

verse 25 or the reference to an anointed one being cut off in verse 26, or both, point to the first coming of Christ. It looks back to the beginning of Scripture, since the protevangelium, Genesis 3:15, declared that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. This bruising was accomplished at Calvary, where the sin question was settled. On the basis of the substitutionary atonement of Christ God redeems His people. The guilt of sin has been expiated. Sin may be said to have been removed and everlasting righteousness introduced.

Yet Paul uses the same figure in another way in Romans 16:20, where he says: "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." Although the guilt of all who trust in Christ has been completely removed by His sacrifice at Calvary, sin continues to be very powerful in much of the world and there is a sense in which the full results of Jesus' victory on the cross have not yet been realized. Sin has been completely destroyed in principle but the full outworking of what Christ accomplished at Calvary requires the complete destruction of sin's earthly power, and thus parallels the later events described in Daniel 2, 7, and 11-12.

In the NIV the first statement of purpose reads, "to finish transgression," with a footnote, "Or restrain." Commentators divide almost equally between these two translations, some being very insistent on one or the other. Yet examination of the usage of the two Hebrew verbs shows that the difference has little significance. Those who, following the *qere*, take it as "to finish," derive it from the piel of the verb *kala*, which is used for making something complete, either by filling it or by emptying it. It indicates the reaching of a time when there is no sin or a time where the total amount of sin has occurred and no more can be expected.

Those who prefer to translate the verb as "restrain" take it from the verb *kala*. Examination of the use of this word shows that it means the forcible cessation of an activity. It always points to a complete stop, never to a mere hindrance. It is used in Numbers 11:28, where Joshua urges Moses to make the elders stop prophesying in the camp. Here the KJV translates it "forbid them" and the NIV renders