbeitsedition of the *Liber de concordia*. On Joachim and the visions of Daniel, now see Whalen, *Dominion of God*, 116–17.

¹¹² Joachim of Fiore, *Liber de concordia* 5.118, fol. 133vb.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 5.67, fol. 96va: “Quod notandum quod in tertio statu nuda erunt mysteria et aperta fidelibus. Quia per singulas etates mundi multiplicatur scientia sicut scriptum est: *pertransibunt plurimi et multiplex erit scientia*.” See Lerner, “*Pertransibunt plurimi*,” 20.

¹¹⁴ Joachim of Fiore, *Tractatus super quatuor Evangelia*, ed. Francesco Santi, *Fonti per la Storia dell'Italia Medievale, Antiquitates*, 17 (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 2002), 7. Matthew reflected the time from Abraham to the Annunciation of the Lord. Luke, as stated, begins with John the Baptist and continues through the present. Mark will begin with Elijah's return and continue until the end of the world, and John's Gospel reflects the ineffable wisdom of the future. See Henry Mottu, *La manifestation de l'esprit selon Joachim de Fiore: Herméneutique et théologie de l'histoire d'après le Traité sur les quatre Évangiles* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1977), 148–51.

Joachim of Fiore's work represents the pinnacle in the use of Daniel 12.4 in its combined eschatological and progressive sense. Like many writers before him, he saw no difference between the two. In contrast to them, the novelty of his exegesis places him in a unique position among medieval thinkers drawing from Daniel 12.4. The popularity, and often notoriety, that his writings achieved after his death—due in large part to the advent of an order of contemplatives that he seemed to have predicted—was so important that it may have affected how theologians of the thirteenth century dealt with Daniel 12.4.¹¹⁵

DANIEL 12.4 ESTABLISHED IN THE UNIVERSITY

When, in the early 1180s, William of Tyre reflected on his educational experience at Paris decades earlier, he praised his various teachers and the manifold knowledge that they exuded.¹¹⁶ William is perhaps the most optimistic user of Daniel 12.4, one who felt that it referred to intellectual progress unfettered by any eschatological concern. But William's use of Daniel 12.4 would become less and less typical. The surprise in the story of Daniel 12.4 in the University of Paris in the thirteenth century is the eventual triumph of the Hieronymian interpretation denoting a diversity of opinions over the Gregorian idea of progress.

The Hieronymian interpretation, which played a deeply subordinate role from the ninth through the twelfth centuries, never lay completely dormant. As we have seen, in the ninth century it is to be found in the commentary tradition, and, indeed, if this study had been limited to biblical commentaries on Daniel, the influence of Jerome's reading of Daniel 12.4 would have been greatly overstated. By the late twelfth century, through the rising influence of the *Glossa ordinaria*, we can begin to see this commentary tradition steering the general interpretation of Daniel 12.4. On Daniel 12.4, the *Glossa* was wholly derived from Jerome's commentary.¹¹⁷ One of the first writers of the twelfth century to view Daniel 12.4

¹¹⁵ On Joachim's subsequent influence, see Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachimism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

¹¹⁶ William of Tyre, *Chronicon* 19.12, ed. R. B. C. Huygens, CCCM 63A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986), 881: "Horum omnium usque hodie in benedictione vivit memoria et permanet inclita recordatio, qui elucidaverunt scienciam et pertranseuntes fecerunt eam multiplicem, multos erudientes ad iusticiam in quibus perhenniter vivunt oblivionis dispendia non sensuri, quorum lumen quasi syderum secundum Danyelis sermonem, quo ait: *pertransibunt plurimi, et erit scientia multiplex*, et item: *fulgebunt iusti sicut firmamentum, et qui multos erudiunt ad iusticiam quasi stelle in perpetuas eternitates* (Dan. 12.3)." William is one of the several advocates of Dan. 12.4 as intellectual progress to also incorporate Dan. 12.3, which praises the learned (*docti*), though William changes this to the just (*iusti*); cf. Matt. 13.43. See Epp, "Ars und scientia in der Geschichtsschreibung des 12. Jahrhunderts," 844–45. Jerome, *Commentarii in Daniele* 4, p. 938, saw Dan. 12.3 as an affirmation of the superiority of "learned sanctity" (*erudita sanctitas*) over "saintly rusticity" (*sancta rusticitas*).

¹¹⁷ *Biblia Latina cum glossa ordinaria: Facsimile Reprint of the Editio princeps of 1480/81*, 4 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), 3:349. On the attribution of the gloss on Daniel to Gilbertus Universalis (as indicated in Saint-Omer, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 220, fol. 29v), see Beryl Smalley, "Gilbertus Universalis, Bishop of London (1128–34), and the Problem of the *Glossa ordinaria*," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 7 (1935): 235–62, and more recently, Courtray, "La réception du *Commentaire sur Daniel* de Jérôme," 151–65. For Haimo of Auxerre's influence, see above, n. 60.

in the Hieronymian way was Isaac of Stella, who used it at the beginning of a sermon on the multiple meanings of scripture.¹¹⁸

For a time in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, a single interpretation of Daniel 12.4 does not seem to have been dominant. It became such a frequently used expression that writers felt little need to explain it further when quoting it. Some stuck to a Gregorian interpretation, some preferred to follow Jerome, and a few used Daniel 12.4 with enough ambiguity to allow for either reading.¹¹⁹ The ubiquitous *Historia scholastica* of Peter Comestor takes an interesting tack on the passage. Though very brief, his statement was influential for later writers. Peter sees *multiplex erit scientia* in Daniel 12.4 simply as an indication that the matter should be left to posterity to figure out.¹²⁰ This is at the very least a gesture towards a progressive interpretation, though it is not an incremental progress. One may be tempted to see Comestor here attempting to reconcile the two traditions.¹²¹

Jacques de Vitry cited Daniel 12.4 twice, employing in both cases the Hieronymian reading. In his famous vita of the beguine Mary d'Oignies, near his detailed account of Mary's death, Jacques claims that Mary had made additional predictions of future events, which he will not relate at present but will record in writing so that those weak in belief may later have verification.¹²² Some years later, in a sermon specifically intended for scholars, Jacques warns young intellectuals against seeking to know everything. In this vein, Jacques is reminiscent of the Cistercians a century earlier, albeit with a different view of Daniel 12.4. He closes his words for knowledge seekers with cautionary tales, including some brief

¹¹⁸ Isaac of Stella, *Sermo* 16, ed. Anselm Hoste, Sources Chrétiennes 130 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967), 294.

¹¹⁹ In two of the instances in which Innocent III quotes Dan. 12.4, he stresses the secrecy involved in God's mysteries: *Registrum* 6.193, ed. O. Hageneder et al., *Die Register Innocenz' III.* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, et alibi, 1964–), 6:321; and *De sacro altaris mysterio* 5.16, PL 217:897. That he ultimately understood the passage in the Hieronymian sense becomes clear from his *Sermo in circumcissione Domini*, PL 217:470, where he supplies *sententia* in place of *scientia*.

¹²⁰ Peter Comestor, *Historia scholastica*, PL 198:1465: "Tu autem, Daniel, signa librum, id est scribe mysteria, sed non expone. Pertransibunt plurimi, et multiplex erit scientia. Quasi diceret: Relinque posteris materiam exercitii." For the unparalleled diffusion of this work, see Agneta Sylwan's introduction in *Historia scholastica: Liber Genesis*, CCCM 191 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), xxxiii. Peter of Poitiers, Hugh of Saint-Cher, and Jean Michaelis all draw from Comestor here. On the last, see below, p. 000.

¹²¹ Though the drive to harmonize divergent interpretations of Dan. 12.4 cannot be said to have been as strong as in the cases studied by Buc, *L'ambiguïté du Livre*, 40–49 and passim.

¹²² Drawing on the full verse of Dan. 12.4, he states that his silence about these predictions will forestall any confusion as to what Mary's yet-unfulfilled prophecies might mean: Jacques de Vitry, *Vita Mariae Oigniacensis* 106, *Acta sanctorum* (henceforth AASS), Jun., 4 (Antwerp: Petrus Jacobs, 1707), 665A: "Quaedam autem alicui nostrum secreto dixit, quae post mortem ejus debebant accidere, sicut Spiritu sancto revelante et promittente cognovimus. Quae ita propter scandalum infirmorum subjunximus, quod cum evenerint, de facili ex scriptura possint perpendi. Interim vero sermones signavimus, et libenter clausimus, quia forte transibunt plurimi, et multiplex erit scientia. Quidam autem, quod Deus reservat ad commodum posterorum, nisi statim viderint evenire, incipiant murmurare, dicentes cum Judaeis: *Manda remanda, expecta reexpecta* (Isa. 28.10). Quaedam autem jam vidimus accidisse . . . reliqua certissime expectamus ventura." *Multiplex scientia* here denotes a negative variety of opinions.

exempla for which his sermons are best known. An overcurious fox persists in pestering a mule about his lineage, only to receive a swift and fatal kick when the angry mule directs the fox to examine his horseshoe for further information on his pedigree. Citations from several authorities warning against the pursuit of the unknowable are followed with: “*Pertransibunt plurimi et multiplex erit scientia*; but one ought to read through (*pertransire*) many things without scrutinizing each of them, lest we resemble that yokel who dropped his axe from a bridge into a river and then proceeded to wait there until all the water had passed in order to retrieve it” (an image taken from Horace). Jacques concludes: “And so, knowledge is often followed by more knowledge, opinions by more opinions, and books by more books.”¹²³ Attempting to master too much is to be avoided. The thrust of the sermon is perhaps best reflected in one of Jacques’s several quotations from Ecclesiastes (always a reliable source for knowledge’s downside): “God made man right, but man has entangled himself with infinite questions.”¹²⁴

The towering mendicant masters of the mid-thirteenth century employed the Hieronymian interpretation of Daniel 12.4. Albertus Magnus utilized it in his own commentary on Daniel, but also earlier in his commentary on Peter Lombard’s *Sentences*. As he sought to determine Jacob’s guilt for impersonating Esau, Albertus noted that Jacob was not acting on his own but was rather guided by the Holy Spirit, who can often convey many different senses in a single phrase.¹²⁵

Albertus’s student, Thomas Aquinas, used Daniel 12.4 only once in his entire corpus, but he cited it prominently as the prime authority to justify the various hermeneutic modes of biblical interpretation. In the earliest of his quodlibets, on whether any given words of scripture may contain multiple meanings—that is, whether there were senses in which scripture was to be understood beyond the literal—Daniel 12.4 is Thomas’s first piece of evidence in support of this position, which he ultimately adopts.¹²⁶ The spiritual sense of scripture is valid as long as it

¹²³ Jacques de Vitry, *Sermones vulgares* (Sermo 16, *Ad scholares*), ed. Jean-Baptiste Pitra, *Analecta novissima spicilegii Solesmensis: Altera continuatio*, 2 vols. (Paris: Typis Tusculanis, 1885–88), 2:372: “In Proverb. 25(27): *Perscrutator majestatis, opprimetur a gloria*. Hieronymus: ‘Stultum est de eo sollicitum esse, quod sine periculo nescitur.’ [PL 30:124] ‘Mitte arcana Dei coelumque inquirere quid sit.’ [*Disticha Catonis* 1.2] Teste autem Daniele 12(4): *Pertransibunt multi et multiplex erit scientia*. Unde multa pertransire oportet, et non de omnibus inquirere, ne similes simus cuidam rustico de cujus manu securis cecidit in aquam. Qui caepit super pontem expectare, donec tota transiret aqua. ‘Rusticus expectat, dum defluat amnis, at ille / labitur in omne volubile aevum.’ [Horace, *Epist.* 1.2.41] Ita scientia scientiae, opinioniones opinionibus, et libri libris saepe succedunt.” None of these quotations are identified in Pitra’s edition.

¹²⁴ Eccles. 7.30. Jacques also cites Eccles. 7.1, 7.26, and 12.12.

¹²⁵ Albertus Magnus, *Commentarium in IV libros Sententiarum* 3.38.9, ed. Auguste Borgnet, *Alberti Magni opera omnia*, 38 vols. (Paris: Vivès, 1890–95), 28:726: “Licet autem intellectus hominis per se non sit sufficiens ad hoc quod in una locutione ponat plures sensus simul et semel, tamen Spiritus sanctus semper fecit et faciet, ut in sermonibus suis *pertranseant plurimi, et multiplex sit scientia*.” Cf. *In Daniele prophetam*, *ibid.*, 18:610–11.

¹²⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones quodlibetales* 7.6.14, in *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII P. M. edita* (Rome: Ex Typographia Polyglotta S. C. de Propaganda Fide, 1882–), 25/1:28: “Auctor autem sacre scripture, scilicet Spiritus Sanctus, non solum est auctor verborum, sed etiam est auctor rerum, unde non solum verba potest accommodare ad aliquid significandum, sed etiam res potest disponere in figuram alterius; et secundum hoc in sacra scriptura manifestatur veritas dupliciter: uno modo secundum quod res significantur per verba, et in hoc consistit sensus

stems from the literal-historical sense. The text that many will read through is no longer limited to Daniel's last vision—as it was for Jerome—but extends to the entire field of scripture.

This idea to use Daniel 12.4 in discussions of biblical hermeneutics is developed further by Bonaventure. In two texts Bonaventure describes the complexity of the Bible and its multiplicity of interpretations (*theoriae*) through metaphor. Scripture is the sea, not only in the depth of its mysteries but in the multiplicity of its senses: just as the sea is composed of diverse currents, so does one letter of scripture contain multiple meanings (*multiplex sententia*).¹²⁷ At another point, Bonaventure compares the multiple theories of scripture to the nearly infinite refractions of light rays in a mirror.¹²⁸ Thus scripture is also a mirror. Gone is any reminiscence of Daniel 12.4 as referring to a singular truth towards which humanity progresses; interpretations, meanings, and opinions are infinite.

In the controversies about the coming of the Antichrist at the end of the thirteenth century, Daniel 12.4 remained at the forefront. For the Catalonian physician-turned-apocalypticist, Arnau de Vilanova, Daniel 12.4 was a favorite passage, always cited to denote a multiplicity of meanings, but often also joined to the claim that inspired individuals could uncover the secrets of scripture.¹²⁹ In his Apocalypse commentary, which began with a general reflection on Daniel 12.4, Arnau first admits that this verse applies to all of scripture, but he continues with the observation that, while exegetes may claim that various interpretations are equally valid, God chooses when and how to make the chief meaning (*sensus principalis*) known.¹³⁰ John of Paris, whose Antichrist treatise was written to

litteralis . . . sed sensus spiritualis semper fundatur super litteralem et procedit ex eo, unde ex hoc quod sacra scriptura exponitur litteraliter et spiritualiter, non est in ipsa aliqua multiplicitas.” On the dating of this text to ca. 1256, see Leonard Boyle, “The Quodlibets of St. Thomas and Pastoral Care,” *The Thomist* 38 (1974): 232–56, at 237–39. Cf. Isaac of Stella, above, n. 118.

¹²⁷ Bonaventure, *Collationes de septem donis Spiritus Sancti* 4.15, in *Sancti Bonaventurae opera omnia*, 10 vols. (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1882–1902), 5:476: “Secundo comparatur sacra scriptura aquae maris propter multiformitatem sensuum. In mari sunt diversae scaturitiones ita in sacra scriptura in una littera est multiplex sententia. Unde in Daniele: *pertransibunt*. . . .”

¹²⁸ Bonaventure, *Collationes in Hexaëmeron* 15.10, *ibid.*, 5:400. Taking the argument one step further, Bonaventure also compares the interpretations to the intermediate angles between a right and obtuse angle. The edition of Ferdinand Delorme, *Bibliotheca Franciscana scholastica medii aevi* 8 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1934), contains a much-abbreviated text, including this particular part (p. 172). On the two redactions, see Joseph Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*, trans. Zachary Hayes (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989; original German ed., 1959), 4–6.

¹²⁹ Arnau de Vilanova, *De tempore adventus Antichristi*, ed. Heinrich Finke, *Aus den Tagen Bonifaz VIII.: Funde und Forschungen*, Vorreformationsgeschichtliche Forschungen 2 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1902), cxlv–cxlvi. Arnau's citations of Dan. 12.4 are identified by Gian Luca Potestà, “Dall'annuncio dell'Anticristo all'attesa del Pastore Angelico: Gli scritti di Arnaldo di Villanova nel codice dell'Archivio Generale dei Carmelitani,” *Arxiu de textos catalans antics* 13 (1994): 287–344, at 314 n. 104, who notes how Arnau uses the passage in a sense different from Joachim of Fiore. Cf. Lerner, “*Pertransibunt plurimi*,” 22–24.

¹³⁰ Arnau de Vilanova, *Expositio super Apocalypsi*, ed. Joachim Carreras i Artau et al., *Corpus philosophorum medii aevi, Scripta spiritualia*, 1 (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 1971), 1–3: “Est etiam una de causis praedictae multiplicatis diversitas finis vel intentionis, propter quam auctor

respond to Arnau's own, also led off with Daniel 12.4, but John disavows any prophetic gift and contents himself with gathering the testimonies of others.¹³¹

One final attestation around the turn of the fourteenth century, this time in a Daniel commentary probably written by a Provençal friar named Jean Michaelis, attempts to find common ground between the Hieronymian and Gregorian interpretations. Remarkably, this approach would appear to be unique in the entire medieval tradition of Daniel 12.4.¹³² He first cites Jerome's explanation of the passage directly, follows with Comestor's remark that the prophecy was to be left to posterity, and closes with Gregory's statement that heavenly knowledge increases the closer the world reaches its end.¹³³ The strict meaning of *multiplex scientia* here would seem to be a variety of interpretations—but the correct interpretation becomes evident at some future time. Jean's commentary shows how the interpretations of Jerome and Gregory were not polar opposites and how Comestor could help to serve as a bridge between the two. Any close reader of Jerome's commentary would have picked up on a potential progressive element of the passage by reading the associated passages from Revelation on the sealed book. What is surprising is that more writers—at least in the commentary tradition—did not attempt to reconcile the readings.

How to explain this triumph of the Hieronymian interpretation of *multiplex scientia* in the universities of the thirteenth century? Jerome and Gregory both enjoyed the highest regard throughout the Middle Ages, and it is difficult to believe that one was endowed with more authority than the other. But Jerome wrote a full commentary on the book of Daniel, whereas Gregory did not, and the heavy reliance on Jerome in the commentary tradition, and most importantly,

visionum dictarum, scilicet Deus, dat intellectum earum: ipse enim qui claudit et aperit quando et quantum vult."

¹³¹ John of Paris, *De Antichristo*, ed. Sara Beth Peters Clark, "The *Tractatus de Antichristo* of John of Paris" (PhD dissertation, Cornell University, 1981), 24.

¹³² A commentary attributed to Remigius of Auxerre did gloss Dan. 12.4 with both interpretations but apparently made no attempt to reconcile them: see above, n. 63.

¹³³ Jean Michaelis (?), *In Daniele expositio*, ed. Stanislaus Eduard Fretté and Paul Maré, *Thomae Aquinatis opera omnia*, 34 vols. (Paris: Vivès, 1874–89), 31:269: "Unde sequitur: *pertransibunt plurimi et multiplex erit scientia*. Hieronymus, pertransibunt, idest percurrent libros; et transient historias propter multitudinem lectionum. Vult ergo dicere Angelus prophetae: scribe quidem mysteria: sed non exponas, ut posteris exercitii materiam relinuas; ut dicit Gregorius hom. iv super Ezechielem secundae partis: 'quanto mundus ad extremitatem ducitur, tanto nobis aeternae scientiae aditus largius aperitur.'" Régis Courtray and Mark Zier follow Spicq's identification of Jean de Murrovalle as the author of this commentary, which stems from the attribution in Paris, BnF lat. 366, fols. 66r–89r, to a Johannes M. of the Friars Minor: Ceslas Spicq, *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'exégèse latine au moyen âge*, Bibliothèque Thomiste 26 (Paris: J. Vrin, 1944), 325; see Stegmüller no. 4820. But another manuscript (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, MS Conv. soppr. 451, fol. 39r) attributes it to a "fratre . . . Michaelis de ordine fratrum servorum" whom Stegmüller (no. 4801) identifies as Jean Michaelis, and who, unlike Jean de Murrovalle, wrote a number of other biblical commentaries. Scholars have pushed Jean Michaelis's activity from the late fifteenth century (Stegmüller) back to ca. 1300 on the basis of manuscripts. See, e.g., Aquilin Emmen, "Jean Michaelis O.F.M. et son Commentaire du troisième livre des *Sentences* (vers 1292): Identification du ms. Vatican, Chigi B.VI.95," *Archivum Franciscanum historicum* 59 (1966): 38–84. While Jean de Murrovalle served as one of Olivi's *censores* in 1284 and later became minister general of the order, Jean Michaelis, the more likely candidate, was perhaps one of Olivi's colleagues at Montpellier.

in the *Glossa ordinaria*, was probably the decisive factor. In the long tradition of interpretation of Daniel 12.4, one of the most important voices is not found among the many authors known to us by name but rather in the anonymous compiler(s) of the *Glossa ordinaria* in the early twelfth century—who, by choosing to gloss Daniel 12.4 with Jerome, and not Gregory, set the course for how this passage would be treated by the majority of theologians of the later Middle Ages up through the Reformation.¹³⁴ Thus, the interpretive trajectory of Daniel 12.4 provides insight into the implications of the reorganization of knowledge into standardized textbooks.

If a secondary explanation is sought, by the thirteenth century, Daniel 12.4 might have come more and more to be associated with Joachimite thought. Aquinas and Bonaventure were both cognizant of Joachim's influence on historical theology and would have wanted to downplay any scriptural passage that could be construed as a justification for Joachim's third *status*.¹³⁵ The fact that the most prominent Joachimite writer of his time, Peter John Olivi, was the only writer in the late thirteenth century to employ the Gregorian interpretation would seem to support this claim. Towards the end of his massive Apocalypse commentary, Olivi refers directly to Gregory's *Moralia in Job* while quoting Daniel 12.4; he is sure to incorporate Gregory's statements about the increase in *superna scientia* as the world nears its end, while emphasizing the order not to seal the book in Apocalypse 22.10.¹³⁶

Finally, one might also consider the nature of the medieval university itself. For all the claims to universal knowledge that the universities made (and which their modern successors often continue to make), the nature of their organizational structure, and especially the program of study in the faculty of theology, often enough resulted in a multitude of varying opinions. Indeed, Daniel 12.4 appears as the incipit for several as the incipit for several Scholastic commentaries and treatises.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ For the evidence that Gilbertus Universalis compiled the *Glossa ordinaria* for Daniel, see above, n. 117.

¹³⁵ See Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*, esp. 104–18; and Bernard McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim of Fiore in the History of Western Thought* (New York: Macmillan, 1985), 209–19.

¹³⁶ Peter John Olivi, *Lectura super Apocalypsim*, Paris, BnF lat. 713, fol. 202r. Olivi pairs Gregory's quotation from the *Moralia* with another from *Dialogi* 4.41 on the transition of the world to come as the dawn. For Olivi's text, see Paolo Vian, "Tempo escatologico e tempo della chiesa: Pietro di Giovanni Olivi e i suoi censori," in *Sentimento del tempo e periodizzazione della storia nel medioevo*, Atti del Convegno del Centro italiano di studi sul basso medioevo—Accademia Tudertina e del Centro di studi sulla spiritualità medievale, n.s., 13 (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo 2000), 137–83, at 165. Alberto Forni has made a transcription of Paris, BnF lat. 713, available online at www.danteolivi.com. Warren Lewis, whose 1972 Tübingen dissertation has served as the only edition of Olivi's Apocalypse commentary, reportedly has a new critical edition forthcoming. On Olivi in general see David Burr, *Olivi's Peaceable Kingdom: A Reading of the Apocalypse Commentary* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); and now see Lerner, "Pertransibunt plurimi," 24–27, who brings in further manuscript evidence.

¹³⁷ E.g., a *Commentarius in magistrum Sententiarum*, attributed to Guibert of Tournai by Jean-François Foppens, *Bibliotheca Belgica*, 2 vols. (Brussels: Peter Foppens, 1739), 1:387. Dan. 12.4 also begins the interesting reflections that preface the late-thirteenth-century concordance attributed to Thomas of Sutton, *Liber de concordia librorum Thomae* (opusc. 65), in *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis*

One should not of course put too much weight on a preferred exegesis of a single biblical passage in the thought of the most prolific and influential masters of the thirteenth century. Bonaventure, despite his decision not to view Daniel 12.4 in the Gregorian sense, certainly embraced a progressive theology of history, which even contained some modified Joachite elements.¹³⁸ Thomas Aquinas, a much more virulent opponent of Joachism, also made several claims about the progressive discovery of knowledge.¹³⁹ But interestingly, when Aquinas came to discuss the nature of prophecy in his *Summa theologiae*, he begins with a statement on the increase of knowledge that he credits to Gregory, though Aquinas restricts this idea to foreknowledge of the Incarnation.¹⁴⁰ A progressive element exists in divine revelation only when the ages of dispensation (*ante legem, sub lege, sub gratia*) are compared with one another. Within each age, the prophetic message is subject to degeneration, not progress.¹⁴¹ This clarification seems directed against the Franciscan Spirituals, who were proclaiming the Joachite Eternal Evangel as Thomas was writing.

Both the multiple senses of scripture and progress in spiritual understanding are fundamental ideas to the Christian tradition and cannot fully be appreciated by examining a single line from the Old Testament.¹⁴² Subscription to one reading of Daniel 12.4 did not mean that one of these central ideas was being chosen over the other.

The use of Daniel 12.4, in either context, did not end with the fourteenth century. But the quantity of edited materials and digital tools make a foray beyond the thirteenth century much more difficult. We might expect that the use of

opera omnia, 25 vols. (Parma: Pietro Fiaccadori, 1852–73), 17:404, which attempts to harmonize the differences in Aquinas's *Sentences* commentary with the *Summa theologiae*. A later witness, Gerard of Bologna, begins his own *Summa* (written 1313–17): "Pertransibunt plurimi et multiplex erit scientia. Licet haec verba Danielis de multiforimi multiplicitate scientiae accipi potest, ad praesens tamen sumuntur pro illa multiplicitate scientiae, qua scientiarum scientia, sacra scilicet theologia, tum propter multipliciter quaestionum maxime inutilium et argumentorum ac etiam articularum, tum propter multipliciter diversarum opinionum multiplex dicitur," in Friedrich Stegmüller, *Repertorium commentariorum in Sententias Petri Lombardi*, 2 vols. (Würzburg: Schöningh, 1947), 1:112, no. 248.

¹³⁸ See above, n. 135.

¹³⁹ See Gilbert Dahan, "Ex imperfecto ad perfectum: Le progrès de la pensée humaine chez les théologiens du XIII^e siècle," in *Progrès, réaction, décadence dans l'Occident médiéval*, ed. Emmanuèle Baumgartner and Laurence Harf-Lancner, Publications Romanes et Françaises 231 (Geneva: Droz, 2003), 171–84.

¹⁴⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* IIaIIae, q. 174, a. 6, in *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis opera omnia iussu Leonis XIII*, 10:399–400: "Utrum gradus prophetiae varientur secundum temporis processum." See also Thomas's *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* 12 (*De prophetia*), a. 14, *ibid.*, 22/2:413–14: "Utrum Moyses fuerit excellentior aliis prophetis."

¹⁴¹ Thomas does allow for the possibility of continued prophecy after the apostles, but solely for human actions, and not to reveal any new teachings: *Summa theologiae* IIaIIae, q. 174, a. 6, 10:400: "Et singulis temporibus non defuerunt aliqui prophetiae spiritum habentes, non quidem ad novam doctrinam fidei depromendam, sed ad humanorum actuum directionem." Earlier in the same article, Thomas clarifies that, regarding the direction of human acts, "prophetica revelatio diversificata est, non secundum temporis processum, sed secundum conditionem negotiorum."

¹⁴² Henri de Lubac has written a massive multivolume work on the former theme alone (cited above, n. 31), and various scholars have dealt with the latter.

Daniel 12.4 fell along the lines already established, with Scholastics preferring the interpretation of Jerome and monastic exegetes (including those in the Joachite tradition) clinging to Gregory's promise of increasing spiritual understanding, though I suspect far more instances of the Hieronymian view.¹⁴³

FRANCIS BACON

By far the most attention given by scholars to the use of Daniel 12.4 has been in the context of Francis Bacon, who, in his own interpretation of the passage, adds a new layer to a tradition over a thousand years old by the time he is writing at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Bacon's view was certainly one of intellectual advancement, but one divorced of any notion of a gradual progression in favor of a specific progressive moment: his own time. Bacon thought that Daniel foretold the lightning advancements of his own age, at the dawn of the modern, and that the predicted boundary that had now been *pertransitus* was the shell of Old Europe. He first reflects on Daniel 12.4 in his 1605 treatise, *The Advancement of Learning*:

And this Proficiencie in Nauigation, and discoueries, may plant also an expectation of the furder proficiencie, and augmentation of all Scyences, because it may seeme they are ordained by God to be *Coeualls*, that is, to meete in one Age. For so the Prophet *Daniel*, speaking of the latter times, foretelleth: *Plurimi pertransibunt, & multiplex erit scientia*: as if the openness and through-passage of the world and the encrease of knowledge were appointed to be in the same ages, as we see it is already performed in great part, the learning of these latter times not much giuing place to the former two Periods or Returnes of learning, the one of the Græcians, the other of the Romanes.¹⁴⁴

While ultimately subscribing to a view that Daniel 12.4 predicted intellectual advancement, Bacon's geographical conception of the passage brought forth a

¹⁴³ See, e.g., Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla in Danielelem*, ed. François Feuarent et al., *Bibliorum sacrorum cum glossa ordinaria . . . collecta*, 6 vols. (Venice: Giunta, 1603), 4:1668: "*Plurimi pertransibunt*: legentes scilicet librum istum, aliqui malignantes, aliqui devote tractantes. *Et multiplex erit scientia*: id est expositio circa ista." (This commentary was completed in 1328; Stegmüller no. 5880.) Some later Hieronymian uses of Dan. 12.4 include Girolamo Savonarola, *Compendium revelationum*, ed. Angela Crucitti (Rome: Belardetti, 1974), 5 (Italian) and 131 (Latin); and Jerome Dungersheim's 1519 *Dialogus ad Lutherum*, ed. Ernst Ludwig Enders, *Dr. Martin Luther's Briefwechsel*, 18 vols. (Calw: Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1884–1932), 2:168–80 (no. 220a), at 174.

¹⁴⁴ Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning* 2.2.14 (1605), ed. Michael Kiernan, *The Oxford Francis Bacon 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 71. Bacon's fragmentary *Valerius Terminus* already contains the germ, though a slightly more tentative step, of the exposition in the quotation above: *Valerius Terminus: Of the Interpretation of Nature* 1 (1603?), ed. James Spedding et al., *Works of Francis Bacon*, 7 vols. (London: Longmans, 1887–1901), 3:220–21: "This is a thing which I cannot tell whether I may so plainly speak as truly conceive, that as all knowledge appeareth to be a plant of God's own planting, so it may seem the spreading and flourishing or at least the bearing and fructifying of this plant, by a providence of God, nay not only by a general providence but by a special prophecy, was appointed to this autumn of the world: for to my understanding it is not violent to the letter, and safe now after the event, so to interpret that place in the prophecy of Daniel where speaking of the latter times it is said, *many shall pass to and fro, and science shall be increased*; as if the opening of the world by navigation and commerce and the further discovery of knowledge should meet in one time or age." See, along similar lines, Bacon, *Redargutio philosophiarum* (1608), *ibid.*, 3:384.

new layer of interpretation. He clearly viewed the combination of navigational and scientific advancement in his own age to be the cornerstone of the Daniel prophecy. Credit for the exceptional originality of this reading of the passage does not, however, belong exclusively to Bacon. Rather, he was influenced by English Bible translations of the sixteenth century, which changed the way in which Daniel 12.4 was understood. With a greater concern for the original Hebrew, the vernacular translations not only (re)introduced a geographical component to Jerome's *pertransire*,¹⁴⁵ they also rendered *multiplex* as "increase" and thereby eliminated the ambiguity inherent in the concept of "manifold knowledge." These changes were enshrined in the King James Bible (1611), which translates Daniel 12.4: "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." It was the culmination of a series of translation efforts, not only in English, of the previous century.¹⁴⁶

In Bacon's monumental work on scientific advancement and method, the *Instauratio magna* of 1620, Daniel 12.4 appears on no less than the title page (Fig. 1). In this work, Bacon rebuilds the foundations of knowledge and challenges his readers to drop the assumptions and authorities that had accumulated over the centuries. One cannot read the preface of the *Instauratio magna* without feeling a sense of rupture: it calls for a complete epistemological break with the past and aims to rebuild knowledge from scratch on the basis of empirical observation.¹⁴⁷ Bacon was never able to complete his massive project of instauration. The 1620 edition contained only the general outline of the work and its second part, which Bacon provocatively titled the *Novum organum*, meant to

¹⁴⁵ This was much more in tune with Jerome's usual meaning for *pertransire* throughout the Vulgate. Even in the previous chapter in Daniel (11.40), Jerome had described the king of the north as entering, destroying, and "passing through" the lands of the south: "Ingredietur terras, et conteret, et pertransiet." Remember that Jerome's explanation for Dan. 12.4 included the qualification that the semantic field of *pertransire* could be extended to reading in certain cases. Sixteenth-century vernacular translations (see the following note) were themselves influenced by contemporary Latin translations that also reached back to the Hebrew: e.g., that of the Italian Hebraist Santi Pagnini (1528), whose parallel Hebrew-Latin text gave Dan. 12.4 as "discurrent multi et multiplicabitur scientia."

¹⁴⁶ The so-called Great Bible (1539), in this portion the work of Miles Coverdale (1535), was the first to render Dan. 12.4 in English as "many shal go aboute here and there, and the shal knowlege increase" (emphases added). This was the reading that would stick in later English versions, slightly modified to "many shall run to and from" by the Geneva Bible (1587), and from there to the King James Bible (1611). Cf. the Wycliffe Bible (ca. 1395): "ful many men schulen passe, and kunnyng schal be many fold," and the Douay-Reims Bible (1610): "many shall pass over, and knowledge shall be manifold." The key change for *pertransibunt* in Dan. 12.4 comes from the German Propheten Bibel (1529) / Zürcher Bibel (1531) translated by Zwingli and his colleagues: "Vil werdend hin und haer drinn umbgon, und mangerley meynung halten." Cf. Martin Luther (ca. 1530): "So werden viel drüber komen, vnd grossen verstand finden." The emphasis on the *increase* in knowledge, if not implied in Luther, could derive from French translation efforts, i.e., the Antwerp Bible (1528–30): "Plusieurs passeront outre: et la science est fort augmentee." For an overview of the English translations, see S. L. Greenslade, "English Versions of the Bible, 1525–1611," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963–70), 3:141–74, who notes Coverdale's reliance on the 1531 Zürcher Bibel for his translation of the major prophets (148).

¹⁴⁷ Francis Bacon, *Instauratio magna* prelatio (1620), ed. Graham Rees, The Oxford Francis Bacon 11 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), esp. 12.

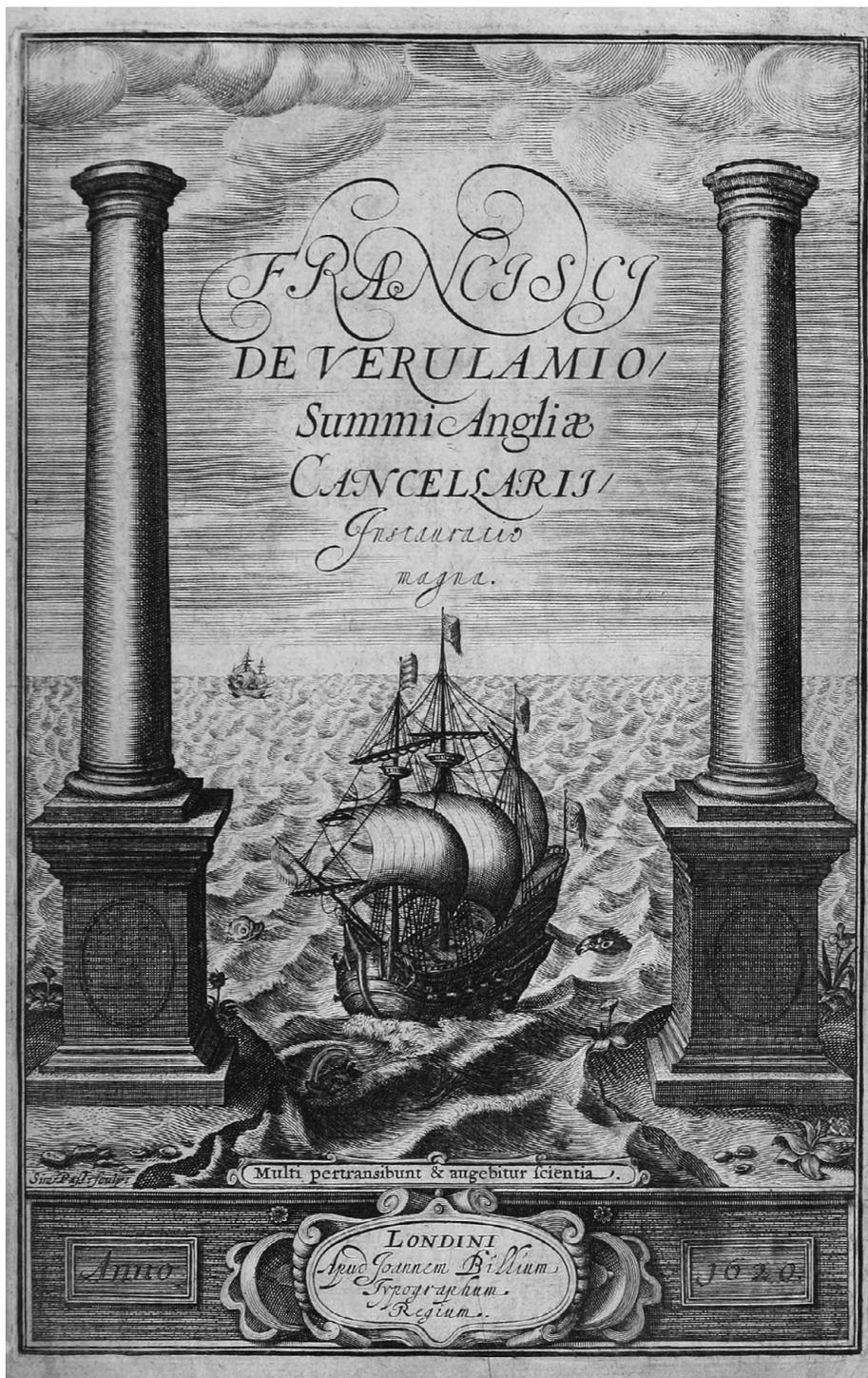


Fig. 1. Title page of Francis Bacon's *Instauratio magna* (1620).

evoke the corpus of Aristotelian texts commonly known as the *Organon*. The progress of knowledge advocated here is in no way gradual.

The image on the title page has a ship at the Pillars of Hercules. “Passing through” meant leaving the boundaries of the Mediterranean, exploring unknown parts of the globe, and gaining increased knowledge through observation and experimentation. Bacon modifies the passage in order to enable the concept of intellectual progress to ring forth: “Multi pertransibunt et *augebitur* scientia” (my italics), thus emphasizing the increase of knowledge, as the English Bible translations had it, instead of the concept of knowledge being made manifold or variable.¹⁴⁸

The prophecy appears again in aphorism 93 of Bacon’s *Novum organum* in the same geographical vein as in the quotation above. Bacon praises divine Providence, which had destined the exploration of the world (*pertransitus Mundi*) and the increases in the sciences (*augmenta Scientiarum*) to occur in the same age. The previous aphorism reveals a bit more about the relationship between navigation and knowledge. With a reference to Columbus’s attempts to persuade people of the new lands to be discovered across the Atlantic, Bacon tries to instill hope in those who may have been discouraged by his assault on earlier authorities. Columbus’s arguments were initially rejected but were later proved through experience, “and were the causes and beginnings of the greatest things.”¹⁴⁹

Bacon was not the last great English mind to ruminate on Daniel 12.4. Likely through his influence, English Puritans seized on the Daniel prophecy as an expression of their millennial expectations.¹⁵⁰ Later in the seventeenth century, none other than Isaac Newton would cite the passage at the beginning of his own efforts to find the divine code hidden in the book of Revelation:

Having searched after knowledge in the prophetique scriptures, I have thought my self bound to communicate it for the benefit of others. . . . I would not have any discouraged by the difficulty & ill success that men have hitherto met with in these attempts. This is nothing but what ought to have been, for it was revealed to Daniel that the prophesies concerning the last times should be *closed up & sealed untill the time of the end: but then the wise should understand, & knowledg should be increased.* Dan 12.4, 9, 10. And therefore the longer they have continued in obscurity, the more hopes there is that the time is at hand in which they are to be made manifest. If they are never to be understood, to what end did God reveale them? Certainly he did it for the edification of the church; & if so, then it is as certain that the church shall at length attain to the understanding thereof.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ In his 1623 expanded Latin version of the *Advancement of Learning*, the *De augmentis scientiarum*, which served as the first part of the *Instauratio magna*, Bacon changed *multiplex erit scientia* to *augebitur scientia*, as he had already done in the 1620 edition.

¹⁴⁹ Francis Bacon, *Novum organum* (aphorism 92), ed. Rees, *The Oxford Francis Bacon* 11, p. 150: “Quae rationes licet primo reiectae, postea tamen experimento probatae sunt, et rerum maximarum causae et initia fuerunt.”

¹⁵⁰ Charles Webster, *The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine, and Reform, 1626–1660* (London: Duckworth, 1975), esp. 6–12 and 19–27.

¹⁵¹ Isaac Newton, *Untitled Treatise on Revelation* (Jerusalem, National Library of Israel, Yahuda MS 1.1, fol. 1r), now available online at www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk.

Newton has assumed the part of posterity mentioned in Comestor and applied his genius to deciphering the prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse.¹⁵² Thankfully for science, he also found time for other intellectual pursuits.

* * *

To conclude with Bacon and Newton is appropriate, not only because they bring the interpretation back to a view of intellectual advancement, albeit of a slightly different type, but because they stand at the transition into the modern world, which supposedly fostered as one of its components the first theory of progress. For J. B. Bury, who sought to trace the historical development of this idea, Bacon was a harbinger of the modern idea of progress because he saw human utility as the end of knowledge in a way that had not been previously apparent.¹⁵³ Bury's 1921 work, which set the standard for what followed, presents the idea of progress as having arisen only in the seventeenth century, when philosophers openly challenged God's role in the advancement of humanity and the notion of progress without a fixed end point appeared.¹⁵⁴ Bury is therefore dismissive of the entire medieval period.¹⁵⁵

The reaction to Bury's work came in the wake of economic depression and another world war. By the 1960s, one could speak of a new orthodoxy that had supplanted Bury, which emphasized the indebtedness of the "modern" notion of progress to its Christian predecessor.¹⁵⁶ Foremost among its postwar proponents was the historian and philosopher Karl Löwith, who considered the theory of progress that developed in the Enlightenment to be thoroughly derivative of Christian beliefs, where the *eschaton* was merely replaced by the promise of some other eventual stage of perfection.¹⁵⁷ Taking up the gauntlet against Löwith and

¹⁵² In his treatise on Daniel and Revelation published posthumously, Newton uses Dan. 12.4 to emphasize the standard idea that the Gospel shall reach all nations before the end of the world; i.e., the geographical component taken from the King James Bible makes for another new interpretation: Isaac Newton, *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St John*, 2 vols. (London: Benjamin Smith, 1733), 2:250; see similarly in his *Drafts on the History of the Church* (Yahuda 15.7, fol. 180v). I cannot here pass up the opportunity to cite Voltaire's opinion of Newton's Apocalypse commentary, given in a 1739 addition to his *Lettres philosophiques* 17 (*Sur l'infini et sur la chronologie*), ed. L. Moland, in *Œuvres complètes de Voltaire*, 52 vols. (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1877–85), 22/1:148 n. 2: "Apparemment qu'il a voulu par ce commentaire consoler la race humaine de la supériorité qu'il avait sur elle."

¹⁵³ J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into Its Origin and Growth* (London: Macmillan, 1921), 50–63. Cf. Robert Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 1980), 112–15, whose analysis of Bacon is problematic.

¹⁵⁴ As Bury sees it, *Idea of Progress*, 7: "You may conceive civilisation as having gradually advanced in the past, but you have not got the idea of Progress until you go on to conceive that it is destined to advance indefinitely in the future."

¹⁵⁵ Only Roger Bacon is mentioned as standing on "an isolated pinnacle," though Bury quickly negates any contribution from this earlier Bacon by citing his overriding concern for the afterlife, his attention to astrology, and his belief in the imminence of the coming of the Antichrist: Bury, *Idea of Progress*, 24–28.

¹⁵⁶ For a fuller survey of the debate, see W. Warren Wagar, "Modern Views of the Origins of the Idea of Progress," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 28 (1967): 55–70.

¹⁵⁷ Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History: The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949). Löwith, a student of Heidegger and later professor at

others was Hans Blumenberg, who attempted to chart an independent, scientific, and therefore “legitimate,” origin for the idea of progress.¹⁵⁸ Bacon’s views of advancement, Providence, and even Daniel 12.4 have helped to fuel this debate about the extent to which the “secularization” of Christian apocalyptic formed the basis for the idea of progress.¹⁵⁹ This debate in turn has major implications for the general problem of when to locate modernity.¹⁶⁰ Bacon is understandably a pivotal figure for both Bury and Blumenberg. But what did Bacon mean when he joined his call to liberate humanity from authority with an appeal to prophecy—that is, a statement from the ultimate authority—on the advancement of knowledge? Was he merely paying lip service to the concept of Providence to play to the sentiments of his religiously minded patron, King James I, or was this his genuine belief? The complete title of Bacon’s first published use of Daniel 12.4 was, after all, *Of the Proficiency and Advancement of Learning, Divine and Human* (1605).¹⁶¹

If Bacon’s views on Providence and progress are open to debate, then what does that mean for the medievals? Did they believe in intellectual progress, or is this the wrong term to apply in a medieval context? Much depends on whether one plays by Bury’s stringent rules and insists that any notion of progress must necessarily be divorced from the providential and continue indefinitely. If Bacon and Newton are to be included among the “moderns,” then it is important to recognize that they still envisaged a scheme in which God operates in history. Their advancements may appear more significant to us than those of the Middle Ages, but that is of limited relevance when considering progress as a concept.

Christians have always believed in the basic historical progression of the revelation of God’s plan leading up to the Incarnation, the Old Testament providing the testimony that Christ would come. However, the further belief that spiritual knowledge would continue to increase *after* God’s most important intervention in history is what many understood Daniel 12.4 to mean. Though Gregory’s fullest demonstration of the progressive nature of the prophecy stood on examining

Heidelberg, wrote this important work—the English is the original—while in exile in the aftermath of World War II. While Bury traces the idea through time, Löwith adopts a reverse chronology, ending with the Bible. An elegant earlier challenge to Bury’s thesis that should be pointed out is Carl Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932). For these and other critiques, see Wagar, “Modern Views of the Origins of the Idea of Progress,” 62–67.

¹⁵⁸ Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert Wallace (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1983; original German ed., 1966).

¹⁵⁹ On the side of Blumenberg stands his translator, Robert Wallace, “Progress, Secularization and Modernity: The Löwith/Blumenberg Debate,” *New German Critique* 22 (1981): 63–79. Malcolm Bull, “On Making Ends Meet,” in *Apocalypse Theory and the Ends of the World*, ed. Malcolm Bull (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 1–17; and idem, *Seeing Things Hidden: Apocalypse, Vision, and Totality* (London: Verso, 1999), 116–24, leans towards Löwith’s view. Bull makes use of Dan. 12.4 and its appearance in Francis Bacon, though he sees the progressive view of Dan. 12.4 as originating with Joachim of Fiore (120–23).

¹⁶⁰ See Kathleen Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty: How Ideas of Feudalism and Secularization Govern the Politics of Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 77–102.

¹⁶¹ See Charles Whitney, *Francis Bacon and Modernity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), esp. 43–54.

spiritual progress up to the Incarnation, he clearly stressed that *multiplex erit scientia* also pertained to future developments. What is largely consistent in the thinking of those who employed Daniel 12.4 in the Gregorian sense is the belief that knowledge would increase *throughout* historical time, most importantly in the time between the Incarnation and the Last Judgment—the sixth age of the world, the era in which they found themselves living. God’s lessons for humanity did not end with the Crucifixion, or even with Pentecost, but would continue to unfold in subsequent events and discoveries.

Speculation on how the world would develop up to the Second Coming was a fertile area in medieval thought, not least because signs of the end times had many watchers. Because the book of Daniel was so closely considered alongside Revelation, and indeed, because many believed that the prophecy in question referred explicitly to the end times, *multiplex scientia* was seen as an attribute of the future. And in this respect a progressive element was latent even in Jerome’s exegesis of Daniel 12.4. By following his explanation of diverse interpretations with a mention of the sealed book in Apocalypse 5, Jerome left open the possibility for later writers to imagine that the variety of opinions prophesied would resolve into a singular truth at or near the end of time.

Many of our authors saw Daniel 12.4 as relating, at least initially, to divine knowledge. Some extended it to knowledge of all sorts. Most never distinguished between the two. By framing the question with a distinction between what belongs to human thought and endeavor, on the one hand, and what to divine revelation, on the other, we may have missed the point and may find ourselves far from medieval views, which saw both working in tandem.¹⁶²

CONTEXT, CONTENT, AND AMBIGUITY

Why does a single verse from the Old Testament turn out to yield such rich testimony of the intellectual culture at various points in the Middle Ages and beyond? First, its importance was assured by its placement in the book of Daniel, a book elusive in its mysteries, whose words yielded many interpretations.¹⁶³ Its location in the culminating chapter of Daniel, which told of future salvation and even gave numerical calculations as to when this would occur, secured it as an authority for those seeking to unlock the secrets of the future. Furthermore, these were words uttered to Daniel by an angel. The verse’s nature as prophecy rendered it exempt from being subject to multiple modes or senses of meaning: those drawing on Daniel 12.4 consistently sought to find in it a single meaning, even when that single

¹⁶² Étienne Gilson grasped this long ago: *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, trans. A. H. C. Downes (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1936; original French ed., 1932), 398. Even the first theorists of Christian history had to contemplate the paradox of God’s guiding of history while allowing for some measure of free will for its participants. See Luneau, *L’histoire du salut chez les pères*, 421–22.

¹⁶³ Hugh of Saint-Cher prefaced his Daniel commentary by noting the book’s difficulties: “Et etiam difficultas libri ostenditur, cum dicitur quod in eo est sapientia et scientia . . . *Pertransibunt plurimi, et multiplex erit scientia*, id est, propter difficultatem multi sic intelligent, et multi aliter”: *In Daniele*, in *Hugonis de Sancto Charo opera omnia in universum Vetus et Novum Testamentum*, 8 vols. (Venice: N. Pezzana, 1703), 5:145r.

meaning was a prediction of multiple meanings elsewhere. Additionally, the fact that this prophecy dealt with knowledge (*scientia*) made it a favorite for writers dealing with a host of epistemological issues and ensured that it would keep cropping up in the writings of medieval intellectuals and exegetes. The final, and most important, factor is its ambiguity, especially in Jerome's Vulgate translation. It was a verse that a reader of the Vulgate had to take a closer look at in order to make sure that one had understood it correctly. If one remained confused, then there was Jerome's explanation that it was one's very confusion that was therein predicted.

The tradition of Daniel 12.4 shows the strong debt owed to the two patristic giants, Jerome and Gregory, who established the outlines of how later writers would come to view the passage. Gregory's interpretation seems to have won more adherents prior to the thirteenth century. His view was often adopted by those optimistic about the learning or scientific advancements of their own age, whether in the ninth, twelfth, seventeenth, or later centuries. Comparison of the use of Daniel 12.4 during the two medieval "renaissances" suggests that churchmen in the ninth century had a tendency to apply the prophecy to contemporary issues of law, scholarship, etc., whereas those drawing from the passage in the twelfth century were often aiming to make more general speculations about universal history. A few of the key exegetes of the twelfth century drew direct contemporary significance from Daniel 12.4; the belief that their own time was a critical one in the history of salvation was emblematic of their theologies of history. The creative culmination of this view was Joachim of Fiore's belief that God's plan for humanity would not only become more intelligible with the passing of each generation but would lead to an extra earthly epoch in which intellectual advances would reach perfection.

Jerome's explanation that the *multiplex scientia* in Daniel 12.4 denoted a variety of meanings did not vanish. Its resurgence came at the beginning of the thirteenth century, in the university, the epicenter of intellectual debate, where a divinely predicted variety of opinions often held more value than the gradual progression towards a singular truth. This enabled the exploration of the mysteries of scripture, through the hermeneutic of the four senses, to continue without the complete dominance of the literal sense despite the fact that, in practice, the use of standardized texts and glosses often reduced the range of interpretation. The single most determinative factor in the thirteenth-century interpretation of Daniel 12.4 may have been the reliance on Jerome's commentary in the *Glossa ordinaria*.

While the Hieronymian interpretation came to dominate university discourse, the progressive view of Daniel 12.4 was too widespread to be forgotten, and it persevered to reemerge in the modern era, first as the expression of a tie between progress and prophecy (a role it had often played before) and then, much later, as a catchphrase for positivistic science. This last view was perhaps the one that most readily came to mind to the many scholars who "passed through" the staircase to Duke Humfrey's Library at Oxford's Bodleian and contemplated this enigmatic verse inscribed above the Benefactors' Tablet.

* * *

Each epoch must grapple with the intellectual and technological legacy of those preceding. A feeling of inferiority with respect to this legacy is one of the many

gulfs separating the premodern outlook from our own. Medievals of course believed in their superiority—or at least their fortune—in the most essential thing: that they had been born at a time in which their knowledge and acceptance of the Christian truth had opened up the possibility of eternal life.¹⁶⁴ But they never felt that they were smarter than Aristotle or more eloquent than Cicero. Only through additional accumulations could later generations hope to improve upon the edifice of knowledge.

Phrases that betray notions of progress especially benefit from analyses of their interpretation over time. When they change their meaning or emphasis from one writer to another, it is the very legacy of the past that is being evaluated with each reiteration. When Isaac Newton said that he had seen farther “by standing on the shoulders of giants,” he meant something slightly different from Bernard of Chartres, who said the same thing some five centuries earlier.¹⁶⁵ Another phrase along these lines, though with a much different trajectory from that of Daniel 12.4, considered truth to be the daughter of time: *Veritas filia temporis*. The saying is known to us through a fleeting reference from the second-century writer Aulus Gellius.¹⁶⁶ It passed unknown through the centuries until recovered by Italians in the sixteenth century. But soon thereafter it enjoyed a great vogue, appearing as a slogan on Mary Tudor’s seal and coinage and later employed by Francis Bacon.¹⁶⁷ Daniel 12.4 is to be distinguished from these and other phrases denoting intellectual progress because it retained the element of the providential. As the revealed Word, it was much more than a pithy or fitting statement about intellectual advancement; it was a prophecy. Therefore, its validity or truth was never in question for believers; only its meaning was open to ponder.

Were my analysis restricted to biblical commentaries on the book of Daniel, a significant portion of the Gregorian tradition on Daniel 12.4 would have escaped notice, and Jerome’s commentary would have appeared to dominate subsequent interpretations. But because biblical passages permeate all text and thought of the Middle Ages, the breakthrough with today’s new digital tools is that they allow one to shed the shackles of genre when exploring words, phrases, or quotations. Many passages—biblical, classical, or otherwise—could benefit from a similar analysis that traces changing interpretations over several centuries. Most will not

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Otto of Freising, *Chronica* 3.prol, pp. 130–31, where he asks why God had waited so long in history to save humanity (“cur universitatem gentium tamdiu tot retroactis seculis in errore perfidiae perire permisit”), though a few lines earlier Otto exempts “a few from the people of Israel” from the entire world deceived in error.

¹⁶⁵ See George Sarton, “Standing on the Shoulders of Giants,” *Isis* 24 (1935): 107–9.

¹⁶⁶ Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 12.11, ed. Carolus Hosius, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903), 2:46: “Alius quidam veterum poetarum, cuius nomen mihi nunc memoriae non est, veritatem temporis filiam esse dixit.”

¹⁶⁷ See Fritz Saxl, “*Veritas filia temporis*,” in *Philosophy and History: Essays Presented to Ernst Cassirer*, ed. Raymond Klibansky and H. J. Paton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), 197–222. The phrase was known to Leonardo da Vinci as well, who noted (Paris, Institut de France, MS 2183 [M], fol. 58v, ca. 1500) that “la verità sola fu figliola del tempo.” I have not found any evidence to support Chenu’s attribution of this expression to Bernard of Chartres, in his “Theology and the New Awareness of History,” 162. Indeed, see Paul Edward Dutton, “The Uncovering of the *Glosae super Platonem* of Bernard of Chartres,” *Mediaeval Studies* 46 (1984): 192–221, at 193 n. 12.

offer as rich a trajectory as Daniel 12.4, but today's digital tools make it much easier to find out.

Scholars in the coming years will come across references to Daniel 12.4 that have escaped my analysis or perhaps find greater significance in those not emphasized here. They will possess more sophisticated search tools and, more importantly, a larger textual corpus. On the latter point it bears repeating that the further my analysis reached into the later Middle Ages, the less I could rely on the digital databases currently available.¹⁶⁸ But we of the present need not leave the ground undisturbed for the better equipped textual archaeologists of the future. And, in this sense, with respect to these exegetical legacies of passages through the passage of time, the prophecy is once again fulfilled—*pertransibunt plurimi et multiplex erit scientia*.

APPENDIX

HANDLIST OF CITATIONS OF DANIEL 12.4(b), CA. 200–CA. 1300

With the exception of numbers 1–3, references are based on the Vulgate text.

1. Irenaeus of Lyon (d. ca. 202), *Adversus haereses* 4.26.1, Sources Chrétiennes 100/2:712.
2. Cyprian (d. 258), *Testimonia* 1.4, CSEL 3/1:42.
3. *Altercatio ecclesiae et synagogae* (saec. V), CCSL 69A:47.
4. Jerome (ca. 407), *Commentarii in Daniele* 4.12, CCSL 75A:938.
5. Primasius (ca. 540), *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* 2.5 and 3.10, CCSL 92:77 and 161.
6. Gregory I (579–95), *Moralia in Job* 9.11, CCSL 143:467.
Gregory I (591–93), *Homiliae in Hiezechielem prophetam* 2.4.12, CCSL 142:267–8.
7. Julian of Toledo (ca. 686), *De comprobatione sextae aetatis libri tres* 1.5, CCSL 115:152.
8. *Missale mixtum . . . dictum Mozarabes* (post-700), PL 85:748B, 878C, and 918B; PL 86:1219A.
9. Bede (ca. 721), *De tabernaculo* 1, CCSL 119A:19.
Bede (d. 735), *In Cantica canticorum* 2.3, CCSL 119B:232.
10. Ambrosius Autpertus (758–67), *Expositio in Apocalypsin* 10.22, CCCM 27A:857.
11. Beatus of Liébana (776–86), *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* 8.1, ed. E. Romero-Pose (Rome: Typis Officinae Polygraphicae, 1985), 2:226–27.
Beatus of Liébana / Eterius of Osma (ca. 785), *Adversus Elipandum libri duo* 1.131, CCCM 59:101.

¹⁶⁸ E.g., the *Patrologia Latina* ends with Innocent III. Thus, the remarks of Beryl Smalley, *Study of the Bible*, 264, are still somewhat valid today: “The *Patrologia latina* has acted as a path through the marsh. It has provided a modicum of printed matter, however shaky the edition and attributions may be. It comes to an end with Innocent III and the student has to find his own way.” For biblical commentaries, Stegmüller’s *Repertorium biblicum* (cited above, n. 63) provides a good starting point.

12. Hadrian I (793), *Epistola ad regem Carolum*, MGH Epp. 5:51–52.
13. Paschasius Radbertus (ante 831), *Expositio in Matheo* 1.prol., CCCM 56:4; also MGH Epp. 6:140.
Paschasius Radbertus (856), *Expositio in Lamentationes Hieremiae* 3.49–51, CCCM 85:210.
14. Hilduin of Saint-Denis (ca. 835), *Epistola ad cunctos fideles* (BHL 2174), MGH Epp. 5:336.
15. Walahfrid Strabo (840–42), *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum* 23, ed. A. L. Harting-Correa (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 136.
16. Hrabanus Maurus (842), *Commentaria in Ezechielem* 14.40, PL 110:905D.
Hrabanus Maurus (842–46), *Expositio super Danielem* (Karlsruhe, Landesbibliothek, MS Aug. perg. 208, fols. 59r–60v); Stegmüller no. 7057.
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