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## Is the Angel of Revelation 10 a Divine Being?

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### Introduction

The passage in Revelation 10:1-3 is unique within the biblical canon.<sup>1</sup> Never is an angel described in this much detail or in these terms. The practice of describing angels—including names, functions and appearance—was part of a growing late second temple practice among certain Jewish authors.<sup>2</sup> However, these elaborations do not appear in the NT, which does not go beyond OT usage,<sup>3</sup> unless the exception is here in this passage.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the appearance and acts of the angel in Chapter 10, together with his oath (vss. 5-6), and to identify him in light of the significance of John's description.

There are several issues which impact an investigation of this sort. One is the issue of John's sources. That is, should Revelation be interpreted in light of the OT (with its limited angelology), or in light of the non-canonical material of late second temple Judaism (with a more advanced angelology), or in light of the NT (with its OT oriented angelology). Furthermore, since John never clearly cites a source, how do we know when he has a source in mind, and how that source is functioning in the context of Revelation?

It is generally taken for granted by commentators that the OT functions as the source of images and symbols for John. Merrill Tenny, in a chapter on the "Old Testament Background of Revelation," says:

The reader of Revelation will not have perused many of its pages before he realizes that much of its language sounds familiar. It is filled with references to events and characters of the OT, and a great deal of its phraseology is taken directly from the OT books. . . .<sup>4</sup>

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Pick up any commentary and this becomes evident, as symbol after symbol is referred back to the OT. There are names like “Son of Man” (1:13), “Balaam” (2:14), “Moses” (15:3), “Babylon” (14; 17; 18), “Gog and Magog” (20:8). There are images like the “four living creatures” (Rev 4; Ezek 1), the altar and incense (Rev 8; OT sanctuary service), the plagues of Revelation 16 recall the plagues of the Exodus. However, what becomes equally clear is that for many images there is no agreement on which OT passage(s) John may have had in mind.

That there is a relationship with the NT is also generally taken for granted. This seems appropriate due to its inclusion in the NT canon,<sup>5</sup> although the nature of that relationship is debated by some.<sup>6</sup> In both the NT (John 1:29, 36; 1 Cor 5:7 cf. Exod 12) and Revelation (Rev 5:6; 6:16) Jesus is pictured as the Lamb. There are a number of images in common to both, for example, churches, the Son of Man coming on the clouds, etc. Some kind of relationship between the seals of Chapter 6 and our Lord’s prophecy (Matt 24; Mark 13; Luke 21) is generally recognized.<sup>7</sup> Some of these are items that both Revelation and the NT share in common with the OT, such as the Son of Man terminology.

The relationship to the noncanonical apocalyptic literature is less certain. Though the NT seems to contain certain thoughts or language similar to them, it does not appear to recognize this literature as authoritative nor quote from it in the same way it does those documents traditionally considered canonical.<sup>8</sup> The question arises, When John uses an image present in both the OT and the other literature, which is John drawing upon? Is this to be determined by genre or canon? Given that much of the relationship between Revelation and this literature is “indirect,”<sup>9</sup> given the overwhelming use of the OT in Revelation, and given the fact that the OT is considered canonical by the NT writers, the OT should have priority unless the contrary can be proved. That there is some sort of relationship would seem to be evident from R. H. Charles’ collection of textual similarities between Revelation and the Apocrypha.<sup>10</sup> The background in this literature will be examined due to its development of a more advanced angelology.

The uncertain nature of what is a source for Revelation can be illustrated by comparing the lists of passages thought by various scholars to be cited from the OT. Tenny places the count at 348, these being “verbal resemblances” and “contextual connections.”<sup>11</sup> The margin of the Nestle-Aland Greek text cites over 850 OT verses. R. H. Charles cites 284 verses based on one of the ancient texts or echoes of them.<sup>12</sup> UBS<sup>13</sup> cites fewer verses than Nestle-Aland, but still around 800;

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however, in its “Index of Quotations” zero references are cited for Revelation to the OT.

In line with this more formal approach to quotations is the study of Robert G. Bratcher. He includes “all formal quotations and some of the more obvious paraphrases and allusions which seem to reflect a conscious use of a specific OT passage or OT phraseology.”<sup>14</sup> With this approach Bratcher counts just 19 quotes/allusions in Revelation to the OT.<sup>15</sup> Gleason Archer and G. C. Chirichigno, in their *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament: A Complete Survey*, count only 17 OT quotes in Revelation.<sup>16</sup>

This brief survey points up both the lack of formal quotations in Revelation and the difficulties in determining to which verse or verses John might be referring. It is also evidence of the different ways scholars evaluate how John used his sources.

Several scholars have sought to put this issue in a more defined setting. But since John never tells us how he functions in relation to his sources, there is a degree of subjectivity in all these attempts. The value in such discussions is that the difficulties are clarified and the procedure/method is at least thought through more completely. This may keep the researcher from seeing allusions and parallels where none were intended at all.<sup>17</sup>

When scholars talk about Revelation’s sources, they sometimes use the word “allusion.”<sup>18</sup> But defining and determining the nature of an allusion can be an allusive enterprise.<sup>19</sup> M. Tenny discusses the problem in his book, as does G. Beale. The fullest study I know of is the dissertation of J. Paulien.<sup>20</sup> A repeat of this discussion would seem redundant here, and the reader is referred to the above sources.

In terms of our study of Rev 10:1-3, the background of a given symbol will be investigated in the various possible sources, looking for similar words, themes, and interlocking ideas and structures. We will review OT texts that have the same word(s) via the Greek Septuagint (LXX) to see if it is possible to isolate which ones John may have had in mind and see if there is a pattern to the symbolism as John uses it.

**Symbolic Imagery—Appearance<sup>21</sup>**

**“Another Mighty Angel.”** “Then I saw *another might angel*” (*allon aggelon ischuron*) is the phrase that introduces the angel of 10:1. The Greek word for “angel” occurs 76 times in Revelation, but only 3 times is it combined with the adjective “mighty” (Rev 5:2; 10:1; 18:21). Only 10:1 precedes the phrase by the form “another.”

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Since “another” (*allos*) usually notes some kind of contrast with what precedes,<sup>22</sup> the question of the contrast arises. Some contrast this angel with the trumpet angels,<sup>23</sup> the fallen star of chapter 9,<sup>24</sup> or the angel of 8:3.<sup>25</sup> Others identify him with the mighty angel of 5:2.<sup>26</sup> The presence of the adjective *ischuron* (mighty) alone is sufficient to contrast this angel with the other angels of chapters 8 and 9. And if John had wanted to identify this angel with the mighty angel of 5:2 he would have used the Greek definite article, either *ton ischuron aggelon*, or *ton aggelon ton ischuron*. The fact that he does not use the article, but rather uses the contrastive adjective “another” together with “mighty angel” would seem to indicate that the *contrast* is with the “mighty angel” of 5:2. Thus, in 10:1 a different “mighty angel” is being presented.

**Cloud Imagery.** We turn now to the imagery associated with this angel. In the Septuagint<sup>27</sup>, among the books counted as canonical, there are 114 uses of the term for cloud (*nephelē*).<sup>28</sup> Of these, fifty-six<sup>29</sup> refer to the Pillar of Cloud/Glory of the Lord in the Exodus account. Thirty-nine are literal clouds,<sup>30</sup> and nineteen<sup>31</sup> could be literal, but in their usage and associations could just as well be interpreted another way.<sup>32</sup>

The word “cloud” is never associated with an angel. One reference to the *malʾāk hāʾelōhīm*, “the Angel [or Messenger] of God”—associated with the pillar of cloud/fire—(Exod 14:19) is identified in vs. 24 as YHWH.

Among commentators there is often seen a link between this cloud imagery and the pillar of cloud associated with the tabernacle and the wilderness wanderings. E. S. Fiorenza writes, “. . . The clouds and the pillars of fire in turn evoke the Exodus and Sinai covenant with Israel (Exod 13:21ff; 19:16ff).”<sup>33</sup> J. A. Siess likewise reviews many of the OT passages which are associated with the pillar of cloud motif.<sup>34</sup> And J. M. Ford notes:

The angel is more than a sign of the Noachic covenant; his feature bear the traces also of the Sinai covenant. The words *katabainō*, “descend,” *nephelē*, “a cloud,” and *stuloi puros*, “pillars of fire,” recall the following texts: Exod 33:9, where the pillar (*stulos*) of cloud (*nephelē*) descended (*katabainō*), and stood at the door of the tabernacle . . . .”<sup>35</sup>

She further cites Exodus 34:5; Numbers 11:25; 14:10 and Deuteronomy 31:15, all of which use similar language.

Another group of texts often cited by commentators is Psalms 104:3, Daniel 7:13, Acts 1:9, and Matthew 24:30.<sup>36</sup> The theme common to these

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texts is that the cloud symbolism concerns the vehicle for movement by God, the Son of Man or Jesus Christ, depending on the passage cited. We may rule out these passages as sources for interpreting the cloud imagery of Revelation 10:1. For while the angel moves between heaven and earth, the cloud functions as his covering and not his transport.

Another passage cited is that of Genesis 9:13-14.<sup>37</sup> The word for cloud is the same and both passages speak of a rainbow; however the themes are not the same. Genesis 9 presents a literal cloud in the sky without image, or symbol or metaphor, a different picture than the Revelation 10 description.

Of the various kinds of backgrounds proposed for this imagery, that of the Being who appears in the cloud at the door of the tabernacle seems the best. The functions of the cloud are similar, that is, in both contexts the cloud functions as a covering. In the Exodus situation it is a covering for YHWH; in Revelation 10 it is a covering for the angel and seems linked with the terminology of the pillar of fire.

The word *nephelē* (cloud) occurs 26 times in the NT. Once in a literal sense (Luke 12:54), twice as a metaphor (2 Pet 2:17; Jude 12), seven times in the transfiguration,<sup>38</sup> and two times for the pillar of cloud (1 Cor 10:1, 2). In the remaining passages the cloud imagery is a vehicle for Christ, the Son of Man, the redeemed, and the symbolic two witnesses of Revelation. This follows the same basic imagery pattern as found in the OT.

The use of cloud imagery in the noncanonical literature<sup>39</sup> seems to function differently than in either OT or NT. One passage uses the cloud imagery for the pillar of cloud (Ps-Philo 13:1-2), another speaks of the clouds as encircling the throne of glory in the description of the celestial rainbow (3 Enoch appendix 22c:4; cf. Gen 9:13). In the appendix to 3 Enoch 24:1-23 there is a list of the chariots of God based on various OT passages; vss. 3 and 4 mention chariots of swift clouds and chariots of clouds respectively. The other references do not have similarity with OT/NT, or specifically Revelation 10:1.<sup>40</sup>

**Rainbow Imagery.** The common Greek word for rainbow is *iris*, but it is not used in the LXX.<sup>41</sup> Rather the Greek word *toxson*, archer's bow, is used to translate the Hebrew *qešet* which stands for both rainbow and archer's bow. When Josephus comments on the bow in the cloud (Gen 9), he informs his readers ". . . whereby is meant the rainbow, for they determined that the rainbow was the bow of God."<sup>42</sup> On this matter Ringstorff concludes,

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In view of the linguistic and material background of the word *iris*, we may say in conclusion, that this term, which is not itself a biblical word, is given in Rev the content of the OT *tv,q/toxon* and that with this content is seen in the light of the revelation in Christ . . .<sup>43</sup>

*Toxon* occurs 74 times in the LXX.<sup>44</sup> Of these, only four uses have the clear meaning of rainbow;<sup>45</sup> the others refer to the archer's bow. With only two passages (Gen and Ezek) the amount of background is limited.<sup>46</sup> A number of commentators see the background in Genesis 9 and the covenant with Noah.<sup>47</sup> However, the same limitations that occurred with the cloud imagery seem relevant here. Ezekiel 1:28 is also cited as background.<sup>48</sup> Here the appearance of God is described as "the likeness of the glory of the Lord," using cloud and rainbow together for the description.<sup>49</sup>

The only other passage in the NT which uses *iris* is in Revelation 4:3, where a rainbow is seen around the throne. A number of scholars cite this passage as the source for the rainbow imagery in Revelation 10.<sup>50</sup> J. A. Seiss notes that the definite article is present in 10:1, indicating that the rainbow of 4:3 is again in view.<sup>51</sup>

In the Appendix to 3 Enoch 22:4f there is a vision of a huge "bow" in the cloud which is around the throne of God. In the Apocalypse of Abraham 11:3 the headdress on the head of the angel Jaobel is likened to a rainbow.

**Face Like the Sun.** This imagery does not specifically occur in the OT.<sup>52</sup> Only two passages in the NT can be considered as background here. The first is Matthew 17:2. The words *to prosōpon autou hōs ho hēlios* are nearly identical in the two passages. In this account of the transfiguration Jesus' face shines like the sun. The second passage (Rev 1:16) is John's description of the Son of Man. John's phrase differs from Matthew's by the exchange of *hē oyis* for *to prosōpon* and the addition of the expression "in its strength."

In 3 Enoch 22 of the noncanonical literature the being Kerubi'el YHWH is described. Part of this description states that His face looks like "a blazing fire." The description of Michael who appears to Aseneth in Joseph and Asenath 14:9-10 includes a face like lighting. In 2 Enoch 1:45 two huge men are described with faces shining like the sun. And the description of an angel in the Apocalypse of Zephaniah includes a face shining like the sun.

**Feet Like Pillars of Fire.** In the LXX the phrase, "pillar of fire," occurs in only six passages,<sup>53</sup> but the same context, that is, the cloudy pillar of fire that led Israel by night. The phrase "pillar of fire" is always used in conjunction with the "pillar of cloud." The significance of the

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plural (pillars) in Revelation 10:1 would seem to be its connection with the plural “feet,” each foot or leg is like a pillar of fire.

The rest of the NT has no phrase comparable to this (pillars of fire), although in 1:15 the feet of the Son of Man are described as fired brass or burnished bronze, alluding to the Being of Daniel 10:6 whose feet are described like the gleam of burnished bronze.

Among the descriptions of heavenly beings in the noncanonical literature, there are two that describe the feet. The Apocalypse of Zephaniah (6:11-15) describes an angel with feet like bronze, probably a reference back to Daniel 10:6. In Joseph and Asenath 14:9-10, sparks fly from the hands and feet of Michael. Neither of these would serve as an adequate background to the personage of Revelation 10:1.

**Symbolic Imagery—Activities**

**He set his feet (vs. 2).** The meaning of this terminology is variously interpreted. For Ladd it suggests not only his “gigantic size,” but also that his message is for the whole world.<sup>54</sup> For Morris it means that he has mastery over both the land and the sea, and the message is universal;<sup>55</sup> Charles, too, says the message concerns the whole world.<sup>56</sup> Mounce takes the angel’s stance as symbolic of his authority over the entire earth and thinks it less likely to point to a universal message.<sup>57</sup> Ralph Earle also believes it points to his authority.<sup>58</sup> The *Interpreters Bible* follows this line and sets it in contrast with the desire of the Roman Empire for world domination.<sup>59</sup> Krodel thinks the angel’s position points to his authority as the representative of God.<sup>60</sup>

Several commentators discuss this symbolism in light of the OT “foot motif” wherein the person who places his/her foot on something announces ownership, subjugation, victory etc.<sup>61</sup> In his article on the term *pous* (foot) Weiss notes a symbolic use when “the foot is the sign of power exercised by the person.”<sup>62</sup> He cites Joshua 10:24 where the captains of Joshua put their feet on the necks of their enemies, also Josh 14:9; Deut 11:23; Josh 1:3; 2 Sam 22:39=Ps 18:38; Ps 58:10 with the same motif. Other passages cited from the OT directly concern the Deity: 1 Chron 28:2; Ezek 43:7; Ps 99:5; Lam 2:1; Ps 77:19; Zech 14:4; Hab 3:6.<sup>63</sup>

While these passages illustrate the “foot motif,” none of them are used by John in the sense of an allusion. They seem, rather, to form the broader background of a motif echoed by John in the act of this angel in Revelation 10. John’s decision would seem to indicate some significance beyond the size of the angel or the universality of the message to point to a claim being made.

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**Like a Lion Roaring.** When this angel cries out, His cry is compared to the roar of a lion. The idea of a roaring lion occurs several times in the OT. But since the verb *mukaomai* (roar) does not occur in the LXX, a verbal parallel is not possible. Several passages speak generally about a roaring lion, such as Isaiah 5:29 and Amos 3:4, but these do not appear in contexts similar to our passage and probably do not form a background to Revelation 10. In two passages a voice is likened to a lion's roar: Amos 3:8 provides a loose parallel in which "a lion has roared" and the "The Lord God has spoken" function in poetic parallelism. In Hosea 11:10 God is said to roar like a lion. In two other passages, Amos 1:2 and Joel 3:16, God is said to roar, but the word for lion is absent.

Within the book of Revelation the Lamb who takes the sealed scroll (5:7) is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah"; one of the creatures around the throne is like a lion (4:7); in 9:8 the locusts have lions' teeth; in 9:17 the heads of the horses are like lions; and in 13:2 there is a beast with a mouth like a lion. In the apocryphal book of 4 Ezra<sup>64</sup> 11:37 there is a creature which roars like a lion which in 12:31 is interpreted as the Messiah.

#### **Summary and Conclusion**

Our study has investigated the background of the angel of Revelation 10 against the background of the OT, the NT, and the non-canonical Jewish literature. Our research did not find a close correlation between the non-canonical literature and Revelation but for one exception: the symbolism of the face shining like the sun. The areas which Revelation and this literature share any similarity seem to be due to the OT as a common source. Since this is the case, our summary and conclusion will focus on the OT and NT relationships.

The title of this essay asks a question: "Is the Angel of Revelation 10 a Divine Being?" Commentators have often noted that the imagery found in the passage is linked to imagery used in various places to describe God. For example, in the *Interpreter's Bible*: ". . . This angel arrived in a cloud, as did Yahweh in Ezek 1:27-28, for he had a rainbow on his head, his face shone like the sun and his legs were pillars of fire (cf also Dan 10:5-6. . .)." <sup>65</sup> However, the angel is not identified beyond this similarity. Alan Johnson writes:

The author sees a mighty angel (possibly Michael the great prince [Dan 12:1]) whom he describes in such dazzling terms (cloud, rainbow, sun, fiery pillars) that some have identified him with Christ. But



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angels are always angels in the Apocalypse, as well as the rest of the NT and should not be identified with Christ . . .<sup>66</sup>

Ladd likewise writes, “All of these items are similar to descriptions of the glorified Christ. However in the apocalypse angels are always angels; Christ is never called an angel. . .”<sup>67</sup> R. H. Charles and Morris hold the same opinion.<sup>68</sup> R. H. Mounce, after reviewing the imagery and having noted that some commentators take this angel to be Christ, writes, “This identification is rejected by most because in the Apocalypse Christ never appears as an angel . . .”<sup>69</sup>

When I read these authors (all of whom I respect and have learned from), I am troubled by the lack of explanation. If this is a mere angel, why is he presented in the majesty of Deity? The assertion that in Revelation angels are always angels is not very helpful. Stating that nowhere is Christ called an angel is beside the point. Even in this passage this angel is not called or designated as Christ. The question raised by these verses is not what this being is designated (that he is called an “angel” is very clear), *but what is this “angel” doing in a wardrobe reserved for divinity if he is not a divine personage?*

Are angels always angels? This is not the only problematic use of angels in the book of Revelation. In chapters 2-3 John is instructed to write a message to the “angel” of each church. According to 1:1 this revelation of Christ was mediated to John by an angel. It makes little sense to see John receiving a message mediated by one angel for him to pass on to another angel! Even commentators who have said that angels are always angels in Revelation struggle (with little success it seem to me) to see these as angels.<sup>70</sup> It is hard to see how the assertion, “angels are always angels,” is either true or helpful.

Another passage where understanding the role of angels seem difficult is Revelation 14:6, 8, 9. How does one envision these passages? In the NT the commission to preach the gospel to the world is given to Christ’s disciples; the announcement of the fall of Babylon is taken from a previous prophet.

The problem lies in limiting the range of meaning for the term “angel.” In the OT the word for angel, *mal’āk*, often means messenger (see Gen 32:3, 6; Num 20:14; 21:21; 22:5 etc.). Even the phrase *mal’āk YHWH* (the Angel of the Lord), who is often interchanged with YHWH (cf. Exod 3:2, 4), is used to designate the prophet Haggai (1:13). And in the NT the term “angel” may also refer to human messengers (Matt 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:24, 27; 9:52, etc.), though less often than in the OT.

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In each of the passages noted above in which the role of the angel is strange or problematic, the being referred to as “angel” is functioning as a messenger. Consequently, the specific identity of the messenger is to be clarified by the clues found in the context, and not by an assertion that angels are always angels in a given book regardless of the problems of interpretation the identification may cause. To what does the context of our passage point?

First, this angel is not to be identified with any other in the Book of Revelation.

Second, no matter how we take the cloud imagery, it all points to imagery used of God and His covenant. However the best background seems to be the pillar of cloud imagery in which YHWH wrapped Himself.

Third, the background to the rainbow imagery is limited. But the rainbow in Ezekiel’s vision (Ezek 1:23) and the rainbow in John’s vision (Rev 4:3), being related, probably form the background to our passage.<sup>71</sup>

Fourth, the terminology, “face like the sun,” is used only of Jesus in His transfiguration and John’s vision of the Son of Man.

Fifth, the feet like pillars of fire point again to God’s manifestations during the Exodus.

Sixth, the stance of this personage indicates his authority over the earth.

Seventh, His voice roars like the voice of God.

John has picked imagery and symbols limited to divinity from Scripture. It is difficult, then, to escape the conclusion that this angelic figure is none other than the Son of God in His role of messenger to the prophet John.

There yet remains one point of discussion, the oath. This is one of the key reasons that many commentators reject the interpretation that this messenger figure is Christ. To them the oath is inappropriate for Christ to pronounce.<sup>72</sup> In response we wish to make several observations:

First, it is not impossible for God to swear by Himself. ““But if you will not heed these words, I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation,”” (Jer 22:5). ““And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, ‘By myself I have sworn,’ declares the Lord, ‘because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son . . .’” (Gen 22:15-16). In this passage not only does God swear by Himself, but does so by the voice of an angel. About this oath the author of Hebrews writes in 6:13

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“For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself.”<sup>75</sup>

Second, the oath sworn by the messenger figure of Revelation 10 is an allusion to Daniel 12:7. The language of the oath may be present in order to draw the attention of the reader to Daniel 12 and its context, and should not be used to outweigh all the other evidence, if one still feels that this oath could not be given by Christ. To illustrate, there is the figure of the Son or Man in Revelation 14, who, because he receives an order from an angel, could not, according to some scholars, be Christ or the same Son of Man in 1:13.<sup>74</sup> I’m not at all certain that the symbolic imagery in Revelation should be strained in this manner.

Third, it should be noted that earlier in the book of Revelation the roles of Creator and Redeemer were considered separately. In Revelation 4 the “One seated on the throne” (the Father) is deemed worthy because He created; in Revelation 5 the “Lamb,” standing in the throne area, is deemed worthy because He redeemed.

Finally, this kind of language (the oath addressed to the Creator by the “messenger,” 10:6) is consistent with other NT passages. For example, in 3:1-2 the Son of Man (1:12-20) says, “. . . Awake, and strengthen what remains, and is on the point of death, for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of *my God*.” In Matthew 27:46 Jesus cries out “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” For the Christ to swear by the Father as Creator (Rev 10:6) or to address Him as “My God” (Rev 3:1-2; Matt 27:46) does not seem to be too different. As the second does not deny Christ’s divinity, neither should the first.

Is the “Angel” of Revelation 10 a Divine Being? In light of the symbolism and activities of this Being, we conclude that the Risen Christ has appeared to John.

### **Notes**

1 Meaning the Protestant canon.

2 Cf. D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), 235-249; Carol A. Newsome, “Angels,” *ABD* 1(1992), pp. 248-253.

3 Duane F. Watson, “Angels,” *ABD* 1(1992):253-255, notes the lack of description of function, names or appearance beyond what is given in the OT.

4 Merrill C. Tenny, *Interpreting Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), p. 101.

5 Cf. K. A. Strand, *Interpreting the Book of Revelation* (Naples, Florida: Ann Arbor Publishers, 1972), pp. 18, 22.

6 This debate will not detain us here. I agree with J. Paulien “Interpreting Revelation’s Symbols,” in *Symposium on Revelation-Book I* (Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, F. B. Holbrook, ed., (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992), 6:76. “It is evident from the very first phrase (‘the revelation of Jesus Christ’) that Revelation is a Christian book (1:1). Jesus Christ is present every where, both explicitly and in symbol. There are references to churches and to the cross. The careful reader also becomes aware of scores if not hundreds, of echoes recalling NT themes, vocabulary, and theology. . .”

7 See Paulien, “The Seven Seals,” *Ibid*, p. 243.

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- 8 See R. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), pp. 91-92; G. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody, 1974), pp. 74-75.
- 9 See R. H. Charles, *Revelation ICC* (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1920?), I:lxv.
- 10 Charles, lxxxii-lxxxiii.
- 11 Tenny, p. 101.
- 12 Charles, I:lxviii-lxxxiii.
- 13 *The Greek New Testament*, United Bible Societies, p. 903.
- 14 Robert G. Bratcher, *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1984), vii.
- 15 *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.
- 16 Gleason Archer and G. C. Chirichigno, *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament: A Complete Survey* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), xxii.
- 17 Cf. Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81 (1961):1-13. On page 1 he defines "parallelomania" ". . . as that extravagance among scholars which first overdoes the supposed similarity in passages and then proceeds to describe source and derivation as if implying literary connection flowing in an inevitable or predetermined direction."
- 18 Eg. Bratcher, *Ibid.*; Tenny, p. 102; Beale 306ff; Jon Paulien, *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets* (Andrews University Doctoral Dissertation [Series] No. 11 (Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1987), throughout.
- 19 Strand (28) notes the fluidity of a symbol and some of the problems that would make their sources "allusive."
- 20 The bibliography is available in their works already cited in the footnotes here. Additionally, Paulien has written a shorter version of his study, see footnote 6.
- 21 The Greek text of Revelation 10:1-3 has no significant variants that affect the thrust of this study.
- 22 Cf. Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), p. 272.
- 23 Eg. George E. Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 141; E. W. Hengstenberg, *The Revelation of St John* (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1851), p. 376.
- 24 Eg. J. M. Ford, *Revelation, Anchor Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1975), p. 161.
- 25 Suggested by Ladd, p. 141.
- 26 Ladd, p. 141, "The fact that he is a strong angel may identify him with the strong angel of 5:2. But see 18:21 for similar language." G. A. Krodel, *Revelation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), p. 210, sees this as part of the thematic relationship between chapters 5 and 10. G. R. Beasley-Murray, *The Book of Revelation* (London: Oliphants, 1974), p. 170, notes that the language "harks back" to the first mighty angel of 5:2, but he does not make any identification between the two.
- 27 LXX is the abbreviation generally applied to the Greek translation of the Pentateuch made in Alexandria by either 70 or 72 translators (depending on the tradition), by extension LXX (Septuagint) is applied to the entire Greek OT, see Moses Hadas, *Aristeas to Philocrates* (New York: Ktav, 1973), p. 66.
- 28 Count based on Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, Reprint, 1991).
- 29 Exod 13:21, 22; 14:19, 24; 16:10; 19:9, 13, 16; 24:15, 16(2x's); 33:9, 10; 34:5; 40:34, 35, 36, 37(2x's), 38; Lev 16:2; Num 9:15, 16, 17(2x's), 18, 19, 20, 21, 22; 10:11, 12, 34; 11:25; 12:5, 10; 14:10, 14(2x's); 16:42(17:7) Deut 1:33; 31:15(2x's); Jos 24:7; 3 Ki (1 Ki in English) 8:10(2x's); 2 Chron 5:13, 14; Neh (1:2, 19 Ps 77(78):14; 98(99):7; 104(105):39; Isa 4:5 Ezek 10:3, 4.
- 30 Gen 9:13, 14(2x's), 16; Judg 5:4; 2 Ki (2 Sam in English) 22:12; 3 Ki 18:44, 45; Job 26:8; 35:4; 36:27; 37:11; Ps 35(36):5; 56(57):10; 107(108):4; 134(135):7; 146(147):8; Eccl 11:4; Hos 6:5(4); 13:3; Joel 2:2; Zech 1:15 Isa 5:6; 18:4; 44:22; 45:8; 60:8; Jer 4:13; 10:13; 28(51):16; Lam 3:44; Ezek 1:4, 28; 31:3, 10, 14; 32:7; 34:12; 38:9, 16.
- 31 Job 22:14; 36:29; Ps 17(18):11, 12; 67(68):34; 76(77):17; 77(78):23; 88(89):6; 96(97):2; 103(104):3; Nah 1:3 Zech 2:13(17); Isa 14:14; 19:1; Lam 3:44; Ezek 1:20; 303,18; Dan 7:13.
- 32 Please note that in the above passages the verses cited are for the LXX, the verses in parenthesis are for the MT (BHS-Hebrew). English Bibles may follow one or the other or neither of the verse numberings. In addition the LXX has a number of verses which use the word "cloud" though the corresponding word is not used in the MT, and so will not likely be used in an English version.
- 33 Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Revelation: Vision of a Just World*, Proclamation Commentaries (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), p. 75.

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- 34 J. A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), p. 224.
- 35 Ford, p. 162.
- 36 See Leon Morris, *Revelation*, TNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), p. 134; Ladd, p. 141; Mounce, p. 206. None of these commentators cite all these texts; Ladd, p. 141, also notes that in Rev 10:1 a cloud provides the angel's garb, not his vehicle.
- 37 See J. M. Ford, p. 161-162.
- 38 Matt 17:5(2x's); Mark 9:7(2x's); Luke 9:34 (2x's), p. 35.
- 39 I have relied on the indexes of James Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* 2 vols (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983) and references in D. S. Russell, *Divine Disclosure* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992); Maxwell J. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran*, Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 11 (Sheffield: JSOT press, 1992); T. H. Gaster, *The Dead Sea Scriptures* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1976); and Christopher Rowland, *The Open Heaven* (New York: Crossroad, 1982). In the areas of OT/NT using standard concordances, I worked with every passage using "cloud," but this has not been possible with this literature. Furthermore, as this literature covers many languages, all comparisons were made from Charlesworth's edition, English to English.
- 40 Jubilees 2:2, among the "spirits" which minister before God are "the angels of the spirit of the clouds and darkness and snow and hail and frost," among many other types of angels. 2 Baruch 53 records a "vision" in which a cloud waters the land. In 2 Enoch 3:1-3 Enoch is carried to heaven in a cloud, though in rescension [A] the word "wing" is used. In the Sibylline Oracles book 3 §805, one of the signs of the end is "a battle of infantry and cavalry in the clouds, like a hunt." And in 1 Enoch 14:8ff the clouds and fogs call him to vision. For a discussion of *'arobot* in 3 Enoch 19:7 see fn 19j in Charlesworth and see Rowland, p. 81, where *'arobot* is the 7th heaven in some rabbinic interpretation. For the MT, *'arobot*, *CHAL* gives "desert," the NKJV, KJV, and NJPS translate "clouds," the Tg translates "heaven" and the LXX gives "west."
- 41 K. H. Rengstorff III, "*iris*," TDNT 3:339-40. *Iris* only occurs at Exod 30:24 as a translation of qiddāh, a plant used for a kind of ointment.
- 42 Flavius Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, I. III. 8. William Whiston, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1960), p. 29. Cf. Loeb 1:103.
- 43 Ringstorff, p. 342. Cf. Rev 6:2, the only use of *toxon* in the NT means an archer's bow, in contrast to the two uses of *iris* in Rev 4:3 and 10:1.
- 44 See Hatch and Redpath for references.
- 45 Gen 9:13,14,16; Ezek 1:28. Since the remaining passages do not mean rainbow, and do not serve as background to this imagery of Rev 10:1-3, they will not be listed here.
- 46 A number of scholars either don't comment on the background (e.g. Johnson), or give it a different kind of interpretation. Charles (1:259), for example, says the rainbow is due to the light on the angel's face, due to the cloud. Ladd (141) calls it a glorious headdress.
- 47 Among them, Fiorenza, p. 75; Krodel, p. 312, cf. note 26; Eugenio Corsini, *The Apocalypse* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1983), p. 188. Mounce refers the reader to Rev 4:3, where he discusses the rainbow in terms of the covenant to Noah.
- 48 J. M. Ford, p. 162; Morris, p. 143, refers the reader to Rev 4:3, where he discusses Ezek 1.
- 49 Cf. C. Rowland, pp. 59-60, where he evaluates this imagery in a similar way.
- 50 Among them, Mounce, p. 207; and Morris, p. 134.
- 51 Seiss, p. 224.
- 52 In Dan 10:6 there is a being whose face is like the appearance of lightning.
- 53 Exod 13:21, 22; 14:24; Num 14:14; Neh 9:12, 19.
- 54 Ladd, p. 142.
- 55 Morris, p. 134.
- 56 Charles 1:260.
- 57 Mounce, p. 208.
- 58 Ralph Earle, "Revelation," *Beacon Bible Commentary* vol 10 (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1967), p. 559.
- 59 "Revelation," *Interpreters Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1957), p. 439.
- 60 G. Krodel, p. 213.
- 61 See H. W. Lay and R. W. Vunderink, "Foot," *ISBE* 2(1982): 331-332.
- 62 Konrad Weiss, "mous" (or "pous") *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, TDNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Erdmans, 1968), 6: 624-631.
- 63 *Ibid*, pp. 626-627; Ford, p. 162. Cf. Seiss, p. 225, and Hengstenburg, p. 382.

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64 This is the 4th Ezra as designated by Charlesworth's edition. For the relationship of the various books that bear Ezra's name see Charlesworth 1:516 and *The Apocraphal Old Testament* edited by H. F. D. Sparks (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), pp. 927-928.

65 *Interpreter's Bible*, p. 439; Fiorenza, p. 75.

66 Alan F. Johnson, "Revelation," *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), p. 496.

67 Ladd, p. 141.

68 Charles 1:259; Morris, p. 133.

69 Mounce, p. 207.

70 See Mounce, p. 82; Morris, pp. 56-57; Ladd, p. 35.

71 See Rowland, p. 102.

72 See Mounce, p. 207; cf Morris, p. 134.

73 See also Isa 45:23; 62:8; Amos 4:2; 6:8; Jer 44:26; 49:13; 51:14; Deut 32:40.

74 See the discussion in Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1995), pp. 240-245.