



(As a side note, it is worth pointing out that the Mosaic Law does alter the meaning of “minchah” as it is used in earlier in Genesis. For instance, the first use of “minchah” occurs in Genesis 4:3-5 where it is used to describe Cain and Abel’s offerings. In Genesis 4, Cain’s “minchah” is an offering of grain while Abel’s “minchah” is an offering from his flock. In other words, Abel’s “minchah” is an animal sacrifice, but Cain’s is a “minchah” of grain. And Cain’s grain “minchah” is rejected while Abel’s animal “minchah” is accepted. Put another way, in Genesis 4, God accepts a “minchah” involving animal sacrifice, but rejects a “minchah” of grain. This contrasts with the Law of Moses which uses “minchah” to refer to grain offerings which God had instituted. Also, unlike Genesis 4’s application of “minchah” to Abel’s offering from his herd, the Law of Moses does not use “minchah” to refer to animal sacrifices. Although it will not ultimately be necessary, this change in the usage of “minchah” within Moses’ own writings would perhaps provide a precedent allowing for some shift away from the original use of “zevah” as well.)

The potential difficulty with understanding the Book of Daniel to refer only to those offerings which not involve animal sacrifice comes not from Daniel 9:27’s use of “minchah,” but its use of “zevah” (02077).

Throughout the Old Testament, “zevah” (02077) always involves an animal sacrifice. Therefore, Daniel 9:27’s use of “zevah” (02077) seems to indicate something that is nowhere else required by Daniel’s discussion of these end-times events. It would seem to imply the occurrence of animal sacrifice at the premillennial temple.

In contrast to Daniel’s consistent use of “tamiyd,” we should also note that “zevah” (02077) is never used in the Law of Moses to refer to a daily (“tamiyd”) offering. Rather, “zevah” offerings are most often associated with the “peace offering” (which are called “shelem,” Strong’s number 08002). (See passages such as Lev. 3:1, 3, 6; 4:10, etc.) In fact, of the 66 times “zevah” occurs in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, it refers to “peace offerings” 43 times. And, as passages like Leviticus 7:15 and 19:5 indicate, in the Law of Moses, peace offerings relate to voluntary offerings in contrast to things like the burnt offerings and other rituals which were mandated to be performed by the priest on a daily or regular basis. Moreover, the Law of Moses consistently distinguishes between “zevah” and burnt offerings (the type of animal sacrifices that were required daily). (See Ex. 10:25, 18:12; Josh. 22:26, 2 Kings 10:24, 16:15, Ps. 50:8, 51:19, Is. 56:7, Ezekiel 40:42, and Hosea 6:6.)

These general distinctions make it difficult to conclude that Daniel 9:27’s use of “zevah” is intended to refer to the “tamiyd” which included the daily burnt offering (that did involve an animal sacrifice). What then is Daniel referring to by his use of “zevah” in Daniel 9:27?

A study of “zevah” alongside other types of offerings from the greater Old Testament period and more specifically from the Law of Moses is helpful regarding this question.

One thing that can be learned from such a study is that there are several kinds of offerings involving the sacrificing of animals in the Old Testament. These various animal sacrifices had different purposes and were referred to using different Hebrew words (such as the burnt offering or “olah,” 05930; the sin offering or “chatta-ah” 02403; the trespass offering “asham” 0817; etc.). Of these types of animal sacrifices, the word “zevah” specifically is used to refer to sacrifices which involve the sharing of a communal meal. This meal was to be shared by the Levitical priests and non-priestly participants alike.

This particular characteristic of the “zevah” offering (as an offering resulting in a fellowship meal) is seen in its earliest uses. For instance, Genesis 31:54 uses “zevah” to refer to Jacob offering a sacrifice and then eating bread with his brethren. Perhaps more importantly, Exodus 10:25, 12:27, and 23:18 all use “zevah” to refer to the Passover meal that the Israelites were to share in commemoration of their Exodus from Egypt. In accordance with this, Vine’s Bible Dictionary explains that “zebah” (or “zevah”) specifically denotes the sharing of a meal as a result of the sacrifice.

SACRIFICE – zebah (2077), “sacrifice.” ... **The zebah was not like the burnt offering (olah), which was completely burnt on the altar;** and it was unlike the sin offering (hatta’t), where the meat was given to the priest, for most of the meat was given to the priest, for most of the meat of the zebah was returned to the person who made the “sacrifice.” The fat was burned on the altar (Lev. 3:4-5), and the blood was poured out around the altar (3:2). **The person who made the zebah had to share the meat with the officiating priest (Exod. 29:28; Lev. 7:31-35; Deut. 18:3).** In view of the fact that the people shared in the eating of the zebah, the “sacrifice” became a communal meal in which the Lord hosted His people. Zephaniah’s message of judgment is based on this conception of “sacrifice”: “Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God: for the day of the Lord is at hand: for the Lord has prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guest.” The Israelite came to the temple with the animal to be sacrificed. It was butchered, boiled, and eaten in the area of the sanctuary (1 Sam. 2:13). Apart from the sanctuaries, the Israelites also celebrated God’s goodness together in their native villages. The story of Samuel gives several good illustrations of this custom (cf. 1 Sam. 9:13; 16:2-3.)... The Septuagint gives the following translation: thusia (“sacrifice; offering”). The KJV gives these senses: “sacrifice: offering.” - Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. p. 210

Likewise, Encyclopedia Judaica also reports that peace offerings were a communal offering that always involved a fellowship meal. This is important because earlier we established that the peace offering is most associated with “zevah” (Strong’s 02077) in the Law of Moses.

**Sacrifice - The term "peace offerings"** (the singular שְׁלֵמִים, shelem, occurs only in Amos 5:22, otherwise pl. שְׁלָמִים, shelamim; Lev. 3; 7:11–36). **This is the basic sacrifice of all communal offerings; the others are simply different types of the peace offering...Certain portions of the offering were allotted to the priest; he was permitted to eat it in any ritually clean place and to share it with his family** (Lev. 7:14 and 30–36), whereas the other sacrifices had to be eaten in the sanctuary compound (Num. 18:10–11). He received one of the cakes and the breast as a wave offering (cf. below), and the right thigh as a "contribution" from the offerer. This latter is the so-called heave offering; the technical term used, terumah (תְּרוּמָה), though developed from the root signifying "to be high" and meaning "that which is lifted up," did not represent a special type of presentation ceremony (in contrast to the wave offering, below). **Every peace offering culminated in a communal meal.** Except for the portions burned on the altar or assigned to the priest, the sacrificial animal was given to the offerer. **He used it as food for a communal meal for himself, his family, and also the levite in his community** (Deut. 12:12, 18–19). **This had to take place at the divinely appointed sanctuary** (Deut. 12:6–7, 11–12, 15–19, 26; cf. I Sam 1:3–4), **and very strict rules of purity had to be observed by the participants** (Lev. 7:19–21). The meat of a thanksgiving offering had to be eaten on the same day as the sacrifice (Lev. 7:15), while that of the votive or freewill offerings could be finished off on the next day (Lev. 7:16–18). – Encyclopedia Judaica

And lastly, TorahClass.com similarly explains the uniqueness of the “zevah” (“zevah shelamim” – peace offering) as a sacred meal.

**In Hebrew this offering is called the “Zevah Shelamim”, or more often as simply the Zevah.** And, not all scholars would translate these words to mean Peace Offering. Some of your Bibles translate it as the “offering of well-being”, or the “offering of fellowship”...**Now this Peace Offering of Leviticus chapter 3 introduces us to a new class of offering: the Zevah.** The Zevah is a lower class of offering than either the ‘Olah or the Minchah; and this is reflected in the fact that in the Olah and the Minchah only the priests were permitted to use or benefit from any part of the sacrificial offering. In the ‘Olah, the priests could keep the animal skin; in the Minchah the priests could keep the bulk of the grain offering as their own personal food; in fact they were required to eat that food within the courtyard of the Tabernacle, for it was considered a sacred meal. **The Zevah, the Peace Offering, class of sacrifice also was considered a sacred meal; however this sacred meal could be shared with the worshipper.....a non-priest.** – torahclass.com, Lesson 5, (Leviticus) Chapter 3, Tom Bradford, <http://www.torahclass.com/old-testament-studies/36-old-testament-studies-leviticus/157-lesson-5-chapter3>

In this study we have been looking at terms used in Daniel and specifically in Daniel 9:27. The essential question behind our investigation deals with what kinds of offerings will be performed (and eventually stopped) at the rebuilt Temple in the end-times. Most of Daniel’s references discuss the daily offerings that were made at the Temple. But in those verses, he does not specify which of the daily offerings he has in mind. Perhaps he means all of them. Perhaps he only means

particular types of daily offering. But Daniel 9:27 uses the word “zevah” which is a typical word for an animal sacrifice that functions as a shared communal meal.

In addition to what we have learned from Old Testament terminology and Mosaic offerings we also need to consider details provided in the New Testament that relate to this essential question. These texts will have some bearing on what types of Temple activities are indicated in these prophetic texts.

In the first section of our Premillennial Temple study we discuss Revelation 11:1-2 wherein John depicts the future Temple which will be built prior to Christ’s return. In that study we noted that John specifically tells us that the Temple house itself will be built, but the court that is outside of the Temple house will not be built.

**Revelation 11:1** And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and **measure the temple (3485) of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. 2 But the court which is without the temple (3485) leave out, and measure it not;** for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

It is important to be aware that the New Testament has two words to refer to the Temple. Only one of these words is used here by John. It is the word “naos” (3485) and it refers only to the Temple house itself, the building consisting of two rooms, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place (the Holy of Holies). The “naos” does not include the courts that surrounded the Temple.

The second Greek word used to discuss the Temple in the New Testament is “heiron” (2411). Unlike “naos,” “heiron” refers to the entire Temple complex including all of the courts, gates, colonnades, and support structures. With the distinction between these two terms in mind, it is clear that Revelation 11:1-2 is informing us that the premillennial Temple will only include the Temple house itself and not the courts outside of the Temple.

Outside the Temple house itself, the first court was the court of the priests. It was in the court of the priests (on the brazen altar) that animal sacrifices were killed. No animals were killed in the Temple house itself. Likewise, while Revelation 11:1 does mention an altar, it is important to note that the Temple had more than one altar. As we mentioned, the brazen altar where the bodies of (most) animals were burned was in the court of the priests. But there was also a gold altar of incense which was located in the outer room of the Temple house itself (Exodus 30:1-8).

So, verse 1 is explaining that the Temple house and the incense altar (that is within it) will be part of this future rebuilding. But verse 2 explains that things that are outside the Temple house will not be included. Verse two specifies that the court of the priests will not be built and neither will the brazen altar that was located within it. Without the court of the priests and the brazen altar, there is no place for the sacrificing of animals according to the Mosaic requirements.

Now it could be suggested that Revelation 11:1-2 is not intended to be a list of the parts of the Temple that are built and the parts that are not built, but rather provides a list of those parts of the Temple that will be defiled and those which will not be. According to this view, verse 2 would be specifying that the court of the priests will be defiled while the Temple house itself will not be.

This consideration is flawed for two main reasons. First, both Jesus and Paul make it clear that the antichrist will enter into the Temple house itself and defile it (Matthew 24:15, Mark 13:14, and 2 Thessalonians 2). Second, Daniel clearly indicates that the “tamiyd” offerings will be stopped by the antichrist. Several aspects of the “tamiyd” offering took place in the Temple house itself (the filling of the oil of the menorah, the burning of incense on the incense altar, and the placing of the show bread). So, if the antichrist only gets as far as the court outside the Temple house, then he would not be in a position to defile the Temple house itself or cause the cessation of activities that took place within it.

These observations indicate that Revelation 11:1-2 is informing us not of what will or won't be defiled by the antichrist, but what will and won't be built. And, the lack of a court of priests or a brazen altar means that the activities stopped by the antichrist are those which do not involve or require the court of the priests or the brazen altar. This leaves us with the daily supplying of oil to the menorah to keep it lit, the placing of the showbread, and the burning of incense. All of these activities take place within the Temple building itself (not in the court) and are fittingly identified through Daniel's use of the term “tamiyd.”

Besides the lack of an altar and court for conducting animal sacrifices, in passages like Hebrews 7:11-14 the New Testament indicates that the specifications regarding the Levitical priesthood have also been removed. In the Law of Moses, the only persons who were authorized to perform animal sacrifices were Levites who descended from Aaron. Furthermore, the New Testament nowhere instructs Christ's followers to conduct animal sacrifices. Therefore, when the new covenant sets aside the Levitical order, it creates a situation without priests who have been commanded and authorized to offer animal sacrifices.

Here it would be useful to take a closer look at Hebrews 7 and take note of its relevant remarks regarding the current specifications and requirements for priestly service.

**Hebrews 7:5** And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: 6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. 7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. 8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. 9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. 10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

**11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? 12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. 13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. 15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,**

In this passage we see a discussion of priestly service and a contrast between two different orders of priests. Verse 5 mentions the priesthood under the Law of Moses. It states that under Law of Moses those who served at the altar of the Temple were required to be from the tribe of Levi through Aaron. However, verse 12 states that the new covenant which Jesus established brought about a change in the priesthood. Verses 11-15 explain that the new covenant no longer specifies that priests had to be from the tribe of Levi or descendants of Aaron. Although Christ was a descendant of Abraham and an Israelite, he was not a descendant of Levi or of Aaron. Rather, he was from another tribe altogether, the tribe of Judah.

However, Hebrews doesn't simply place Christ outside the Levitical order of priests and into a new order. It discusses Christ's priesthood as part of an order of priests to which Melchizedek also belonged. Melchizedek exemplifies a priestly order recognized by God which predates the Law of Moses and the Levitical priests (the descendants of Aaron). More importantly, Melchizedek is a priest of God who is not a descendant of Aaron or of Levi, but moreover he is not even an Israelite or a descendant of Abraham. Therefore, this passage is declaring that the specifications of priestly service no longer require someone to have lineage through Abraham, Israel, Levi, and Aaron. This conclusion is supported by other scriptural texts.

First, there are several locations in the New Testament that attest to the priesthood of all of Christ's followers, both Jewish and Gentile (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:4-7, 5:9-10, 20:4-6). While the New Testament does offer information on our priestly service, we should note again that there is no place where we are commanded or authorized to make animal sacrifices.

Second, we can see from the Book of Numbers that when God instructed Moses to take a census of the people of Israel every tribe was to be counted except the tribe of Levi. As verses 47-51 explain, the tribe of Levi was left out of the census because they had been set apart by God for priestly service and to attend to the tabernacle. (To be sure, the people are still divided into twelve. The omission of the tribe of Levi is made up for by numbering the tribe of Joseph according to two sub-tribes named by after his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. See verses 32-35.)

**Numbers 1:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses** in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, 2 **Take ye the**

**sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names, every male by their polls; 3 From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies. 4 And with you there shall be a man of every tribe; every one head of the house of his fathers. 5 And these are the names of the men that shall stand with you: of the tribe of Reuben; Elizur the son of Shedeur. 6 Of Simeon; Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. 7 Of Judah; Nahshon the son of Amminadab. 8 Of Issachar; Nethaneel the son of Zuar. 9 Of Zebulun; Eliab the son of Helon. 10 Of the children of Joseph: of Ephraim; Elishama the son of Ammihud: of Manasseh; Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. 11 Of Benjamin; Abidan the son of Gideoni. 12 Of Dan; Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. 13 Of Asher; Pagiel the son of Ocran. 14 Of Gad; Eliasaph the son of Deuel. 15 Of Naphtali; Ahira the son of Enan. 16 These were the renowned of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thousands in Israel. 17 And Moses and Aaron took these men which are expressed by their names: 18 And they assembled all the congregation together on the first day of the second month, and they declared their pedigrees after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, by their polls. 19 As the LORD commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the wilderness of Sinai. 20 And the children of Reuben, Israel's eldest son, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 21 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Reuben, were forty and six thousand and five hundred. 22 Of the children of Simeon, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, those that were numbered of them, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 23 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Simeon, were fifty and nine thousand and three hundred. 24 Of the children of Gad, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 25 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Gad, were forty and five thousand six hundred and fifty. 26 Of the children of Judah, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 27 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Judah, were threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred. 28 Of the children of Issachar, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 29 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Issachar, were fifty and four thousand and four hundred. 30 Of the children of Zebulun, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 31 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Zebulun, were fifty and seven thousand and four hundred. 32 Of the children of Joseph, namely, of the children of Ephraim, by their generations, after their families, by the house of**

their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 33 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Ephraim, were forty thousand and five hundred. 34 **Of the children of Manasseh**, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 35 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Manasseh, were thirty and two thousand and two hundred. 36 **Of the children of Benjamin**, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 37 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Benjamin, were thirty and five thousand and four hundred. 38 **Of the children of Dan**, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 39 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Dan, were threescore and two thousand and seven hundred. 40 **Of the children of Asher**, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 41 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Asher, were forty and one thousand and five hundred. 42 **Of the children of Naphtali**, throughout their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; 43 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Naphtali, were fifty and three thousand and four hundred. 44 **These are those that were numbered, which Moses and Aaron numbered, and the princes of Israel, being twelve men: each one was for the house of his fathers.** 45 **So were all those that were numbered of the children of Israel, by the house of their fathers**, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel; 46 Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty. 47 **But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them.** 48 **For the LORD had spoken unto Moses, saying,** 49 **Only thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel:** 50 **But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle.** 51 And when the tabernacle setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down: and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

We can see then that the omission of the tribe of Levi in the count of God's people designates their appointment to priestly service and ministry at the tabernacle. However, we have noted that in New Testament passages like Hebrews 7, 1 Peter 2, and Revelation 1, 5, and 20, we are informed that priestly service is no longer restricted to descendants of Abraham, Israel, Levi, and ultimately Aaron. This conclusion is also supported by the numbering of God's people provided in Revelation 7. In Revelation 7, we can note several contrasts to the census provided in Numbers 1.

First, this New Testament counting only numbers the tribe of Joseph as one tribe. It is not divided into Ephraim and Manasseh. This is due to another important contrast with the Book of Numbers. Here, the tribe of Levi is included just as any other tribe.

**Revelation 7:3** Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. 4 **And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.** 5 **Of the tribe of Juda** were sealed twelve thousand. **Of the tribe of Reuben** were sealed twelve thousand. **Of the tribe of Gad** were sealed twelve thousand. 6 **Of the tribe of Aser** were sealed twelve thousand. **Of the tribe of Nephthalim** were sealed twelve thousand. **Of the tribe of Manasses** were sealed twelve thousand. 7 **Of the tribe of Simeon** were sealed twelve thousand. **Of the tribe of Levi** were sealed twelve thousand. **Of the tribe of Issachar** were sealed twelve thousand. 8 **Of the tribe of Zabulon** were sealed twelve thousand. **Of the tribe of Joseph** were sealed twelve thousand. **Of the tribe of Benjamin** were sealed twelve thousand.

From this we can see that God no longer sets apart the tribe of Levi from the other tribes. The priesthood is no longer restricted to or associated with the Levites and the descendants of Aaron. This conclusion is also supported by what immediately follows in Revelation 7. After the count of the Israelites by tribe, we have reference to a large group that is beyond count and which is identified as inclusive of all nations, kindreds, peoples, and tongues. In verses 13-15 we are told that this group is clothed in white robes (verse 9) and serves in the Temple. So, we again see that in the New Testament period the priesthood is no longer restricted to people whose lineage can be traced through Abraham, Israel, Levi, and Aaron. Rather, it is inclusive of both Jews and Gentiles.

**Revelation 7:9** **After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues,** stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, **clothed with white robes,** and palms in their hands; 10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. 11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. 13 **And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes?** and whence came they? 14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. **And he said to me, These** are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 **Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple:** and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

From our study of these passages, we can see then that the premillennial Temple will not include a court of the priests, nor a brazen altar for animal sacrifice. Likewise, the New Testament sets aside the Levitical order which was authorized to conduct animal sacrifices and replaces it with a priestly order that is nowhere authorized to conduct animal sacrifices. These considerations should be taken into account as we try to understand what Daniel 9:27 is referring to by its use of “zevah.”

With that in mind, we return to the central question of our study. What priestly services does the scripture indicate will be performed in the Temple that is built prior to Christ’s return?

It is perhaps natural to be at first led to conclude that the rebuilt Temple will be operated by Levitical priests descended from Aaron who will offer up the annual, seasonal, monthly, weekly, and daily animal sacrifices prescribed in the Law of Moses on the brazen altar which was located in the court of the priests. Even though this view may be a common one in the modern church, we have seen that there are scriptural details which are problematic for it.

First, with the exception of the language he uses in chapter 9, verse 27, Daniel repeatedly specifies that it is the daily (“tamiyd”) offerings (and not the annual, seasonal, monthly, or weekly offerings) which comprise the Temple activity which will be brought to a stop by the antichrist. Second, the New Testament provides several different lines of evidence that priestly service is no longer restricted to the descendants of Abraham through Israel, through Levi, and ultimately through Aaron. Rather, through Christ, priestly service has been opened up to include people from all nations. And finally, Revelation 11:1-2 indicates that the court of the priests and the brazen altar of animal sacrifice (which was located within the court of the priests) will not be constructed prior to Christ’s return.

What then do we make of Daniel 9:27’s use of “zevah” and “minchah”? As we noted earlier, the term “minchah” is most often used by Moses in reference to the daily (“tamiyd”) offering of grains. This fits very well with Daniel’s use of “tamiyd” in every other passage in which he discusses the subject of Temple activity in the end times. But what about “zevah”?

Several lines of evidence lead us to conclude that Daniel’s use of “zevah” should be understood to refer to a sacred fellowship meal that is the result of a sacrificial act. This is completely appropriate since the New Testament indicates that Christ is our Passover sacrifice (Matthew 26:18-19, 26-28; Mark 14:16, 22-24; Luke 22:13-15, 19-20; and 1 Corinthians 5:7) and since one of the earliest uses of “zevah” in the Old Testament is a reference to Passover (Exodus 10:25, 12:27, and 23:18). Furthermore, Christ instituted that his followers regularly share a sacred meal together with one another in memory of his sacrifice. He even refers to the main elements of that meal as “my body” and “my blood” which were sacrificed for us (Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24). Paul also refers to the communion meal as representing the sacrifice of Christ’s body and blood in 1

Corinthians 10:18 where he infers it is analogous to the altar from which the Jewish people partook. Similarly, Hebrews 13:9-12 compares the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as analogous but superior to the tabernacle altar from which the Jewish priests ate. Such passages make it clear that the New Testament communion meal is a modified continuation of the practice of the “zevah” under the Law of Moses. This conclusion also mirrors Acts 2:46 and 5:42 which both report that the first-century church (under the leadership of the apostles) met daily in the Temple and daily shared the communal meal Jesus instituted as a modified continuation of the Passover sacrificial meal. Likewise, the Law of Moses required that the fellowship meals that were shared from peace offerings (“zevah”) at the Temple and at Passover were to take place in Jerusalem (Exodus 23:14-17, Deuteronomy 16:1-16).

These factors from within the Book of Daniel, from the greater Old Testament presentation of Temple ritual, and from the New Testament discussion of priestly service and the premillennial Temple all support the following interpretation of Daniel’s depiction of the practice and cessation of Temple service in the end times. The antichrist will bring an end to both the daily Temple offerings such as the incense, the oil, and the showbread as well as the communal meals that are occurring in Jerusalem during the first half of the final week of years before Christ’s return. (Animal sacrifices will not be offered in the rebuilt Temple.)

This understanding does not require or invent a concept of priesthood that would have been outside of Daniel’s understanding. Melchizedek is identified in Moses’ writings as a legitimate priest of God serving in Jerusalem (“Salem”) even though he was not descended from Abraham, Israel, Levi, and Aaron. Since this precedent concerning Melchizedek is fundamental in the writings of Moses and in David’s depictions of the Messiah (Psalm 110:4), this interpretation of Daniel 9:27 does not violate a grammatical-historical exegesis of this passage. While it is true, that “zevah” may here be used with some slight distinction, it should also be noted that our interpretation is well within the central Old Testament usage and meaning of this word. The central depiction of a sacrifice that becomes a communal meal is retained with Christ himself simply satisfying the sacrificial element. More to the point, this understanding of Daniel 9:27 does not remove the sacrificial component of “zevah.” On the contrary, it recognizes Christ as the sacrificial lamb whose body we share in our communal meal. Ultimately, New Testament Christians should no more expect the communal meal of the “zevah” in Daniel 9:27 to pertain to an animal sacrifice instead of Christ’s death any more than we should expect the reconstitution of a Levitical priesthood to supplant the priesthood of all believers. It is not that these practices of the “zevah” and the priesthood have been discontinued by the New Covenant, but rather New Testament authors saw the priesthood and the sacrificial communion meal as continuing in a modified form under the precepts of the new covenant. Consequently, we look to these modified versions authorized by the new covenant to fulfill the descriptions in Daniel 9:27.