



The compatibility of Christ's ascension in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the theology of pre-advent judgment (Part 1)

La compatibilidad de la ascensión de Cristo
en la Epístola a los Hebreos y la teología del juicio
preadvenimiento (Parte 1)

Lalnuntluanga Ralte
Mizo Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Mizoram, Aizawl, India
mizoapologetics@gmail.com

Abstract

The Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of pre-advent investigative judgment has faced skepticism since the late 19th century, largely due to perceived conflicts with the Epistle to the Hebrews. This study endeavors to establish the doctrine's biblical foundation, predominantly found in the book of Daniel, while scrutinizing its compatibility with the New Testament. By analyzing texts in Daniel 7, 8, 9, and the explicit sequence in Revelation 14, this research provides compelling evidence for the concept of pre-advent judgment in the Bible. However, questions arise concerning the location of Jesus' post-ascension ministry in heaven, particularly in the context of "seated at the right hand of God". Despite potential conflicts suggested by this phrase, aspects such as intercessory ministry and High priest Christology appear to harmonize with the doctrine. While this article offers substantial support, a more detailed examination of their compatibility awaits part two of this study.

Keywords

Adventist theology – Pre-advent judgment – Hebrews – Sanctuary – New Testament

Resumen

La doctrina adventista del juicio investigador preadvenimiento se ha enfrentado al escepticismo desde finales del siglo XIX, en gran parte debido a los conflictos percibidos con la Epístola a los Hebreos. Este estudio busca establecer el fundamento bíblico de la doctrina, que se encuentra principalmente en el Libro de Daniel, mientras examina su compatibilidad con el Nuevo Testamento. Mediante el análisis de los textos de Daniel 7, 8, 9 y la secuencia explícita de Apocalipsis 14, esta investigación aporta pruebas convincentes del



concepto de juicio previo al advenimiento en la Biblia. Sin embargo, surgen dudas sobre la ubicación del ministerio de Jesús en el cielo tras la ascensión, en particular en el contexto de “sentado a la diestra de Dios”. A pesar de los posibles conflictos que sugiere esta frase, aspectos como el ministerio intercesor y la cristología del Sumo Sacerdote parecen armonizar con la doctrina. Aunque este artículo ofrece un apoyo sustancial, un examen más detallado de su compatibilidad aguarda la segunda parte de este estudio.

Palabras claves

Teología adventista – Juicio previo al advenimiento – Hebreos – Santuario – Nuevo Testamento

Introduction

One of the most significant occasions in the history of salvation is the ascension of Jesus.¹ Without Christ’s ascension, Jesus’ intercession and the *parousia* are impossible to understand. The doctrine of God is incomplete without it.² However, fortunately, there seems to be a lesser issue on the ascension of Christ because it is well established in the New Testament (John 2,17; Acts 1,1-2; 2,33; Phil 2,8.9; Rev 12,5). In support of this view, “the witness of the New Testament writings to the ascension of Christ is remarkable in its universality”, writes J. G. Davies.³ Therefore, it is not a surprise that “belief in the ascension was universal in the early church, both East and West”,⁴ and it is uncontested that early Christians believed in the theology of ascension. Today, however, the dis-

¹ The Bible provides stories of ascension to heaven. Three people are recorded to have ascended to heaven: Enoch (Gen 5,24; Heb 11,5); Elijah (2 Kgs 2,1-12); Jesus (Luke 24,51; Acts 1,9). Paul claimed that he ascended to heaven, but he is uncertain that he ascended to heaven physically or not (2 Cor 12,2-4). John ascended to heaven in the vision (Rev 4,1). There are accounts in which the throne in heaven is granted to humanity: Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel (Exod 24,9-11); Micaiah (1 Kgs 22,19-23; 2 Chr 18,18-21); Isaiah (Isa 6,1-13); and Ezekiel (Ezek 1,10). See James D. Tabor, “Ascent to Heaven”, *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. by David Noel Freedman, vol. 3 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 91-94.

² Brian K. Donne, “The significance of the ascension of Jesus Christ in the New Testament”, *Scottish Journal of Theology* 30 (1977): 567.

³ J. G. Davies, *He ascended into heaven: A study in the history of doctrine* (Cambridge, UK: James Clarke & Co., 2004), 45.

⁴ A. B Swete, *The ascended Christ* (London: 1910), 1, quoted in Norman R. Gulley, “Ascension of Christ”, in ABD, ed. by David Noel Freedman, vol. 1 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 473.

cussion of this doctrine has been disregarded due to several questions in cosmology, criticism of the Bible, and secularization.⁵ In light of these considerations, Felix Cortez has done tremendous work regarding the ascension of Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews.⁶

However, although interest in ascension-related research has recently increased, research addressing the theological consistency between ascension theology and the pre-advent judgment in the Book of Daniel is being ignored. As a result, for the Seventh-day Adventist church who believes that the 2300 days prophecy (Dan 8,14) in Daniel was fulfilled in the year 1844 and that Christ's heavenly ministry is predicted in the Book of Daniel, it could become a theological issue.⁷ The issue seems to spring up from the two texts –Hebrews 6,19.20 and Hebrews 9,12.

Hebrew 6,19.20 seem to show that Jesus as a High priest entered within the veil, in which, the nuance concerning the veil occurs. The question arises: Does the expression “within the veil” refer to the Most Holy Place or the Holy Place? In Hebrew 9,12, τὰ ἅγια⁸ has been translated variously.⁹ Consequently, one will ask, whether τὰ ἅγια is the Most Holy

⁵ Gulley, “Ascension of Christ”, 1:473.

⁶ Felix H. Cortez, “The anchor of the soul that enters within the veil: The ascension of the ‘Son’ in the Letter to the Hebrews” (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2008).

⁷ Daniel 8,14 contains 2300 year-day prophecy, which, according to the calculation ends at 1844 that proceeds the pre-advent judgment. See William Shea, “Supplementary evidence in support of 457 B.C. as a starting date for 2300 day-years of Daniel 8:14”, *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 12, no. 1 (Spring, 2001): 89–96. See also Roy E. Gane, “Christ’s heavenly sanctuary ministry”, *Perspective Digest* 15, no. 3 (2010). Daniel 8,14 says: “And he said unto me, ‘For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed’” (The version of the Bible is NKJV). Ezekiel 4,6 explained the interpretation of the prophetic time known as the year-day principle, in which, one day is equal to one year. Thus, the prophecy of Dan 8,14 became 2300 years. According to Daniel 9,25-27, the prophecy began with King Artaxerxes giving the command to rebuild Jerusalem. Hence, the 2300 year-day prophetic timeframe came to an end at 1844 when counted from the day the order to rebuild Jerusalem was given.

⁸ Τὰ ἅγια is the phrase used for sanctuary, holy place, holy of holies, most holy place, etc., based on the version of the Bible. See Barbara Friberg, Timothy Friberg, and Kurt Aland, in *Analytical Greek New Testament: Greek Text Analysis* (Cedar Hill, TX: Silver Mountain Software, 2001), s. v. “Hebrews 9,12.”

⁹ American King James Version, Emphasized Bible, King James 2000 version, New Heart English Bible: Aramaic Names New Testament Edition and World English Bible translated as “the holy place”; Darby Bible, Modern Literal Version, Voice in the Wilderness 2008 Bible, translated

place or the Holy place. Or can there be another interpretation of τὰ ἅγια? The Seventh-day Adventists believe that Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary began in the Most Holy Place in the year 1844 to start the investigative judgment or the pre-advent judgment, notwithstanding all the questions that have been raised.¹⁰ Such an interpretation of the Book of Daniel seems to conflict with the idea presented by the author of Epistle to the Hebrews that Jesus went into the Most Holy Place soon after His ascension.¹¹ However, if one accepts the unity and harmony of the Scriptures, both Old and New, then it may be profitable to examine the seemingly conflicting verses to see if there is a harmony that has been overlooked. Therefore, it is not surprising to attempt to harmonize the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary in the Book of Daniel and the ascension of Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews.¹²

One may easily agree that at His ascension, Jesus went to heaven and became a high priest on behalf of humanity. This truth is based on the Epistle to the Hebrews which claims that Jesus became a high priest for

as “the holy of holies”; English Majority Text version 2011 Edition, the Logos Bible, Modern King James Version, and Smith's Literal Translation translated as the “Holies”; New English Translation, Unlocked Literal Bible, New International Version and New King James Version translated as “the Most holy place”; Open English Bible translated as “Sanctuary”; and Young Literal version translated as “the holy places”.

¹⁰ Daniel 7,9-13; 8,14; 9,25-27.

¹¹ According to the interpretation of Daniel 8,14, Jesus entered the Most Holy place only by 1844 and not in His ascension. See Shea, “Supplementary evidence”, *JATS* 12, no 1, (Spring, 2001): 89-96.

¹² Mostly, the studies on Christ ascension and His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary are narrowed down to the study of Daniel and the Epistle to the Hebrews separately; e.g., Felix Cortez wrote a dissertation which is a major work on the Epistle to the Hebrews concerning Christ Ascension. See Cortez, “The anchor of the soul that enters within the veil”: The ascension of the ‘Son’ in the Letter to the Hebrews”; Gerhard F. Hasel, “The ‘Little Horn’, the saints, and the sanctuary in Daniel 8”, in *The sanctuary and the atonement: Biblical, historical and theological studies*, ed. by Arnold V. Wallenkampf and W. Richard Leshner (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1981), 177, is the brief studies of Daniel 8; William Shea, “The relationship between the prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9”, in *Sanctuary and the atonement: Biblical, historical and theological studies*, ed. by Arnold V. Wallenkampf and W. Richard Leshner (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1981), 228, is another material for the Book of Daniel. However, the intertextuality of Daniel and the Epistle to the Hebrews is rarely found.

us as an advocate in the heavenly sanctuary.¹³ However, the problem remains as to which compartment of the heavenly sanctuary Jesus entered at His ascension. Did He enter the second compartment known as the Most Holy place or the first compartment known as the Holy place? Or, is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews referring to the whole sanctuary without making any specific mention of the compartments of the heavenly sanctuary?

In light of the aforementioned issues, a biblical definition of investigative judgment will be sought in the Old and New Testaments in the first part of this article. The second part of this article will attempt to find a solution to the question as to which compartment of the heavenly sanctuary did Jesus enter into at His ascension and the meaning of the two texts—Hebrews 6,19 and 9,12. The question of whether “the ascension theology” in the Epistle to the Hebrews and “the ministry of Christ” indicated in the Book of Daniel are compatible will be resolved from the conclusions. The study is delimited in the following ways. First, the study is mostly focused on Hebrews 6 and 9.¹⁴ Thus, other varieties of ascension texts are not included. Second, the study of the investigative judgment in the Book of Daniel is only examined in connection with the underlying issues on Christ's ascension and His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.¹⁵ Thus, the study will be centered on the compatibility of the ascension theology in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the heavenly ministry of Christ in the Book of Daniel.

¹³ Hebrews 3,1; 4,14; 7,25; 8,2; 9,24; 9,12; 10,12.

¹⁴ The study mainly highlight on Hebrews 6,19 which expounded on “Christ within the veil” and Hebrews 9,12, which described that Christ entered to τὰ ἅγια (see earlier footnote) once and for all. Christ's ascension theology was mentioned in the introduction part, in which, the disciples saw Jesus ascended to heaven (Acts 1,9) and the other story was found in Luke 24,51, when Jesus blessed them, and He was taken to heaven. However, the texts merely describe the nature of His ascension and the function of His ministry and not the location of the sanctuary. In these lights, one of the purposes of the study is to specify on whether Jesus went into the Holy place or the Most Holy place in His ascension.

¹⁵ One can study a vast open subject of investigative judgment. However, the thesis will primarily focus on the investigative judgment, the sanctuary service, its type, and antitype, in order to be able to assess the compatibility of Christ ascension theology in the Epistle to the Hebrews with the other theology in the other part of the Bible and particular in the Book of Daniel.

Biblical basis on the pre-advent judgment and the ascension of Christ in Epistle to the Hebrews

The foundation for the biblical teaching on the pre-advent judgment and the ascension of Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews is outlined in this section. Since the doctrine of the heavenly sanctuary is closely tied to the doctrine of pre-advent judgement, the first section introduces its scriptural veracity. A section describing the literalness of the heavenly sanctuary and its typology of the earthly sanctuary is included in the introduction. The brief scriptural justification for the investigative judgement in the Old Testament and New Testament is provided in the next section. The concept of investigation in the Bible further explains the meaning of the pre-advent judgment in Daniel 7 and 8. Subsequently, considering the ascension of Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the biblical exposition will cover Christ's inauguration as a king-priest, the significance of Jesus' sitting at the right hand of God, and the identification of His ministry right after His ascension.

The heavenly sanctuary in the Bible

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament mention the heavenly sanctuary. This section will explain how the heavenly sanctuary described in the Bible actually exists. The purpose of this portion is to provide scriptural evidence in support of the assertion that the earthly sanctuary served as a type of the heavenly sanctuary. The exposition begins with the Old Testament and continues with the New Testament, and thus, ended with the inter-textual studies of both the scripture from the Old Testament and New Testament.

The heavenly sanctuary in the Old Testament

Several passages in the Old Testament refer to the presence of the sanctuary in heaven.¹⁶ However, some are implicitly stated, and others are

¹⁶ For a thorough study on the subject of heavenly sanctuary in the Old Testament, see Elias Brasil de Souza, "The heavenly sanctuary /temple motif in the Hebrew Bible : Function and relationship to the earthly counterparts" (dissertation, Michigan, Andrews University, 2005). For a few example of explicit passages of the heavenly sanctuary in the Old Testament, see

explicitly understood as well. Among the passive reference to the heavenly sanctuary is when God told Moses to build a sanctuary for Him to dwell according to the pattern which God showed him on the mount (Exod 25,8,9). The word “pattern” is תְּבִנִית in original Hebrew, which can be also translated as form, or a plan.¹⁷ The root word comes from the verb בָּנָה, which means build or rebuild (Ezek 36,36), it is also translated as “set up or erect, or a construction” (Gen 8,20; Judge 6,28; Num 13,12), sometimes translated as producing something new by “using prior materials” (Gen 2,22).¹⁸ Thus, the root word implies construction, the establishment of something according to the material existed, in which, the word תְּבִנִית is formed.

Hence, there are occasions where the word תְּבִנִית is employed; on one occasion, it was used in relation to “altar,” in which, it is translated as replica or pattern (Josh 22,28; 1 Kgs 16,10). In another context, it is an image of the pattern of something such as an image of their gods (Deut 4,16-18), the “calf of Horeb” (Ps 106,20), “daughters as pillars” in a metaphoric form (Ps 144,12), “figure” of a man (Isa 44,13).¹⁹ The synonym for תְּבִנִית is תְּמוּנָה which means likeness, similitude or image,²⁰ and דְּמוּת, which has the same meaning such as likeness, similitude, fashion, and manner.²¹ Exodus 25,9 uses the term “pattern” and the meaning of the Hebrew words that relate to it tend to suggest that the word is understood as a replica or pattern that was drawn from the original or the

Gen 11,1-9; 28,10-22; Exod 15,1-18; 24,9-11; 25,9.40; 32,1-34,34; Deut 26,15; 2 Sam 22,1-51; 1 Kgs 18,12-66; 22,19-23; Isa 6,1-8; 14,12-15; Ezek 1,1-28; 10,1-22; 28,11-19; Micah 1,2-3; Zech 3,1-10; 1 Chro 16,27; Jonah 2,7; Habakkuk 2,20; Ps 11,4; 18,6; 60,6; 63,2; 68,35; 96,6; 102,19; 108,7; 150,1; Dan 7,9-14; 8,9-14; 9,24). I took these passages from Souza's dissertation.

¹⁷ Warren Baker and Eugene E. Carpenter, *The complete word study dictionary: Old Testament*, (CWSD) Word Study Series (2003), s. v. “תְּבִנִית”.

¹⁸ James Swanson, *Dictionary of biblical languages with semantic domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (1997), s. v. “בָּנָה”. See also James Strong, *Strong's exhaustive concordance of the Bible*, s. v. “בָּנָה”.

¹⁹ Baker, *CWSD*, s. v. “תְּבִנִית”.

²⁰ Strong, *Exhaustive concordance*, s. v. “תְּמוּנָה”.

²¹ Strong, *Exhaustive concordances*, s. v. “דְּמוּת”.

previous material. As a result, it is reasonable to believe that the pattern was first found in a heavenly sanctuary.²²

On the other hand, another view was that the pattern was referring to the “divine direction” for the establishment of the “desert sanctuary”. Thus, according to them, the pattern does not refer to the heavenly sanctuary.²³ The latter view supplies a reason for their defense because the archaeologist discovered that the earthly sanctuary along with Solomon’s temple is similar to the Syrian and Palestinian temples.²⁴ However, the majority of the commentators and even the New Testament writers support the existence of the heavenly sanctuary based on Exodus 25,9.²⁵

David also said: “The Lord is in His Holy temple, The Lord’s throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the son of men” (Ps 11,4), reading the passage, one sees that the temple could denote the heavenly abode of God,²⁶ which give imagery that there is heavenly sanctuary. On the other hand, the phrase “The Lord is in His holy temple” can also refer to God’s residence in the temple of Jerusalem, the “throne

²² For a thorough study of the word *tabnit* see Richard M. Davidson, “Typology in the Book of Hebrews”, in *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed. by Frank B. Holbrook, vol. 4, DARCOM (Silver Spring: MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1989), 156–69; Several scholars supported this view, such as B. Childs, *The Book of Exodus* (London, UK: SMC, 1974), 535; C. Rylaarsdam, “Exodus”, *The interpreter’s Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1952), 1021; R. L. Honeycott Jr., “Exodus”, in *Broadman Bible Commentary*, ed. by Clifton J. Allen (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1969), 416. Walther Eichrodt et al., *The Old Testament Library*, vol. 1 (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1961), 423. All these supporters believed in the heavenly realities of the sanctuary.

²³ See Niel Erik Andreason, “The heavenly sanctuary in the Old Testament”, in *The sanctuary and the atonement: Biblical, historical, and theological studies*, ed. by Arnold V. Wallenkampf and W. Richard Leshner (Washington DC: Review and Herald, 1981), 69. Scholars who support this view are Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *The Pentateuch*, vol. 2 (London, UK: T & T Clark, 1864), 165; and W Harrelson, “The significance of cosmology in the ancient Near East”, in *Translating and understanding of The Old Testament*, ed. by H. T Frank and W. L Reed (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1970), 249.

²⁴ Y. Aharoni, “The Israelites sanctuary at Arad”, in *New direction in biblical archaeology*, ed. by David Noel Freedman and J. C. Greenfield (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1971), 25-39.

²⁵ Harrelson, “Significance of cosmology,” 249.

²⁶ “Temple...heaven” [Psalm 11,4], Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown, *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997).

room” of the temple (Ps 5,8; 79,1; 138,2). However, several passages have synonyms which indicate that God is in his holy temple in heaven (Mic 1,2; Hab 2,20; Ps 18,7).²⁷ Therefore, since the passages in the Old Testament provide numerous explicit explanations on the sanctuary in heaven, one cannot deny that the heavenly sanctuary existed. Henceforth, the evidence seems to be clearer in the New Testament.

The heavenly sanctuary in the New Testament

Several passages in the New Testament make it clearer that the temple is in heaven.²⁸ The earlier section mentioned that God had shown the pattern of the earthly sanctuary to Moses (Exod 26,9). To get a complete understanding of the “pattern”, the Epistle to the Hebrews mentioned the reality of the pattern (Heb 8,2-5). The heavenly sanctuary, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews, is not set up by a man (Heb 8,2) or made by human beings (Heb 9,11.24). The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews compares the heavenly and earthly by mentioning that Moses was the constructor of the earthly (Heb 8,5), while God pitched the heavenly.²⁹ William G. Johnson, commenting in the Epistle to the Hebrews in regard to the reality of the heavenly sanctuary, stated:

While he (the author) does not enter upon a description of the heavenly sanctuary and liturgy, his language suggests several important conclusions. First, he holds to their *reality*. His concern throughout the sermon is to ground Christian confidence in objective *facts*, as we have seen. *Real* deity, *real* humanity, *real* priesthood—and we may add a *real* ministry in a *real* sanctuary.³⁰

²⁷ Charles A Briggs and Emilie Grace Briggs, *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Book of Psalms*, vol. 2, The International Critical Commentary (Fifth Avenue, NY: C. Scribner's Sons, 1906), 90.

²⁸ See Leonardo G. Nunes, “Function and nature of the heavenly sanctuary/temple and its earthly counterparts in the New Testament Gospels, Acts, and the Epistles: A motif study of major passages” (dissertation, Michigan, Andrews University, 2020). For example, John 14,2; Acts 7,55-56; Ephe 4,8; Heb 1,3; 8,1-2; 10,12; 11,10.16; 12,2; 12,22; 13,10; 13,14; I took these passages from Nunes' dissertation.

²⁹ Nunes, “Function and nature of the heavenly sanctuary/temple”, 39.

³⁰ William G. Johnson, *In absolute confidence: The Book of Hebrew speaks to our day* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing, 1979), 91.

The abundance of heavenly sanctuary/temple terminology, imagery, and explicit references found throughout the letter has led to the recognition of the motif of the heavenly sanctuary/temple in the book of Hebrews by New Testament scholars.³¹ When discussing the situation of the recipients of Epistle to the Hebrews, A. P. Salom stated: “As seems likely, the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple was near, all the more they need such assurances. These verses (Heb 10,1; 8,2-5) told them that they had access to superior “temple”, a heavenly sanctuary where Christ ministered”.³² Thus, the Epistle to the Hebrews supplied a clear picture of the true tabernacle in heaven.

The Book of Revelation also confirms that the heavenly sanctuary existed. The word *ναός* is usually translated as a “temple” with an occurrence of 45 times in the Authorized Version. Apart from this, it was translated as a “shrine” for once.³³ It is used metaphorically as a community (Rev 3,12; 21,22) which is an exceptional case. But, in all other occurrences referred to the temple such as the temple in Jerusalem (Ps 45,15; Mk 15,38; Acts 7,48), the pagan’s temple (Acts 19,24), and the body as a temple in the epistles of Paul (1 Cor 3,16; 6,19; 2 Cor 6,16-17).

However, John’s vision in the Book of Revelation provides a picture of the heavenly temple which was opened (Rev 11,19).³⁴ Moreover, since John saw the ark of covenant inside the temple (Rev 11,19), it must be the Most Holy place because the ark of the covenant was located in the Most Holy place (Heb 9,3-4). John also used the word “ark of the covenant (*διαθήκη*)” when he saw that the heavenly temple was opened. This phrase is used in the Old Testament to designate the earthly sanctuary

³¹ Nunes, “Function and nature of the heavenly sanctuary/temple”, 292. Nunes provides texts such as Heb 4,14; 6,19,20; 8,1-2; 9,11-12; 23-24; 10,19). Nunes pointed out scholars such as Steve Motyers, Aelred Cody, MacRae, David Mottiff, Felix Cortez, Kiwoong Son, and Richard Davidson who strongly supports the presence of the heavenly sanctuary, see Nunes, “Function and nature of the heavenly sanctuary/temple”, 292, 294.

³² A. P Salom, “Sanctuary theology”, in *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, vol. 4, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1989), 206.

³³ Strong, *Exhaustive concordance*, s. v. “*ναός*”.

³⁴ Gerhard Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 626.

(Num 10,33). As a result, the ties between the earthly and heavenly were seen here. As a result, it is possible to see how God revealed the truth of heaven through the typology of the earthly. In this context, it is possible to see how Jesus, in his role as an intercessor, is carrying out a ministry in the heavenly sanctuary on behalf of humanity (1 John 2,1-2; Heb 8,1-2). Subsequently, Jesus's heavenly ministration in the sanctuary before His second coming has a specific function which is known as investigative judgment.³⁵ The next section will briefly deal with this concept.

Investigative judgment in the Bible as a key to understanding the biblical concept of the pre-advent judgment

In the Bible, there are instances where God has conducted an investigation before executing judgment on someone, which is what this section describes. Additionally, it enlightens one on the importance of investigative judgment for humanity in the final days before the second coming of Christ. This part will center on the creation narrative in Genesis and the judgement of Judah in Ezekiel, starting with the idea of divine legal scrutiny in the Old Testament. In light of the concept of the investigative judgement, Daniel chapters 7 and 8's pre-advent judgement will then be briefly studied. After that, a brief discussion of the pre-advent judgement in the New Testament will follow.

Investigation concept in the Old Testament

The beginning of Genesis started with the “judicial procedure” of God to Adam and Eve when they fell into sin. Claus Westermann, a highly esteemed liberal-critical Protestant German scholar, notes that after the fall, God returns for a “legal process”, “trial”, or “court process” in his monumental commentary on Genesis.³⁶ Richard Davidson pointed out that several non-Adventist scholars recognized this incident as

³⁵ Jiri Moskala, “Toward a biblical theology of God’s judgment: A celebration of the cross in seven phases of divine universal judgment (An overview of a theocentric-christocentric approach)”, *Journal of Adventist Theological Society* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 152–55.

³⁶ Claus Westermann, *Creation*, trans. by John J. Scullion (London: SPCK, 1974), 96;

well.³⁷ For example, Phyllis Tribble and Rick Marrs recognized the scene in Genesis 3,8-13 as a trial and verdict which is followed by a judgment in Genesis 3,14-19.³⁸ Another scene of investigation is in the story of Cain and Abel (Gen 4,9-10). God ask Cain: “Where is Abel your brother?”. Kenneth A. Matthews and Victor Hamilton notice that there is a “divine investigation” here before judgement.³⁹ Commenting of the story of tower of Babel (Gen 11,5), Nahum Sarna notes: “God does not react capriciously; he investigates man’s doings”.⁴⁰

His descent to Sodom and Gomorrah to conduct an investigation describes the same process (Gen 18,20–21). According to T. F. Mafico, “Yahweh came down to make a judicial investigation”.⁴¹ It is significant to know that the New Testament considers the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah as the type or example of the judgment at the end (2 Pet 2,6; Jude 7). During the time of the prophets, when the nation of Israel sinned, God, each time made an investigative act before the verdict is finally announced (Isa 5,1-7; 43,8-13; 43,22-28). Davidson pointed out that there are eighty-five passages in the Book of Psalms that have the motif of divine investigative judgment.⁴² In all instances noted above, the order will always be an act of sin, investigation, and final judgment. Thus, though

³⁷ Richard M. Davidson, *The song of the sanctuary: Experiencing God’s presence in shadow and reality*, 1st ed. (Nampa: ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2022), 411.

³⁸ Phyllis Tribble, *God and the rhetoric of sexuality, overtures to biblical theology* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1978), 117; Rick R. Marrs, “In the beginning: Male and female (Gen 1–3)”, in *Essays on women in earliest Christianity*, ed. by Carroll D. Osburn, vol. 2 (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1995), 27–28.

³⁹ Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 230–231; Kenneth A. Matthews, Genesis 1–11:26, *New American Commentary* 1A (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1996), 275.

⁴⁰ Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis, The JPS Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia, PA: JPS, 1989), 82.

⁴¹ T. F. Mafico, “The crucial question concerning the justice of God”, *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 42 (1983): 13.

⁴² According to Davidson, there are twenty five psalms where the lawsuit divine investigative judgment is prominent: Psalms 3; 4; 5; 7; 11; 17; 26; 27; 31; 35; 42; 43; 54; 55; 56; 57; 59; 62; 64; 69; 70; 86; 109; 140; 142; 143. And there are sixty passages that are related to “divine legal proceedings”: Psalms 9,4.8.16.19; 10,18; 14,2; 33,13-15; 37,33; 51,6 (ET 4); 53,2-3; 54,1; 56,8-9; 58,11; 62,12; 66,10; 67,4; 73,17-20; 75,2.7-8; 76,8-10; 80,14; 81,1-2; 82,1-4.8;

the word for investigative judgment is not present in the scripture, it is clear that the concept is found on several occasions. The sections below give a detailed account of the scene from Ezekiel and Daniel's book that depicts an investigative judgement.

Investigative judgment on Judah (Ezekiel 1-10)

The purpose of presenting the judgment of Judah is to bring to light that the motif of God's investigative judgment is found in Ezekiel, which could be in parallel with the judgment in Daniel 7. Thus, this section supplies the sequential motion of God during his judgment in the land of Judah.

The background of the judgment

The ministry of Ezekiel began when God came to him in a vision near the river Chebar, on "the fifth day of the fourth month of the fifth year of exile", which could be a month of July, 592 B.C., according to the fall-to-fall calculation of the calendar (Ezek 1,1-3). To historically situate these dates, one must know that the siege of Jerusalem began in January, 588 B.C., that is, four and half years after Ezekiel was called to ministry. After two and half years, the Babylonian defeated the city completely in July, 586 B.C.⁴³

The onset of Ezekiel's vision was an appearance of a great whirlwind from the north (Ezek 1,4). The location of this appearance is significant, which will be known later. Amidst the whirlwind or the storm cloud, comes the four living creatures (Ezek 1,5-14), which are identified later as the cherubim (Ezek 10). These creatures reappeared before the throne in heaven (Rev 4). There are significant characteristics that one should notice about these four creatures. First, they have wings (Ezek 1,6.8.11.14),

87,6; 94,1-3; 96,10-13; 97,8; 98,9; 102,19-22; 110,5-6; 135,14; 137,7-9; 139,1-6.23-24; 146,7; 149,7-9. See Davidson, *The song of the sanctuary*, 433-34.

⁴³ William Shea, "The investigative judgment of Judah, Ezekiel 1-10", in *The Sanctuary and Atonement: Biblical, historical and theological studies*, ed. by Arnold V. Wallenkampf and W. Richard Leshner (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1981), 283. Shea, *Selected studies on prophetic interpretation*, 1:16.

and they are in motion (Ezek 1,9.12.14). Second, they have something like a torch of burning coal between them (Ezek 1,13), and third, each of them has wheels for motion on the ground (Ezek 1,17.19-21). Thus, the wings, the wheels, and the motion imply that they are going toward something.

The vision also shows that the firmament is upon the head and wings of the four living creatures, which are in motion (Ezek 1,24-25). The firmament is to carry the throne of God (Ezek 1,26), over which, God sits and appears in a human form. The glory in God is described as, “gleaming bronze, like the appearance of fire” (Ezek 1,27), in which, Ezekiel fell upon his face in the brightness of God’s glory. In analyzing this, Shea asserted that the motion of God implies that God is going somewhere, and that “is the point of this vision”.⁴⁴ He said that the motion of the four living creatures is “intentional and directional” because God is the one who commands the wheels in certain directions.⁴⁵ Thus, this brings a question of where God is heading. Aforementioned, God came from the north in the earlier verse (v. 40), being coming from the north, the possible direction is southeast, to the exiles in Babylon and the southwest, to Judah and Jerusalem. The latter location is supported by chapters 9 and 10 of Ezekiel. Thus, the vision in chapter 1 signifies the transition of God’s throne to the earthly sanctuary.

The motif of investigation on Judah

Ezekiel, as God’s prophet, becomes a medium to proclaim the judgment and the charges which followed (Ezek 2, 3, 4-7). Subsequently, the vision on the corruption of the temple is dated in the sixth month of the sixth year of the exile, which is September 591 B.C. (Ezek 8,1). Connecting Ezekiel’s vision in chapter 1 when Yahweh transit to the earthly residence, it has been fourteen months when he received the vision of the temple in chapter 8. That brings a crucial question of why God needs to abide on the earth in the first place. In addition, the Shekinah glory is

⁴⁴ Shea, “Judgment of Judah”, in *The sanctuary*, 285.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

already present to indicate God's presence, then, why the visions implicitly conveyed that God's dwelling on earth is about fourteen months. Shea, in explaining this vision, gives the evident answer that God has a special work to do in the land of Judah.⁴⁶

Chapter 9 further supports that God is doing a work of investigation. It divides the people of Judah into two groups, one, who are crying for the abomination done in the temple, and others, who are responsible for the abomination. Apparently, this division is recorded by the angel as a scribe. The angel was instructed to write the Hebrew letter **ן** on the forehead of the first group (Ezek 9,4). The letter **ן** is the last alphabet of Hebrew, thus, indicating the remnant that will be saved at the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem.⁴⁷ This judgment came to pass when the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar sieged Jerusalem (1 King 25,9). Thus, it is significant to note that the execution of Judah is based upon the investigation done in the temple earlier, during the session of judgment.

The scene of departure

After every case has been decided, there is no reason for God to remain in the temple. Subsequently, God raised the rhetorical question during the vision in chapter 8: "Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abomination of the house of Israel are committing here, to drive me far from the sanctuary?" (Ezek 8,6). The scene of God departure from His temple is mentioned three times (Ezek 9,3; 10,4; 10,18). When God is about to leave His temple, "the sound of the wings of the cherubim is heard" (Ezek 10,5) and the wheels are ready to move (Ezek 10,13). Subsequently, the divine chariot appears at the threshold of the temple: "The glory of the Lord went up from the cherubim to the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the glory of the Lord" (Ezek 10,4). The cherubim moved to the east gate of the temple (Ezek 10,19) and finally departed from the city through Kidron valley (Ezek 11,22-25).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 286.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 287.

Thus, the vision from chapters 9 to 11 is the opposite of chapter 1, because in chapter 1, God ascended to the earth to judge and remain on earth for investigation for fourteen months, and in chapters 9 through 11, God finished his judgment and departed from the temple.⁴⁸

*The pre-advent judgment scene
on the vision of Daniel 7*

Daniel 7 provides a judgment scene that describes the commencement of the judgment (vv. 9-10), the closing scene (vv. 13-14), and the explanation of the judgment scene (vv. 26-27). Daniel saw the thrones were put into place and the Ancient of days sat on the throne. Before the court, were the books opened, and one like the son of man came before the Ancient of days. After the court made a decision, the saint and the Son of man received the kingdom.⁴⁹

The sequential order of the vision

The vision started with four beasts namely a lion, a bear, a leopard, and the indefinable creature which possessed ten horns (vv. 4-7). Out of the ten horns of the creature, came out a little horn and uprooted the existing three horns. This little horn arises from the creature speaking against God, persecuting the saints three and half times,⁵⁰ and “attempting to

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 289.

⁴⁹ Angel Manuel Rodriguez, “Response to: “The investigative judgment: A Bible based doctrine?”, *The watchtower*, July 1997, 6.

⁵⁰ The three and half times refers to 1260 years. This is to be calculated with a year-day principle, which is seems to be reliable and a correct way of interpreting apocalyptic literature like Daniel because they are symbolic. The biblical reference for this method of interpretation is found in Numbers 14,34 and Ezekiel 4,6, where God literally used a day for a year. For instance, Numbers 14,36 stated: “According to the number of days in which you spied out for a land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt for one year, namely forty years, and you shall know my rejection”. Accordingly, three and half times or three and half years ($360 \times 3 + 180 = 1260$) is 1260 days. Thus, applying day as a year, the little horn rule for 1260 years. For more understanding of the historicist method of year-day principle, see Thomas R. Birks, *First elements of sacred prophecy* (London, UK: William E. Painter, 1843); H. G. Guinness, *The approaching end of the age, viewed in the light of history, prophecy, and science*, 8th ed. (London, UK: Hodder & Stoughton, 1882); Desmond Ford, *Daniel* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing, 1978), 300–305; Shea, *Selected studies on prophetic interpretation*, 1:64–104. For understanding from the Jewish Literature, see O. S. Wintermute, “Jubilees: A new translation and introduction”,

change the law and the times" (v. 25).⁵¹ While the little horn is speaking against God, one can be recognized that the heavenly judgment scene had started (vv. 11, 25)⁵² after Daniel had heard the "pompous word", the attention of the passage is a shift to the heavenly scene of judgment (vv. 8-10). Studying the passage, one can catch that the time of the little horn and the heavenly judgment correspond to each other. Accordingly, it cannot be a final executive judgment of Revelation 20. Thus, it is "preliminary judgment" that is to happen before the second coming.⁵³ The result of the judgment is followed by the dominion of the Son of man and the saints receiving the kingdom forever and ever (v. 27). Subsequently, the little horn power is destroyed.

The investigating nature of the judgment

The nature of the investigation is clearly expressed in reference to the presence of the book during the judgment (v. 10). The Old Testament

in *The Old Testament pseudepigrapha*, ed. by James H. Charlesworth, vol. 2 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 39.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* The little horn opposed the saints and the Most High. Pfandl, "The pre-advent judgment", 2.

⁵² Pfandl, "The pre-advent judgment", 2.

⁵³ *Ibid.* The fact of Daniel 7 judgment being a preliminary judgment had been noticed by several non-Seventh-day Adventists commentators. For instance, the Roman Catholic author, F. Dusterwald stated:

Without question, the prophet Daniel here describes God's judgment concerning the hostile powers. The judgment ends with the total condemnation of the world empires and the triumph of the cause of God. However, what is described here is not as many old interpreters (Theodoret and others) have assumed the general judgment of the world, it is not God judgment here on earth; rather the place of judgment is in heaven. The context indicates that it is preliminary judgment which is later confirmed in the general judgment of the world.

See F. Dusterwald, *Die Weltreiche Und Das Gottesreich* (Freiburg: Herder'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1890), 177. T. Robinson wrote in his commentary that the judgment is sat in the 19th century. Concerning this, he stated:

As already observed, this is not the general judgment at the termination of Christ's reign on earth, or, as the phrase is commonly understood, the end of the world. It appears rather to be an invisible judgment carried on within the veil and revealed by its effects and the execution of its sentence. As occasioned by the 'great words' of a Little horn and followed by taking away of his dominion, it might seem to have already sat. As, However, the sentence is not yet by any means fully executed, it may be sitting now.

See Thomas Robinson, *The preacher's homiletical commentary*, vol. 19 (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1892), 139. See also, S. P. Tregelles, *Remarks on the prophetic visions in the Book of Daniel*, 8th ed. (Chelmsford, UK: The Sovereigns Advent Testimony, n.d.), 35-38.

and the New Testament contain several references in regard to the heavenly book; almost all of them are related to God's people.⁵⁴ Thus, one understands that the book is in heaven, for investigating the cases. Accordingly, the question arises of who will be judged in the judgment. Concerning this, the judgment is an exercise in favor of the saints (Dan 7,22). This judgment is God's vindication of His people.⁵⁵ It is a judgment that declares a believer is worthy of salvation. The court involves the Son of man, the angels, and the universe who is the witnesses to the case decided. In vindicating the saints, God is also vindicated (Ps 51,4).

On the other hand, the "internal contextual evidence suggests that the saints and the little horn equally share in pre-advent judgment verdict";⁵⁶ subsequently, the little horn is judged differently, since the saints are vindicated, the little horn is the one to be condemned with a crime. Rodriguez said that the scene in Daniel 7 must be understood in the sense that an innocent person is accused incorrectly in court.⁵⁷ Then, the little horn is considered to be the accuser since it was against the saints during the judgment (Dan 7,25). As a result, the saints are vindicated, and the dominion of the little horn is taken away (Dan 7,27) which implies that the little horn is condemned as the saints are vindicated (Dan 7,22).

⁵⁴ Several references are present in the Old Testament that is in association with God's people. For instance, there is a "book of a living" mainly dealt with the righteous (Ps 69,28), the lives of humanity is written in God's book, the days and length of lives are recorded (Ps 139,16), the struggles and pain are recorded (Ps 56,8), their thoughts (Mal 3,16), their good deeds (Neh 13,14), their sins are recorded (Ps 109,14; Isa 65,6). Even in the New Testament the heavenly book is mentioned several times (Phil 4,3; Rev 3,5; 13,8; 17,8; 20,12,15) and this book is known as the book of life (Rev 21,27). The Jewish literature also contains the heavenly book (1 Enoch 47,3).

⁵⁵ Shea beautifully explained the vindication of the saints this way: "From time to time some of these saints have been adjudged guilty of various crimes by the earthly tribunals when actually they were serving God and man faithfully. In the pre-advent judgment, these unjust sentences by the earthly court will be reversed by the courts of heaven. In this way, God will vindicate his saints". See William Shea, "A theological importance of the pre-advent judgment", in *The seventy weeks*, Leviticus, and the nature of prophecy, vol. 3, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1986), 328.

⁵⁶ Norman R. Gulley, *Christ is coming! A Christ-centered approach to last-day events* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1998), 413. See also Arthur J. Ferch, "The pre-advent judgment: Is it scriptural?", *Australasian Record*, August 28, 1982, 5-7.

⁵⁷ Rodriguez, "Investigative Judgment", 8.

Therefore, Daniel 7 is a judgment prior to Christ's second coming, and it is about the judgment of the saints and the little horn. The ultimate decision of the judge declares the dominion of the Son of man along with the saints who are vindicated, and the little horn being judged which will succeed with the second coming (Dan 7,26-27).

Daniel 8 in relation to the earthly sanctuary in Leviticus

The prophet saw the vision in Daniel 8 in relation to the earthly sanctuary in Leviticus. Daniel saw a ram with two horns, attacking towards the west, north, and south. Then, a he-goat from the west which has one horn between the eyes appeared in the scene and attacked the ram and defeated it. Subsequently, the horn of he-goat magnified itself exceedingly and broke into four which developed into the four winds of heaven (Dan 8,3-9). Another horn known as the "little horn" came to the scene and grew exceedingly great "toward the south, east, and the glorious land" (Dan 8,10). The horizontal expansion (v. 9-10) of the horn was followed by the vertical expansion (v. 11-12). The little horn "exalted himself as high as the Prince of the Host", took the *daily*⁵⁸ away and cast down the place of the sanctuary (v. 11), it is in this context that the holy one inquiring, "For how long will the vision be?", and Daniel heard the answer: "For two thousand and three hundred mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state" (v. 14).⁵⁹ The political kingdom was portrayed with several animals in the Daniel 7. However, in explaining the same kingdom here, the prophet used the "linguistic

⁵⁸ The word "the daily" is taken from the Hebrew word תְּמִידָה, in which, the Hebrew word is composed by the article הַ and the root word תָּמִיד. The word הַ simply means "the", and תָּמִיד signifies something which is done in a regular basis without any interruption, the usage in the Old Testament is 104 times, in which, most of them are used in an adjectival genitive form for mentioning the continual burnt offering made to God in the sanctuary every morning and evening (Exod 29,42; Num 28,6.10.15.23; Ezra 3,5; Neh 10,6; Ezek 46,15). See R. Laird Harris, Gleason Leonard Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1980), 493; James Strong, *Strong's exhaustive concordance of the Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006), s. v "תָּמִיד". See also, W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White, *Vine's complete expository dictionary of Old and New Testament words: With topical index* (Nashville, TN: T. Nelson, 1996), 1:47.

⁵⁹ Revised Standard Version is used.

and theology of the structure in the book of Leviticus” which is related with the service of the Israelite sanctuary.⁶⁰

The symbol of the political power used in Daniel 8 is interestingly a ram and a he-goat (vv. 20-21) which are sacrificial animals. Moreover, the term “daily” was used in the Old Testament several times in relation to the daily work in the sanctuary.⁶¹ Thus, according to Rodriguez, Daniel was writing in expectation of the reader to know the Israelite sanctuary because the passages are in the terminology of the sanctuary.⁶² The usage of the language of the sanctuary services helps one to understand the work of the little horn, the political reign is not the main concern, rather, the focus was the little horn attacking the sanctuary and overthrowing the prince of host (Dan 8,11.12).

Subsequently, the holy one asked the time of transgression by the little horn in taking away the *daily*, this is when the answer came to Daniel: “Unto 2300 evenings and mornings,” shall the sanctuary be vindicated or cleansed (Dan 8,14). There is only one reference in the Bible where the phrase “evening and mornings” is employed, that is, in Genesis 1, the account of creation. Accordingly, 2300 evenings and mornings can be counted as 2300 days. Since the time period from Daniel 8,1 to the time of the little horn covers more than 2300 days,⁶³ 2300 days is not applicable for literal interpretation, thus, the year-day principle⁶⁴ is applied here, in which, 2300 days will become 2300 years. The presupposition will be more likely right because the little horn power

⁶⁰ Rodriguez, “Investigative Judgment,” 2.

⁶¹ All the usages of *batamid* are relating with the sanctuary and are translated as a “continual or regular burn offering” several times (Num 29,6.11.16.19.22.25.28.31.34.38; Neh 10,34; Dan 11,31; 12,11), a continual bread offering (Num 4,7), and a daily grain offering (Num 4,16).

⁶² Rodriguez, “Investigative Judgment,” 3.

⁶³ Daniel 8,1 started with the political kingdom of rams representing Medo-Persia and he-goat representing Greece, one can compare this with Daniel 7, where the sequences of the kingdom are clearly seen, and the sequences are repeated three times. Accordingly, the four beasts in Daniel 7,3 are the kingdom the earth (v. 13), the little horn power reigned just before the dominion is given to the saints and the Son of Man (Dan 7,26.27).

⁶⁴ See Shea, “Supplementary evidence” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 12, no 1, (Spring, 2001): 89-96.

is judged before the second coming. Thus, 2300 years is more likely applicable to the time of the end.

The linkage of the vision in Daniel 8 and 9

Interestingly, there is no newly given vision in Daniel 9. Instead, Gabriel came to explain the vision (מְרִאָה) to Daniel (Dan 9,23), in which the word ⁶⁵מְרִאָה is the identical usage of the word “vision” that deals with 2300 days prophecy that Daniel did not understand (Dan 8,26). Daniel 9 also provides a similar subject of the sanctuary regarding the sacrificial offerings and the inauguration of the sanctuary. The Messiah has to be anointed and became a sacrificial victim, which proceeds with His priestly work (Dan 9,25.27). Daniel 8 presents Jesus as the priest regarding the daily ministrations in the pattern of the earthly sanctuary. Thus, Daniel 7 is the starting point of the work of the Messiah which is chronologically followed by the vision in Daniel 8.

Time factor involved in Daniel 8 and 9

As aforementioned, both chapters are linked together in terms of vision, literary structure, and theme. Consequently, one can recognize the time factor involved regarding the apocalyptic vision. The prophetic time period in Daniel 8,14 was left uninterpreted,⁶⁶ however, Daniel 9 provides the commencement date of the prophecy in Daniel 8. It presents the beginning of the Messiah and His inauguration to be the high priest in the heavenly sanctuary. The ministry of the Messiah will begin once there is an anointing of the sanctuary (Dan 9,24). Both chapters started with the empire of Medo-Persia, but Daniel 9 stresses more specifically the commencement date of 2300 day-year prophecy. When the decree to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem begins, that is the starting point of the

⁶⁵ The term מְרִאָה is a vision that specifically deals with the representation of truth as enacted by God to His prophets which is can be used interrelatedly to the other term of vision חִזוֹן, which indicate a general divine communication of God. Siegfried H. Horn, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*, rev. ed. (1979), s. v. “vision”.

⁶⁶ The longest prophecy of the Bible is noted to be ended after 2300 days in Daniel 8,14. Thus, it signifies only the time for its fulfillment of the prophecy but do not notify the commencement of the prophecy.

prophecy (Dan 9,25). According to the angel, “70 weeks are determined or cut off” concerning the people of God and the Holy City. The word used for determined is **תָּתַר** which can be translated as “cut off” or “determined” according to the Canaanite literature and Jewish Hebrew literature.⁶⁷ However, the term “cut off” is preferable because Daniel 8 and 9 are connected. Accordingly, one can presuppose that 70 weeks is cut off from the 2300 days prophecy.

The interpretation of the 70 weeks

The content of the 70 weeks has two significant points. One is the decree of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and the other is the purpose of the coming of the Messiah and the detailed description of His work.⁶⁸ Concerning the interpretation of the week, the Hebrew word employed here in Daniel 9 always designates the seven-day time period even in the other places of the Old Testament.⁶⁹ Accordingly, applying the year-day principle, the 70 weeks is 490 years ($707 = 490$). One may take notice that the prophecy has a beginning and ending date. It begins during the reign of

⁶⁷ William Shea, “The relationship between the prophecies of Daniel 8 and Daniel 9”, in *The sanctuary and the atonement: Biblical, historical and theological studies*, ed. by Arnold V. Wallenkampf and W. Richard Leshar (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, 1981), 241-246.

⁶⁸ The Messiah will die towards the end of 70 weeks, and His death would end up the transgression by bringing an everlasting righteousness; He will put an end to sin through forgiveness, seal up the vision by fulfilling the prophecy; make an atonement for sin through His sacrifice; anoint the heavenly sanctuary; make an everlasting covenant with many people and the making an end to the earthly sanctuary service (Dan 9,24-27). In addition, the destruction of the temple and the holy city must be decreed during the 70 weeks (vv. 26, 27), this was fulfilled when Jesus announced the destruction of the city of Jerusalem (Matt 24,1,2).

⁶⁹ Gerhard F. Hasel, “The Hebrew masculine plural for ‘weeks’ in the expression ‘seventy weeks’ in Daniel 9:24”, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 31 (1993): 105-118. The word “weeks” employed in Daniel 9 is **שָׁבָעִים**, which is taken from the root word **שָׁבַע**, meaning sevenfold, a period of seven, a week, a time period of seven days (Gen 29,27,28; Lev 12,5; Deut 16,9; Dan 10,2,3). According to Strong’s Lexicon, the word “weeks” occurs for 20 times. Most of the usage designates the seven unit of days (Exod 34,22; Num 26,28; Deut 16,10,16; 2 Chro 8,13; Jer 5,24; Dan 10,2,3). See Robert L Thomas and W. Don Wilkins, *New American standard exhaustive concordance of the Bible: Hebrew-aramaic and Greek dictionaries* (Anaheim, CA.: Foundation Publications, 1998), s. v. “weeks”. See also, Strong, *Strong’s concordance*, s. v. “שָׁבָעִים”; Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological wordbook of the Old Testament*, 898; Swanson, *Dictionary of biblical languages with semantic domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)*, s. v. “שָׁבָעִים”.

Medo-Persia and ends with the death of the Messiah.⁷⁰ In his dissertation, Brempont Owusu-Antwi provided significant evidence supporting the beginning date of the decree to build the wall at Jerusalem, leading to the conclusion that the decree's beginning date was 457 B.C.⁷¹ Thus, the end of 70 weeks ends at 34 A..D if one begins with 457 B.C. Subsequently, cutting off the 490 years from 2300 years becomes 1830, thus, the end of 2300 years falls in 1844 when 34 years are added to 1830. However, one may ask the reason why the date falls on October 22; this question is resolved through the Babylonian counting of the calendar during the time of Daniel.⁷² Thus, October 22, 1844, is the right date for the fulfillment of 2300 prophetic years.

⁷⁰ William Shea, "The prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27", in *The seventy weeks, Leviticus, and the nature of prophecy*, vol. 3, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1986), 75-118.

⁷¹ There are several decrees given by certain rulers such as a decree from Cyrus in 537 B.C. (Ezra 1,1-4), decree by Darius in 520 B.C. (Ezra 6,1-12), Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. (Ezra 7,12-26), and the renewal of the decree in 444 B.C. during the time of Nehemiah (Neh 1). Among these, 457 B.C. is the most suitable date for the decree of rebuilding the wall in Jerusalem. See Shea, "Supplementary evidence", *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 12, no 1, (Spring, 2001): 89-96; Brempont Owusu-Antwi, "An investigation of the chronology of Daniel 9:24-27" (dissertation, Michigan, Andrews University, 1993), 324-27. See also William Shea, "When did the seventy weeks of Daniel 9:24 begin", *Journal of Adventist Theological Society* 2, no. 1 (1991): 115-138.

⁷² Shea explained that the early Millerites came up to the conclusion of October 22, 1844 according to Karaite Calendar which is the most reliable calendar in their times. However, Shea suggested the modern calculation system because every resource is available now. Accordingly, he used the Babylonian calendar which was used in the time of Daniel which can concluded that the ending period of 2300 days prophecy is in October 22, 1844. For detail calculation of calendar, see Shea, *Selected studies on prophetic interpretation*, 1:169-71. This calculation made by Shea was later improved by Richard M. Davidson, who also noted that the Karaite calendar, which is based on the ripening of barley, is a biblical reckoning and that the 2300-day prophecy began exactly on the Day of Atonement in 457 B.C. (likely in the month of October) and ended on the Day of Atonement in 1844 as well, which is October 22. For a detailed narrative of the calculation, see Richard M. Davidson, "When did the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 begin and end? Fresh evidence from Scripture, chronology, and Karaite History", in *Eschatology from an Adventist perspective*, ed. by Elias Brasil de Souza, A. Rahel Wells, Laszlo Gallusz, and Denis Kaiser (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2021), 105-108, 116-119.

Investigation concept in the New Testament

This section presents the concept of pre-advent judgment which is not explicitly stated in the New Testament. However, these passages point to the judicial act that occurs before the second advent of Christ. The section is classified into three parts: the investigation concept in the teachings of Jesus, in the writings of Paul, and in the book of Revelation.

Investigative judgment concept in the teaching of Christ

Jesus teaches about the reward for those who obey him, which implies evaluative judgment before rewarding a person. The beatitudes sermon is promises of reward (Matt 5,1-12). The phrase “If you love those who love you, what reward have you?” implicitly proposed a notion of the pre-evaluation process.⁷³ Looking at the time of reward, it is always at the second coming (Matt 16,27), which implies that the time apart from the second coming is not a time for evaluation or investigation. When Jesus described resurrection, he make certain that the ones who did good deeds will be resurrected to life, and the evil ones to judgment (John 5,28-29), this implies that one does not resurrect to be the judge but the judgment had finished. The other presupposition of investigative judgment before the Second Advent is seen in Christ commanding to separate the wheat and the tares, the evil and the righteous (Matt 13,30. 49). The context of the passage implies that there is no evaluation during the time of harvest; it is rather a separation of the decided ones.⁷⁴

The parable wedding garments also seem to portray the investigative concept of judgment. In this parable, the king sent an invitation for the wedding of his son (Matt 22,2). The wedding invitation though is for special people, but since they did not respond to it, the king sent the invitation to everyone; thus, the wedding hall was filled with guest

⁷³ The notion of reward is found in many places of the Gospel, for instance, “Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven,” (Matt 6,1; cf. 6,2.4.5.16.18; 10,41.42; Mark 9,41; Luke 6,23.35).

⁷⁴ Similarly, the separation of sheep and goat at the time of advent presupposes that it is only the time of executing the judgment of which had been decided earlier (Matt 25,32-33).

(Matt 22,3-10). The investigation concept is seen when the king came to check for the wedding garments, he found a man without the wedding garment (Matt 22,11).⁷⁵ The parable seems to indicate an allusion to what will happen before the Second Coming.

Investigative judgment concept in the writings of Paul

Paul considered the Second Advent as the revelation of God's judgment and not the time of the judicial evaluating process (1 Cor 4,5). It is the time of the revelation of God's righteous judgment (Rom 2,5), which will be followed by the executive act of Jesus who will give eternal life to the good and punishment to the disobedience (Rom 2,7-8; 2 Thess 1,8-9). The incident presupposes that the judicial act of investigation is prior to Second Advent. Paul, like Jesus, follows the same pattern in regards to the judgement of the dead (1 Tim 4,1), which suggests that attendance is not necessary since the other text in the Bible plainly states that there is a record book for deeds (Dan 7,10; Ps 69,28; Mal 3,16; Rev 20,12).⁷⁶ One

⁷⁵ See , Gerhard F. Hasel, "Divine judgment", in *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*, ed. by Raoul Dederen (Hagerstown: MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 833-864; Moskala, "Toward a biblical theology of God's judgment", 152-155. Rev 19,7, 17 regard the coming of Christ as the "marriage of the lamb". Ellen White, commenting on Matthew 22, stated:

In the parable of Matthew 22, the same figure of the marriage is introduced, the investigative judgment is clearly represented as taking place before marriage. Previous to the wedding the kings comes in to see the guests, to see if all are attired with the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the lamb... the work of examination of character, of determining who are prepared for the kingdom of God, is that of the investigative judgment, the closing work in the Sanctuary above.

See White, *The great controversy*, 428.

⁷⁶ Concerning the sequence of events in 1 Timothy 4,1-2, Barclay notes the order in three parts: (1) Judgment (2) Appearance (3) Kingdom. He mentioned that the events follow the logical progression which leads to the consummated history of salvation. Thus, the judgment is followed by the appearance of Christ. See William Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 3rd ed. fully rev. and updated, The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 232-34. The King James Version reads: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom", which is rejected by many modern translation today because it does not accurately render the Greek conjunction "kai...kai" which would imply "and by His appearing and his Kingdom" (RSV). The New International Version also render the Greek text appropriately: "In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom I give you this charge". Dibelius and Conzelman also notice that the charge of Paul is to be considered as a formulaic, this principle

may easily presuppose that the judicial judgment will take place during the Second Advent.

However, the writings of Paul do not support this manner of judgment.⁷⁷ For instance, 1 Thessalonians 4 provides the manner of the events, in which, the imagery according to the passage signifies only the transformation of the believers and the eternal communion of God (1 Thess 4,16, 17). A judicial investigating process is absent when Christ descends from heaven. It is rather the executive act of Christ changing the believers with the power of glorification.⁷⁸ Subsequently, the judicial evaluation process needs to be done before the second coming. Thus, presuppose the pre-advent judgment.

Investigative judgment concept in the Book of Revelation

The concept of pre-advent judgment is portrayed in Revelation 14. The chapter provides three phases of events and all the events began with the phrase “Then I looked” (Rev 14,1.6.14). The first vision started with the 144,000, their character, and their benefit of being in the group (Rev 14,3.4). The second vision continues with the announcement of the judgment of God (14,6-13), and the third with the executive judgment (14,14-20). The second vision particularly deals with the investigation concept of judgment, where the three angels proclaim the messages.

is seen in 1 Timothy 5,21. Thus, the pattern of charge in 1 Timothy 4 and 5 is similar which is sequentially stated by Paul. Accordingly, the judgment, the appearing, and the kingdom seem to be in sequence. See Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The pastoral epistles: A commentary on the pastoral epistles* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1972), 120.

⁷⁷ Paul provides several passages concerning the manner of Christ coming (1 Thess 1,7-10; 1 Thess 4,13-18; 1 Cor 15,51-58).

⁷⁸ J. A. Seiss, a Lutheran minister, comment on the passage of Paul on the manner of Christ coming, he came to the same conclusion:

The truth is, that the resurrection, and the changes which pass “in the twinkling of an eye” upon the living, are themselves the fruits and embodiments of antecedent judgment. They are the consequences of adjudications then already made. Strictly speaking, men are neither raised nor translated, in order to come to judgment. Resurrections and translations are products of judgment previously passed, upon the dead as dead, and upon the quick as quick.

See Joseph August Seiss, *The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation* (New York, NY: Cosimo Classics, 2007), 18.

The first message announces the warning: “Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come.... (Rev 14,7). The second message declares the judgment of God upon spiritual Babylon (Rev 14,8). The third message deals with the judgment upon the people who worship the beast and its image (14,9-11).

The third vision points to the second coming of Christ where the imagery portrays the angel harvesting the ripened cluster of vines with a sickle which symbolizes the executive judgment of God for the wicked and the harvest of grains which indicated the people of God (Rev 14,14-20). The significance of the sequence of the vision is that the harvest is preceded by the sounding of the judgment, “the hour of the judgment has come” (Rev 14,7). Thus, the judgment comes before harvest.⁷⁹

Christ's ascension and His ministry in heaven

In this section, we discuss the significance of Christ's ascension to heaven and the ministry He continued there. The goal of the study is to comprehend how Christian believers might apply the biblical teachings about Christ's heavenly ministry. The research concentrated on the examination of Jesus' work in the celestial sanctuary as he went to heaven rather than on the concept of ascension as a whole. The study is divided into three parts: the biblical introduction of Christ's ascension, the significance of Jesus' sitting at the right hand of God, the inauguration of Jesus as a king-priest, and under which, the intercessory ministry of Christ is explained.

⁷⁹ John A. Bollier, commenting on the passage, said that the pre-advent judgment in the Book of Revelation “is educative in purpose rather than vindictive and retributive. They are meant to bring both the church and the world to repentance”. See John A. Bollier, “Judgment in the Apocalypse”, *Interpretation* (January 1953): 18. According to Bollier, the hour of judgment in Revelation 14 comes between the series of judgment. The seven seals and trumpets (6-13) followed by the judgment in Revelation 14 and succeeded by the seven last plagues, the judgment of Babylon, the beast, the false prophets and the wicked (Rev 15-20). Thus, the investigative judgment is before the second coming. See *ibid.*, 22.

The biblical understanding of Christ's ascension

The New Testament interpretation of Christ's ascension is rooted in the ascension in the Old Testament like Enoch (Gen 5,24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2,1-12).⁸⁰ After the exile from Babylon, while the Jewish were hoping for the Davidic Kingdom to restore, the two motifs emerge one, the apocalyptic "Son of Man" who will sit at the right hand of Yahweh, to restore the Davidic Kingdom (Ps 110,1), and which will be an eschatological fulfillment with a result of the everlasting dominion of the Son of Man among the nations, kindred and tongues (Dan 7,13-14). The other is the "suffering servant" (Isa 52,13; 53,12) who will sacrifice Himself as a lamb, fulfilling the priestly work who will, in turn, become the eternal high priest. In Matthew, the final appearance of Jesus dealt with a theme "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matt 28,18). However, the actual ascension of Christ is not explicitly recorded in Matthew.

Thus, only Luke in the Gospel is accepted to have the ascension story accurately among the gospel (Luke 24,50-51), because the gospel of Mark is believed to be a later insertion.⁸¹ Acts is the only book in the New Testament depicting the scene of ascension where Jesus was taken up in heaven after telling the disciples to wait for the promise of the Holy Spirit, thus, two men covered in white robes appear to the disciples and notify them that same Jesus will come back again (Acts 1,7.8). The epistle also mentioned that Christ is not merely raised from the dead, but also seated at the right hand of God and those who are baptized will also be raised like Jesus and be seated at God's right hand in the heavenly places (Eph 2,6; Col 2,12; 3,1).

In the Gospel of John, Jesus told Nathanael the ascending and descending "of the angel of God upon the son of man" to imply that he will be exalted (John 1,51). He also told Nicodemus that "no one has

⁸⁰ Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to heaven in Jewish and Christian apocalypses* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1993).

⁸¹ Lois E. Malcolm, "He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty", in *Exploring and proclaiming the Apostles' creed*, ed. by Roger Van Harn (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 161-172.

ascended into heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven” (John 1,31). Though Jesus was glorified on the cross (Phil 2,6-11), His glorification was not completed till He returns to His Father (John 7,39; 12,16.23; 13,31.32; 17,5). One can notice when Mary was weeping near the tomb, she mistakes Jesus as a gardener, and as she recognized that it was Jesus, she attempts to touch Him. In responding to her, Jesus says “Do not hold on me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father”, and admonished her to spread the message that He will ascend to the Father (John 20,17).

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, Jesus was depicted as a sacrifice and high priest who sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven and who is superior to the angels (Heb 1,1-4; 8,1; 10,12; 12,2). Accordingly, He ministers in the heavenly sanctuary which God pitched (Heb 8,1.2) and gives humanity a confidence to enter the heavenly sanctuary through his blood (Heb 9,11-14; Ps 50,13; Isa 1,11). The first Epistle of Timothy mentioned Christ as “received up in glory”, and finally in the Book of Revelation, for those who overcome and conquer, Jesus, declares His promise: “I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I conquered and sat down with my Father on His throne” (Rev 3,20-22). Thus, one can presuppose that to sit with the Father in heaven is for the ones conquering their life with Jesus.

The significance of Jesus' sitting at the right hand of God

When Christ ascended to heaven, he sat at the right hand of God (Eph 1,20), and God had put everything under his feet (Eph 1,21). The expression “sit at God's right hand” occurs about 20 times in the New Testament.⁸² This statement is solely taken from Psalm 110. David writes: “The Lord (Yahweh) says to my lord (יְהוָה) ‘Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstools’”. It is clear that the later word “lord” refers to the Messiah according to the conversation of Jesus and the Pharisees (Matt 22,41-45; Mark 12,35-37; Luke 20,41-44).

⁸² Matthew 22,44; 26,64; Mark 12,36; 14,62; Luke 20,42-43; 22,69; Acts 2,33-34; 5,31; 7,55-56; Romans 8,34; Ephesians 1,20; Colossians 3,1; Hebrews 1,3.13; 8,1; 10,12; 12,2; 1 Peter 3,22.

The expression “sit at my right hand” means a “place or position of honor” but the intention of the expression is not about the physical presence of where Jesus sits in the sanctuary.⁸³ Thus, Jesus sitting at the right hand of God indicates His kingship when he ascended to heaven, accordingly, the question may arise: of what nature did Christ reign? Concerning this, he said: “My kingship is not of this world; if my kingship were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews; but my kingship is not from the world” (John 13,36). Thus, the kingdom of Christ is the kingdom of grace and the requirement for entrance is repentance and grace (Mark 1,15). While the Pharisees were expecting the worldly kingdom, Jesus said to them: “the kingdom is within you” (Luke 17,21).

After Christ’s ascension, he reigns from the throne of grace in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 4,16). The New Testament authors understand that the time of Christ is the climax of the ages (Heb 9,26) for this reason, they considered the era of Christ as last days (Heb 1,2; Acts 2,17). However, this present time is also referred in the scripture as the time that will be ended with the second coming (Matt 24,32-33; Heb 9,28). Thus, when Christ seated at the right hand and rule from the throne of grace, the kingdom extends through his body, the church (1 Cor 12,12-14; 27; Eph 5,23). In addition, the rulership of Christ would always be subordinate to the Father, because of his incarnated nature which he chose to be for eternity (1 Cor 15,28).

⁸³ Holbrook explained the meaning of sitting at the right hand of God this way: “To sit at God’s right hand” is a figurative phrase indicating the Savior’s new, exalted dignity, full authority and majesty, His rank and preeminence over the created universe. Christ Himself speaks of the glorified redeemed in a similar manner when He promises: ‘They will sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne’ (Rev 3:21). Obviously, the phrasing speaks of their dignity as ‘fellow heirs with Christ’ (Rom 8:17) and not of a sitting on a single, literal throne which would be impossible for the millions of redeemed persons”.

See Frank B Holbrook, “Christ’s inauguration as King Priest,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 5, no. 2 (1994): 139.

The inauguration of Jesus as a High Priest

On the day of the Pentecost, Peter proclaimed that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the result of Christ's enthronement in heaven. He said in Acts 2,32-36:

This Jesus God raised up...Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear. For David did not ascend into the heavens; but he himself says, 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet.' Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

Weeks later, Peter made a statement that indicated that Jesus was enthroned in heaven not merely as a king but also as a priest. He said that Jesus Christ is the one God had exalted as prince and He granted repentance and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5,31). Peter implies the priesthood of Jesus here because, in the Old Testament, the work of a priest is concerning sin and repentance. The author of Hebrew made it more clear in stating that Jesus became a high priest: "Now the point in what we are saying is this, we have such a High priest, one who sits at the right hand of the throne of God in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and a true tent which is set up not by man but by Lord" (Heb 8,1-2). One can understand that Jesus was not only enthroned as a king but also as a priest.

The priesthood of Jesus signifies that on behalf of humanity, he can represent them before the throne in heaven, the author of Hebrew put it right this way: "Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect so that he might become merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of many people. For he has suffered and been tempted, he can help those who are tempted" (Heb 2,17-18). John the beloved also said: "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 1,2). Thus, when Jesus ascended to heaven, He became our advocate as who understands all our needs, suffering, and pain, the author of Hebrew stated this way in Hebrews 4,14-16:

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Thus, the priestly work in the Old Testament was perfectly fulfilled in Jesus when he ascended to heaven, sitting at the right hand of God, and interceding on behalf of humanity.

The intercessory ministry of Christ and its significance

The New Testament declares that there is only one intercessor between God and humanity, the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim 2,3-6). As mentioned in the earlier section, the Bible is clear that Jesus is in heaven and intercedes for humans in the heavenly sanctuary.⁸⁴ The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews makes plainly that Jesus is the High Priest and the intercessor of humanity who is presently advocating for sinners in heaven (Heb 7,25). The Old Testament also mentioned the Suffering servant who intercedes for His people (Isa 53,12). It was recognized by the early church as Jesus the Messiah (Acts 8,27-35). Jesus Himself in His time prayed for the believers and the Gospel of Luke particularly points out that he prayed for Peter (John 17; Luk 22,32). The Book of Daniel mentioned Michael and his act of standing up, which implies according to the context of the chapter, that He will save his people from their oppression (Dan 12,1). Similarly, when Stephen was stoned to death, Jesus was standing for him, which indicates His intercessory ministry.⁸⁵ Many biblical scholars had come to the same conclusion regarding Jesus

⁸⁴ Mark 16,19; Luke 24,50-51; Acts 1,9-11; Rom 5,10-21; Rom 8,34; 1 John 2,1; Heb 4,15-16; 8,1-2.

⁸⁵ There is a difference between standing and sitting regarding the act of Jesus near the throne in heaven, According to Moskala, standing refers to the intercessory ministry and sitting refers to the victory, honor, kingship of Jesus (Matt 26,64; Mark 16,19; Rom 8,34; Ephe 1,20; Col 3,1; Heb 12,2; cf. Ps 110,1). Moskala further explained that standing could also be defined as the action of judging. See Jiří Moskala, "The meaning of the intercessory ministry of Jesus Christ on our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary", *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 28, no. 1 (2017): 7.

as the intercessor in heaven,⁸⁶ however, can one find a genuine reason for his intercessory ministry?

The notion that Jesus has to beg the Father on behalf of humanity is not appropriate. Reasons for this are seen in the gospel of John: "In that day you will ask in my name, I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed me that I came from God" (John 16,26-27). The famous verse of John says that God loves the world that he gave his only son (John 3,16). It is not God who needs to change His attitude but human beings who have to reconcile with Him, Paul exhorts that one should reconcile to God (2 Cor 5,20) because He died for humanity while there are sinners (Rom 5,10).⁸⁷

The intercessory ministry can be classified into two parts: "revelatory and redemptive", first, for revelatory intercession, since Jesus is divine (John 1,1-3; Rom 9,5; Col 1,15-16). He represented Godhead to humanity, as a mediator and intercessor. He reveals the character of the Father to humanity perfectly (Matt 11,27; Luke 10,22; John 17,6).⁸⁸ Even in the Old Testament, God intercedes for His people (1 Sam 2,25; Job 16,20). Jesus also explained the ministry of the Holy Spirit as an advocate (John ,16-17; 16,7-15). Proverbs 8,22-31 also gave a hint that

⁸⁶ Emil Brunner, *The mediator: A study of the central doctrine of the Christian faith*, trans. by Olive Wyon (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster John Knox Press, 1947); Edward Heppenstall, *Our high Priest: Jesus Christ in the heavenly sanctuary* (Washington DC: Review and Herald, 1972); G. C. Berkouwer, *The work of Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1965); Louis Berkhof, *Systematic theology*, new ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996); Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic theology: An introduction to biblical doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994); Millard J. Erickson, *Christian theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013).

⁸⁷ Moskala pointed out of what intercessory ministry of Christ does not mean: 1) Christ does not need to beg the heavenly Father to led him forgive the sinners, 2) God is not angry and Christ is not attempting to appease God who is angry, 3) Intercessor does not mean Christ will change the attitude of the Father towards humanity, 4) Jesus does not try to reconcile God to humanity, but reconcile humanity to God. See Moskala, "Intercessory ministry", 8.

⁸⁸ Torrance support this by saying: "Thus as both to incarnate revelation of God and the embodied knowledge of God, Jesus constitutes in himself the Way, the Truth and the Life through whom alone the access to God the Father is freely open for all people of humanity. That is to say, as the incarnate Word and Truth of God Jesus Christ in His own personal Being are identical with the Revelation which he mediates". See Thomas F. Torrance, *The mediation of Christ*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983), 19.

Jesus is the intermediary between the triune God and the created beings. Christ was the one who represents the principle and character of Love from the beginning of Creation.⁸⁹ Second, Jesus is going through the experience of humanity (Matt 4,1-11; John 1,14; Rom 8,3; Phil 2,5-11; 1 John 4,2-3), and suffers like us (Heb 4,15-16), thus, can be a representative of human beings before the Father in heaven (1 Tim 2,5). Thus, the definition of the intercessory ministry of Jesus is bridging divine and human through himself for the cause of salvation and restoration of humanity, and to reveal the true loving character of God.

Conclusion

According to the survey in the Bible, the concept of investigation is frequent from the Old Testament to the New Testament. However, among the references of the Bible concerning the concept of investigation, the pre-advent judgment is primarily found in the Book of Daniel. The observation of the study shows that several non-Seventh-day Adventists scholars support the judgment before Christ's second coming. As surveyed in this article, the doctrine of pre-advent judgment is biblical based on Daniel 7, 8, and 9. The Book of Revelation also shows an explicit sequence of the pre-advent judgment (Rev 14). It is, therefore, possible to conclude that the doctrine has a strong biblical basis.

However, the primary concern of the article is the compatibility of the Epistle to the Hebrews with the pre-advent judgment. It is clear enough that Jesus ascended to heaven, but the problem is particularly with the location of Jesus' ministry in heaven. The expression such as "seated at the right hand of God" gives a presupposition that Jesus must probably seat in the Most Holy place where the thrones are set up. This idea may lead to a conclusion that the expression "seated at the right" is not compatible with the pre-advent judgment at all.

The other subjects like intercessory ministry and High priest Christology have no conflict with the pre-advent judgment because

⁸⁹ Richard M Davidson, "Proverbs 8 and the place of Christ in the Trinity," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 17, no. 1 (2006): 33-54.

when one can conclude that Jesus in His ascension started His heavenly ministry and in 1844, he continued his ministry in the Most Holy place. The nuances that one may ask is the expression of Christ's sitting at the right hand of God which would seem to incline more toward the conclusion that Jesus' ministry started from the Most Holy place. However, this doubt will be solved in part two of this article because this article, though supplying efficient evidence for both the theology of pre-advent judgment and Christ's ascension, does not provide many clues on the compatibility of these doctrines.