

The Controverted Little Book of Revelation 10 and the Shape of Apocalyptic Mission¹

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If the contents of the little book of Revelation 10 are controverted, someone forgot to tell the founders of Seventh-day Adventism. William Miller, for example, in 1841 interpreted the little book that would be sweet in the mouth as being opened in 1798 as evidenced by the increased study of Daniel's prophecies stimulated by events related to the French Revolution and the taking of the Pope captive by General Berthier.² And Ellen White couldn't have been more certain. "The book that was sealed," she wrote in 1896, "was not the book of Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days." After quoting Daniel 12:4 and the sealing of his book until the time of the end, she noted that "when the book was opened, the proclamation was made, 'Time shall be no longer.' (See Revelation 10:6). The book of Daniel is now unsealed, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come to all the inhabitants of the earth. By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared to stand in

¹ The present article is by design a broad effort to tie together the major connecting links in the second halves of both Daniel and Revelation. As a result, it does not develop the exegetical aspects of many of the topics that it touches upon. Rather, it can be viewed as pointing to several exegetical studies that still need to be undertaken.

² William Miller, "Chronological Chart of the World," *Signs of the Times*, May 1, 1841, 20; William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 100-114.

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the latter days.”³

James White agreed wholeheartedly with his wife. He had no qualms in directly tying the opened (implying it had been shut) little book to the prophecy of Daniel 12:4 that would be sealed until the time of the end, at which time students would run to and fro in the Bible and knowledge of Daniel’s end-time prophecies would be increased. He went on to tie the sweetness of the little book to the joy of the discovery of the soon-coming Jesus and its bitterness to their disappointment. But James didn’t stop there. He went on to cite Revelation 10:11 that there was a further message of prophecy that must be taught to “many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.” He found that further message in the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14.⁴

The interpretive package was neat and clean. Furthermore, it matched the ongoing history of the Seventh-day Adventist movement. Unfortunately, almost no one outside of Adventist circles agreed or agrees with their tying the opened little book of Revelation 10 to the sealed book of Daniel. The interpretations of the little book would be many and diverse but the Adventists would be left standing nearly by themselves among a broad array of preterist, futurist, historicist, and idealist interpreters. We will look at the options presented. But first we need to see the place of Revelation 10 in the flow of the Apocalypse.

Revelation 10 in the Onward Flow of the Apocalypse

Nearly all commentators note that Revelation 10:1–11:13 represents an interruption or interlude between the sixth (Rev. 9:13-21) and seventh (Rev. 11:15–17) trumpets. And most see the same sort of interlude (Rev. 7) between the sixth (Rev. 6:12-17) and seventh (Rev. 8:1) seals. Beyond that, several point out that the two interludes deal with God’s people in troublous times. Thus, G. K. Beale writes that “just as the sixth seal was followed by an image of God’s ‘sealing’ of the saints, so also the sixth trumpet will be followed by a similar scene of God’s spiritual protection of

³ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book Two (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1958), 105; cf. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1962), 115.

⁴ James White, *Life Incidents* (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Assn., 1868), 210-216.

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his people (the ‘measuring of the temple’).”⁵ In like manner, J. M. Ford writes that “measuring the holy and excluding the outsiders precedes the seventh trumpet just as the sealing of the elect preceded the seventh seal.”⁶

However, the function of the interlude between the last two trumpets appears to include more than just protection through the measurement of the saints. Thus, Beale points out that Revelation 10’s main point “is the recommissioning of the seer.” Basing his position on verse 11, Beale writes that “having digested the scroll, he must now make its contents known to others.” Thus he must “prophecy again” to “many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”⁷ G. R. Beasley-Murray makes a similar point when he writes that one function of Revelation 10 is to answer the question of “What is the task of the Church in these troublous times?” in terms of “John’s visions of the end.”⁸

With the parallelism of the two interludes in their relation to God’s people noted by some students of the Apocalypse, we now need to turn to the text of Revelation itself to highlight the flow of events. We will examine the interlude between the two final trumpets first.

The order of events is as follows:

1. The sounding of the sixth trumpet, which represents troublous times (Rev. 9:13-21).
2. The interlude of Revelation 10:1–11:13, which partly represents a recommissioning of John (and by extension the Christian community) and God’s protection of His people.
3. The sounding of the seventh trumpet in Revelation 11:15, which represents the Second Advent and related events. (“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he

⁵ G. K. Beale and Sean M. McDonough, “Revelation,” in G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 1115.

⁶ J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation*, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 177.

⁷ G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 520, 553.

⁸ G. R. Beasley-Murray, *The Book of Revelation*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), 168.

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shall reign for ever and ever” [RSV]⁹).

The flow of events in the seal sequence is quite similar.

1. The opening of the sixth seal (Rev. 6:12-17), which represents troublous times and takes earth’s history to the very frontier of the Second Advent.

2. The interlude of Revelation 7, which represents the sealing of God’s faithful ones prior to the final eschatological events (Rev. 7:1-3).

3. The opening of the seventh seal (Rev. 8:1), which from both the context of the sixth seal and the sealing of God’s people before the event would seem to call for the Second Advent. But here we find a surprise, with nothing but a silence that leads to the opening of the seven trumpets. Here we find an interesting problem. Readers expect to find the Second Advent, but are confronted by silence. But that does not mean that the silence does not represent the Second Advent. As G. B. Caird puts it, “the seventh seal *is* the End.” He goes on to imply that just as “nothing can happen after the sounding of the seventh trumpet,” so nothing can happen after the seventh seal. Thus “the End” is indeed “the End.”¹⁰ With that issue settled, Caird then makes a point pregnant with implications that is shared by David Aune. Namely, that Revelation 8:1 shades off into what follows in the book. As Aune notes, the opening of the seals is one thing and the opening of the sealed book another. After all, “the scroll,” he points out, “cannot be opened until all seven of the seals have been broken.” Thus “the contents of the scroll can only be the remainder of Revelation, i.e., 8:2–22:5.”¹¹ That would make the seventh seal not merely the end of the seal sequence but a transition verse that links the seven seals to what follows, just as the mention of the throne in 3:21 not only closes the seven churches sequence but transitions to the throne scenes in chapters 4 and 5 and just as Revelation 11:18, 19 not only closes the seven trumpet sequence but also transitions to the chapters that

⁹ All Bible quotations are from the RSV unless otherwise noted.

¹⁰ G. B. Caird, *The Revelation of St. John the Divine*, Harper’s New Testament Commentaries (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1966), 104.

¹¹ David E. Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 507.

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follow.¹² Thus, Revelation 8:1 could not only represent the expected End in the sense of the Advent, but also be a transition of what is yet to come in the Apocalypse.¹³

One further point that should be noted at this juncture is that late in the sequences of both the seals and trumpets we find a concern with the issue of time. During the fifth seal the souls under the altar are represented as crying out “how long” before God will make things right in judgment (Rev. 6:9, 10). They are told they need to wait a little longer (6:11). The answer to the question of time in Revelation 10 is that there should be no more time (v. 6).

Whatever we might conclude regarding the seventh seal, the parallelism between the interludes in the seven seals and the seven trumpets indicates that both have to do with God’s people in the period just before the eschaton. Both interludes deal with God’s care and protection of His people (sealing and measuring) and the second interlude with a recommissioning with a further prophetic message illustrated by the experience of John (Rev. 10:11).

At this point in our journey we need to examine the nature of the little book of Revelation 10. We will do so in several stages, beginning with what students of Revelation have to say on the topic, moving to an examination of internal evidence in the chapter itself, and concluding with an examination of clues in the succeeding chapters of the Apocalypse.

Views on the Contents of the Little Book

In our introduction we noted the position of the Adventist pioneers on the contents of the little book. Ellen White and the other founders had no

¹² I am indebted to Jon Paulien for this insight, which he first pointed out to me in a conversation regarding Rev. 11:19. See also Jon Paulien, “Interpreting Revelation’s Symbolism,” in Frank B. Holbrook, ed., *Symposium on Revelation: Introductory and Exegetical Studies*, Book 1 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 201-203.

¹³ It should be noted that even though Rev. 8:1 serves as a transitional passage from the seven seals to the seven trumpets that fact does not mean that the trumpets chronologically follow the seals in prophetic history. That interpretation is disallowed due to the fact that both series of seven climax in eschatological events. The function of the transition is to set the stage for the presentation of the next heptad sequence.

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doubt that it was the book of Daniel, especially “that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days.”¹⁴ For traditional Adventism Ellen White’s clear word on the topic would have solved the problem.

But there is a major flaw in that solution. Namely, that she herself repeatedly rejected that approach to a solution. For such historic battles in the church as those over the law in Galatians and the identity of the daily in Daniel 8 she explicitly and consistently told the church that they were not to use her writings to solve issues of biblical interpretation. Rather, she noted, “the Bible must be our standard for every doctrine and practice.” “Let the Word of God speak for itself, let it be its own interpreter.” For her, and for the other founders of Adventism, tradition, church history, or even the use of her writings were not the way to solve the Bible’s exegetical issues.¹⁵ With that fact in mind we return to our exploration of views of the contents of Revelation 10’s little book. That topic has been widely discussed among the students of Revelation. And the suggestions are not only many but diverse.

Before examining those suggestions, we should note two aspects of the little book that seem clear from the text of Revelation 10. First, it is a little book or scroll as opposed to the scroll featured in Revelation 5. The Greek word used in chapter 5 is *biblion*, whereas that in chapter 10 is *biblaridion*, which is a diminutive of *biblion* and means “a small document with writing.”¹⁶ This is the only place in the New Testament where the word is used. Second, the word translated as “open” is a passive perfect participle, and is best translated “having been opened,” with the idea that it will remain open or unsealed. Another implication of the passage is that it had previously been sealed, but that is not explicit.

Now for a survey of thoughts on the little scroll’s contents. Adam Clarke’s classic commentary notes that the opened little book probably means “some *design* of God long concealed, but now about to be made

¹⁴ E. White, *Selected Messages*, II:105.

¹⁵ Ellen White to Brethren Who Shall Assemble in General Conference, Aug. 5, 1888; see George R. Knight, *Angry Saints* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2015), 127-138 for more on Ellen White’s authority in relation to biblical authority.

¹⁶ Frederick William Danker, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2000), 176.

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manifest. But who knows what it means?”¹⁷

Other commentators are not so bashful. A major candidate is that the little book of Revelation 10 is the same as the book of chapter 5. That is the position of Beale, who provides a helpful discussion of the differences and similarities of the two.¹⁸ Other candidates are the Word of God, the Word of God to John, a message of woe, the book of Revelation itself, prophecies of worldwide significance, the Gospel of grace, the purposes of God to be accomplished through the agency of the Church, a proclamation of judgment and salvation that is universal in scope, a prophecy of doom. A few commentators, as we will see later, tie it to the prophecies of Daniel.

John Walvoord takes a different approach when he notes that “the contents of the little book are nowhere revealed in Revelation.” Having made that pessimistic comment, he goes on to point in a constructive direction when he adds that the contents of the little book “seem to represent in this vision the written authority given to the angel to fulfill his mission.”¹⁹ Fellow futurist Arno Gaebelein expands on the point when he suggests that the book contains “what is yet to come upon the earth, culminating in the personal and glorious appearing of the Lord to begin His millennial reign.”²⁰ From a different perspective, Henry Barclay Swete writes that “the little open roll contained but a fragment of the great purpose which was in the Hand of God,” but it was “a fragment ripe for revelation” or being revealed.²¹

The majority of solutions focus on some sort of relationship to the larger scroll of chapter 5. At the minimalist level of that position is the view of R. H. Charles, who after suggesting that the Greek points to “a very small book,” goes on to suggest that its contents can be found in Revelation 11:1-13.²² That minimalist view does not find wide support. Ian Boxall suggests that the contents of the little book begin to unfold “in nutshell

¹⁷ Adam Clarke, *Clarke's Commentary* (New York, NY: Abingdon, n.d.), 6:1004.

¹⁸ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, p. 527.

¹⁹ John F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1966), 170.

²⁰ Arno Gaebelein, quoted in Steve Gregg, ed. *Revelation: Four Views, a Parallel Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 205.

²¹ Henry Barclay Swete, *The Apocalypse of St John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, n.d.), 126, 127.

²² R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St John*, *The International Critical Commentary* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, [1920]), 1:260.

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form” in 11:1-13, but that “we must wait for the second half of the book [of Revelation] for the details to be spelt out.” Craig Koester agrees, putting that explanation forward as the most probable one.²³

George Eldon Ladd says much the same thing when he writes that if the book of Revelation 5:1 “contains the revelation of the unfolding of the divine redemptive and judicial purpose in human history, the little book must contain a fragment of the divine purpose.”²⁴ Grant Osborne and others emphasize that same point. Osborne writes that “the scroll here is a ‘small’ portion of the whole scroll containing the plan of God for ending this present evil world and introducing the ‘new heavens and new earth,’ and depicting the place of the church in these events.”²⁵ Beale makes a similar point when he discusses the relationship between the books of chapters 5 and 10. While holding that they are “generally” equivalent, he also points out that “there remains the stubborn fact that John has chosen to use [*biblaridion*] only here and nowhere else in the Apocalypse, whereas he uses [*biblion*] about twenty times (and [*biblos*]) five times. It is difficult to believe that the unique introduction of the word in ch.10 and its repetition there have no significance whatsoever.”²⁶ While Beale doesn’t do much with that conclusion, Beasley-Murray follows its logic when he writes that “in view of v. 11,” with its command to prophesy again, “the *little scroll* seems to include the rest of the visions of this book.”²⁷

We have surveyed at some length the approach of non-Adventist commentators on the relationship between the books of Revelation 5 and 10. We now need to see what they have to say about possible relationships between the opened little book of Revelation 10:2 and the sealing of Daniel’s prophecies in Dan. 12:4. Here the material is less, but still informative and insightful. For starters, Richard Bauckham presents the

²³ Ian Boxall, *The Revelation of Saint John*, Black’s New Testament Commentaries (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006), 153; Craig A. Koester, *Revelation*, Anchor Yale Bible, New Haven, CT: Yale, 2014), 476.

²⁴ George Eldon Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972), 142.

²⁵ Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 395.

²⁶ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 527, 531.

²⁷ G. R. Beasley-Murray, “The Revelation,” in D. Guthrie and J. A. Motyer, eds., *The New Bible Commentary*, Revised (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1970), 1292.

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little scroll as “a revelation of God’s purpose for the final period of world history, in which God will establish his kingdom on earth, a revelation which supplements and clarifies what remained obscure in the prophecies of the last days by earlier prophets, especially Daniel.” Bauckham definitely ties his understanding to Daniel 12:4.²⁸

Stephen Smalley is another of the few who specifically mention Daniel 12:4, but he doesn’t expand on the connection.²⁹ Ian Boxall, however, as we will see below, does expound on the connection to Daniel’s sealed prophecy, but he makes no reference to Daniel 12:4, but rather relies on a similar statement in Daniel 12:9.³⁰

That lack is explicitly treated by Martin Kiddle, who leads out his discussion of Revelation 10 and 11 with the statement that “to understand John’s purpose fully at this point, we must note carefully . . . that he uses Dan. xii as his chief source. . . . Daniel had been told to keep his prophecy hidden from the world: ‘And now, O Daniel, keep all this a close secret, and keep the book shut as a secret, till the crisis at the end’ (Dan. xii:4).” That time, Kiddle asserts, had come with the opened little book of Revelation 10. Earlier in his commentary he quotes Daniel 12:4 again, noting that the Old Testament was “full of ‘mysteries’—symbols and metaphors whose meaning it was the privilege of a later generation to discover. They were indeed like the sealed scroll of REVELATION; their contents not to be understood until the approach of the End made them relevant.”³¹ Kiddle, of course, interpreted the newly unsealed scroll from his own preterist perspective. But he and Bauckham are the only ones of the 40 or so non-Adventist commentaries and books on Revelation that I surveyed who explicitly tied the opened scroll of Revelation 10:2 to the sealed scroll of Daniel 12:4. Other commentators, as we shall see below, tied the allusions in Revelation 10 to other parts of Daniel, including chapter 12, but none made the same explicit connection as Kiddle and Bauckham.

²⁸ Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies in the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 252, 253, 251.

²⁹ Stephen S. Smalley, *The Revelation to John* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005), 259.

³⁰ Boxall, 155.

³¹ Martin Kiddle, *The Revelation of St. John*, Moffatt New Testament Commentary (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940), 166, 74.

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From the Daniel side of the issue, I surveyed about 25 non-Adventist commentaries but found only one that specifically connected the sealing in Daniel with its being opened in Revelation. But that nineteenth-century commentary did not make that connection in relation to Daniel 12:4, which it claimed referred to “a *distant* time” and was “therefore obscure for the immediate future.” Rather, it made the connection in Daniel 8:26, another passage in Daniel that speaks of shutting up or sealing a part of Daniel’s message for many days. In relation to 8:26 the commentator notes that “the vision was *not to be understood* for the present.” But, he continues, “what in Daniel’s time was *hidden*, was more fully *explained* in Revelation, and as the time draws nearer, it will be clearer still.”³² It should be noted, however, that the commentary refers the fuller knowledge in Revelation to the book in general and makes no connection to the opened book of chapter 10.

My survey of non-Adventist commentators on both Daniel and Revelation make virtually no specific connections between Daniel 12:4 and the little book of Revelation 10. As might be expected, the same would not be true of those in the Adventist community.

Among Seventh-day Adventist writers on Revelation 10 the most extensive discussions of the identity of the contents of the book have been those of recent times. We first look at their views of how the contents relate to the rest of the book of Revelation and then how they relate to Daniel 12:4.

Several Adventist students of the topic don’t even discuss the relationship between the scrolls of Revelation 5 and 10. Among those in this camp are Uriah Smith and C. Mervyn Maxwell. For them the little scroll is the Book of Daniel.³³ William Shea appears to be of the same opinion. In discussing the two scrolls he concludes “the ‘book’ of Revelation 10 thus stands in contrast to, and is not identified with, the one in Revelation 5:1.” For him the scroll in chapter 10 “may be identified as

³² Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), vol. 2, part 2, 455, 430.

³³ Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1944), 2:519, 520; C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1985), 2:275.

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the prophetic book of Daniel.”³⁴

Other Adventist scholars view the contents of the opened book of Revelation 10 in a more complex manner. Hans LaRondelle, for example, writes that “the content of” the book “is not disclosed in Revelation 10. This is gradually unfolded, first in summary form in Revelation 11 and then more in detail in Revelation 12-19.” From that perspective, he views the opened scroll of chapter 10 as the climax of the opening of the scroll of 5:1. Thus, he asserts, “while the angel of Rev. 5 thus announces the *beginning* of the Messianic judgments, as revealed in the seals and the trumpets, the angel of Rev. 10 reveals Christ’s plan for *the final mission* of His church (10:6), in preparation for the second advent (10:7). The special significance of Rev. 10 is to introduce the end-time visions of chapters 11-22. It announces to the world that a new epoch of time has been reached, the period called by Daniel ‘the time of the end’ (8:14, 17, 19).”³⁵ Thus while LaRondelle does not reject the Daniel connection, he extends it and applies it to the post-Revelation 10 content of the Apocalypse, which, as we will see, is largely based on Daniel’s prophecies.

Ranko Stefanovic’s position basically harmonizes with that of LaRondelle. While highlighting the importance of Daniel in relation to the little book he notes that “the content of the little scroll of Revelation 10 is not limited to the prophetic portion of the book of Daniel, because its content is broader than that of the book of Daniel.”³⁶

In terms of the relationship of the scrolls in chapters 5 and 10, Stefanovic sees the latter as containing “only a part of God’s revelation of his salvific plan and redemptive acts represented by the sealed scroll of chapter 5.” More specifically, “the revelation of the contents of the little scroll” is found in Revelation 12-22:5. Thus, “as the great scroll of chapter 5 outlined the destiny of all mankind, so the little scroll unveils the lot of the faithful in those last days of fierce Satanic opposition.” As a result, “in chapter 10 we have a revelation of a portion of the sealed scroll of

³⁴ William H. Shea, “The Mighty Angel and His Message,” in Frank B. Holbrook, *Symposium on Revelation*, Book 1 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 288, 322.

³⁵ Hans K. LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-time Prophecies of the Bible* (Sarasota, FL: First Impressions, 1997), 206, 204, 197, 198.

³⁶ Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 2002), 319.

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Revelation 5 as it applies to the final events of the earth's history," which are directly related to Daniel's prophecies.³⁷

It appears to me that LaRondelle and Stefanovic put forth the best solution to the identity of the contents of the opened scroll of Revelation 10. In the process they have combined many of the most helpful explanations of non-Adventist commentators with those rooted in Adventism.

The one modern Adventist writer on the topic who has gone off on a totally different direction is Roy Naden, who views the message of Revelation's little book as the gospel. He has no discussion of its relation to the larger book. Nor does he connect it to fulfilled prophecy in Daniel, except where there is similar wording between Revelation 10:5-7 and Daniel 12:5-10.³⁸ That perspective he shares with a minority of non-Adventist scholars.

As might be expected, most Adventist writers on the topic make a direct connection between the opened book of Revelation 10:2 and the sealed book of Daniel 12:4. Uriah Smith's treatment of Revelation 10 quotes Daniel 12:4, and then notes that "there is no book spoken of as closed and sealed except the book of Daniel's prophecy, and there is no account of the opening of that book unless it be here in Revelation 10. We see, furthermore, that in both places the contents ascribed to the book are the same."³⁹

Smith also makes the connection in his treatment of Daniel, but not where we would expect it. Rather than treating the topic in the three places where Daniel mentions sealing, he concludes his extended discussion of 12:4 with a few words on the meaning of the increase of Bible knowledge at the end of time. He writes "that we are in the time of the end is shown by Revelation 10:1, 2, where a mighty angel is seen to come down from heaven with a little book open in his hand. Then the book of this prophecy should be no longer sealed. It was to be opened and understood. For proof that the little book to be opened is the book here closed and sealed when Daniel wrote, and that the angel delivers his message in this generation, see

³⁷ Ibid., 178, 179, 329, 330.

³⁸ Roy C. Naden, *The Lamb Among the Beasts* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), 164, 161.

³⁹ Smith, 2:519, 520.

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comments on Revelation 10:2.”⁴⁰

More recent Adventist approaches to the topic have taken the same position. Thus, the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* ties the little scroll to Daniel 12:4 and the “sealed portions of Daniel’s prophecy.”⁴¹ Shea makes a similar point in his treatment of Revelation 10 but not in his commentary on Daniel.⁴² Maxwell, by contrast, and surprisingly, does not make the connection between Daniel 12:4 and Revelation 10 in his comments on those passages, but he does so in his comments on the sealing passage of Daniel 12:9, where he notes that “the Angel of Revelation 10 calls attention to the book of Daniel as finally being opened for the last days.”⁴³

LaRondelle is quite explicit in relating the opened scroll of Revelation 10 to the unsealing of Daniel’s sealed book of Daniel 12:4, pointedly relating this to “the end-time sections of Daniel’s scroll (chapters 7-12).”⁴⁴ Stefanovic touches upon the connection between the opened scroll and Daniel 12:4 but doesn’t do much with the topic.⁴⁵

In conclusion, while the most recent Adventist scholars have found similar relationships between the scrolls of Revelation 5 and 10 to those of other scholars, they have been much more active in expressing the connection between the opened book of chapter 10 with Daniel 12:4. However, what is absent in the Adventist discussion is analysis of just what was sealed in the book of Daniel and how those opened parts might be specifically exhibited in the second half of the Apocalypse. I will treat those topics below, but first I will overview the discussion of the book of Daniel undergirding and infiltrating Revelation 10.

Evidence from the Text of Revelation 10 and the Book of Daniel

At this point I will begin to focus on testing my operating hypothesis. Namely, that the opened little book in Revelation 10 is not only related to

⁴⁰ Ibid., 1:317.

⁴¹ Francis D. Nichol, ed., *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1957), 7:797.

⁴² Shea, “Mighty Angel,” 279; William H. Shea, *Daniel 7-12: Prophecies of the End Time*, Abundant Life Bible Amplifier (Boise, ID: Pacific Press), 223.

⁴³ Maxwell, 2:279; 1:290, 291.

⁴⁴ LaRondelle, *How to Understand*, 206; cf. 198, 199.

⁴⁵ Stefanovic, 319.

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the climax of the larger book of Revelation 5, but most specifically related to opening up the sealed portions of Daniel.

Many have recognized the obvious impact of the Book of Daniel on Revelation. H. B. Swete, for example, notes that while Daniel is not the most alluded to book in the Apocalypse, “in proportion to its length the book of Daniel yields by far the greatest number” of allusions.⁴⁶

Gregg Beale points out that “no other book of the NT is as permeated by the OT as is Revelation. Although its author seldom quotes the OT directly, allusions and echoes are found in almost every verse of the book.”⁴⁷ While that is so, it is not always easy to pinpoint exactly which Old Testament verse is being alluded to due to the fact that the author of Revelation had no qualms regarding blending the symbolisms of several Old Testament books into one passage.

While that is true, it is also true that it is not difficult to discover the massive impact that Daniel has made on the book of Revelation. One of the conclusions of Beale’s book, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John*, is that “the results of the study indicate the probability that Daniel is the most formative influence on the thought and structure of Revelation.”⁴⁸

The task at this point is to examine possible influences of Daniel in Revelation 10, especially influences related to Daniel 12. For our purposes Revelation 10 can be divided into 5 sections:

- (1) The mighty angel with the opened scroll (10:1-3)
- (2) The sealing of the seven thunders (10:4)
- (3) The angel swearing an oath related to the end of time (10:5-7)
- (4) The tasting of the sweet but bitter book (10:8-10)
- (5) The recommissioning (10:11)

Regarding the first section, many are those who find a connection between the description of the mighty angel in Revelation 10:1 with the portrayal of the angel of Daniel 10-12. R. H. Charles, for example, writes

⁴⁶ Swete, cliii.

⁴⁷ Beale, “Revelation,” 1081. On allusions in Revelation from the OT, see Paulien, 83-94.

⁴⁸ G. K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1984), 297.

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that the author of Revelation “had the angel described in Dan. x.6, xii.7 before his mind.” In a similar manner, Beale asserts that “the portrait of the angel in chapter 10 is based on the portrait of the heavenly being in the vision of Dan. 10-12.”⁴⁹

In terms of the second section, the sealing of the vision of the seven thunders, many have seen a natural connection between the sealing of Revelation 10:4 with that of Daniel 12:4. “On the surface,” Grant Osborne notes, “there is an echo of Dan. 12:4.”⁵⁰ Of course, commentators on the text indicate that Revelation makes creative use of the obvious echo.

Thus, the first two sections of Revelation 10 have obvious relationships to Daniel, including the twelfth chapter. But it is the third section dealing with the angel swearing an oath regarding the end of time that highlights the connection. In fact, it is difficult to find students on the topic who don’t mention the connection.

Revelation 10:5, 6 reads: “Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever and ever . . . that there will be delay [*chronos*, time] no longer” (NASB). While Daniel 12:7 reads: “I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time . . . [before] all these events will be completed” (NASB). Verse 9 goes on to tie that completion to “the end time” (NASB) or the “time of the end.”

Regarding the connection between the two passages, R. H. Charles notes that the one in Revelation cannot be investigated apart from Dan. 12:7 and G. B. Caird writes that “at this point John begins to adapt to his own purpose an Old Testament passage that will figure prominently in many of his subsequent visions.” Caird then goes on to quote Daniel 12:6, 7.⁵¹

Four aspects of Revelation 10:5-7 draw repeated comment. The first is the description of the angel.⁵² The second and crucial parallel is the oath sworn by the angel. Brian Blount writes in comparing the passage with

⁴⁹ Charles, 1:259; Beale, “Revelation,” 1116.

⁵⁰ Osborne, 397; cf. Beale, “Revelation,” 1116.

⁵¹ Charles, 1:263; Caird, 127; cf. Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 210.

⁵² Beale, “Revelation,” 1117.

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Daniel 12:7 that “there a divine figure dressed in linen lifted both hands to heaven and swore by the one who lives forever that it would be a time, two times, and a half . . . before God would accomplish all things.” Blount adds that “the parallel with the mighty angel in Rev 10:5 is intentional. He, too, swears on the one who lives forever.” J. M. Ford and others make the same comparison.⁵³ The comparison becomes more pointed when we realize that “Daniel 12 and Revelation 10 are the only two passages in the Bible that refer to angels swearing oaths.”⁵⁴

A third area of contact between the two passages is their concern with end time. Beale, in referring to the content of the oath, notes that Revelation “continues to follow . . . Dan. 12:7, though the idea has been altered somewhat. In Dan. 12:7 the oath is ‘that it would be for a time, times and half a time’; in contrast, the oath of Rev. 10:6 reads ‘that time shall be no longer.’ This phrase in Revelation expresses the idea that there is a predetermined time in the future when God’s purposes for history will be complete.”⁵⁵

A final point of contact is the word “mystery” in Revelation 10:7. J. M. Ford notes that “the Hebrew word *Raz*, ‘mystery,’ is frequent in Daniel . . . and refers primarily to the secret of the times, the sequence of events and the consummation.”⁵⁶

The fourth section of Revelation 10, verses 8-10, deals with the eating of the little book and its sweetness in the mouth and bitterness in the belly. The passage itself is based upon Ezekiel, but the little book which is opened at the end of time has a definite parallel, as we noted above, with the book of Daniel 12:4 that is opened at the end of time. But that parallel, as previously noted, is not mentioned by non-Adventist commentators, with the exception of Kiddle and Bauckham, who explicitly point it out.⁵⁷

The fifth segment of Revelation 10, the recommissioning of verse 11, has no significant parallel in Daniel.

In conclusion, commentators in general have seen and discussed the parallels between Daniel 12 and Revelation 10. The connection between the

⁵³ Brian K. Blount, *Revelation*, New Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009), 193; Ford, 163.

⁵⁴ Shea, “Mighty Angel,” 299.

⁵⁵ Beale, “Revelation,” 1117.

⁵⁶ Ford, 163.

⁵⁷ Kiddle, 166; Bauckham, 251-253.

two chapters is both extensive and extensively recognized. Ian Boxall, for example, sequentially outlines the parallels and concludes, significantly, that “what for Daniel had to be stored up for the future is now about to be revealed, because it is about to come to pass. We can only conclude that it is contained in the open scroll now in the hand of the powerful angel.”⁵⁸ *The remarkable thing is that so many Revelation scholars can treat the many parallels between Revelation 10 and Daniel 12, especially verses 5-7, without even questioning whether the sealed until-the-end book of Daniel 12:4 might have any implications for the opened book of Revelation 10.* We will return to that issue, but first we need to examine Daniel’s statements about the sealing of his book.

The Sealed Parts of Daniel

One surprising aspect in the study of the book of Daniel is that I find no focused study on just what was sealed in the book of Daniel by either Adventist or non-Adventist writers on the topic. Joyce Baldwin first elicited my interest in the topic when I read her comment that “the reason why Daniel was to keep his last two visions sealed was that they were not yet relevant (8:26; 12:9), at least not in all their detail.”⁵⁹ Interestingly enough, I misread Baldwin. Her use of Daniel 8:26 and 12:9 pointed me for the first time to the two verses related to Daniel 12:4, but because of her two specific references, I concluded that she was claiming that the 2300 and 1260 day visions were shut up. But that is not what she said. She had specified Daniel’s last two visions. But my misreading put me onto a fruitful investigative track.

Interestingly, the book of Daniel has three references to the sealing of at least a part of the book, each in the context of the end of time.

1. Daniel 12:4: “Shut up the words, and seal the book, until the time of the end.”
2. Daniel 12:9: “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end.”
3. Daniel 8:26: “Seal up the vision, for it pertains to many days hence.”

⁵⁸ Boxall, 155.

⁵⁹ Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1978), 206.

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Nowhere have I found a discussion of the three passages treated together in a significant way or their relationship to one another. The most discussed is the contents of Daniel 12:4. Yet here there is a division between such scholars as James Montgomery and the authors of the Anchor Bible Commentary, who see it as the whole book of Daniel⁶⁰ and those who claim that it couldn't be the whole book since many items in Daniel's prophecies were explained to him and set forth in the book itself. Given that fact, it seems safe to conclude that only a part of the book was sealed.

And why were parts sealed? *The Interpreter's Bible* notes that "the explanation is that they were written down and sealed up until the time of the end drew near, when they were to be made available to the faithful that they might understand the significance of the events amid which they were living."⁶¹ And Edward J. Young asserts that "there will come a time . . . when the words are needed and then they will be understood. Therefore, they are shut up and sealed until the end of time."⁶²

What I find interesting is the dearth of discussion regarding the relationship of the sealings of Daniel 8:26 and 12:9 to the sealing of Daniel 12:4. That is especially interesting since most commentators view 12:4 as being the beginning of Daniel's postscript and thus refers to a sealing related to the entire book, even though not all of the contents of the whole book were sealed. With that in mind, it can be hypothesized that the sealings mentioned in 8:26 and 12:9 indicate which prophecies in Daniel were sealed and awaited opening at the end of time. Thus, we need to examine the content of those two sealings.

Of the two, the content of Daniel 8:26 is the most obvious since it specifically refers to the vision of the evenings and mornings, which were earlier spoken of in Daniel 8:14 in a vision that Daniel was twice told would extend to "the time of the end" (8:17, 19). Since the rest of the symbolism was explained and did not extend until the time of the end, the

⁶⁰ Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 311; James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1927), 473.

⁶¹ Arthur Jeffery, "The Book of Daniel: Introduction and Exegesis," in George Arthur Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York, NY: Abingdon, 1956), 6:544.

⁶² Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949), 260.

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chapter ends with the sealing of the unexplained vision of the evenings and mornings that pertained to a distant time (8:26).

While there is widespread agreement on what was sealed in Daniel 8:26, that is not true of the sealing in 12:9. Some see it as equivalent to the general statement in 12:4. But there is good evidence that it is referring to the vision of the 1260 days, which is the prophecy in the immediate flow of the context. Here the parallel structure leading up to the sealing in chapter 8 is informative. In chapter 8 the flow is as follows:

1. The question was asked “how long?” regarding the problem related to the sanctuary (8:13).
2. A time period (2300 evenings and mornings) is given in reply (8:14).
3. But though the rest of the prophecy is explained (8:15-25), Daniel is told that the meaning of the 2300 evenings and mornings was not his to know. It was sealed up for an extended period (8:26).

The same general pattern is found in chapter 12.

1. The question of “how long?” is asked (12:6).
2. The time period of time, times, and a half a time is given (12:7).
3. But when Daniel asked the meaning of that time period he was told that it was none of his business—that the vision was sealed until the time of the end (12:8, 9).

Not only are the parallels between the sealings in Daniel 8 and 12 the same, but those are the only two places in Daniel where “how long?” is asked. It is probably no accident that the questions are each answered by a time period and a sealing. It wasn't for Daniel to know at that time. Jesus had a similar response to his inquisitive disciples when they asked regarding the time of His second coming. “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority.” In short, it was none of their business, yet (Acts 1:7).

In conclusion, as a working hypothesis I am suggesting that the sealings of Daniel 8:26 and 12:9 refer to the 2300 and 1260 day prophecies, respectively. Before we seek evidence for that hypothesis in Revelation, we need to look a bit more at the question of “how long?” in the Bible.

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Another Look at “How Long?”

The question of “how long?” is not unique to Daniel in the Old Testament. Beale points out that “the expression ‘how long?’ (*heōs pote*) is typically used throughout the Greek OT for questions about when God will finally punish persecutors and vindicate the oppressed.”⁶³ Thus we find the book of Psalms repeatedly asking the question (see, e.g., Ps. 6:3; 13:1; 74:10; 79:5; 80:4; 89:46; 90:13, English text). Daniel, as we noted above, also uses the question in relation to end-time events (Dan. 8:13; 12:6).

New Testament characters had the same question on their lips. But Jesus’ answer in Acts 1:6, 7 is the same as it was to Daniel, that “only God knows.”⁶⁴

The question of “how long?” did not die in the earliest days of the church. It is resurrected again in the Apocalypse, where it is associated with the belief “that He who was called ‘Sovereign Lord, holy and true’ must sooner or later assert His power in a world which challenged His sovereignty, defiled what was holy, and hated what was true.”⁶⁵ Thus, Revelation 6:10 pictures the souls under the altar as asking “how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood?” There is an answer. But it doesn’t follow the pattern set in Daniel and Acts. Rather, they were told to wait “a little longer” (verse 11). That is a major shift, implying that the wait will not be long. That reply is followed by events to take place right before the Second Advent in the sixth seal (6:12-16), the intermission of chapter 7 with its sealing of the saints, and apparently the Second Coming at the opening of the seventh seal (8:1).

The question of “how long?” does not come up again until the intermission of chapter 10, which comes between the sixth and seventh trumpets, with the seventh trumpet being the Second Advent (11:15-17). But now, with the saints sealed, the answer is much more specific. While the question itself is implied rather than explicit in Revelation 10, the answer moves the explanation a giant step forward: The wait “a little longer” of Revelation 6 is replaced by “there will be no more delay!” (NIV) or no more time (*chronos*), verse 7. In other words, final events will take place soon, when the seventh trumpet sounds. As Grant Osborne puts it,

⁶³ Beale, “Revelation,” 1104; cf. Kiddle, 119.

⁶⁴ Osborne, 399.

⁶⁵ Kiddle, 119.

“the message that the angel delivers” in Revelation 10:6 “culminates redemptive history. In Dan. 12:5-7 the great question is, ‘How long will it be?’ The answer there is, ‘Only God knows,’ and in verse 7 the time of fulfillment is linked to the apocalyptic phrase, ‘time and times and half a time’ (the LXX uses . . . *chronos*, time). Using the same term here, the oath the angel takes on behalf of God is” there will be no more *chronos* (time or delay). “In other words, the time of the eschaton predicted by Daniel has now arrived, and nothing can hold it back.”⁶⁶

With those ideas in place we are now ready to examine evidence for the contents of the opened little book in the chapters of Revelation that follow its opening to see if they provide clues as to the content of the little book itself. The focal point of my examination will be to test my working hypothesis that it is the two sealed parts of Daniel in particular that should feature in Revelation after the little book is opened.

Evidence from Revelation Regarding the Content of the Little Book

If the content of the little book is partly the eschatological aspects of Daniel, including the sealed parts related to the 1260 and 2300 day prophecies, then we would expect to find evidence for that hypothesis in the book of Revelation once the little book has been opened. And that is exactly what we find. In fact, after Revelation 10 we find a virtual explosion of materials coming from Daniel in the Apocalypse of John. Take the 1260 days, for example. Immediately after the little book of Revelation 10 is opened the 1260 days become a central feature in chapters 11-13.

* 11:2—The court of the temple “is given over to the nations, and they will trample over the holy city for forty-two months.”

* 11:3—“And I will grant my two witnesses power to prophecy for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.”

* 12:6—“The woman fled into the wilderness . . . for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.”

* 12:14—The woman flees from the serpent “into the wilderness . . . for a time, and times, and half a time.”

* 13:5—The beast exercised “authority for forty-two months.”

⁶⁶ Osborne, 399.

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It is significant that not once in Revelation is that time period mentioned until the little book is opened. And at that point it is repeatedly mentioned.

A few commentators point out that the time period is the same as that found in Daniel 12:7, but most make nothing of the idea of its being sealed and unsealed. Beyond that, as Hans LaRondelle points out, “few commentators connect [the use of the 1260 days in] Rev. 12 to its taproot in Daniel 7. Yet here lies hidden the key to unlock the 3 1/2 prophetic times in their connection with the ‘little horn’ of Daniel’s fourth beast.”⁶⁷

Major exceptions in the failure to connect Daniel 12:7 with the same time period’s use in Revelation 11-13 are Osborne, Bauckham, and Beale. Osborne, for example, writes that “the various designations for the three-and-a-half year ‘tribulation period’ have not appeared before chapter 10, but in ensuing chapters they appear often. . . . God has instigated the final events of world history, and nothing can delay them.”⁶⁸ But it is Beale who makes the connections explicit. In one place he points out that “the book of Daniel—chapter 7 in particular—provides a mother lode of material for John.” And in his study of Revelation’s use of Daniel he notes that “about two-thirds (21) of all the O.T. references in [Revelation] 13 come from Daniel.” Again, “that Revelation 13 is modeled on Daniel 7 is the best conclusion when so many allusions from Daniel are found together with such a Danielic framework.”⁶⁹ Beale could have generalized his statement to include Revelation 11 and 12, but those chapters were beyond the scope of his study.

While the 1260 day prophecy is featured five times in Revelation 11-13, it is only mentioned twice in Daniel: in 12:7-9, where the vision related to it is sealed, and in 7:25, where the attributes of the little horn power are set forth. That power “[1] shall speak words against the Most High, and [2] shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and [3] shall think to change the times and the law; for they [4] shall be given into his hand for a time, two times, and half a time” (7:25).

Each of the four parts of that verse forms a central piece of the drama in Revelation 11-14.

⁶⁷ LaRondelle, *How to Understand*, 238, 239.

⁶⁸ Osborne, 399; Bauckham, 352.

⁶⁹ Beale, “Revelation,” 1082; Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 244, 245, 247.

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1. The speaking of “words against the Most High” turns up in Revelation 13:5, in which “the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words” for 42 months (cf. verse 6: “It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling”).

2. The wearing out of the saints is reflected in Revelation 13:7, in which the beast “was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.”

3. The part about the attempt to change times and the law is answered in Revelation 12:17 and 14:12, 7, which predicts a restoration of the commandments at the end of time.

4. And we have already noted the centrality of the 1260 days (or “a time, two times, and half a time”) in Revelation.

Truly when the little book of Revelation 10 is opened there is an explosion of Daniel in John’s Apocalypse, indicating that the sealed prophecies of the little book of Daniel had indeed been opened. But we are not finished yet with ideas related to the unsealing of the 1260 days. For the sake of brevity I will list some of them.

1. The restoring of dominion to Christ and the saints at the end of the judgment of Daniel 7:14, 27 is picked up in Revelation 11:15.

2. The 10 horns of Daniel 7:7 are resurrected in Revelation 12:3 and 13:1.

3. The sea beast of Revelation 13:1, 2 represents a composite of the beasts in Daniel 7:3-6.

4. The victorious Son of Man picture of Daniel 7:13, 14, where He is “given dominion,” comes up again in Revelation 14:14, where He takes dominion.

5. The problem of who to worship treated in Daniel 3 in relation to worship of the Golden Image is a central feature of Revelation 13 and 14, where the choice between worshiping the beast and its image or the Creator God is alluded to eight times.

There is more that can be said, but the point has been made. Immediately following the opening of the little book of Revelation 10 the symbols of Daniel related to the sealed 1260 days become omnipresent in Revelation 11-14, whereas that symbolism was absent before the unsealing.

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The evidence leaves no doubt regarding the opening of the 1260 day prophecy that had been sealed in Daniel 12:9. But what about the unsealing of the 2300 day prophecy of Daniel 8:26, 14? Here the evidence is not as rich, but neither is it absent. That prophecy deals with the cleansing, restoration, or justification of the sanctuary. And why did the sanctuary need to be cleansed or restored? Because, Daniel 8:11-13 tells us, the little horn power was trampling the sanctuary, overthrowing its place, perverting its ceremonies, and magnifying itself in relation to the “Prince of the host.” With that in mind, it is significant that one of the activities of the sea beast of Revelation 13 is that it blasphemes God’s “name and his dwelling” (verse 6, RSV). The word translated “dwelling” is *skēnē* or “sanctuary,” the very entity that needs to be restored or cleansed at the end of Daniel’s 2300 days. Thus, when the little book is opened the issue of the perverting of the sanctuary resurfaces.

Even closer to home are the first few verses of Revelation 11. Beale sees in the trampling of verse 2 an allusion to the trampling of Daniel 8:13.⁷⁰ Beyond that, the concern of Daniel 8:13, 14 is the sanctuary and making things right concerning it. And we find in Revelation 11:1, 2 not only a focus on the temple of God, but a judgment scene involving the measuring or judging⁷¹ of both the Temple and God’s people. Kenneth Strand has demonstrated that the measuring of the temple, altar, and worshipers of Revelation 11:1 has its most complete thematic and sequential parallel in the description of the Day of Atonement rituals of Leviticus 16.⁷²

A Day of Atonement allusion in connection with the Temple is also found in Revelation 11:19, in which the Most Holy Place is standing open, an event that only happened on the Day of Atonement. Also interesting as we think of the implications of Daniel 8:14 is the fact that the judgment and dominion scenes regarding the saints and the little horn in Daniel 7 and 8 and Revelation 11:15-18 are fleshed out in Revelation 14-20. Along that line, it is significant that Revelation 14:7 signals the fact that the “hour of [God’s] judgment has come.”

⁷⁰ Beale, “Revelation,” 1118.

⁷¹ Ladd, 151.

⁷² Kenneth A. Strand, “An Overlooked Old-Testament Background to Revelation 11:1,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 22 (Autumn 1984) 320-325.

Beyond the specific allusions to the two sealed parts of Daniel, the second half of Revelation is dominated by symbols featured in the book of Daniel. One only has to think of such concepts as beasts, which figure largely in Daniel's prophecies but do not debut in the Apocalypse until 11:7. In the following chapters beasts come to center stage. Then, of course, there is the Danielic-like struggle between Babylon and God's people, with Babylon first being mentioned in Revelation 14:8. Other of Daniel's themes also surface in the second half of Revelation. But I have said enough. A study of the text of Revelation following the opening of the little book of chapter 10 leaves no doubt that the sealed portions of Daniel dealing with the last days are featured in the second half of the Apocalypse. One of the more interesting facts regarding that relationship is that I have found no study, major or otherwise, on the topic. As such, it could easily form the basis of a doctoral dissertation.

Meanwhile, we need to ask one last question. What does this mean in terms of the shape of apocalyptic and the mission of the church in the twenty-first century?

Implications of the Opened Little Book for the Structure of Apocalyptic and the Mission of the Church

Somewhere I read that Revelation 10 is one of the most important chapters in Revelation since it represents what God does to inaugurate the time of the end. But I never made a note on the passage because I felt it was too strong. I have changed my mind. Recognizing that the little book is probably the last section of the larger scroll of Revelation 5 and that its opening sets forth the eschatological or sealed prophecies of Daniel, I have progressively come to the conclusion of the importance of Revelation 10 for the subsequent chapters of Revelation. In short, I have come to agree with Beasley-Murray that chapter 10 for the first time in the Apocalypse asks the question of "What is the task of the Church in these troublous times?"⁷³

The key to that question is found in verse 11 and its recommissioning regarding a further prophetic message to the whole world.⁷⁴ Simon

⁷³ Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*, 168.

⁷⁴ For discussions of *epi* meaning "before" (KJV), see Danker, 363, 364; Craig R. Koester, *Revelation and the End of All Things* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2001), 103.

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Kistemaker appears to have the idea when he writes that the command of verse 11 sets forth the duty to “proclaim God’s full revelation” regarding all of John’s visions.⁷⁵ That message begins in Revelation 11:1, 2 with its sanctuary and judgment message and climaxes in Revelation 14:6-12, with verse 6’s repetition of 10:11’s command that the message is to go to “every nation and tribe and tongue and people” and 14:7’s picking up of the judgment motif of Revelation 11:1, 2.

A key passage as John’s visions unfold is Revelation 11:19, with its portrayal of the opening up of the Most Holy Place of the heavenly Temple and the revealing of the ark of the covenant. Here we find the only reference “to a *heavenly* ark of the covenant” in “early Jewish and Christian literature.”⁷⁶ The revealing of the ark (in itself an allusion to the Day of Atonement) brings forth many ideas. As Osborne notes, “it contained the two tables of the Decalogue given to Moses by God on Mount Sinai.” But it also represented such concepts as mercy, the presence of God, atonement, and the basis of victories for God’s people over their enemies.⁷⁷ All of those ideas will play out in the following chapters of Revelation.

Revelation 11:19 plays an important role in the flow of the book. Many have noted the point made so nicely by Stephen Smalley that “structurally and theologically, [11:19] ties together the end of Chapters 10-11, and leads into Chapters 12-15.”⁷⁸ Put in another way, the Apocalypse often uses the “device of interlocking” to link what goes before to that which follows.⁷⁹ Previous uses of the interlocking technique are found in Revelation 3:21; 6:17; and 8:1. In 11:19, Craig Koester suggests, “it marks the beginning of a new series of battles against those who oppose God.”⁸⁰ As such, 11:19 sets the stage for what is to follow in the Apocalypse.

More specifically, the revealing of the ark of the covenant prepares the reader for the climax of Revelation 12, with its declaration of the controverted importance of the commandments of God at the end of time. That verse, it should be noted, is the key verse in the unfolding of the

⁷⁵ Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary, Exposition of the Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2001), 317.

⁷⁶ Smalley, 294.

⁷⁷ Osborne, 448; Boxall, 177.

⁷⁸ Smalley, 296.

⁷⁹ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 520.

⁸⁰ Koester, *Revelation and the End*, 113.

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end-time drama for the rest of the book of Revelation. “The dragon,” we read, “was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God” (12:17). Just as 11:19 sets the stage for 12:17, so 12:17 sets the stage for chapters 13 and 14, with chapter 13 expanding on the eschatological dragon power and chapter 14 featuring the last day woman or church, and the two chapters together treating the war between them over end-time allegiance to the commandments of God, a topic that presents bookend statements on God’s last-day people keeping His commandments in 12:17 and 14:12. Then in 14:14-20 comes the Second Advent. The themes set forth in Revelation 13 and 14, in turn, raise issues that are more fully treated in chapters 15-19, including the wrath of God in the seven last plagues (Rev. 14:10; 15; 16), the destruction of Babylon (Rev. 14:8; 17; 18), and the Second Coming (Rev. 14:14-20; 19). Schematically, an abbreviated view of the flow of Revelation would look something like this: 10:11==>11:19==>12:17==>13-14==>15-19, with the chapters following chapter 10 containing the Daniel-intense content of the opened little book.

With those thoughts on the impact of chapter 10 on the structure of the second half of Revelation, we need to take a look at two topics before we move to a missiological conclusion that applies the recommissioning of Revelation 10:11.

First, what is the significance of “the commandments of God” in Revelation 12:17 and 14:12? At the outset, it should be pointed out that most commentators do not share the Adventist interest in the question. Most do not even deal with it in a sustained manner, viewing it as general faithfulness to God, especially in ethical requirements. Jürgen Roloff is a bit more specific when he writes that “in the midst of a world governed by disobedience to God, they stand up for the will of God in unconditional obedience.” Kiddle makes much the same point when he sees the issue to be a “fundamental test” of allegiance.⁸¹ David Aune comes closer to a definition of the content of the commandments of God than most when he notes that it “is very probably a reference to the ethical commands of the second table of the Decalogue and the love command.”⁸² Aune’s position

⁸¹ Jürgen Roloff, *Revelation, A Continental Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 152; Kiddle, 282.

⁸² Aune, 709, 837.

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is helpful, but it fails to take into account that the context features issues dealing with the first table of the law, a point highlighted by Boxall in his discussion of issues of idolatry and worship related to Exodus 20.⁸³ That is a crucial insight since the main feature of both Revelation 13 and 14 and the first two commandments of the first table is the issue of worship, a topic raised eight times in the conflict set forth in Revelation 13 and 14. J. M. Ford in the Anchor Bible notes the point related to the first two commandments being featured, but points out that the fourth commandment is also indicated in the words of Revelation 14:7, “worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water,”⁸⁴ a passage that goes right back to Exodus 20:8-11 and Genesis 2:1, 2. The most comprehensive identification of the commandments of God is offered by Koester, who writes that “the commandments presumably include those in the OT, especially those that promote the worship of God and warn against idolatry, blasphemy, sorcery, theft, murder, and the other sins mentioned in Revelation.”⁸⁵

In conclusion, it appears from the wording and the context of Revelation 12:17 and 14:12 that “the commandments of God” represent total faithfulness to God, including both tables of the Decalogue and Jesus’ law of love, of which the Ten Commandments are specific extensions (see Rom. 13:8-10).

A second issue of importance is the relationship between Revelation 10:11 and Revelation 14:6-12. Several commentators, including Swete, have noted the similarities between the worldwide commission of Revelation 10:11 with that of 14:6.⁸⁶ But they have not done much with the idea. The same cannot be said of Adventist writers on Revelation. LaRondelle, for example, writes that “‘another angel’ in 14:6 suggests a connection with a previous angel, who is the covenant angel of Rev. 10.” He goes on to conclude that “the prophetic mandate of the mighty angel of Rev. 10 is unfolded in the threefold message of Rev. 14.” Stefanovic makes the same general point, one first set forth by Uriah Smith.⁸⁷

Revelation 10:11 and 14:6 represent end time commissions to preach

⁸³ Boxall, 210.

⁸⁴ Ford, 248, 160.

⁸⁵ Koester, *Revelation*, 554, 614.

⁸⁶ Swete, 182.

⁸⁷ LaRondelle, *How to Understand*, 203, 209; Stefanovic, 332, 442; Smith, 2:528.

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the prophetic contents of the opened little book to all the world. In view of that, LaRondelle makes a valid point when he writes that “while the angel of Revelation 10 indicates the end-time *setting* of this warning message, the angels of Revelation 14 develop the *content* of the message itself.”⁸⁸ Part of that *setting*, of course, would be the opening of the sealed parts of Daniel (the 1260 and 2300 day prophecies), which provide *historical anchor points* for the last day message of Revelation 12:17-14:20.

* * *

With that conclusion in mind this article has come full circle to the position affirmed by William Miller and James and Ellen White. The early Adventist position may be a minority position, but that does not mean that it does not reflect a valid understanding. As such, perhaps the major significance of Daniel’s sealed 1260 and 2300 day prophecies from the perspective of Revelation 10 is to provide historical markers for the proclamation of the end-time message set forth in Revelation 10-14.

The identity and significance of the little book of Revelation 10 may be controverted, but its place in the ongoing flow of the Apocalypse of John and its obvious connections with the sealed parts of Daniel argue for its significance in the mission of the church as it contemplates its message in what both Daniel and Revelation refer to as the end of time.

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⁸⁸ Hans K. LaRondelle, *Light for the Last Days: Jesus’ End-time Prophecies Made Plain the Book of Revelation* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1999), 101.