

THE UNITY AND SEPARATION OF JESUS AND THE FATHER IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION:
A STUDY OF JESUS' DIVINITY THROUGH DIVINE TITLES AND OLD TESTAMENT ALLUSIONS

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The topic of Christology is an ongoing pursuit, with many scholars answering differently how first-century Christians were able to render devotion to both the Father and the person of Jesus. Surely, the idea of a divine Son was new to the standard Jewish beliefs of the time, i.e., Second Temple Judaism.¹ However, the early Christian movement understood itself to be in continuity with Israel and in harmony with Jewish Scripture, implying no “innovation” that could have been constituted as an unexpected re-adaptation of the scriptures.² In the process of mining the Scriptures for evidence of their belief in Jesus as divine, early Christians built a Christological foundation using the Old Testament (OT hereafter) as a support.³ The first-century Christian movement offered a novel interpretation of the existing scriptures. On one end of the scholarly debate, Margaret Barker has concluded that textual evidence points to one argument that does not support the idea of an “unprecedented” form of a religious commitment:

The most crucial of all questions is: How was it that Christian theology grew so quickly into a complex system if the greater part of that system had not existed within the Judaism from which it grew? This system will have included the beliefs implicit in the earliest titles for Jesus and all the expectations associated with him. The first Christians related these beliefs closely to the Old Testament by means of proof texts. Were these simply pegs on which to hang new ideas or were they re-stating established ideas, derived from a way of reading the Old Testament which we have now lost? There are no simple answers, but an attempt to read the Old Testament *as it is* does point consistently in one direction.⁴

¹ I will employ the title “Son” to refer to the pre-existent Jesus.

² Larry W. Hurtado argues it to be reasonable to develop a theory to account for the “religious innovation constituted by early Christ-devotion” (*Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 70).

³ I will call the Hebrew Scriptures the Old Testament to reflect the Christian view that the scriptures pointed to Jesus.

⁴ Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel’s Second God* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 28.

Neither the origin of Christian theology nor reading the “Old Testament *as it is*” is of particular interest to this thesis. Neither will I endeavor to compare and/or contrast the different approaches to first-century Christ-devotion.⁵ There remains much to say about the titles bestowed on Jesus in the New Testament (NT hereafter). In this study, my interest is in the way(s) in which John⁶ in the book of Revelation was able to find the Son, and his relationship to the Father, within the Greek Septuagint (LXX) and the Hebrew Scriptures.⁷ Larry W. Hurtado would not discourage this interest: “Indeed, from the earliest moments of the Christian movement, believers turned to the scriptures of the Jewish tradition to find resources for understanding Jesus and for expressing and defending their claims about his significance.”⁸ They often found support in the OT use and combination of divine titles, namely “God” and “Lord.”⁹ In Revelation (as in the NT in general),

⁵ The way in which different scholars have engaged the text appropriately, despite their conclusions, open doors for further investigation. It is appropriate to acknowledge the existence of theological convictions that influence and mold (or skew) the reading and interpreting of the text. “Biblical theology bears a historical character in that it hangs on what the sacred writers thought about divine things; dogmatic theology, on the other hand, bears a didactic character in that it teaches what every theologian through use of his reason philosophizes about divine things in accordance with his understanding, with the circumstances of the time, the age, the place, the school [to which he belongs], and similar matters of this sort. Considered by itself the form always remains the same, since its arguments are historical (although represented this way by one person and that way by another), while the latter, on the other hand, as constant and assiduous observation over so many centuries more than demonstrates, is subjected along with other human disciplines to manifold change” (Johann Philipp Gabler’s inaugural lecture at the University of Altdorf on March 30, 1787 as found in W. G. Kümmel, *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of its Problems* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1972], 98-100).

⁶ I will designate the author of Revelation as “John” throughout (cf. Rev 1:1, 4). For the purposes of this project, the identity of this John (i.e., relationship to the Fourth Evangelist) is neither assumed nor rejected.

⁷ I will not choose a term of preference referring to the Jewish scriptures the early Christians had available to them because both the Greek and Hebrew will be analyzed in relation to this thesis. The Hebrew Scriptures as a possible source for Revelation will be developed further in the following chapter. Generally, I will refer to the Jewish scriptures as OT, reflecting their position in Christian practice in respect to the NT.

⁸ Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 565.

⁹ This reading falls under the “orthodox” umbrella yet it encourages more exploration. These investigations may express a unity between the Father and the Son that may not align to creedal confessions. Yet, some have argued that a post biblical doctrinal statement may not be the best interpretive tool: “for New Testament authors, Nicaea and Chalcedon would have been a complete astonishment and possibly a disappointment. Had they been given the opportunity to read the fourth-and fifth-century creeds of Nicaea and Chalcedon, they would have been amazed at how complex and abstract their experiential, descriptive witness had become” (Fredrick C. Holmgren, *The Old Testament and the Significance of Jesus: Embracing Change—Maintaining Identity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999], 172).

Jesus is consistently called “Lord.”¹⁰ This Lord-Jesus identification was accompanied and supported by OT allusions. In addition, the binomial, “Lord God,” is found throughout Revelation as a common title, which is unusual in the NT.¹¹ I intend to demonstrate that John interpreted “Lord” in the OT to be Jesus, “God” in the OT to be the Father, and the binomial, “Lord God,” to represent the functional unity of the two. If understood this way, there is no clear “Lord” passage from the OT attributed to the Father in Revelation. These same titles, “Lord” and “God,” are otherwise interchangeable in passages that do not contain an OT allusion. Revelation may have used this binomial, “Lord God,” as an exalted title for Jesus, conveying his divine unity with the Father (pointing to a Christological understanding of this title in the OT). Therefore, the inexactness of apocalyptic literature can aide in identifying the Son with the Father where John employs the title “Lord God.” If readers miss the link to OT divine titles, they may also miss Revelation’s integral concern with the relationship between the Father and the Son.

It is possible that the historical stigma attached to the book of Revelation has given it the reputation of not being a very Christological work.¹² On the other hand, Ekkehardt Mueller argues that humanity has a better understanding of the Father and Jesus through the book of

¹⁰ Revelation 1:8; 4:8, 11; 11:4, 8; 11:15, 17; 14:13; 15:3, 4; 17:14; 19:6, 16; 21:22; 22:5, 6, 20, 21. I believe all of the before mentioned citations can be arguably shown to be about Jesus if not explicitly stated. The following are NT examples of Jesus’ title of “Lord”: Matt 14:28-30; Mark 1:3; Luke 1:43; John 6:23; Acts 1:21; Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; Phil 2:11; Col 1:3; 1Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1; 1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; Phlm 1:3; Heb 1:8-10; Jas 1:1; 1 Pet 1:3; 2 Pet 1:2; Jude 1:4.

¹¹ “Lord God” appears only twice in the first chapter of Luke (1:32, 68) and only one other time in Acts (3:22).

¹² Marcion rejected the book because it was too Jewish. Revelation is the only NT book for which John Calvin wrote no commentary. Martin Luther said, “My spirit cannot accommodate itself to this book. There is one sufficient reason for the small esteem in which I hold it – that Christ is neither taught in it nor recognized.” See Loren L. Johns, *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John* (WUNT II; Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 2-3.

Revelation.¹³ Dariusz Kotecki argues that Revelation underscores the unique relationships between two divine persons.¹⁴ In the words of Richard Bauckham, the author of the Apocalypse “has made a rather sophisticated attempt to use language that includes Jesus in the eternal being of God.”¹⁵ Bauckham’s observations lead him to the conclusion that John “does not use the abstract conceptuality with which the later Christian theologians, drawing on Greek philosophy, were able to say that the Son of God shares the divine nature of his Father.”¹⁶ I will apply these and similar statements to the functional unity of the Father and the Son, though the authors may favor ontological unity. However, Greek philosophical categories were not the primary tools that early Christian authors used. Within the OT, Christians were able to find language to explain their belief in “God” the Father and the “Lord” Jesus. Ultimately, the accommodation of divine titles coincides with the idea that the Father was worshipped through the Son.¹⁷

I propose that John in the book of Revelation uses the titles θεός and κύριος, whether together or separately, in ways that indicate both the unity and separation of Jesus and the Father. John’s exegesis reflects his Christology in the first century and his interpretation of the scriptures available to the early Christians.¹⁸ Therefore, in the separation of the titles θεός and κύριος, John’s reading of the OT becomes apparent. The role of the OT in Revelation is paramount when

¹³ Ekkehardt Mueller, “Christological Concepts Part 1: Jesus in the Apocalypse” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 21/1-2 (2010): 274.

¹⁴ Dariusz Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo: Cristología Teocéntica en el Apocalipsis de San Juan” *ST* 40 (2008): 511.

¹⁵ Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* (NTT; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1993), 61-62.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Cf. Matt 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 14:6; 1 Tim 2:5.

¹⁸ Although John would have been familiar with the Hebrew equivalences of these Greek titles, he only used θεός and κύριος (except perhaps in the praise *Hallelujah* (19:1, 3-4). All citations using the Hebrew titles (אֱלֹהִים, *Elohim*, and יְהוָה, *YHWH*) will be interpreted as equivalent to their Greek translations used by John (θεός and κύριος).

it comes to Christology.¹⁹ As research in the use of the OT in Revelation develops, the number of possible literary allusion to the OT increases.²⁰ Consistent with standard theology, I seek to show that the title of “Lord” is consistently used for Jesus (e.g., Rev 11:8; 17:14; 19:16). In addition, John associates divine titles and eschatological tasks belonging to the Lord of the OT with the Lord Jesus. Jesus performs the roles of the Lord of the OT. Even when this divine title is not included in the text, Jesus is still portrayed as divine. J. J. Collins has noted:

The distinctively Christian character of Revelation derives not from its view of history but from the central role of Jesus Christ. Even here the transformation of the genre is not as great as we might expect. Christ combines the roles of revealer (in part) and of heavenly warrior and judge, but these roles are conceived in accordance with Jewish tradition.²¹

It is this consistency that challenges the standard view that apocalyptic literature by nature is thoroughly inconsistent. Throughout the book, John portrays this precise image of and exalted divine Jesus as someone distinct from his God and Father (Rev 1:6).²² John W. Wright observes the unity that Revelation places on the Father and the Son, recognizing that the “subordinate role

¹⁹ “No cabe ninguna duda que el AT y su uso juegan un papel de primordial importancia en Ap” (“There is no room for doubt that the OT and its use play a role of primordial importance in Revelation” [author’s translation]). See Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 509.

²⁰ “The more commentaries written on the book of Revelation, the more literary allusions to the Old Testament are discovered there. Thus the list of allusions to the Old Testament found in the phraseology of Revelation becomes longer and longer” (William H. Shea, “Literary and Theological Parallels Between Revelation 14-15 and Exodus 19-24,” *JATS* 12/2 [Autumn 2001]: 164).

²¹ J. J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 273.

²² This is not an argument for polytheism, but a separation of divine persons (the Father and the Son) associated with divine titles. Jesus is divine by, through, and with his Father. Nevertheless, what have been termed “polytheistic texts” may be read in light of my analysis also. Bauckham comments on the polytheistic nature of some OT texts. “There is (1) a small group of ‘texts in which monotheism is explicit: that is to say, statements in which the existence of other gods apart from Israel’s God, Yahweh, is denied’; and (2) ‘a second group of texts which, although not originally monotheistic, have, under the influence of the [monotheistic] Deuteronomic texts, been so interpreted’. But there is also (3) a third category of texts ‘which are explicitly and embarrassingly polytheistic texts’” (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 86). I believe these passages can be read differently, perhaps Christologically, using the methods employed by John in Revelation.

distinction remains consistent throughout the book.”²³ As consistent as the standard association between the OT Lord and Jesus, I argue that the title “God” from OT allusions was used for the Father. When the divine titles combine, however, as κύριος ὁ θεός the context indicates that the Son should not be excluded as the identified divine figure. Consistent with John’s use of key phrases, verbs, and nouns, the Lord God should be interpreted as Jesus who functions on behalf of and in unity with the Father. The title “Lord God” manifests the shared divinity of the Father and the Son, the θεός and the κύριος.²⁴ Therefore, Jesus as Lord God functions as agent of God the Father. The apocalyptic inconsistency manifests itself in that John employs “Lord God” to identify Jesus or the Father represented by his Son. This project aims to identify patterns and resulting theological and Christological implications of the titles applied to the divine persons in Revelation. It also presents another possible reading of the Book of Revelation highlighting the book’s very high Christology.

Apocalyptic literature

In this work, I will not occupy space expounding on the differences between “apocalyptic” as a noun, “apocalypse” as a literary genre, “apocalypticism” as a social ideology, and “apocalyptic eschatology” as a “set of ideas and motifs that may also be found in other literary genres and social settings.”²⁵ Despite Ernst Käsemann’s overstatement that “apocalyptic...

²³ John W. Wright, “Blessing, Honor, Glory, and Might, Forever and Ever! Nicea and the Christology of the Book of Revelation,” *WTJ* 39 (2004): 22. J. Wright argues that the Father and the Son are united in contrast to all of creation. “Within this duality of God and creation, the Son firmly ends up fully and completely—by nature—on the side of God.” *Ibid.*, 11. However, there is no clear distinction in the text.

²⁴ For example: Revelation 3:21 states that both Jesus and the Father are on the same throne. There is only one on the throne in chapter 4 under the title of κύριος ὁ θεός (4:8-11). In chapter 5, both the Lamb and the One on the Throne are shown to be in some way attached to the throne (ἐπί or ἐν μέσῳ) with a complete absence of the title of κύριος ὁ θεός (5:6-7). In 21:23, God and the Lamb give light to the city, yet in 22:5 only κύριος ὁ θεός gives it light.

²⁵ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 2.

was the mother of all Christian theology,”²⁶ Collins remarks that “strong theological prejudice” impedes scholars from paying enough attention to the text and hinders the work of historical reconstruction.²⁷ Projects have been dedicated to giving a systematic analysis of this literature, taking special notice of the parallels and limitations of apocalyptic texts.²⁸ Collins has defined apocalyptic as including a narrative with heavenly messengers disclosing temporal and eschatological salvation.²⁹ The nature of this genre includes “temporal and spatial dimensions,” “supernatural world and the activity of supernatural beings,” and “final judgment and a destruction of the wicked.”³⁰ Although written late in the first century, Revelation is arguably influenced least by Greek philosophical concepts and is indebted deeply to Jewish apocalyptic thought.³¹ On the origin of Jewish apocalypticism, P. D. Hanson comments, “The basic intent of those works seems to be that of describing to the faithful the vision of Yahweh’s future saving act on their behalf.”³² In Revelation, it is the Lord Jesus who performs these saving acts (Rev 14:14-16; 19:11, 19-20). Eschatological salvation is not directly attributed to God the Father.

To ignore efforts to find consistency within Revelation does not allow the text’s inner-workings to surface. Undoubtedly, this genre is “far more tolerant of inconsistency and

²⁶ Ernst Käsemann, “The Beginning of Christian Theology,” *JTC* 6 (1969): 40.

²⁷ “Whatever we may decide about the theological value of these writings, it is obvious that a strong theological prejudice can impede the task of historical reconstruction and make it difficult to pay enough attention to the literature to enable us even to understand it at all” (Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 2).

²⁸ The following is an example of such volumes: J. J. Collins, ed., *Semeia 14: Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* (1979).

²⁹ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 5. E. P. Sanders has designated apocalyptic as “literature of the oppressed” (“The Genre of Palestinian Jewish Apocalypses,” in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East* [ed. David Hellholm; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1983], 447-459. Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism Uppsala, August 12-17, 1979).

³⁰ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 6.

³¹ Wright, “Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 10.

³² P. D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalypticism*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 8.

repetition” than others.³³ Therefore, as Collins argues, “we must learn the conventions that are actually employed in the text rather than assume that our own criteria of consistency are applicable. ...our working assumptions should favor the unity of a document, unless there is cogent evidence to the contrary. The burden of proof falls on the scholar who would divide a text.”³⁴ Inconsistency within the literature does not imply no consistency. Collins continues:

In short, authors who work with traditional material do not conform to the standards of consistency and coherence...[Authors of apocalyptic] may well allow loose ends and even contradictions to stand in their work...The insight that the apocalypse did not aspire to conceptual consistency but could allow diverse formulations to complement each other is especially important.³⁵

It is, thus, particularly fitting of apocalyptic literature generally and Revelation in particular that this pairing of two ostensibly competing confessions – that the Father and the Son are unified (“Lord God”) *and* that the Father and the Son are separate (“Lord and God”) – is reinforced in the use of divine titles and OT allusions. As apocalyptic, Revelation may be consistent in its portrayal of Jesus, yet inconsistent in the multiple titles that John utilizes to describe and identify him.

³³ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 15.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

CHAPTER 2

John's Exegetical Approach to Isaiah 60:19

Revelation 21:23

One OT allusion in Revelation serves as the entry point to present possible use and identification of OT divine titles. The verses in Revelation related to the initial approach to this thesis are 21:23 and 22:5. These and other allusions to the OT are a strong OT foundation for the Christological message of Revelation. G. K. Beale describes the relationship between Revelation and the OT:

But even if John was always only recording what he saw and heard directly from his visionary and auditory experience, he likely still would have been conscious of the OT links and associations inherent in those visions and apocalyptic declarations which he received, since he considered himself to be in a long line of prophets stretching back into the OT.³⁶

Revelation 21 recounts the glory and state of the new heavens and the new earth, the new city of Jerusalem (vv. 2 and 10), through the pen of the Revelator. This imagery would not have been unfamiliar to John, for it was available to him in the scriptures.³⁷ He would have been able to pull language, vocabulary and imagery from these sources. The imagery in Revelation speaks of peace, divine presence, and light by means of God and the Lamb. In Revelation 21:23, John makes an allusion and possibly a Christological interpretation of LXX Isaiah 60:19:

LXX Isaiah 60:19 And the sun shall not be to you for daylight neither [shall] the rising of the moon give you light at night but the Lord shall be to you an everlasting light [κύριος φῶς αἰώνιον]	Revelation 21:23 And the city has no need for the sun neither for the moon to give it light, for the glory of God gave it light [δόξα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐφώτισεν αὐτήν]
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³⁶ G. K. Beale and Sean M. McDonough, "Revelation," *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, edited by G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 1084.

³⁷ G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 1090, 1093; Beale, "Revelation," 1150; Josephine Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 344. Isa 24:23; 52; 54:5-8; 56:1-8; 62; 65:16-18; Jer 3:15-17; etc.

and God [shall be] your glory [ὁ θεὸς δόξα σου] and the Lamb [is] its lamp [ὁ λύχνος αὐτῆς τὸ ἄρνιον].

The verses begin somewhat alike, yet make a change as they conclude. This appears to be an identifiable allusion to Isaiah 60:19. Unfortunately, the few scholars who have commented on this association with the OT make little effort (if not none at all) to explain John's connection between God's glory in distinction from the Lord who he identifies as the Lamb.³⁸ John interprets the divine titles found in Isaiah (θεός and κύριος) respectively as "God" and "Lamb" in Revelation.³⁹

A statement made by Beale may lead to further interpretation: "The light from God and the Lamb will fulfill the prophecy of Isa. 60:19, which underscores the deity of the Lamb together with the Lord."⁴⁰ Beale suggests that "Lamb" corresponds to the title "Lord" in Isaiah, and not to "God." Despite the position of the term "Lamb" at the end of the verse, John may have used it in place of, or in relation to, the title "Lord" in Isaiah. Bauckham has noticed the Christological identity early Christians attributed to the Lord-God of Deutero-Isaiah: "It was in the unique identity of this God of Deutero-Isaiah, in his cosmic and historical lordship that early Christians so clearly and deliberately included the pre-existent and exalted Christ."⁴¹ This appears to be the identification that John is making in Revelation 21. To be clear, the "God of

³⁸ Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 328; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 1093.

³⁹ Beale believes the Lamb's role as a lamp correlates with the glory of God in Isaiah, both being the final lines of both verses, respectively. In his juxtaposition of Hebrew Isaiah 60:19 and Revelation 21:23, Beale italicizes the last line of each one, then states that: "The clause identifying the Lamb as the city's lamp is substituted for the last clause of Isa. 60:19, which describes God and his glory" (see Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 1093). He offers no reason for this conclusion, only relying on the location of these two lines at the conclusion of the above passages. Beale suggests a straight replacement because the Isaiah passage concludes with God's glory and Revelation with the Lamp. But this ignores that the terms "glory (δόξα)" and "God" (θεός) remain together in John's allusion. They both speak of the glory of God, simply rearranged. Without offering another suggestion besides the location of the clauses, Beale would have the burden of justifying his assumption of John's allusion. He would have to explain John's reasoning for exchanging "glory" for "lamp" and θεός for "Lamb," while continuing to hold "glory" and θεός together in his rendition.

⁴⁰ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 1093.

⁴¹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 34. This will be taken as including what some have called Triton-Isaiah (Isa. 56-66).

Deutero-Isaiah” was the divine κύριος, the Lord; there was none beside him (Isa 45:5, 6, 14, 18, 22) in relation to Israel (45:4, 11, 17, 25).⁴² However, in Revelation 21:23 “God” is clearly someone distinct from the Lamb. This association does not end with the Lord and the Lamb. As the churches read and listened to Revelation read aloud, the title “God” (the Father) would suggest a different entity than the Lamb. Apparently, John had identified two divine subjects: 1) God and 2) Lord/Lamb. It is this separation of OT divine titles that may have been the basis for John’s Christology. Bauckham and others do not see any distinction between “God” and “Lord” in John’s allusion to Isaiah 60:19. I suggest this allusion to Isaiah illustrates John’s deliberate intention of separating these divine titles. Although such a suggestion may appear to be improbable, I do not hesitate to call attention to the fact that there has not been another explanation proffered for this allusion. John substitutes “Lamb” in place of “Lord,” leaving “God” as it was found in Isaiah. John may have identified the title “God” with either the Father or the authority of the Father and the title “Lord” with Jesus (Lamb).

In the rendition of the Isaiah passage in Revelation 21:23, John associates glory with the title of “God” (“...for the glory of God gave it light”). Isaiah had said God would be the city’s glory (“...and God [shall be] your glory”). The wording of each phrase is different, yet similarities are also apparent. In both, this glory from God would be specifically for the city. However, John may have been communicating a separation of the source and the means for the light through this allusion, reflecting John’s interpretation and separation of divine titles in Isaiah 60:19. In Revelation, the glory of God provides light to the city, identifying God as the source. He does this by using the verb “to give light” (φωτίζω). John has associated both “glory” and the verb φωτίζω with the title of “God.” Isaiah did not employ the verb, φωτίζω, but had identified

⁴² I have only cited verses from one chapter of Isaiah (45) in order to show how the role of κύριος is portrayed contextually.

the specific title of “Lord” as an everlasting light (φῶς). This shows a distinction between the Isaiah and Revelation passages, but likewise shows that John did not stray from Isaiah. By employing φωτίζω in Revelation, John was able to avoid calling God “light” in this allusion, in accordance with the Isaiah text. Neither Isaiah nor Revelation identify God with the light, as if there is a one-for-one correlation.⁴³ In Revelation, the glory of God would give that light. Said differently, for John, God whose glory would be for the city, as Isaiah had said, would also be the emitter of light; i.e., God is the source for the light.⁴⁴ Beale says, “God [is] the illuminator and the Lamb (is) the ‘lamp’.”⁴⁵ Therefore, as Beale says, God illuminates (φωτίζω) by means of the lamp who is the Lamb. There appears to be a distinction of source (God) and means (Lamp) for the light in John’s rendition of Isaiah 60:19. Beale suggests that the glory of God *is* the Lamb: “[T]he idea could be that the glory of God is identified in the second of these two clauses as the Lamb himself.”⁴⁶ The Lamb may quite possibly be the glory of God that is identified as the light. Read retroactively onto Isaiah, John’s identification of the “everlasting light” (the

⁴³ Perhaps there was a reticence to equate the God of Israel with a light-giving heavenly body (i.e., the sun). This is not to say that God cannot be light, only that John agrees with and makes a connection with the language of Isaiah 60:19 in order to present his Christology.

⁴⁴ Interestingly, John may have found support from the divine titles in Gen account of creation. In the first account of creation, light is produced by the creator under the singular title of “God” (Gen 1:3). In the second account of creation, light is not attributed even once to the creator under the binomial title of “Lord God” (Gen 2). This may coincide with John’s identification of Jesus as the “Lord God.”

⁴⁵ Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 1116.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1093. Bauckham has made a similar identification: “The Fourth Gospel itself gives programmatic prominence to that glory (the heavenly splendor) which is the appearance of God, the manifestation of God’s being, when the Prologue claims that ‘we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son’ ([John] 1:14). This glory is the visible manifestation of who God is, reflected in the earthly life of Jesus, a son who is (as it were) the spitting image of his father. It appears in the miracles of Jesus, which reveal his glory, but supremely in the hour of his glorification when finally the divine identity is manifested on earth as it is in heaven. It is not, of course, that the words ‘the Son of man is glorified’ can have the literal meaning: ‘manifests the divine glory’. We are dealing rather with a play on words, which links the glorification of the servant of the Lord (Isa. 52:14) with the revelation of the glory of the Lord, also a Deutero-Isaianic theme: Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together (40:5)” (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 49). According to this exegesis, the glory of the Word (John 1:14) is also identified with the glory of the Lord that would be seen according to Isa. 40:5. In conclusion, it was this glory of the Word/Lord that was “‘the glory as of a father’s only son’ ([John] 1:14).” Then, it was the Lord who was identified as the Father’s only-begotten Son, under the title of “Word” in the Gospel of John.

Lord), and the “glory” in relation to God, becomes understandable. In both verses (in Isaiah and Revelation), it is either the Lord or the Lamb who are identified as the light (lamp).⁴⁷ In both verses, “glory” is attributed to the title “God.” Therefore, John may have understood Isaiah to say that the glory of God to the city was the “everlasting light” represented by the Lord himself (the Lamb). I underline this distinction first in order to emphasize a method that John uses extensively throughout Revelation.

Taking particular notice of John’s description of the enlightened city, Josephine Massyngberde Ford suggests that the language in Revelation implies a complete separation between God and the Lamb in regard to the glory: “[T]he text might suggest that the Lamb does not share in the glory of God.”⁴⁸ Her statement at least shows the linguistic flexibility of reading this verse outside of the standard interpretation. However, it is not that the Lamb does not share in God’s glory, as Ford posits, but that the Lamb may be the manifestation of that glory. Beale’s proposal is more convincing, as quoted above, that the Lamb may very well be the glory by which God gives light.⁴⁹ This would be consistent with the use of the Christological title of “Word of God” (Rev 19:13). Jesus could be both the “word” and the “glory” of God.⁵⁰ The Lamb (lamp) is the glory that will illuminate the city. Clearly, there is the possibility for John to have identified the Father (God) and Jesus (the Lamb) based on a perceived distinction between the titles θεός and κύριος in Isaiah 60:19. In Revelation, God may be the emitter of light by means of

⁴⁷ Robert Mounce notices how in Johannine literature, Jesus is consistently identified as light (John 1:9; 3:19; 8:12; 12:35) (Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* [rev. ed.; NTCNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 384). Grant R. Osborne associates this identification with James 1:17, where God is identified as the “Father of lights” (Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002], 762). James also begins the epistle by distinguishing God from the Lord Jesus Christ (Jas 1:1; 1:27-2:1).

⁴⁸ Josephine Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 337. I will comment on this below.

⁴⁹ Perhaps “glory of God” may be read as a Christological title.

⁵⁰ Osborne notes that similarly, in 2 Cor 4:6, the “glory of God” is manifested in the “face of Jesus” (Osborne, *Revelation*, 762).

the Lamb. Then Jesus, with all of his titles, functions as mediator between God and humanity (the city). Through Jesus, the Father blesses all human kind (Rev 3:5, 21).⁵¹ In 21:23, John focuses on Jesus' role as light. John did not identify God as the "everlasting light," but as the one who gives light (φωτίζω). The Lamb (the Lord) is explicitly identified as that light.

John's unique exegetical approach to Isaiah 60:19 maintains "God" corresponding with "God," but associates "Lord" with "Lamb." Although a relationship, of sorts, is apparent between God's glory and the Lamb, Ford found sufficient grounds to conclude that the Lamb does not share in the glory and proposes that the reference to the Lamb was "added to the text."⁵² In support of her conclusion, Ford argues that the glory of God enlightening the city would eliminate "no further need of another lamp, even if this is the Lamb."⁵³ For her, this is a clear indication that the line about the Lamb was a later scribal addition to the text. David E. Aune concurs, stating that the inclusion of the Lamb in this chapter is part of a "later expansion of the text" of Revelation.⁵⁴ But, an expansion to the text does not respect the exegetical approach John has taken to Isaiah, distinguishing God from the Lamb, by separating κύριος from θεός. Later, Aune recognizes that the way the text reads "now" concludes with "synonymous lines arranged chiastically."⁵⁵ The verse has an inherent poetic nature that makes it unlikely that the Lamb is an afterthought, but is instead structurally central. This does not allow for the possibility of an addition to the text:

⁵¹ Cf. Matt 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 14:6.

⁵² "The two references to the Lamb in vss. 22-23, like the one in v. 14, appear to be added to the text. In vs. 22 one would expect '...the Lord God almighty and the Lamb are its temple,' rather than the Lord God almighty is its temple and the Lamb. Equally, in vs. 23 references to the lamp, Gr. *luchnos*, seems tautological." (Ford, *Revelation*, 337).

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ David E. Aune, *Revelation 17-22* (WBC; 3 vols.; Dallas, Texas: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1168. Aune also suggests that the following verses include later scribal expansions to the text: Rev 6:16; 7:10; 14:4, 10; 22:1, 3 (Ibid).

⁵⁵ Ibid., 1169.

a		for the glory of God
	b	gave it light
	b	and the lamp
a		[is] the Lamb.

Under the “later expansion” theory, it would have to have been done by cleverly adding a missing couplet or parallel line, in other words, filling-in the missing gap. John, as a result, would have had to either forgotten to finish the bicolon or had not known he was quoting and transmitting poetry. Therefore, an expansion to the text seems rather improbable, taking account the parallelism found in the source text (Isa 60:19). The poem found in Isaiah 60 contains aspects of Hebrew poetry (even in its Greek translation).⁵⁶

The verse under investigation in Isaiah is an obvious example of parallelism which is the “congruence...of comparable elements in corresponding lines of Hebrew poetry.”⁵⁷ In the case of Isaiah 60:19, “the Lord shall be to you an everlasting light” corresponds to “and God [shall be] your glory.” The first clause would be considered the “A line” and the second the “B line,” constituting a bicolon. Each clause (i.e., colon or verset) in Isaiah 60:19 contains a corresponding parallel found with a particular divine title: “God” or “Lord.” Commonly, this and other parallel lines divided by these specific divine titles are identified under the category of synonymous parallelism. Synonymous parallelism has been described as containing lines that repeat “the same statement...in different, but equivalent terms.”⁵⁸ In this case, “God” and “Lord” would be the “equivalent terms.” Following this train of interpretation, Bauckham, commenting on Deutero-Isaiah, has written: “Those chapters of Isaiah were, outside the Torah, the most

⁵⁶ John L. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (Anchor Bible; New York: Doubleday, 1968), 177.

⁵⁷ J. M. LeMon and B. A. Strawn, “Parallelism,” Pages 502-515 in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings* (Ed. Tremper Longman III and Peter Enns; Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2008), 502.

⁵⁸ Robert Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews* 4th ed. Trans. G. Gregory (London: Thomas Tegg, 1839), 205.

important sources of Second Temple Jewish monotheism.”⁵⁹ Therefore, for Bauckham and many interpreters, “God” and “Lord” are equivalent terms, one and the same. Modern readers are more likely to collapse the poetic subtleties as fitting one mold: synonymous parallelism. Isaiah 60:19 is understood to be speaking of the same divine being in accordance with standard interpretation of Hebrew poetry, in general, and of synonymous parallelism, in particular. If John conforms his allusion to this modern distinction of parallelism, then within these synonymous terms John is able to identify God in one parallel line and the Lamb who is the Lord in the other. To read John’s interpretation of Isaiah 60:19 as an example of synonymous parallelism, the unity of God and the Lord would be manifest, the Lamb being included as the Lord.

Perhaps, in contrast to this view, John may have treated Isaiah’s bicolon as synthetic (or constructive) parallelism. While John would not have had access to these literary categories, he may have treated Isaiah’s parallelism in a way he thought made Christological sense. Under the category of synthetic parallelism, lines “are parallel only insofar as some of the elements *seem* to match one another . . . However, the elements are not obviously synonymous, nor do they provide strong contrasts (antitheses) for one another.”⁶⁰ Examples of synthetic parallelism are found throughout the OT, including Deutero-Isaiah⁶¹:

Isa 45:12:

a	“I made the earth and created humanity on [it]”
b	“my hands stretched out the heavens and all of their host I have commanded.”

⁵⁹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 9. As suggested above, my interest is not to defend or refute the modern understanding of the word “monotheism.” I believe there is a NT divine duality, portraying the divinity of the Father and the Son, manifested by the exegesis of the titles “God” and “Lord” as found in the OT. Whether there are two divine figures (Gods), or simply a Son who reflects the divinity of his Father, or one God including multiple persons (or combination of these possibilities) can be determined by the reader.

⁶⁰ LeMon, “Parallelism,” 504. See also Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, 211-212.

⁶¹ In the following verse, the terms in the parallelism are not synonymous:

Isa 40:4: “the crooked will be made straight” // “and the rough places plain”

In the above verse, the parallelism revolves around creation. Nevertheless, the earth and humanity is not synonymous to “the heavens and all of their host.” In addition, the terms “sun” and “moon” from Isaiah 60:19 are clearly not synonymous. Although it is possible that John read the first half as synthetic and the second half as synonymous parallelism, this allows for the possibility for considering the two elements of “God” and “Lord” not to have been read by John as “obviously synonymous.”⁶² In the case of Revelation, the A line (“the glory of God gave it light”) corresponds with the B line (“the Lamb [is] its lamp”). In John’s rendition, he may have used a combination of synonymous and synthetic parallelism perhaps to reflect his Christological exegesis of the unity and separation of “God” and “Lord.” He appropriated Isaiah’s language and pattern in order to say what he (John) meant. In other words, Isaiah 60:19 meant for John that the Lamb was the Lord, but not God in that particular passage. In Revelation 21:23, John was able to present two distinct divine figures yet functionally united: God and the Lamb. The Lamb is separate from than the figure identified as “God” many times in Revelation.⁶³

The initial association between Lord and Jesus is not very nuanced. Barker comments on Revelation 1:18, that identifies Jesus with Lord of the OT, stating that this practice was not unique to Revelation:

This declaration, both here and by implication elsewhere in the Book of Revelation, that Jesus is the LORD, the God of Israel, is the most remarkable testimony to early Christian belief. “Jesus is LORD” was the earliest declaration of the new faith, and by this was meant that Jesus was the God of Israel. Verses of Hebrew scripture about the God of Israel were applied to Jesus not only in the Book of Revelation, but in many writings. The words of the prophet Joel, for example, “Everyone who calls on the Name of the LORD will be saved” (Joel 2:32), were used of Jesus by Paul [Rom 10:13].⁶⁴

⁶² Other passages may have been read in the same way, identifying two:

Isa 40:3 “...Prepare the way of the Lord” // “make straight a road in the wilderness for our God.”

Isa 52:12 “...for the Lord will go before you” // “and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.”

⁶³ Rev 5:6-10, 13; 6:16; 7:10, 17; 14:1, 4, 10; 19:9; 21:23; 22:1, 3.

⁶⁴ Margaret Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Edinburgh: Clark, 2000), 91.

Revelation 21:23 equates the Lord with the Lamb, while maintaining a distinction between God and the Lamb.⁶⁵ Not only was the “Lord” the Lamb, but “God” was the Father. Commenting on John’s approach in 21:23, Barker notes the particularities of John’s identification of these divine titles: “When Isaiah spoke of ‘the LORD’ and ‘your God’ as sources of light, it is never suggested that two divinities were envisaged.”⁶⁶ Reading the parallelism in Isaiah as synthetic and synonymous, John may have been able to use these divine titles in such a way as to explain the Christian belief in Jesus as divine (and pre-existent).

Parallelism has always been understood to have the possibility of employing related but not equivalent terms, under synthetic parallelism. However, speaking of parallelism in general, Gerald H. Wilson says:

The sense of . . . [parallelism] is that after the statement of an initial line, a second (and sometimes a third) line is generated that shares some obvious grammatical-structural similarities with the first and yet redirects the focus of the first through alternate words and expression. The close grammatical-structural similarity between lines provides continuity that emphasizes the *parallel* character of the two lines, while the distinctive phraseology of each phrase lifts the phenomenon beyond *mere repetition* and offers the opportunity for expansion of advancement on the original line’s meaning.⁶⁷

John may have seen the separate clauses using “God” and “Lord,” respectively, as more than a “mere repetition.” Wilson’s clarification emphasizes that parallels should not be “misconstrued

⁶⁵ Barker explains that in the NT the character of the Lord of the OT had been associated with Jesus and not with the Father. She also addresses the complexity of equating the Lord of the OT with the Father: “Nevertheless, *the title most commonly used for Yahweh in the Old Testament became that of Jesus in the New*. This created enormous problems for later orthodoxy once it had lost sight of the older distinction between Yahweh and [the Father]. When it was believed that Yahweh was the Father and yet Jesus was not the Father, various expedients had to be devised to explain how ‘the Lord’ could possibly have been used of Jesus. When we set all the linguistic evidence in the context of the widely held belief in [a second divine being] such ingenuity is redundant. The New Testament identified Jesus with Yahweh, [a second divine being], but not with . . . the Father” (Barker, *The Great Angel*, 219).

⁶⁶ Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 328. Consistent with the gospel of John, Jesus was Thomas’ God (John 20:28) yet the Father is both the disciples’ God and Jesus’ (John 20:17). They both are their God, but there is a distinction between the Father and the Son.

⁶⁷ Gerald H. Wilson, *Psalms Volume I*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 39.

to mean that all the elements of one line find exact correspondence in the second.”⁶⁸ Similar to Beale’s association of the Lamb with God’s glory in the Revelation bicolon, within the general rules of parallelism, corresponding lines “may suggest that the former is somehow manifested or revealed in the latter.”⁶⁹ John may have read the “everlasting light” of the Lord as the manifestation of the “glory” of God. At least, this may be how Isaiah is rephrased in Revelation, taking “Lamb” in place of “Lord.” Where Isaiah had included both divine titles, John associated the Lamb only with the title “Lord.” Barker comments on the replacement of “Lord” (Isa 60:19) with “Lamb” (Rev 21:23): “[When] the Book of Revelation speaks of God and the Lamb as sources of light, this is another indication that the Lamb is the LORD.”⁷⁰ Therefore, John apparently did not simply equate “God” with “Lord.” In the case of Isaiah, for John, the Lord who is identified as “everlasting light” may have been a manifestation of the glory of God that would be for the benefit of those in the city.⁷¹

In addition to this concept related to parallelism, there may be more material from which John could have based his reading of a separation of “God” and “Lord” in Isaiah 60. I again bring attention to the lack of any indepth explanation for John’s rendition of Isaiah 60:19. In reference to Isaiah 60, John McKenzie has commented on the ambiguity in regard to the identification of the speaker: “It is more difficult to distinguish the speakers in this poem than in any other portion of the book.”⁷² Taking note of passages like Isaiah 60:1-2, 6, 9, 20, McKenzie

⁶⁸ LeMon, “Parallelism,” 503.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 502.

⁷⁰ Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 328.

⁷¹ Although I do not agree with the language of “polytheism” and “monotheism” (both foreign to the ancient world) the following statement by Bauckham is enlightening: “...polytheistic material has survived only because it could be read monotheistically...this promising proposal has not been followed up by further argument that ‘polytheistic’ texts in the Old Testament are limited to ones that could be read in a monotheistic way, consistent with the explicit monotheism of other parts of the canon” (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 85).

⁷² McKenzie, *Second Isaiah*, 177.

bases his conclusion on the observation that in addition to lines where the Lord speaks in first person, in this poem someone is also speaking about the Lord.⁷³ McKenzie would surely attribute these words to the author (Deutero-Isaiah). The reason for attributing the “entire poem” to the Lord must be based on Isaiah 60:22.⁷⁴ Yet, because the Lord is spoken about in third person, John may have seen the open door for another possible reading. Beyond simply placing these phrases on the lips (or pen) of the author himself, as McKenzie would most surely suggest, John may have attributed them to a separate divine figure under the title of “God.” That is, if the divine figures are interpreted as distinct, one may be speaking about another. In this vein, John could have identified multiple speakers within this same poem. Scholars have discovered divine council language in Deutero-Isaiah.⁷⁵ In addition, similar to McKenzie’s observation regarding multiple speakers, some scholars have identified dialogue between divine speakers in Deutero-Isaiah.⁷⁶ John may have attributed language at times to the title “God,” and at others times, to “Lord.” This opens the remote possibility for John’s Christological approach to Isaiah 60:19.

⁷³ “We have made Yahweh the speaker in the entire poem, in spite of the appearance of Yahweh in the third person in a number of verses” (Ibid.).

⁷⁴ “...I, YHWH, will hasten it in its time.”

⁷⁵ Mark S. Smith observes: “At first glance, Israelite monotheism would seem theoretically to stand at odds with the imagery of Israelite assembly with its multiplicity of divinities, even if they are minor or subservient to Yahweh as their absolute king. In fact, the divine assembly is not oppositional to monotheistic statements in biblical literature. For example, it is commonly held by biblical scholars that the opening scene of ‘Second Isaiah’ (Isaiah 40) involves a divine council scene, yet this chapter is part of a larger work that contains the greatest number of monotheistic statements in the Bible” (*The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel’s Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2001], 51).

⁷⁶ Andrew Russell McGinn comments on the different speakers in Isa 40: “In this passage the council scene meets with the agenda of comfort for the people. In this scene a plethora of anonymous voices is heard deliberating this agenda. The council is already in session when we hear the agenda announced in verses 1-2. It is a mediated word, as is indicated by the herald’s declaration that these are the words ‘your God’ (אלהיכם) speaks. The agenda is a command to ‘comfort his people’ with declarations of deliverance, forgiveness and the fulfillment of punishment (v. 2). In verses 3-5 a voice different from the herald of verses 1-2 is heard. This voice excitedly proposes a course of fulfillment for the agenda announced in verses 1-2. A third and dissenting voice is heard to question this proposal in verses 6-7” (“The Divine Council and Israelite Monotheism,” [Masters thesis, McMaster University, 2005], 109). Perhaps in John’s favor, the speaker in the first verses of Isaiah 40 is never identified as Lord. Certain passages in Deutero-Isaiah have one divine title (God) speaking about the other in third person (Lord; Isa 40:1-2; 54:6).

The Separation of θεός and κύριος

The change in language from κύριος as “everlasting light” to the Lamb as the “lamp” continues to be unique, in particular to the way in which “the Lord” is replaced by “the Lamb” in Revelation 21:23. In the Book of Revelation, there is a clear distinction between the person of Jesus (Lamb, Christ, etc.) and the person at times identified simply as “God.”⁷⁷ Specifically, the “Lamb” is referred to as a figure distinct from the figure described by the following titles: “the One sitting on the throne” (5:6-7, 13; 6:16; 7:10), “God” (5:8-10; 7:10, 17; 14:4, 10; 19:9; 21:23; 22:1, 3), and “Father” (14:1). As J. Wright has said, “One need not read long, nor search hard, to discover the distinction between God and Jesus in the Apocalypse, and the subordination of the Son to the Father.”⁷⁸ At the same time, Revelation associates Jesus directly with the title “Lord” from the OT. Jesus enacts the roles of the Lord of the OT, fulfilling prophecies about him. In Revelation, Jesus is the Lord of his people, who was crucified in the great city (11:8), the expected Lord who is coming (22:20-21).

On two occasions, Jesus is called the “Lord of lords” (κύριος κυρίων; 17:14; 19:16). There is no other κύριος to rival him. The only OT passages of scripture where this exalted title is found are LXX Deuteronomy 10:17 and LXX Daniel 4:37.⁷⁹ The only alteration John made was to remove the presence of an article, κύριος τῶν κυρίων. In LXX Daniel 4:37, this title is accompanied by the titles of “God of gods” (θεὸς τῶν θεῶν) and “king of kings” (βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλέων). The title κύριος (τῶν) κυρίων, “king of kings,” is the only other title used for Jesus in

⁷⁷ Rev 1:1; 3:12; 7:10, 17; 12:5; 14:4, 10; 19:13; 20:6; 21:23; 22:1, 3.

⁷⁸ Wright, “Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 21. I will argue that the titles of “God” and the “One on the throne” can overlap at times and be applied to both Jesus and the Father in Revelation consistent with the inexactness of apocalyptic.

⁷⁹ Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 516. 1 Tim 6:15 may also be speaking of Jesus. The appearing (ἐπιφανείας) of the Lord Jesus Christ is what (ἦν) will bring to light “the blessed and only master, the King of kings and Lord of lords.” The grammar does not say that Jesus will reveal someone else, but that his appearing will reveal who he is. He who alone is immortal “dwells in unapproachable light” (φῶς; 1 Tim 6:16). It is this (ὅν) light that no one has ever seen or can see.

Revelation. John did not apply “God of gods” to Jesus. This is another indication that the terms “God” and “Lord” are not equivalent in the Revelator’s purview.⁸⁰ This suggests that John avoids applying the title of “God” from OT allusions to Jesus, favoring instead titles like “witness” and “Amen” (Rev 3:14; cf. LXX Isa 43:10; Hebrew or LXX Isa 65:16).⁸¹ John does not hesitate in describing Jesus’ divinity in association with the titles and descriptions of the OT Lord.

John’s method appears to have been to identify Jesus’ divine role in continuation of that of the Lord of the OT.⁸² Jesus was both called “Lord” and equated with the title “Lord” in the OT, always maintaining a careful separation from θεός. Jesus is presented as a mediator for the “Father,” but never of another or secondary κύριος (1:5-6; 2:26-27; 3:5, 21).⁸³ By maintaining Jesus’ identity as Lord along with a separation from God the Father, Revelation reflects Jesus’ divinity, but does not collapse Jesus into an ontological unity with God. Neither is the Father included in the person of the OT Lord. For John, Jesus was not functioning on behalf of or in ontological unity with another Lord: Jesus is and had always been the Lord.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ More will be said about the identification of the Lord of the OT as “God of gods” in chapter 4.

⁸¹ Ibid., 516, 523; Beale, “Revelation,” 1097-1098.

⁸² I will comment on Revelation 11:15 in chapter 4.

⁸³ In Rev 1:5-6, Jesus has made believers into a kingdom of priests for his Father. In 2:26-27, Jesus will give authority as he has received from the Father. In 3:5, Jesus will confess the names of the believers before the Father. In 3:21, Jesus will give a place on his throne as he has received of the Father to sit on the Father’s throne. All previous passages, in reference, use the title “Father.” Rev 1:1 and 5:9-10 use θεός to identify the delegator. In 1:1, God has a revelation for Jesus to communicate. In 5:9-10, Jesus was slaughtered as a ransom for God and to make a kingdom of priests for him (God).

⁸⁴ When applied to this thesis, the following observation by Bauckham proves to be enlightening: “Once the category of divine identity replaces those of function and nature as the primary and comprehensive category for understanding both Jewish monotheism and early Christology, we can see that the New Testament’s lack of concern with the divine nature of Christ is by no means an indication of a merely functional Christology. We can see that, throughout the New Testament texts, there is a clear and deliberate use of the characteristics of the unique divine identity to include Jesus in that identity. Once we have rid ourselves of the prejudice that high Christology must speak of Christ’s divine nature, we can see the obvious fact that the Christology of divine identity common to the whole New Testament is the highest Christology of all. It identifies Jesus as intrinsic to who God is” (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 31). Apparently, John had identified Jesus as the Lord who was connected to the title of God throughout the OT, as Bauckham puts it, “the characteristics of the unique divine identity [included] Jesus”

While highlighting Jesus' divinity, John was able also to distinguish God, at times, from the Lord Jesus. John was not the first to participate in this practice; many NT authors demonstrate a consistent distinction between the titles of "Lord" and "God."⁸⁵ To have identified the Lord in Isaiah 60:19 as Jesus the Lamb in distinction from God in the same OT verse would possibly not have been alarming to his readers. For John, by the end of the first century, this may have already been a (or the) common practice.⁸⁶

Revelation 22:5

The second allusion to Isaiah 60:19 acts as a key description in the final vision of the eternal city. The structure of Revelation 22:5 is as follows:⁸⁷

a	And night will be no more
b	and they do not need light of lamp (λύχνου) or light of sun,
a'	because the Lord God will shine (φωτίσει) upon them,
b'	and they will reign forever and ever.

Brian K. Blount calls the two allusions to Isaiah 60:19 in Revelation (21:23 and 22:5) a doublet, conveying their related nature.⁸⁸ In this poetic verse (22:5), the lack of night corresponds to the unnecessary lamp light and sun. Line a', the emanation of light from the Lord God, is the synthetic parallel to line b', the everlasting reign of the faithful disciples (22:3-4).⁸⁹ Although

throughout Revelation. He does this by maintaining a separation between the titles of "God" and "Lord" from the OT, and consistently identifying Jesus as Lord. Revelation shows a Jesus who functions as and is identified with the Lord, with a divine nature as portrayed in the OT.

⁸⁵ Luke 3:3-6, 16 (Isa 40:3-5); John 1:14 (Isa 40:5); Rom 10:9-13 (Isa. 28:16; 49:23; Joel 2:32); Eph 4:5-10 (Ps 113:4-7); Phil 2:6-11 (Isa 45:23); Jude 1:4-5.

⁸⁶ "The earliest Christology was already the highest Christology" (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, x).

⁸⁷ See widespread agreement on this structure: Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1181; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 1115; Mounce, *Book of Revelation*, 388; Osborne, *Revelation*, 775.

⁸⁸ Brian K. Blount, *Revelation: A Commentary*, New Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009), 393.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 299; Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 344.

Isaiah 60:19 mentions no exaltation manifested by a communal reign of Zion's people, 60:21 may be the source of John's notion to this effect.⁹⁰ In structure of Revelation 22:5, κύριος ὁ θεός corresponds synthetically to the servants, as θεός had corresponded to κύριος in Isaiah 60:19. This further supports John's reading of an inexact parallel in the use of the two divine titles.

In Revelation 22:5, however, there is no separation of divine titles; the opposite is taking place. John appears to allude to the functions attributed to the titles "God" and "Lord" from Isaiah, but combines the two into "Lord God," the source of light for the people. If John had made an effort to separate God from Lord in OT passages, as we have seen in the previous instance (21:23), then who is in reference with the combined title Lord God? First, a brief note on the position of these titles will lead to further analysis. Revelation 21:23 begins with "God" and is followed by "the Lamb" ("the Lord" in Isaiah 60:19). In a way, John could be showing an order of hierarchy, identifying the Lord from Isaiah 60:19 as the Lamb who is the means by which the Father gives light.⁹¹ In Revelation 22:5, John begins with the title "Lord God" and follows by making mention of the reign of the servants. This bicolon clearly shows hierarchy, the Lord God over the servants. As shown above, God has "glory" which in turn is manifested by the "light"/"lamp" of the Lord/Lamb, in 21:23. Yet, in Revelation 22:5, there is no mention of glory and it is the Lord God who is identified as the light who replaces the need for a lamp.⁹² This last identification correlates the Lord God indirectly with the term "lamp" and not with "glory."

⁹⁰ John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (WBC; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 297.

⁹¹ I will attempt to present a thorough study of Revelation's ordering of terms and whether there is a discernible separation. The apocalyptic inexactness remains in the multiple use of imagery associated with the Son. See ahead the discussion on the book of life, the I AM, the angel, etc. in chapter 3. Jesus is associated with the OT Lord in reference to particular roles. The Father is separate and apparently not associated with the title "Lord" in the OT, but with the title "God."

⁹² Osborne, *Revelation*, 775.

Judging from John's handling of Isaiah 60:19 in Revelation 21:23, the Lord God may have a closer relation to the role of the Lord-Lamb than with the distinct divine person referenced with the singular title of God. John uses language in 22:5 for the Lord God found also in 21:23 for both Lord and God (φωτίζω and "lamp"). But the omission in the second allusion of "glory" is significant. As stated above, the Lord God is not connected to the term "glory" in Revelation 22:5, a term John previously had seemed to rearrange in order to emphasize its significance for the particular divine title of God. Unfortunately, the nature of apocalyptic genre is predominantly messy and inexact. Therefore, a detailed analysis of possible patterns could be construed as trying to diagnose with logic things that are artistic and poetic.⁹³ At the very least, the title "Lord God" in 22:5 may be an eclipsing of previous distinctions in favor of demonstrating unity in purpose. The Lord God is both the illuminator and the light spoken of in 21:23.⁹⁴

The functional unity that John may have intended for the combined title of "Lord God" may possibly be best explained comparing it to J. Wright's theology of the Godhead in Revelation, "with the character of the one 'God' embracing simultaneously both the Father and the Son."⁹⁵ The character and role of God (θεός) is revealed through Jesus (κύριος) functionally. Jesus' role as agent of the Father and mediator between God and humanity is consistent with NT

⁹³ Rev 21:23 had stated that the glory of God would give light to the city. That light comes from the Lamb fulfilling the role of a lamp. In 22:5, there will be no need for a lamp, because of the light coming from the Lord God. This is not to say that the light from the Lord God will remove the need for the Lamb, who had been identified as the lamp. If the Lord God is now that lamp, shining or giving light (φωτίζω), John has combined the roles attributed to the titles "God" and "Lord." The verb φωτίζω had only been used for God in 21:23. In 22:5, it was used for the Lord God who was functioning as the light. Stated differently, the verb φωτίζω may imply a functional unity between God (21:23) and the Lord God (22:5). The role of a lamp (and no need for another) may also imply an ontological unity between the Lamb of 21:23 (Lord; Isa 60:19) and the Lord God, in Revelation 22:5.

⁹⁴ Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 1116.

⁹⁵ Wright, "Blessing, Honor, Glory," 21.

theology.⁹⁶ John may have expressed Jesus' role in mediation by the manner in which he employed the divine titles of "Lord" and "God" in relation to each other. In the NT, the authors would at times separate the Lord from God the Father⁹⁷; John was not alone in making that same distinction between "Lord" and "God" in the OT. Bauckham has identified NT passages in which the term "Lord" from the OT is separated from God the Father:

As a final comment on Philippians 2:11-12, it is worth noting the possibility that the exegesis of Isaiah 45:23 that lies behind it distinguished two divine subjects in that verse... The speaker is YHWH (v 18) but in this verse he speaks not only of himself ("to me every knee shall bow") but also in the third person of "God" ("every tongue shall confess to God"). When Paul quotes this verse in Romans 14:11, he seems to take advantage of this possibility of distinguishing two divine subjects, identifying "the Lord" (YHWH) as Jesus and "God" as the Father.⁹⁸

John may have been familiar with this early practice. N. T. Wright has suggested that Paul uses "Lord our God" in Deuteronomy 6:4 to identify both God the Father and the Lord Jesus in 1 Corinthians 8:6. Commenting on the key words "Lord" and "God" taken from Deuteronomy 6:4, he states that Paul "has glossed 'God' with 'the Father,' and 'Lord' with 'Jesus Christ,' adding in each case an explanatory phrase: 'God' is the Father, 'from whom are all things and we to him,' and the 'Lord' is Jesus the Messiah, 'through whom are all things and we through him.'"⁹⁹

Revelation may indicate related use of divine titles. It is possible for Revelation to maintain a similar concept, expressed by John's use of OT passages. Therefore, in Revelation, the title

⁹⁶ The Revelator may have been expressing a relationship similar to John 14:6 and 1 Tim 2:5, where Jesus stands between the Father and humankind. As mediator, no one could know or even see the Father without Jesus (Matt 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 1:18). The words and works of the Father are communicated and manifested through Jesus (John 14:10). One will either be confessed or denied by Jesus before the Father (Matt 10:32-33; Rev 3:5). Jesus comes in the glory of his Father (Matt 16:27; Mark 8:38). The righteous will be included in the kingdom through Jesus because of the goodness of the Father (Luke 22:29; Rev 1:5-6).

⁹⁷ Mark 16:19; Acts 2:36; 20:24; Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2-3; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2-3; Phil 1:2; Col 1:3; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1-2; 1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; Phlm 1:3; Heb 13:20; Jas 1:1; 1 Pet 1:3; 2 Pet 1:2; Jude 1:4.

⁹⁸ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 209.

⁹⁹ N. T. Wright, "Monotheism, Christology, and Ethics: 1 Cor. 8," in *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 129.

“Lord God” might be reflecting the functional unity of the Father and the Son while conveying the person of Jesus who is eternally invested with divinity.¹⁰⁰

Revelation 22:5 omits the term “glory” that had been associated with the title “God” and retains the term “lamp” which had been identified as the Lamb. John says, “they do not need light of lamp or light of sun, because the Lord God will shine upon them.” The justification of using “lamp” in both verses is not entirely clear. Aune and Osborne believe this may be connected to Psalm 132:17 (LXX 131:17).¹⁰¹ In this psalm, the Lord promised a lamp would be prepared for the anointed one of the line of David.¹⁰² If the Psalm is the source, we see again the unique approach of John: he assigns this anointed one’s lamp to the character not only of the Lamb, but also of κύριος in Isaiah 60. Likewise, Barker finds a direct connection between the term “lamp” and κύριος, as found in the OT. By combining imagery found in Revelation 5 and Zechariah 4, she applies “lamp” to both the person of Jesus and the Lord of the OT:

Zechariah the prophet has seen the seven eyes of Yahweh which were the seven lamps of the *menorah* [Zech. 4.2]. The eyes ranged through the whole earth (Zech. 4.10). Since the lamp represented the presence of Yahweh with his people, its sevenfold form, the eyes, was his sevenfold presence. At the climax of his Revelation, John saw the new Jerusalem which had no need of sun or moon because the Lamb, the risen Lord, was its lamp (Rev. 21.23). Now the Lamb in Revelation had many roles of Yahweh, and at the climax of his vision, the two symbols of Lamb and Lamp were fused. Earlier in the vision John had seen the Lamb with seven eyes which were the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth (Rev. 5.6). These seven spirits or eyes of Yahweh became the seven archangels, all of whom were ‘present’ in the Messiah because he manifested the LORD in his entirety.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ More about this particular concept regarding the functional unity of the Father and the Son in the title of “Lord God” will be addressed in chapter 4.

¹⁰¹ In Greek, the same noun, λύχνος (lamp), is used in the LXX Psalm as in Revelation 21:23 and 22:5. The early Christian application of the idea of a “lamb” (whether ἀμνός, ἀρνίον, or πρόβατον) as the anointed one, as found in Revelation 21:23, may allow for this application of Psalm 132 (John 1:29, 36; 1 Pet 1:19). See Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1170; Osborne, *Revelation*, 762.

¹⁰² Blount, *Revelation*, 108.

¹⁰³ Barker, *The Great Angel*, 83.

In the LXX, both Zechariah 4:2 and Exodus 25:37 use the term lamp (λύχνος) to describe this seven branched lamp that Barker mentions. Her argument reveals a new thread of connection: both the Lord and the Lamb are seen in proximity to this lamp (Lev 24:4; Rev 1:12-13). Barker concludes, “The Lamb, then, symbolizes the same as the lamp, the presence of Yahweh with his people.”¹⁰⁴ Her observation gives an explanation for the association of “lamp” and “Lord.”¹⁰⁵

In the city, there will be no need for a lamp because of the presence of the Lord God, who is *the* lamp. The term “lamp” indirectly associates the Lord God in 22:5 and the Lamb in 21:23. However, Aune assumes that the Lord God is not applied to Jesus, but to the Father. He finds the Book of Revelation to be unprecedented in its limited use of κύριος for Jesus.¹⁰⁶ However, the opposite may be true also. Jesus is not only κύριος but also κύριος ὁ θεός. If the Hebrew name-titles in the following quotation are understood in their Greek equivalences, Barker may supply a starting point for more exploration regarding the binomial “Lord God”: “Yahweh was known as Yahweh of Hosts, the chief of the heavenly hosts. He was also Yahweh Elohim, which may once have indicated something very similar, viz. Yahweh of the Elohim.”¹⁰⁷ That is, the “Lord” can be both *of* God and in unity with the Father as his agent. My interpretation is that, by functioning as God’s representative, the Lord Jesus becomes God for the people.¹⁰⁸ Borrowing from

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 202.

¹⁰⁵ The title of “God” from the previously referenced passages (Exod 25; Lev 24; Zech 4) is not applied to Jesus in Revelation. Therefore, John’s rendition is unique. The Lord God appears to be equivalent to the Lamb in Rev 21:23, yet the addition of the title of “God” conveys an elevated role. But that exalted role comes in connection to the exalted servants. In other words, the Lord is God to the people.

¹⁰⁶ Aune says, “In view of the extent to which the title κύριος is applied to Jesus in the rest of the NT, its relative absence in Revelation is remarkable” (*Revelation 6-16* [WBC 52b; Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 1998], 620).

¹⁰⁷ Barker, *The Great Angel*, 162. Looking back to pre-Exilic beliefs Bauckham has said: “As far as origins go...[the] exclusive worship of El in the form of YAHWEH-EL originated, in the context of a wider tendency to put one god above others” (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 74). In other words, they put EL above YHWH, worshipping EL through the title and person of YHWH-EL.

¹⁰⁸ Certain passages in the Torah read together and in context may be interpreted using John’s method as indicating the Lord’s role as messenger of God (Gen 28:12-13, 19-21; 31:11-13; 35:1, 7; 45:15-16; Exod 13:21-22; 14:19-20, 24).

Bauckham's terminology, this may reflect a "Christology of divine identity."¹⁰⁹ The Book of Revelation may have reflected the highest Christology explicitly by directly calling Jesus the Lord God as mediator between humanity and the Father. This is a Christology that portrays Jesus as having the divine identity of κύριος, as found in the OT, in separation from, yet also in unity with, θεός.

Greek or Hebrew, or Both

At this stage in the discussion, it is expedient to discuss the text John might have had before him. Although my focus is on the titles of κύριος and θεός, I suggested that John would have been familiar with the equivalent titles in Hebrew, contrary to the uniform opinion of NT interpreters. Hurtado explains: "It is clear that [κύριος] was used by Greek-speaking Jews for the Hebrew tetragrammaton (*Yahweh*) when reading aloud the biblical texts, and so it had long been indigenized as part of the religious vocabulary available to Greek-speaking Christian Jews."¹¹⁰ I do not believe that the Hebrew titles simply stand in the distant background of John's usage of κύριος, etc. Instead there are indications that he drew on both Greek and Hebrew in order to use allusions that reflected his Christology, based on divine titles and narrative from the OT.

I will provide pertinent examples that suggest John's awareness of Greek and Hebrew of the OT.¹¹¹ One way to demonstrate this is to identify how John used and modified the OT. However, this method does not always render a definitive answer, as Beale explains:

¹⁰⁹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 58. I do not share with Bauckham the view that this identity is shared by the Son and the Father. I use Bauckham's language to describe the Son's unique divinity functionally united with his Father.

¹¹⁰ Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 21.

¹¹¹ David J. MacLeod makes a subtle suggestion when he explains the inclusion of the colors of sardius/carnelian and jasper in Rev 4:3. In Hebrew, "sardius was the first of the stones on the high priest's breastplate, and jasper was the last in the Greek rendering of Exodus 28:17-18" ("The Adoration of God the Creator: An Exposition of Revelation 4," *BS* 164 [2007]: 204). Barker agrees that this choice of stones/colors have to do with

The text form of OT references in Revelation needs in-depth discussion since there are no formal quotations and most are allusions, a phenomenon often making identification of such references more difficult. The complex relationship of the Hebrew text to early Greek versions, the history of which is largely unknown to us, makes it difficult to know whether John depends on the Hebrew or the Greek.¹¹²

More than a century ago, H. B. Swete determined that Revelation depends mainly on the Greek.¹¹³ Approximately fifteen years after Swete, R. H. Charles concluded that John had used the Hebrew as a source because the revelator departed from the wording used in the Greek.¹¹⁴ Charles wrote, “While he writes in Greek, he thinks in Hebrew, and the thought has naturally affected the vehicle of expression.”¹¹⁵ Beale mediates between these observations: “The likelihood is that John draws from both Semitic and Greek biblical sources and often modifies both.”¹¹⁶

One example of a modification is found in Revelation 1:7 which combines prophecies from both Daniel 7:13 and Zechariah 12:10.¹¹⁷ Focusing on the passage of LXX Zechariah, the Lord was stating that he would be seen or that the people would look toward him (καὶ ἐπιβλέψονται πρὸς με; “and they will look upon toward me” [12:8-9]). The same is said in Hebrew (וַיִּבְרָאוּ אֵלָיו). To that point, the two versions are directly parallel. Then the texts part ways. The LXX proceeds by saying that the one who would be seen is he against whom the

the high priestly garb (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 24). Others have associated this imagery with the walls of the new Jerusalem (Rev 21:19-20). See Blount, *Revelation*, 89; Osborne, *Revelation*, 226-227. Although there is ambiguity, the possibility does remain that sardius was taken from the Hebrew breastplate and jasper from the Greek, hence, a familiarity with both versions of the Jewish scriptures.

¹¹² Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 77.

¹¹³ H. B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John* (London: Macmillan, 1906), clv-clvi.

¹¹⁴ R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John I-II* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1920), 1:lxvi. Bauckham may fall in this category: “In my view, most early Christian exegesis of the Old Testament was done with reference to the Hebrew text, even when the Greek text was also employed” (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 36).

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:cxliii.

¹¹⁶ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 78.

¹¹⁷ Blount, *Revelation*, 37-38; Osborne, *Revelation*, 68-70.

people would be dancing (ἀνθ' ὧν κατωργήσαντο). This is distinct from the Hebrew that says the one who would be seen had also been “pierced” by the onlookers (וְרָקַדְרָשׁוּצ).¹¹⁸ Revelation 1:7 has no mention of dancing, but speaks of piercing (ἐκκεντέω), indicating knowledge of the Hebrew rendition: καὶ ὄψεται αὐτὸν πᾶς ὀφθαλμὸς καὶ οἴτινες αὐτὸν ἐξεκέντησαν; “And every eye will see him even the ones that *pierced* him . . .” John has retained the Hebrew imagery, while writing the allusion in Greek. Heinrich Schlier explains the link between the Lord in Zechariah and the eschatological expectations of Jesus:

Here Zech. 12:10 (12) is linked with the early Christian expectation of the return of Christ. The One whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem will bewail as the Beloved (LXX) and the Firstborn is the returning Jesus Christ, who will be seen by both Jews and Gentiles as the One who was pierced. Mention of ἐξεκέντησαν serves to emphasise the fact that the One put to death by the world will be manifested at the last as the Lord concerning whom the world in tardy remorse will lament.¹¹⁹

The likeliest source for the piercing-language is direct: from a Hebrew source (resembling the Hebrew). Commenting on the language, Barker calls this a “free rendering of the Hebrew text and not a quotation from the LXX.”¹²⁰ The change in pronoun (from “me” to “him”) only reflects the differing contexts of the source text and its application in a new literary setting. Where as the Lord was the one speaking in Zechariah, the Lord Jesus was spoken about in Revelation.¹²¹ This example may show John’s own translation of the Hebrew (if not the use of a

¹¹⁸ The change in Greek may reflect that the LXX translators felt uncomfortable with the way in which the Hebrew read regarding the Lord. However somewhat different, this may have similarities with the scribal change that was made in Acts 20:28 in some manuscripts where “the church of God which he purchased with his own blood” was changed to “the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood.” See Bruce R Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (Second Edition) A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies’ Greek New Testament Fourth Revised Edition* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005), 425-427.

¹¹⁹ Heinrich Schlier, “ἐκκεντέω” in vol. 2 of *TDNT* (Edited by Gerhard Kittel. Germany: Eerdmans, 1964), 447.

¹²⁰ Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 91.

¹²¹ Cf. John 19:37.

lost version of the Greek), indicating John's knowledge of the Hebrew text.¹²² In addition, it also associates the coming-pierced Jesus with the Lord of Zechariah.

There are two Christological titles (or three) in Revelation 3:14 that can be traced to one verse in Deutero-Isaiah. The line in question from Revelation reads: *τάδε λέγει ὁ ἀμὴν ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός*; "These things says the Amen, the Witness, the Faithful and True..." The Christological titles under question are "Amen" and "True." Both "Amen" and "True" can be rooted in Isaiah 65:16, which on two occasions calls the divine, the "God of truth."¹²³ In some translations of Revelation 3:14, "true" is attached as an attribute adjective describing "witness"; i.e., "True Witness."¹²⁴ In contrast, Beale believes that "The promise of a new creation by the faithful God of Israel in Isa. 65:15-16 stands behind the title 'the Amen, the faithful and true.'"¹²⁵ Beale attributes the origin of the separate titles "Amen" and "True" to Isaiah. "Amen" appears to have been taken from the word, *אָמֵן* (*'āmēn*), translated as "true"/"truth" in English.¹²⁶ Kotecki supports this correlation of "Amen" with Isaiah, noting that Revelation 3:14 and Isaiah 65:16 are the only two places in all of scripture that convert "Amen" into a name.¹²⁷ Beale expands on this identification:

ὁ Ἀμὴν ("the Amen") is a Semitic equivalent to both "faithful" (*πιστός*) and "true" (*ἀληθινός*), which is evident from the LXX's typical translation of verbal and nominal forms of the root *'mm* ("be faithful") mainly by *πιστός* but also sometimes by *ἀληθινός*.

¹²² Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 78.

¹²³ Osborne, *Revelation*, 203.

¹²⁴ This includes most commentators also. See Davie E. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, Word Biblical Commentary 52a (Dallas, Texas: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 254-256. But, "witness" can have its origin in passages that either do not have (LXX Isa 43:10) or have adjectives (LXX Jer 49:5; Hebrew Jer 42:5). See Blount, *Revelation*, 81; Beale, "Revelation," 1098. Therefore, the uncertain function of "true" (and "faithful") as an adjective for "witness" may have been purpose driven.

¹²⁵ "Revelation," 1097.

¹²⁶ Commenting on this reference, Osborne says that "[t]he Hebrew *אָמֵן* means to 'confirm' or 'verify'" (*Revelation*, 203).

¹²⁷ Kotecki, "Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo," 523.

Therefore, the threefold name could be an independent expanded translation of Isaiah's "Amen."¹²⁸

Therefore, the Greek terms "faithful" and "true" can be associated with the Hebrew "Amen" from Isaiah 65:16, in connection with the Christological title in Revelation 3:14 of "Witness." John may be combining both texts with an inherent redundancy not apparent in the Greek of Revelation.

In the LXX, Isaiah has ἀληθινός, in place of the Hebrew אָמֵן. In other words, John may not have included ἀληθινός solely on the grounds that it was one of the translations of אָמֵן throughout the LXX, but the LXX actually employs it in the translation of Isaiah 65:16. Osborne shows the relationship between both texts: "This is probably an echo of Isa. 65:16, which twice has 'the God of truth,' with the MT אֱלֹהֵי אֱמֵן (*blē'lohē 'āmēn*, by the God of amen) and the LXX τὸν θεὸν τὸν ἀληθινόν (*ton theon ton alēthinon*, the true God) in both times."¹²⁹ The "God of Amen" (Hebrew) and the "God of truth" (LXX) were a direct translation of each other. Then it is possible that John took one word from the Hebrew (Amen) and the other from the LXX (True). If this is so, then in one verse John has applied both the Hebrew אָמֵן and the Greek ἀληθινός to Jesus, taken from Isaiah 65:16.

Yet, while John applied all of these titles from Isaiah 65:16 to Jesus in Revelation 3:14, he did not do so with the term "God." In Revelation 1:7, Jesus had been made equivalent to the Lord who was said to be seen in the Book of Zechariah.¹³⁰ In Revelation 3:14, from Isaiah's "God of Amen/truth," Jesus was only given the titles of "the Amen," "the faithful," and "true." Or, he was "Amen" or "true one" of God (the Father), i.e., "God of Amen."¹³¹ In other words,

¹²⁸ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 299. See also Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 255.

¹²⁹ Osborne, *Revelation*, 203. However, Revelation 3:14 does not use the singular title of "God" for Jesus.

¹³⁰ Cf. John 19:37.

¹³¹ Cf. John 14:6.

Jesus *was* the Lord and *was of* God. Using the Hebrew text and the LXX, John may have alluded to the OT according to his understanding in order to reflect his and/or his community's Christology. His knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek scriptures allowed him to supply a variety of Christological titles that had been used previously for the title "Lord" in the OT while maintaining a separation from the title of "God."¹³²

¹³² "Even if it is unclear whether a divergence between the LXX and the MT comes from the translator or from his source-text, a difference of interpretation between the two texts has significance. If nothing else, it shows that there were different streams of tradition, and if the LXX witnesses to some elements of interpretation which have not otherwise been preserved in Hebrew [or Aramaic], it is a very important window onto a period of biblical interpretation before the MT emerged as dominant" (Jennifer M. Dines, *The Septuagint* [London: T&T Clark, 2004], 133).

CHAPTER 3

John's Separation of "Lord" and "God" in the OT

The reading proposed in the preceding section, in which the term "Lord" is invested with Christological significance, is, I will argue, consistent throughout Revelation. As a result, the inconsistent tendencies of apocalyptic do not impact this established NT Christological identification. The correlation is simple: when John read the title "Lord" in the OT he used it to refer to Jesus.¹³³ The absence of the title "Lord" in certain allusions is supplanted by the divine roles and expectations of the OT Lord. John found a way to call Jesus the OT Lord without always having to employ the term "Lord." In Revelation, Jesus is the person acting as and speaking the very words of the OT Lord. On the other hand, I argue that John's interpretation of the title "God" in the OT reflects his concept of a separation and unity of the Father and the Son. When an OT allusion was applied to Jesus and contained the title "God," all but "God" was applied to Jesus (Rev 3:14; 17:14; 19:16; 21:23). Instead, when an OT allusion was applied to the Father, the title "God" made this identification (Rev 1:6; 5:10; 7:17; 11:11; 20:6; 21:23; 22:18-19).¹³⁴ What I consider the one exception will be dealt with in chapter 4 (Rev 21:7).¹³⁵ In

¹³³ Bauckham said "...even a Greek-speaking Jewish Christian who knew the Jewish Scriptures only in Greek could not have been unaware of the function of *kurios* as representing the Tetragrammaton. ...NT scholars often speak of *kurios* as a 'translation' of the divine name. This is inaccurate. It was not normally understood as a translation, but as a conventional *substitute* for the divine name" (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 190).

¹³⁴ In Revelation's usage of divine titles, I argue that "God" (θεός) was less restricted (or not restricted at all) to the Father, a concept that will be developed in chapter 4 of this thesis. I argue that "God" was used for Jesus substantially through the binomial "Lord God" (Rev 1:8; 4:8, 11; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 18:8; 19:6; 21:[7,] 22; 22:5-6). In these references, the title "God" may convey a message that reveals the shared functional divinity of Jesus and his Father. Jesus shared a divine nature with the Father manifested through the title "Lord God." Although 21:7 does not have "Lord God," the representational role is reflect by the context (see chapter 4). Jesus had always been the divine Lord, but was also invested with divinity manifested by the title of "God" (cf. John 1:1-3). In the Gospel of John, the preexistent Jesus (the Word) had been divine from the beginning. He was with God and was the divine agent of creation. The application of the title of "God" in Revelation may have been quite similar, signifying the divinity of both the Father and the Son as a title and not a name.

¹³⁵ David Lincicum states that the use of divine titles for Jesus in Revelation appears to be John's "favorite strategy" ("The Origin of 'Alpha and Omega' [Revelation 1.8; 21.6; 22.13]: A Suggestion," *Journal of Greco-Roman and Judaism* 6 [2009]: 131).

Revelation, Christological functions were used in place of the “Lord” of the OT who performs those same roles. Jesus was the OT Lord and the Father was OT God.

The method of reading I am proposing for OT allusions is suggested in addition to passages in Revelation in which Jesus is defined by his relationship to the Father in one of two ways: (1) Jesus and the Father clearly share a role/title (5:13-14; 6:16-17; 7:10; 14:4; 20:6; 21:23; 22:3) or (2) Jesus acts as the Father’s delegate in an explicit way in the role of mediator (1:1, 5-6; 2:26-27; 3:5, 21; 5:9-10).¹³⁶ The latter set of passages indicates the Son’s subordination to the Father. Therefore, John may have conscientiously separated Jesus from the Father by using language about Jesus’ role as mediator in one line, and followed by identifying Jesus with the Lord of the OT in the next. Jesus is the Lord, the agent of God the Father.¹³⁷ I argue John separated the identity of the “Lord” from that of “God” (the Father) and by so doing found both the Father and the Son in the OT. Consequently, Jesus’ eternal identification as Lord is part of John’s high Christology. In this way, John was able to point to the divine nature of the Son (along with the Father) in the OT. In order to explicate this concept in Revelation, a preliminary step is necessary: I explore Jesus’ correlation with the Lord of the OT in Revelation, indicating that this association is as internally consistent as it is in other NT books despite its literary apocalyptic genre. Once I have established that John aligned Jesus closely with the OT Lord, yet distinct from the OT God, it will be clear that the following view, which represents the consensus opinion, is just one among several possible interpretations of Revelation:

In the NT the term “Lord,” *kyrios*, is normally used for Jesus. In OT quotations it replaces the divine name Yahweh. However in Revelation, the “Lord” is usually God the

¹³⁶ In the case of the allusion to Exod 19:6, Rev 5:9-10 differs from 20:6. In 5:9-10, the slaughtering of Jesus (the Lamb) has made those redeemed into priests and kings for God. Here, the role of Jesus is of a mediator between God and humanity. In 20:6, the redeemed will be priests for God and for the Christ, and will reign alongside of Jesus. Here, God and Christ are side by side over the priests.

¹³⁷ Cf. Phil 2:5-11.

Father (e.g., Rev 1:8; 15:4). In some texts it is not so easy to know whether the term refers to the Father or the Son (e.g. Rev 11:4; 14:13). Yet there are also texts in which it clearly points to Jesus (Rev 11:8). Revelation ends with calling Jesus “the Lord Jesus.” Therefore, in Revelation God the Father as well as Jesus are the Lord. Jesus is declared to be equal with the Father.¹³⁸

I challenge the exclusive character of this claim, along with Aune’s view of a “relative absence” of Jesus’ identification as Lord in Revelation.¹³⁹ By starting with the equation between Jesus and the Lord in OT allusions, references to an exalted Lord may be understood as pointing to Jesus throughout Revelation.¹⁴⁰ Jesus as “Lord” does not eclipse any role for God the Father in Revelation. I will argue in chapter 4 that Jesus takes on a representational role for the Father.¹⁴¹

Jesus’ Direct Self-Identification with the Lord of Jeremiah and Ezekiel

The allusions reflecting Jesus’ identification with a divine figure from the OT in Revelation 2:23 place another Christological title in exchange for Lord: “I AM” (ἐγώ εἰμι). These allusions come from Jeremiah and Ezekiel where John cleverly employs this one Christological title. The verse begins with a brief phrase (Rev 2:23a), utilizes language from Ezekiel (Rev 2:23b), and finishes with Jeremiah (Rev 2:23c). Analyzing Revelation 2:23c first

¹³⁸ Mueller, “Christological Concepts 1,” 285.

¹³⁹ Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 620. It is under the term “Lord God” that I argue that “it is not so easy to know whether the term refers to the Father or the Son.” Although, Jesus may prove to be a likely candidate.

¹⁴⁰ In contrast to my view, Mueller argues that in Revelation “Lord” refers clearly to God the Father thirteen times. Ekkehardt Mueller, “Christological Concepts in the Book Revelation-Part 2: Christ’s Divinity,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 22/1 (2011): 68. Mueller gives the following list: Rev 1:8; 4:8 11; 11:4(?), 15, 17; 14:13(?); 15:3, 4; 16:7; 18:8; 19:6; 21:22; 22:5, 6. Mueller implies that Jesus cannot be included in these thirteen passages, or that there is no hint of ambiguity as to whether the text speaks of either the Father or the Son. As agent and mediator, Jesus would have been able to represent the Father through divine investiture (as I will attempt to present). See Mueller, “Christological Concepts 1,” 297-298. See also Macleod, “The Lion Who Is a Lamb,” 339. Although the term “Lord” is not employed there, John 1:18 also shows Jesus’ divine role as revealer of God the Father: “No one has ever seen God, the Only-Begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, that one, had made him known.” Even when identified as the Lord of the OT and Lord in Revelation, Jesus may have likewise functioned as agent. Therefore, Jesus as Lord represented the Father in word and deed (cf. John 14:8-10).

¹⁴¹ This representation role of Jesus goes hand-in-hand with Mat 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 1:18; 3:35; 5:19, 22, 26, 30; 14:6, 10; 1 Cor 15:27-28.

will aide in clarifying John’s introduction found in 2:23b. Revelation 2:23 contains an emphatic identification of the speaker who communicates the message for the church in Thyatira.

Although many source-texts are suggested for the allusion in Revelation 2:23c, it has the most parallels with Jeremiah 17:10¹⁴²:

Revelation 2:23	Jeremiah 17:10
(a) And I will kill her children with death,	
(b) and every church will know that	
(c) I AM (ἐγώ εἰμι) the one who searches minds and hearts and will give to each of you according to your work.	I, Lord, testing hearts and examining minds to give to each according to his ways and according to the fruits of his pursuits.

Aune says this connection between these two verses is of “important Christological significance” because the Lord and Jesus possess the “same omniscience.”¹⁴³ The word “same” that Aune uses can be understood as “shared,” meaning that Jesus is being placed side-by-side with the Lord as found in Jeremiah 17:10. This ignores the self-identification placed on the lips of Jesus by John.¹⁴⁴ John is not merely saying that Jesus had now been elevated to the “same” status that the Lord had in Jeremiah. By including “I AM” in place of “the Lord,” Jesus is identifying himself as the very Lord who had spoken in Jeremiah and was presently speaking to the church. Aside from the assumption understood by many that Jesus is one with the Lord/I Am speaking in Jeremiah, John also describes him in this letter as the “Son of God” (Rev 2:18), having received authority from his “Father” (2:27). Although Jesus was the Lord in Jeremiah, he did not assume the shared divine identity with the Father as an ontologically united God.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 207.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 206.

¹⁴⁴ Stuckenbruck identifies other passages in the letters that manifest Jesus’ omniscience: “The Jesus who speaks is one who ‘knows’ in detail the struggles, failures, and triumphs of each community of faith (2:2-3, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15).” See Stuckenbruck, “Revelation 4:5: Divided worship or one vision?,” 237.

¹⁴⁵ Unlike Revelation 1:1 where there is a clear line of communication (God gives a revelation to Jesus who in turn gives it to his servants), Jesus is the one pronouncing the words of Jeremiah 17:10, making them his own. John does not say Jesus was sent by the Lord to act on behalf of him. This omniscience, to search both mind and heart, belongs to the speaker. In Jeremiah, the speaker had been the Lord. Now in Revelation, the speaker was

Aune observes that “the LXX version of Jer 17:10b differs somewhat from the proverb found here in v. 23c,” as can be seen above. Although it is an inexact parallel,¹⁴⁶ the allusion is clear; the vocabulary changes, but the message is virtually the same. Further, this change of vocabulary may also merely indicate John’s own paraphrase of the Hebrew.¹⁴⁷ If that were so, it would support John L. Ronning’s conclusion that ἐγώ εἰμι is a substitution for אֲנִי יְהוָה (“I [am] YHWH”).¹⁴⁸ Ronning is not alone in viewing ἐγώ εἰμι as a Greek translation of the Hebrew divine name. The more “conventional substitution” is κύριος, used both in the LXX and NT.¹⁴⁹ Bauckham favors a Hebrew origin of ἐγώ εἰμι for the Gospel of John:

The Johannine choice is the concise statement ‘I am he’, in Hebrew *’ānî hû’*, usually translated in the Septuagint Greek as *egō eimi* (‘I am’), the form in which it appears in John’s Gospel. This sentence occurs as a divine declaration of unique identity seven times in the Hebrew Bible: once in Deuteronomy, in one of the most important monotheistic passages of the Torah, and six times in Deutero-Isaiah. It serves to declare, in the most concise of forms, the uniqueness of God, equivalent to the more common ‘I am YHWH’... The series of sayings thus comprehensively identifies Jesus with the God of Israel who sums up his identity in the declaration ‘I am he’. More than that, they identify Jesus as the eschatological revelation of the unique identity of God, predicated by Deutero-Isaiah.¹⁵⁰

identified as the Son of God (Rev 2:18). In contrast to 21:23 where John clearly rearranged the language in Isaiah for his Christological purposes, in 2:23 he places this self-identification on the lips of Jesus. Not only is John reading Jeremiah Christologically, he is attributing this self-identification of the omniscient Lord (Jer 17:10) to the Son of God. In reference to the title, “Son of God,” John equates the Lord with the term “Son,” not “God.” Jesus was the Lord and the Son of God. The Son was the “I AM.” Barker makes a particular observation of the Christological title of “Son of God”: “Jesus is not called the son of Yahweh nor the son of the Lord, but he is called Lord” (Barker, *The Great Angel*, 4-5).

¹⁴⁶ Aune observes that “the LXX version of Jer[emiah] 17:10b differs somewhat from the proverb found here in v. 23c,” as I have demonstrated above (*Revelation 1-5*, 206).

¹⁴⁷ It may also reflect a Greek translation not available today.

¹⁴⁸ John L. Ronning, “Biblical Studies: The *Targum of Isaiah* and the Johannine Literature,” *WTJ* 69 (2007): 251.

¹⁴⁹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 190.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 40. Although ἐγώ εἰμι is an emphatic self-identification in the LXX for divinity, it is also used for many other speakers. Perhaps that is why scholars argue that the “I AM” sayings may have come more from a Hebrew source embracing the divine name. Stauffer explains how “I AM” developed in the Hebrew text: “This emphatic formula rests ultimately on the ‘I am that I am’ of Ex. 3:14. It takes clearer shape in Dt. 32:39: ‘See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me’; and it becomes a fixed formula in the divine proclamations of Dt. Is. ‘I, even I, am Yahweh; and beside me there is no saviour’ [43:11]. ‘Who hath wrought and done it...? I Yahweh, the first and the last, I am he’ (41:4). ‘Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last’ (48:12). It is in keeping with the style of the I-saying that the meaning of ‘I am he’ is explained in an

Bauckham argues that Jesus signals his identity by referencing a translation of the Hebrew divine name, likely paralleled in Revelation. The emphatic ἐγὼ εἰμι had Christological importance and appears in Revelation only three other times: Revelation 1:8, 17; and 22:16.¹⁵¹ The latter two references appear to be Christological statements.¹⁵² It is likely that early Christians prior to the end of the first century recognized the Christological importance of the title of ἐγὼ εἰμι on the lips of Jesus.¹⁵³

John reflects this linguistic practice with “I AM” in Revelation 2:23c, reemphasizing it further in 2:23b. This middle portion of the verse is an introduction to 2:23c not found in

accompanying formula, which is usually to the effect that the One who thus speaks is the true and only Subject of all occurrence, the true and only God” (“ἐγὼ,” 352). By placing ἐγὼ εἰμι over and in place of “the Lord,” John was emphasizing Jesus’ divinity according to Bauckham: “John places Deutero-Isaiah’s great monotheistic self-declaration of God – ‘I am he’ – on the lips of Jesus in the series of seven absolute ‘I am’ sayings” (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 46). Raymond E. Brown explains ἐγὼ εἰμι in the LXX: “The most important use of the OT formula ‘I am Yahweh’ stresses the unicity of God: I am Yahweh and there is no other. This use occurs six times in Deuter-Isaiah, as well as in Hos xiii 4 and Joel ii 27. The Heb. ^anī YHWH in Isa xiv 18 is translated in the LXX simply as *egō eimi*. In this use which stresses unicity a Hebrew alternate for ^anī YHWH is ^anī hū (‘I [am] He’), and the latter expression is always translated in LXX as *egō eimi*” (Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966], 536). Brown sums up his conclusion: “[A] good case can be made for the thesis that John means specifically the divine name ‘I AM’” (*The Epistles of John: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1996], 302). According to Brown and Ronning, ἐγὼ εἰμι on the mouth of Jesus would have been equivalent to the divine name translated as “Lord” (or phrase, “I am the Lord”) perhaps as a condensed form or code (Ronning, “The Targum of Isaiah and the Johannine Literature,” 251). Ronning expounds: “[ἐγὼ εἰμι is] found in the LXX as an idiomatic translation of the MT אֲנִי הוּא, ‘I [am] he,’ but especially in the LXX of Isa 43:25; 51:12; 52:6 where the MT ‘I, I am he’ is rendered with a double ἐγὼ εἰμι and thus could be understood as ‘I am “I AM,”’ the second ἐγὼ εἰμι being a way of saying the divine name, which was no longer pronounced” (Ibid., 248). See also Jerome H. Neyrey, *An Ideology of Revolt: John’s Christology in Social-Science Perspective* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 214.

¹⁵¹ For more on the use of “I AM” see Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), 533.

¹⁵² The Christological identification in 1:8 (and its connection to the Lord God) will have to be discussed in the following chapter.

¹⁵³ Although not commonly translated explicitly in the “I AM” sayings, Ethelbert Stauffer proposes an “emphatic overtone” due to ἐγὼ εἰμι as early as Mark 6:50-51 (Ethelbert Stauffer, “ἐγὼ” in vol. 2 of *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* [ed. Gerhard Kittel; Germany: Eerdmans, 1964], 352). It is noteworthy that Mark is widely considered the earliest written Gospel. The use of ἐγὼ εἰμι is most frequent in the Gospel of John; the Fourth Gospel contains seven “I AM” sayings: John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; and 15:1.

Jeremiah 17:10. The almost exact phrasing is found spoken by the Lord in the LXX in Exodus, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Joel.¹⁵⁴ Here, the speaker also emphasizes his self-identification:

Rev 2:23b

καὶ γνώσονται πᾶσαι αἱ ἐκκλησίαι ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι and so all the churches might know that I AM

LXX Ezekiel 33:29

καὶ γνώσονται ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος and that they might know that I am [the] Lord¹⁵⁵

Jesus' self-identification (ἐγὼ εἰμι) functions as the link between these two allusions from

Jeremiah and Ezekiel. In v. 23 Jesus portrays himself as Lord of Jeremiah and Ezekiel.¹⁵⁶ Jesus

had not received this capacity *from* an entity called “the Lord”; John clearly identifies Jesus *as*

“the Lord” by substituting the divine title with ἐγὼ εἰμι in a first-person declaration.¹⁵⁷ In this

letter to the church at Thyatira, John makes an effort to show that Jesus unites his identity with

the Lord (v. 23) and, yet, distinguishes himself from the Father (v. 27-28).¹⁵⁸ In contrast, the

Father is not associated with the Lord of the OT.

¹⁵⁴ Exod 7:5; 8:22; 14:4, 18; 29:46; Isa 43:10; 52:6?; Jer 9:24 (LXX 9:23); 24:7?; Joel 2:27?.

¹⁵⁵ Beale reasons that Ezekiel is most likely the source because this “formulaic result clause” occurs approximately 50 times in Ezekiel, towering in number over the occurrences in the other books (Beale, *Revelation*, 264). Although Ezekiel has more similar phrases than any other OT book, I could not find 50: Ezek 7:9; 28:22, 24, 26; 29:6, 9, 16, 21; 30:8, 19, 25, 26; 32:15; 33:29; 34:15, 27, 30; 35:4, 9, 12, 15; 36:11, 23; 37:6, 13, 28; 38:23; 39:6, 7, 22, 28. In the OT, this phrase conveyed the Lord’s power and explained his actions in order that the people might know him and his consequences. Brown provides an explanation: “A use that is more closely associated with revelation is where God promises, ‘You shall know that I am Yahweh.’ This knowledge of Yahweh will be gained through what He does (Exod vi 7, vii 5). Many times what God does will help or save; other times it is God’s punishing judgment that will cause men to know that He is the Lord. This OT use offers interesting parallels... of the Johannine ‘I AM’ statements. There Jesus says that men will come to know or believe that ‘I AM.’ In John vii 24 this is related to God’s punishing judgment; in viii 28 it is related to the great salvific action of death, resurrection, and ascension (Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 536). Likewise, Jesus proclaims that the Church would know that he will search minds and test hearts. For Beale, Jesus’ judicial function highlights his divine nature (*Revelation*, 264). Contextually, Jesus is not only performing a function, but is making a self-identification. The delegated function as Judge seems to have been preexistent according to Rev 13:8.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. to John 5:22.

¹⁵⁷ Whether this had been delegated to him (by the Father) is not the issue in this verse. John was making a pronounced gesture for his readers. John makes another identification between Jesus and the OT Lord in Rev 3:19 (Prov 3:12): “Thus the proverbial saying concerning [YHWH]’s love and chastisement appears in the final letter as a proclamation of Christ with a preceding ἐγὼ” (Stauffer, “ἐγὼ,” 351).

¹⁵⁸ Some versions only have this in v 27. John is precise when conveying the delegated authority (2:26-28). In v. 28, Jesus clearly states he was given authority over the nations; he was given this authority by his Father. The one who bestows this rule is precisely identified as “my Father” (τοῦ πατρὸς μου), rather than “the Lord” (ὁ κύριος).

The Lamb's Book of Life

In the letter to the church at Sardis (3:1-6), Jesus pronounces his power to prevent the blotting out of names from the book of life. Jesus possesses this ability in order that he might confess to the Father the names of those who have overcome¹⁵⁹: “The one who overcomes in this way... I will not blot out (ἐξάλειψω) his name from the book of life (βιβλου τῆς ζωῆς), and I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels” (3:5). Jesus’ role as mediator in control of the book of life places him between the Father and humanity. Jesus has control of the book of life and will confess the names to the Father. Aune suggests this may be an allusion to LXX Exodus 32:32-33 where Moses converses with the Lord about the possible blotting out of Israelites from a similar book¹⁶⁰: “And now, if indeed you forgive them the sins, forgive. But if not, blot me out (ἐξάλειψόν) of your book (βιβλου σου), the one you have written (ἔγραψας). And the Lord said to Moses: If anyone has sinned before me, I will blot him out (ἐξάλειψω) of my book (βιβλου μου).” There are linguistic parallels between both passages.¹⁶¹ Exodus also uses the verb “to blot out, erase” (ἐξάλειψω) and the reference to a book (βιβλος).¹⁶² First, Moses acknowledged the role of the Lord in regard to the book: the Lord is the one who erases names from the book.¹⁶³ In Exodus and Revelation the first-person use of the verb (ἐξάλειψω)

¹⁵⁹ “The third aspect of the promise of 3:5b affirms that Christ will confess the names of believers to his Father and to the angels. The idea may be that he will read the believers’ names out of the book of life in recognition of their final salvation” (Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 280).

¹⁶⁰ Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 223. Cf. Deut 29:20.

¹⁶¹ According to Shea, connections and allusions can appear in different formats: “We are dealing here with a more comprehensive scheme in which a connected series of passages in one book are paralleled by another series of texts in the other. The parallels between these blocks of text may consist in lexical relations, in historical experiences, in theophanic aspects of revelation, or in theological relations” (Shea, “Literary and Theological Parallels Between Revelation 14-15 and Exodus 19-24,” 164).

¹⁶² Cf. LXX 2 Kgs 14:27.

¹⁶³ Then the Lord testified to this role, as Jesus does in Revelation. Perhaps drawing from different sources, another source (or combined sources) could include LXX Psalm 68:29 (Hebrew 69:28): “May they be blotted out (ἐξάλειψήτωσαν) from the book of [the] living ones (βιβλου ζώντων) and not be written (γραφῆτωσαν) with [the]

emphasizes the role of the speaker. In Exodus, “the Lord” (ὁ κύριος) had authority to erase from the book. That same authority is ascribed to Jesus in Revelation.¹⁶⁴ In judgment, the works and deeds found in the book would later be confessed to the Father.¹⁶⁵ Therefore, John makes a distinction between “the Lord” who has immediate control of the book and the “Father” before whom the names will be confessed.¹⁶⁶

In addition to the verb ἐξαλείφω, LXX Exodus 32 also has the verb “to write” (γράφω). This book surfaces throughout Revelation (3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27).¹⁶⁷ After Revelation 3:5, the passages that follow also attach the verb γράφω to this book. Jesus’ active role with this book is implied not only because of 3:5, but Revelation says twice that it belongs to the Lamb: “the book of life of the Lamb who was slain” (13:8); and “the Lamb’s book of life” (21:27).¹⁶⁸

righteous ones” (Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 360). This Psalm also includes the verb, ἐξαλείφω, and the noun, βιβλος, supplying a description of this book: “book of the living ones” (βιβλου ζώντων). Perhaps not the exact wording of Revelation (βιβλου τῆς ζωῆς), the idea of “life” continues to be attached to the reward for those inscribed in the book, making a strong linguistic parallel. Both titles of κύριος and θεός are used in Greek Psalm 68, but the “blotting” is not attributed to any particular divine title.

¹⁶⁴ The titles and verbs in Revelation 22:19 provide an exegetical insight to John’s Christology: “God will remove (ἀφαιεῖ) his part from the tree of life and from the holy city from the ones written in this book.” Alluding to Deuteronomy 29:20, John exchanged the title “Lord” for “God” (from both the Hebrew text and the LXX) as to show he was speaking of God the Father and not the Lord Jesus. He also changed the verb, ἐξαλείφω (“to blot out”), for ἀφαιρέω (“to remove”) as to not employ a verb used previously for the Lord Jesus. (In Deut 29:20, the verb is also ἐξαλείφω, not ἀφαιρέω). What God will remove from the book are not names but the blessings of the tree of life and the holy city for those already inscribed in the book. This suggests that the Lord Jesus writes and will confess the names of those inscribed, while God determines the degree of blessing.

¹⁶⁵ Barker finds similar concepts in the Synoptic gospels: Mark 8:38; Matt 10:32; Luke 9:26; 12:8-9 (Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 108).

¹⁶⁶ Beale argues that “the metaphorical book idea in Exodus 32 and Psalm 69 is different from what we see in Rev. 3:5b and elsewhere in Revelation” (Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 281). He reaches this conclusion because he favors the use of Dan 12:1-2 as the OT sources (Beale, “Revelation,” 1096). He does however accept a “contextual idea” communicated in Revelation from these two sources (*Book of Revelation*, 281).

¹⁶⁷ Ekkhardt Mueller, “Christological Concepts in the Book Revelation-Part 3: The Lamb Christology,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 22 (2011): 53.

¹⁶⁸ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 281. It is in the Torah, the Prophets, and Poetry. A simple possessive interpretation of the genitive phrase τοῦ ἀρνίου is indicated given the analogous construction in LXX Psalm 138:16, “upon your book (βιβλίον σου) all things will be written (γραφήσονται)” (Heb 139:16), and LXX Malachi 3:16, “the Lord took heed and heard, and wrote a book (ἔγραψεν βιβλίον) of memory before him, for those who feared the Lord, and who received well his name” (Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 361-362). Barker has explained that “[it] was an ancient belief that the Lord had a book in which he wrote the names of his faithful people” (Ibid., 108). There are strong ties between these two passages. For example, LXX Psalm 138 is directed to the Lord (138:1) and

Although the book in Exodus belongs to the Lord, the LXX does not give it a description attached to its owner, similar to the descriptions found in Revelation. Hebrew Isaiah may provide a description from which John was able to convert christologically into “the book of life of the Lamb who was slain” (13:8) or “the Lamb’s book of life” (21:27). The book is attributed directly to the Lord in Hebrew Isaiah 34. According to this chapter, the animals (figuratively the righteous) who will possess the land will be written in the “book of YHWH,” סֵפֶר יְהוָה (34:16).¹⁶⁹ Not one of the righteous will be “missing” from the book (אֶחָת מִהֵנָּה לֹא רָהֲנָעֵד). This description of “missing” is very similar to Revelation 20:15 where John speaks about those “not found” in the book (“...and if someone is not found in the book of life...”). Whereas Isaiah had described the righteous as not missing from the book, Revelation described the punishment of those who are “not found” (i.e., “missing”). The two concepts are related, but inverted, which may indicate that John knew Isaiah 34:16 and modified it in his context. As a result, not only does Jesus assume the very role of the Lord of the OT regarding this book, but the title of the book changes also from “book of YHWH” to “book of the Lamb.” Barker argues that these two are the same book.¹⁷⁰ Replacing the term YHWH (i.e., “the Lord”) with Lamb is similar (if not identical) to John’s rearrangement in Revelation 21:23.¹⁷¹ The book continues to be in the hands of the divine Lord.¹⁷² Apparently for John, all that has changed is the title of the one who has stewardship over

the psalmist testifies that everything about him was written in the Lord’s book (τὸ βιβλίον σου; 138:16 [13-16]). In Malachi, the Lord wrote the people’s faithfulness in a “book of memory.” Although called differently, I argue that the same concept lays behind the “Lamb’s book of life” in Revelation.

¹⁶⁹ “Yahweh had been the heavenly scribe in whose book were recorded the details of the judgment (Exod. 32:32-3; Ps. 56:8; Isa. 34:16). He wrote down the names of the elect (Ps. 87:6).” See Barker, *The Great Angel*, 91.

¹⁷⁰ “In the Book of Revelation, the book of life, or the Lamb’s book of life (21:27) is the book of the LORD” (Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 362).

¹⁷¹ John’s source must have been Hebrew because there was no Greek precedence.

¹⁷² Beale believes “the book of life is unreservedly ascribed to Christ” because of his act of redemption (cf. 5:9) (*Book of Revelation*, 703).

the book from “the Lord” to the “Lamb.” In Revelation, this Lord would confess the names of those found in the book before the Father.

The Witness

As noted in chapter 2, part of Revelation 3:14 can be translated “the Witness, the Faithful, and the True [one]” or “the faithful and true witness” (ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστὸς καὶ ὁ ἀληθινός).¹⁷³ John may have allowed for ambiguity by making both translations plausible. If one prefers the latter translation, however, it allows one to see John’s potential allusion to Hebrew Jeremiah 42:5, “may YHWH [the Lord] be a true and faithful witness” (יְהוָה בְּנִי לְעֵד אֱמֶת וְנִמְנֵן).¹⁷⁴ Consistent with the above, regarding John’s separation of the *Lord* Jesus and *God* the Father, Jesus’ identification with the Lord in the final letter to the Laodicians (Rev 3:14-22) is accompanied by his subordination to the Father as the “beginning of the God’s creation” (v. 14) and the one who has been permitted to sit on the Father’s throne (3:21).¹⁷⁵ If the former translation is correct (“the witness, the faithful and the true [one]”), the title “witness” can stand alone. This may reflect an allusion to LXX Isaiah 43:10, as the table below illustrates¹⁷⁶:

LXX Isaiah 43:10

γένεσθέ μοι μάρτυρες καὶ γὰρ ὁ μάρτυς λέγει	“Be my witnesses even I [am] a witness,” says
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¹⁷³ Beale describes how this self-identification reflects role of Jesus: “The three descriptions ‘the Amen, the faithful and the true’ are not distinct but generally overlap in meaning to underline the idea of Jesus’ *faithfulness* in testifying to his Father during his earthly ministry and his continuing as such a witness” (*Book of Revelation*, 296).

¹⁷⁴ In the corresponding line in the LXX (Jer 49:5), it reads, ἔστω κύριος ἐν ἡμῖν εἰς μάρτυρα δίκαιον καὶ πιστόν (“let the Lord be among us as a just and faithful witness”). The difference of the word, “just,” in Hebrew and “true” in Greek may point to a translation of Hebrew Jeremiah.

¹⁷⁵ The Lord of Jeremiah (and the Amen of God, from Isaiah 65:15-16) was revealed as subordinate to the Father (3:14, 21). Therefore, the Lord Amen belonged to God (Isa 65:15-16) and was the “beginning of [his] creation.” Once again, John associated Jesus with the Lord in separation from the Father. Whether this passage is translated as the “beginning” or the “ruler” of “God’s creation,” the title “God” clearly identifies someone distinct from the Amen.

¹⁷⁶ Beale states that “[t]hese OT allusions are used to indicate that Christ is the true Israel and the divine” (*Book of Revelation*, 297; cf. Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 516). Although Beale’s identification relates only to the Hebrew text, the title “witness” may reflect LXX Isaiah 43:10.

κύριος ὁ θεός καὶ ὁ παῖς ὃν ἐξελεξάμην ἵνα
γνῶτε καὶ πιστεύσητε καὶ συνῆτε ὅτι ἐγώ
εἰμι ἔμπροσθέν μου οὐκ ἐγένετο ἄλλος θεὸς
καὶ μετ’ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔσται

the Lord God, “even the servant who I chose
for myself so that you might know and believe
and understand that I AM. There is no other
god before me and after me there is none.”¹⁷⁷

In the LXX, not only had the Lord (God) called Israel to be witnesses, but the Lord chose himself to be the witness and servant through whom Israel would know that he is the I AM (ἐγώ εἰμι).¹⁷⁸ This may have influenced John’s interpretation of the role of Jesus, considering his allusion to Isaiah. Jesus was both Lord-witness and Lord-servant who was chosen.¹⁷⁹ In a number of books of the OT, the Lord had been described as a witness further making this connection.¹⁸⁰ Kotecki comments that this Christological title of “witness” comes directly from the divine role in Isaiah, because outside of Revelation Jesus is never called a witness elsewhere in the NT. Kotecki argues that this particular association between Jesus and the OT underscores the transcendence of Jesus as the divine witness.¹⁸¹ John, as a prophetic figure, was believed to

¹⁷⁷ Cf. John 8:24 (“for if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sins”) and 8:28 (“Therefore Jesus said, ‘When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM’”). Both knowing and believing that Jesus is the “I AM” appears to come also from Isa 43:10.

¹⁷⁸ Job too was in search of a witness from heaven (Job 16:19). In Hebrew, this heavenly witness would advocate between Job and God (16:21). Gustavo Gutiérrez recognizes that Job was speaking of a third person, “someone who will defend him in the suit he is carrying on with God” (*On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent* [Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1987], 62). The LXX Job rearranges Job’s plea, but does not contradict it. In Greek, this witness is identified as κύριος. The title of θεός is not mentioned at all in this passage. If John had both texts before him, he may have understood this to imply that the Lord functioned as “witness” before God and himself, a separation of divine titles. Cf. Job 19:25-26 where the Redeemer is someone separate from God. In addition, the Israelites as witnesses of the Lord (in Isa) became the saints as witnesses of Jesus (Rev 17:6).

¹⁷⁹ This may be analogous to Matthew’s portrayal of Jesus as a law-giver like Moses, but also as the source and authority behind the New Law (standing in the place of the Lord). It is a both/and allusion.

¹⁸⁰ LXX Isaiah 43:10 may have implied for John the dual role of the Lord. Despite the lack of the word, “witness,” Isaiah 41 depicts YHWH and others in the role of witnesses (1, 21-24, 29). In LXX Exodus, the ark before which Moses would know and communicate with the Lord was called the “ark of witness.” The LXX description is as follows: “And I will make my self known to you from there and I will speak to you from above the place of propitiation above the middle of the two cherubim which are on the ark of witness and even according to all such that I command you for the children of Israel” (LXX Exod 25:21[22]). The tabernacle that represented the presence of the Lord was called the “tent of witness” (LXX Exod 29:10-11; 30:16; cf. Rev 15:5). Then, “witness” was divinely associated with “Lord.”

¹⁸¹ Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 516. Revelation, 1:5 and 3:14 are the only NT occurrences to call Jesus a witness (Osborne, *Revelation*, 204). Aune observes that in addition, “the exalted Jesus refers to himself as ὁ μαρτυρῶν ταῦτα, ‘the one who testifies of these things’ (Rev 22:20).” See Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 255. On four occasions, Revelation makes reference to the witness (or testimony) particularly of

be inspired of the Lord. Jesus as Lord witnesses the God the Father to the world, indicating their role distinction. In this letter to the church in Laodicea, John continues to be consistent in his identification of Jesus as Lord in distinction from God the Father whom he does not associate with the title “Lord” (Rev 3:14, 21).¹⁸²

Interpretation of Divine Titles from Exodus 19 in Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 20:5

In the above examples, I highlighted Jesus’ direct association with the divine Lord of the OT. The identification of “God” in the OT may be observed in John’s three allusions to Exodus 19:6. John may have exegetically identified the Son *and the Father* in Exodus 19 by separating the titles “Lord” and “God.”¹⁸³ In Exodus 19:6, the Lord instructed Israel to be a priestly kingdom, saying, “[Y]ou shall be to me a kingdom of priests.” However, the echoes of this passage within Revelation involve two divine persons, the Father and the Son. Jesus mediates the Christians’ becoming a priestly kingdom to God. In a subsequent scene, the blood of the Lamb is described as bringing about redemption: “You are worthy... because you were slain and

Jesus (Rev 1:2, 9; 12:17; 19:10). In 19:10, the “witness of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Jesus as a necessity for the spirit of prophecy is innovative, considering that prophecy had long existed before the first century. There are different ways in which the genitive of Ἰησοῦ is conceived. Beale comments: “A subjective genitive connotes the idea that all true prophecy has its origin in the words and acts of Jesus; an objective genitive conveys the notion that all true prophecy manifests itself in testimony to Jesus” (“Revelation,” 947; see also Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1038-1039). John could not have been implying that OT prophecy did not have the same status as his own. For him, this witness of/from the person of the Son may have been what the prophets of the OT had received. Bauckham comments on this relationship: “Difficult as it is, this must mean that when the Spirit inspires prophecy, its content is the witness of Jesus... It is connected with the idea of the church’s newly revealed role... like that of Moses with the Pharaoh and his magicians or of Elijah with Jezebel and her prophets of Baal, and in the power of the Spirit of prophecy winning the nations to the worship of the true God” (*Theology*, 119-120). For John, the witness that the prophets of the OT had received, in order to win Israel and the nations, may have come from the same Lord who was witnessing to him. Beale states that John continues “the OT prophetic office” (“Revelation,” 948). Barker argues that Revelation seems to follow the pattern of Hebrew prophecy observing that the witness of Jesus precedes the witness of the prophets; therefore “the whole book is prefaced, like the other books of Hebrew prophecy, with the name of the prophet” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 78). John may have believed the prophets of the OT had received this same witness. Cf. Acts 10:42-43. Luke appears to say that the one appointed (the Son) was known by the prophets of the OT.

¹⁸² Jesus identifies himself as the Lord of Proverbs (cf. Rev 3:19 to Prov 3:12) yet ontologically distinguishes himself from the Father (Rev 3:21).

¹⁸³ Mueller, “Christological Concepts 3,” 55.

redeemed for God with your blood from all the tribes and languages and people and nations, and you made them a kingdom and priests for our God, and they will reign upon the earth” (5:9-10). In this liturgy, the Lamb is said to be worthy (to open the sealed book) because through his blood the redeemed have become a kingdom and priests for God.¹⁸⁴ Once again, it is through the blood of Jesus that they were exalted before God. I emphasize this in order to demonstrate that John draws from Exodus 19 an identification of the both God (the Father) and Jesus/Lamb (the Lord of Revelation). Similar to 1:6, Jesus stands between humanity and God in a mediatory position. Revelation 20:6 indicates an exalted position for Jesus in comparison to the previous two textual examples: “They will be priests *of God and Christ*, and shall rule with him a thousand years” (emphasis added). The most noticeable modification found in this verse is that those who overcome will be priests of both God and Christ. In previous examples, the people’s priesthood had been in service of God, enabled by Jesus but not directed toward him.¹⁸⁵ If John had been able to find Jesus (the Lamb) and the Father in Isaiah 60:19 by separating the divine titles, he may have been able to do the same in Exodus 19.¹⁸⁶ The following analysis of Exodus 19 is strictly in reference to divine titles and John’s allusions to Exodus 19:6.

¹⁸⁴ Charles, “An Apocalyptic tribute to the Lamb,” 471.

¹⁸⁵ J. Wright comments on the singular pronoun (“him”) stating that it was used for both God and Christ (Wright, “Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 23). However, a survey of divine titles demonstrates John’s preference to associate the verb, “the reign” (βασιλεύω), strictly with either “Lord God” or “Christ” and never with the single title of “God” (Rev 11:15, 17; 19:6; 20:4). Apparently, John carefully employed divine titles where he could better communicate his desired message. In addition, Revelation 20:4 clearly states that it is with Christ with whom the righteous will reign clarifying the antecedent for “him” in 20:6. Cf. 20:4: ἐβασίλευσαν μετὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ (“They reigned with Christ”); 20:6: βασιλεύσουσιν μετ’ αὐτοῦ (“they will reign with him”). Contextually, the singular pronoun refers to Christ. This is comparable to 3:21 where those who overcome sit with Christ, not with the Father. Perhaps the focus is on sharing the reign with the exalted Jesus after judgment as a result of the atonement.

¹⁸⁶ Not only does Exod 19 use the “kingdom of priests” language that we find in Revelation (1:6; 5:9-10; 20:6), but the imagery of cleansing in the blood (7:14; 22:14) in connection with Revelation 1:5 may allude to Exod 19:10 and 14. The doxology in Revelation’s opening verses reads, “...to the one who loved us and washed us our sins in his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to God even his Father...” (1:5-6). The verb is the same (πλύνω). The people washed their garments in order to meet the Lord at Mt. Sinai. In Revelation, Jesus performed the washing of sins by his blood. Despite the differences, both washings would permit the believers to be found worthy before divinity. Mueller observes that atonement is not directly mentioned in Exod 19, however, the NT authors may have interpreted “cleaning”/ “washing” to be a type of atonement (1 John 1:7). Symbolically, filthy garments are

The LXX renders the Hebrew of Exodus 19:6 literally. Nevertheless, the ambiguity of some verses in Exodus 19 may have influenced John’s three allusions and the identity of two divine figures. Exodus 19:3 in the Hebrew text could have sparked a reading of dual figures because of the twofold divine titles connected by an “and”: “And Moses went up unto God (יהוה־אלהים/Elohim), and the LORD (יהוה/YHWH) called unto him out of the mountain saying...” (Exod 19:3). John could have read this verse as synthetic parallelism, just as he had read Isaiah 60:19. Thus, assigning each title to a distinct divine person, John would have understood that Moses had gone to God (the Father) and was called by the Lord (Jesus). If so, John’s exegesis was not without precedent. Alan F. Segal has shown examples where the separation of divine titles was a debated practice in existence in the first centuries of the Common Era.¹⁸⁷ Although this is not the standard mode in which modern interpreters read parallel terms, this practice might not have been foreign to John if contemporary (unorthodox) Jews used similar methods of

spoken about in Isa 54:5 and Zech 3:3 (Mueller, “Christological Concepts 3,” 51). Forgiveness comes from the shedding of blood in Heb 9:7. Acts 20:28 states that the church belongs to the God who purchased it with his own blood (τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἣν περιεποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου). This atonement is in connection with becoming a kingdom of priests. “Note the combining of kingship and priesthood in Psalm 110 and Zechariah 3-4” (Charles, “An Apocalyptic tribute to the Lamb,” 471). The intersection of these metaphors, then, makes Exod 19 a fruitful text to examine as a possible source text for John’s prophetic imagination.

¹⁸⁷ The dividing of divine titles in Exodus by an unknown group was considered a heresy by Jews in the first and second centuries C.E. The fact that his practice warrants (negative) mention by ancient rabbis indicates that it was an interpretation widely enough known to attract derision from those in power. It is possible, then, that such a practice was current among John’s contemporaries. According to Alan F. Segal, certain orthodox rabbis contended that the divine names of YHWH and Elohim were simply distinct manifestations of the same deity in order to debate with these unwanted (unorthodox) beliefs: “[T]he rabbis acknowledge that God manifested Himself in two ways in the Bible. They derive this contention... from the contrast between the Hebrew name, ‘YHWH,’ used to describe the Lord at the sea, and the other Hebrew name for divinity, ‘Elohim,’ used to describe God at Sinai. At least one possible conclusion based on the two different names of the deity—namely, that two different divinities, God and Lord, were being described—is condemned as dangerous. Instead, the rabbis suggest that the solution to the paradox will be found at Ex. 20:2, the first of the Ten Commandments, which contains both names of God and declares His unity... This rabbinic doctrine derives two different aspects of God - one merciful and the other, just - from the two Hebrew names of God, YHWH and Elohim... The argument that two figures or manifestations of God are possible (one ostensibly old, the other young) is separable from the argument that God has two attributes, one just and the other merciful” (*Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism*, [Waco, Texas: Baylor University, 2012], 38-39). See also Barker, *The Great Angel*, 157.

interpretation. If John drew from the Hebrew, it must be noted that John chose the title “God,” instead of “Lord,” to identify the Father in all three allusions in Revelation.

In addition to utilizing a mode of interpretation for divine titles that might have been in circulation at the time, John might have followed signals in the LXX itself, as grounds for his allusive use of divine titles and the identification of two divine beings. LXX Exodus 19 neatly segregates the divine titles: θεός (vv. 1-8) and κύριος (vv. 9-12).¹⁸⁸ Another possible point of reference for John’s interpretation may have been vv. 18 and 20:

LXX Exodus 19:18

So, the entire mountain of Sinai smoked because God had come down upon it in fire...

LXX Exodus 19:20

And [the] Lord came down upon mount Sinai upon the top of the mount...

God (θεός) had come down upon the mountain (v. 18). The language repeats, stating that the Lord (κύριος) had come down on it. With this separation/repetition, John may have interpreted this as reflecting two divine figures.¹⁸⁹ The Father is, without a doubt, God (θεός) in Revelation and all of scripture. Jesus/Lamb/Christ (titles from the three allusions in Revelation) is without a

¹⁸⁸ Verses 1-8 narrate the recounting of the deliverance from Egypt and the command to be a kingdom of priests under the title of “God.” In contrast to the Hebrew (אלהים), this spoken decree in 19:6 is associated with the title of “God” (θεός; LXX 19:3), stating that Israel will be a kingdom of priests for him.¹⁸⁸ Lord (κύριος) is then used exclusively from verses 9-12, a total of four times. These verses relate the Lord’s (κυρίου) instructions after the people had committed to do all that “God” had commanded in v. 8. For John, God (θεός) may have pronounced his mission followed by the Lord’s (κυρίου) instructions. The change of divine titles may have aided John’s Christological interpretation of the text. The Lord (κύριος) instructs everyone to wash their clothes in v. 10. In Revelation, John may have been also able to associate Christ (Lamb/ἀρνίον) with washing and becoming pure. In Rev 7:14 and 22:14 the verb πλύνω is used to describe being washed through the Lamb. The detailed correlation between the Lord and Jesus is consistent with the above analysis of Revelation. This further points to a possible Christological interpretation based on the separation of divine titles.

¹⁸⁹ A sense of unity may also be read in the text of LXX Exod 19:21-24. When θεός was speaking in vv. 21-22, he spoke about the titles θεός, κύριος ὁ θεός, and κύριος in third person. When κύριος was speaking in v 24, he spoke about θεός, and κύριος in third person. This may have indicated for John a sense of unity and separation. Immediately following the proceeding account in Exod 20 and after the book of the covenant (Exod 21-23), there is ambiguity in Exod 24:1, in both Hebrew and Greek. Rabbi Idi of the third century argued against a contemporary belief that saw two divine figures in Exod 24:1: “The demonstration of R. Idi’s competence is exceedingly interesting. Without naming the heresy, he describes a passage conducive to the ‘two powers’ heresy (Ex. 24:1). In that scripture, God orders Moses and the elders to ascend to the Lord. Since the text says, ‘Come up to YHWH’ and not ‘Come up to me,’ the heretic states that two deities are present. The tetragrammaton [YHWH] would then be the name of a second deity, a conclusion further supported by the lack of an explicit subject for the verb ‘said’ in the Massoretic Text” (Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 68). See also Barker, *The Great Angel*, 157.

doubt called Lord (κύριος) in Revelation by John. Revelation clearly states that two were and are involved in the fulfillment of becoming a kingdom of priests: Jesus and the Father.¹⁹⁰ The general tendency to separate allusions to θεός to point to the Father and κύριος to reference Jesus is pronounced. Notwithstanding, if John had separated the titles in Isaiah 60:19, he may have produced his three renditions by doing the same.

OT “God” (θεός) as the Father in Revelation

The above allocation of divine titles that John might have used in referencing Exodus 19 may be supported by John’s application of the title “God” from the OT for the Father. Whereas John had associated the OT Lord with Jesus, the single title “God” in the OT was identified as the Father. John associates the OT God with the Father sparingly. I argue John conveys his tendency toward high Christology by using the title “God” for the Father far less than “Lord” for Jesus. In other words, the exalted nature of Jesus is portrayed with more emphasis than that of the Father. In Revelation 7:17, John makes an allusion to the statement in LXX Isaiah 25:8 that God (θεός) will wipe away tears.¹⁹¹ The phrasing does not seem to reflect the Hebrew, which employs the title “Lord” (κύριος) instead.¹⁹² God’s actions in providing comfort are described in parallel to the Lamb’s role in leading the faithful to springs of the water of life. The allusion to LXX Isaiah 25:8 applies the title “God” directly to the Father in Revelation 7:17. Whereas

¹⁹⁰ Admittedly, because of the complexity and threefold recurrence of the allusion to Exod 19, the titles do not divide nearly so neatly between the divine persons, as they do in the allusion to Isa 60.

¹⁹¹ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 443.

¹⁹² In fact, the LXX separates the titles in such a way as to allow for John interpret a separation: “God again has removed every tear from every face... for the mouth of the Lord has spoken [it].” Where “Lord” is speaking about the actions of “God,” only “God” was used for the Father. With the two titles of “God” and “Lord” from LXX Isa 25:8, John mirrored his exegetical approach to Isa 60:19 in Rev 21:23, producing “God” and “Lamb.”

“Lord” was identified as the Son, “God” was reserved for the Father. It is this association that, I argue, does not receive scholarly attention.

In other allusions, John continues to favor the title “God” from the LXX where the Hebrew employs the title “Lord.”¹⁹³ The allocation of divine titles in the LXX may have aided him in conveying his concept of Christology. According to Osbourne, the raising of the fallen prophets by God’s “breath of life” (Rev 11:11; πνεῦμα ζωῆς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ) was an allusion to LXX Genesis 2:7 (ὁ θεὸς . . . ἐνεφύσησεν . . . πνοὴν ζωῆς; “God breathed . . . the breath of life”).¹⁹⁴ Hebrew Gen 2:7 has the binomial of YHWH Elohim, and not one particular title. If John was familiar with this passage in the Hebrew text, then John may have avoided the title of “Lord” (YHWH) for the Father. Therefore, the single title of “God” in the LXX permitted him to make a separation with the title “Lord” for Jesus in the same account (11:8). If John is also alluding to Ezekiel 37:9-10 as Osbourne suggests, he has removed the title “Lord” in order to contrast “God” with the “Lord” who was crucified (11:8).¹⁹⁵ Whether the allusion comes from Genesis 2 or Ezekiel 37, John rearranged the titles in order to identify the Father as “God.”¹⁹⁶

At the end of Revelation, John brings back a concept related to the Jesus’ role as the one who blots out names from the Book of Life (Rev 3:5). John’s rendition of LXX Deuteronomy 29:20 in Revelation 22:18-19 about “God” excludes the title “Lord.”¹⁹⁷ I will juxtapose LXX

¹⁹³ The authors of the LXX might have had a different Hebrew Vorlage and may not have simply been haphazard in their own application of divine titles. Just as Origen’s Hexapla illustrates that there were in circulation a number of OT Greek versions, DSS finds illustrate that there were also different Hebrew versions in use contemporaneously.

¹⁹⁴ Osbourne, *Revelation*, 429-430. See also Craig, S. Keener, *Revelation*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999): 296.

¹⁹⁵ Osbourne, *Revelation*, 429-430.

¹⁹⁶ In the context of Rev 11, this may be John’s interpretation and separation of the “God of heaven” (11:13) and the “Lord of the earth” (11:4).

¹⁹⁷ Beale, “Revelation,” 1158.

Deuteronomy 29:20 and Revelation 22:18-19 in such a way as to highlight the adaptations and interpretive rendition John may have made to support his Christology:

LXX Deuteronomy 29:20

God will not want to forgive him, but the wrath of the Lord and his zeal will then be inflamed in that human and all of the curses of this covenant written in the book of this law will join him,

Revelation 22:18-21

18 ...God will add upon him the plagues written in this book,

19 God will remove (ἀφελει) his part from the tree of life and from the holy city from the ones written in this book.

and the Lord will blot out (ἐξαλείψει) his name from it, beneath heaven.

A careful tailoring of LXX Deuteronomy 29:20 allowed John to include the Father and Jesus. John removed the title “Lord” once from the beginning of Deuteronomy 29:20, taking advantage of the ambiguous future passive of κολλω, “to join” (κολληθήσονται). The LXX does not attribute the distribution of curses to any particular title. As a result, John was able to attach the action of bringing about curses/plagues to the title “God,” also mentioned in the passage of Deuteronomy. In order to separate the “Lord” from “God,” he removed the “Lord’s” association with “names” (already attested in Revelation 3:14).¹⁹⁸ He then attributed to “God” the determining of the degree of blessings for those already written in the book. He replaced the verb ἐξαλείφω (also previously attached to the title “Lord”) with ἀφαιρέω.¹⁹⁹ John does not associate the title “God” with the blotting out of names (ἐξαλείφω), for that work belongs to the Lord Jesus.²⁰⁰ “God” removes (ἀφαιρέω) blessings “from the ones written in this book.”²⁰¹ This

¹⁹⁸ Finally, John may have possibly, at the end of Revelation, exchanged the Lord’s fierce judgment in Deuteronomy for the Lord’s majestic return or “coming” (Rev 22:20-21).

¹⁹⁹ It would be ironic to say this passage about a “book of prophecy” refers to the Bible as a whole if John, himself, is adding to and taking away from Deuteronomy 29:20.

²⁰⁰ Cf. LXX 2 Kgs 14:27.

²⁰¹ The change in verb from ἀφαιρέω (LXX) to ἐξαλείφω may also suggest either John’s own translation or another version of the LXX.

identification exalts “God” above the “Lord” who has already written the names in the book beforehand. John used the single title “God” from the OT to identify the Father.

In the above and following repetitive connection between Jesus and the OT Lord, it is imperative to note John’s lack of identifying the Father with the OT Lord. Jesus as “Lord” (in the OT) was consistently separate from “God” (Rev 1:1; 3:12; 5:9-10; 19:13). In other words, this thesis is not simply an in-depth portrayal of the common interpretation of Jesus’ divinity as Lord. My focus is to analyze John’s possible interpretation of two divine persons in the OT in accordance with a Christology based on divine titles (“Lord” and “God”). Therefore, all associations between Jesus and the OT Lord should be read in light of John’s separate identification of the OT God as shown above.

Revelation 19

The extensive use of divine titles and OT allusions manifests the concept of unity and separation of divine titles in Revelation 19. Jesus is consistently identified fulfilling the prophecies regarding the Lord of the OT. Functional unity above all of humanity, between the Son and the Father, is clear in the use of terms such as “worship” (προσκυνέω) and “throne,” ultimately with an emphasis on the binomial, “Lord God.” As I demonstrated with Revelation 22:5, I argue that “Lord God” identifies Jesus, functionally united with the Father, explicitly. Revelation 19 begins by alternating between divine titles implicitly through a transliterated Hebrew exhortation of praise. Generally accepted Christological titles do not surface until v. 7. In v. 1, the praise “Hallelujah!” is sung, a “Greek transliteration of a Hebrew phrase meaning ‘praise Yahweh’” (cf. Ps 104:35; 106:1).²⁰² The letters “jah” (or “YAH”) represent the divine

²⁰² Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 926.

name of YHWH that had been translated or substituted by κύριος in the LXX and the NT.²⁰³ If indeed John interpreted YAH as the title “Lord,” we may observe a purposeful alternation between one title and the other (Lord/YAH and God). Read this way, this passage exemplifies John’s use and understanding of these titles within the text of Revelation.

John’s symmetry may imply both separation and unity. The account contains liturgy by a great multitude in heaven, the twenty-four elders, and perhaps another great multitude:

- 1) v. 1b: “Praise YAH” (*Hallelujah*)
- 2) v. 1c: “Salvation, honor, glory, and power to God”
- 3) v. 3: “Praise YAH”
- 4) v. 4a: “[they] worshipped God”
- 5) v. 4b: “Praise YAH”
- 6) v. 5: “Praise our God”

The first title used is YAH (v. 1b), followed by a doxology to “God” (v. 1c). Verse 3 concludes with a praise using the title YAH. A brief pause explains that the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures had fallen down (πίπτω) and had worshipped (προσκυνέω) “God” (θεός) who is seated on the throne (v. 4a).²⁰⁴ The name YAH was used in and preceded the worship of “God” (θεός; v. 4a-b). In other words, John may be reflecting the idea that “God” on the throne was worshipped by praising the “Lord.” This may also suggest unity behind the diversity in titles by associating both “God” and “Lord” with true worship.²⁰⁵ However, there is an implied

²⁰³ YHWH and YAH will be interpreted in this section as equivalent in use to κύριος, in contrast to “God.”

²⁰⁴ The title of “God” and its relationship in Revelation to the throne will be discussed in the following chapter.

²⁰⁵ Verses with the language of the worshipping of God often (if not always) include a Christological reference in the nearby literary context, which relate Jesus to worship (7:11; 11:16; 14:7; 19:4, 10; 22:9). Using the same verbs ascribed to the worshippers, John will later fall down (πίπτω) and worship (προσκυνέω) the angel who he may have believed to be Jesus (Rev 19:10; 22:8). John was merely mimicking what he had seen before. John was not rebuked for worshipping Jesus, but for his conduct before the angelic representative (cf. John 14:6, 13, 26; 15:16; 16:26; Acts 9:15; Col 3:17). Also, the concepts of “throne” and “worship” may have included God (the Father) and the Lord (Jesus) throughout Revelation. Later, “throne” will be shown to reflect the unity of the Father and the Son in Revelation. After the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures worship God who was on the throne, they said, “Hallelujah.” The indirect use of the title “Lord” (YAH) can include the person of Jesus. The title, “God,” is used only twice by John to describe the one on the throne: 7:10; 19:4. In these two examples, there is the textual possibility of including Jesus under the divine title of “God” by making reference of him within the context

separation: after the third, “praise YAH,” a virtually identical praise in Greek is given to the title of “God” closing the symmetry (“Praise our God”; v. 5): three times YAH (“Lord”) and three times “God.” Afterward, another and final “praise YAH” (v. 6), the last “Hallelujah,” is given an explanation: “because the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.” The implication is along the lines of, “praise YAH because he is the Lord God Almighty who reigns.” This is the first identification in this chapter of the One who reigns. The One who reigns will be identified again in the following scene (19:16). The liturgy continues as the Lord God is praised because of the marriage of the Lamb (v. 7).

In 19:7, John introduces the bride whose worthiness and purity represent the righteous ones.²⁰⁶ The Lamb’s role as bridegroom is associated with the Lord of the OT. For instance, whereas the Lord had been the one to endow with wedding garments in Isaiah 61:10, all endowment is performed or instructed by Jesus in Revelation (3:5, 18; 7:9, 13).²⁰⁷ In the OT, the bridegroom was clearly the Lord himself.²⁰⁸ Osbourne adds about Revelation 19: “This imagery of Israel as the bride of Yahweh and the church as the bride of Christ has a rich background in

(7:10-11, 17). On eleven occasions, there is textual ambiguity or lack of a title for the one on the throne. In these eleven examples, the only descriptor is “the one sitting on the throne” (4:2[, 3], 9, 10; 5:1, 7, 13; 6:16; 7:15; 20:11; 21:5). According to apocalyptic inconsistency, this may be John’s indication of the flexibility of the identity of the one on the throne according to 3:21. Therefore, in Revelation 19, the throne may reflect God being worshipped through the Lord. This will be developed in the next chapter.

²⁰⁶ Verse 7 appears to be a rephrasing or synthetic parallel of verse 6: “Praise YHWH, because the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.” / V. 7: “We rejoice and exult and will give glory to him because the marriage of the Lamb has come...”

²⁰⁷ According to Revelation 7:14, this clothing was made white in the blood of the Lamb. By the end of the first century, the bride and the marriage of Jesus were part of Christian metaphorical parlance (Matt 25:1-13; Mar 2:19-20 [Matt 9:15; Luke 5:34-35]; John 3:27-30; 2 Cor 11:2, Eph 5:22-33; Rev 19:7, 9; 21:2, 19; 22:17).

²⁰⁸ Aune reasons that Rev 19:6-8 has “the only hymn in Revelation that conforms fully to the OT genre” (*Revelation 17-22*, 1022-1023). The end of Isaiah 61:10 and the beginning of Isaiah 62 make this identification. Beale describes this connection with Revelation 19: “That the marital metaphors at the end of Isa. 61:10 signify the intimate relationship initiated only by [the Lord] with his latter-day people is borne out by 62:1-5, where the same idea is conveyed with the same bridal and marriage metaphors (so also Hos. 2:20: ‘I will betroth you to me in faithfulness, Then you will know the LORD’)” (Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 939). In the context of Hosea, the speaker is the Lord (Hos 2:16-21). The Lord would betroth the people to himself. In LXX Isaiah 62:5, the Lord will rejoice over Zion as a bridegroom. Hebrew Isaiah uses the title “God.”

both OT and NT. It occurs primarily in the Prophets, as Isa. 54:5 says, ‘For you Maker is your husband - the LORD Almighty is his name’ (cf. 49:18; 61:10; 62:5; Jer 31:32).”²⁰⁹ Aune observes the lack of any imagery in the OT of Israel being betrothed or wed to the Messiah.²¹⁰ The role as bridegroom for the people was strictly divine and not Davidic.

The following scene is a theophany of Jesus as the divine warrior.²¹¹ Barker’s exegesis leads her to conclude that there exists the possibility of reading a distinction of divine figures (the Father and the Son) in the OT in connection with the roles of Jesus as both the bridegroom and the divine Warrior.²¹² In v. 11, Jesus comes down from heaven on a white horse to judge and make war.²¹³ John calls the rider “faithful” and “true” harking back to the Amen and Witness in 3:14.²¹⁴ He will enact judgment in righteousness.²¹⁵ Revelation 19 has many similarities to

²⁰⁹ Osbourne, *Revelation*, 672. Also Isa 50:1.

²¹⁰ “In dealing with the origins of this imagery, it is important to distinguish between the OT and the early Jewish metaphor of the marriage of Yahweh to Israel and the (rarely attested) marriage of the Messiah to Israel” (Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1030).

²¹¹ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 276.

²¹² Barker reasons: “The sequence of the Bride and the Lamb, who then rides out as the Warrior, has been compared to Psalm 45, the royal wedding psalm. The king, girded with his sword, rides out to victory against his enemies and he is twice addressed as ‘God’: ‘Your throne, O God, endures for ever, and therefore, O God, your God has anointed you. . .’ (Ps. 45.6-7). The Hebrew text can bear other translations – e.g. ‘your divine throne’, but this is not how the early church understood the text, and Eusebius was quite clear what it meant. When the psalms spoke of the Anointed One they referred not simply to the king, but to the LORD anointed by his Father, El Elyon [the Most High]. Eusebius wrote: ‘So the whole verse runs: Thou hast, O God, loved justice and hated impiety; therefore in return, O God, the highest and greatest God who is also thy God, is far above the Anointed, he being God in a different sense. And this would be clear to anyone who anyone who knew Hebrew. Therefore in these words you have it clearly stated that God was anointed and became the Christ’ (*Proof of the Gospel* 4.15). The royal wedding psalms probably accompanied a temple ritual which enacted the LORD going forth against his enemies, and there stands at his right hand the queen, dressed in ‘gold of Ophir’ (Ps. 45.9)” (*Revelation*, 317-318).

²¹³ At this point, the adjectives of “faithful” and “true” can be reasonable interpreted to be conveying the person of the Son as witness to/of the Father (Rev 3:7, 14; 6:10; 15:3; 16:7; 19:1-2, 19:11).

²¹⁴ Cf. Jer 42:5.

²¹⁵ In Revelation, the righteous judge has been identified by the titles “Holy One” (16:5) and “Lord God Almighty” (16:7) indirectly associating the Lamb with these titles. Rev 19:1-2 can be understood as YHWH who functions as “our God” enacts righteous judgment. In Isa 59:15-19, YHWH sees that there is no righteousness (justice) and intercedes himself. John then clarifies that Jesus is this judge who intervenes (See Mueller, “Christological Concepts 3,” 56).

Zechariah 14 and other apocalyptic literature in the OT.²¹⁶ In this genre, “[t]he basic intent of those works seems to be that of describing to the faithful the vision of Yahweh’s future saving act on their behalf.”²¹⁷ On two occasions, Jesus is described as performing a “saving act” by making war on behalf of his people: Revelation 2:16 and 19:11.²¹⁸ The latter may be an allusion to Zechariah 14:3 also describing the coming day when the Lord will fight his enemies in battle.²¹⁹ According to John, the divine warrior will be Jesus.

Revelation 19:12-13 mentions an unknown name that John later identifies as the “Word of God.”²²⁰ Unlike the Gospel of John, Jesus is called the “Word of God” and not simply the “Word.”²²¹ Hence, through Jesus “God speaks to humanity” as mediator, demarcating a precise

²¹⁶ Hanson remarks that “[w]ith Zechariah 14 one enters the period of full-blown apocalyptic literature” (*The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 369).

²¹⁷ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 8.

²¹⁸ Mueller, “Christological Concepts 3,” 61. Cf. Exod 15:3.

²¹⁹ Hanson describes Zechariah 14:3: “Moving beyond the first two verses, we need to say little about the terse announcement of Yahweh’s intervention to fight the attacking nation in verse 3. This verse makes it clear that we are dealing with a celebration of Yahweh as Divine Warrior. His fighting will be like that ‘on a day of battle.’ This reference evokes memories of the long history of the Divine Warrior’s battles, beginning with battles described in Exodus 15, Judges 5, Josh 10:12-13 and Nu 21:27-30, that is, the battles of the league period, and then extending through the battles celebrated in the royal psalms and on down to those of the early apocalyptic writings” (*The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 374). Barker, on the other hand, associates Jesus’ role as warrior judge with the Lord in Deuteronomy 32:43: “The Faithful and True rode out from heaven as the warrior judge (19:11-16), i.e., he was the Yahweh of Deut 32.43” (*The Great Angel*, 203). In the Deuteronomy text, the Lord would avenge the blood of his servants and atone (כפר) for the land, perhaps another parallel with the blood imageray of Rev 19:13: “We can only speculate as to how [YHWH] performed this rite of expiation, especially as it was expiation for the *land* of his people” (*The Great Angel*, 44).

²²⁰ The title “Word” (λόγος) is ascribed to many sources. For the purposes of this thesis, only those sources suggesting high Christology and an identification with the Lord of the OT will be analyzed.

²²¹ See also Heb 4:12 (Richard A. Lammert, “The Word of YHWH as Theophany,” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 73 [2009]: 195). Acts 10:42-43 and Col 1:25-27 also calls him the “Word” in relation to “God.” Gerhard Kittel defines Jesus’ with the title of “word”: “[A]ccording to the common understanding of primitive Christianity this is not a process which stands alongside the person of Jesus Christ. It is not a doctrine proclaimed by Him and passed on by His apostles. It is present only in His person, in the historical occurrences which is given with Him, which He Himself is... There is not the slightest difference, but full and unremitting correspondence with the fundamental NT fact constantly described herewith, if we say that Jesus is not just the One who brings the Word but the One who incorporates it in His person, in the historical process of His speech and action, of His life and being” (Gerhard Kittel, “λέγω, λόγος, ῥῆμα, λαλέω, λόγιος, λόγιον, ἄλογος, λογικός, λογομαξέω, λογομαχία, ἐκλέγομαι, ἐκλογή, ἐκλεκτός” [*TDNT*], 4:126). As the “word of the Lord” had been the Lord, Jesus too was the “Word.” However, in Revelation (and in the NT as a whole) Jesus is not called the word or message of the Lord, but the Word of God. In Acts 11:16, Jesus is identified as the Lord who had spoken the “word” (cf. Acts 1:4-6). Cf. also

separation, yet unity in purpose.²²² H. C. Ackerman suggests that in regard to the OT the phrase “word of the Lord” meant revelation from the Lord.²²³ Perhaps, the “word of the Lord” was a transmitted message that represented the Lord himself and was identified as the Lord as some passages may suggest (Gen 15:1-6; Jer 13:1-9).²²⁴ Richard A. Lammert concludes that, “the word of YHWH is a theophany in several Old Testament texts” with the “exegetical evidence impelling us to understand several of the *word of YHWH* accounts in the Old Testament as actual theophanies, or appearances of God in visible form.”²²⁵ John’s association of Jesus as both the Lord of the OT and the Word may have made conceived in distinction of the Father (God). Said differently, in the context of Revelation, Jesus continues to be the Word who was equivalent with

Amen of God (Rev 3:14; Isa 65:15-16), “beginning of the creations of God” (3:14), Son of God (Rev 3:18), Word of God (19:13).

²²² Mueller, “Christological Concepts 1,” 301.

²²³ H. C. Ackerman, “The Principal of Differentiation between ‘The Word of the Lord’ and ‘The angel of the Lord,’” *AJSLL* 37 (1921): 145. Otto Procksch concurs: “The הַדְבָר always contains revelation, and the revelation of the Word is the main form of all divine revelation” (“λέγω, λόγος, ῥῆμα, λαλέω, λόγιος, λόγιον, ἄλογος, λογικός, λογομαξέω, λογομαχία, ἐκλέγομαι, ἐκλογή, ἐκλεκτός” [*TDNT*], 4:98). As a revelation or message, the phrase “word of God” surfaces only once in the OT in 1Kgs 21:22 where it appears to be equivalent to the “word of the Lord” (v. 23).

²²⁴ Throughout the OT the “word of the Lord” is not a separate person but the very message and or person of the Lord (Gen 15:1-6; 1 Sam 3:1-21; 15:10-26; 2 Sam 7:4-8; 24:11-12; 1 Kgs 6:11-13; Jer 13:1-9; etc.). Lammert describes Gen 15:1, 4-7, 18: “The word of YHWH here is obviously more than a title for a verbal event; it is a title for a personal appearance of YHWH. Abram accepts the statement by the word of YHWH as if it were YHWH’s own word: Abram believed YHWH. Then the word of YHWH identifies himself as YHWH... [It] is reasonable to conclude that the word of YHWH is the same YHWH who made a covenant with Abram” (“The Word of YHWH as Theophany,” 200). Another example is Jer 1. The “word of the Lord” comes to Jeremiah and speaks as the Lord (1:2-5). Jeremiah the book and Jeremiah the prophet then identify the “word of the Lord” as the Lord (vv. 6-18). The Lord proceeds to touch Jeremiah with his hand in v. 9, speaks in v. 10, and is called the “word” in v. 11. This identification is reiterated in v. 13 when it says the “word of the Lord” returned a second time. The “word” may have been ontologically the Lord, unlike the “angel of the Lord.”

²²⁵ Lammert, “The Word of YHWH as Theophany,” 195-196. Charles A. Gieschen comments on the nature of the hypostasis in the Ancient Near East: “It has been affirmed through textual analysis that it is valid to speak of hypostases as aspects of God that have degrees of distinct personhood. It should be emphasized that our modern ways of conceptualization often resist giving a degree of personhood to these divine attributes or aspects. In spite of this, the textual evidence leads us to understand a world view that is based much more on tangible forms than abstract concepts. Thus, Name, Glory, Wisdom, Word, Spirit, and Power are not primarily abstract concepts in this world view; they are realities with visible forms” (*Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence*. Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 42 [Leiden: Brill, 1998], 122). I argue that in regard to the “word of YHWH,” this hypostasis is a person, the very person of YHWH.

the Lord as found in the OT, nevertheless he is the message (messenger) of God the Father.²²⁶

John may have intentionally avoided calling him the “word of the Lord” in order to show a separation of significance behind the divine titles of “Lord” and “God.”²²⁷

Many similarities can be identified between Revelation 19 and Zachariah 14 pointing to Jesus’ identity as the Lord.²²⁸ John’s choice of titles in an allusion to Isaiah 63 may draw on

²²⁶ In Mark 13:31 (Matt 24:35; Luke 21:33), Jesus declare his words to have a power equivalent to those spoken by the Lord in Isa 55:11. These prophecies in the Gospels belong to the Lord Jesus.

²²⁷ The divine Word has also been attributed to the creation account(s). John may have seen a difference in the use of divine titles in chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis. Chapter 1 portrays “God” speaking (commanding) and chapter 2 shows the workings of the “Lord God.” Therefore, the Lord enacts the words of God. Although Procksch does not see a difference involving the divine titles, he makes a similar observation regarding the divine word: “Since the Word of Yahweh always contained revelation, whether in the Law or the prophets, it could always be used to denote the revealed will of God. Indeed, there is a third sphere of revelation, namely, in the creation of nature, which is everywhere attributed to the Word of God. This thought, though without the term, is present already in the P creation story (Gen. 1), where the world has its origin in the divine Word” (“λέγω,” 99-100). Cf. John 1:1-3 where the title “God” is taken from Gen 1, not Gen 2 (“Lord”). Outside of scripture, contemporary sources of John also found a connection between the “Lord” and the “Word.” Barker finds this contemporary connection in wisdom literature and Philo. “An almost contemporary text described the Word as the mighty warrior who appeared on the night of the Exodus, in other words, this was a contemporary description of the LORD. The divine warrior was not just an image in the ancient texts. ‘Thy all powerful Word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne, into the midst of the land that was doomed, a stern warrior, carrying the sharp sword of thy authentic command, and stood and filled all things with death...’ (Wisd. 18.15). Philo listed the many names of Israel’s God, the Mighty Angel: he was ‘the High Priest, his First Born, the Divine Word’ (*Dreams* I.215), he was ‘God’s Firstborn, the Word, who holds the eldership among the angels, the ruler as it were. And many names are his: for he is called the Beginning and the Name of God and the Man after his Image’ (*Tongues* 146)” (Barker, *Revelation*, 307-308). Ronning describes the argument for a targumic source for Rev 19:13. In the Targums, especially of Isaiah, the Aramaic term “Word of the Lord” (including its variations: “my Word,” “his Word,” etc.) is inserted in place of the Hebrew, YHWH. “[T]he Tetragrammaton is often referred to as ‘the name of the Word of the LORD’ (Ronning, “The *Targum of Isaiah* and the Johannine Literature,” 262). Ronning argues that John describes Jesus not according to the prophecies of a human Messiah, but the divine Word: “[I]t is of interest that John did not content himself to depict Christ as the (human) Messiah envisaged in the Targums, but made prominent the parallels with the divine warrior of Isa 59:15b-21/63:1-6, even giving him the name which is the Targum equivalent of the Tetragrammaton. In showing this warrior both as the (human) Messiah and as the divine Word, John is giving us the message in Rev 19 that the divine Word has become flesh, just as [had been] said in John 1:14” (“The *Targum of Isaiah* and the Johannine Literature,” 264). Apparently, there was the possibility for John to have been aware of this link between the title “Word” and the Lord. Whatever the source might have been for the title “Word,” John most certainly must have made adaptations to suit his purposes of identifying Jesus as the Lord. Ronning concludes: “By saying that the name of the warrior is ‘the Word of God,’ which infers the Tetragrammaton, John makes it clear that the Warrior of Rev 19 is YHWH, not merely a personification of the God’s decree” (Ibid., 263). Kittel’s argument that the source for John’s use of “Word” could not have been the Targums does not affect my argument: “Similarly, all attempts to explain the λόγος statements of Jn. 1 in terms of the Targumic ארמית have failed, since this is never a personal hypostasis, but only a substitute for the tetragrammaton” (“λέγω,” 132). This does not reject the possibility that in Rev (or the Gospel of John) the Word was also a substitute or even identical to the divine name considering this consistent identification. In Rev, Jesus was the Lord, the Word of God.

²²⁸ Similar to the Lord in Zech 14:5, Jesus arrived on a horse with his army ready for battle in Rev 19:14 (cf. Isa 13:4-5). Horses of war are present in both accounts (Zech 14:20). The army’s attire symbolizes the purity of the saints mentioned in Rev 19:8. Zech 14:5 (and Joel 3:11) also describes the Lord’s arrival accompanied by his

language also found in Zechariah 14. The allusion begins with the description of Jesus' clothes. It is described as being red (19:13) because "he walks the winepress of the passionate wrath of God Almighty (τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ παντοκράτορος)" (v. 15). This treading through the winepress is another of the Lord's roles "clearly dependent" on Isaiah 63:1-6.²²⁹ Although the warrior of Isaiah is unnamed, that "his name is YHWH is clear from the parallel passage Isa 59:15b-20."²³⁰ Whereas the Lord of the OT had arrived with his army having treaded the winepress, Revelation has identified Jesus as the wine treading divine warrior. However, John makes particular distinction between Jesus the divine warrior and God Almighty in Revelation 19:15. John may have opted for "God Almighty" as to not make an association of identity with the "Lord Almighty." There is only one other instance in Revelation where the title "God Almighty" appears: 16:14. Elsewhere in Revelation, the adjective "almighty" is attached to the binomial "Lord God."²³¹ John repeatedly associated Jesus with the Lord of the OT. Jesus' separate and clear distinction from "God Almighty" may have been intentional. In Hebrew Zech 14, the Lord bears an inscription saying: "Holy to YHWH" (Zech 14:20). In the LXX, the inscription says: "Holy to the Lord Almighty." Taking note of the parallels in Zechariah 14 and Revelation 19, it is very likely that John used his choice of terms in order to reflect his Christology of divine titles.²³² If John was aware of this inscription from the LXX ("Holy to the Lord Almighty"), his

saints (cf. 1 Thess 3:13 and 2 Thess 1:7; Rev 14:1-4). Barker also correlates this imagery of Jesus's army with the Lord of the OT: "Yahweh was known as Yahweh of Hosts, the chief of the heavenly hosts" (*The Great Angel*, 162). For John, the "hosts" (saints) belong to Jesus (Rev 19:14).

²²⁹ Martin McNamara, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch*, *Anelecta Biblica* 27 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1966), 261. See also Barker, *The Great Angel*, 203.

²³⁰ Ronning, "The Targum of Isaiah and the Johannine Literature," 263.

²³¹ Rev 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 19:6; 21:22. While there is ambiguity in Rev 16, John may be making a distinction between the divine warrior, Lord Jesus, and God the Father by not attaching the title of "Lord" to "God Almighty."

²³² There are other allusions to Zechariah 14. The devoured corrupt flesh of all living is also in Revelation 19:17-18, 21b (Zech 14:13, 15; cf. Ezek 39:4, 17-18). There are details regarding the gathered armies that are to fight with the Lord (Rev 19:19; Zech 14:2). The Lord gathers the armies in Zech 14:2. Jesus does the gathering in

use of the divine title, “God Almighty,” suggests a possible interpretation consistent with Revelation as a whole. He may have wanted to portray “God Almighty” as someone distinct from the “Lord Almighty,” identified as Jesus. In order to identify the Father (distinct from the wine treading Lord), John did not use the title “Lord Almighty” or any variation with the title “Lord.”

The inscription in Revelation 19:16 is “King of kings and Lord of lords.” This same title appears in LXX Daniel 4:37, with the addition of, “God of gods.”²³³ Using this scriptural resource, however, John did not apply “God of gods” to Jesus. This was the second time John seems to avoid using the title “God of gods” for Jesus, while at the same time applying other lofty, parallel titles (see Rev 17:14). Jesus’ role as divine king over the earth may have come from Zechariah 14:9²³⁴:

Rev 16:15-16. Outside of Revelation 19, there are other linguistic parallels: the one who gathers his enemies (Rev 16:16; Zech 14:2; cf. Ezek 39:2-3); the one standing on a mount (ἴσσημι; Rev 14:1; LXX Zech 14:4); living water (Rev 7:17; Zech 14:8); the lack of merchants (Rev 18:15-17; Hebrew Zech 14:21). John takes this concept from Hebrew because the LXX has “Canaanites” in place of “merchants.”

²³³ Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 516. See also Beale, “Revelation,” 963. These titles are found in the Old Greek and not in the version by Theodotion, nor in Hebrew: “I confess openly to the Most High (τῷ ὑψίστῳ) and I give praise to one who created the heaven and the earth and the seas and the rivers and all things in them. I acknowledge and praise because he is God of gods and Lord of lords and King of kings” (θεὸς τῶν θεῶν καὶ κύριος τῶν κυρίων καὶ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλέων; LXX Dan 4:37). John’s use of divine titles can be applied to LXX Dan. Perhaps, for John, the Most High could be the “God of gods and Lord of lords and King of kings.” In order to make a distinction, Jesus was only the “Lord of lords and King of Kings.” In this same chapter in LXX Dan, the Lord who lives in heaven will atone for sins and unrighteousness: “The Lord lives in heaven (ζῆ ἐν οὐρανῷ) and his authority is over the whole earth; inquire of him about your sins even to atone (λύτρωσαι) all your unrighteousness in alms giving” (LXX Dan 4:27; cf. Rev 4:4, 8). When redemption comes, it happens before the God of Heaven (which could have been read as separate from the Lord who lives in heaven): “And upon the sum of the time of the seven years, my redemption came and my sins and my ignorances were fulfilled before the God of Heaven (τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ) and I inquired the God of Gods about my ignorances” (Dan 4:30c). The difference between the “Lord who lives in Heaven” (with his authority over the earth) and the “God of Heaven” (called the “God of gods”) may have provoked John’s designation of Jesus as the “Lord of the earth” (Rev 11:4, 8) and the Father as the “God of Heaven” (Rev 11:13). Revelation 11:8 may reflect the redeeming atonement mentioned in LXX Dan 4:27. This seems very probable taking note of the careful association John had been making with the use of divine titles in the OT.

²³⁴ Howbeit, completely different from the inscription in Zechariah 14:20, the inscription in Revelation may also have precedence in Zechariah. Zechariah 14:9 states that the Lord will be king over the entire earth. Hanson points out that this is a “[m]anifestation of Yahweh’s universal reign: Yahweh alone will reign” (*The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 372). This role as universal king in Zechariah may have been resembled by the title found in Revelation: “King of kings” (cf. Zech 14:16-17). As Messiah who had shed his blood, he was “the ruler of the kings

LXX Zechariah 14:9

The Lord (κύριος) will become King (βασιλέα) upon the earth; on that day the Lord will be one and his name (ὄνομα) [will be] one.

Revelation 19:16

...a name (ὄνομα) written: King (βασιλεύς) of kings and Lord (κύριος) of Lords.

With the many allusions taken from Zechariah, the possibility arises for John to have used three words common in these two verses: “Lord” (κύριος), “King” (βασιλεύς), and “name” (ὄνομα). If he is drawing from Zechariah, John magnifies the description given to Jesus. Zechariah says that the Lord will become King (אֲלֹהֵי יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ).²³⁵ In Revelation, Jesus is the “King of kings.”²³⁶ The great multitude of 19:6 had said: “Praise YAH [*hallelujah*], because the Lord our God the Almighty reigned [ἐβασίλευσεν].” The verb βασιλεύω shares its root with the noun “king” (βασιλεύς); in fact, βασιλεύω can be translated as “to be king.” Within ten verses, John states that Jesus would be “King of kings.” In this way, employing the shared root, John associates indirectly the King of Kings (19:16) with the reigning Lord God (19:6).²³⁷ In Revelation, Jesus is

of the earth” (ὁ ἄρχων τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς; Rev 1:5). Kotecki reasons that the appellation in 1:5 expresses complete dominion, perhaps comparable to the title “King of kings” (Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 516). This also goes hand-in-hand with the description of Jesus ruling with an iron fist in Rev 19:15 (cf. 2:27; 7:17; 12:5; 15:3).

²³⁵ In LXX Mal 1:14, the Lord calls himself a “great King”: “Cursed be the cheat who has a male in the flock and vows to give it, and yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished; for I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and my name is revered among the nations.”

²³⁶ Zech 14:9 also states that YHWH will be one and his name one. In the context of Zech 14, one may wonder if there was any disunity in the Lord that might have provoked this statement. However, YHWH is not the only king mentioned in Zech. In 9:9, Zion’s king will come riding a donkey. The Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of John both identified this king as Jesus (Matt 21:5; John 12:15). (In Matt, there is a clear distinction between the divine king Jesus and the Father [Matt 25:34]). John the revelator may have understood this king to be both the mortal messiah and the divine warrior Lord whose identity would be recognized as one, because Rev 19 makes a similar association. Cf. Acts 2:34-36. Barker describes the OT background in this divine Christological scene in Rev: “We have to envisage an ancient kingmaking rite, known in post-exilic times and to the first Christians, when Yahweh the Holy One came to his people both as king and as judge. The imagery of this ceremony had embedded itself deeply into the memory of the people, because it persisted from the time of the monarchy at least until the late first century AD when Jude was written. If we could understand what was done we should know the significance of what is depicted in the surviving texts, and should be much nearer understanding the first formulation of Christian belief, since this expectation of the coming of the king from heaven was the basis of the early parousia expectations. In other words, the Christians expected of Jesus what had formerly been expected of Yahweh and they called him the Holy One (Mark 1.24)” (*The Great Angel*, 29-30).

²³⁷ The Lord from Zech 14 (with whom Jesus had so closely been identified) was called the “Lord my God” (κύριος ὁ θεός μου [Zech 14:5]). The only difference in these binomials is the addition of a possessive pronoun:

the King of kings, the reigning Lord God.²³⁸ There is much to support seeing a conscientious effort on the part of John to depict a divine Jesus identified in Zechariah 14. John describes Jesus as the promised divine Bridegroom, the divine Warrior, the Lord who treads the winepress, the divine Judge, the divine Word, and the divine King. Bauckham summarizes stating that “Jesus himself is the eschatological manifestation of YHWH’s unique identity to the whole world.”²³⁹ My point, however, is to emphasize John’s separation of the two: the divine Lord Jesus and God the Father. Despite embodying many divine roles drawn from this and many other OT passages, John differentiates between the titles used for Jesus and those used for the Father.

“my.” John associates both the reigning “Lord my God” of Zechariah 14 and the “Lord God Almighty” of Revelation 19:6 with the Son.

²³⁸ However, even in this identification in this same chapter, John continues to separate “God” from “Lord” differently than the above examples: “...Hallelujah, because the *Lord our God, the Almighty*, reigns” (Rev 19:6) and “... he walks the winepress of the passionate wrath of *God Almighty*. And upon [his] robe and upon his thigh he had a name written: King of kings and Lord of Lords” (19:15-16). The identity of Jesus as the “King of kings” is associated with the “Lord our God, the Almighty.” However the King of kings is separate from the one called “God Almighty.” In the following chapter, I will develop the identification of Jesus as the Lord our God. As mentioned above, I argue Jesus was consistently the Lord in Revelation. When the images behind Revelation 19:6, 15-16 are placed together, John may imply that the King Lord God Almighty will tread “the winepress of the passionate wrath of God Almighty” (19:15). John had associated worship with the divine title of “God” (Rev 19:4). Zechariah 14:16-17 had said that all must worship the Lord the King Almighty (προσκυνῆσαι τῷ βασιλεῖ κυρίῳ παντοκράτορι). Perhaps, this concept is also based on Zech 14:16-17. With so many parallels between Zechariah 14 and Revelation 19, it is impractical to draw the line. John used the word “worship” in Revelation predominantly with the title of “God” possibly because he could include both *God* the Father and Jesus the Lord *God* under this one title (Rev 7:11; 11:16; 14:7; 19:4, 10; 22:9). Directing worship to the “Lamb” three times in Revelation may suggest he was included in the worship of “God” (5:13-14; 7:10-11, 17; 22:3). See Wright, “Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 32. Rev 22:3 uses the verb, λατρεύω, which is the same verb used in LXX Deut 6:13 for the Lord God (cf. Matt 4:10; Luke 4:8). On one occasion, “worship” is used with “Lord” (Rev 15:4).

²³⁹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 193. Mark D. Vander Hart notes that this eschatological imagery is never attributed to the Messiah: “...one searches in vain for any hint in the Old Testament history of revelation that the son of David would be the one responsible for the Day of YHWH” (“The Transition of the Old Testament Day of the Lord into the New Testament Day of the Lord Jesus Christ,” *MAJT* 9 (1993): 10). Vander Hart describes the Day of Lord as manifesting the work of the Lord (not the Davidic messiah) throughout OT prophetic literature of the eight-seventh century prophets (*ibid.*, 6-7) and the exilic and post-exilic prophets (*ibid.*, 7-8).

CHAPTER 4

The Lord God: Functional Unity and Ontological Separation of the Father and the Son

I have suggested that the Lord God in Revelation be understood as the person of Jesus (Lord) reflecting unity with the Father (God). In Revelation 22:5, the Lord God, κύριος ὁ θεός, gave light (as God, θεός, had in 21:23) and replaced the need for a lamp (related to the role of the Lamb in 21:23). Using the verb, φωρίζω, in both passages may represent a shared function with God while the association with light (lamp) identifies him with the Lamb. Furthermore, by Revelation 21, the “Lamb” had already been identified as the Lord over the book of life, the divine Bridegroom, and the Lord of Isaiah 60:19. On this basis, it seems that John conceived of the Lamb (Jesus) as the OT divine Lord. In Revelation 19:6, the one who reigns (or is king) was called “Lord God.” After a divine eschatological manifestation, this King of kings was called the “Word of God” (19:13).²⁴⁰ Both titles share the word “God,” explicitly conveying divinity: “Lord God” and “Word of God.” I suggest that there are parallels between the way that “Lord” and “Word” express Jesus’ identity both in unity with the Father. (Just as the title “Word of God” reflects Jesus’ functional role as revelation from the Father.) I suggest “Lord God” in Revelation conveys Jesus as the one who possess the complete authority of the Father. John may have employed the binomial “Lord God” to explicitly communicate Jesus’ eternal and divine investiture and mediatory position given to him by the Father (Rev 3:21). As Lord God, Jesus divinely communicated the message and reflected the person of the Father in Revelation.²⁴¹

²⁴⁰ He was also called “Faithful” and “True” in verse 12.

²⁴¹ This concept is comparable and applicable to passages such as: Matt 1:18; Luke 5:20-26; John 14:8-10; Col 1:15-17; and Heb 1:1-3.

Jesus as Lord God (worthy of worship) who sent his Angel

In the book of Revelation there is an angel who had been sent specifically by Jesus (1:1). While this angel receives minor attention, at the end of the book, John suggested that this messenger had made the entire revelation known (Rev 22:16). The role of this angel mirrors OT language regarding the “angel of the Lord” sent by the OT Lord, further identifying the divine sender of the angel as the Son. The book begins, “[The] revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him to show to his servants... and communicated [it] sending his angel to his servant John” (1:1). The order of delegation is defined clearly. First, the revelation can either belong to or be about Jesus and it was given to him by God (the Father).²⁴² Jesus and God are unified as revealers, yet separation is reflected as one delegates to the other.²⁴³ The Revelation is both about and given to Jesus, conveying his role as mediator, standing between God and those who receive the message. However, in Revelation, Jesus has his own intermediary.²⁴⁴ The pronouns such as “his servant” and “his angel” seem to be referring to Jesus, despite θεός in nominative case.²⁴⁵

Therefore, the order of delegation in Revelation appears to be: 1) God the Father, 2) Jesus, 3) the

²⁴² On the use of the genitive and the revelation belonging to Jesus (indicating delegation) complementary to being a revelation about Jesus, Beale has argued that: “The opening expression *Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* (‘revelation of Jesus Christ’) could mean that the ‘revelation’ is given by or from Jesus (subjective genitive or genitive of source). However, the phrase may also include the idea that the revelation is about Jesus (objective genitive)... though this is contested by many. The immediate context does favor the subjective genitive: (1) the following clause said that “God gave” (or revealed) the revelation to Jesus; (2) Christ is set within the chain of revelation, so that he is one of the agents who reveals; (3) in the NT and Revelation prophecy comes from Christ to a prophet, and the content of the message is not always information about Christ. Rev. 22:16, 20 confirm this by portraying Jesus as the One who bears revelatory testimony through his angel to the churches” (Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 703).

²⁴³ This may be his implicit role as Word of God.

²⁴⁴ J. Wright identifies Jesus’ role in regard to the angel: “Jesus stands below ‘God’ and above the angel in a heavenly hierarchy for the successful communication of the heavenly revelation into the earthly realm” (“Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 21).

²⁴⁵ This may imply Jesus’ divine superiority over the angels. Cf. Mar 13:32; Matt 24:36; Heb 1:5-9. For Bauckham, this superiority allows Jesus to participate in “divine sovereignty... he is included in the unique identity of the one God” (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 24). I would interpret this concept as reflecting functional, not ontological, unity. Commenting on the subject of the verb, “to show/signify” (σημαίνω), Aune clarifies that Jesus “is logically more probable since the revelation was transmitted by God to Jesus Christ, and it must be Jesus Christ who then further communicates the revelation” (*Revelation 1-5*, 15).

angel, and 4) the servants (humanity).²⁴⁶ Whether this reflects hierarchy will have to be determined by the text.

The function of this angel develops further in the last chapter of Revelation: 22:6, 8, 16. After a general statement and rephrasing of Revelation 1:1 in 22:6, this messenger speaks as if he were Jesus in v. 7, saying in first person, “I come quickly.” This messenger follows by pronouncing a blessing, reminiscent of Jesus’ beatitudes: “Blessed [is] the one who keeps the words of the prophecies of this book.”²⁴⁷ Perhaps as a result of the fact that the angel speaks *as if he were Jesus*, John falls down at his feet to worship him (πίπτω and προσκυνέω; vv. 8-9). Treating the angel as Jesus, John mimics the actions of the elders in 19:4 by falling and attempting to perform worship. The angel rebukes John by revealing his true identity as a fellow-slave and brother (σύνδουλός σου εἰμι καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου). He redirects John to “worship God” (v. 9).²⁴⁸ To readers, John’s confusion is understandable. The angel had previously said that he was the One who was coming (v. 7). He later calls himself the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last” (v. 13). Eventually, the angel speaks according to his role as agent, saying, “I Jesus,” and continues to speak in third person about the angel who Jesus had sent (who is in fact himself; v. 16). In speech, the angel fully represents Jesus, yet worship is not properly directed to the angel but redirected to God. In other words, John is not rebuked for attempting to worship Jesus. Lincicum comments:

With John, the reader/hearer is told not to worship any lesser being, but only to “Worship God!” (22:9)... The frame also recalls the introductory scene when John offers worship

²⁴⁶ The angel must communicate the words of Jesus, as the Word-Jesus does for God the Father (i.e., Word of God”). Comparatively, the Jesus-angel relationship mirrors the Father-Son relationship: God gave the revelation to Jesus and Jesus to the angel.

²⁴⁷ Blount, *Revelation*, 403. Cf. Matt 5:3-11 and Luke 6:20-22.

²⁴⁸ An account similar to 22:8-9 occurs in 19:10 but there are some differences. In chapter 19, the speaker is never called an angel neither does he speak as if he were Jesus. On the other hand, the angel in chapter 22 is identified specifically as the one sent to John: 22:6, 8, 18.

to Jesus and is not rebuked as he is when he does the same to the angel (1:17-18). The statement of 22:13 justifies and clarifies the actions of 1:17-18 as worship toward one who has come to share in the divine identity.²⁴⁹

As Lincicum observes, in 1:17-18, John had fallen before Jesus' feet and was not rebuked.²⁵⁰ I suggest that the command in Revelation 22 to "worship God" is actually consistent, as there is a differentiation maintained between Jesus and the angel speaking for him. Yet, in the context of Revelation, references to "God" may include God the Father and Jesus as the Lord God.²⁵¹ The Lamb (Jesus) and the One on the throne (Father) were both proper objects of worship in 5:13-14. When the angel commands John to worship God (1:17; 7:11, 17), Jesus may have been included implicitly under the divine title of "God."²⁵² Therefore, it was not John's impulse that was inappropriate when he falls to worship Jesus; his error is in the one to whom he bows in this attempt.

²⁴⁹ Lincicum, "The Origin of 'Alpha and Omega,'" 132. Although not entirely consistent with Lincicum, I understand Jesus in Revelation to "share in the divine identity" because he is also divine. He has his own unique divine identity as represents the Father, constituting oneness in function and purpose.

²⁵⁰ Revelation 1 lacks the verb "to worship."

²⁵¹ For example, Lincicum's observation on shared worship recalls the liturgy of Rev 5:13-14: "And every creature who was in heaven and upon the earth and below the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, I heard saying, 'To the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb, blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!' And the four living creatures were saying, 'Amen!' And the elders fell down and worshipped." Those before whom the elders had fallen and were worshiping were both the One on the throne and the Lamb. Although there is no direct object to "worship," to argue the action of the verb is directed to only one of the two would render no definite conclusion. Consistent with Rev 19:4 and 22:8, the elders in Rev 5 also fell down (πίπτω) and worshipped (προσκυνέω). Collins observes: "Significantly, the Son of Man does not refuse John's obeisance, as the angels elsewhere do (Rev 19:10; 22:8-9)... The worship of Jesus, and the way in which divine imagery is applied to him, marks perhaps the most fundamental point at which Revelation departs from Jewish precedent" (*The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 274). Collins' statement ignores that Revelation is very Jewish. Perhaps, it departs from first-century Jewish thought. Cf. Matt 2:11 (cf. 4:9); Mark 3:11; 5:22, 33; 7:25; Luke 5:8, 12; 8:28, 41, 47; Luke 17:16; John 11:32; Rom 14:9-11; 1 Cor 14:25; Phil 2:10-11; Rev 1:17; 4:10; 5:8, 13-14; 7:11 (17); 11:16; and 19:4 (cf. 10).

²⁵² In reference to worshipping the Lord God, John may have had in mind the version of Deuteronomy 6:13 that Q (Matthew and Luke) were quoting in the account of the temptations: "You shall worship (προσκυνήσεις) the Lord your God and him only you shall serve (λατρεύσεις)" (Matt 4:10; Luke 4:8). In LXX Deut 6:13, the verb, προσκυνέω ("to worship"), is not used but, φοβέω ("to fear"). In line with my thesis, early Christian worship may have been to worship God (the Father) through the Lord (Jesus): "You shall worship the Lord your God."

In the OT, the “angel of the Lord” functioned on behalf of the Lord.²⁵³ Barker argues that in Revelation the functions of Jesus’ angel is parallel to the OT concept.²⁵⁴ As in Revelation 22, the angel of the Lord in the OT spoke as if he were the Lord. Andrew S. Malone explains the two theories that scholars have offered to explain such a phenomenon: the “representational theory” or the “identification theory.”²⁵⁵ This angel either represented the Lord or was identified as the Lord.²⁵⁶ In Revelation, John may have been confused by the angel’s representation of Jesus.²⁵⁷

²⁵³ Gen 16:7-11; Gen 22:11, 15; Exod 3:2; 23:20; Num 22:22-35; Judg 2:1, 4; 5:23; 6:11-22; 13:3-21; 2 Sam 24:16; 1 Kgs 19:7; 2 Kgs 1:3, 15; 19:35; Zech 1:11-12; 3:1, 5-6; 12:8.

²⁵⁴ Barker, *The Great Angel*, 202. For some scholars, this angel in the OT may have been Jesus in some preexistent state. “Many former and contemporary theologians have argued that the OT angel of the Lord was either a theophany or a Christophany. Although the latter view is more popular, the common denominator for both views is that מלאך־יהוה is ontologically identified with deity” (René A. López, “Identifying the ‘Angel of the Lord’ in the Book of Judges: A Model for Reconsidering the Referent in Other Old Testament Loci,” *BBR* 20 [2010]: 3-4). This conclusion is based on an attempt to show Jesus in the OT. However, René A. López argues that no NT author made an effort to demonstrate that Jesus was typified in the angel of the Lord (Ibid., 14). López later adds, commenting on the angel in Luke, that, “[b]ecause Jesus appears together with the angel of Lord of the OT, how can this OT angel be the preincarnate Christ?” (Ibid., 15).

²⁵⁵ Andrew S. Malone, “Distinguishing the Angel of the Lord,” *BBR* 21.3 (2011): 297.

²⁵⁶ For Douglas K. Stuart, the appositional construct, “angel of the Lord,” can be translated as, the “Angel YHWH”: “Of the dozen or so types of constructs typically recognized by Hebrew grammarians, the most likely type involved here is the appositional construct (also called definitional construct, genitive of apposition, genitive of definition, genitive of association), that is, the form of the construct that uses the second word to identify the first... Likewise, *mal’āk yahweh* is grammatically appositional and best translates as ‘the angel that is Yahweh’ or ‘the Angel Yahweh’ or ‘Angel Yahweh’” (Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture* [NAC; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006], 110-111). This conclusion springs predominantly from the first-person speech of the angel. It also shows the confusion produced by the portrayal of this angel in the OT.

²⁵⁷ This first-person agent language (i.e., *I, me*) may be comparable to Jesus’ role as spokesman for the Father in the Gospel of John (14:8-10). In the Gospel of John, to see Jesus was to see the Father (not the “Lord”). The Son spoke the words and performed the deeds of the Father. On the angel in the OT, Malone states that the “first-person language is insufficient to distinguish between an envoy and his master. We thus require additional evidence to be confident that a distinguishable messenger is at work” (“Distinguishing the Angel of the Lord,” 303). As awkward as this role may appear to be to a modern reader, López describes the nature on this agent-messenger relationship: “While this kind of language of personal appropriation may seem to us unsuitable for mere messengers, [Ancient Near Eastern] customs and texts indicate that envoys who came as agents of a god typically spoke in the first person and were addressed in the second person, just as the deity they represented” (López, “Identifying the ‘Angel of the Lord,’” 4). This is most certainly applicable to Revelation. The “additional evidence” includes the rebuke and explanation given by the angel in order to correct John’s confusion. In Rev 22 and the OT, there is no clear separation between the angel and the one who sent him while the messenger spoke. Norman R. Gulley offers a reading that pictures a plurality within the Godhead in analyzing the “angel” and Hagar in Gen 16. After the angel is identified as divine or God (16:13), Gulley says that “[t]his God said the Lord had heard of her misery, so God referred to the Lord, and in so doing gave insight into there being more than one Person in the Godhead (Gen 16:7–13)” (“Trinity in the Old Testament,” 86). In the OT, this heavenly messenger identified himself as divine (Gen 31:13) and to see the angel was to see divinity (Judg 13:20-22). Therefore: “[t]he angel of the Lord represents Yahweh as his agent” (López, “Identifying the ‘Angel of the Lord,’” 18). This messenger appears also in the

However, the mere comparison between the angel of Jesus in Revelation and the angel of the Lord in the OT is not the only identification John had worked into the language of chapter 22.²⁵⁸ In regard to revelation, Ackerman argues that the titles “angel of the Lord” and the “word of the Lord” in the OT are concepts related to the giving of revelation.²⁵⁹ Already John has used “Word” and “angel” in connection with the Lord Jesus (Rev 19:13; 22:16).²⁶⁰

writings of the post-exilic Chronicler. Malone observes that “1 Chr 21:15-16 has David encounter ‘angel of Yahweh,’ the narrator later considers David to have met Yahweh himself (2 Chr 3:1)” (Malone, “Distinguishing the Angel of the Lord,” 305). Barker describes the ambiguous role of the angel in the OT describing, first, passages that show a clear separation (Gen 24:7; Exod 23:20-21, 23; 32:34; 33:2; Num. 20:16; 1Chr 21:27; Zech 1:21) followed by ambiguous passages (Gen 12:7; 26:23; 35:12; Sam 24.16-17). See *The Great Angel*, 31-32. John mirrors the nature of this angel-Lord relationship in his depiction of the angel-Jesus relationship of Rev 22, indirectly attributing divine status to Jesus.

²⁵⁸ The angel in v. 16 declares that he is Jesus who had sent his angel. This is a possible allusion to Exod 23:20 (“I am sending my angel”) or Mal 3:1 (“I am sending-forth my angel”). However, in Exod 23 the unnamed speaker refers to himself in first person and to the Lord in third person in the verses before and after this passage (Exod 23:17, 20, 25). In Mal 3:1 the speaker is clearly the Lord; John attributes this angel-sending role to Jesus: “Also, if Jesus’ sending of his angel is modeled on the language of Mal. 3:1 (“I [the LORD] will send my angel”), here is yet another suggestion of Christ’s divinity” (Beale, “Revelation,” 1143). “[The] revelation of Jesus Christ... and he communicated [it] sending his angel to his servant John (Rev 1:1); ‘I Jesus sent my angel to testify to you these things to the churches’ (Rev 22:16). Jesus is described as sending *his* angel. The Father is not said to play a direct role with the angel. Identical to the Lord in the OT, Jesus was identified as the divine commissioner of revelation to humanity. Cf. Isa 55:11 and Matt 24:35.

²⁵⁹ Ackerman, “The Principal of Differentiation between ‘The Word of the Lord’ and ‘The angel of the Lord,’” 145. Commenting on the “word” and the “angel” of the Lord, Ackerman says: “Here are two phrases which are one in meaning so far as they signify revelation” (Ibid., 146). The “word” is the message/Jesus and the angel communicates that message.

²⁶⁰ John’s adaptations are fitting. Whereas the “word of the Lord” had been the Lord himself (Gen 15:1-2; 1 Sam 3:1, 7, 21; Jer 1:2-13), correspondingly, the Lord Jesus continues to be the Word who was sent explicitly by God (Rev 19:13; cf. John 1:1-3, 14). The LXX uses the word, ῥῆμα, whereas the NT uses, λόγος (see also Luke 10:36). In the NT, the “word of the Lord” is applied christologically to Jesus (Col: 3:16; cf. Rom 10:17 [ῥῆμα]). John is not alone in this particular description of the Lord-angel relationship in contrast to the title “God.” John associated the angel (and the word [λόγος]) with the title “Lord,” while maintaining a separation with the divine title of “God.” Alan Segal explains how Philo, the first-century philosopher, used titles in a way that resembles John’s use of titles: “The *logos*, a necessary part of Philo’s ontology, is... generally and completely equated with the angel mentioned throughout Genesis and Exodus... this angel is a creature who carries ‘the name of [the Lord God]’, as scripture says (Exod 23:21). This is the same scripture which rabbis found so easily misinterpreted. But not only can Philo refer to YHWH as the *logos*, he can also interpret other occurrences of YHWH in scripture to indicate the presence of an angel, not God. For instance, the Lord (YHWH) standing on top of Jacob’s ladder (Gen 28:13) is identified as the archangel, the *logos*... Philo is able to link the two Hebrew words for God, *Elohim* and *YHWH*, which he knew by their Greek equivalents *theos* and *kyrios*, with the Existent One and His *logos* respectively” (Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 170; “The angel of God” is used twice in the OT [Gen 21:17; 31:11]). According to Segal, at least in this particular example, Philo had read scripture linking “word”/“angel” with “Lord,” maintaining a separation with the title “God.” John may have done the same. Jesus and the title “God” clearly speak of two separate figures in the context of Revelation 1:1, where the angel and the servants had belonged specifically to Jesus. Linguistically, there is no connection between God (the Father), the angel, and the servants outside of Jesus. The angel and servants most certainly belong to the Father, but the text reserves them for Jesus.

In 22:6, the angel and the servants are now both attributed to the binomial “Lord God,” indicating perhaps that he is not the person of the Father. John is apparently equating Jesus with the Lord God:

22:6
The Lord God sent his angel...

22:16
I Jesus sent my angel...

These lines are structurally similar.²⁶¹ Furthermore, John had fallen before this angel in order to worship him (22:8). It is reasonable to assume John had wanted to worship the Lord God whom the angel represented. In response, this messenger identifies the one whom he represents as Jesus, not the Father (vv. 12-16). When Revelation 1:1 is considered, the separation between God and the Lord God is more apparent. John used the angel to identify the Lord God as Jesus. John apparently was able to equate the angel of the Lord with the angel of Jesus, equating Jesus with the Lord God, a concept drawn from the OT.²⁶²

Grammatical Hints to the Identity of Jesus as Exalted Lord *and* Suffering Christ/Lamb

In Greek neuter nouns can be grouped together by one singular verb. Daniel B. Wallace observes that non-neuter compound subjects can be followed by a singular verb if the “*first*-named subject is the one being stressed in such instances.”²⁶³ The models presented by Wallace follow a particular structure: First Subject + Singular Verb + Conjunction (καί) + Second Subject. Revelation employs a singular verb in this same structure with the dragon and his angels

²⁶¹ Although the verb ἀποστέλλω (“to send away”; 22:6) for the Lord God is changed to πέμπω (“to send”; 22:16), this does not imply a different person. John had also used the verb, ἀποστέλλω, for Jesus in 1:1.

²⁶² “The evidence that the first Christians identified Jesus with the God of the Jews is overwhelming; it was their customary way of reading the Old Testament. The appearances of Yahweh or the angel of Yahweh were read [both] as manifestations of the pre-existent Christ” (Barker, *The Great Angel*, 192-193).

²⁶³ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 401-402. Cf. Matt 13:55; Mark 8:27; 14:1; John 2:2; 3:22; 4:36; Acts 5:29; 16:31; 1 Tim 6:4.

(Rev 12:7) and the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb (21:22). Revelation 21:22 appears to follow this structure, stressing the Lord God’s role as temple in the New Jerusalem. The verb (ἐστίν) follows the first subject: Lord God. There may be another reason for this phrasing, beyond adherence to this grammatical pattern, called for by the context.

Before John’s separation of divine titles in 21:23, he may have used the grammar of v. 22 to support the interpretation I have presented, identifying Jesus as the Lord God Almighty.

Although the singular verb is closer to the title “Lord God Almighty” consistent with Wallace’s comments, the syntax allows John to have identified him with the Lamb. In describing the New Jerusalem, Revelation 21:22 literally reads:

“And I did not see a temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty is [ἐστίν] her temple and the Lamb.”	καὶ ναὸν οὐκ εἶδον ἐν αὐτῇ ὁ γὰρ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ ναὸς αὐτῆς ἐστίν καὶ τὸ ἄρνιον
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In contrast to other examples of compound subjects and singular verbs, the verb here is εἰμί, “to be,” making an identification. Although John may have stressed the point that the Lord God and the Lamb are not a plurality of beings (i.e., they *is* the temple [sic]), that may not be the message of this passage. The singular verb may demonstrate the ontological identity stating that the Lord God Almighty is both the temple (symbolically) and the Lamb (ontologically). Therefore the text could read: “for the Lord God Almighty is her temple and [is] the Lamb.”

The verb “to be” is what differentiates this statement from those mentioned by Wallace. John had made other similar statements: “...the Lamb will conquer them, for he is [ἐστίν] Lord of lords and King of kings” (τὸ ἄρνιον νικήσει αὐτούς ὅτι κύριος κυρίων ἐστίν καὶ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων; 17:14); “And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is [ἐστίν] the Devil and Satan” (καὶ ἐκράτησεν τὸν δράκοντα ὁ ὄφης ὁ ἀρχαῖος ὃς ἐστίν Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς; 20:2). The singular verb (ἐστίν) and the conjunction (καί) in Revelation 17:14 resemble the ἐστίν-καί

(is-and) grammatical structure of 21:22: κύριος κυρίων ἐστὶν καὶ (17:14); ναὸς αὐτῆς ἐστὶν καὶ (21:22). These are the only two examples of this ἐστὶν-καὶ structure in Revelation. This structure in 17:14 identified the Lamb as both Lord of lords and King of kings. This ἐστὶν-καὶ (is-and) grammatical structure may have reflected a similar and dual identification of the Lord God Almighty as both the Temple and the Lamb. John, perhaps, was preparing his readers for the separation and functional unity between God the Father and the Lord Jesus reflected in 21:23 and 22:5.²⁶⁴ If the Lord God Almighty is the Temple and the Lamb, Jesus' association with the temple is supported by other NT passages.²⁶⁵

Revelation 21:3 uses similar vocabulary to the prologue of the Gospel of John where the Word is said to have come and “tabernacled” (σκηνώω; *skēnoō*) among the disciples.²⁶⁶

Bauckham comments on the use of σκηνώω in Revelation:

Then, when the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven, God will make his home with humanity on earth (21:3). The Greek words which 21:3 uses for “dwelling” (*skēnē*) and “dwell” (*skēnoō*) are those which Jewish Greek used as virtually transliterations of the Hebrew *mishkān* and *shākan*, used in the Old Testament of [YHWH]'s presence in the tabernacle and the temple.²⁶⁷

The verb, σκηνώω, communicates and represents divine presence. I pay attention particularly to John's choice of title to describe what he has seen. Although Revelation 21:2-3 states that “God”

²⁶⁴ Aune makes a similar observation but sees no separation of divine titles in 21:23 (Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1148). By way of explaining this grammatical particularity in verse 22, Aune concludes that the phrase “and the Lamb” must have been added to the text (ibid, 1168). The ontological unity between the Lord God and the Messiah figure may also be John's interpretation of Zech 14:9: “The Lord will be one and his name one.” The temple is also mentioned under different terms in Zech 14:20-21.

²⁶⁵ Aune finds a correlation more with Jesus than with God the Father: “While the Johannine Jesus speaks of his physical body figuratively as a ναός, ‘temple’ (John 2:19, 21), there are few parallels to the conception of God as temple” (Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1168). Beale finds the same temple-replacement imagery elsewhere: “This replacement was inaugurated with Christ's first coming, when he referred to his own resurrection as the rebuilding of the temple (John 2:19-22; Mark 14:58; 15:29). Analogously, Matt 21:42; Mark 12:10-12; Luke 20:17-18; Acts 4:11; and Rom 9:32-33 picture Christ as the temple's ‘chief cornerstone,’ while Eph 2:20 portrays Christ as the ‘cornerstone’ of the temple, which there is the church” (Beale, “Revelation,” 1091).

²⁶⁶ John 1:14: “And the Word became flesh and tabernacled [ἐσκήνωσεν] among us.”

²⁶⁷ Bauckham, *Theology*, 140. Cf. Rev 7:15.

in heaven would dwell with his people, John saw not “God” but the “Lord God” (21:22). Therefore, the binomial “Lord God” could indicate the united presence of God (21:3) and the identity of the Lamb (21:22). John may have suggested that Jesus, as Lord God, bears the presence of God (the Father).²⁶⁸ Although John intentionally distinguishes the superiority of the Father in previous passages (1:1, 6; 3:5, 21; 5:7), no superiority is suggested in 21:22 between the Lord God and the Lamb. The possibility exists that Jesus, the Lord God Almighty, is the temple who bears the presence of God on earth (21:3). Therefore, Jesus could be rightly called the “Almighty” as he fully represents “God” (the Father), sitting upon his Father’s throne (3:21).²⁶⁹ This will be further developed.

Revelation 11:15 does not follow the same grammatical structure suggested by Wallace or the structure of 21:22. Grammatical unity in 11:15 is expressed differently with the verb following both subjects: “Lord” and “Christ.” The context is in regard to the second and third “Woe.” After the account of the two martyr-prophets in Jerusalem, John hears great voices cry out in 11:15. The passage is generally translated as such: “The kingdom of the world became of our Lord and his Christ and he will reign [βασιλεύσει] forever and ever.” The conjunction (καί) does not lie between the first subject/singular verb and the second subject, as shown above: First Subject + Singular Verb + Conjunction (καί) + Second Subject. In 11:15, the singular verb

²⁶⁸ J. Wright, assuming the Lord God is the Father, comments on this use of grammar: “God and the Lamb are at no point in the Apocalypse clearly referred to with a plural pronoun nor are they the subject of a plural verb” (“Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 23). Although the term “God” is not used, but instead “the one who sits on the throne” (which infers God), Rev 6:16-17 uses a plural pronoun, which does not support Wright’s premise. His claim is more accurate, however, if the terms are modified: the Lord and Jesus are never plural in Revelation.

²⁶⁹ Singular verbs are used for the actions of more than one noun in Revelation (and not always neuter as the grammatical rule allows). In 12:7, “the dragon and his angels *makes war* (ἐπολέμησεν).” The verb is singular. This practice in chapter 12 may appear to revolve around heaven where the war took place. Once the dragon and his angels are cast out of heaven in 12:9, the grammar separates the dragon (ἐβλήθη) from his angels (ἐβλήθησαν) who were cast out. In contrast, inanimate objects in 9:17 (fire, smoke, and sulphur) *comes out* onto the earth with the use of singular verbs/participles (ἐκπορεύεται; τοῦ ἐκπορευομένου). However, around the throne/temple in heaven, the lightning, noise and thunder *come out* (ἐκπορεύονται; 4:5) and *come to be* (ἐγένοντο; 11:19) in plural. 21:22 may reflect the unity of/connection between heaven and earth through the Lord God (i.e., the Lord Jesus and God the Father).

comes after both subjects. Therefore, the verse does not give any other indication that “the *first*-person subject is the one being stressed” as Wallace suggests. Passages in Revelation associate the verb “to reign” and the divine authority over earthly kingdoms with the title Lord and/or the person of Jesus (Rev [1:5;] 11:15, 17; 19:6; 20:6).²⁷⁰

This association between divine rule over the cosmos, the title Lord, and the person of Jesus may also identify Jesus indirectly with the title “Lord God” in 11:17. After identifying Jesus as the divine and atoning Lord (11:4, 8), John may have also identified the Lord Christ with the reigning Lord God Almighty in 11:17.²⁷¹ Revelation 11:15 concludes with a singular verb, but had begun with plurality: “Lord” and “Christ.” Osbourne suggests that “John switches to the third-singular βασιλεύσει (he will reign) to stress . . . oneness.”²⁷² This oneness between the Lord God and Christ may be consistent with the use of the title “Lord” throughout Revelation 11 (11:4, 8, 15, 17). This further supports John’s reluctance to speak of the Lord and Jesus “as a plurality.”²⁷³ Against my understanding of John’s use of titles, Osbourne argues that “our Lord” can only refer to the Father:

²⁷⁰ Rev 12:10 complements this concept identifying collectively (ἐγένετο) salvation, power, the kingdom of God, the authority of Christ. The Kingdom of God in 12:10 will come from heaven.

²⁷¹ The context does not appear to demand that 11:4 be referring to the Father (See 11:13).

²⁷² Osbourne, *Revelation*, 441. See also Mounce, *Revelation*, 226; Mueller, “Christological Concepts 2,” 79.

²⁷³ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 142. Although Bauckham uses titles “God and Christ” as never being spoken “as a plurality,” Revelation does not support his conclusion if “God” is meant to represent someone other than Jesus. Wrath belongs to the One on the throne *and* the Lamb; it will be the great day of “*their* wrath” (Rev 6:16-17). The plural pronoun shows plurality involving God and Christ. In reference to the “great day,” throughout the NT, the OT day of the Lord was attributed to Jesus: “Thus in the witness of both the four Gospels as well as the preaching recorded in Acts, it is clear that Jesus is both LORD (YHWH) and Messiah (son of David, crucified and resurrected), and that the particulars of the Day of the LORD revolve around this same Jesus” (Vander Hart, “The Transition of the Old Testament Day of the LORD,” 16; cf. Isa 13:9; Joel 2:11, 31; Zeph 1:14-15; Luke 17:22-30; John 8:56; 1 Cor 1:8; 2 Cor 1:14; Phil 1:6, 10; 2:16. Vander Hart adds: “The New Testament parousia of Jesus Christ is thus rooted in the Old Testament theophanies of YHWH” (Ibid., 4; See also Thomas Francis Glasson, “Theophany and Parousia,” *NTS* 34 [1998]: 259). However, in Rev 6:16-17, the “great day” belongs to the One on the throne *and* the Lamb (cf. 16:14). Although, much of the language comes from Isa 2:10 that only speaks of the title “Lord,” John may have used other passages with the title “Lord God” to attribute this day to the Father and the Son. In LXX Jer 26:10 (Heb Jer 46:10) and LXX Amos 8:9, this “day” is attributed to the “Lord God” (or “Lord our

Moreover, there is an inseparable unity between τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν, undoubtedly God the Father, and τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ (of his Christ)... While κύριος often refers to Christ in the book, it cannot do so here, for αὐτοῦ (“his Christ”) demands that the “Lord” here be God the Father.²⁷⁴

This is a logical assumption if only this verse is observed in its traditional translation. In the context of chapter 11, John may have clarified the identity of the one called “Lord” (v. 8).

In order to perceive why the title “Lord God” may reflect Jesus’ unity with the Father in 11:17, I will review the divine titles in Revelation 11. Two titles in the description of the second “Woe” contrast: “the Lord of the earth” (11:4) and “the God of heaven” (11:13). Nothing demands these two titles to be about the same divine person, implying the “Lord of the earth” (Jesus) may have been distinct, at least in this description, from the “God of heaven” (the Father). For John to have called Jesus the Lord of the earth may not have been without precedence, expressing John’s view of the exalted divine Jesus in v. 4.²⁷⁵ When describing the great city of Jerusalem four verses later, John adds the descriptor: “where their Lord was crucified” (11:8). As Osbourne expresses it, this description in 11:8 “demands that the ‘Lord here be’ Jesus.”²⁷⁶ The narrative appears to describe the crucifixion of the Lord of the earth mentioned in v. 4. Beale describes how the title “Lord” in Revelation 11:4, 8, and 15 interrelates with the Christology of Revelation:

God”). John may have identified the One on the throne and the Lamb from the binomial “Lord God,” separating the persons by separating the titles. Heb Isa 13:13 has parallelism with “day of YHWH” in one line and “destruction of Almighty” (יְיָ) in the other (LXX has “Lord” and “God”). In addition, Isa 13:11-13 has an unidentified divine voice speaking in third person about the Lord and his day. This may have implied two divine persons for a first-century reader like John.

²⁷⁴ Osbourne, *Revelation*, 441.

²⁷⁵ Bauckham finds scriptural support: “Christ’s lordship over ‘all things’: Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 3:35; 13:3; 16:15; Acts 10:36; 1 Cor. 15:27-28; Eph. 1:22; Phil. 3:21; Heb. 1:2; 2:8; cf. Eph. 1:10, 23; 4:10; Col. 1:20. Christ’s participation in the creation and sustaining of ‘all things’: John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:3” (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 23).

²⁷⁶ Bauckham argues John “like most early Christian writers, restricts the word ‘God’ to God the Father of Jesus Christ” (*Theology*, 25). However, the NT may not uphold his conclusion regarding “early Christian writers” (Matt 1:23; 4:4, 5:2; Mark 2:7-12; Luke 4:2, 12-13; John 1:18; Acts 20:28; Rom 9:5; 1 Tim 1:17, 6:14-15; Titus 1:3-4, 2:10, 13, 3:4, 6; Heb 1:8-9; 2Pet 1:1). “God” was used indirectly and directly for Jesus.

The subject of “they see” in v 9 is people throughout the world and continues the plural antecedent of “their” (αὐτῶν) here in “their Lord was crucified.” Therefore those represented by “their” must be people around the world and cannot be restricted to the inhabitants of literal Jerusalem, either in the past or future, who “crucified their [Israel’s] Lord.” But how could Christ be called the “Lord” of unbelievers? The approach is to see “where their Lord was crucified” as a general metaphor for unbelieving Israel being applied to the whole world of unbelievers . . . Therefore, the world is characterized by persecution of Christ’s followers. And Revelation speaks of Christ as Lord not only of Israel but also of the unbelieving world (e.g., 1:5; 17:14; 19:16), so that it is appropriate to think of him here as Lord of the world (cf. esp. 11:15).²⁷⁷

According to Beale, the Lord throughout Revelation 11 was Jesus, indicating that Jesus was both “our Lord” and “Christ” in v. 15. John begins by mentioning the Lord of the earth (11:4). He then identifies this Lord as the crucified Messiah, the Lord of his disciples (v. 8) and of the “unbelieving world” as Beale has said.

The third-person plural pronoun (“their”) communicates possession in 11:8. In 11:15, another possessive pronoun accompanies the Lord mentioned (“our Lord”). Grammatically, it would be plausible for “their Lord” who was crucified (11:8) to also be “our Lord” in 11:15. The singular verb “he will reign” (βασιλεύσει) combines the two antecedents: “our Lord” and “Christ.” If Jesus is being called “*his* Christ,” according to the traditional translation, then “Christ” is clearly someone distinct from “our Lord.” However, if the “Lord” and “Christ” both communicate the One who will reign, then both roles belong to the Son as John will convey in Revelation 21:22. To separate “Lord” from “Christ” as different entities who reign, must also separate “our Lord” (v 15) from “their Lord” who was crucified (v 8) as two different Lords. In contrast, the singular verb βασιλεύσει expresses Lord and Christ as singular. The singular verb appears to function in such a way as to associate the “Lord of the earth” (Lord God) with “their [crucified] Lord” (Christ/Lamb). He, the Lord-Christ, will reign (βασιλεύσει) upon the earth.

²⁷⁷ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 593.

The grammar, however, does not strictly demand the traditional translation of Revelation 11:15. I argue that my alternative explanation is consistent with both the grammar of v. 15 and christologically of the book of Revelation. If the phrase τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ were isolated, the translation very well could render: “of Christ himself.”²⁷⁸ This would make the pronoun (αὐτοῦ) an intensive pronoun in relation to “Christ” and not a possessive pronoun for “our Lord.”²⁷⁹ This would be the only example of this use of the pronoun in Revelation, but one of a number of examples in the NT: “of the Lord himself” (αὐτοῦ τοῦ κυρίου; 2 Cor 8:19); “Christ Jesus himself” (αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ; Eph 2:20). The pronoun positioned after the noun is likely the reason for the traditional translation of αὐτοῦ as “his” with “our Lord” as its antecedent.²⁸⁰ If one accepts, however, the non-traditional intensive translation of αὐτοῦ in 11:15 (“of Christ *himself*”), the conjunction (καί) need not be a barrier to understanding: the conjunction can also be translated as “even” or “indeed” (Mat 10:30; 1 Cor 9:5; Jas 2:19; Rev 2:27-28 [κἀγῶ]).²⁸¹

Therefore, a literal translation of Revelation 11:15 as follows is possible:

<p>The kingdom of the world became of our Lord, even of Christ himself, and he will reign forever and ever.²⁸²</p>	<p>ἐγένετο ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ κόσμου τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλεύσει εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων</p>
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While this rendering is considered less as grammatically possible, its benefit is that it aligns the usage of “our Lord” with “Christ” to that which is typical in Revelation as a whole.²⁸³ In contrast to Osbourne’s conclusions, 11:15 does not *demand* that “our Lord” be the Father in contrast to

²⁷⁸ Cf. Rev 21:3: “...even God himself will be with them...” (καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς μετ’ αὐτῶν ἔσται).

²⁷⁹ Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the basics*, 349.

²⁸⁰ Acts 11:5 has a similar example with an emphatic pronoun: “it came even unto me” (καὶ ἦλθεν ἄχρι ἐμοῦ).

²⁸¹ Or, “also.”

²⁸² Contrary to grammatical tendencies, I suggest that this translation of καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ, with the noun and the pronoun in genitive case, is also possible for other similar structures, namely τοῦ [noun] αὐτοῦ (Mat 16:27; Rom 1:9; 1Cor 1:9; Gal 4:6; 1 John 3:23; 4:13; Rev 12:10; 14:1).

²⁸³ Although terminology and structure differ, this may resemble LXX Isa 43:10: “even I [am] a witness,” says the Lord God, “even the servant” (κἀγὼ μάρτυς λέγει κύριος ὁ θεός καὶ ὁ παῖς).

the fact that “κύριος ...refers to Christ in the book” of Revelation. There is grammatical possibility beyond reading αὐτοῦ as a possessive pronoun with “our Lord” as its antecedent.

These Lord passages in connection to the earth (in 11:4, 8, 15 and 17) do not appear to include the person behind the title “God of heaven” (11:13). To separate the person of “our Lord” from “Christ” in 11:15 is to do what John explicitly avoided by identifying “our Lord” and “Christ” as the One who will reign (βασιλεύσει).²⁸⁴ Therefore, the identity of Jesus as “Lord of the earth” and “Christ” may very well be in distinction from the Father who is the “God of heaven.” Other NT writings may have also identified Jesus as both the “Lord” in the OT and the suffering Christ, in distinction from “God” the Father (e.g, John 12:26-41; Acts 2:34-36; Rom 14:9-11; Phil 2:11-12; Heb 1:6-12). Reading John’s Christology with an eye toward a more consistent (and distinct) application of divine titles—even if atypical among interpreters—can find support in other NT texts that identify two divine subjects.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁴ This oneness can reflect a number of passages in the OT already mentioned above. Zech 14:9 can be included as the source of this concept behind Rev 11:15: “The Lord will become King upon the earth; on that day the Lord will be one and his name [will be] one.” The verb, ἐγένετο, in 11:14 can be a translation of the Hebrew, הָיָה. The LXX has ἕσται. John may have unified the Lord-King in Zechariah 14:9 and the christologically interpreted Messiah-King in Zechariah 9:9 (Matt 21:5; John 12:15). This may also be merging the Lord God as the only one over the entire earth (Ps 83:18; LXX 82) and the Messiah who would be above all of the kings of the earth (Ps 89:27; LXX 88). Although not using the same kingly language, LXX Isaiah 43:10 (alluded to in Rev 3:14) has a like concept. As shown above, the Lord God identifies himself as the one who he has chosen to be witness and servant, making himself, along with Israel, a possible subject of the servant songs: “I [am] a witness, says the Lord God, and the servant who I chose for myself so that you might know and believe and understand that I AM.” In this case of Isaiah, the servant was both first person speaker and a third person subject.

²⁸⁵ Bauckham argues a similar identification regarding divine titles can be found as early as the writings of Paul. Bauckham’s exegesis complements my understanding John’s application of divine titles: “As a final comment on Philippians 2:11-12, it is worth noting the possibility that the exegesis of Isaiah 45:23 that lies behind it distinguished two divine subjects in that verse... The speaker is YHWH (v 18) but in this verse he speaks not only of himself (‘to me every knee shall bow’) but also in the third person of ‘God’ (‘every tongue shall confess to God’). When Paul quotes this verse in Romans 14:11, he seems to take advantage of this possibility of distinguishing two divine subjects, identifying ‘the Lord’ (YHWH) as Jesus and ‘God’ as the Father. He makes this clear by inserting ‘says the Lord’ into the first part of his quotation: ‘As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.’ The same interpretation could lie behind Philippians 2:10-11, where the first part of this quotation is interpreted as ‘at the name of Jesus every knee should bow’, while the interpretation of the second part also refers to Jesus but goes on to make clear that the confession of Jesus as Lord redounds to the praise of God the Father: ‘every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father’. Such a reading of Isaiah 45:23 could have been encouraged also by the fact that verse 25 (LXX) has two parallel statements, one about the Lord (*kurios* for YHWH), the other about God (*tō theō*)” (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 209). This was quoted

It is possible that a separate divine person was designated by John as the “God of heaven,” considering the use of the term “heaven” in regard to divine titles in the book of Revelation. The literary context aids in identifying the person of the “God of heaven” in Revelation 11:13 as the Father. When Revelation refers to “heaven,” the title attached is consistently the single title “God” (3:12; 11:19; 12:10 13:6; 16:11, 21; 21:2, 10).²⁸⁶ Whereas the title “God” was intrinsically connected to heaven, the person of Jesus (the Lord) is repeatedly presented as God’s mediator for humanity (1:1, 3:5, 21; 5:9-10). The Lord Jesus mediates on behalf of God, on earth.

The unity of Jesus and the Father is indicated by a possible combination of the titles in “*Lord of the earth*” and “*God of Heaven*” in the third “woe” as the “Lord God” (v. 17). John describes 24 elders who fall (πίπτω) and worship (προσκυνέω) God, giving praise (11:16).²⁸⁷ The

partially in chapter 2. This distinction of “God” as the Father and OT “Lord” as Jesus furthers the possibility that John held a similar (if not identical) Christology in regard to divine titles in the OT. Speaking of Jesus’ crucifixion in this same Christological hymn in Philippians, Bauckham adds: “[T]he contrast of lord and servant... in Philippians 2 is a sequence: the one who is obedient even to the point of dying the death of a slave is therefore exalted to cosmic sovereignty as Lord. Jesus is servant and lord in succession” (Ibid., 50). According to Bauckham, through the words of a pre-Pauline hymn, Paul identified Jesus as both Lord in Isaiah and the crucified/exalted Jesus, in separation of God the Father. Bauckham finds this Lord-servant identity in the Johannine passion narrative: “But in John the whole passion narrative fuses the two themes of lordship and servanthood in simultaneity” (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 50). Vander Hart states the four Gospels witness a Christology similar to Bauckham’s analysis: “Thus in the witness of both the four Gospels as well as the preaching recorded in Acts, it is clear that Jesus is both LORD (YHWH) and Messiah (son of David, crucified and resurrected)” (“The Transition of the Old Testament Day of the LORD,” 16). However, Jesus’ identification as Lord in Isaiah suggests sovereignty prior to his mortality. Jesus’ lordship is not merely “a sequence” as Bauckham said but his premortal nature. In Revelation 11, Jesus was the “Lord of the earth” and “their [crucified] Lord” simultaneously.

²⁸⁶ Cf. use of earth and heaven in 16:18, 21. Manifestations of destruction (or power) affect first the earth and those upon it in verse 18. In verse 21, hail fell *from heaven* resulting the blaspheming of “God.” In Revelation 11:19, also in the third “Woe,” a temple is called, “God’s temple in heaven” (cf. 21:2-3). In this same temple in heaven, John witnessed a war (12:1, 3-4, 7). This language is different from that used to describe the temple that John saw on earth (i.e., “God’s temple *in heaven*” and “Lord God Almighty and the Lamb is her temple” *on earth* [21:22]). The future temple would be messianic (Lord God/Lamb), which may have reflected the presence of God’s temple/tabernacle in heaven (21:3). The mention of these temples and the use of singular verbs indirectly connect chapter 11 to chapter 21. A similar contrast can be found compared to the OT. In the OT, the temple/tabernacle had always been the Lord’s presence on earth and never reflected a temple in heaven (Exod 40:34-35; Jos 22:19; 2 Sam 22:7 [Ps 18:6]; 1 Kgs 12:27; 2 Chron 7:1; Isa 66:6; Ezek 43:4-5; Mic 1:2; Hag 2:20). In fact, the Lord had a throne of on earth (1 Chron 29:23). Psalm 11:4 may be the only exception.

²⁸⁷ As shown above, falling down and worshipping is directed to both the persons of the Father and Jesus.

next verse reads, “They fell on their faces and worshiped God... We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who are, who were, because you have received [εἴληφας] your great power and have reigned [ἐβασίλευσας]” (11:17). The last line with the verb, λαμβάνω, resembles

Revelation 2:26-28:

2:26-28

...I will give him authority over the nations and he will shepherd them. . . even as I have received (εἴληφα) from my Father...

11:17

We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty who are, who were, because you have received (εἴληφας) your great power and have reigned.

Although λαμβάνω can either be translated as “to receive” or “to take,” the context of both verses is similar. They both refer to the *authority* to shepherd or reign.²⁸⁸ Although the tense of the verb εἴληφας, “you have received” (perfect active), in 11:17 is different from ἐγένοντο, “became” (aorist), in 11:15, they both may imply there was a time when these truths became reality.²⁸⁹ Therefore, there was a time in temporal existence (whether figuratively) when the kingdom of the earth was not the Lord’s/Christ’s (11:15) and a time (whether figuratively) before the Lord God Almighty had received great power and reigned (11:17).²⁹⁰ This suggested relationship (between 2:26-28 and 11:15, 17) may indicate that Jesus, not the Father (as in 2:28), is the right object of praise in both texts. The Father would have been identified separately as the “God of heaven” in Revelation 11:13.

In addition, John appears to be consistent with his use of divine titles in regard to the worship and liturgy, as a comparison to Revelation 19 indicates. “God” is worshipped by and

²⁸⁸ John does not appear to make an effort to separate the concepts; i.e., Jesus was *given* authority but the Lord God Almighty *took* his great power. If that were John’s intention, he could have used the verb to give, δίδωμι, for Jesus as he had used for those who overcome in 2:26. The fact that he chose λαμβάνω (to receive) for both 2:28 and 11:17 draws a connection.

²⁸⁹ “. . .the kingdom of the world became . . .” (11:15). Robert E. Picirilli has compiled the scholarly opinion that advocates a primary “verbal aspect” of verb tenses with the aspect of time as only a possible implied secondary meaning in the indicative (“The Meaning of the Tenses in New Testament Greek: Where Are We?” *JETS* 48 (2005): 533-555).

²⁹⁰ Cf. Matt 4:8-9; Luke 4:5-7; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 1 Cor 15: 24-28; 2 Cor 4:4; Rev 13:7.

through praising the “Lord God Almighty” (11:16-17; 19:4-6).²⁹¹ A superficial reading might make the two terms seem identical. However, in both passages, John describes the worship directed to the one representing the title “God” as being expressed through attention directed toward the binomial “Lord God.” As previously argued, John’s rendition of Isaiah 60:19 suggests how John read and used two synthetic divine titles. In the case of Revelation 11 and 19, the synthetic divine titles were “God” and “Lord God.” Therefore, Revelation 11:13-16 could be read as indicating the following: the God of heaven (v. 13) is worshiped because the kingdom of the earth belongs to our Lord, even Jesus Christ (v. 15). The One who reigns on earth according to Revelation 11 is the Lord, the Christ (11:15), the Lord God Almighty (11:17).²⁹² The kingdom and ruling authority over the earth can be connected to Jesus throughout Revelation 11. This identification of Jesus and the Lord God who rules is repeated in Revelation 19, as shown above: “the Lord our God the Almighty reigns” (19:6), and “King of kings and Lord of lords” (19:16). In Revelation, Jesus is consistently associated with the Lord God on earth yet separate from the person of God the Father (1:5-6; 2:27-28; 3:5, 21; 5:9-10; 14:1). In Revelation 11, the single title “God” may be interpreted as the Father who is a separate entity in heaven, distinct from the Lord of the earth.

The description of Jesus’ authority and kingship over the earth correlates with 1 Corinthians 15:24-28, in which Jesus is depicted as ruler of the earth and delivers it to the Father

²⁹¹ This may coincide with passages on the lips of Jesus: Mar 12:29-30 (Matt 22:37; Luke 10:27). In 19:6, the Lord (YAH) is praised “because he is the Lord God Almighty who reigns” (19:6).

²⁹² Von Rad describes the dominant role of Yahweh as king in the OT: “A further concept is that of Yahweh as King. It is easy to see that the hope of a Messiah does not dominate the OT. Indeed, its appearances are comparatively isolated in relation to the whole. Better attested is faith in another supraterritorial kingdom determining the present and the future, namely, that of Yahweh. The relationship of this sequence of thought to belief in a Messianic kingdom is difficult to reduce to a simple formula. It will not do to assume two independent traditions, for Isaiah, the most powerful Messianic prophet, also calls Yahweh a King (6:5), and the same is true of Micah and Jeremiah. On the other hand, the Psalter, to which the figure of the eschatological King is quite alien, has the most numerous and important references to the kingship of Yahweh” (Gerhard Von Rad, “βασιλεύς, βασιλεία, βασιλίσσα, βασιλεύω, συμβασιλεύω, βασιλείος, βασιλικός,” [TDNT], 1:568).

only after he has subdued it all. While I find this connection between the two passages' expectations convincing, Beale resists:

It is not clear whether it is “our Lord” or “his Christ” who “will reign forever and ever.” It may well be that the singular comprehends God and his Christ as an inseparable unity... But vv 16-17 show that it is the Lord whose eternal reign is focused on here (5:12-13, like Luke 1:33, shows that the Lamb shares in this endless rule, and therefore would be included here). The consummated fulfillment of the long-awaited messianic kingdom prophesied in the OT finally has come to pass (12:10 makes the same point). It is difficult to say how Christ’s delivering up the kingdom to the Father and subjecting himself to the Father as the consummation in 1 Cor. 15:24-28 relates to the present text. Perhaps Christ gives up the redemptive historical phase of his rule and then assumes an eternal rule alongside but in subjection to his Father.²⁹³

For Beale, “[it] is difficult to say” whether the Son’s rule alongside the Father (Rev 11:15) can be reconciled with 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 that explicitly expresses Jesus’ subjection to the Father. My argument is that based on the grammar of Revelation 11:15 “our Lord even Christ himself” is the ruling and reigning Son.²⁹⁴ Then, it is this earthly divine rule of the Lord that Jesus will deliver to the Father who is the God of heaven, in agreement with 1 Corinthians 15.²⁹⁵ In Revelation, the titles for the divine ruler of the earth include “Jesus” (1:5), “Lord” (11:4, 15), “Christ” (11:15; 20:4, 6), “Lord God Almighty” (11:17; 15:3; 19:6), “Lamb” (17:14), and “Word of God” (19:13-16). There is no passage in Revelation identifying the divine ruler (or reigning king) over the earth with the single title of “God.” Therefore, if we interpret John consistently in his use of titles, perhaps John identified Jesus as the Lord God Almighty who rules on earth in representation of the God of heaven (the Father; 11:13).²⁹⁶ In this regard, it would be difficult to make an argument for inconsistency in light of this apparent consistency. The inconsistency

²⁹³ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 611.

²⁹⁴ There may be another way of reading this verse: “The kingdom of the world became of our Lord even of *the Christ himself* and he will reign forever and ever” (emphasis added).

²⁹⁵ Later I will argue that although Jesus will deliver all to the Father, he remains on his Father’s throne and will therefore reign forever and ever (with his Father).

²⁹⁶ This can be based on both on kingship in chapter 11 and the presence of God and the temple in chapter 21. See exegesis of Rev 21 in this chapter.

would then lie in the multiple titles for the reigning Son. In the following sections, I will attempt to describe the imagery in Revelation that John employed to show how Jesus can be the “Almighty” as the perfect manifestation of the Father.²⁹⁷ That is, I argue that Jesus is the Lord God as the “Lord” who fully represents “God” the Father, christologically consistent with the NT.

The Throne as Place of Unity and Authority for the Father and Son: Revelation 3:21

After the letter to the church in Laodicea (3:14-20), a throne scene spans chapters 4 and 5. While the letters to the churches differ in subject and genre from the revelation itself, Revelation 3:20-21 functions to segue into the throne scene, in which the title “Lord God” is used when there is one divine figure present (Rev 4) and removed when there are two (Rev 5). After describing Jesus standing at the door and his mealtime associations with the one who opens that door (3:20), the reader is told of Jesus’ proximity to the Father. Verse 21 says: “To the one who conquers I will give to sit with me on my throne even as I conquered and have sat down with my Father on his throne.” That is, those who conquer will be permitted to sit even “as [Jesus has] conquered and sat” (ὡς κἀγὼ ἐνίκησα καὶ ἐκάθισα).²⁹⁸ Jesus’ conquering has permitted him to sit on his Father’s throne as (ὡς) he will permit those who conquer to sit with him (cf. Rev 2:27-28).²⁹⁹ The verbs in reference to Jesus’ conquering and then sitting in the Father’s throne

²⁹⁷ Cf. Mat 1:23; John 1:18; 14:9-10; Heb 1:3.

²⁹⁸ One must not be selective as to what ὡς refers in the first clause: ὁ νικῶν δώσω αὐτῷ καθίσαι μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἐν τῷ θρόνῳ μου. If those who conquered will be allowed to sit on Jesus’ throne, then this is like (ὡς) Jesus also has conquered and has sat on the Father’s throne. According to Revelation, Jesus *is* given authority by the Father (2:27-28).

²⁹⁹ See also Matt 28:18; John 5:26-27. Although Bauckham does not see a separation of “Lord” and “God” in Revelation, his comments on this verse are applicable: “[T]his confession of Jesus reigning on the divine throne was precisely a recognition of his inclusion in the unique divine identity, himself decisively distinguished, as God himself is, from any exalted heavenly servant of God” (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 21). This reflects Jesus’ role as mediator between humanity and the Father.

highlight Jesus' own actions in comparison to his followers. To accentuate this distinction between the two divine figures, John uses the title of "Father" as the superior/ delegator and names two thrones: Jesus' and his Father's. He and his Father are separate and so are the thrones: "my throne" and "his throne." To emphasize the subordination of Jesus, he has been allowed to sit with his Father on the Father's throne.³⁰⁰ Therefore this throne does not belong to Jesus.

Whether this imagery of who on one throne is literal or symbolic does not diminish from the message. J. Wright elaborates:

This subordinate role distinction remains consistent throughout the book, but becomes explicated in the introductory letters as the imagery of the Father and the Son. Yet even here, the complexity of the claims concerning the relationship between the Father and Son emerge. The letters end with [Rev. 3:21]. The verse is intriguing in its drawing together, yet distinguishing the Father [from] the Son . . . The Son has a throne distinct from the Father's, a throne that is shared with the faithful through the gift of the Son. The Son also shares the Father's throne after conquering . . . [T]he only throne in the book that the Son occupies is the same throne sat upon by "the One who sits upon the throne" . . . From the heavenly perspective of the economy of salvation, the Son stands subordinate to "God the Father," mediating humanity to the Father's throne through his own throne (which is the Father's).³⁰¹

The contention is not whether Jesus is the Father, but that he has all authority as he sits with the Father (on his throne) to exalt those who have conquered. Jesus is functionally and ontologically

³⁰⁰ This concept is much different than the message of Ps 110 about the mortal Davidic king. Jesus does not sit on anyone's right hand in Revelation. The NT authors also made a distinction when addressing Ps 110. Luke interprets this psalm in exclusion of the Father; in Acts, God (the Father) is said to have made Jesus both the Lord and the messiah figure in Ps 110 (Acts 2:34-36). The Gospels give no in-depth exegesis of Ps 110 (Mark 10:35-37; Matt 22:41-46; Luke 20:41-44). However, similar to Revelation, in Mark and Matthew the divine person on whose right hand the disciples will sit is Jesus, not the Father (Mark 10:37; Matt 20:21, 23). When Psalm 110 is alluded, the NT authors refrain from using the title "Lord" for the one on whose right hand Jesus sits (Mark 14:62; [16:19]; Matt 26:64; Luke 22:69; Acts 2:33; 5:31; 7:55; Rom 8:34; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3; 8:1; Heb 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22). Barker's comments on the throne in 1 Chr are comparable if not transferable to Rev 3:21: "The account of Solomon's coronation says that the king sat on the throne of Yahweh and was worshipped with him. In this verse (1 Chr 29:20) there are two objects to the one verb: *the people worshipped Yahweh and the king*. Can we justify separating the two actions as do the English translations? *The people worshipped Yahweh and did obeisance to the king* reads into the text a whole lot of things which may be obscuring what was actually said, especially as we have also been told that Solomon sat on the throne of Yahweh as king (1 Chr 29:23), a text where there is no ambiguity at all" (Barker, *The Great Angel*, 36). Jesus assumes both roles, "Lord" and Davidic king.

³⁰¹ Wright, "Blessing, Honor, Glory," 22.

divine, manifesting his role as divine mediator stated throughout the NT.³⁰² Bauckham comments on the functional and ontological divinity of Jesus: “The dominance of the distinction between ‘functional’ and ‘ontic’ Christology has made it seem unproblematic to say that, for early Christology, Jesus exercises the ‘function’ of divine lordship without being regarded as ‘ontically’ divine.”³⁰³ Bauckham argues that Jesus is included in the identity of God the Father. On the other hand, in the context of Revelation, by sitting on the Father’s throne, Jesus may represent “God” as the “Lord of the Earth” sitting on the Father’s throne.³⁰⁴ On the Father’s throne suggests Jesus has all the authority of the Father.³⁰⁵ But this fully delegated authority does not require that they share a divine identity.

Revelation 4

Jesus’ exalted divine nature in Revelation 3:20:21 aids in identifying the person and the use of “Lord God” in the following throne-room scene. John sees an opened door at the beginning of the scene (4:1). A voice “like a trumpet” invites him to be shown what would soon take place (cf. 1:1). The speaker is not specifically identified. Revelation 3:20, where Jesus

³⁰² I.e., no one knows the Father [not “Lord”] except through him. Cf. Matt 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 1:18; 14:6; 1 Tim 2:5.

³⁰³ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 30.

³⁰⁴ Eusebius, in the fourth century, comments on a similar interpretation of Psalm 45:6-7: “So the whole verse runs: ‘Thou hast, O God, loved justice and hated impiety; therefore in return, O God, the highest and greatest God who is also thy God...’ ...so that the Anointer, being supreme God, is far above the Anointed, he being God in a different sense. And this would be clear to anyone who anyone who knew Hebrew. Therefore in these words you have it clearly stated that God was anointed and became the Christ... And this is He who was beloved of the Father and his Offspring and the eternal Priest and the being called the Sharer of the Father’s throne” (*Proof of the Gospel* 4.15 quoted in Barker, *The Great Angel*, 199).

³⁰⁵ Cf. Mat 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 3:31, 35; 5:22; Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 15:27-28. This concept of a second person as “Almighty” may not have been foreign to the NT authors. In the Joseph story of Genesis, Joseph was placed over all things and was the most powerful one in Egypt yet continued to be subject to Pharaoh (Gen 41:40-43; 42:6; 45:8, 26). Haman and Mordecai were delegated by the king all authority above the princes (Ester 3:1-2; 8:2; 9:29). A king also made Daniel the “ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon” (Dan 2:48; 6:3).

stands at the door, only three verses earlier, still holds sway. This voice may have been Jesus' (or of the angel who represented him). According to Macleod, however, these doors should not be confused with each other. Still, Macleod thinks that "[t]he voice John heard summoning him to come up through the door was the voice of Jesus Christ (cf. 1:10), who told John that he would be shown 'what must take place after these things.'"³⁰⁶ Regarding the voice of Christ, John has already described the Son of Man as having this same trumpet-voice (1:10-13).³⁰⁷ Loren T.

Stuckenbruck explains:

Though Christ nowhere appears obvious in the vision itself, note again how chapter 4 opens: the voice that calls John up to heaven is described as, according to verse 1, "the voice which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet." Whose voice is this? This voice is none other than that of Jesus whom John [had] encountered in the opening vision of chapter 1 as having "a loud voice like a trumpet" (1:10). Just as Jesus has done in chapter 1, the voice at the opening of chapter 4 (that is, *Jesus' voice*) tells John, "*I will show you what must take place after this.*" Also, in verse 1 of chapter 4, John gazes at an "open" door. This image is suggestive, since in the preceding verses at the end of chapter 3, Jesus has just said, "Listen! I am standing at the door..."³⁰⁸

Although ambiguous, Revelation 4:1 suggests Jesus' continued presence throughout the vision. I argue that the language in 3:20-4:1 implies a connection with the throne and "One sitting on the throne" in 4:2: "Immediately I came to be in the Spirit and, behold, a throne was standing in heaven and One sitting upon the throne."³⁰⁹ Therefore, this throne *in heaven* may have been identified in 3:21 as the Father's, the God of heaven (3:12; 11:13, 19; 13:6; 16:11, 21; 21:2, 10).³¹⁰ The description and identity of the enthroned one in 4:1 is ambiguous. This is the first

³⁰⁶ Macleod, "The Adoration of God the Creator," 202.

³⁰⁷ Although a subtle allusion, the OT Lord had also been described as having a voice "like a trumpet": Exod 19:16; Ps 47:5; Zec 9:14. Cf. to Jesus: Matt 24:30-31; 1Thess 4:16; Rev 1:10-13. If the voice belongs to an exalted Jesus, then John may have suggested his presence in this scene.

³⁰⁸ Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "Revelation 4:5: Divided worship or one vision?" *SCJ* 14 (2011): 240.

³⁰⁹ Macleod suggests that in the scene John follows the apocalyptic visionary tradition of Ezek 1 or Dan 7 ("The Adoration of God the Creator," 198-199).

³¹⁰ Cf. the Lord's throne on earth (1 Chr 29:23; Jer 3:17) and in heaven (Ps 11:4 [Acts 7:49]; Isa 66:1) in the OT. In the NT, the Father's throne is in heaven (Matt 5:34; 23:22; Heb 8:1).

instance in Revelation in which the phrase (“One sitting on the throne”) appears, absent any divine title. Perhaps, the enthroned One is not named specifically because it would be redundant to restate what Jesus had said only three verses prior: that he sits with his Father on this very throne. Given the shared throne of 3:21, I suggest that the “One sitting on the throne” somehow represents both the Father and the Son, or the Son as he represents the Father.³¹¹ J. Wright comments that “contemporary readings tend to merge uncritically the character [of the Father] solely with the character ‘the One on the Throne.’”³¹² Revelation 3:21 indicates there were two on one throne.³¹³

As the vision continues, John indicates that the One on the throne may be Jesus. Revelation 4:5 ends with the seven headed lampstand and the seven spirits surrounding this throne. Earlier, Jesus was identified as the one in the midst of the lamp-stand and the spirits

³¹¹ Although 3:21 and 4:1 belong to separate parts of Revelation (the letters and the vision), Macleod observes that John being in the Spirit in 4:2 is merely a repetition of what John had said in 1:10 (“The Adoration of God the Creator,” 203). In other words, the entire book is John’s visionary experience in the Spirit, indicating that similar imagery may have been woven into different sections of the text.

³¹² Wright, “Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 20. J. Wright says “God” implying the “Father.” I inserted “the Father” in brackets to clarify the ambiguity of J. Wright’s statement. Therefore I would argue that “God” is the One on the throne whether the one in reference is God the Father or the Lord God Jesus.

³¹³ John may have associated this nameless One on the throne with imagery attached to both divine titles: “Lord” and “God.” In Revelation 4:3, the one on the throne is surrounded by a rainbow. According to the Priestly source of the Torah, the favored Hebrew divine title revolving around the sign of a rainbow is “God” (Gen 9:8-17). John, although not aware of what has been designated today as the Documentary Hypothesis, may have seen a similar separation of divine titles in the early accounts of Genesis and Exodus. The LXX has “Lord God” in Gen 9:12 where the Hebrew has *Elohim*. This may imply that John used imagery from the Hebrew narrative, not Greek. Macleod observes that “[t]he rainbow would have reminded John and his readers of the covenant God made with Noah after the Flood” (“The Adoration of God the Creator,” 205). Therefore, John may have chosen the symbol of a rainbow, because it had been associated in Hebrew Genesis with the title “God.” The first appearance of the twenty-four priestly kings (in white robes [priests] and crowns [kings]) in Revelation 4:4 also recalls the combined work of Jesus and the Father, a reflection of Exod 19 1:5-6; 5:9-10; 20:6). (The multiple thrones in this scene is comparable to the thrones in Dan 7:9 [Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 161]). Mueller associates the lightning and thunder in Rev 4:5 specifically with the Lord in Exod 19:16 (“Christological Concepts 1,” 296). Macleod agrees that the thunder and lightning are “a reminder of Mount Sinai” (“The Adoration of God the Creator,” 212). Lightning was a sign of the Lord of the OT (Exod 19:16; LXX Ps 96:1-5; Zech 9:14). As shown in the previous chapter, the LXX has both divine titles (“God” and “Lord”) in Exod 19 and may have been known by John to his advantage. Zech 9:14 references lightning *and* the voice of a trumpet in connection to the title “Lord.” Using Hebrew Exod 19 in contrast to Hebrew Genesis 9, John may have been alluding to these divine titles in the Torah where either “God” or “Lord” is the dominant title in the narrative. John may have combined these titles into the binomial “Lord God.”

(1:13, 16, 20; cf. 5:6).³¹⁴ The four living creatures, that may represent all of living creation, give the One on the throne the binomial title, “Lord God,” as they sing day and night without ceasing: “Holy, holy, holy, [the] Lord God the Almighty, the one who was and is and is coming” (Rev 4:8).³¹⁵ Mueller, who does not identify Jesus as the Lord God Almighty, struggles to reconcile how the three chants of “holy” from Isaiah 6:3 are applied to the one whom he interprets as being the Father in Revelation 4:8. His identification is complicated, because he understands John 12:38-41 to apply the same allusive passage to Jesus (cf. Isa 6:1-9).³¹⁶ However, if we interpret such that “Lord God” points to Jesus rather than the Father, the Gospel of John and Revelation remain consistent in their christological reading of Isaiah 6.

Further analysis of the triple description in Revelation 4:8 may support Jesus’ identity as the One on the throne: “the One who was and is and is coming.” The scholarly consensus is that ὁ ὢν (“the one who is”) comes from LXX Exodus 3:14, where the Lord personally gives to Moses this appellation by which Lord will be known.³¹⁷ Without dispute, this articular participle connects the Lord God (in Rev 4:8) with the Lord of Exodus. On the other hand, the last identifier is heavily Christological: ὁ ἐρχόμενος (“the One who is coming”). In Revelation, Jesus is unequivocally identified as the *One who is coming* nine times (1:7; 2:5; 2:16; 3:11; 16:15; 22:7; 22:12; 22:20 [x2]).³¹⁸ Revelation 4:8 identifies the Lord God as the one who is coming. If this description were concerning the Father, Revelation would constitute the only NT book that

³¹⁴ There is a difference in terms: *λυχνία* (1:12-13) and *λαμπάς* (4:5). However, there number (7) and there identification (angels/spirits [1:20]) present an intended association.

³¹⁵ Macleod, “The Adoration of God the Creator,” 214.

³¹⁶ Mueller, “Christological Concepts 1,” 289.

³¹⁷ Büchsel, “εἰμί, ὁ ὢν,” 398; Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 513.

³¹⁸ The identifiers ὁ ἦν (aorist/past) and ὁ ὢν (present) may transmit the concept that the One who *was* the Lord in the OT and *is* the Lord presently, is coming.

refers to the coming of the Father.³¹⁹ It is more likely that John understood the Lord God as both the Lord of Exodus 3 *and* the coming Jesus. The implication could be that the One divine person sitting on the throne being praised and worshipped in Revelation 4:9-10 is the divine Lord Jesus.³²⁰ This reading is in keeping with Revelation 3:21, in which Jesus sitting on the Father's throne in heaven invested with the Father's divine authority.³²¹ Therefore, Jesus is both Lord and God.³²² Furthermore, the Lord God in 4:11 is described as creator of all things. This complements Jesus' early description as the "beginning/ ruler of the creations of God" (3:14). The NT repeatedly describes Jesus as the one through whom God enacted creation.³²³ After having depicted the Lord God as receiving praise and worship (4:10), this section of the throne-scene transitions by slightly separating the divine titles by a conjunction (and), perhaps in preparation of the following section: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power..." (4:11). There is unity of person, yet separation of titles: "Lord and our God."³²⁴

Revelation 5

Although 4:11 continues to speak about one divine person, what follows is an explicit distinction of divine persons in Revelation 5, returning to the imagery found in 3:21 of two on

³¹⁹ The verb "to come" is not in Rev 21:3. I will discuss this verse ahead in this chapter.

³²⁰ By defining true worship to include the Father and the Son, John may have been comfortable using this verb (προσκυνέω; to worship). This verb is used in Revelation twenty-four times. That is more than any other NT book (Macleod, "The Adoration of God the Creator," 215).

³²¹ Despite these implications, the text continues to remain ambiguous. John never states directly that it was the Lord God who sat on the throne (4:4-11). Rev 4:8-11 may present a similar image of worship as in 11:16-17 and 19:4-6. Whereas "God" had been worshipped by giving praise to the "Lord God," the "one on the throne" may have been given "glory and honor and thanks" (4:9) by giving "glory and honor and power" to the "Lord...our God" (4:11).

³²² Cf. John 20:28; 2 Pet 1:1-2.

³²³ John 1:1-3; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:15-17; Heb 1:2, 10.

³²⁴ Perhaps the "Lord" is worthy because he is invested with authority and becomes "our God."

one throne.³²⁵ As this section of the throne room scene begins, the One on the throne is once again unnamed. He has a sealed scroll (5:1) and an angel begins the search for one “worthy” to open it (5:2-4). Previously, the Lord God had been called “worthy” in 4:11. I suggest that in this section of the scene, the two titles in the binomial “Lord God” are separated to reflect Revelation 3:21 with the Father on the throne (and Jesus/the Lamb also). If the one on the throne had continued to be the Lord God from the previous section of the throne scene, then he should have been “worthy” for the task.

However, it seems that John now separates the One sitting on the throne from the worthy Lamb positioned in the middle of the throne (5:6, 9, 12; [cf. 7:17]), who may very well have been the worthy Lord God (4:11). The similitude between Jesus and the Lord God Almighty in Revelation 4 are complemented by the worthiness of the Lamb (5:9, 12). The correlation works in this way: John has just now separated the sitting One (“God”) from the worthy One who was needed to open the scroll (“Lord”), John no longer uses the title “Lord God.” At the same time, John continues to ascribe attributes and titles of the OT Lord to the Lamb and not to the One on the throne. John is told “the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that” he might open the sealed scroll (5:5). In 3:21, similar to those who conquer, Jesus’ conquering had permitted him to sit on his Father’s throne. My suggestion is that these two concepts, conquering and worthiness, are connected. The “worthiness” of the Lord God Almighty (4:11) and the “conquering” of Jesus (3:21) are the combined prerequisites for the one who can open the sealed scroll (5:4-5).

³²⁵ Beale states that “[t]he scene in ch. 4 continues uninterrupted in 5:1” (Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 337).

The descriptions of “lion” and “root” may also reflect facets of Jesus’ dual nature, divine Lord and mortal Messiah.³²⁶ These two titles, spoken by one of the elders, correspond to the Lord of the OT in contrast to the image John actually saw. John does not see a Lion but a Lamb “standing as if slaughtered” (ἑστηκὸς ὡς ἐσφαγμένον).³²⁷ Michael E. Lodahl suggests that the images of Lion and Lamb may also be describing Jesus’ dual role as exalted Lord and slain servant.³²⁸ It is the location of the Lamb in the throne that suggests a connection to Revelation 3:21. The conquering Lamb is center stage “in the middle of the throne” (ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου) and in the middle of the living creatures and the elders (5:6).³²⁹ The imagery suggests, as does

³²⁶ Scholars generally subscribe the description of the “Lion of the tribe of Judah” to Gen 49:9-10 (Blount, *Revelation*, 105; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 349). However, there is no similar title in Gen. In Hos 5:14, the Lord gave himself a title that resembles more the description found in Revelation: Hebrew: יהוה יריב לִי כַּיּוֹן לְבֵית יְהוּדָה; LXX: λέων τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰουδα (cf. Rev 5:5: ὁ λέων ὁ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰουδα). The verse in LXX Hos 5:14 begins as follows: διότι ἐγὼ εἰμι... ὡς λέων τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰουδα; “For I AM... as a lion to the house of Judah.” This is the only OT title that resembles the title in Rev. The Lord of Hosea had said he was like “a lion for the house of Judah,” a title John may have applied to Jesus using the definite article: “the Lion of the tribe of Judah.” The Son was the Lion of Judah because in Revelation he was the Lord. A number of sources have been suggested for the second title, “Root of David” (Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 349. MT Jer 23:5; Heb 33:15; and Heb Zech 3:8 describes a “branch” springing from Judah). Revelation 5:5 (22:16) describe a “root” from which David has sprung. Calling Jesus the “Root (ἡ ρίζα) of David” implies that he is the source from which David has come. A branch grows from a source; a root is that source. Philip Edgcumbe Hughes describes the implication: “his designation as ‘the Root of David,’ . . . implies that he who came after David was also before him; and this is a pointer to his pre-existence as the eternal Son of God” (Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *The Book of the Revelation* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990], 79). Macleod describes the divine implications: “Some commentators, however, say the title ‘root of David’ refers not to Jesus’ human descendency from David, but more likely to Christ as ‘the Divine root, which brought forth David.’ In favor of this view is the wording in 22:16, where Jesus said, ‘I am the root and the descendant of David’ (ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ρίζα καὶ τὸ γένος Δαυίδ). It is highly unlikely that ‘root’ (ρίζα) and ‘descendant’ (γένος) are merely synonymous. It is true that in Isaiah the Messiah is viewed as growing from the stump or root of Jesse. But in Revelation 22:16, the risen Lord . . . reverses the concept of Isaiah 11:1. He is the root from which David grew, and so [He is] the source of David’s line. The word ‘root’ in this context, therefore, does not mean that Jesus is David’s son (though that is true as other verses make clear); rather it suggests that He is David’s God and Creator (cf. Matt. 22:41-46). As ‘root’ He is David’s ancestor; as ‘descendant’ He is David’s son. Thus He is the God-Man. He is at once the . . . Beginning and the End of the whole economy associated with the Davidic family” (“The Lion Who Is a Lamb,” 333-334). According to Revelation 5:5 and 22:16, Jesus is the source of (the promises to) the house of David as the “Root of David.” In Samuel 16:12-13, the Lord had been the source of David’s kingly right. Kings were chosen in Israel because the people had rejected the Lord their King (1 Sam 8:5-7). Therefore, Jesus is the Lord as both Lion of Judah and Root of David.

³²⁷ The verb, to slay (σφάζω) may reflect the pierced Lord in Zech 12:10 (Rev 1:7) and/or the crucified Lord in Rev 11:8.

³²⁸ This is based on a conversation with Dr. Lodahl on 1/14/2014, during the defense of my thesis proposal.

³²⁹ However separate, both the Lamb and the unnamed sitting one in chapter 5 are connected to the throne. This concept of being in the middle (of the throne) and other Christological language in Revelation have parallels with LXX Joel 2:27: “And you will know [ἐπιγνώσεσθε ὅτι] that I AM in the middle of Israel [ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ

3:21, that there is One sitting on the throne (the Father) and the Lamb who is simultaneously in the midst of the throne (Jesus). Although 5:6 also describes the Lamb as being in the middle of the elders and the living creatures, 7:17 clarifies that he is in fact “in the middle of the throne.” That is, “the Lamb in the middle of the throne will be their shepherd” (7:17). Both the One sitting and the Lamb are on the throne, symbolically. Therefore, adding to this exalted (and complicated) cluster of appellations, the Lion-Root-Lamb who is found worthy to open the seals has a position on the Father’s throne.

Based on Revelation 6-8, Loren L. Johns suggests that the opening of the seals conveys that “the Lamb represents in some way the key to the working out of God’s plan and that God’s will for humanity in some way depends upon the victorious success of the Lamb . . . the Lamb is the ‘window’ through whom God is revealed.”³³⁰ Likewise, Bauckham states in reference to the opening of the seals that Jesus is “the one who is to bring God’s rule into effect on earth.”³³¹ Revelation portrays Jesus the Lamb, through his divine roles and his position in regard to the throne, as the mediator who opens the sealed scroll (or will) of God. Jesus is the duly commissioned agent of the Father. Bauckham reasons that “Revelation 5, having portrayed the exalted Christ as the Lamb in the midst of the divine throne in heaven (5:6; cf. 7:17), includes the Lamb in the worship of God on his throne in heaven.”³³² The Lamb’s position in the middle of

ἐγὼ εἰμι], and that I am the Lord your God and there is yet no other except me . . .” The verse begins similarly to a line in Rev 2:32 (Ezek 33:29), contains an “I AM” statement, and uses identical language to reference the Lord’s location “in the middle of” (Israel). LXX Dan 3:25 is another possible source: “But Azariah standing this way and opening his mouth confessed to the Lord in the middle of the fire [ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ πυρὸς] at the same time his companions.” In the LXX the Lord was in the midst of the fire (cf. Heb Dan 3:25). For John, Jesus continued to be the divine Lord in the middle of the believers (Rev 5:6).

³³⁰ Johns, *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, 163.

³³¹ Bauckham, *Theology*, 32.

³³² Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 198.

the throne reflects his divinity, consistent with the previously ascribed titles in Revelation 5:5.³³³ Symbolically, Jesus stands in the middle of the throne, while the Father remains “sitting” there. Jesus is permitted to be on the throne because he has conquered and is found worthy (3:21; 4:11; 5:5, 9). The exalted role of the Lamb is complemented by his seven horns and seven eyes (5:6). The seven eyes communicate the Lamb’s complete power of perception.³³⁴ Horns in the OT were a symbol of power and strength.³³⁵ Seven horns, seven conveying completeness, would imply Jesus’ “absolute power and authority.”³³⁶ This complete power may be another way of calling him the “Almighty”; the Lamb’s almightiness is demonstrated by his position in the middle of the Father’s throne. Similar to 3:21, the separation of two subjects and the identification of one throne is not accompanied by the title “Lord God.” The literary separation of the One sitting and the Lamb may represent the separation of the title “Lord God.”³³⁷

³³³ Macleod expands on the relationship between the Lamb’s position and Rev 3:21: “First, while a number of commentators concede that the language indicates that the Lamb is in the middle of the throne and the center of the action, they conclude that verse 7 does not allow this interpretation... Second, other commentators follow a more literal translation, ‘And I saw the lamb who is on the center of the throne and among the four living creatures.’ This translation is preferred for several reasons. First, it agrees with the uniform testimony of the New Testament that when Christ ascended into heaven He sat down at the right hand of God (Acts 2:33; Heb. 1:3). Second, it harmonizes with Revelation 3:21...” (Macleod, “The Lion Who Is a Lamb,” 335-336). J. Wright has a similar understanding: “The Lamb stands spatially on the Throne where the One on the Throne sits, geographically distinct from all other beings in the scene. The Throne spatially binds the Lamb and the One on the Throne together as One before all the heavens and earth. As has been noted by recent scholarship, such scenes of worship are extremely significant for the Christological claims of the New Testament. The exclamations and movements of worship and devotion in chapters 4-5 bind the One on the Throne and the Lamb together as God in contrast to the creation that renders praise to them” (“Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 27).

³³⁴ Mueller, “Christological Concepts 3,” 48. Stuckenbruck and Barker correlate the seven eyes and seven spirits with those of Yahweh in Zech 3:9 and 4:10 (Stuckenbruck, “Revelation 4:5: Divided worship or one vision?,” 241; Barker, *The Great Angel*, 202).

³³⁵ Lam 2:3; Ps 132:17.

³³⁶ Mueller, “Christological Concepts 3,” 47.

³³⁷ Johns states that “there is much uncertainty and debate about the religio-historical background of the image of Christ as a lamb” (*The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, 19). There may be a Christological exegesis for the application of Lamb based on divine titles in the OT. Although ἀρνίον (lamb) is diminutive, many suggest that this meaning had been lost by the time of the NT (Ibid., 26). If ἀρνίον had lost its diminutive semantic, it would have been synonymous to ἀμνός (John 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet 1:19) and πρόβατον (Acts 8:32). In the NT, that does not appear to be the case; ἀρνίον is only used in Revelation and always for Jesus (cf. John 21:15-16). John may have attempted to convey a distinct Christological message behind ἀρνίον. As noted in this thesis, John purposefully made the Lamb correspond to the roles of the Lord in Isaiah 60:19 (Rev 21:23), the Lord in charge of

The separation of two persons is reemphasized as the Lamb takes the scroll from the One seated: “and he came and received [ἐἴληφεν] from the right hand of the One sitting on the throne” (5:7).³³⁸ With both personages close to the throne, Macleod suggests the movement behind the verb, “to come” (ἔρχομαι), depicts “merely His movement from beside the Father to a

the book in the OT (Exod 32:23-33; Isa 34:16; Rev 3:5; Rev 13:8), the Lord-Lion of Judah (Hos 5:14; Rev 5:5), the divine bridegroom (Isa 54:5; Rev 19:7), the Lord of lords and King of kings (17:14), etc. Mueller observes that the image in Rev 5:6 has a variation of meaning with the horns portraying the symbol of a ram (“Christological Concepts 3,” 43). Consequently, this imagery can reflect partly both a (horned) ram *and* a young lamb. An account in the OT that contains the separation of divine titles, a ram, and a lamb, is Gen 22, the sacrifice of Isaac. Johns asks, “Was there a tradition in Early Judaism about a lamb who would redeem Israel?” (“The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John,” 76). I suggest that the Revelator may have answered in the affirmative. Mueller observes that the same verb, “to slay” (σφάζω; Rev 5:6), is also found in LXX Gen 22:10 (“Christological Concepts 3,” 52). The parallel imagery between these scriptures may have been John’s intention. Gen 22 is an account of a father and a son: Abraham and Isaac. The Documentary Hypothesis divides the chapter in half according to divine titles: God/*Elohim* (vv. 1-9) and Lord/Yahweh (“angle of the Lord”; vv. 10-19). According to Gen 22, God spoke to Abraham about sacrificing his son using the same verb in Revelation (σφάζω). When Isaac inquires about the lack of a lamb for the sacrifice, Abraham supplies the following explanation in Gen 22:8: “God will provide for himself a lamb for a burnt sacrifice” (i.e., “For in such a way God loved the world that he gave his Only-begotten Son” [John 3:16]). The Documentary Hypothesis suggests the narrative that follows in Gen 22 is from a different source because the title “God” ceases to be used (vv. 10-19). (John would not have had any idea of the Documentary Hypothesis, but may have used the division of titles to his advantage.) In addition, the single title of “Lord” does not appear either. Subsequently, the one who speaks with Abraham is neither “God” nor the “Lord,” but the “angel of the Lord.” With the separation of titles, Norman R. Gulley differentiates between two divine persons: “When Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, ‘The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time and said, ‘I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand of the seashore’” (Gen 22:11–17). The angel of the Lord is called the Lord (*Yahweh*), and He speaks twice in the passage (vs. 11, 12; 15–18), and God (Heb. *’Elōhīm*) is mentioned four times (vv. 1, 3, 8, 9). It is *Yahweh* who saves Abraham from sacrificing His son, blesses Him, and Abraham calls the place ‘*Yahweh* will provide’ (v. 14), an insight into the future day when on the same mount, Christ would provide the sacrifice for all humans” (“Trinity in the Old Testament,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 17 [2006]: 86). But, the second speaker is the angel, not the Lord. In addition, a lamb is never provided and the place is named, “the Lord will provide” (i.e. “No one lifts it [life] from me but I lay it down for myself. I have authority to lay it down and authority to receive it again. This command I received from my Father” [John 10:18; cf. Rom 14:9]). The animal that is found and sacrificed in place of Isaac is a ram caught by his horns (Gen 22:13). Therefore, neither the Lord nor the lamb ever appear. Abraham’s prophecy that God would provide a Lamb (in place of a ram) on the mountain of the Lord (mount Moriah) was yet to be fulfilled (Gen 22: [2], 14). The mountain of the Lord was also referred to as the temple mount (mount Moriah) which was also mount Zion (Isa 2:3; Zech 8:3; 2 Chr 3:1; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 731). In Revelation, the Jesus *does* appear on top of Mount Zion both as Lamb and Lord (14:1). Perhaps, the diminutive noun, ἄρνιον, may communicate not little-lamb, but lamb-child, in connection with Isaac the son of Abraham. In Revelation, the Lamb who had represented the Lord repeatedly may have been interpreted by John as the one that God would provide. The Lord and Lamb who were absent in Gen 22 are combined to be the Lord-Lamb Jesus in Revelation.

³³⁸ In the throne room scene consisting of chs. 4 and 5, the Lord God Almighty claims to be the one who is coming (4:8). In 5:7, the reader is told that it was the Lamb who “came” to take the scroll from the one seated, associating the Lord God with the Lamb, yet separating him from the Father or One on the throne.

position where He could receive the scroll.”³³⁹ Whatever movement is implied, it would have been only the slightest, Jesus being portrayed as being in the middle of the throne (5:6; 7:17).³⁴⁰ This action causes a response of worship by the living creatures and the twenty-four elders who fall before the Lamb (5:8-14).³⁴¹ The exalted portrayal of Jesus throughout the chapter never uses the word “God” in reference to Jesus. Instead, Jesus is described in relation to God: “You were slain and you redeemed to God with your blood” (5:9).³⁴² J. Wright comments on this separation: “Yet even in opening the seals, the Lamb remains subordinate to the will of ‘the One on the Throne.’ As in Rev. 3:21, the Lamb mediates between the ‘One on the Throne’ and humanity in redemption.”³⁴³ The Lamb is with the Father on the throne as exalted mediator.

The voices heard by John increase to include myriads upon myriads of angels who surround the throne and sing to both divine personages.³⁴⁴ According to Mueller, this entire scene does not recount enthronement or a commissioning of the Lamb, but only a ratification of

³³⁹ Macleod, “The Lion Who Is a Lamb,” 336.

³⁴⁰ Also, the verb λαμβάνω is used as we have seen in Rev 2:26-28 and 11:17. Whether the Lamb received or took the book is irrelevant. It was hand down from the One sitting to the Lamb. This may be depicting when Jesus, the Lord God, had received this authority.

³⁴¹ Macleod, “The Adoration of God the Redeemer,” 457; Wright, “Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 28. The Lamb’s worthiness is restated in 5:9 (and 5:12), using the same language used for the Lord God in 4:11, but now the qualifier was the Lamb’s redemptive act: “You are worthy to receive the book... for you were slain.” “The introductory ἄξιός ἐστι λαβεῖν of v. 9 takes us back to the same introductory formula of 4:11” (G. K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* [Lanham: University Press of America, 1984], 214). See also Charles, “An Apocalyptic tribute to the Lamb,” 471. Johns states that Revelation’s “treatment of Christ as the source of redemption (rather than God) is unusual in the Apocalypse” (*The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, 130). He may not be accounting for the multiple divine titles for Christ in Revelation. Jesus may not have been “God the Father” but John was apparently identifying Jesus as the “Lord God.” In addition to the his role as Lion of Judah, Root of David, the seven horns, seven eyes and position in the middle of the throne, Jesus repeatedly divine. For example, the “new song” sung to Jesus in 5:9 recalls the frequent new songs of the OT acclaiming the new acts of salvation of the Lord (Exod 15; Ps 33:1; 40:4; 96:1; 144:9; 149:1; Isa 42:10; cf. Charles, “An Apocalyptic tribute to the Lamb,” 470). In addition, the worship of the Lord God in 4:11 is replicated for the Lamb (5:8-10) (Osborne, *Revelation*, 258).

³⁴² The separation is emphasized again in Rev 5:10 as shown in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

³⁴³ Wright, “Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 24.

³⁴⁴ Cf. Dan 7:10; Charles, “An Apocalyptic Tribute to the Lamb,” 472.

his investiture of authority.³⁴⁵ Mueller's conclusion is consistent with the Lamb's position already in the middle of the throne. For Aune, this is the "royal investiture of a king" and "means not that the Lamb is venerated as God."³⁴⁶ However, in accordance with the context of Revelation, Jesus *is* venerated as divine, but *not* as the Father.³⁴⁷ This may be because Jesus had become worthy by conquering (5:5), redeeming (5:9), and receiving divine investiture (taking language for Aune and Mueller). As a result, he is worthy to open the seals (5:9) and to receive power, riches, wisdom, might, honor, glory, and blessing (5:12).³⁴⁸

Jesus' capacity to open the seals (representative of the will of God) signifies that Jesus had always been "actively involved in the unfolding of history and brings about the final consummation."³⁴⁹ As divine mediator and revealer of the Father, Jesus with reason could be worshipped according to 5:13-14.³⁵⁰ J. Wright explains:

Their presence upon/in the midst of the Throne marks them as those worthy of worship, in distinction from those around the Throne who give worship to them. The Throne unites the One who sits upon it and the Lamb who stands in its midst together as God . . . the scene ends with the elders again falling and worshipping, presumably around the Throne—the Throne where the One sits and the Lamb stands. The final climatic scene of worship draws the One sitting on the Throne and the Lamb together as recipients of a single act of worship, linking this worship with their eternity, the characteristic of the divine in chapter 4.³⁵¹

³⁴⁵ Mueller, "Christological Concepts 1," 297-298. See also Macleod, "The Lion Who Is a Lamb," 339.

³⁴⁶ Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 365.

³⁴⁷ Mueller argues that the Lamb should be included under title "God" seven times in Revelation: 5:13; 6:16; 7:10; 14:4; 21:22; 22:1, 3 ("Christological Concepts 1," 292). Although not all of Mueller's examples include the title "God," there does appear to be a message of unity.

³⁴⁸ Bauckham finds a connection between glory in John 1:14 ("we saw *his glory* as the only-begotten of the Father") and Isa 40:5 ("they will see the *glory of the Lord*") (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 49).

³⁴⁹ Mueller, "Christological Concepts 1," 304.

³⁵⁰ Wright, "Blessing, Honor, Glory," 32. Bauckham notices that the similarities between the worship of Jesus in Rev 5 and Phil 2:9-11 (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 25, 198). "In Philippians 2:9-11, kneeling at the name of Jesus and confessing him to be Lord are 'to the glory of God the Father'. In Revelation 5, the angelic worshippers who continually worship God (4:8-11) now worship the Lamb, along with myriads of angels (5:11-12), while the climax of the scene is the worship by every creature in the whole cosmos of both God and the Lamb (5:13)" (*Ibid.*, 202).

³⁵¹ Wright, "Blessing, Honor, Glory," 29.

Divinity worshiped in Revelation 4 is called “Lord God,” attributing to him both Christological and OT Lord imagery. The scene closes in Revelation 5 as every creature worships the One on the throne (God) and the Lamb (Lord).³⁵² The twenty-four elders and four living creatures sanction the sung praises, fall down, and worship (5:14). The antecedents to “worship” had been both the One on the throne and the Lamb. Clearly the Lamb was worshipped, the Lamb who may have been the Lord God on God the Father’s throne. The throne communicates (symbolically) where the two figures are united in power and glory. The Lord God may be the divinely invested and worshipped Lamb who resides with the Father (John 1:18). The concept of divine investiture suggested by Aune and Mueller may have provoked this Jesus-worship in connection with an OT allusion in Rev 5:7 (Dan 7:13).³⁵³ The two divine figures of Daniel 7 appear also to share, in

³⁵² Bauckham: “It is important to notice how the scene is so structured that the worship of the Lamb (5:8-12) leads to the worship of God and the Lamb together (5:13). John does not wish to represent Jesus as an alternative object of worship alongside God, but as one who shares in the glory due to God. He is worthy of divine worship because his worship can be included in the worship of the one God” (*Theology*, 60). See also Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 141; MacLeod, “The Adoration of God the Redeemer,” 470; Charles, “An Apocalyptic tribute to the Lamb,” 464.

³⁵³ Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 356. Some scholars conclude that the combined allusions of Daniel 7, and 10 (and perhaps Ezek 43:2 [Rev 1:15]) show that “Israel’s monotheism is here compromised” (Johns, *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, 219). This, however, ignores LXX Dan 7 (see Rev 1:7, 12-15; [14:14]; 5:6-12). The imagery in Rev 1 and Rev 5 support one another. In 1:7, Jesus arrives riding the clouds fulfilling or enacting Daniel 7:13 (cf. Rev. 14:14; see also Mark 13:26; 14:62; Matt 24:30; 26:64; Luke 21:27): “Behold, there was as a son of Man coming with (μετὰ) the clouds of heaven...” (LXX Daniel 7:13); “Behold, he came with (μετὰ) the clouds...” (Rev 1:7). John Adney Emerton states, “The act of coming in the clouds suggests a theophany of Yahweh himself. If Daniel vii.13 does not refer to a divine being then it is the only exception out of about seventy passages in the Old Testament” (“The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery,” *JT* 9 [1958]: 231-232; cf. Deut 33:26; Ps 68:4; 104:3; Isa. 19:1). Likewise, Michael Heiser says, “all references to the one ‘riding’ (רכב) upon clouds or through the heavens in the Hebrew Bible speak of the God of Israel” (“The Divine Council in Late Canonical and Non-Canonical Second Temple Jewish Literature,” [Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004], 148. (In this dissertation, there are no page numbers. The page references here, therefore, are my own numbering starting with the Abstract). Reynolds describes this as a characteristic of the Lord of the OT: “[The] significance is in the reference to clouds. Clouds, in the OT commonly indicate the appearance of YHWH. [The Lords]’ presence in the tabernacle and in the temple is signified by the presence of a cloud (Exod 40,34-35; 1 Kgs 8,10-11; 2 Chron 5,13-14). The pillar of cloud also indicates the Lord’s presence (Exod 13,21-22; 14,19). In Deut 5,22, the Lord’s presence on Sinai is connected with fire, cloud, gloom, and darkness. Jer 4,13 speaks of [the Lord]’s chariot as closely related to the clouds (cf. Ezek 1,4,28), and Ps 97,2 highlights the relationship between clouds, fire, and [the Lord]’s throne (cf. Ps 18,11). Even the coming of the Lord in judgment on the Day of the Lord is correlated with clouds (Joel 2,2; Nah 1,3; Zeph 1,14)” (“The ‘One Like a Son of Man,’” 75). Jesus’ cloud riding in Revelation is taken not only from the Son of Man imagery in Daniel but also from the Lord in Isaiah (Rev 14): “Behold, the Lord sitting upon (κάθεται ἐπὶ) a cloud...” (LXX Isaiah 19:1); “Behold... upon the cloud sitting (ἐπὶ... καθήμενον) like a Son of

addition to imagery, the divine unity between the two. “The LXX variant in Daniel 7:13 (88-Syh) which portrays the ‘son of man’ approaching ‘as the Ancient of Days’ (ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν)

Man...” (Rev 14:14). John alludes to Isaiah 19:1 as to identify the Son of Man as the Lord. A change occurs when Jesus’ physical appearance is described; his hair was white as wool, a description belonging to the Ancient of Days from Daniel 7:9 (Rev 1:14; Beale, *The Use of Daniel*, 160; see also Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 273; Mueller, “Christological Concepts 1,” 285). Beale observes that “the fire before the Ancient of Day’s throne (φλόξ πυρός) is applied to the eyes of the ‘Son of Man’” (Ibid., 161. See also Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 519). LXX Daniel may be a source for this application of imagery from “the Ancient of Days,” the “Lord,” and “Son of Man” with imagery of divine investiture from the LXX. The Hebrew text states that one like the Son of man *came with* (בָּרָחַ) the clouds and *came to* (בָּרָחַ) the Ancient of Days. In contrast, multiple versions of the LXX read: “...and behold upon the clouds of heaven came (ἦρχετο) one like the Son of Man, and he arrived *as* the Ancient of Days (ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν παρήν)” (Papyrus 967, Codex 88, and Syro-Hexaplar [Reynolds, “The ‘One Like a Son of Man,’” 71-72]). Benjamin E. Reynolds comments on the preposition, “[t]he significance of v. 13c is that the ‘one like a son of man’ did not come *to* the Ancient of Days (as in the MT and Q), but *as* or like the Ancient of Days” (Emphasis mine [Ibid]). F.F. Bruce argues that although ὡς can either mean “when” or “as,” to apply the former in this verse would demand a different meaning of ὡς in the previous line (“The Oldest Greek Version of Daniel,” *OTS* 20 [1977]: 25). The change of verb from ἔρχομαι (ἦρχετο) to πάρεμι (παρήν) shows a difference in action. When he “arrived” (παρήν) he was like, or similar to, the Ancient of Days, broadening the message of the imagery taken and interpreted in Revelation. Reynolds comments on LXX Daniel 7:13: “With respect to OG [Old Greek] Dan 7,13, this means that ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου and ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν are being used in the same sort of parallel structure. . . The figure who comes with the clouds like a son of man also arrives like the Ancient of Days. Thus, the OG witnesses refer to the ‘one like a son of man’ as similar to the Ancient of Days, but this similarity does not mean that the ‘one like a son of man’ is the same being as the Ancient of Days in 7,9-10. But, as with the Aramaic text of Daniel, the OG also presents the ‘one like a son of man’ and the Ancient of Days as two distinct figures. Evidence for this is seen in the giving of authority to the ‘one like a son of man’” (“The ‘One Like a Son of Man,’” 74). By applying the Ancient of Day’s white hair to the Son of Man (Rev 1:13) and later describing Jesus’ place on the Father’s throne, John is portraying a divine Lord Jesus (cloud-riding Son of Man) who was like or similar to the Father (Ancient of Days). This scene is comparable to the Ba’al and Father El relationship in the Ancient Near East. “But Dan. 7 has also been shown to resemble the Ugaritic account of Ba’al himself ascending to El, to be installed as king and judge. . . Israel must have had a divinity Yahweh who corresponded in some ways to Ba’al and was represented in Dan. 7 by the Man figure, who was enthroned. The theophanies in Deut. 33.2-5, Hab. 3 and Zech. 14 were descriptions of this same installation of Yahweh as king and judge” (Barker, *The Great Angel*, 37-38). A comparison of Daniel 7 and Revelation 5 reveals many parallels. In both accounts, myriads surround the Son of Man/Lamb (Dan 7:10; Rev 5:11; Reynolds, “The ‘One Like a Son of Man,’” 77). The Ancient of Days/One on the throne gives him authority (Dan 7:15; Rev 5:12; Ibid., 75). The sovereignty he receives in Daniel 7:14 is closely related to the description of the sovereignty of the Most High, hence the Son of Man is *as/like* the Ancient of Days, the Most High (Dan 4:3, 34; Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 170). In Aramaic Daniel, the Lord is never called directly neither “Ancient of Days” nor “the Most High.” The Son of Man/Lamb receives worship (λατρεύω; Dan 7:14; Rev 5:13-14). “For example, in Exod 3,12, the sign given to Moses at the burning bush is that once the Lord has brought his people out of Egypt, they will worship (λατρεύετε) him on that mountain. In Daniel, the word λατρεύω is connected with cultic worship and is used nine times. The first three (3,12.14.18) refer to the worship of the statue Nebuchadnezzar set up. The next five refer to the worship of God by Daniel or his friends, and the final use is in reference to the ‘one like a son of man’ in 7,14. In the NT, service in worship is clearly the meaning of λατρεύω” (Reynolds, “The ‘One Like a Son of Man,’” 76). This may have been intentional, suggesting John’s knowledge and interpretation of Daniel 7:13 in Greek. John also includes the transference of physical attributes (white wool-like hair): i.e., “the one who sees me has seen the Father” (John 14:9; cf. Col 1:15; Heb 1:3).

may have represented a tradition which helped influence John's transference of the attributes.³⁵⁴
One was "as" the other (Phil 2:6; Col 1:15; Heb 1:3).

It is perhaps John's desire to avoid an adoptionistic sense of bestowed authority onto Jesus (that is, only during and/or after his mortal ministry) that leads him to identify Jesus as the "Lord" from the OT.³⁵⁵ The long-standing title underscores the Son's divinity throughout Israelite history in John's portrayal.³⁵⁶ John portrays the redemptive act as existing from the beginning: "the Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world [ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου]" (Rev 13:8). Although other translations of this verse have been suggested, the slaying of the Lamb appears to be what had preceded the foundation of the world.³⁵⁷ Beale explains 13:8:

The last phrase, "from the foundation of the world," might explain that the death of Christ was decreed before time began ("of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world"; so 1 Pet 1:19ff) Or it might affirm a decree of reprobation that took place before creation: "whose names were not written in the book of life . . . before the foundation of the world." The former translation is viable because the statement about the Lamb's death is immediately followed by the precreation temporal expression. And it is unlikely that the concluding temporal clause goes with "written," since twelve words separate them. If the phrase describes the decree of the Lamb's death, it is complementary to 17:8, which strongly implies that the elect were written "in the book of life before the foundation of the world."³⁵⁸

³⁵⁴ Beale, *The Use of Daniel*, 177.

³⁵⁵ Vander Hart observes a similar identification of Jesus as both the Lord of the OT and the Messiah: "The sermons recorded in Acts proclaim the Jesus who was crucified, to be both LORD and Messiah through His resurrection from the dead (Acts 2:36; 3:13ff.; 4:10, 27-30; 5:30-32; 10:36-43; 13:29ff.)" ("The Transition of the Old Testament Day of the LORD," 15). In other words, Jesus was both "LORD and Messiah" during and even before his death and resurrection (cf. Deut 32:39; John 10:18; Rom 14:9). Acts 2:34-36 makes a separation between God and Jesus the Lord-Messiah.

³⁵⁶ In contrast to John's preexistent identification of Jesus, based on the language of worthiness because of the redemptive act (Rev 5:9-10), Beale argues that the exaltation of Jesus "was accomplished by his death and resurrection" (*The Use of Daniel*, 180). Similarly, Bauckham, comparing Revelation to Philippians 2, argues that "because Jesus degraded himself to the lowest position, therefore he was exalted to the highest position" (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 51; emphasis original to quote).

³⁵⁷ Stuckenbruck, "Revelation 4:5: Divided worship or one vision?," 247. Some translations rephrase the verse to say that those obedient were inscribed in the book before the foundation of the world in order to match Rev 17:8.

³⁵⁸ Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 702.

Whether he is aware of 1 Peter 1:19-20 (or John 17:24), the Revelator describes a redeeming Jesus who had been chosen from the foundation of the world. I contend that this election was dependent on his worthiness to reveal the complete will of God, represented by the seven seals.³⁵⁹ This may imply that Jesus' role of enacting the rule of God on earth, as Bauckham states, was complementary to his worthiness from the foundation of the world, being the "beginning" or "ruler" of God's creation (Rev 3:14).³⁶⁰ As a result, Jesus may ride the white horse of victory (19:11) because "the decisive battle is already over."³⁶¹ The battle was already over before creation ever began (3:14; 22:12-13).³⁶² John's exalted, slain, seven-horned Lamb—inextricably connected with the OT Lord—may have been the "Lord God Almighty" who represented God the Father as on the Father's throne, merging the concepts of 3:12, and chs 4 and 5.³⁶³

³⁵⁹ Cf. John 1:1. Collins' declaration that "Revelation shows no interest in history prior to Jesus," fails to recognize John's placement of Jesus throughout the history of the OT (Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 271).

³⁶⁰ Johns, *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, 163; Bauckham, *Theology*, 32. "Beginning" is my preferred translation of ἀρχή. If that is what John means, this may be consistent with Jesus' Christological attribute of light which both Genesis 1:3 and John 1:4 associate with the beginning and creation (cf. John 8:12). Commenting on Jesus' participation in creation in John 1:1-3, 1 Cor 8:6, Col 1:15-17, Heb 1:1-10, and Rev 3:14, Bauckham says: "Including him precisely in the divine activity of creation is the most unequivocal way of excluding any threat to monotheism – as though Jesus were a subordinate demigod – while redefining the unique identity of God in a way that includes Jesus" (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 27). For John, Jesus may have been the agent of creation as the Lord God (Gen 2:4).

³⁶¹ Johns, *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, 21. Exod states that the Lord was already a warrior (Exod 15:3).

³⁶² The following heavenly scene in revelation (after the commissioning of John in Rev 10) is the war when the dragon was cast out of heaven before becoming the "serpent of old," ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος (12:8-9; Gen 3; cf. Luke 10:18). (Collins identifies Isaiah 14:12-14 as the source for the fallen dragon from heaven and the "stars" [Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 275]). This reference to the serpent in Rev 12 (Gen 3) along with creation in Rev 3:14 supports the idea that Jesus had power from the beginning (Mueller, "Christological Concepts 1," 299). Perhaps the multiple layers of Revelation convey that John believed Jesus/Lamb was praised before creation and will be praised at the eschatological finale.

³⁶³ "The spatial dynamics of the throne room draws both the One on the Throne and the Lamb together as God" (Wright, "Blessing, Honor, Glory," 25). Rev 7 also manifests the throne as perhaps symbolically shared by both God and the Lamb. The great multitude stands before the throne and the Lamb (7:9), "a redundancy as the Lamb is still in the midst of the Throne" (Ibid., 31; see 7:17; Giblin argues judging from 8:3-4 that the phrases "before God" and "before the throne" are equivalent ["From and before the Throne," 507]). In song, the multitude praises the salvation of both God and the Lamb (7:10). J. Wright argues that a "[g]rammatically [and] equally legitimate translation" from the Greek can say that God to whom salvation belongs is both the One on the throne and

The Lord Who Is Coming, the Alpha and Omega: Revelation 1 and 22

Revelation 1 and 22 both clearly depict Jesus as the coming One (1:7; 22:20). Daniel 7 was used in Revelation 1:7 to portray the One coming, sitting on the clouds. In addition, Bauckham identifies an allusion in the witness of “every eye” drawn from the witness of the Lord’s glory by “all flesh” in Isaiah 40:5.³⁶⁴ In other words, every eye/all flesh will see the Lord Jesus come in glory. In Revelation, Jesus is identified as the One who is coming nine times undisputedly (1:7; 2:5; 2:16; 3:11; 16:15; 22:7; 22:12; 22:20 [x2]). Scholars generally interpret Revelation 1:8 (and 4:8) as referring to the Father, reasoning that the merism (“Alpha and

the Lamb (Ibid., 32; see also Mueller, “Christological Concepts 2,” 78). Although J. Wright’s statement is consistent with Revelation as a whole, this may be an allusion to the OT; one that compliments this concept. Isa 12 has two linguistic similarities with Rev 7: “salvation” (7:10) and “springs” (7:17). Hebrew Isa 12:2 says: “Behold, *El* [לֵאלֹהִים] is my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid for he is my strength and song, for YH, YHWH, has become salvation to me.” If *El*’s being and YHWH’s becoming were not sufficient to inspire John to see two divine sources for salvation (consistent with his reading of Isa 60:19), the LXX elaborates: “Behold, God is my savior; my Lord has persuaded [me]; I will be with him... because the Lord is my glory and my praise and he has become for the purpose of salvation for me.” John may have interpreted this as saying that the Lord had persuaded Isaiah to seek God for salvation. As a result, the Lord became the mediator of salvation. The equality of the Enthroned One and Jesus that Mueller sees in Rev 7:10 is complimented by Isa 12:3 (“Christological Concepts 2,” 77). After giving John room to see two divine sources for salvation (“God” and “Lord”), Isa 12:3 mentions the springs (plural) of salvation (מְצֻדֹת; ἐκ τῶν πηγῶν). John may have interpreted the plural springs of salvation as representing the two titles “God” and “Lord” in Isa 12:2. Rev 7:10 is the first occasion that the One on the throne is given the title “God.” This title may have been used by John in association with the title “God” in Isa 12:2 in separation of the title “Lord.” This is further supported by John’s use of the same noun, πηγῆ (from the LXX), in reference to the “springs” (πηγὰς) of water to which the Lamb guides the righteous (Rev 7:17). This plural noun in Isa 12:2-3 may have been interpreted in Rev 7:10 to reflect two divine sources of salvation (cf. 22:1). Ironically, the Lamb guiding believers to springs of water functions similar to the divine shepherd of the OT (Mueller, “Christological Concepts 3,” 54; Ps 23; cf. John 10). In addition, John separates the Lord who leads to the springs of salvation (Isa 12:2-3; cf. Rev 21:6; 22:1, 17) from God who wipes away every tear in LXX Isa 25:8 (cf. Rev 21:4). (The LXX also claims that the title “Lord” had declared that “God” would do this. John took particular care not to cite the Hebrew text that identifies YHWH as the one who wipes away tears.) J. Wright explains how these two divine beings could equally be called “God”: “Indeed, the passage emphasizes the Lamb’s presence on the Throne, identifying the Lamb as the one ‘up in the midst of the Throne’ [Rev: 7:17]. As the seal of God, the ‘Throne of God’ includes the Father and the Son, distinguished but equally God. When the angels, elders and living beings fall before the Throne upon their faces and worship God [Rev: 7:11], the one (singular) God they worship is ‘the One on the Throne and the Lamb.’ The ‘unity in distinction’ appears quite clearly in the hymn of vv. 15-17” (“Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 32). The multitude before (God) the Father and the Lamb (Lord God) could therefore rightfully worship and praise God (7:11-12).

³⁶⁴ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 201. The Gospel of John also identifies Jesus as the Lord whose glory was seen by Isaiah (John 12:35-41).

Omega”) can only represent the Father’s control over history.³⁶⁵ However, Jesus is given all three merisms at the end of the book: “I AM the Alpha and the Omega says the Lord God, the one who is and was and is coming, the Almighty” (Rev 22:13).³⁶⁶ According to the narrative, John describes the nameless One who is coming as the pierced one in 1:7 (cf. 11:8). The suspense regarding the name or even identity of the One coming in verse 7 is resolved in verse 8. In first person, the coming One identifies himself as the Lord God Almighty (1:8).³⁶⁷ This precise identification in the opening lines of this book may have been the message throughout Revelation.³⁶⁸

In fact, vv. 7-8 parallel in an inverted fashion what John is reported to hear and see in chapter 5. He hears that the Lion of Judah (the Lord; LXX Hos 5:14) and the source or Root of David (also the Lord; 1 Sam 16:12-13) was found worthy to open the sealed book. What he sees is a slain all powerful (seven-horned) Lamb worthy of power, riches, wisdom, might, honor, glory, and blessing (5:12).³⁶⁹ Even in this divine representation of the slain Lord Jesus, John presents him as distinctly divine from the Father. The One on the throne in ch. 5 is not the seven-horned almighty Lamb to whom he gives authority and power. In ch. 1, it may be that John separates the titles, distinguishing the coming, pierced, Lord God (1:7-8) from God the Father

³⁶⁵ Aune, “Revelation 1-5,” 57; Beale, “Revelation,” 199; Mueller, “Christological Concepts 1,” 294; Osbourne, *Revelation*, 71. We have already seen how the Lord God in Rev 4 may have been John’s depiction of the divinely invested Jesus as portrayed in 3:21 and chapter 5.

³⁶⁶ In John’s “narrative Christology,” 1:8 may be another example of an identification of Jesus as the Lord God in connection with the verb, ἔρχομαι (“I come”). Cf. “king”/ “reign” in 11:15, 17; “king”/ “reign” in 19:6, 14; “is” in 21:22. The concept of a “narrative Christology” comes from C. Kavin Rowe (*Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006]). In his work, Rowe argues that in Luke (and Acts) the narrative identifies Jesus as the divine Lord, directly and indirectly.

³⁶⁷ This Christological reality, identifying the pierced one as the Lord God, may have provoked later scribes to remove the title “God” from this verse as found in the Textus Receptus.

³⁶⁸ “The visions show that Jesus is identified as ‘the one who was and is to come’ (1.8; 11.13), and that he was also the one in whom was the sevenfold spirit (5.6)” (Barker, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 83).

³⁶⁹ Also, in ch. 11, the kingdom of the world (11:15) now belonged to the Lord of the earth (11:4), the Lord crucified (11:8), and *he* would reign as the Lord God Almighty (11:17). Once again, the God of heaven is not equated with the Lord who reigned upon the earth (11:13).

(1:6).³⁷⁰ Therefore, Revelation could be read as giving Jesus the exalted title of “God the Lord” after having identified “God and Father” in 1:6.

However, vv. 4 and 5 can cause confusion. John begins desiring grace and peace for his readers from the “One who is, who was and who is to come,” attaching no identification or title to this divine person (1:4). The verse closes desiring grace and peace also from the seven spirits before the throne. John continues desiring the same from Jesus Christ (1:5), calling him by the exalted titles of “Faithful Witness” (LXX Isa 43:10), the “Firstborn of the dead,”³⁷¹ and the “ruler of the kings of the earth” (Ps 89:18, 27; cf 83:18).³⁷² Although vv. 4 and 5 can be read to be about the Father (v. 4) and the Son (v. 5), 1:4 provides no name to the divine person mentioned and both verses associate the personage with “Lord” passages from the OT. As shown above, it is possible that “Lord” passages were used exclusively for Jesus. Just as 1:8, verse 4 begins calling the divine person the “One who is” (ὁ ὢν), a participle that reflects the “name” of the Lord in LXX Exodus 3:14.³⁷³ Therefore the descriptions in vv 4 and 5 are both associated with the Lord of the OT. Compared to vv 7 and 8, the person described is also named only once: (1) “Jesus Christ” in verse 5, and then (2) “Lord God” in verse 8:

³⁷⁰ Similar to the Gospel of John, “Lord” and “God” are used for Jesus (John 20:28), while “God” and “Father” are used for the Father (John 20:17). Kotecki argues that both the Father and the Son are presented as “coming” (Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 514). As seen above, the narrative Christology had previously identified the one who was pierced as the coming one, not the Father. For Vander Hard, this is consistent with the Gospels: “All four Gospel records introduce us to John the Baptizer, the one in the wilderness who is sent to prepare the way for the Coming One, (YHWH) Jesus Christ [Isa 40:3].” Vander Hart, “The Transition of the Old Testament Day of the LORD,” 13.

³⁷¹ “In the NT the term ‘firstborn’ (*protokos*) is used six times in connection with Jesus. He was Mary’s firstborn son (Luke 2:70), the firstborn among many brothers (Rom 8:29), the firstborn of all creation (Col 1:15), the firstborn from the dead (Col:18; Rev 1:5), and the firstborn who is worshiped by the angels (Heb 1:6).” See Mueller, “Christological Concepts 1,” 287.

³⁷² Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 515-516. In Ps 89 (LXX 88) both the Lord and David are called the king in verses 18 and 27.

³⁷³ Büchsel, “εἰμί, ὁ ὢν,” 398; Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 513; Lincicum, “The Origin of ‘Alpha and Omega,’” 131. Aside from the use of ὁ ὢν for the exalted Jesus in Revelation (1:4, 8; 4:8; 11:17; 16:5), the Gospel of John uses this participle for Jesus in John 1:18. Therefore, the only-begotten God was the Lord who dwells in God the Father’s bosom.

v. 4: “One who is, who was and who is to come”

v. 7: “He comes with the clouds and every eye shall see him and they who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth shall weep over him.”

v. 5: “Jesus Christ, Faithful Witness, Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth”

v. 8: “I AM the Alpha and the Omega says the Lord God, the one who is and was and is coming, the Almighty.”

There are shared and related concepts scattered throughout these four verses. The messianic imagery dominates vv. 5 and 7. However, idea of One “coming” is found in vv. 4, 7, and 8, connecting the divine Lord to the Messiah. Revelation 1:4 and 5 may be two descriptions of the same person in contrast to the “God and Father” of 1:6. Not only is this comparable to 11:15 in which “our Lord” and “his Christ” reflect only one divine person who reigns, the context of chapter 1 allows for a dual, even redundant, identification of Jesus.

In verses 2 and 9, John refers to the “word of God” *and* “Jesus Christ.” The possibility of a repetition of synonymous identities becomes apparent when Jesus is identified as the Word of God in 19:13. Johns observes that “Word of God” is one of only two Christological titles in Revelation that is not preceded by ὡς, “like” or “as.”³⁷⁴ That means that Jesus is not *like* the word of God, he *is* the Word of God. In other words, he is the revelation and message that proceeds from God (the Father). Therefore, the Word (λόγος) of God and the witness (μαρτυρία) of Jesus Christ can be considered synonymous, conveying his role as mediator (1:9; cf. 20:4).

Gerhard Kittel explains:

The impartation of the Lord given in John’s visions is simply a presentation, propagation, elucidation, and illustration of the λόγος which is spoken by God and the μαρτυρία which is given by Jesus... When we speak of the given factors described in these phrases, do we refer to two different things, or to one? Are λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ and μαρτυρία Ἰησοῦ distinct, or are they one and the same thing? If we are to give the opinion of the writer, we cannot answer this question without referring to a verse which is highly singular and yet an integral part of the whole, namely, 19:13. The description of the Christ who appears

³⁷⁴ Johns, *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, 218. The other title is “Lamb.”

eschatologically culminates in the saying: καὶ κέκληται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ.³⁷⁵

Before and after vv. 4 and 5, where Jesus may have been described twice (once as the exalted Eternal One and then as the exalted Messiah), John includes these two descriptions of Jesus:

“the word of God”
“witness of Jesus Christ” (v. 2)
“the one who is, who was, and is coming” (v. 4)
“Jesus Christ, the faithful witness,…” (v. 5)
“the word of God”
“witness of Jesus Christ” (v. 9)

This synonymous identification of Jesus supports the possibility that vv. 4 and 5 be both about Jesus. This is also complemented by verses 7 and 8 that, in agreement with verse 4, speak about he who is coming having been identified as the pierced one.³⁷⁶ In fact, this would place God the Father in the middle of a chiasmic structure within the introduction to Revelation:

³⁷⁵ Gerhard Kittel, “λέγω, λόγος, ῥῆμα, λαλέω, λόγιος, λόγιον, ἄλογος, λογικός, λογομαξέω, λογομαχία, ἐκλέγομαι, ἐκλογή, ἐκλεκτός,” [TDNT], 4:124.

³⁷⁶ Perhaps the role of the Word (of God), in connection with ὁ ὢν in verse 4, reflects partially Jesus’ pre-mortal existence, similar to John 1:1, 18. The combination of “I AM” (ἐγώ εἰμι), ὁ ὢν from LXX Exod 3:14, and the reference to “coming” in Revelation 1:8, are reinforced with the titles “Alpha” (Ἄλφα) and “Omega” (Ὠ), the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Many convincing and unconvincing sources have been suggested for the origin of these titles (Lincicum, “The Origin of ‘Alpha and Omega,’” 128). The only three references in scripture of these two letters as titles are in Revelation (1:8; 21:6; 22:13). John may have been speaking of Jesus in all three instances. Austin Farrer was the first to suggest that there is one possible source for “Alpha” and “Omega” found at Qumran in one LXX manuscript of the book of Leviticus (4QpapLXX-Levb=4Q120; see Austin Farrer, *A Rebirth of Images The Making of St John’s Apocalypse* [Boston: Beacon, 1963]), 262-270; and Lincicum, “The Origin of ‘Alpha and Omega,’” 130; Lev 1:11; 2:3; 3:12, 14; 4:27). The translators transliterated into Greek a phonetic form of the Hebrew tetragrammaton, יהוה (YHWH; Larry W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006], 103-104). As a result, three Greek letters were written, ΙΑΩ: iota, alpha, and omega. As a document purported to be from the first century B.C.E, John might have been aware of this rendition of YHWH (Patrick W. Skehan, “The Qumran Manuscripts and Textual Criticism” in *Volume du Congrès - Strasbourg 1956*. VTSup 4 [Leiden: Brill, 1957], 148-160). If “Α” and “Ω” were used in Revelation, the initial “Ι” would be all that was missing. However, Lincicum has offered a solution: “Might it have been the case that John, perhaps taking his cue from the emerging Christian practice of abbreviating names in the *nomina sacra*, ‘exegeted’ the divine name ΙΑΩ as Ἰησοῦς ἄλφα ὦ, that is, Jesus is the Alpha and Omega? We know that the Greek name ΙΑΩ was current as a rendering of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton at the time from its presence in at least one Septuagintal manuscript” (Lincicum, “The Origin of ‘Alpha and Omega,’” 129-130). In Greek, “Ι” (iota) is the first letter in “Jesus” (Ἰησοῦς). John may have understood YHWH in Greek (ΙΑΩ) to have meant that the Lord of the OT was Jesus (“Ι”) who was the Alpha (“Α”) and Omega (“Ω”). “Alpha” and “omega,” the “First” and the “Last,” the “Beginning” and the “End” convey the same connotation (Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 521). Jesus clearly identifies himself by this connotation throughout Revelation (1:17; 2:8; 21:6; 22:13). In addition, the speaker of 1:8 had also been presented by John in 1:7 as the coming pierced one. Revelation 21:6 will

“the word of God” and “witness of Jesus Christ” (v. 2)
 “the one who is, who was, and is coming” (v. 4)
 “Jesus Christ, the faithful witness,…” (v. 5)
 “his God and Father” (v. 6)
 The coming pierced one (v. 7)
 “Lord God, the one who is and was and is coming, the Almighty” (v. 8)
 “the word of God” and “witness of Jesus Christ” (v. 9)

This may have been intentional with the many roles and titles of Jesus surrounding the identity of his God and Father in Revelation 1:6.

The titles “Alpha and Omega” for the Lord God Almighty (1:8) and “First and Last” for Jesus (1:17) also suggest an association.³⁷⁷ The parallels between 1:8 and 1:17-18 are illuminating.³⁷⁸

1:8 (Lord God)	1:17-18 (Jesus)
“I AM”	“I AM”
“Alpha and Omega”	“First and the Last” (Isa 41:4; 44:6; 48:12)
“who is” (ὁ ὢν; participle)	“who lives” (ὁ ζῶν; participle)
“who was” (ὁ ἦν; aorist)	“who became dead” (ἐγενόμην νεκρὸς; aorist)
“who is coming” (ὁ ἐρχόμενος; participle)	“I am living forever” (ζῶν; participle) ³⁷⁹
“the Almighty”	“I have the keys of Hades and of death” ³⁸⁰

be discussed in the further in this chapter. The “I” also may be the Greek translation of *yod* (י), the first letter of YHWH, identifying Jesus and the Lord YHWH (Lincicum, “The Origin of ‘Alpha and Omega,’” 131).

³⁷⁷ The “First and the Last” along with ὁ ὢν suggests that John is identifying Jesus specifically with not only the Lord of Exodus, but also of Isaiah (cf. Isa 41:4; 44:6; 48:12; see Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 535). The command to “fear not” was spoken in the OT by the Lord and his messengers (cf. Rev 1:17; 2:10; Gen 26:24; Isa 41:10; 44:2, 8). See Ronning, “The *Targum of Isaiah* and the Johannine Literature,” 250, 255. Cf. also Dan 10:12, 18-19.

³⁷⁸ In v. 17 “there is material parallel to the ΑΩ of 1:8” (Stauffer, “ἐγώ,” 351). Barker states that in 1:17 Jesus “introduced himself as Yahweh” (Barker, *The Great Angel*, 201).

³⁷⁹ Jesus’ statement parallels LXX Deut 32:40: “I live for forever” (ζῶ ἐγὼ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). Kotecki states that this description had only belonged to divinity (Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 521). Barker comments: “He introduces himself as Yahweh: ‘I am the first and the last and the living one’ (Rev. 1.17), with which we should compare [to] Isa. 44.6. ... In a passage which is now suspiciously obscured, Job expresses confidence in a living Redeemer... The line in question could be read ‘I know my Redeemer is the Living One and the Last One shall rise up’ (Job 19.25-9)” (Barker, *The Great Angel*, 201). In Job 19:25-26, there appears to be a distinction between the Redeemer (v. 25) and God (v. 26).

³⁸⁰ This is consistent with an early letter by Paul: “For whether we live, we live for the Lord, and whether we die, we die for the Lord, and therefore whether we live or die, we are of the Lord. For this is why Christ died and lived again even that he might be Lord of the dead and the living” (Rom 14:8-9). This positions Jesus as deity (Beale, *Use of Daniel*, 177).

These details suggest strongly an identification of Jesus and the Lord God. In addition, in verse 4, the seven spirits are before the throne of him “who is and was and is coming.” In verse 13, John describes the Son of Man as being in the middle of the seven lamps, representing the seven spirits/angels (1:20). To describe them as being before the throne surrounding the Son of Man is consistent with 3:21, where Jesus sits on the Father’s throne. Also, in this, his exalted state as Lord God, Jesus is clearly not God the Father. He makes a kingdom of priests for God, his Father (not “Lord”; 1:6). Therefore, it is in his exalted nature as Lord God—yet distinct from God the Father—that Jesus mediates and brings about the will of his Father, even as the Father’s true revelation.

The identification of Jesus as the coming Lord God is further supported by Revelation 22. On two occasions, John mentions the “throne of God” and the “Lamb” (22:1, 3).³⁸¹ He does not speak of the Father, but only of the “throne.” The throne may represent the authority Jesus has, he being in the midst of the throne.³⁸² Jesus, before calling himself “Alpha” and “Omega,” the “First” and the “Last,” the “Beginning” and the “End” (22:13), identifies himself twice as the

³⁸¹ This can also be translated as “the throne of God and of the Lamb.”

³⁸² The singular pronouns in verse 3 and 4 refer only to the Lamb because no one else is mentioned (only the throne and the Lamb). Mueller believes the pronouns refer to the Father also (Mueller, “Christological Concepts 2,” 79). However, he would have the burden of showing where the Father is mentioned in these verses. In fact, the reference regarding the Lamb’s face is an allusion to the “Lord” (LXX Ps 16:15 [Hebrew Ps 17:15]). In 22:6, Jesus is identified as the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets, similar to titles in Num. 16:22 and 27:16. There is a pattern in the Torah of which John may have been aware that begins by attaching a title to “God,” and then afterward attributes it to the title “Lord.” In Num 16:22, “God” is the “God of the spirits of all flesh”; the title of “Lord” assumes this role in Num 27:16. “God” is the creator of “heaven and earth” in Gen 1 and “Lord God” is the creator of “earth and heaven” (inverted) in Gen 2. The Lord is also called creator of “heaven and earth” in Exod 20:11. “God” is called the “Most High” in Gen 14:18-20 by Melchizedek of unknown lineage. On the lips of Abraham the father of the people of Israel, the “Lord” is called the “Most High” (Gen 14:22; this distinction is absent from LXX). While “God” is speaking, he calls himself the “God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob” (Exod 3:4-6). This is the first time these three names are found together. When “God” continues to speak, Moses is instructed to call the “Lord” the “God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob” (Exod 3:15-16; cf. Exod 6:2-3). John, if aware of this use of divine titles, may have used this ordering of titles to support the superiority of “God” (the Father) over “Lord” (Jesus).

only one who is coming (22:7, 12). In verse 12, Jesus further identifies himself as the divine One who speaks the words of Isaiah 40:10³⁸³:

LXX Isa 40:10

Behold, the Lord comes with might and the arm with exaltedness. Behold, his reward is with him and the work before him. (Cf. 62:11)

Rev 22:12

Behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me to render to each according to is his work.

John consistently places the words about the Lord in first person on the lips of Jesus.³⁸⁴ All three titles, “Alpha” and “Omega,” the “First” and the “Last,” the “Beginning” and the “End,” are placed on the lips of one speaker, the coming Jesus, reflecting his eternal nature (22:13).³⁸⁵

Kotecki argues that the title “Beginning” is equivalent in meaning to Jesus’ role as the “beginning (ἀρχή) of the God’s creation” (3:14).³⁸⁶ By living forever, with dominion over Hades and death (1:18), Kotecki says that Jesus was not only exalted through resurrection, but is divine as the beginning and end of God’s work. Mueller expands on this thought:

That a reference to Christ’s participation in God’s creation of all things is not out of place...is clear from 3:14, where the beginning of the message to the church at Laodicea calls him: “the origin (*archē*) of God’s creation.” This does not mean that he was the first created being or that in his resurrection he was the beginning of God’s new creation. It must have the same sense as the first part of the title, “the beginning (*archē*) and the end.”³⁸⁷

³⁸³ Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 514. I translate the LXX.

³⁸⁴ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 220.

³⁸⁵ Kotecki, “Reinterpretación del Antiguo Testamento en el Nuevo,” 515. Although Bauckham believes Rev 1:8 and 21:6 refer to the Father, he observes that his reading identifies Jesus only as the “First” and the “Last” identifying him directly with the Lord of Isaiah (Isa 44:6; 48:12; Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 38-39.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 523-524.

³⁸⁷ Mueller, “Christological Concepts 2,” 74. Mueller suggest this title belongs to the Father and the Son in Revelation. Although theologically true, Revelation does not appear to attribute these titles to the Father, but strictly to the exalted Jesus. See also Ronning, “The *Targum of Isaiah* and the Johannine Literature,” 249. Werner Forester identifies a tradition that associated “bright morning star” with the beginning of creation: “But there is also an old tradition that it was created before all other creatures. At ψ 109:3 LXX rendered the obscure text: πρὸ ἑωσφόρου ἐξεγέννησά σε = B *ante luciferum*. Aug. Sermon, 119, 14 took this to mean *ante omnem creaturam*. At least in Rev. 22:16 it would then be the equivalent of ἀρχὴ πάσης κτίσεως. Only a systematic investigation of the nature of the whole imagery of Rev. could give us any certainty in matter.” See Werner Forester, “ἀστήρ, ἄστρον,” in vol. 1 of *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (ed. Gerhard Kittel; Germany: Eerdmans, 1964), 504.

Although Mueller does not attach this concept with the title “the End,” Jesus’ constant role in judgment presupposes his participation in the eschatological end (2:23; 19:11; 22:12). As stated above, his identification as “Alpha” and “Omega,” the “First” and the “Last,” the “Beginning” and the “End” is christologically high in association with the divine name. This connotation and some of these titles are also found in LXX Deutero-Isaiah found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q120):

[S]cholars have suggested that the title “Alpha and Omega” in Revelation arose through reflection on the Greek form of the divine name, ΙΑΩ. This note takes up and extends that evidence to put forth the possibility that John “exegeted” the divine name, in light of Isaiah 40-48 and emerging scribal practices of abbreviating the *nomina sacra*, as a reference to Jesus as the Alpha and Omega.³⁸⁸

Therefore, Jesus was not merely substituting the “Lord” by including himself into passages as John most certainly had him do. In 1:8, 21:6 and 22:13, Jesus was calling himself by the divine name as found in 4Q120: ΙΑΩ. When writing about the Lord in allusions to the OT, John always includes Jesus in the image; yet, the same is not so with the Father. John does not replace the singular title of “God” in the OT with a Christological concept; neither does he make an effort to separate the title “Lord” from Jesus. Having been endowed with divinity, Jesus represents the divinity of the Father. Ethelbert Stauffer comments on the divine nature of Jesus; “Yet neither here nor in the NT generally could one speak of a replacement of God by Christ or of an admixture of two magnitudes [under the title ‘Lord’] . . . He is instituted by the one God as the authoritative Bearer of the divine office for the whole sphere of this world and its history.”³⁸⁹

³⁸⁸ Lincicum, “The Origin of ‘Alpha and Omega,’” 128. The author of Hebrews had made a similar statement about Jesus. He was called the author (ἀρχηγός) and the finisher (τελειωτής) of faith (Heb 12:2).

³⁸⁹ Stauffer, “ἐγώ,” 351.

The chapter begins mentioning the Lamb alone with the throne (22:3, 5). There is no mention of the Father and Jesus is repeatedly identified as the Lord.³⁹⁰ Complementary to 22:7 and 12, Jesus is identified as the Lord who is coming: “The one who witnesses these things says, ‘Surely I come quickly, Amen.’ Yes, come Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ [be] with all of you, Amen” (Rev 22:20-21). Clearly, the one who is coming is the Lord Jesus. Barker combines the imagery from Revelation, including the position of being in the middle of the seven lamps/spirits, to identify the divine person of Revelation 1:8:

[Jesus] in the midst of the lamps was central part of the one, composite lamp, rather than a distinct figure surrounded by seven freestanding lamps as often depicted. The seven-branched lamp as a whole was the presence of the LORD with his people, the seven spirits before the throne (1:4) who were all present in the Anointed One . . . The greeting to the seven churches is another composite description of the heavenly LORD: “Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first born of the dead and the ruler of the kings of the earth” (1:4). The visions show that Jesus is identified as “the one who was and is and is to come” (1:8, cf. 22:13), and that he was also the one in whom was the sevenfold spirit (5:6). These complex and cumulative descriptions of one being are characteristic of the Book of Revelation and are important for understanding its theology.³⁹¹

Jesus is the Lord as supported by Revelation. Jesus may be the same Lord God who is coming who had also been pierced 1:7-8.³⁹² John clearly called the Coming One both Lord Jesus (22:20-

³⁹⁰ Jesus is identified as the Lord multiple times: the Lord God’s replacing of lamps and his identification with the previously mentioned Lamb (22:4 [21:23]), Jesus-Lord God who sends his angel to his servants (22:6, 16), his role as divine Judge (22:12 [Isa 40:10]), and the “Root”/source (the Lord) and descendent (Messiah) of David. Vander Hart observes that in the OT, it was the Lord who restores the house of David himself, not the Messiah: “Yet in Amos 9:11 YHWH says that ‘in that day’ He will ‘raise up the fallen booth of David.’ But this is said to be YHWH’s work, not the work of a messianic figure” (Vander Hart, “The Transition of the Old Testament Day of the LORD,” 6). In Rev 11:15 and Acts 2:34-36, Jesus assumes both the roles of divine Lord and suffering Messiah.

³⁹¹ Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 83.

³⁹² In the throne room scene of chapters 4 and 5, John may have suggested that the coming Lord God, ὁ ἐρχόμενος (4:8), came to take the sealed book and open it as the slain Lamb (ἦλθεν; 5:7).

21)³⁹³ and Lord God (1:8), in contrast to the one who was both God and Father (1:6).³⁹⁴ The Son is the divine manifestation of the Father; both are God.³⁹⁵

God: God the Father and God the Lord

The single title “God” can be read as being applied to Jesus in Revelation also. Upon seeing a new heaven and earth, and a new city, John continues the ambiguity in regard to the Enthroned One, giving him no title (21:1-5). In 21:3, John hears “a great voice from the throne” and does not say who the speaker is. At this point, there are only two possibilities: the Father or the Son (3:21; 7:10, 17). No one else had spoken from (or resided on) this throne. The words spoken extend the ambiguity as the title “God” is spoken about in third person: “And I heard a great voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with humans and he will tabernacle with them and they will be his people and the very God will be with them...’” (21:3-4). Therefore, the voice can either be interpreted as the Father’s speaking about Jesus (the Lord God) or Jesus’ speaking about God the Father.³⁹⁶ This “God” in 21:3 will dwell among the

³⁹³ The cry for Jesus at the end of Revelation was like calling on the name of and praying to the Lord. Bauckham shows this practice to be very early: “Acclamations and prayers addressed to Jesus go back to the earliest times. The Aramaic cry *Maranatha* (‘Our Lord, come!’: 1 Cor. 16:22; *Did.* 10:6; cf. Rev. 22:20), whose preservation in Aramaic Greek-speaking churches indicates its very early origin, implies not only the expectation of the Parousia, but present religious relationship with the one who is to come... The New Testament evidence for personal prayer to Jesus as a regular feature of early Christianity has sometimes been underestimated” (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 128; cf. Ps 3:7; 7:6; 9:19; 10:12; 50:3; 96:13; 98:9; 101:2; 144:5; Isa 35:4; 59:20; 64:1; 66:5). The earliest Christians expected the return (“coming”) of Jesus and venerated him. Jesus was more than the mortal Messiah; he was the divine Lord: “[S]ince the Aramaic original of this prayer has survived..., both the form and the language of the prayer suggests that the Palestinian community worshipped Jesus as Yahweh. Scholars have found this worship of Jesus hard to explain and have even been driven to suggest that the veneration of Jesus was an unfortunate development... This hypothesis is not necessary” (Barker, *The Great Angel*, 215). This was the highest Christology, from the earliest writings to the close of the first century C.E.

³⁹⁴ Cf. John 20:17 and John 20:28.

³⁹⁵ In Rev 14:1, the 144,000 sealed bore the name of the Lamb and the Father on their foreheads. However, Rev 3:12 had said that those who overcame would have “the seal of the living God.” J. Wright explains: “The ‘seal of the living God’ thus identifies ‘God’ as ‘the Father’ and ‘the Son,’ distinguishing between them—they both have their own names—yet joining them together equally as God” (“Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 31).

³⁹⁶ The idea of one divine being representing another was a possible interpretation of the OT according to Philo. Whether the unarticulated θεός is read as indefinite or qualitative in LXX Gen 31:13, Philo identifies two as divine in *Som.* i 227-229: “Yet there can be no cowering fear for the man who relies on the hope of the divine comradeship, to whom are addressed the words ‘I am the God who appeared to thee in the place of God’ ([LXX]

righteous. Revelation 21:2 says that “God” was in heaven whence the new city descends. The implication is that somehow God in heaven would descend. However, John’s particular implementation of divine titles likely reflects an interpretation the role of the Lord Jesus. When describing God on earth, John does not use the single title of “God” to name the one dwelling in the holy city; he uses “Lord God” in connection with the Lamb, as shown above:

21:3
 ...Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with humans and he will tabernacle with them and they will be his people and the very God will be with them [as their God].³⁹⁷

21:22
 And I did not see a temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty is its temple and the Lamb.³⁹⁸

John uses two titles that are not entirely identical, even though apparently similar: “God” and “Lord God.” God’s presence on earth is demonstrated as the Lord God, the Lord God who is (ἔστιν) the temple (symbolically) and the Lamb (ontologically).³⁹⁹ If the tabernacle of God is equivalent to the temple (and that may certainly be the case), that could identify the Lord God/Lamb as the “tabernacle of God.”⁴⁰⁰ John may have indirectly identified the Lord God on earth as the tabernacle/temple of the God who is in heaven.

Gen 31:13). Surely a right noble cause of vaunting it is for a soul that God deigns to show himself to and converse with it. And do not fail to mark the language used, *but carefully inquire whether there are two Gods*; for we read ‘I am the God that appeared to thee,’ not ‘in my place’ but ‘in the place of God,’ as though it were another’s. What then are we to say? He that is truly God is one, but those that are improperly so-called are more than one. Accordingly, the holy word in the present instance has indicated Him whom truly is God by means of the articles, saying ‘I am the God,’ while it omits the article when mentioning him who is improperly so called, saying ‘who appeared to thee in the place not ‘of the God’ but simply ‘of God’” (cited in Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 159).

³⁹⁷ The end, αὐτῶν θεός, is not in all manuscripts and may be subject to doubt. However, the concept of belonging to him has already been expressed in the verse and may repeat in v. 7.

³⁹⁸ These two verses parallel ideas and titles in Isa: “God with us” (8:10; cf. Rev 21:3); “Sanctify YHWH...he shall be a sanctuary” (Isa 8:13-14; cf. Rev 21:22).

³⁹⁹ Wright, “Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 33. J. Wright interprets the text to read that God is represented by the Lord God (who is the Father) and the Lamb. However, the context in the entire book of Revelation seems to imply that God the Father is represented on earth by the Lord God who is also the Lamb (11:15-17; 21:22; cf. John 1:18). As seen in chapter 2, Revelation 21:23 (Isa 60:19) can be read as saying that the glory of God is represented as the light of the Lamb.

⁴⁰⁰ John had called the Lord of Revelation (Jesus) the: “beginning of the creations of God” (3:14); Amen of God (3:14 [Isa 65:15]); Word of God (19:13); and finally the “tabernacle of God.”

In Revelation 21:5, the speaker is identified differently: “the one sitting on the throne” (not merely “a great voice from the throne”). The one on the throne identifies himself as “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end” (21:6) equivalent to Jesus in 22:13. To further this identification with Jesus, John says this speaker will give living water (21:6). This precise role had previously distinguished the Lamb from God (7:17).⁴⁰¹ The speaker in 21:3 and 21:5-6 may in fact be Jesus speaking about God’s presence on earth through him. According to Segal, Philo also has a concept of distinct manifestations of the divine in connection with the application and combination of divine titles.⁴⁰² Segal also argues that rabbis were in opposition to a comparable, but different, concept of “two powers in heaven.”⁴⁰³

⁴⁰¹ The Lamb would lead to springs of water and God would wipe tears (7:17). God’s role as wiper of tears is repeated also in 21:4, reflecting the separate role of the Father.

⁴⁰² “At the beginning of *On the Change of Names*, Philo discusses seeing God. . . The passage where Abram was granted a vision of YHWH (Gen 17:1-5) before his name was changed to Abraham forms the basis of Philo’s discussion, but he goes far afield in reflecting upon it. At first, Abram only saw God’s sovereign power. When scripture says that God said to him ‘I am thy God’ it signified that a vision of the higher, creative power was given to Abram. Philo again is depending on the distinction between the two names of God. The Existent One may appear in either of two ways to normal men—as Lord YHWH to the bad, when they are punished (hence as a lower potency), or as ‘God’ to the earnest striver. Only to the perfected can he appear as both ‘God and Lord.’ Thus he is spoken of as ‘Lord’ to Pharaoh, whom he punishes, ‘God’ to Moses (before his ultimate revelation) and ‘Lord God’ to Israel, who in this context is the highest, most perfect believer. Jacob is renamed Israel, signifying that he has seen the complete image of God, his *logos*. Only to the higher man, who can understand the allegory, does God reveal himself as *theos*, the higher power, to whom man must respond with love. To those with lesser powers of intellect, who understand only the literal meaning, God reveals himself as a fearful, punishing deity, *kyrios*. They know no better than to perceive him as a man” (Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 177-178). Segal also cites Philo’s comments in *Som.* i 234-237: “[T]he lines taken throughout the Law are these two only, one that which keeps truth in view and so provides the thought ‘God is not a man’ (Num. 23:19), the other which keeps in view the ways of thinking of the duller folk, of whom it is said, ‘The Lord God will chasten thee, as a man should chasten his son’ (Dt. 8:5). Why then do we wonder any longer at His assuming the likeness of [messengers], seeing that for the succor of those that are in need He assumes the likeness of man? Accordingly, when He says, ‘I am the God who was seen of thee in the place of God’ ([LXX] Gen. 31:13) understand that He occupied the place of [a messenger] only so far as appeared, without changing with a view to the profit of him who was not yet capable of seeing the true God” (ibid, 160). According to Segal’s reading of one passage of the writings of Philo, Philo here understood “Lord” as reflecting “a lower potency” of the title “God,” an appearance “as a man.” The difference for Philo is the human capacity for perception, to which the One God alters his revelation. The concept in Revelation is comparable to Philo’s, but different. In Revelation, God and Father may be interpreted as being manifested to all humanity through the Lord Jesus (with his different titles).

⁴⁰³ Rabbis may have interpreted the text of the OT to reflect two manifestations of the one God: a young man and an old man: “The exegesis notes the repetition of the name YHWH in Ex. 15:3 and explains its significance. ‘YHWH is a man of war’ is to be interpreted as a descriptive statement referring to God’s manifestation as a young warrior when He destroyed the Egyptians at the Red Sea. ‘YHWH is His name’ is necessary because at Sinai He will reveal Himself as an old man, showing mercy. Hence, it is important for the

If Jesus is in reference in Revelation 21:3-7, his identity as the Lord God on earth, distinct from God in heaven, may be consistent with Revelation as a whole (and possibly comparable to Philo and the rabbis). In 22:7, the speaker also pronounces the words of the Lord of the OT as Jesus had throughout Revelation: “I will be his God and he will be my son.”⁴⁰⁴ A careful reading will show that the title “God” may have been applied to Jesus in a very particular way, if this is in fact Jesus. If he is Jesus, he is saying, “I *will be* his God.” As divine as Jesus has been portrayed in Revelation, here, the title “God” may suggest a function in addition to the believer’s role of accepting him as his God. This could have meant for John that Jesus would, as the Lord had also promised in the OT, *become* their God. This supports John’s portrayal of Jesus as divinely invested (or becoming divine) on the Father’s throne (3:21). This suggests that the same or similar interpretation that I have suggested for “Lord God,” reflecting Jesus’ unity with the Father, can also be applied to the addition of an explanatory genitive pronoun “Lord their/your God” (or any other pronoun). In other words, Jesus was their God as he represented the Father on his throne. The Father and the Son were united yet separate. John identified two, but never called them two, always conveying their unity.

Paul, the author of many of the NT’s earliest writings, may have also defined and elaborated on a similar understanding of the title “Lord our God.” 1 Corinthians 8:6 is a clear

Israelites to realize that same God is speaking in both cases, though the manifestations look different. The proof-text for these statements is Dan. 7:9f. which describes a heavenly enthronement scene involving two manifestations, ‘the son of man’ and ‘the Ancient of Days.’ In this context, the reference from Dan. must be taken to demonstrate that God may be manifested either as a young man or as an old man. . . Not only does the passage allow the interpretation that God changes aspect, it may easily be describing two separate, divine figures. More than one throne is revealed and scripture describes two divine figures to fill them. One sits and the other seems to be invested with power, possibly enthroned” (*Two Powers in Heaven*, 35). According to Segal, the some Rabbis argued that the Lord was the “young man” appearance of God. Other examples of separate manifestations were also connected to divine titles: “The rabbinic doctrine derives two different aspects of God—one merciful and the other just—from the two Hebrew names of God, YHWH and Elohim” (ibid., 39).

⁴⁰⁴ Exod 6:7; 2 Sam 7:14; Jer 7:23; 11:4; 24:7; 30:22; 31:1, 33; 32:38; Ezek 11:20; 36:28; 37:23, 27; Zech 8:8. If 2 Sam 7:14 is the *only* source text as Beale suggests (“Revelation,” 1151), and I do not believe it is, John has removed the title “father” having reserved it for God the Father in Revelation.

allusion to Deuteronomy 6:4: the *Shema*. However, Paul produces a “Christian version” of the source text, identifying two divine subjects⁴⁰⁵:

Deuteronomy 6:4

Listen Israel: YHWH our God, YHWH is one.

1 Corinthians 8:6

But for us [there is] one God the Father, from whom [are] all things and we for him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom [are] all things and we through him.

Paul has retained all of the words from the *Shema* and has included descriptive commentary.

Paul may not have been, as Bauckham asserts, “redefining monotheism as Christological monotheism,” but exegeting an OT Christology based on divine titles (even when connected with a possessive pronoun.⁴⁰⁶ Beale describes Paul’s textual commitment and explanatory additions to the *Shema*:

The key words “Lord,” “God,” and “one” are taken from Deut. 6:4 (“the LORD our God, the LORD is one”)... But now Paul has glossed “God” with “the Father,” and “Lord” with “Jesus Christ,” adding in each case an explanatory phrase: “God” is the Father, “from whom are all things and we to him,” and the “Lord” is Jesus the Messiah, “through whom are all things and we through him.”⁴⁰⁷

By interpreting the title “Lord *our* God” as two divine subjects, Paul may have been describing a representative role for the Son on behalf of the Father, similar to the Christology of Revelation. Paul defined “our God” as Father and the ultimate source of all that exists. “Lord,” on the other hand, is Jesus Christ through whom all exists, acting as mediator before the Father.⁴⁰⁸ In Deuteronomy, the “Lord” was described as “our God.” Therefore, Paul may have understood the “Lord” (Jesus) to have been the mediator of “our God” (the Father) whom the Lord represented to Israel. As a result, not only did John in Revelation (at the end of the first century), but also

⁴⁰⁵ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 27-28.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, “1 Corinthians,” *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, edited by G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 717.

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. John 1:1-3. See also Matt 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 14:6; 1 Tim 2:5.

Paul (the first Christian author of whom we have record), were able to find both the Father and the Son in the OT, both divine, ontologically separate, yet functionally united.⁴⁰⁹ Paul and John may have shared, at least partially, a very high Christology based on the divine titles “God” and “Lord” in the OT.⁴¹⁰ Therefore, Paul understood a separation associated with the divine titles: Lord and God. As shown, above they all interpreted the title “Lord” as a manifestation or revelation of the title “God.” John appears to share in this exegetical practice. In Revelation 21, John depicts God’s presence on earth with his people (21:3) through the Lord God who is also the Lamb (21:22; cf. 1:5; 11:4, 15, 17); i.e., “The Lord Jesus will be their God.”⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁹ Barker describes Paul’s Christology: “Now Paul, though completely at home in the Greek world, claimed to have been the strictest of Jews, educated in Jerusalem and zealous for the traditions of his people. How was it that he, of all people, could distinguish between God and Lord as he did in 1 Cor., if this was not already a part of first-century Jewish belief? He emphasized that this distinction was fundamental to this belief: ‘there is one God, the Father ... and one Lord, Jesus Christ’ (1 Cor 8:6). This is, to say the least, a remarkable contradiction of Deut. 6:4, *if he understood that verse in the way we do, as a statement of [traditional] monotheism*” (*The Great Angel*, 192-193). Bauckham and Smith agree that Deuteronomy, read in context, never denies the existence of multiple divine beings (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 63; Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism*, 153). In addition, Gulley describes how the word, “one,” is used for unity between two parties: “There are two words for ‘one’ in Hebrew (1) *yāhîd* means unique, such as an only son (Gen 22:2) and an only child (Prov 4:3; Zech 12:10), whereas (2) *’ehād* means united, such as ‘a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh’ (Gen 2:24). The word *’ehād* (united) is used in the Shema” (Gulley, “Trinity in the Old Testament,” 83). He therefore concludes: “So it seems that the Shema not only speaks of the uniqueness of God as the only God, but refers to the oneness that results from a unity of numerous persons” (Ibid., 84).

⁴¹⁰ Deut 10:17 and 1 Cor 8:5 are to only two passages in the OT and NT “where ‘gods’ and ‘lords’ appear in the same sentence” conveying Paul’s knowledge of the former (Ciampa, “1 Corinthians,” 718). Deut 10:17 proclaims the Lord our God to be “God of gods and Lord of lords.” Judging from Paul’s christological exegesis of the titles in the Shema, Jesus as the “Lord our God” (as explained above) would have had every right and authority to be called “God of gods and Lord of lords” without any threat to God the Father (1 Cor 15:27-28).

⁴¹¹ Cf. Matt 1:21-23 where the Lord is quoted saying that the child (in Isaiah 7:14) would represent “God,” not “Lord.” This interpretation also reconciles such passages as Isa 45:5 for early Christian thought: “because I [the] Lord God and there is yet no god except me and you did not know me.” Outside of the Lord God, there was none else; i.e., “no one comes to the Father except by me” (John 14:6).

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Context for Finding the Father and the Son in the OT, and Conclusion

This concluding chapter presents an overview of the patterns of titles identified in Revelation. I will offer a comment on the implications of applying these methods to the broader NT. There is room for further study in this regard. These patterns include a number of similar associations of divine titles in OT citations/allusions with the persons of the Father and the Son as described in the NT. These patterns may reflect a Christological reading of the OT that complements Revelation's. By finding the Father and the Son (identified as "Lord") in the OT, John conveys their eternal divine nature, ultimately implying that the person of the Son existed with and on behalf of the Father from the beginning. A move in Biblical Studies has been to read Christology in the NT through the lens of later creeds, which can seem disconnected from the OT.⁴¹² It is my view, however, that the authors of scripture had their own exegetical practices that should be investigated on their own terms. Often, scholars like Bauckham have proposed that the authors of the NT had no choice but to include Jesus in the unique identity of the God of the OT, thereby maintaining "the most unequivocal way of excluding any threat to monotheism."⁴¹³ Bauckham's language of "inclusion" may imply that the early Christians of first century had to attach Jesus to the identity of the Father as to avoid any threat to the oneness of "God." Such a representation of first-century beliefs ignores the possibility that early Christians had the conviction that their theology was both a new reading of Scripture and a reading that

⁴¹² J. Wright provides the following example of the reverse-application of tradition onto scripture: "Nicea stands as a fundamental rule, a hermeneutical guide, for the Christian reading of Scripture. To abandon it may be to abandon the concept of Scripture, reducing the Christian Bible to a collection of miscellaneous books from various stages within Israelite, Jewish, and early Christian history and communities" ("Blessing, Honor Glory," 36).

⁴¹³ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 26-27, 53, 176. "[T]he intention of New Testament Christology, throughout the texts, is to include Jesus in the unique divine identity as Jewish monotheism understood it" (Ibid., 19). The language of "monotheism" and even "polytheism" are late and may impose a semantic understanding the authors never conceived.

identifies the Lord as Jesus in the OT texts. The Son had always been in the OT. Along the same lines, Hurtado asks readers to “consider the possibility of significant reformulations and new adaptations of a religious commitment” by early Christians.⁴¹⁴ Hurtado states that only “significant reformulations and new adaptations” can be accepted as plausible explanations for first-century Christology.⁴¹⁵ Hurtado describes this “difficult to imagine...Christian-devotion” as a “variant form of a tradition,” a “major development,” an “innovation,” a “mutation” “unparalleled,” and “unprecedented.”⁴¹⁶ Nevertheless, John and the authors of the NT do not appear to consider themselves part of an unprecedented divine Lord movement.

By identifying the Father as “God” and Jesus as “Lord,” John and the NT authors find a wealth of scriptures that support their Christology. In Revelation, we observed that the divine titles (“God” and “Lord”) in Isaiah 60:19 are read as God the Father and the Lamb (Rev 21:23).⁴¹⁷ John identifies Jesus as the OT Lord, a generally accepted exegesis, yet maintains a contextual separation from the titles “God” and/or “Father.”⁴¹⁸ There are numerous examples of Jesus speaking and acting the very words and actions of the Lord of the OT.⁴¹⁹ In contrast, there is no clear application of any “Lord” passages from the OT to God the Father. According to

⁴¹⁴ Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 45. For Hurtado, these “significant reformulations and new adaptations” were, too, a production of first-century thought: “In light of constraining effect of exclusivist monotheism, it is in fact initially difficult to imagine how the sort of Christian-devotion that we see reflected in the early Christian sources could have emerged and flourished so early and so fully among people who professed a fidelity to the monotheistic tradition” (ibid., 51).

⁴¹⁵ Cf. Matt 13:15; John 17:[5], 25; Eph 1:4; 1Pet 1:20.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., 52-53, 64.

⁴¹⁷ John’s rendition of the fulfillment of Exod 19:6 in regard to two divine beings may have been dependent on the two divine titles either from Hebrew Exod 19:3 or the entire chapter of LXX Exod 19.

⁴¹⁸ Rev 1:1; 22:6, 16 [Exod 23:20]; 2:23, 27 [Jer 17:10]; 3:5 [Exod 32:32-33]; 3:14 [Isa LXX 43:10; Hebrew 65:16]; 5:6 [Zech 4:2, 10]; 19:13-15 [Isa 63:1-4]. In the case of Rev 21:7, Jesus may be God dwelling on earth representing God in heaven (21:3; cf. 11:13).

⁴¹⁹ Rev 1:17 [Isa 41:4, 13]; 1:18 [LXX Deut 32:39]; 2:23 [Jer 17:10]; 3:19 [Prov 3:12]; 5:6 [LXX Hos 5:14]; 5:6 [Zech 4:2, 10]; 13:8 [Isa 34:16]; 14:1 [Zech 14:4]; 14:14 [Isa 19:1]; 19:7-9 [Isa 49:18; 54:5]; 22:12 [Isa 40:10].

Revelation, John identified the Father with title “God” in the OT (Rev 21:23 [Isa 60:19], which includes allusions based off the LXX where the title “God” stands where “Lord” is found in Hebrew.⁴²⁰ In this separation, John is consistent to maintain the Divine Lord’s role as mediator before God the Father in Revelation.

This practice of identifying Jesus with the title “Lord” in the OT and yet separating him from “God” the Father may not have been new to John. The following overview of the NT is complementary to passages already cited and is presented as a comparison. Beginning with the Gospels, Jesus is described clearly as the Lord for whom the Baptist was preparing the way (Isa 40:3), only to be called “Son” by a separate voice from heaven not identified as “Lord.”⁴²¹ In Mark (and Matthew), Jesus cries to the Father from the cross, quoting a psalm with the divine title of “God,” not “Lord” (Ps 22:1).⁴²² However, the separation of divine titles typologically for the Father and the Son becomes apparent when Jesus is mocked for not saving *himself*:

LXX Psalm 21:1, 8 (MT 22:1, 8)	Mark 15: 34, 30-31
1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?	34 ...My God, my God why have you forsaken me?
8 He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him. Let him save him (σωσάτω αὐτόν)...	30 "...save yourself (σῶσον σεαυτὸν), descending from the cross."
	31 ...“Others he saved (ἔσωσεν), he is not able to save himself (ἐαυτὸν . . . σῶσαι).”

Mark associates the cry to the Father with the title “God” and attributed the act of saving (i.e., saving himself) associated with the title “Lord” to Jesus.⁴²³ The verb “to save,” σώζω, is the

⁴²⁰ LXX Gen 2:7 [Rev 11:11]; LXX Deut 29:20 [Rev 22:18-19]; LXX Isa 25:8 [Rev 7:17].

⁴²¹ Mark 1:1, 3, 11; Matt 3:3, 17; Luke 1:76; 3:3, 6, 22; cf. John 1:18, 23 (Wright, “Blessing, Honor, Glory,” 36). Quoted in the footnotes of chapter 2, McGinn identifies voices of the divine council in Isa 40 (“The Divine Council and Israelite Monotheism,” 109). In favor of the Gospels, the title “God” is speaking about the actions of the “Lord,” before another voice from the council is heard (Isa 40:1-2).

⁴²² Mark 14:34; Matt 27:46.

⁴²³ When Peter calls to Jesus, Luke uses language spoken to the Lord (Isa 6:5), and so do disciples/followers in Matthew (Luke 5:8; Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 87-89). Cf. “save” in Matt 8:25; 14:30; Ps 11:2; 105:47; and “mercy” in Matt 15:22; 17:15; 20:30-31; Ps 6:3; 30:10; 40:5, 11; 85:3; 122:3. See

same. The pronouns, “he” and “him,” found in the psalm are used both typologically and reflexively for Jesus in Mark, despite “the Lord” and “he”/“him” being depicted as two distinct entities in the original context. The recipient of the crowds’ words in Mark 15:30-31 does *not* become “explicitly apparent” as it relates to the Psalm. The Gospel of John associates the title “God” with the Father, quoting LXX Isaiah 54:13.⁴²⁴ Acts 2:34-36 may have meant that Peter was declaring “God” to have made Jesus into both the divine “Lord” and the Messiah figure of Ps 110:1.⁴²⁵

For Paul, the Son is both the “Lord of all” and the Lord of Joel 3:32 who is also the Lord Jesus whom “God” raised from the dead (Rom 10:9-13).⁴²⁶ The Lord Jesus, distinct from God the Father in 1 Thessalonians 1:1, is later depicted as the Lord who would return with his saints (1 Thess 3:13; Zech 14:5).⁴²⁷ After the author of Ephesians declares that there is only one Lord and one God/Father (Eph 4:5-6), he identifies the Son as the ascending Lord of Psalm 68:18 (Eph 4:8).⁴²⁸ In Hebrews, the Son is the “Lord” of Psalm 102:12, 25-27 (Heb 1:10-12) who trusts in the “God” of LXX Isaiah 8:18 (Heb 2:13).⁴²⁹ In 1 Peter, the Lord from Psalm 34:12-16 is Christ who “suffered once only for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous ones, so that he might

Simon J. Gathercole, *The Pre-existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 246.

⁴²⁴ John 6:45. The Hebrew has “Lord.”

⁴²⁵ Vander Hart, “The Transition of the Old Testament Day of the Lord,” 15.

⁴²⁶ For Bauckham’s comments on similar theology and Christology in Rom 14 and Phil 2, see chapter 3 of this thesis (*Jesus and the God of Israel*, 209).

⁴²⁷ Cf. also 2 Thess 2:7; Isa 66:15.

⁴²⁸ Barker, *The Great Angel*, 222. Cf. Eph 4:9-10 to Ps 113:4-6.

⁴²⁹ The author of Hebrews begins by identifying the Son as creator and the copy (χαράκτήρ) of God the Father (Heb 1:1-3), describing him as both the OT Lord and the Davidic-Messiah. As the copy (χαράκτήρ) of God, he is “Lord”: Heb 1:6 [LXX Deut 32:43]; Heb 1:7 [Ps 104:4]; Heb 1:10-12 [Ps 102:25-27]; and Messiah: Heb 1:5a [Ps 2:7]; Heb 1:5b [2 Sam 7:14]; Heb 1:8-9 [Ps 45:6-7]. See Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 241-242. Comparable to Revelation 3:21, Barker and Bauckham understand Heb 1:8-9 (Ps 45:6-7) as portraying the divine Jesus sitting upon the throne of God, only to be called later, in verses 10-13, the Lord of Psalm 102:12, 25-27 (Barker, *The Great Angel*, 199, 216; Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 137-138, 242).

bring us unto God.”⁴³⁰ Although Jude does not quote any particular passage, he distinguishes God the Father from “our only master and Lord, Jesus Christ,” later stating that it was this Lord who had saved his people from Egypt (Jude 1:1-5).⁴³¹ This may reflect a common Christology based on OT divine titles.

The title “God,” alone, may have also been applied to Jesus in Revelation 21, uniting him with the Father. Other NT books may call Jesus by the single title of “God,” whether directly or indirectly,⁴³² My interpretation of the allusion in Revelation 21:7, identifying Jesus as the “Lord their/your God,” may have parallels in the NT: Luke 4:12 (par. Matt 4:10); Heb 8:10.⁴³³ In addition, Revelation also includes an extensive application of the title “Lord God” for Jesus.⁴³⁴ In summation, the separation of the specific divine titles of “Lord” and “God” appears to have been practiced by John and other NT authors in the first century C.E.

⁴³⁰ 1 Pet 3:10-18. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 219.

⁴³¹ As shared in chapters 3 and 4, rabbis in the 2nd and 3rd centuries C.E. considered “heretical” groups (not Christians) who also separated the title of “God” and “Lord” from the OT into two divine powers in heaven. These Jewish heretics used passages in the OT that either simply separated the titles or had a divine voice speaking about a divine title in third person as if two divine beings were implied; i.e., Exod 24:1 (Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 38-39, 68; Barker, *The Great Angel*, 157). At times, Philo, prior to the 1st century, held a similar concept (Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 170).

⁴³² Matt 1:23; 4:4 and 5:2; Mark 2:7-12; John 1:1, 18; Acts 20:28; Rom 9:5; 1 Tim 1:17, 6:14-15; Tito 1:3-4, 2:10, 13, 3:4, 6; Heb 1:8-9.

⁴³³ Being tempted by the devil (Luke 4:2), Jesus defended himself saying, “Do not tempt the Lord your God” (4:12). Following Jesus’ command, the Devil brings to an end his temptations and departs from “him” (αὐτοῦ; 4:13). The antecedent for “him” can be, not only, “Jesus” (4:12a) but the “Lord your God” (4:12b). Although the order of the temptations in Matthew is different, the account has the same impact (Matt 4:1-11). By comparing both Gospels, Luke’s emphasis regarding this identification of Jesus in Luke 4:13 is made apparent. Jesus may have been identifying himself as the “Lord your God” who the Devil was not to tempt. In Hebrews, Jesus the Lord who had descended from Judah (with no right to the priesthood [Heb 7:14]) was also the Lord who had sworn to raise a priest forever (7:21; Ps 110:4; cf. Acts 2:34-36). This same Lord later promised, “I will be God for them and they will be a people for me” (Heb 8:10; Jer 31:31-34). For the author of Hebrews and John, the “Lord” would become “God” (or be divine) for the people; he would be their “God.”

⁴³⁴ 1) 1:7-8; 4:8; 22:20-21; 2) 4:11; 5:12; 3) 11:15, 17; 4) 19:6, 16; 5) 21:22; 6) 21:23; 22:5; 7) 22:6, 16.

Among other Jews in antiquity, the concept of “two powers in heaven” (and divine titles) was not considered heretical until the second century, according to Segal.⁴³⁵ In fact, the Qumran community likewise had separated, at least once, the two titles in Isaiah 61:2, “replacing YHWH with Melchizedek.”⁴³⁶ In the Qumran text, “God” was taken as someone different than Melchizedek (Lord). Melchizedek was considered a divine messiah. This is comparable to John’s rendition of Isaiah 60:19 in Revelation 21:23:

Isa 61:2
the acceptable year of YHWH and the day of vengeance of our God

LXX Isaiah 60:19
but the Lord shall be to you an everlasting light and God [shall be] your glory.

11QMelchizedek 11Q13 II 9, 13
the year of grace for Melchizedek, to exalt in the trial the holy ones of El through the rule of judgment...
But Melchizedek will carry out the vengeance of God’s judgments on this day

Revelation 21:23
for the glory of God gave it light and the Lamb [is] its lamp.

Whether one conceives Melchizedek as divine for the Qumran community, the name of the “Lord” in Isaiah 61 was replaced by Melchizedek twice. At the very least, the implied distinction between “God” and the Messianic “Lord” in Isaiah 61 is similar to Revelation.⁴³⁷ Considering Qumran’s respect and eschatological hopes in a messianic Melchizedek, John’s exegetical

⁴³⁵ “The received rabbinic identification of justice and mercy with Elohim and YHWH respectively is attested by the second century. It was a convenient weapon against Christianity . . . because it emphasized that YHWH was a merciful God, making mercy the aspect of God which was most often manifested to Israel. . . During the later stage of the heresy, which is better evidenced in the rabbinic texts, almost any doctrine incompatible with monotheism was understood by the rabbis as ‘two powers’ speculation. Such may already have been the case during the second century. . . It also seems clear that several church fathers evinced ‘two powers’ heresy in the second century” (Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 263). Aside from this clear separation cited in chapter 3, Segal also attributes to Philo a separation of divine hypostasis: “*Logos* is equivalent with the intelligible world; but, because it can be hypostasized, the *logos* can also be viewed as separate agent and called a god. Hence any Jew who shared Philo’s ideas of the nature of divinity would be a prime candidate for the change of ‘two powers in heaven’” (*Two Powers in Heaven*, 23).

⁴³⁶ Anders Aschim, “Melchizedek and Jesus: 11QMelchizedek and the Epistle to the Hebrews,” *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conferences on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus*, edited by Gary C. Newman, James Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 134-135.

⁴³⁷ However, the claims made of Jesus were never applied to Melchizedek. Likewise, the text that is used has different implications. A king or ruler can have a “year,” but to claim that a figure will provide light for an eternal city seems larger.

approach in associating the Lord with the Lamb does not appear to be inconceivable or unprecedented.

The practice of uniting divine titles into binomials (Lord God) in the first century may have also had precedence, whether the individual who used them were entirely aware. Loren Johns writes that in Egypt, Amun, the father or creator of the gods, was combined with Re to become “Amun-Re.”⁴³⁸ The divine power behind this binomial (or the combining of the names of two gods) was conceived of “as the sole creator of all things including even the gods.”⁴³⁹

Johns comments:

The use of combined names for deities in Egypt is a complex subject. It was not merely a matter of translation nor was it a matter of equating or substituting one god for another. While such a combining of names has often been treated in the past as an example of syncretism, recent scholarship has suggested that the combining or association of names represents instead the juxtaposition of person and function or the inhabitation of one god by another. Sometimes one name or identity designates the person, or the local presence of the deity, while the other designates the function the deity fulfills at a given time. According to Phillippe Derchain, this relationship is typically a vertical relationship of dependence rather than a horizontal one in which the two identities are equivalent but from differing origins. Although such words as *syncretism* and *identification* have been used to describe the phenomenon of the associating of divine identities, they can be used only with caution and with recognition that such divinities were not horizontal equivalences nor were they entirely subsumed into each other.⁴⁴⁰

According to Johns, binomials were meant to reflect neither a singular divinity nor equivalent divinities, but perhaps a hierarchy of divinity. Smith describes these divine “pairings” in the Ancient Near East as representing “family relations, such as El and Athirat as a divine couple, or Dagan and Baal as father and son.”⁴⁴¹ Smith concludes:

[T]he preponderance of binomial names remains an interesting feature of the Ugaritic texts, and perhaps it prompts further consideration of compound divine names in ancient

⁴³⁸ Johns, *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, 26, 44. Johns’ spelling is “Ammon-Re.” However, Johns does not give a reason for the spelling changes between the two versions, Amun to Ammon.

⁴³⁹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 93.

⁴⁴⁰ Johns, *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, 26.

⁴⁴¹ Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism*, 71.

Israel. Some of the Ugaritic compound names sometimes lack the coordinating conjunction “and” (*w-*). Kothar wa-Hasis is once called Kothar Hasis. It is this sort of compound that appears in biblical texts, for example Yahweh Elohim.⁴⁴²

Smith suggests that “Lord God” (YHWH Elohim) may also have once had a coordinating conjunction in the OT: “Lord and God.” Although this practice predates John’s authorship by centuries, Revelation may reflect this practice in its similar formulations. For Bauckham, the pursuit by modern scholarship to identify these similarities in the Ancient Near East (including biblical literature) will render “no good reason” for being interested in Israel at all.⁴⁴³

Unfortunately, such rationale may not recognize the implications for an extremely high Christology, one that acknowledges the Son beside the Father (in his bosom [John 1:18]) from the very beginning. Similarities between the implementation of divine titles do not diminish the Israelite and later Christian message, but regard the Lord Jesus as eternally divine. Whether John or other NT authors were aware of these ancient correlations is impossible to say. John identifies Jesus as the coming, ruling, divinely enthroned Lord God. The Christology of Revelation may have included the identification of “God” and “Lord” in the OT as the separate yet united Father and Son.⁴⁴⁴ Bauckham has said, about a different situation, “[t]he earliest Christology was already the highest Christology.”⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ “If the attractive religious paradigm is that of Israel when Israelite religion was very much like most other ancient Near Eastern religious cultures, then there can be no good reason for continuing to be religiously interested in Israel in particular” (Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 81).

⁴⁴⁴ Barker observes similarities in Hebrew grammar with יהוה צבאות (“Lord [of] Hosts”) and יהוה אלהים (Yahweh Elohim), concluding the latter could have meant “[the] Lord of God”; i.e., the Lord who belonged to God (Barker, *The Great Angel*, 162. In Hebrew, the binomial “YHWH Elohim” has limited use, despite the many renditions of יהוה אלהים (“Lord YHWH”) as “Lord GOD” in English translations. There are 39 strict pairings of YHWH Elohim יהוה אלהים), with no qualifying and explanatory phrases (like “אלהים/God of Israel”). This binomial surfaces nineteen times up until Gen 3:23. The other twenty times are scattered throughout the OT. In Greek, κύριος ὁ θεός, with no explanatory phrases, appears a little over a hundred times, 29 times in Genesis alone. Therefore, the binomial “Lord God” was comparatively as uncommon throughout the 39 books of OT as it was in the 27 books of the NT. But, John may have been able to draw plurality from other OT passages. Plurality exists in the first chapters of Genesis regardless of the divine title. There are known plural pronouns in Hebrew: “us,” “our” (Gen 1:26); “us” (Gen 3:22); “us” (Gen 11:7). However, the LXX provides more: “us” (LXX Gen 2:18); “Gods/gods” (LXX Gen

John's two allusions to Isaiah 60:19 convey his possible interpretation of divine titles in the OT. In Revelation 21:23, he identifies "God" as separate from the Lamb; this Lamb is associated with the "Lord" in Isaiah. The exalted identification of the Lamb throughout Revelation consistently reflects his role as mediator before the Father. J. Wright states that the "Lamb is distinct from and subordinate to the [Father]. The distinction between these two is never lost nor blurred."⁴⁴⁶ In Revelation 22:5, the function of "God" and the identity of the "Lord"/Lamb in connection to the term "lamp" may have been combined into the title "Lord God."⁴⁴⁷ Jesus' identification with the Lord is common and accepted. However, John appears to have favored the title "God" from the OT for the Father.⁴⁴⁸ Where John applies the single title of "God" to Jesus, Jesus is both "God" with the Father (3:14; 14:1) and eternally becomes "God" as

3:5). In Hebrew, the "Gods caused" Abraham to wander (הִתְעַנּוּ אֹתִי אֱלֹהִים; Gen 20:13); "Gods appeared" appeared to Jacob (וַיִּגְלוּ אֱלֹהֵי הָאֲרָצוֹת; Gen 35:7); separated divine titles are called "Holy Gods" (אֱלֹהִים קְדוֹשִׁים; Josh 24:19); and "Gods went to redeem" (וַיִּשְׁלַח אֱלֹהִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל; 2 Sam 7:23). God or Gods (both Elohim) is identified as plural "Makers" (Job 35:10) and "Judges" (Ps 58:11). In addition to this concept of a divine Lord and a divine God, YHWH always attributes the destruction of Sodom to "God" in third person when YHWH is clearly the speaker in the text (Isa 13:17-19; Jer 50:40; Amos 4:11). There are also passages that may show subordination/delegation from one divine title to the other (2 Sam 7:23 [consult Hebrew]; 2 Chron 24:20; Mal 1:9).

⁴⁴⁵ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, x.

⁴⁴⁶ Wright, "Blessing, Honor, Glory," 34. I have substituted "God" for "Father" in order to be precise in the distinction of divine figures. I have argue that the Lamb who is Jesus and the Lord is also as divine as the Father.

⁴⁴⁷ Jesus was the Lord God. Lincicum describes Jesus' exalted divinity as the OT Lord in Revelation: "John, during the period of long gestation that must have preceded such a learned work as his Apocalypse, reflected on the meaning and deeper significance of various divine names. Steeped in the already considerable Christian tradition of identifying Yahweh's predicates and actions with those of Jesus, often by means of the Greek translation of Yahweh as 'Lord' (κύριος), John wondered what it might mean to identify Jesus by means of that alternative rendering of the tetragrammaton into Greek, ΙΑΩ. He held ΙΑΩ in his mind while reading or hearing Isaiah 40-48 and temporal merisms there applied to Yahweh, 'the first and the last' and 'the beginning and the end'. Knowing by Christian conviction that ΙΑΩ ultimately was to be referred to Jesus, he was struck by the alphabetical merism, that is, the alpha and omega, included in the divine title, and with how well this might express and stand in continuity with the other two merisms derived from Isaiah. This left the initial iota unaccounted for; might this have been a divinely ordained reference to the initial letter of Jesus' name? Thus: Jesus is the Alpha and Omega. Especially in tandem with the two other merisms gleaned from Isaiah, John now had a rich triad of compact statements expressing the ultimate divine identification and sovereignty of the risen Lord Jesus, and employed them accordingly in the writing of his Apocalypse" (Lincicum, "The Origin of 'Alpha and Omega,'" 133).

⁴⁴⁸ Rev 7:17 (LXX Isa 25:8); Rev 11:11 (LXX Gen 2:7); Rev 22:18 (LXX Deut 29:20).

he represents “God” (the Father) who is in heaven (Rev 21:2, 7, 22).⁴⁴⁹ John appears to have made an effort to associate the person of the Son with the person of the “Lord” and was simultaneously on the throne with the Father, functioning as and being “God.” Jesus was the “Lord God.”

Attention to John’s separation and unity of divine titles from the OT enhances the perception of Christology in the first century. Johns has said: “Such a procedure requires the reader to see the text as a window to the world behind the text so that the world *behind* the text can in turn illuminate the world *within* the text – a procedure that inevitably entails some circularity.”⁴⁵⁰ Modern interpretations of the “world *behind* ... and *within* the text” have reached two extremes. Barker states that this “is not just a question of divine names; it is also a question of how many divinities were acknowledged.”⁴⁵¹ Regardless of the number of divinities, unity was always the message of Revelation. On the other extreme, Bauckham appears to be indecisive regarding the context of divine plurality in the Second-Temple period. At one point he concludes: “In my view, there is no good evidence for the idea that non-monotheistic forms of Israel religion survived through the Second Temple period to be available to the early Christians.”⁴⁵² However, Bauckham later makes a reassessment upon reviewing the evidence: “This is not to say that there are no traces remaining in Second Temple Jewish literature of the notions that God is the most eminent example of the species ‘deity’ or that God is the Chief of a

⁴⁴⁹ This unity is expressed in such a way as to be grounded in the OT and not in any post biblical tradition: “We must not attribute to John the particular conceptuality of the patristic doctrine of the Trinity which became the norm for the later Christian tradition” (Bauckham, *Theology*, 24).

⁴⁵⁰ Johns, *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, 117. Emphasis is original to the text.

⁴⁵¹ Barker, *The Great Angel*, 25.

⁴⁵² Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 95.

divine hierarchy.”⁴⁵³ Bauckam either sees “no good evidence for” or perhaps merely “traces” of divine plurality applicable to the NT.

Through the above interpretation of the divine titles, I argue that John views the Son as always having been with the Father, including within the history of and on the pages of the OT. In Revelation, Jesus’ divinity and unity with the Father precede creation (3:14), is present during the exodus (1:5-6; 5:9-10; 20:6), and is manifested to the prophets (2:23; 5:5; 19:11-16; 21:23; 22:12). Perhaps a summary of statements will identify Jesus’ eternal divinity.

3:21 “...I have conquered and have sat with my Father on his throne.”

5:5 “the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, to open the book”

5:9 “You are worthy...because you redeemed to God with your blood...”

13:8 “...the Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world.”

The Son (the Lamb) is worthy to enact the complete will of God (seals) because he had conquered and was slain, having redeemed with his blood. According to John, he was slain before the foundation of the world. The resulting view is that the Lamb must also have conquered before the foundation of the world, taking his seat on the Father’s throne from the very beginning.⁴⁵⁴ Given this emphatic statement of the Son’s eternal rule, it is clear that

⁴⁵³ Ibid., 157.

⁴⁵⁴ This reading is proposed in contrast to the description of the Dragon and his minions in Revelation. By attaching the throne scenes, the reader will notice a sequence. After the Lamb was found worthy because he had been slain (before the foundation of the world [13:8]) in Rev 5 and after John is commissioned for a work (Rev 10), the Dragon makes war in heaven and is cast out prior to becoming the serpent (12:8-9). The Dragon then has two beasts that both resemble Jesus in some way. The first beast receives great authority causing the Dragon to be worshiped and had a head that appeared to be slaughtered, mimicking the Father *and* the Son (13:2-4, 14; cf 2:8, 26-27; 5:12; see Mueller, “Christological Concepts 2,” 81). The cry for the beast in 13:4 (τίς ὅμοιος τῷ θηρίῳ; “Who is like the beast?”) resembles the cry for the Lord in LXX Exod 15:11 (τίς ὅμοιος σοι ἐν θεοῖς κύριε τίς ὅμοιος σοι; “Who is like you among the gods, Lord, who is like you?”). Therefore, this first beast, under the authority of the Dragon, “is an imitation of Jesus” and of the divine Lord (Mueller, “Christological Concepts 1,” 299). The second beast looked like a lamb and spoke like a dragon (perhaps as the “*word of the Dragon*”), had the authority of the first beast, making all worship the first beast (13:11-12). As seen above, Jesus was the Lamb, the Word of God, and had authority as Messiah and the Lord God as king of the earth (11:8, 15, 17; 15:3; 19:6, 16). The shared relationship between these two beasts under the authority of the Dragon (13:14-15) resemble the divine Lord and the slain Messiah under the authority of the Father (11:15, 17; 21:22-23). A different singular beast is also described as being in contrast to both the Lord God (1:8) and Jesus as the one who “was and is not and will arrive” (17:8; cf. 1:8, 17). See Mueller, “Christological Concepts 2,” 80. The beasts of the Dragon resemble the divine Lord Jesus as Lord God and Messiah. Ultimately, the Dragon and his beast are two objects of worship (13:4) in contrast to the worship

Revelation has an exalted Christology.⁴⁵⁵ Reflecting Jesus' exalted nature throughout Revelation, John was able to identify him within his scriptural resources as the Lord in Isaiah 60:19. After this identification, John distinguishes "Lord" from "God" in order to identify the Father. John connects Jesus to the "Lord" of the OT and proceeds to identify Jesus as the "Lord God."⁴⁵⁶ In Revelation, John confesses an exalted Jesus: "Praise YAH, because the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns" (Rev 19:6), the "King of kings and Lord of lords" (19:16).

directed to the Father and the Lamb (5:13-14). See "Wright, "Blessing, Honor, Glory," 30. This comparison reveals John's intention of depicting Jesus as Messiah and divine Lord under the authority of the Father.

⁴⁵⁵ Mueller, "Christological Concepts 2," 67.

⁴⁵⁶ The title "Lord" is first identified in the OT by the binomial "Lord God" was (Gen 2:4).

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