

Part 2

In Regard to Dan 7

Chapter 1

Where Does the Vision of Rev 4-5 Take Place?

In Rev 4 John sees the throne of God. He also sees seven lamps and a sea of glass (vss. 5, 6). Each of these things is associated in some way with the sanctuary.

Within the sanctuary, God's throne is normally associated with the second apartment.³⁰ The seven lamps have their counterpart on earth (see Rev 1:12-13, 20) but also occupy the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven. It is significant that the sea of glass is mentioned in the same context as the seven lamps. It is part of the same description. Not only the lamps but also the sea of glass are said to be "before the throne" (vss. 5, 6). The only water associated with the sanctuary was in the laver outside.

So where is John in this vision? Is he in the second apartment, or the first apartment, or the court? He sees things located in each of these places. That is the problem. There appears to be no distinction between apartments, or between what is inside and what is outside. Are there no apartments in the heavenly sanctuary (if we are speaking of the lamps)? Worse yet, is there no sanctuary (if we are speaking of the sea)?

In the book of Hebrews we read that there is indeed a sanctuary in heaven and that it is as real as the High Priest who ministers in it. "The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man" (Heb 8:1-2). How real is Christ? To answer this question is to answer the corresponding one about how real the sanctuary is. In Heb 8 the two issues are linked. We cannot separate them.

³⁰ One sometimes hears Isa 14:13 quoted in this regard because that passage refers to Lucifer's desire to sit "on the sides of the north" (KJV). The table for the consecrated bread was on the north side of the sanctuary. Therefore the table for consecrated bread represents the throne of God in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. I question whether Lucifer would have settled for a throne in the first apartment if there had been anything more to want he would have wanted it. So I do not think that Isa 14:13 represents a strong argument. The second apartment was on the west side of the sanctuary. For Lucifer this would have been the ultimate. So I do not think the word "north" refers to the furniture of the first apartment in Isa 14:13. For background on what "north" might mean there see J. J. M. Roberts, "SAPON in Job 26,7," *Biblica* 56 (1975); 554-57.

It is one thing to say that the heavenly sanctuary is real, but after we have said that, what is it like? If the heavenly and earthly sanctuaries do not resemble each other, how would we ever know? The only way we will ever learn about the one is to study the other. In all of this the assumption must be that the type resembles what it typifies. If it does, then there are two apartments in the heavenly sanctuary. There were certainly two apartments in the earthly sanctuary.³¹ The claim requiring explanation would be that these two corresponding structures are fundamentally dissimilar, as for example that the heavenly sanctuary has only one apartment and one phase of service while the earthly sanctuary had two.

With this much as background, if the throne of God is in the second apartment then it and the lamps are not in the same place. Or at least the lamps and the sea of glass are not in the same place. Incidentally, this latter point follows whether or not we interpret the sea in the context of the sanctuary. If the sea is part of the sanctuary it corresponds to the laver outside in the court.³² On the other hand, if it is not part of the sanctuary it certainly would not be in the first apartment. The sea is outside under either set of assumptions. The lamps are not.

This fact argues strongly against placing the whole scene in the first apartment. In vs. 5 if we say that the lamps are before the throne and that for this reason the throne must be where the lamps are, the same logic should be applied to vs. 6. The sea is also before the throne. Is it the case that because the sea is before the throne, the throne is where the sea is? This puts the throne in two places because the lamps are inside while the sea is outside. And yet John sees these all of things while standing in one place. So how can we resolve these problems?

The answer lies within the text of the passage. "After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven" (Rev 4:1). John is in the second apartment. From there he is able to see things in the second apartment (the throne) and the first (the seven lamps). The door at the entrance to the first apartment is open too because he is able to look beyond it as well (to the sea).

³¹ "Volkmar Fritz, in his paper, "Temple Architecture: What Can Archaeology Tell Us About Solomon's Temple?" (Biblical Archaeology Review, July/August 1987, pp. 38-49). suggests that the inner compartment of Solomon's temple was not really a separate room but was more on the order of a shrine, such as those found in contemporary Canaanite temples. I do not find his argument persuasive. The second apartment of Solomon's temple was walled off with cedar and covered with gold (see 1 Kgs 6:16-22). To a person standing inside the whole room would appear to end in a wall of solid metal at the far end of the first apartment. It was not solid, but that was the appearance. The second apartment of Solomon's temple was every bit much a room as any we have in our homes today. And the reason why it had two rooms is that the tabernacle it was copied from had two apartments. I grant that the pillars in front of the temple looked all very Canaanite, but once we go inside the building Fritz's parallels with Canaanite floor plans do not bear scrutiny.

³² "The court represents the earth. The cross did not symbolize something else. It was itself the antitype of the altar. From this we could reason to the laver. The altar was in the court and the court is therefore the earth. The laver was also in the court and is also on me earth. What then does it represent? Just as there was a sense in which the seven lamps could be both in heaven and on earth (see Rev 1:12-13), so the laver, although it is in the court, can also be in heaven - if it has a counterpart on earth.

Having said this much about where things are located, I will be accused of literalism. This charge will have special reference to the idea that there is a door, and to what this fact implies about the rest of the sanctuary and its services. But if there is no door in the heavenly sanctuary, what does John mean when he says the door is open (see Rev 4:1)? There must be a door -or something that can be represented by the figure of a door - or John would not invoke that figure in telling us about it. It is not ours to object that John should not have seen what he saw.

Granting that there is some such object as a door, its function must be to separate areas as well as to grant entrance between them.³³ What areas does it separate? The two apartments God was trying to telling us about in the earthly type. We do not have to be able to draw a picture of these things in order to understand the biblical symbolism involved. It is the symbolism that I am interested in here. But before we discuss it further let me say a word about Dan 7, which is closely parallel to what we have been studying so far.

³³ "Christ says, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:7-10). He lets His sheep in but keeps me robbers out. He both allows access and denies it. He is one Christ and yet serves these two functions because of me different relationships people sustain toward Him. In the same way the author of Hebrews states, "Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place [the word is plural, lit. holy places]by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith,..." The syntax allows two interpretations. Christ's body is the "curtain" (this is the most natural sense in English) or it is the "new and living way" (this is the most natural sense in the Greek). But in the end it does not matter which we choose. The choices are a curtain, a gate, a door, a veil on the one hand (see John 10:7) or a way, a road on the other (see John 14:6). Both are means of access. "But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it" (Matt 7:14). And both prove to be a stumbling block to those who refuse the gift Christ offers. See also 1 Pet 2:7-8.

Chapter 2

The Parallels with Dan 7

There are a number of similarities between Rev 4-5 and Dan 7. In pointing these out one must also show that the parallels have parallels. Dan 7 is parallel in turn with Dan 8 and so this whole web of borrowed language and similar themes is germane to us in this chapter.

Dan 7 in Relation to Rev 4-5

Below we consider the thrones mentioned in both Dan 7 and Rev 4-5, the vast numbers of angels and other beings in attendance, the prominence of Christ under such figures as the "one like a son of man" (Dan 7:13), "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev 5:5), and "a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain" (vs. 6), and the "books" or "scroll" (Dan 7:10; Rev 5:1) that are opened in both scenes.

The thrones

In Rev 4 John says, "At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne. Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders" (Rev 4:2-4).

Writing much earlier Daniel says "thrones were set in place" (Dan 7:9) - not one but many. In fact on this occasion some twenty-five thrones were set in place" the throne of God at the center of the great judgment hall and one for each of the twenty-four elders seated in a circle around it.

Pursuing this matter further, could it be that only the twenty-four additional thrones are set in place on this occasion? What I mean is, could it be that the throne of God in Dan 7 remained where it always was - in the second apartment - and that the others were the only ones brought in on this occasion? This possibility fails on the second clause of vs. 9 ("and the Ancient of Days took his seat"). One does not take a seat where he is already sitting. So it is not only the case that the twenty-four elders took their seats. The Ancient of Days also sat down. Or at least that is the language of the passage.

Nor is it the case that God was without a throne until this moment. As King of the universe He has always had a throne, but it was elsewhere immediately prior to what we read in Dan 7 - in the first apartment for example.

The throne of God was also set in place - a different place - in Dan 7, just as the twenty-four other thrones surrounding it were. Again there is no need to draw pictures, but Daniel's words indicate a change of location. This is the important thing to notice.

The judgment has not always been in session. More specifically, it has not been in session ever since the cross. From the sanctuary we know that what Daniel describes corresponds to the day of atonement at the end of the ceremonial year, i.e. at the end of the ceremonial year, i.e. at the end of the 2300 evening-mornings of Dan 8 in 1844. If what we are talking about is time, the timeframe for the events of Dan 7 is clear enough.

Numbers in attendance

John says, "Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders" (Rev 5:11).

The expression "thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand" (Rev 5:11) is a direct reference to the words already quoted, "'Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him'" (Dan 7:10). This is an important fact. What it tells us is that John was thinking of Dan 7 as he wrote down what he saw in Rev 4-5.

If John was quoting Daniel, that is the best evidence we could have for interpreting the two passages together. And if he was not quoting Daniel, how is it that the two writers state themselves so similarly? John was referencing the earlier prophet's work purposefully, directly, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We cannot have the same understanding of Rev 4-5 that John had if we do not also share his concept of Dan 7, as documented in quotations such as those above. To break the connection between Dan 7 and Rev 4-5 would be a reversal of the author's intent.

References to Christ

There is a third point of similarity between the two passages under review. Daniel writes, "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed." (Dan 7:13-14)

In John's account of this same scene we do not see "'one like a son of man,'" but rather a "Lamb, looking as if it had been slain." "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" (Rev 5:6). The Son of man and the Lamb are different in the sense that different words are used, but both figures transparently refer to the same divine Being.

The "books" or "scroll"

The Lamb then takes the scroll mentioned in Rev 5:1 and opens its seven seals. When He does this He is praised by the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders (Rev 5:8-10), by the myriad of angels also present (vss. 11-12), and by "every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them" (vs. 13). This passage has the same intent as when Daniel said earlier, that "all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him" (Dan 7:14). The parallel is exact.

In Daniel there are "books" (7:10), in Revelation a "scroll" (5:1). In Daniel the books are opened, in Revelation the scroll is sealed. But why is it important to know this? The only reason for mentioning that the scroll is "sealed with seven seals" (Rev 5:1) is that Christ opens it, breaking each in turn and laying its contents open for the whole universe to see. This is one reason why the book that tells us these things is called a Revelation. So what insight do we gain by saying that the books are opened but the scroll is closed?³⁴ How long does the scroll stay closed? When are the books opened? Why do they need to be opened? How could they possibly be opened unless they were closed previously? Who opened them?³⁵

Summary

Granting that both men saw the things they describe, John is consciously modeling his description on that of Daniel. A number of literary links bind their accounts together.

It is one thing to show that both writers saw the same events. They did, but more is true. John writes in such a way as to link the accounts as well as the events. He was actively aware of Dan 7 as he wrote Rev 4-5. The later account draws from the earlier one, producing a number of very obvious literary and thematic correspondences.

³⁴ "In Daniel 7:9-14 the books are already open before the Son of man makes his appearance. In striking contrast, a focal emphasis of Revelation 4 and 5 is that the little scroll is closed - it is thoroughly closed; it is sealed with seven seals - until the Lamb undertakes to open it. The remaining portion of the seven-seals division (Revelation 6:1 to 8:1) continues to describe the Lamb's activity as He continues to break open the seals" (Maxwell, *God Cares*, 2:170-71).

³⁵ "It would be possible to press the argument from sequence too far in Dan 7:8-14 (not 9-14). First the beast makes his loud and boastful claims (vs. 8). This corresponds to the "time, times and half a time" of vs. 25. Then "[t]he court was seated, and the books were opened" (vs. 10). This corresponds to the fact that "the court will sit" in vs. 26. The court will remain in session from 1844 until a time just before Christ returns. "Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking" (vs. 11). This corresponds to the healing of the fatal wound in Rev 13:3. But the "one like a son of man" is not introduced until vs. 13. If we are arguing from sequence - the books are opened first and the Son of man comes only later - is the Son of man led into God's presence at the end of the judgment after the deadly wound has had time to heal? Maxwell would not want to make such a claim but it is consistent with his argument. Daniel writes with a repetitious style. In my view he develops one aspect of the story line in vss. 8-12 and then circles back to say more about the same things in vss. 13-14. Thus vs. 13 is in the same timeframe as vs. 9 after all and the argument from sequence fails to bear close scrutiny. Let me say this another way. Christ enters the second apartment at the beginning of the judgment. Verse 9 represents the beginning of the judgment. Therefore Christ enters the second apartment in the timeframe of vs. 9.

Dan 7 in Relation to Dan 8

If Rev 4-5 is parallel to Dan 7 it is also parallel to Dan 8, by means of the latter two chapters many additional links to each other. By bringing Dan 8 into the discussion we add another dimension. This is the sanctuary. We consider the second apartment and then the first.

The second apartment

A set of supporting parallels to Rev 4-5 is that between judgment scene in Dan 7 and the cleansing of the sanctuary in Dan 8.

In Dan 7 we have the Babylonian lion, the Medo-Persian bear, the Greek leopard, and the Roman beast out of which grows the little horn. After the little horn comes the judgment. In chap. 8 there is no reference to Babylon or to imperial Rome. But we do find a Medo-Persian ram and a Greek goat. The little horn is also present, just as it was in chap. 7.

There is a question why Babylon should be left out of Dan 8. Surely an appropriate symbol could have been found for it. In my view one reason for leaving Babylon out is to emphasize its similarities with Rome. The secular first phase of Roman power is omitted also. This comparison becomes a major theme of New Testament eschatology.

The Roman beast does not appear in chap. 8 because it is wild, whereas rams and goats are domesticated animals used in the ancient sanctuary. The animals in Dan 8 are clean, those in Dan 7 unclean. So the prophet does not mix them. But the little horn itself is the same in both cases.

If the events themselves and the sequence in which they appear are the same in Dan 7 and 8, should not the timeframe for those events be the same as well? I submit that the two chapters are indeed parallel with respect to time. Their culminating events (the judgment, the cleansing of the sanctuary) occur at the end of an era. The timeframe for both chapters is established in Dan 8. What happens in that timeframe is clarified for both chapters in Dan 7. These facts about Daniel must be allowed to influence our understanding of Rev 4-5. They certainly influenced John's understanding as he wrote Rev 4-5.

The first apartment

If the judgment or cleansing of the sanctuary occurs in the second apartment at the end of the 2300 evening-mornings of Dan 8, how does this relate to Christ's earlier ministry in the first apartment? This earlier phase of ministry is not directly referred to in Dan 7, but in my opinion chap. 8 does mention it.

In chap. 8 the prophet speaks of "the daily sacrifice" (Dan 8:11). Removing the word "sacrifice" (because it is supplied) does not change "daily" into "yearly." Whether we say "daily," or "daily sacrifice," or "daily service," the context for this term is not confined to vss. 8-12 but includes vss. 13-14 as well. If we take vss. 8-12 by themselves

we have only the little horn to help us understand the "daily." This is not the whole story and indeed this much, taken by itself, could be positively misleading. There is more in chap. 8 than a little horn.

By including vs. 13-14 we place the "daily" in the broader context of the sanctuary, which is where it belongs. If vs. 14 is the antitypical yearly service, that fact should give us insight into what the corresponding "daily" is in vs. 11. Both parts of the passage must be studied together. When they are, what we see is Christ ministering both before and during the judgment as our great High Priest in heaven.

Notice that, of the phases of ministry represented by the two apartments, it is the "daily" and not the yearly which is attacked by the little horn during the Middle Ages. In the timeframe of vs. 11 the ministry of Christ mentioned in vs. 14 had not yet begun. Verse 14 marks the beginning of something more. It marks the beginning of the judgment. During the Middle Ages the ministry of Christ that the little horn opposes is not the yearly but the "daily."

The cleansing of the sanctuary - i.e. the investigative judgment on the day of atonement - would begin immediately after this, at the end of the 2300 evening-mornings in 1844. First the one antitypical service, then the other. In this way every part of the sanctuary teaches us something about what Christ would be doing in different periods of history.

Other Comments

If the yearly service or cleansing of the sanctuary in Dan 8 is the same as the judgment of Dan 7, and if Rev 4-5 is itself overtly parallel to Dan 7 as I claim, it follows that Rev 4-5 is parallel to Dan 8 as well as to Dan 7 and that what we see there occurs after 1844 in the second apartment. In Rev 4-5 we are not talking about first apartment events that take place during John's lifetime. They are second apartment events happening right now. Revelation is a book of prophecy. John sees these things prophetically.

The seven seals are not opened before the Judgment begins. The judgment sits in order to open them. So in Rev 4-5 the judicial proceedings are just beginning. In Rev 19a, on the other hand, we have the other end of the same process. There the judgment is just ending.

When all has been said that can be, when all the evidence has been presented that would benefit any saint or sinner and every case decided, the whole assembly offers its united and heartfelt verdict that God has been more than fair in all His dealings with mankind. The heavenly court stands completely vindicated, and with it the government of God administered from that center. The law which serves as the constitution of God's government is a transcript of His own character. This much has to do with Dan 7 and 8, Rev 4-5 and 19a.

In Rev 19b it only remains for Christ to liberate the saints He has acquitted. There is no more reason for the Bridegroom to wait. The tarrying time is over and Christ returns in glory, leading all the angel armies of heaven to bring home those who, at great

personal risk, have faithfully waited for Him (see Isa 25:9 KJV; Matt 25:10). The judgment ends in Rev 19a. Christ returns in Rev 19b. The millennium is next in chap. 20 when the righteous are in heaven and the wicked are dead. During this time Satan has no one to tempt. Then after the thousand years both he and all who have followed him are destroyed. This is the lake of fire, which, please notice, comes "down from heaven" (Rev 20:9) and not up from the lower parts of the earth. Finally John sees "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev 21:1).

My point here is that the events are laid out in sequence. Rev 19a is followed by Rev 19b-22, deriving its context from these later chapters. And Rev 19a, in turn, provides the context for Rev 4-5 earlier in the book. In Rev 19a the judgment ends, in Rev 4-5 it begins. All of these things are parallel to Dan 8 and to Dan 7.