

# Parallels Between Zechariah 1:7-6:15 and Revelation 4:1-6:8

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## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Much of what John writes in Rev 4-5 and the first four of the seven seals (6:1-8 = Rev 6a) is modeled on Zech 3-6, with secondary awareness of Zech 1-2. The parallels are most instructive. We discuss them in three stages. First we relate Zech 3-6 to Rev 4-6a, then Zech 1-2 to 3-6, then Zech 1-2 to Rev 4-6a.

Zechariah is a twin prophecy to Haggai. Haggai was written in the second year of Darius (520 BC), with datelines of year 2, month 6, day 1 (1:1); year 2, month 6, day 24 (1:15); [year 2,] month 7, day 20 (2:1); and year 2, month 9, day 24 (2:10); [year 2,] month 9, day 24 (2:18); and [year 2, month 9,] day 24 (2:20). Zechariah begins in the second year of Darius as well, with datelines of year 2, month 8 (1:1) and year 2, month 11, day 24 (7:1); but goes beyond this with a dateline of year 4, month 9, day 4 (7:1). The context for both books is the Jews' return from Babylonian captivity after the seventy years prophecy of Jeremiah (25:11, 12; 29:10).

The exile is an important piece of contextual information here that we neglect at our peril. No one will ever understand Haggai or Zechariah without an awareness of the exile (more specifically the recent return from exile), which gives these prophecies their reason for existence. Similarly, no one will ever understand Rev 4-6a without an awareness of the material John had in mind while writing it. The thesis of this paper is that the material he had in mind was Zech 3-6. The parallels discussed below do not represent isolated verses selected at random, but rather a series of representative excerpts from an extended body of text – four of the fourteen chapters (29%) of Zechariah, or almost a third of the book.

In Rev 4-6a it is as though John picked up Zech 3-6, with secondary awareness of Zech 1-2, wrung out some white space, and set the chapters down in his own prophecy immediately following the seven churches.

## Zechariah 3-6 and Revelation 4-6a

There are at least four thematic parallels between Zech 3-6 and Rev 4-6a. The themes or figures from Zechariah that we examine here are: (1) the clothing and crowning of Joshua the high priest (Zech 3:1-5), (2) the seven eyes of the LORD that go out into all the earth (Zech 3:9; 4:2, 10), (3) the flying scroll with writing on both sides (Zech 5:1-4), and (4) the four teams of different colored horses (Zech 6:1-5).

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Alberto Treiyer for commenting on an earlier version of this paper.

## Joshua the high priest

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?" <sup>3</sup> Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. <sup>4</sup> The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put **rich garments** on you." <sup>5</sup> Then I said, "Put a clean **turban** [šānîp] on his head." So they put a clean **turban** on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the LORD stood by. (Zechariah 3:1-5)<sup>2</sup>

*Joshua.* Joshua is here dressed in filthy clothes. Ellen White applies this figure to us, on the comparison that filthy clothes represents the guilt of our sin. She compares the changing of Joshua's clothing to our putting on the garments of salvation.

Your heavenly Father will take from you the garments defiled by sin. In the beautiful parabolic prophecy of Zechariah, the high priest Joshua, standing clothed in filthy garments before the angel of the Lord, represents the sinner. And the word is spoken by the Lord, "Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. . . . So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments." Zechariah 3:4, 5. Even so God will clothe you with "the garments of salvation," and cover you with "the robe of righteousness." Isaiah 61:10. "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." Psalm 68:13. {COL 206.2}

Was the guilt symbolized by Joshua's clothing his own? The assumption so far has been that it was (see vs. 4). "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom 6:23). This would include Joshua – as it would include every other high priest back to Aaron – but I personally doubt that focusing on Joshua's own guilt exhausts the meaning of the passage.

The whole thing about being a high priest, or any priest, is that you represent others in their dealings with God. In the context of the exile, all Israel had sinned and incurred guilt. That was the reason for the exile. God was not acting capriciously when He drove His people from their homeland. They well deserved their punishment (see Dan 9:1-19). As their high priest, Joshua was the representative of the entire nation in spiritual things. As such, and with no remaining temple, he would have been the only one capable of bearing their sin. Now God was removing not just his sin, but their sin, and bringing His people back again from exile. Removing Joshua's filthy clothes was symbolic of an act of corporate forgiveness on God's part.

By virtue of his office every high priest was a type of Christ, who would one day come and minister as the great antitypical High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. Or is this true? Was it every high priest, or every high priest except Joshua? Does the fact that Joshua sinned unfit him from typifying Christ? If so, no high priest could typify Him. And yet we just pointed out that every high priest did. The basis for the typical significance of the high priesthood was not the

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individual holding the office, but the office itself. Thus there is nothing in Zech 3 to keep us from seeing the parallels John saw between Joshua and the Lamb.

In the type, Joshua's act of changing clothes had to do with God restoring His people to favor, assuring them that He had once more chosen Jerusalem, allowing them to return home from Babylonian exile. In the antitype there are two possible interpretations. In an inauguration model, which places Rev 4-5 in the first century, Joshua's putting on of a clean turban is reminiscent of a coronation ceremony. One problem with this alternative is that a turban is not the only thing Joshua puts on. He undergoes a complete change of clothing. "So they put a clean turban on his head *and clothed him*, while the angel of the LORD stood by" (vs. 5, emphasis added). A coronation would normally focus only on the crown, whereas Zechariah does not limit himself in this way.<sup>3</sup> In a judgment model, which places Rev 4-5 in the end time, the fact that a high priest changes into special clothes calls to mind his preparation for ministry in the second apartment.<sup>4</sup>

He is to put on the sacred linen tunic, with linen undergarments next to his body; he is to tie the linen sash around him and put on **the linen turban**. These are sacred garments; so he must bathe himself with water before he puts them on. (Leviticus 16:4)

*Satan*. In Zech 3:1-5 the cast of characters includes "Joshua the high priest," "the angel of the LORD," and "Satan [*haśśāṭān*]" there "to accuse [*l'esaṭnô*] him," i.e., to accuse Joshua (vs. 1). Since there is an accusation, there is a disagreement. If there is a disagreement and Satan is taking one position (accusing), could we say that the Angel of the LORD is taking a different position (defending)? After the accusation and the defense, the LORD, before whom all this has been taking place, issues a verdict, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan!" (vs. 2). If the accusation and defense of Joshua takes place before the LORD, and if having heard the arguments He issues a verdict, He is occupying the role of a Judge (see Gen 18:25).

This is not the entire cast. Others "were standing before him" (vs. 4). "If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among *these standing here*" (vs. 7). Those standing in vs. 4 and again in vs. 7 cannot be the same as "your associates seated before you" in vs. 8, because those "before" the LORD are standing, whereas those "before" Joshua (his associates) are seated. This entire setting sounds very much like a court.

Then he showed me **Joshua the high priest** standing before **the angel of the LORD**, and **Satan** standing at his right side to accuse him. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?" <sup>3</sup> Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. <sup>4</sup> The angel

<sup>3</sup> The turban in Zech 5:5 is Hebrew *śānîp*. This is the only place in the Old Testament the term takes this form. Elsewhere it is *mişnépet*,<sup>3</sup> as in Exod 28:4, 37, 39; 29:6; 39:28, 31; Lev 8:9; 16:4; Ezek 21:31. A crown, such as a king would wear, is Hebrew *ʿāṭārâ*.

<sup>4</sup> In his published doctoral dissertation (*The Heavenly Sanctuary/Temple Motif in the Hebrew Bible: Function and Relationship to Earthly Counterparts* [Berrien Springs: ATS Dissertation Series, 2005], pp. 316-18), Elias Brasil de Souza discusses the implications of Joshua's change of clothing. He points out that the argument can be taken one of two ways (installation ceremony, Day of Atonement), then suggests that here it is neither. "[B]y the change of garments, Joshua is made fit for the activities he is supposed to perform in the temple" (p. 317). This begs the question of what those responsibilities are and when and where he performs them.

said to **those who were standing before him**, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you." <sup>5</sup> Then I said, "Put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while **the angel of the LORD** stood by.

The angel of the LORD gave this charge to Joshua: <sup>7</sup> "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among **these standing here**.' <sup>8</sup> "Listen, O high priest Joshua and **your associates seated before you**, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch. (Zechariah 3:1-8)

The reference to Jerusalem is of interest. Jerusalem was the place from which God had driven His people into exile. Having done this, He allowed Israel's enemies to burn the city to the ground. This sounds like He was rejecting Jerusalem. But now He says, "'The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you!'" (vs. 2). This is a clue that the Jews' return from exile was part of the subject matter for Satan's accusations and for God's rebuttal. In the antitype also, there is a controversy over the legal basis for God's plan to bring His people home. The issue before the court is the fairness of God's government. There are close similarities between Zech 3:1-5 and the judgment.

*Spirit of Prophecy.* If Rev 4-5 is a judgment rather than a coronation, it follows that Joshua receiving a "clean turban" represents something other than Christ being crowned and taking His seat on the throne of His father David. Ellen White confirms that this (His ultimate coronation) cannot be the meaning of the passage. She does this not by commenting on Zech 3 or on Rev 5. Actually her remarks are based on the enthronement of Rev 3:21.<sup>5</sup> But the point to notice is that she distinguishes between two levels of enthronement.

He "shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne." Not now "upon the throne of His glory;" the kingdom of glory has not yet been ushered in. **Not until His work as a mediator shall be ended will God "give unto Him the throne of His father David,"** a kingdom of which "there shall be no end." Luke 1:32, 33. **As a priest, Christ is now set down with the Father in His throne.** Revelation 3:21. **Upon the throne with the eternal, self-existent One** is He who "hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," who "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," that He might be "able to succor them that are tempted." "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Isaiah 53:4; Hebrews 4:15; 2:18; 1 John 2:1. His intercession is that of a pierced and broken body, of a spotless life. The wounded hands, the pierced side, the marred feet, plead for fallen man, whose redemption was purchased at such infinite cost. {GC 416.3}

There are two levels of enthronement which contrast with each other or Ellen White flatly contradicts herself, because she says Christ has experienced the one (sharing the Father's throne) but not the other (occupying the throne of His father David). Christ is acclaimed initially at His ascension (Ps 24) and there are many passages which speak of Him as sitting (Matt 22:44, 64; Mark 12:36, 62; Luke 20:42, 69; Acts 2:34; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:13) or standing

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<sup>5</sup> If I'm right in believing that the timeframe for Laodicea and the timeframe for the throne scene that follows are the same, then Rev 3:21 ("just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne") provides evidence in support of Ellen White's two enthronements model. The one is already past ("I . . . sat down"). The other has not yet come.

(Acts 7:55, 56) at the right hand of God. Christ is acclaimed at the beginning of the judgment (Rev 5, in my view). But as to sitting on the throne of His father David, not yet. He will not do that "until His work as a mediator shall be ended."

*Summary.* What Zechariah intends in Zech 3:1-5 might be different from what John intends in Rev 5 as he describes the Lamb standing before the Father on the throne. And yet, if John draws so deeply on what Zechariah says, it is obvious that he sees a similarity between what Zechariah was trying to say and what he is trying to say. So the issue is not primarily what Zechariah meant, although we should understand that, but what John understood Zechariah to mean. We must see Zechariah through John's eyes to see the parallels as John sees them. Perhaps in Joshua's change of clothes (putting on "rich garments" and "a clean turban") Zechariah did not see a high priest's preparation for service in the second apartment. Perhaps he was not thinking of a judgment at the end of human history. But if I'm right, John was.

If Rev 5 is a judgment rather than a coronation, we should not consider it demeaning that Christ's ultimate coronation and enthronement takes place later. If Christ has not yet received His throne (Ellen White explicitly says He has not), what that means is, despite all the glory and honor He has already received, there is more to come. One way to ensure that we will understand what Ellen White says on this topic is to accept the distinction she introduces between two levels of enthronement. If we think there is only one level, many statements will appear contradictory. If we think there is only one level, Rev 5 must and can only be an inauguration. If we accept that there are two levels, it is better understood as a judgment.

### Seven eyes, seven spirits

See, the stone I have set in front of Joshua! There are **seven eyes** on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it,' says the LORD Almighty, 'and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day. (Zechariah 3:9)

He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a solid gold **lampstand** with a bowl at the top and **seven lights** on it, with seven channels to the lights. (Zechariah 4:2)

"Who despises the day of small things? Men will rejoice when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. "(These seven are **the eyes of the LORD, which range throughout the earth.**") (Zechariah 4:10)

Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and **seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.** (Revelation 5:6)

The language of these passages is evocative, but certain themes emerge from it that can be used to identify parallels between Zech 3-6 and Rev 4-6a, with supporting reference to Zech 1-2. In Zech 4:10 the prophet states, "These seven are the eyes of the LORD which range throughout the earth"; in Rev 5:6 John writes, "He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth." We can speak of the "seven spirits" and draw parallels with Pentecost, but bear in mind that these spirits represent the "seven eyes" of the Lamb (Rev 5:6), or "eyes of the LORD" (Zech 4:10). The eyes of the Lamb see through us, discerning "the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Heb 4:12). We are transparent before Him.

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Heb 4:13)

Those words, "to whom we must give an account." In what context should we apply them? Not Pentecost. So long as we isolate the term "seven spirits" from the rest of its sentence in Rev 5:6, Pentecost comes across nicely as an application. But when we complete the equation ("seven spirits" = "seven eyes") and put that in the context of what we're getting from Zech 3:9; 4:2, 10, it works less well.

This is not to say that the idea of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit is out of place, only that the former rain is not the only outpouring to consider. If there is an early rain there is also a latter rain, and leading up to that a worldwide proclamation of the gospel. This is why the three messages of Rev 14 are represented as being given by angels flying in mid-air. It is because their messages are being "sent out into all the earth" (Rev 5:6), i.e., "to those who live on the earth" (Rev 14:6). I should clarify that Rev 14 does not take place in the timeframe of the latter rain. That comes later, in Rev 18, when the second (18:1-3) and third (18:4-24) messages are repeated with greater force. And yet all of this is the work of the Holy Spirit and takes place, in one form or another, during the whole time that the judgment is in session.

Is the lead up to the latter rain worth mentioning in this context? Does our Laodicean attitude toward spiritual things bear any comparison to what took place at and after Pentecost? Actually, yes. Every time a person accepts the truth for this time, it is because the Holy Spirit leads him or her to accept it. When the message spreads and the church grows, what makes this happen is the Holy Spirit. Having said this, consider some numbers.

In 1900 there were 75,767 Seventh-day Adventists world-wide, believing and teaching the three angels' messages. By 2000 our membership had grown to 11,687,229. As of the 2010 GC session in Atlanta, we are now about 16.3 million strong. We come from every part of the earth and are growing exponentially. See fig. 1.

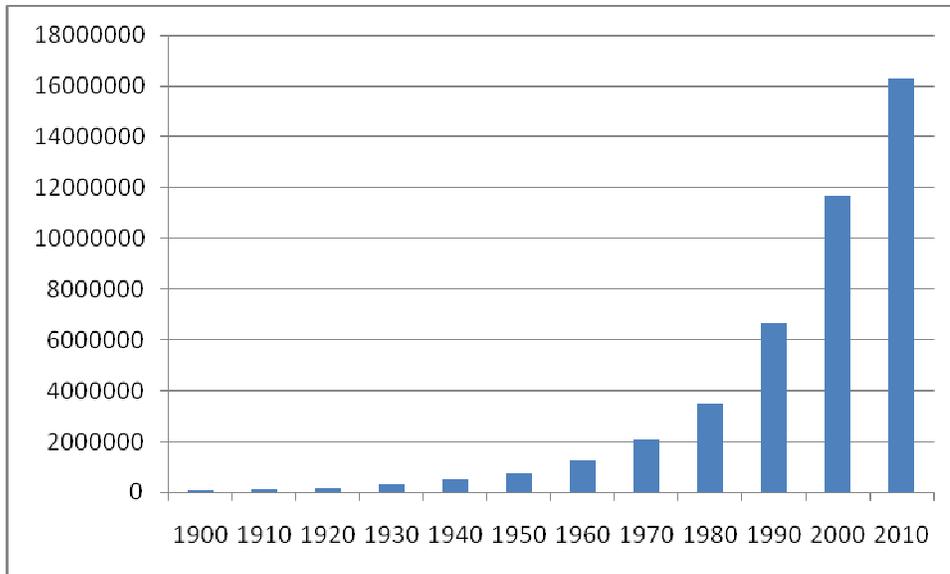


Fig. 1. Seventh-day Adventist church growth from 1900 (75,767 worldwide) to 2010 (approximately 16,300,000), as a way of quantifying the proclamation and spread of the three angels' messages.<sup>6</sup>

These facts demonstrate that the Holy Spirit has indeed already been "sent into all the earth," whether or not we say so in the context of Rev 5:6, and we're not through yet – not until Jesus comes. We may even now be seeing the beginnings of the latter rain – in the former Soviet Union, in Central and South America, in India, in Viet Nam, in parts of Africa, and elsewhere. The latter rain need not fall in a way we expect in order for it to be a genuine manifestation of God's power (see Exod 23:30). God has always flown in the face of human expectations.<sup>7</sup> Why should He bow to such considerations now?

We need to understand more clearly what the Holy Spirit does. Pentecost, for example, was not primarily the day when the disciples received the gift of tongues. It was the day when 3000 people received the gospel. We don't think of our humble little not particularly charismatic church as being filled with the Holy Spirit, but what has caused 16,300,000 people to believe the three angels' messages? It was the moving of the Spirit on people's hearts. Jesus did not say, "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). If He has guided this many into the truth for this time, and many more who have since gone to their rest, why should we not say the Spirit of truth did these things? Results have causes. When the result is that people hear and accept the truth, that's the work of the Holy Spirit. There will be more, yes, but what we have already seen need not be discounted.

The Lamb has "seven eyes" (all wisdom) and also "seven horns" (all power). It would be consistent with His power to apply vs. 6 to events leading up to and including the latter rain,

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.adventistarchives.org/documents.asp?CatID=11&SortBy=2&ShowDateOrder=True>.

<sup>7</sup> "There must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it." {Mar 219.3}

which are more wide-spread than the former rain which began at Pentecost. And yet this is not the only possible interpretation. It would be consistent with His wisdom to apply vs. 6 to the judgment, where the decisions announced fill all in attendance with admiration and awe. Here the focus is not on us, but on the Lamb Himself, as His eyes go out "into all the earth." If He were not doing this, how could the judgment proceed? Without Him, the evidence presented would be meaningless.

### Flying scroll with writing on both sides

I looked again— and there before me was a flying scroll! <sup>2</sup> He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll, thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide." <sup>3</sup> And he said to me, "This is **the curse** that is going out over the whole land; for according to **what it says on one side**, every thief will be banished, and according to **what it says on the other**, everyone who swears falsely will be banished. <sup>4</sup> The LORD Almighty declares, 'I will send it out, and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of him who swears falsely by my name. It will remain in his house and destroy it, both its timbers and its stones.'" (Zechariah 5:1-4)

Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. (Rev 5:1)

The flying scroll of Zech 5 is written on both sides, as is the scroll of Rev 5-6. The two are clearly linked in John's mind, despite the fact that his scroll is sealed and Zechariah's is not. Where does this shared symbolism come from? We consider five possible sources. (1) The precedent could be legal, with possible reference to Exod 20:2-17.<sup>8</sup> (2) It could be prophetic. In Dan 12:4 Daniel is dealing with a scroll and is told to seal it. (2) It could be historical. Samuel wrote out a scroll at the coronation of Saul. We have something similar in Deut 17:18-20. (3) It could have to do with the covenant. Joash received a scroll at his coronation in 2 Kgs 11:12. (4) Another possibility has to do with the "curse" mentioned in Zech 5:1-4 (see vs. 3). There is a blessing in Zech 2:1-5. Combining blessings with curses in this way brings to mind the covenant blessings and curses of Deut 27-33. Could the scroll contain, not the commandments themselves, or the covenant itself, but the blessings and curses that follow from obeying or breaking the covenant stipulations found in the law? Correctly identifying which scroll John has in mind as he wrote Rev 5-6 will take us a long way toward understanding the passage. In any event, this is not a topic we can brush past quickly. We must take some time with it.

*Exod 20:2-17.* Two of the ten commandments are mentioned in connection with Zechariah's flying scroll. Is this a mere sampling of its contents, or a complete listing? Does the scroll perhaps contain all ten of the commandments? Shea suggests that

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<sup>8</sup> William H. Shea ("The Literary Structure of Zechariah 1-6," in Jiří Moskala, ed., *Creation, Life, and Hope: Essays in Honor of Jacques B. Doukhan* [Berrien Springs: Andrews University, 2000]), suggests that the scroll contains especially the commandments that condemn the person who promises to support the rebuilding of the temple financially (lying) and does not (stealing), and that *pars pro toto* they possibly contained the text of all ten (p. 93). I would hesitate, however, to call the ten commandments a "curse" (Zech 5:3). If we broaden this to include the corresponding blessing, as Shea does by pointing out that visions three and six have to do respectively with a blessing (three) and a curse (six), that opens another topic. "The blessing and curse have operated together all the way back in the Old Testament to the earliest covenants. One of the provisions at the end of the covenant formulary was the blessings and curses. These are found, for example, in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 27-33" (p. 94).

If the ten commandments were written on the two sides of the flying scroll in Zechariah, then one can think of them as being written on the two sides of the scroll that is unsealed in Rev 8:1, for by context and content this provides the best parallel in the Old Testament to explain the symbol for the content of the scroll in Revelation.<sup>9</sup>

In Exod 20 the ten commandments occupy 16 verses (vss. 2-17). Assuming that 10 x 20 cu (200 cu<sup>2</sup>) is approximately equal to 15 x 30 feet (450 ft<sup>2</sup>),<sup>10</sup> that's a lot of space for so little text. And the scroll is written on both sides, so 450 ft<sup>2</sup> x 2 = 900 ft<sup>2</sup>. The two commandments specifically mentioned are #8 (*lō' tignōb*, "You shall not steal," vs. 15) and #9 (*lō' ta<sup>a</sup>neh b<sup>e</sup>rē<sup>e</sup>kā ēd šāqer*, "You shall not bear false testimony against your neighbor," vs. 16). Is there anything that would deal with the same sorts of issues in a context that ties directly to both Zech 5 and Rev 5 and yet take up a little more space? I believe there is.

*Dan 12:1, 4*. "But at that time your people-- everyone whose name is found written in the book-- will be delivered" (Dan 12:1). We could associate the book mentioned in vs. 1 with the Lamb's book of life in Rev 13:8; 21:27. The scroll mentioned in vs. 4 is different from this. "But you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge" (vs. 4). Seventh-day Adventists have always associated this scroll with the book of Daniel itself and said that Daniel was a sealed book, whereas Revelation is a book revealed. Since the scroll of Dan 12:4 is sealed, perhaps that one gives us a better parallel with Rev 5:1.

*1 Sam 10:24-25*. When Saul became king Samuel wrote "the ordinances of the kingdom" in a book and place it "before the LORD."

And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom the LORD has chosen? Surely there is no one like him among all the people." So all the people shouted and said, "*Long* live the king!"

<sup>25</sup> Then Samuel told the people the ordinances of the kingdom, and wrote *them* in the book and placed *it* before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, each one to his house. (1 Sam 10:24-25)

There is a connection between Saul becoming king and Samuel writing down certain ordinances. The events occur close together but the sequence appears to be that (1) Saul is acclaimed as king (vs. 24), (2) Samuel tells the ordinances (vs. 25a), (3) Samuel writes the ordinances (vs. 25b). Saul does not write anything down for himself (see Deut 17:18-20) and the ordinances Samuel first proclaims and then writes are probably not the entire book of Deuteronomy, because that would take considerable time. The way the story is told, he finishes before sending the people home. What happens here is similar though not identical to 2 Kgs 11:12 and Deut 17:18-20, just as 2 Kgs 11:12 and Deut 17:18-20 are similar though not identical to each other.

*Deut 17:18-20*. Moses enjoins that every future king of Israel should write out a copy of the law (Deuteronomy) in his own hand and "read it all the days of his life."

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> "He asked me, 'What do you see?' I answered, 'I see a flying scroll, thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide'" (Zech 5:2; NIV).

When he takes the throne of his kingdom [*w<sup>h</sup>āyâ k<sup>e</sup>šibtô ʿal kissē mamlaktô*], he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law [*w<sup>k</sup>ātab lô ʿet-mišnēh hattôrâ hazzōʿt ʿal-sēper*], taken from that of the priests [*millipnê hakkōh<sup>a</sup>nîm*], who are Levites [*hal<sup>a</sup>wiyyîm*].<sup>19</sup> It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the LORD his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees<sup>20</sup> and not consider himself better than his brothers and turn from the law to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel. (Deut 17:18-20)<sup>11</sup>

Notice the syntax. The Hebrew says, *w<sup>h</sup>āyâ k<sup>e</sup>šibtô . . . w<sup>k</sup>ātab* ("and when he sits . . . he shall write" [RSV]) (vs. 18). Now notice the sequence. He sits, then writes. The writing does not precede the enthronement of the new king. Moses does not say it should. The idea of using scrolls at inauguration ceremonies might be what gives special interest to the proposed parallel between Deut 17 and Rev 5, but on close inspection, the point that ought to connect them most closely (i.e., using a scroll at an inauguration ceremony) is in fact missing.

Although words of the form *k<sup>e</sup>-[Infinitive Construct]* are common in the Old Testament,<sup>12</sup> here followed by *w<sup>e</sup>-[Perfective]*, there is only one parallel involving the form *k<sup>e</sup>šibtô* ("when he sat"). It appears in a passage about the accession of Zimri.

When he began to reign [*wayhî b<sup>e</sup>molkô*], as soon as he had seated himself on his throne [*k<sup>e</sup>šibtô ʿal-kisʿô*], he killed all the house of Baasha [*hikkâ ʿet-kol-bêt ba<sup>e</sup>šāʿ*]; he did not leave him a single male of his kindred or his friends. (1 Kgs 16:11; NRSV)

In 1 Kgs 16:11 Zimri did not kill all the house of Baasha prior to reigning, i.e., before he had seated himself on his throne, but after. He did this "as soon as he had seated himself on his throne." From this parallel, and from the text of Deut 17:18, I draw that the writing out of a copy of Deuteronomy was to be the new king's first item of business after becoming king, not his last item of business before becoming king. He took the throne, then made his own copy of the scroll.<sup>13</sup> If this description is accurate, the finished scroll could not play any part in the coronation ceremony, even if Moses' instruction were followed to the letter. Sadly, we have no evidence that it ever was.

This contrasts at a number of points with what we find later in 2 Kgs 11:12 and, more importantly, with Rev 5. Joash receives a copy of a scroll he did not write, and given his age may not have been able to read. It was given to him when the coronation occurred, which harmonizes with Rev 5, but not Deut 17:18-20. The fact that the Lamb receives a scroll while a ceremony (of whatever sort) is still in progress, whereas the kings referred to in Deut 17 do not, means that the proposed parallel between Deut 17 and Rev 5 breaks down at the point of greatest interest.

<sup>11</sup> In a different context see also Christ's words, "But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers" (Matt 23:8). Having the same Master puts people on the same level, whether a Rabbi and his congregants or a king and his subjects.

<sup>12</sup> Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN; Eisenbrauns, 1990), §36.2.2b (p. 604).

<sup>13</sup> In a respected Jewish translation the scroll is commissioned by the new king rather being written out with his own hand. "When he is seated on his royal throne, he shall have a copy of this Teaching written for him [*w<sup>k</sup>ātab lô*] on a scroll by the levitical priests" (Deut 17:18; JPS).

If no king ever copied Deuteronomy prior to his coronation – not only because Moses' instructions were never followed, but because he doesn't say to do it that way – then Deut 17:18-20 and 2 Kgs 11:12 differ with respect to both the time and the manner in which the scroll is to be used. If the point of the parallel is to show how kings were crowned, and if the point of difference between the passages is that in Deut 17 they weren't crowned that way, this leaves 2 Kgs 11:12 as an isolated passage with no direct parallel on the point at issue. Passages such as Exod 20:2-17; Deut 31:9, 24-26; and Dan 12:1, 4 do not describe coronations and the two passages that do (Deut 17:18-20; 1 Sam 10:24-25) both illustrate a different pattern different from what we see in 2 Kgs 11:12 (below). The case of Joash parallels Rev 5 in an inauguration model, but is otherwise unique.<sup>14</sup>

*2 Kgs 11:12.* Joash received a scroll of the covenant when he became king (2 Kgs 11:12; see also 2 Chr 23:11). Ranko Stefanovic states that

At his enthronement, according to 2 Kings 11:12, the Judean king Joash was brought to a special place reserved for the king in "the house of the Lord" where he was invested with the royal emblems of "the crown and the testimony." Both the crown and "the testimony" are seen as tokens of kingship. They signified the right to rule.<sup>15</sup>

Paraphrasing, the parallel with Rev 5 is clear. In Rev 5 the Lamb is brought to a special place reserved for the King in "the house of the Lord" where He is invested with the royal emblems of "the crown and the testimony." These signify the Lamb's right to rule. Rev 4-5 therefore depicts the enthronement of the Lamb. Or does it?

What I have quoted above is only three sentences from a very large book, but they make a point that is central to the author's argument and may be considered representative.<sup>16</sup> Notice the author states that Joash "was brought to a special place reserved for the King in 'the house of the Lord. . . .'" But the place reserved for Joash in the house of the Lord was the room where he was hidden from Athaliah. This is not where his coronation occurred.

But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah and stole him from among the king's sons who were being put to death, and placed him and his nurse in the bedroom. So they hid him from Athaliah, and he was not put to death. (vs. 2; NASV)

The place where Joash was presented to Israel took place not in any part of "the house of the LORD," but outside in the court – beside the altar, as we read in vs. 11.

<sup>14</sup> "The subsequent history of Israelite kingship shows that only a small number of Israel's kings followed the instructions of God with regard to the Covenant Book. The historical books clearly show that God's ideal of the king obeying the Covenant Book was very rarely realized" (Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ* [Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 2002], p. 173). No references are given for these assertions, which I submit are not verifiable. God's instruction with regard to the Covenant Book was not followed by any of Israel's kings. It was never realized – not even by Joash, because he did not write out his own scroll.

<sup>15</sup> *Idem*, p. 171.

<sup>16</sup> Notice a few points in passing before we proceed. After saying "according to 2 Kings 11:12" two phrases are quoted. The one is "the house of the Lord," and the other "the crown and the testimony." The expression "house of the Lord" (NASV) occurs nine times in 2 Kgs 11 (see vs. 3, 4, 4, 7, 10, 13, 15, 18, 19). It does not occur in vs. 12. Separately, you will not find "the crown and the testimony" by keying these words into your Bible software as quoted. The text says, "Then he brought the king's son out and put the crown on him, and gave him the testimony; . . . (vs. 12; NASV).

And the guards stood each with his weapons in his hand, from the right side of the house to the left side of the house, by the altar and by the house, around the king. <sup>12</sup> Then he brought the king's son out and put the crown on him, and *gave him* the testimony; and they made him king and anointed him, and they clapped their hands and said, "Long live the king!" (vss. 11-12; NASV)

In vs. 12 Jehoiada, starting from a point that was already outside the main temple structure, "brought the king's son out and put the crown on him." This clause could be interpreted in one of two ways. It could mean that Jehoiada brought Joash out from his nurse's bedroom where he had been hiding, or it could mean that he brought him out from among the ranks of those guarding him beside the altar. In either case, the point is that Jehoiada "brought the king's son out." He did not bring him in. Joash was not in the house of the Lord when he was invested with the royal emblems of "the crown and the testimony."

The Lamb receives a scroll in Rev 5, just as Joash does. Joash also receives a crown. Does the Lamb receive a crown? Forms of the word *stephanos* ("crown") occur eight times in the Greek text of Revelation (2:10; 3:11; 4:4, 10; 6:2; 9:7; 12:1; 14:14), but not in chap. 5. If the point of the parallel with 2 Kgs 11:12 is that Rev 5 is a coronation, and if on that occasion the Lamb does not receive a crown, the parallel is not as robust as we had thought.

There is a question what the purpose for the scroll is in the two passages. Stefanovic suggests that Deut 17:18-20 offers a parallel for 2 Kgs 11:12, and therefore for Rev 5. I grant that Jehoiada probably had Deut 17 in mind when he gave Joash a copy of Deuteronomy in 2 Kgs 11, but there are differences between the two passages. Deut 17:18-20 was quoted above, but I now repeat it for the reader's convenience.

"Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. <sup>19</sup> "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, <sup>20</sup> that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left; in order that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel. (Deut 17:18-20; NASV)

We spoke earlier about the relative sequence of enthronement and writing, i.e., that the enthronement came first and the writing of the scroll came immediately afterward, "when he sits on the throne of his kingdom" (vs. 18). Notice two further points. First, the reason why each new king was to write out his own copy of Deuteronomy was to "learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, <sup>20</sup> that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen . . . ." This cannot be the meaning in Rev 5. So in Rev 5 what is the purpose? What does the scroll signify there?

Both the crown and "the testimony" are seen as tokens of kingship. They signified the right to rule.<sup>17</sup>

Do the crown and "the testimony" both signify the right to rule? Yes and no. The crown showed that the new king was receiving the right rule, but "the testimony" (the scroll in Rev 5) showed something quite different, i.e., that the king's qualifications for ruling Israel were not

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<sup>17</sup> Stefanovic, p. 171.

inherent, but derived. Without instruction from God he was *not* fit to rule. The rightful Ruler was not the king, but God.

The crown indicated the king's relationship to his people. He would rule over them. The scroll indicated his relationship to God. God must rule over both him and his subjects equally. It was a constant reminder that in and of himself he lacked the qualifications to rule wisely. Thus the scroll was not a certificate of fitness, but of unfitness. It had to be studied, and studied constantly, if it was to benefit each new king. We return to this point below. So yes, the crown was a token of the king's right to rule, as Stefanovic asserts, but the scroll sent more than one message. The kings who ruled Israel and Judah were ordained by God, but as such were tenants of a throne that not inherently theirs. They served in God's place and at His pleasure.

In many places we find expressions such "throne of Israel" (1 Kgs 2:4; 8:20, 25; 9:5; 10:9; 2 Kgs 10:30; 15:12; 2 Chr 6:10, 16; Jer 33:17), "throne of David" (Jer 22:30; 36:30); "David's throne" (2 Sam 3:10; 1 Kgs 2:45; Isa 9:7; Jer 13:13; 17:25; 22:2, 4; 29:16), or such. But there are other passages which put these in context. "So Solomon sat on **the throne of the LORD** as king in place of his father David" (1 Chr 29:23). David also says, "he [the LORD] has chosen my son Solomon to sit on **the throne of the kingdom of the LORD** over Israel" (1 Chr 28:5). The throne of Israel and Judah – the kingdom – was not David's, but the LORD's.

If Rev 5 is an inauguration and the Lamb on this occasion receives both a crown and a scroll, then Deut 17:18-20 is parallel in the sense that a king's reign is beginning and that a scroll is somehow involved in that process (although in Deut 17 the coronation took place first and the scroll was written afterwards), and 1 Sam 10:24-25 is parallel in the sense that a scroll is used at the coronation ceremony (it was apparently written at Saul's inauguration in vs. 25, but only after he was proclaimed king in vs. 24). Only the parallel with Joash holds. If 2 Kgs 11:12 is the only passage where a scroll prepared in advance is used at the coronation of a new king, then we don't have a pattern. We only have a single data point. Patterns are not defined by single data points.

Nor is the parallel between 2 Kgs 11:12 and Rev 5 by any means exact. The coronation of Joash in 2 Kgs 11 takes place outside the temple in the court, while the events of Rev 5 – whatever they might be – take place inside the throne room. Thus it is not the case that

At his enthronement, according to 2 Kings 11:12, the Judean king Joash was brought to a special place reserved for the king in "the house of the Lord" where he was invested with the royal emblems of "the crown and the testimony."<sup>18</sup>

He was led outside "the house of the Lord" on this occasion, not into it as the above statement implies. Joash receives a crown in 2 Kgs 11 in the court, while the Lamb – in the throne room – does not receive a crown on this occasion. (The word "crown" [Greek *stephanos*] does not occur in Rev 5.) The scroll Joash receives is not sealed and is given to instruct him, showing that even as king he must be subject to God's law and obey God's decrees, while the scroll the Lamb receives in Rev 5 is sealed and is given to Him because He is the only One in heaven or earth who can make its contents clear to others. To a significant degree the two scenes are different from each other. The Lamb in Rev 5 is a later David, not a later Joash.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

*Deut 31:9,24-26.* In Deut 31 Moses commits the scroll he has been writing to a particular group of Levites for safe keeping. I now quote both parts of the passage, including vs. 25.

So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. (Deut 31:9; NASV)

And it came about, when Moses finished writing the words of this law in a book until they were complete, <sup>25</sup> that Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, <sup>26</sup> "Take this book of the law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may remain there as a witness against you. (Deut 31:24-26; NASV)

Why did Moses commit the scroll of Deuteronomy to "the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD"? Why not some other group of Levites? Because these were the ones who had responsibility for taking the sanctuary apart, transporting it, and reassembling it as the people moved from place to place in the wilderness. It wasn't that Moses asked the Levites to keep the scroll in their possession. The responsibility he gave them was to put the scroll in the second apartment beside the ark. Once they did this, their job was done until the next time the sanctuary had to be moved.

In Deut 27-33 the covenant blessings and curses, with related discussion, occupy seven chapters (254 verses). Admittedly, all of this could be written many times over, with wide margins, on a scroll of 10 x 20 cubits written on both sides. Notice, however, that when Moses wrote Deut 31 the blessings and curses looked to the future. The people were not yet settled in Canaan. If I am right in saying that Rev 4-5 represents a judgment scene, the blessings and curses written prospectively and generally in Deut 27-33 could by this time be matched with actual cases of obedience or rebellion. This would take vastly more space than what Moses gives us.

Descriptions such as that given in Zech 5:1-4 are intended to be evocative and symbolic, and yet by going beyond the commandments, and the covenant based on them, to the blessings and curses that have to do with covenant obedience or disobedience in general, and to actual examples of such obedience or disobedience, we come closer to the flavor of the symbolic language in Zech 5 and to the types of issues John deals with in Rev 5-6.

*Summary.* Our interpretation of the scroll in Rev 5-6 must be framed in the context of the sanctuary.<sup>19</sup> We have looked here and there in the Old Testament for possible parallels, but should we not have begun our search in the most obvious place – inside the sanctuary. That's where the sealed scroll is when the Lamb receives it. If this is where the scroll is in the passage we are interpreting, is there an earlier precedent for finding books or scrolls in the sanctuary? If so, these should be included in the discussion. We have said that a scroll was placed beside the ark in Deut 31:26 and that it enumerated the covenant blessings and curses. It was not itself the covenant. The covenant – the ten commandment law – was inside the ark, not beside it. It was written on stone, not on a scroll. I suggest that the word "curse," used in Zech 5:3 (below) takes

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<sup>19</sup> "The flying scroll has a direct connection with the earthly sanctuary, just as the scroll in the hand of the Father is located in the heavenly sanctuary" (Shea, "Zechariah's Flying Scroll and Revelation's Unsealed Scroll," JATS 14 [2003]:98). Shea goes on to point out that the dimensions of the scroll are the same as the dimensions of the first apartment. The point to carry away from this is that the connection with the sanctuary is inescapable, but once we have made this point we should bear in mind that the only scroll stored inside the ancient sanctuary was kept in the second apartment beside the ark (see Deut 31:26).

us not to Dan 12:1, 4; not to 1 Sam 10:25; not to 2 Kgs 11:12 and 2 Chr 23:11; not to Deut 17:18-20; but to Deut 31:9, 24-26 and related discussion throughout Deut 27-33.

If what we have on Zechariah's scroll is not the covenant itself, but an enumeration of covenant blessings and curses, in the context of whether a man is a thief or one who swears false, that brings us to a judgment. How would one know which curse to apply (see Zech 5:3) if there were not some process of evaluation? And if one has not stolen or sworn falsely, that fact also would need to be established. If the curse does not apply at all, why should it be meted out? The scroll stored beside the ark in the Most Holy Place (Deut 31:26), provides our best Old Testament parallel Zech 5:3 and the scroll at the Father's right hand in Rev 5:1 provides our best New Testament parallel. Because it is beside the ark, it is beside the throne, ready for God to reach out, pick up, and hand to the Lamb.

The purpose for this scroll is not to inform Christ, but to inform the assembled court. It was a witness against God's people, showing whether they had followed or not followed the covenant stipulations as specified on the tablets of stone inside the ark. This is why only the Lamb is able to open the scroll. The covenant itself was revealed to the universe, not primarily at Sinai, but at the cross. Only the Lamb can comment on the blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience because only He is simultaneously one with God (the Source of the covenant) and mankind (its recipients). Only He can bring such different parties together and effect the salvation that He gave His life to provide.

### Horses of four different colors

I looked up again- and there before me were **four chariots** coming out from between two mountains- mountains of bronze! <sup>2</sup> The first chariot had **red horses**, the second **black**, <sup>3</sup> the third **white**, and the fourth **dappled**- all of them powerful. <sup>4</sup> I asked the angel who was speaking to me, "What are these, my lord?" <sup>5</sup> The angel answered me, "These are the four spirits of heaven, going out from standing in the presence of the Lord of the whole world. (Zechariah 6:1-5)

Here we have four sets of horses, as in Rev 6:1-8. In Zech 6 their colors are first red, then black, then white, then dappled (Hebrew *b'rūdîm*, Greek *poikiloi*). The sequence appears not to be significant, and is different from a similar list in Zech 1:18. In Rev 6, however, John changes the sequence, adapting it to his purpose of showing how the church would over time gradually slip away from God. In Rev 6 the horses are first white, then red, then black, then pale (Greek *chlōros*). Unlike Zech 6:1-5 where the horses are teams of two, harnessed to chariots, John's horses are single animals with riders. In this respect Rev 6 is closer to the symbolism of Zech 1 than to that found in Zech 6.

### Summary

The matter of Joshua receiving a "clean turban" fits the inauguration model to a degree, but the idea of an entire change of clothing does not. The reference to "the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth" fits nicely in an inauguration model, as claimed by its proponents. The analogy with Joash receiving a scroll at his coronation is attractive, but doesn't bear scrutiny. The Lamb was not receiving a set of instructions when He took a scroll in Rev 5:7; in 2 Kgs 11:12 Joash was.

More importantly, inaugurationists see Rev 5 as the occasion on which the Lamb receives universal kingship, as opposed to merely sitting with the Father on His throne. But the scroll in both Deut 17:18-20 and 2 Kgs 11:12 was to be a constant reminder that the king served at God's pleasure and was under His authority. Was it a token of his right to rule? Yes – in subservience to God.

Joshua's changing into nicer clothes was a symbolic act (see Zech 3:8). God was forgiving the sins which had led to the people's Babylonian exile and was accepting Jerusalem once again. Present were Joshua (the accused), Satan (the accuser), the angel of the Lord (the defense?), and a number of onlookers. Their discussion took place before the Lord. A discussion involving guilt or innocence, with attorneys, before a Judge and spectators is a court scene or judgment. It is not a coronation.

The "seven spirits of God" (Rev 5:6) are the "seven eyes" of the Lamb. The function of the "seven spirits" is two-fold, i.e., to bring a message to world-wide attention and to evaluate those who accept it. The work of the Holy Spirit leading up to and including the latter rain represents a dramatically greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit than does Pentecost. This work takes place during the entire time the judgment is in session, increasing exponentially all the while. The latter rain is the last part of this curve. If Seventh-day Adventist world membership over time provides a fair way to measure how widely the three angels' messages have been proclaimed and accepted, and if causing people to hear and accept it is the work of the Holy Spirit, the spread of these messages since before and after 1844 represents a gradually increasing outpouring of the Spirit's power, which has gone out into as much of the earth as the results have come back from. Equating the "seven spirits of God" with the "seven eyes" of the Lamb we could apply this figure also to the Lamb Himself, who exhibits His marvelous wisdom mixed with love as each case comes in review before God (see Rev 4:9-11).

## Zechariah 1-2 and 3-6

In this section I point out three thematic parallels that establish primary links between Zech 1-2 and 3-6 and secondary links between Zech 1-2 and Rev 4-6a. The logic here is that if A is parallel to B, and A is parallel to C, then B is also parallel to C. In this formula let A represent Zech 3-6, B Rev 4-6a, and C Zech 1-2.

### Different colored horses

During the night I had a vision— and there before me was a man riding **a red horse!** He was standing among the myrtle trees in a ravine. Behind him were **red, brown and white horses.** <sup>9</sup> I asked, "What are these, my lord?" The angel who was talking with me answered, "I will show you what they are." <sup>10</sup> Then the man standing among the myrtle trees explained, "They are the ones the LORD has sent to go throughout the earth." (Zech 1:8-10)

In Zech 1:8-10 the prophet mentions four horses (red, red, brown, white), one of which is said to have a rider.<sup>20</sup> In Zech 6:1-5 there are four teams of two horses each, hitched to chariots (red, white, black, dappled). In Rev 6:1-8 John speaks of four horses (white, red, black, pale) all

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<sup>20</sup> Shea argues that all four horses in Zech 1:8-10 should be assumed to have riders ("Literary Structure," p. 87).

of which have riders. The colors are not the same in any two lists, but the motif of different colored horses is the same.

### Choosing Jerusalem

"Proclaim further: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'My towns will again overflow with prosperity, and the LORD will again **comfort Zion and choose Jerusalem.**'" (Zech 1:17)

In connection with Zech 3:2 we said Joshua's change of clothing had to do with God bringing His people home from exile. Here God expressly states that He will again "comfort Zion and choose Jerusalem" (Zech 1:17).

### Measuring line, plumb line, measuring basket

"Therefore, this is what the LORD says: 'I will return to Jerusalem with mercy, and there my house will be rebuilt. And the **measuring line** will be stretched out over Jerusalem,' declares the LORD Almighty. (Zech 1:16)

Then I looked up— and there before me was a man with a **measuring line** in his hand! <sup>2</sup> I asked, "Where are you going?" He answered me, "To measure Jerusalem, to find out how wide and how long it is." (Zech 2:1-2)

"Who despises the day of small things? Men will rejoice when they see the **plumb line** in the hand of Zerubbabel. (These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range throughout the earth.)" (Zech 4:10)

Then the angel who was speaking to me came forward and said to me, "Look up and see what this is that is appearing." <sup>6</sup> I asked, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a **measuring basket.**" And he added, "This is the iniquity of the people throughout the land." (Zech 5:5-6)

In the above passages we find three thematically equivalent figures. A measuring line can extend in any direction and measures length. In the case of a plumb line length is not an issue. It extends only down ensuring that vertical surfaces are truly and exactly vertical. A measuring basket measures volume (or weight),<sup>21</sup> rather than length or straightness. There are differences among the three, but this is not what I wish to emphasize.

The point to notice is that in all three cases an objective standard is used in order to gain accurate knowledge of something. Over and above the idea of measurement, in Zech 1:16 the fact that a measuring line is used at all represents a promise that Jerusalem would be rebuilt. The measuring basket, however, is explicitly linked with human guilt.

I asked, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a measuring basket." And he added, "This is the iniquity of the people throughout the land."

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<sup>21</sup> "The basket was called the ephah, which was a measure of dry weight that could be contained in it" (Shea, "Literary Structure," p. 91). But an ephah of gravel would weight more than an ephah of barley. A basket can be filled with anything. It's a measure of volume.

In a later verse the basket is taken away to Babylon. Recall that Babylon is where God sent His people when He wanted to get them out of His sight (see Acts 7:43). Taking the measuring basket there could be seen as symbolic of removing Israel's iniquity after the exile. God sent His people there; now He promises to send, not them, but their iniquity. On the day of atonement the scape goat was taken into the wilderness; here He exiles their guilt. The one removal is reminiscent of the other.

This removal of iniquity is part of the process of atonement and, as such, it is part of what Jesus does to save us. Jesus died on the cross to remove human guilt and ultimately to remove human iniquity (see Matt 1:21). He invites and He chooses. Inviting is a familiar part of the gospel. Choosing those who respond, however, is part of this same process. There is a theology which suggests that being invited (called) is the entire thing. This is not the way Jesus says it in Matt 22:14. Nor is it the case that inviting all to come builds God's kingdom up while choosing who gets to stay tears it down. Both inviting and choosing are part of one process that has the cumulative effect of building up God's kingdom. So applying the figures of a measuring line, plumb line, and measuring basket to the judgment as instruments of measurement is very much to the point. We invite here (on earth); God chooses there (in heaven). He does this through a judgment. When we include both parts of this process the result is solid, sustainable, enduring growth.

The differences among the three figures used above are less important than their similarities. The same concept of applying an objective external standard occurs twice in Zech 1-2 (1:16; 2:1) and twice in Zech 3-6 (4:10; 5:5-6), with different emphases. One emphasis is that Jerusalem would be rebuilt (1:16; 4:10); the other has to do with measurement or evaluation (2:1; 5:5-6). Notice, however, that even the way the differences are distributed across the two sections illustrates an overarching unity, since both emphases find support in both sections. The sections are robustly linked to each other.

## Datelines

Beyond the matter of thematic parallels, another reason why Zech 1-2 and 3-6 can't be separated from each other is that both sections occur under one dateline. Zechariah supplies only three datelines, at 1:1, 7 and 7:1. Thus, apart from the first six verses, the first six chapters of Zechariah are all part of the same vision report. William H. Shea establishes the unity of this first vision report in a masterful paper entitled, "The Literary Structure of Zechariah 1-6."<sup>22</sup> He points out that there are eight visions within Zech 1:7-6:14,<sup>23</sup> that they are related chiasmatically, and that the directionality of the reasoning in each case is not from cause to effect (A > A', B > B', . . .), but from effect back to cause (A < A', B < B', . . .).

Thus in Zech 1-6 we are dealing with a single unified body of text. There is no structural fact that would justify dividing Zech 1-2 from 3-6 such that chaps. 3-6 provide background for Rev 4-6a while chaps. 1-2 do not. Zech 1-2 and 3-6 go together. If one part informs Rev 4-6a, the other does as well.

<sup>22</sup> In Jiří Moskala, ed., *Creation, Life, and Hope: Essays in Honor of Jacques B. Doukhan* (Berrien Springs: Andrews University, 2000), pp. 83-100.

<sup>23</sup> I would prefer to call these "scenes" rather than "visions." They all fall within one dated vision report, given to Zechariah "On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius" (Zech 1:7).

## Zechariah 1-2 and Revelation 4-6a

If Zech 3-6 is related to Rev 4-6a, and Zech 3-6 is related to Zech 1-2, it follows that Zech 1-2 is related to Rev 4-6a. The task before us in this section is to expand our contextual base for Rev 4-6a by exploring in some detail the assumptions that lie behind what has been said already. We could call this a background (Zech 1-2) for the background (Zech 3-6) of our target passage. Above we made the case that a judgment model offers the best backdrop for interpreting Rev 4-6a. Now we argue that any such judgment must take place in the end time.

In Zech 1-2 three themes emerge from the text. These do not map directly onto Rev 4-6a, but do lie behind it. The three themes are (1) a time period of fixed duration prior to the time of the prophet's activity (the seventy years of Jeremiah), (2) the theme of escape from Babylon, and (3) the theme of God coming to be with His people (Zech 2:9-10). These themes show more fully what Zech 3-6 has in view, and in this way they help to clarify what John heard Zech 3-6 saying as he wrote Rev 4-6a.

### Seventy years

Then the angel of the LORD said, "LORD Almighty, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and from the towns of Judah, which you have been angry with **these seventy years**?"<sup>24</sup> (Zechariah 1:12)

*Jeremiah's seventy years.* Just before the events described in the prophecy of Zechariah (spanning roughly 520-518 BC), a time period of specified duration comes to an end. What Jeremiah said was, "these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years" (Jer 25:11). We can calculate the period from this clause alone. Babylon was defeated by Medo-Persia in 539 BC. If this is the ending point, 609 BC should be the beginning and, as it happens, that was the year when Babylon defeated Assyria at Carchemish. Jeremiah defined the seventy years as the time during which "these nations" (not this nation) would serve the king of Babylon. They could only serve Babylon during the years it was in power.

Jeremiah mentions this same period in two other passages. (1) "But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt,' declares the LORD, 'and will make it desolate forever'" (Jer 25:12). In 25:12 we can know when the period ends by asking when "the king of Babylon and his nation" were

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<sup>24</sup> When the text says, "these seventy years," which seventy years is that? Ezra 6:15 says the work on the temple was finished in the sixth year of Darius, so there were seventy years from the time the temple was destroyed in 586 BC and the time when it was rebuilt. Is this what Jeremiah had in mind? No. His seventy years were the time during which "these nations will serve the king of Babylon" (Jer 25:11). These nations were still serving the king of Babylon in 586, but not in 516. For that matter, when Zechariah records the words, "which you have been angry with these seventy years," are these the same as the seventy years during which the temple lay in ruins? They can't be, because the temple had only been in ruins 66 years when they were written. At that moment there were not seventy years of temple desolation to refer to, so this verse cannot be referring to them. Nor were there seventy years of wrath against the Jewish nation. The wrath began in 605 and ended in 539. The idea of a seventy-year period might appear in different guises in and around the time of the exile, but Jeremiah's seventy years are only and exclusively from 609 when "these nations" started serving the king of Babylon until 539 when Babylon, which had destroyed the others was itself destroyed. No one was serving the king of Babylon in 538 BC, or anytime after that.

punished for their guilt. Babylon was punished in 539 BC. That was the year the city fell to the Medo-Persians. (2) "This is what the LORD says: 'When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place'" (Jer 29:10). Notice two things. First, the seventy years were "for Babylon." They were years of Babylonian power, not Jewish subservience. And second, when the seventy years are over, God would fulfill His gracious promise to "bring [the Jews] back to this place." The Jews were free to return in 539 BC. Thus Jeremiah tells us three times (25:11, 12; 29:10) that the seventy years would end in 539 BC. They did not end in 516 BC. The seventy years, if by that we mean the seventy years of Jeremiah, were over for 19 years before Haggai or Zechariah started writing their respective prophecies.

*Other ancient applications.* Or is this true? Was the period perhaps still coming to an end then? When Zechariah says, "which you have been angry with these seventy years," what is he referring to? The intent appears to be that the temple was still in ruins and so the seventy years were not yet over. Shea remarks that

. . . for Zechariah the seventy years extended from 586, the year of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (2 Kgs 25:8), until its construction was completed in 516 (Ezra 6:15). . . . Thus one can reckon these 70 years from 605 to 536 in terms of the people, while in terms of the temple they can be dated from 586 to 516.<sup>25</sup>

True or false? Can the seventy years be dated from 605 to 536? Or 586 to 516? Or both 605 to 536 and 586 to 516? Not really, because Babylon came to its end in 539. Jeremiah not only gives us a number; he gives us an interpretation for the number and it has to do with Babylon, not Jerusalem, not the temple. So 586 to 516 might be seventy years, but not Jeremiah's seventy years.<sup>26</sup> In terms of perceptions we could do this in still more ways. From Daniel's point of view the period would logically measure from 605 to 535 (dating from the first attack, when Daniel went into exile), just as for Ezekiel it would be 597 to 527 (dating from the second attack, when Ezekiel went into exile), and for the remaining exiles 586 to 516 (dating from the third attack and destruction of the temple, when they all went into exile). But Jeremiah does not give us three definitions; he gives us one definition three times, and it is none of the above. The exiles were right in one sense because the temple was in fact rebuilt after a period of seventy years in 516 BC, but not in the sense that Jeremiah had anything to do with setting that date. The defining research in this area is that of Ross Winkle, which I warmly recommend to all my readers.<sup>27</sup>

*Later analogical applications.* We're not through with this time period when we finish figuring out how to count correctly. The reason why we're discussing this at all is that, if the analogy holds between Zech 1:12 and Rev 4-6a, there should be something in the antitype that

<sup>25</sup> Shea, "Literary Structure," p. 91.

<sup>26</sup> Why shouldn't we say that the Jews were correctly waiting in 520 BC for the seventy years to end, i.e., that the central theme of the seventy years was the temple? Perhaps the temple was inaugurated in 516 BC? This is an attractive hypothesis, but Jeremiah doesn't say it that way. Babylon was to be punished when the period ended. The Jews were to return when the period ended. Both of these things happened in 539 BC, so that is Jeremiah's terminus for the period. Nor can his seventy years be applied multiple ways. Because 516 BC has nothing to do with Babylon, 516 BC has nothing to do with the seventy years.

<sup>27</sup> Winkle, "Jeremiah's Seventy Years For Babylon: A Re-Assessment. Part I: The Scriptural Data," *AUSS* 25/2 1987, pp. 201-14; "Jeremiah's Seventy Years For Babylon: A Re-Assessment. Part I: The Historical Data," *AUSS* 25/3 1987, pp. 289-300.

corresponds to it. So now the question is whether there's a later time period that occupies the same role relative to Rev 4-6a that the seventy years does to what Zechariah says.

There are two ways to approach this. In a first century inauguration model, the only likely possibility is the seventy weeks of Dan 9:24-27. But there are inconvenient details. First, on the day of Pentecost the seventy weeks were still in progress. In the case of Zechariah the whole story revolves around the idea that the seventy years, as defined by Jeremiah, had already run their course before the story concerning them begins. The seventy weeks end, not in the timeframe of Pentecost (Acts 2), but three and a half years later in the timeframe of Stephen's martyrdom (Acts 7). Second, the events that were prophesied by Daniel bear little similarity to those prophesied by Jeremiah. The seventy weeks were a time of relative favor for the Jewish people, whereas the seventy years were a time of oppression. Thus the seventy weeks of Daniel don't provide a good parallel for us in Rev 4-6a.

In a judgment model, however, the 1260 days work perfectly. The 1260 days were a time of oppression and persecution for the church, as the seventy years were for Israel. The fact that the two periods are not the same length is not an issue. They do not need to be. The important thing is that both periods represent a time during which a hostile power exerts control over God's people. The theme of escape, to which we now turn, develops against this background. If there's no oppression during the time period which leads up to our passage, there's nothing to escape from and the whole story line comes apart.

### The theme of escape from Babylon

"Come! Come! Flee from the land of the north," declares the LORD, "for I have scattered you to the four winds of heaven," declares the LORD. <sup>7</sup> "Come, O Zion! Escape, you who live in the Daughter of Babylon!" (Zechariah 2:6-7)

Then I heard another voice from heaven say: "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues; <sup>5</sup> for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes. (Revelation 18:4-5)

The above passage has no counterpart in Rev 4-5. Instead it calls to mind Rev 18, where the substance of the second and third angel's messages of Rev 14 is repeated with greater force.<sup>28</sup> In Maxwell's outline Rev 18 is in what we could call section D', which does not correspond to Rev 4-5 (section B), but Zech 2:6-7 can't be omitted from the discussion without doing violence to the material that surrounds it. Zechariah, and also Haggai, spoke to people who had just returned from Babylonian exile. That's what Zech 2:6-7 is about, so it's a passage we must deal with. Even though these verses have no verbal link to Rev 4-6a, they do give us a clue as to the timeframe for an expected application of Rev 4-6a. Historically, the message of Rev 18:4-5 is given during the end time when Christ is still in the second apartment and the judgment is still in session. The present parallel, although not the chiasmic structure of Revelation, suggests that Rev 4-6a also take place in the end time.

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<sup>28</sup> The three angels' messages appear first in Rev 14:6-11, with two verses, one verse, and three verses respectively. If we extend the third message to vs. 12, it's two, one, and four verses respectively. In Rev 18 the second message ("Babylon is fallen") is repeated in three verses (1-3) and the third message is repeated in 21 verses (4-24).

## The theme of God coming

I will surely raise my hand against them so that their slaves will plunder them. Then you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me. <sup>10</sup> "Shout and be glad, O Daughter of Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you," declares the LORD. (Zechariah 2:9-10)

Looking back, as we do now from the perspective of the end time, we can see an obvious connection between the coming of God that Zechariah refers to and the second coming promised by Jesus. In Zechariah's day God was coming to welcome His people home from Babylonian exile. In the antitype both Father and Son welcome the redeemed of all ages home to heaven at the end of the age, and they come here in order to do that.<sup>29</sup>

## Discussion

Proponents of the inauguration model for Rev 4-5 are quick to point out that there are no terms for judgment within the section, and this is true. Terms like *krima*, *krinō*, *krisis*, and so on, do not appear in Rev 4-5. But what about the stem *dikē*, as in the word Laodicea (Greek *laodikeia*)? Thayer offers glosses for *dikē* such as "right, justice; suit at law; judicial hearing, judicial decision, especially a sentence of condemnation."<sup>30</sup> In a historicist interpretation of the seven churches, the period to which the last church brings us is one during which people are being judged.<sup>31</sup>

Is this fact relevant? Ekkehardt Müller points out that Rev 4:1 begins a new section. The Greek words *meta tauta eidon* ("after this I saw") are a transition marker in Revelation and mark a clean break between the last of the letters in chap. 3 and the throne scene of chaps. 4-5.<sup>32</sup> This

<sup>29</sup> Both Father and Son. Of the creation John says, "Through him all things were made" (John 1:3). This cannot mean that someone greater made our world "through" the Father. The words, "Let there be light" (Gen 1:3), were pronounced by the Son, expressing with perfect fidelity the will of the Father. And so it is true that "God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen 1:1) – through His Son. Ellen White states that both Father and Son were present on Sinai when God gave Moses the law (see PP 339). Again, the words spoken expressed the will of the Father, and again they will have been pronounced by the Son. While on earth Jesus said, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30), one meaning of which is that they are inseparable. When Christ died on the cross His separation from the Father crushed out His life. In this they became, as it were, two. It is a condition that will never be repeated. So is it "God" who comes (Zech 2:10) (giving the passage a plenary meaning), or Jesus (John 14:3)? It is both.

<sup>30</sup> In Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, Abridged, we find "an action at law, law-suit"; in G. Abbott-Smith, *Manual Greek Lexicon*, "a judicial hearing." For a related form see Acts 25:15 ("the Jews brought charges [*katadikēn*] against him").

<sup>31</sup> Ellen White was a historicist when it came to Rev 2-3. She isolated broad principles from the letters that have general applicability, especial the parts about Ephesus losing its first love (2:4) and the counsel that those in Sardis should remember what they had received (3:3). But she never allowed these idealist interpretations to displace historicist interpretations. Her primary focus was historicist, as ours should be.

<sup>32</sup> "There is also a clear-cut end of this septet at Rev 3:22 and the beginning of a new section with Rev 4:11" (Ekkehardt Müller, *Microstructural Analysis of Revelation 4-11*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, vol. 21 [Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1994], p. 200). "The first clear structuring formula [*meta tauta eidon*] comes in Rev 4:1. This is a strong indication that a new section starts in Rev 4:1" (p. 201). "In Rev 4, John in the spirit sees heavenly realities, an entire new setting" (p. 201). I challenge only this last statement. Is the setting *entirely* new? In space it is, but the time in which the events occur remains constant. That a new section begins in Rev 4:1 is not at issue. Müller is clearly

is true as regards space, but not as regards time. (In fairness, Müller does not mention time. Only space.)<sup>33</sup> My position is that once John describes the deplorable condition of the people in Laodicea, and his attention is directed from where they are on earth to a widely different scene in heaven, his intent is show us the contrast between the two. We cannot capture this contrast without being aware that they take place simultaneously. If Rev 4-5 is a judgment, it makes perfect sense to show this as an overlay over Laodicea, where God's people are being judged. If in Laodicea God's people are being judged, as their name implies, that letter applies with special force to the end time. Can we pull these things apart? Yes. But not without doing violence to John's intent.

The irony conveyed by seeing the contrast between events here during the judgment and events there during the judgment is what John places before us – not just one scene and another scene. The location is different, but the timeframe is the same. We must grasp both facts, but we will be unable to do this if we confine our interpretation of the churches to the types of idealist insights they legitimately convey. Let us not lose the one, but in doing this let us not lose the other. Laodicea must be applied to our day and time, now while the judgment is in session in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary, or we will never see the relationships John is trying to convey. In Rev 3:17-22 and Rev 4-5 there is only one set of events, but those events unfold in two places. Saying the scenes of Rev 3:14-22 and Rev 4-5 are in different sections is not the same as saying they are unrelated.

To us the judgment is about us; to heavenly beings it is about God – a referendum on the integrity of His government. We Laodiceans have grasped the point that the judgment is a time to afflict our souls.<sup>34</sup> So for us the judgment may or may not be a happy time. But those who attend the proceedings and can see what God is actually doing on our behalf can't contain themselves. As they see God's spectacular display of wisdom mixed with love in each case brought forward for their review, His decisions and His explanations of them fill every heart with inexpressible joy and awe. I venture that if we could see the events from this perspective, we would feel the same way.

Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, <sup>10</sup> the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: <sup>11</sup> "You

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right in saying that it does. But granting that there are two sections (one before 4:1, one after), what is the relationship between them?

<sup>33</sup> Things can be in relationship even if they are fundamentally different. A hammer is not a nail, and yet the only way to understand what a hammer is, or what a nail is, is by grasping the relationship they bear to each other. Neither one makes sense without the other. Similarly, I am not my wife, and yet we have lived together 32 years. I'm not saying that Rev 3 blends into Rev 4 structurally. Structurally they are separate, just as Müller points out. But the letter to Laodicea, occurring simultaneously with the throne scene in a judgment model, has a relationship in time that must be grasped if we are to understand either section well. (1) In a historicist interpretation of the churches, especially Seventh-day Adventists are Laodicea. In Thyatira God speaks of the majority church in third person, but addresses a remnant within it in second person. In the case of Laodicea a similar focus on a remnant is therefore not without precedent. (2) The pre-advent judgment has been in session since 1844, whether or not Rev 4-5 is a description of it. Thus if Rev 4-5 depicts the judgment, as I assert, bringing the two ([1], [2]) together in this way is entirely natural from a historicist Seventh-day Adventist perspective. One person who shares my historicist assumptions exactly, while arguing well against a judgment model for Rev 4-5, is Austin F. Cooke. It is unfortunate that his two papers on the subject ("An Exposition of Revelation 4," "An Exposition of Revelation 5") remain unpublished.

<sup>34</sup> In the antitype this is a possible reference to Adventist dietary restrictions and other lifestyle choices.

are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being." (Rev 4:9-11)

## Objections

### To the judgment model

*How long, Sovereign Lord?* There is a question about the relationship between Rev 4-5 in relation to 6. If we place Rev 4-5 in the end time, what do we do with the following chapter? Does the judgment model push chap. 6 into the future?

They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" (Revelation 6:10)

Rev 6 follows Rev 4-5 textually. In Rev 6 the blood of the martyrs cries out for justice in a timeframe that is still future to those crying out for it. So how can all of this be earlier than the events of Rev 4-5? I grant there is a set of assumptions under which this sequence of events would be impossible. There is another set of assumptions, however, where it all makes perfect sense. At issue is the distinction between Rev 6 following Rev 4-5 textual and following Rev 4-5 chronologically. Is it possible for textual sequence to differ from chronological sequence? If not, then how can we explain the relationship between Rev 11:19 and 12:1? And yet all agree that 11:19 is the sanctuary introduction for the scene that follows. If we can explain this, surely we can also explain the relationship between Rev 4-5 and 6a.

Rev 4-5 could look forward to the events of chap. 6 as prophecy (from the perspective of the first century), or just as easily it could look back on the events of chap. 6 as history (from the perspective of the end time). Why should it be impossible for God to review past events? This happens routinely in human law courts. Judges never try cases involving future actions. So why can a similar scenario apply in the case the heavenly court? The judgment model for Rev 4-5 in relation to Rev 6a is not internally inconsistent. It is only inconsistent when measured against the assumptions of a competing model.

The judgment model creates a set of temporal relationships for the breaking of the seals that could appear complex and confusing, but this need not be. You have an evening to spare and take down a book to read. Its topic is American history. You open the first chapter and it's about the Revolutionary War. A half hour later you open the second chapter and it's about the War of 1812. A half hour later you open the second chapter and it's about the Mexican American War. A half hour later you open the third chapter and it's about the Civil War, and so on. You read through the book and it takes you a few hours. What has just happened?

You sat down to read in the present, but each chapter takes you to a later series of past events. What you are reading about took place earlier than the process of reading about it. (How else could such a book have been written?) There are processes here which run parallel to each other. At 6:00 p.m. you read about the Revolutionary War, which occurred 1775-83. At 6:30 p.m. you read about the War of 1812. At 7:00 p.m. you read about the Mexican American War, which occurred 1846-48. At 7:30 you read about the Civil War, which occurred 1861-65. Other chapters have different topics. One sequence involves the reading process (6:00, 6:30, 7:00, 7:30, . . .). Another involves a succession of historical events (1775-83, 1812, 1846-48,

1861-65). Mapping the one process onto the other might seem complex – until you sit down and read a book of history for the first time. Then it all becomes clear.

*Structure of Revelation.* One of the organizing principles in the book of Revelation is a succession of annual feast days (Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits; Pentecost; Trumpets, Atonement, Booths). This series strongly argues for the existence of linear structure in the book, but this is not the same as saying that it does not have chiasmic structure. We can discuss the details further, but I think Strand and Maxwell have demonstrated beyond question that it does.<sup>35</sup>

The question whether Rev 4-5 can be interpreted as a judgment scene is equivalent to asking whether Revelation is chiasmic in structure. If it is, and if the judgment is referred to in a later chapter (19:1-10 comes to mind), it would be entirely reasonable to look for a forward reference to that event in an earlier chapter. For this reason it is ironic that Maxwell was so opposed to the idea of a judgment in Rev 4-5. Having laid such heavy emphasis on the book's chiasmic structure he, of all people, should have been able to see it. Actually, he might have. At one point he changes Strand's outline (D'B') so as to place Rev 19:1-10 in a section that would not be chiasmically parallel to Rev 4-5. And while Maxwell's book was still in preparation Shea published a paper showing that such a change was unnecessary and ill advised.<sup>36</sup>

I submit that references to and portrayals of the pre-advent judgment are pervasive in the book of Revelation. I see Rev 4-5 as the beginning of the judgment and Rev 19:1-10 as its end.<sup>37</sup> Thus, if Rev 4-5 is in section B and Rev 19a is in section B' (Strand), finding a forward reference to the judgment in section B is exactly what we would expect on structural grounds. It will only be unreasonable to find a forward reference to the judgment in the early chapters of Revelation if the book's chiasmic structure is set aside, or if we see no comparable judgment in later chapters.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> See Kenneth A. Strand, *Interpreting the Book of Revelation* (Ann Arbor: Ann Arbor Publishers, 1979); C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares*, vol. 2 (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1985).

<sup>36</sup> "Revelation 5 and 19 as Literary Reciprocals," *AUSS* 22 (1984), pp. 249-58.

<sup>37</sup> How can we be sure that the parallel with Zech 3:5, where Joshua puts on a "clean turban" (indicating a change of clothes) does not correspond to the change of clothing that would occur when the high priest comes out of the sanctuary rather than when he goes in? How can we be sure the judgment is not ending in Rev 4-5 rather than beginning? We know this because Joshua is putting the turban on, not taking it off. Putting the turban on is something high priests did when entering the most holy place, not when leaving it. So in the antitype, Rev 4-5 is a starting point, not an ending point. Additionally, if the structure of the book is chiasmic and if the judgment is mentioned twice, it would make sense to see the early reference as a beginning and the late reference as an end. But this is not necessarily the case. In Zech 1-6 Shea points out that the reasoning is backward (effect to cause) rather than forward (cause to effect) (see "Literary Structure," pp. 85-87).

<sup>38</sup> The parallels between Rev 4-5 and 19:1-10 (19a) are strongly motivated. In the one case the sequence is throne, twenty-four elders, four creatures, innumerable multitude. In Rev 19a the sequence is innumerable multitude, twenty-four elders, four creatures, throne. What we have here is ABCD:D'B'C'A'. The outer parts of this structure are related chiasmically (AD:D'A'), but the middle parts are not (BC:B'C'). This fact is significant, because for both Strand and Maxwell the structure of the book as a whole is ABCD:C'D'B'A', where the outer parts of the outline (AB:B'A') are related chiasmically but the inner parts are not (CD:C'D'). Thus there is a relationship of self-similarity between the smaller chiasm involving Rev 4-5 and 19 and the larger one involving the book as a whole. Rev 4-5 and 19a are robustly linked to each other by a succession of both structural and thematic facts.

## To the inauguration model

*The Lamb.* The Lamb's posture is described twice in Rev 5 (vss. 6, 7) and both times He is standing or walking. In vs. 6 He is "standing in the center." In vs. 7 "He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne." If this is a coronation and the Lamb takes His seat on a throne as part of the ceremony, when does He do so? Which verse describes this? In either model He is already seated with His Father on His throne, so showing that the Lamb receives worship in Rev 5:14 does not distinguish between the two models.

*The throne.* Is there any way to be sure that the throne in this scene is in the second apartment? There is. The concept of centrality hangs heavy in Rev 4-5 (*kuklothen* "surrounding" [4:4]; *kuklō* "around" [4:6; 5:11]; *en mesō* "in the center" [4:6; 5:6, 6]). No one challenges the fact that the golden altar and the candlesticks were in the first apartment, and Ellen White confirms this in a widely circulated quotation (see addendum below), but she doesn't mention the throne in the same quotation. Thus we can neither agree nor disagree with her as we try to establish where the throne was on the basis of the text. The feature of the text that is of special interest in this regard has to do with words denoting centrality. These argue strongly that the throne, as portrayed in Rev 4-5, was in the second apartment.

What organizing principle governs the placement of furniture in the first apartment? How could we summarize it? Outward. The table for consecrated bread was on the north side of the room, the golden altar on the west, the candlesticks on the south. What was at the center of the first apartment? Nothing. What organizing principle governs the placement of furniture in the second apartment? How could we summarize that? Inward. A number of items were placed in the second apartment (ark, atonement cover, cherubim),<sup>39</sup> but all of these were brought together at the center of the room. The atonement cover was over the ark; the cherubim were over the atonement cover.

In Exod 40 and elsewhere the ark is always at the center of the second apartment. In Rev 4-5 the throne is at the center of the four creatures, at the center of the twenty-four surrounding thrones, and surrounded by a rainbow. It was also at the center of everyone's attention. The throne is the center of scene. If the ark at the center of the second apartment could reasonably be used to symbolize anything in the sanctuary, what would that be? If it could represent the throne, then the second apartment provides a better context for the use of such terms as *kuklothen* (x1), *kuklō* (x2), and *en mesō* (x3) than the first. In the first apartment the pervasive use of such terms would be impossible.

*The candlesticks.* If the throne is in the second apartment in Rev 4-5, that fact could be used to solve another puzzle that has not received the attention it deserves. If the candlesticks are "before the throne" (4:5), that appears to favor the idea that the scene takes place in the first apartment – until one reads the next verse. A "sea" is mentioned in vs. 6 and this also is "before the throne." In the first apartment one can explain vs. 5 by saying that the table of consecrated bread is directly opposite the candlesticks. In this case the table represents the throne. But one cannot explain vs. 5 and vs. 6 in this way at the same time. If the candlesticks and the sea are

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<sup>39</sup> Commenting on the word *kataskiazonta* (Heb 9:5), B. F. Westcott states, "The Cherubim are treated as *zōa* (Apoc. iv. 6)" (*The Epistle to the Hebrews* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, repr. 1980], p. 249).

both "before the throne,"<sup>40</sup> where are they with respect to each other? Does the antitype have a body of water in the first apartment? Did the type have water there?

The type had water only in the court. If the analogy holds, we must assume that the "sea" of vs. 6 is in the court. If it is, the whole scene comes into focus once we move our viewpoint to the second apartment. If the throne is in the second apartment and the veil separating the apartments is drawn aside, as it had to be on the day of atonement, one could look out past the candlesticks eastward and they would be "before the throne." The sea would also be "before the throne," as we read in vs. 6. A remaining problem for my model is the fact that on the day of atonement the door to the first apartment was kept closed. We can only work with what has been given us. The text says, "After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven" (Rev 4:1; see 3:8).<sup>41</sup>

## Conclusion

The inauguration model has many appealing features and has good explanations for some things (notably the "seven spirits of God sent into all the earth" [Rev 5:6]), but it does not bear scrutiny when measured against the contextual material supplied by Zech 1-6. Nor can these materials be ignored. John was clearly thinking of them when he wrote Rev 4-6a. Viewed in the context of Zechariah's earlier prophecy, an end time judgment model provides a better explanation of what John describes in Rev 4-6a.

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<sup>40</sup> I submit that the type for the sea of glass is the laver. What the text says is, "Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal" (Rev 4:6). It is not "a sea of glass," but "what looked like a sea of glass," i.e., it is not really a sea of glass. But where does the counterfactual belong? Does John say "what looked like a sea of glass" because it was not really a sea? Or because this sea was not really glass? I would say the latter. It was not really glass. What it really was was water. In the type, was there water in the sanctuary? Not in either apartment, but in the court yes, there was water. "He placed the basin between the Tent of Meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing,<sup>31</sup> and Moses and Aaron and his sons used it to wash their hands and feet" (Exod 40:30-31). This is the only information we have to go on in the type when seeking an interpretation for Rev 4:6.

<sup>41</sup> Was this the curtain separating the two apartments, which was always open while the high priest ministered in the second apartment and never open at any other time? If so, this would explain how one could see the candlesticks, the golden altar, and the throne all at the same time, if the throne corresponds to the ark of the covenant and if in Rev 4-5 that was in the second apartment. Or was it the door at the entrance to the first apartment, which was always closed when the high priest ministered in the second apartment? If so, that might mean that things were just getting started. In any event, what he sees is "a door standing open in heaven." And in any event, we can see the throne at the center of everything (nothing was at the center of the first apartment) and we can see "what looked like a sea of glass" (vs. 6), for which there is no precedent inside either apartment. Moving the sea into the first apartment won't work, nor will moving it into the second apartment. The only body of water in the ancient sanctuary was the laver, and that was very clearly in the court. So if questions remain, so be it. Let us explain them as we're able. What we can't do is go beyond facts supplied by the text or by the types given to us in the ancient sanctuary.

## Addenda

### Literary Structure of Revelation

If the book of Revelation is chiasmic in structure, as Strand and Maxwell have shown, and if Revelation mentions the investigative or pre-advent judgment in a later chapter, as would seem reasonable, a forward reference to the judgment should appear somewhere in an earlier chapter in order to maintain chiasmic symmetry. I submit that Rev 4-5 is the expected forward reference and that the scene does not stop at the end of chap. 5, but continues on up to and including 19:10. Rev 19:1-10, closely parallel with Rev 4-5, is the end of the judgment – the point beyond which the only thing that it remains for Christ to do is come to the earth with all His holy angels.

The seals, the trumpets, and the material of other chapters between these outer limits represent the sort of information that would be presented as evidence in the judgment. God's explanation does not only include a list of sins and a verdict. In each case He is revealing not primarily the sinner, but Himself. The judgment is a self-revelation of God, just as the gospel is a self-revelation of God. The point is not that we have done this and this and are guilty, but that, given such behavior, Christ has done this and this on the sinner's behalf and is innocent. The purpose for the judgment is to vindicate the character and government of God. So He gives the background for each person's life – the historical backdrop in the church and in the world against which it develops. "The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, *that this man was born there*" (Psalm 87:6, KJV). Only in this context can His own actions on the sinner's behalf be understood. This is the reason why the scroll is sealed and only Christ can open it. Only He is both God and man. Only He can stand on both sides of the dividing line between the Source of the covenant stipulations and those accused of violating them. Not even the Father can do this (see Rev 5:3-4). I've had a theory for some time that to explain a thing means setting it in context. If the theory is true, this process illustrates it.

The question whether the pre-advent judgment can be found in the New Testament is equivalent to asking whether the book of Revelation can be found in the New Testament. In the model I propose, the judgment occupies much of the book in one way or another (Rev 4-19a = 15.5/22 chapters = 70%). Rev 1-3 lead up to the judgment scenes in historical sequence and Rev 19b-22 follow the judgment scenes in historical sequence. The portions of the book that are presented out of sequence all occur between the limits I propose above for the judgment, i.e., 4:1-19:10. The organizing principle for the inner sections is thematic rather than historical.<sup>42</sup>

As regards Maxwell's outline, I prefer Strand's. The outline Strand sets forth can be summarized as prologue ABCD C'D'B'A' epilogue, with the outer sections (ABB'A') chiasmic and the central sections (CDC'D') not chiasmic.<sup>43</sup> I propose dividing his B (4:1-8:1) and B' (19:1-21:4) as 4:1-5:14 = B, 6:1-8:1 = C, 19:1-16 = B', and 19:17-21:4 = C', retaining 8:2-11:18 = D, 11:19-14:20 = E, 15:1-16:21 = D', 17:1-18:24 = E'. The structure of the whole would then be prologue ABCDE D'E'B'C'A' epilogue. The two inner sections (BC B'C', DE D'E') are not chiasmic, but the structure as a whole is solidly chiasmic. This closely follows Strand's original concept, modifying only details. Within sections B and B', as defined above, I suggest further that B (4:1-5:14) be subdivided into 4:1-11 (B1) and 5:1-14 (B2) and that B' (19:1-16) be subdivided into 19:1-10

<sup>42</sup> One place to bear this principle in mind is in chap. 11.

<sup>43</sup> Strand himself labeled the middle sections C(a) C(b) C(a)' C(b)', so most abstractly his outline could be simplified to prologue ABC C'B'A' epilogue. See Strand, *Interpreting*, p. 52.

(B1') and 19:11-16 (B2') respectively. These are relatively minor changes all based on Strand's distinctions. What would truly violate the spirit of what he was trying to accomplish would be to revert to a linear outline.

### Ellen White

There are a number of quotations that we could deal with, and these could become the basis for a separate paper, but let me mention two of them. They are tantalizingly unconnected to each other.

"The holy places of the sanctuary in heaven are represented by the two apartments in the sanctuary on earth. As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the temple of God in heaven, he beheld there **"seven lamps of fire** burning before the throne." Revelation 4:5. He saw an angel "having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon **the golden altar** which was before the throne." Revelation 8:3. Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment [415] of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw there the "seven lamps of fire" and "the golden altar," represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth. Again, "the temple of God was opened" (Revelation 11:19), and he looked within the inner veil, upon the holy of holies. Here he beheld **"the ark of His testament,"** represented by the sacred chest constructed by Moses to contain the law of God (GC 414.3).

"John was strengthened to live in the presence of his glorified Lord. Then before his wondering vision were [583] opened the glories of heaven. **He was permitted to see the throne of God** and, looking beyond the conflicts of earth, to behold the white-robed throng of the redeemed. He heard the music of the heavenly angels and the triumphant songs of those who had overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. In the revelation given to him there was unfolded scene after scene of thrilling interest in the experience of the people of God, and the history of the church foretold to the very close of time. In figures and symbols, subjects of vast importance were presented to John, which he was to record, that the people of God living in his age and in future ages might have an intelligent understanding of the perils and conflicts before them" (AA 582.3).

The first statement doesn't mention the throne, so conveys no information as to where it might be located in Rev 4-5. The second statement says that she saw the throne, but doesn't tell us which chapter of Revelation she has in mind. The present model cannot agree or disagree with Ellen White where she takes no position.