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**JESUS AND THE ANGELS: THE INFLUENCE OF  
ANGELOLOGY ON THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE APOCALYPSE  
OF JOHN**

by

PETER RUANE CARRELL

Submitted for Ph.D., June 1993

ABSTRACT

A review of previous study of the christology of the Apc reveals that little work has been done on the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc. What work has been done has focused mainly on Apc 1.13-16 and 14.14 and has drawn attention to parallels with angelophanies in OT and other Jewish and Christian apocalyptic and related writings from the period c. 200 BCE to 200 CE. In Part One of the dissertation the context of the christology in Jewish and Christian traditions is explored. Initially angelology and epiphanies in Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Daniel are explored. Principal angels, especially those with a glorious appearance are then studied, followed by angelomorphic figures. Included in the latter category are both exalted humans and the *Logos*. The investigation in Part One is rounded off with a brief survey of texts featuring angel- and angelomorphic christology in the first Christian centuries. Part Two begins with consideration of the relationship between Jesus and God and between Jesus and the angel of the revelation. This determines that Jesus is identified with God yet functionally equivalent to the angel. In four successive chapters the three visions of Jesus which most probably reflect the influence of angelology (1.13-16, 14.14, 19.11-16) are discussed. An alternative is put forward to the increasingly common assumption that Dn 7.9 LXX has influenced the combination of imagery found in Apc 1.13-16, and the thesis is proposed that Jesus is perceived as adopting angelic form analogous to his human incarnation. Jesus is not, however, in the final analysis an angel. His true nature is bound with God.

**JESUS AND THE ANGELS:  
THE INFLUENCE OF ANGELOLOGY ON THE  
CHRISTOLOGY OF THE APOCALYPSE OF  
JOHN**

by

PETER RUANE CARRELL

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Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy.

University of Durham

Department of Theology

June, 1993



21 OCT 1993

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## **DECLARATION**

I confirm that no part of this material has been previously submitted by me for a degree in the University of Durham or any other University.

## **STATEMENT OF COPYRIGHT**

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# PREFACE

The origins of this project have been dimmed in my memory. I recall being interested in doing something in christology for my third year dissertation at Knox Theological Hall, Dunedin, N.Z., in 1986. But what led me to focus on the Apocalypse of John now escapes me. In that dissertation I focused on 'Lamb' christology and I realised that the christology of the Apocalypse was a comparatively little worked field of NT studies. My intention to do further research led me to the University of Durham. In the course of three and a half years research the focus of my interest in the christology of the Apocalypse has switched to 'angelomorphic christology' and this dissertation is the fruit of my labours.

It is my pleasant task to thank a number of folk who have helped me in various ways to undertake and complete this dissertation.

First and foremost is Teresa, my wife, whom I thank for encouraging me at each step along the way, for nurturing our family, and for keeping us afloat financially in the latter stages of the research.

Secondly, I would like to thank my extended *whanau*, the Carrell and Kundycki families, both in New Zealand and in Britain, who have helped in many ways, large and small. Special thanks go to our parents, Brian and May Carrell, and Stan and Joan Kundycki. In the same breath go my thanks to many friends both in New Zealand and in Britain who have helped in all kinds of ways. It is invidious to single folk out from a large list but special thanks must go to friends in Durham whose care of our children enabled me to keep working when Teresa also had to work: Derek, Lea, and Anna Tovey, Barry and Ruth Thomas, Michael and Sarah Leather, Robert and Alison Hand, Tim and Martha McLay, John and Mavis Payne, and Stefan and Silvia Friebe. I would also like to thank my uncle and aunt, Robin and Sue Carrell, for their generous hospitality on numerous visits to Cambridge.

Without the support of various funding bodies we would never have left the shores of New Zealand and been able to stay in Britain until the completion of the dissertation. The St. John's College Trust Board, Auckland, N.Z., who contributed the substantive portion of my funding through a Post Ordination Scholarship, receive a special vote of thanks. An ORS Award from the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the United Kingdom made a substantial contribution to the payment of fees. Smaller grants through the University of Durham and the Council of Tyndale House, Cambridge, England were also appreciated. The latter was particularly appreciated as it enabled me to make use of the remarkable research facilities at Tyndale House. Finally, unexpected and generous gifts from various friends and family, especially from our Housegroup here in Durham, have been welcome and are also gratefully acknowledged.

All the mistakes herein are my responsibility but if some good arguments and valuable insights are found then the credit should be shared with, if not given wholly over to a number of valued friends and colleagues in the world of academia.

I would like first to acknowledge the support and encouragement of teachers at Knox Theological Hall in Dunedin, both during the time of my study there and in subsequent years as I investigated the possibility of further study in the United Kingdom. I especially thank Prof. John McCullough (now of Belfast, Northern Ireland), Rev. Gavin Munro, Prof. Peter Matheson, and Prof. Paul Trebilco.

Here in Durham I would like to thank first and foremost Prof. James Dunn, my *Doktorvater*, whose penetrative comments and encouraging manner have always spurred me on my way. In other ways (the writing of many references etc.) Prof. Dunn has been extraordinarily helpful for which I am most grateful. Other members of staff in the Department of Theology at Durham have contributed with advice, critical reading, and the loan of books: thanks especially go to Drs. Stephen Barton, Robert Hayward, Walter Moberly, Willie Morrice, and Sandy Wedderburn. I am also grateful for the assistance of Frau Wollfraud Coles in mastering some of the finer points of German grammar and syntax.

I have very much appreciated the opportunity to talk informally with several scholars whose contribution to the study of the Apocalypse and/or to the question of the influence of angelology on christology has been of great significance and my warm thanks goes to Prof. Richard Bauckham, Dr. John Court, Prof. Larry Hurtado, and Prof. Christopher Rowland.

I am grateful for the sense of fellowship (in suffering?) and shared commitment with fellow research students and members of the NT Seminar in Durham over the past three and a half years: Ms. Helen Bond, Mrs. Ellen Christensen, Mr. Carsten Clausen, Rev. Mateen Elaas, Mrs. Elisabeth Fisher, Mr. Michael Fraser, Dr. Peter Harland, Rev. Jey Kanagaraj, Rev. Ezra Kok, Rev. Tim Mclay, Rev. Joe Mutharaj, Dr. Bruce Longenecker, Sister Rosemary Howarth, Rev. Rodney Plunket, Dr. Nicholas Taylor, Mrs. Frances Shaw, Rev. Dennis Stamps, and Rev. Derek Tovey have been wonderful colleagues and good friends. I am particularly grateful for the critical reading by Jey Kanagaraj and Tim McLay of those portions of this dissertation which correspond to their own research interests. Thanks also are due to Dr. Peter Lineham (Palmerston North, N.Z. and, temporarily, London) and to Mr. Darryl Hannah (Cambridge) for reading portions of my work.

Finally, but by no means because I am least grateful for their help, I am thankful for the cheerful and energetic assistance provided by the staff of the University of Durham Library, especially those of the Palace Green Section, by the Warden and Librarian of Tyndale House, Cambridge, by the staff of the University of Cambridge Library, and by the Secretarial and Administrative Staff in the Department of Theology in the University of Durham, especially Mrs. Margaret Parkinson and Mrs. Sheila Robson.

I dedicate this work to Teresa and to our daughters, Leah and Bridget.

Peter Carrell,  
June, 1993.

# ABBREVIATIONS

ABD	Friedman, D.N., <i>et al</i> (eds.), <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> , 6 vols.
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJBI	<i>Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute</i>
ANCL	Ante Nicene Christian Library
ANRW	Temporini, H., Haase, W. (eds.) <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
ANTJ	Arbeiten zum Neuen Testament und Judentum
AOS	American Oriental Series
AOT	Sparks, H.E.D. (ed), <i>The Apochryphal Old Testament</i>
Apc	The Apocalypse of John = The Revelation of John
<i>Apc. Abr.</i>	<i>Apocalypse of Abraham</i>
<i>Apc. Moses</i>	<i>Apocalypse of Moses</i> (= [Greek] <i>Vit. Ad. Evae, Vit. Ad. Evae</i> [Apocalypse])
<i>Apc. Paul</i>	<i>Apocalypse of Paul</i>
<i>Apc. Peter</i>	<i>Apocalypse of Peter</i>
<i>Apc. Zeph.</i>	<i>Apocalypse of Zephaniah</i>
APOT	Charles, R.H. (ed.), <i>The Apochrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English</i> (2 vols.)
<i>Asc. Is.</i>	<i>Ascension of Isaiah</i>
<i>As. Moses</i>	<i>Assumption of Moses</i>
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>Aug</i>	<i>Augustianum</i>
b. [before rabbinic text]	Babylonian Talmud
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BAG	Bauer, W., Arndt, W.F., and Gingrich, F.W., <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BCE	Before Common Era
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
BHS	<i>Biblia hebraica stuttgartensia</i>
BHT	<i>Beitrage zur Historische Theologie</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibLeb</i>	<i>Bibel und Leben</i>
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester</i>
<i>BiKi</i>	<i>Bibel und Kirche</i>
BNZW	<i>Beihefte zur ZNW</i>
BR	<i>Biblical Research</i>
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZRRG	Beihefte der Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte
BZAW	<i>Beihefte zur ZAW</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CE	Common Era
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
Comm.	Commentary

CSCO	Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesasticorum latinorum
CTM	<i>Concordia Theological Monthly</i>
DBAT	<i>Dielhammer Blatter zum Alten Testament</i>
Did.	<i>Didache</i>
Diss.	Dissertation
DJD	<i>Discoveries in the Judean Desert</i>
DSSE	Vermes, G., <i>The Dead Sea Scrolls in English</i>
1, 2, or 3 En.	<i>First, Second, or Third Book of Enoch</i>
Epist. Apost.	<i>Epistula Apostolorum</i>
Epist. Barn.	<i>Epistle of Barnabas</i>
ESTNT	Exegetische Studien zur Theologie des Neuen Testaments
ET	English Translation
Eth.	Ethiopic
ETL	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
ETR	<i>Etudes théologiques et religieuses</i>
EUS	European University Studies
EvQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
ExpTim	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literature des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FS	<i>Festschriften</i>
GCS	Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der Ersten Drei Jahrhunderte
GNS	Good News Studies
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
HKNT	Handkommentar zum Neuen testament
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IB	Interpreters Bible
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JSHRZ	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
JSJ	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period</i>
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSS	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSP	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSPSS	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JTC	<i>Journal for Theology and Church</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
Jos. Asen.	<i>Joseph and Aseneth</i>
Josephus	
Ant.	<i>Jewish Antiquities</i>
War	<i>Jewish Wars</i>
Jub.	<i>The Book of Jubilees</i>
Lat.	Latin



LXX	The Septuagint
M.	Mishnah
<i>Mor. Def. Orac.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Moralia: De Defectu Oraculorum</i>
MS	Manuscript
MSS	Manuscripts
MT	Masoretic Text
n.	Footnote number
N-A <sup>26</sup>	Nestle, E., Aland, K., Aland, B., <i>et al.</i> (ed), <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , <sup>26</sup> 1979.
NCB	New Century Bible
NEB	New English Bible
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestimentica</i>
NIV	New International Version
NLC	New London Commentary
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
NTAb	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTA	Hennecke, E., Schneemelcher, W. (ed), <i>New Testament Apochrypha</i>
NTD	Das Neue testament Deutsch
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OCD	<i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> , <sup>2</sup> 1970.
OT	Old Testament
OTP	Charlesworth, James H. (ed.), <i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> ,
OTS	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
Pap.	Papyrus
PG	Migne, J. (ed.), <i>Patrologia graeca</i>
Philo	
<i>Agr.</i>	<i>De Agricultura</i>
<i>Cher.</i>	<i>De Cherubim</i>
<i>Conf.</i>	<i>De Confusione Linguarum</i>
<i>Det.</i>	<i>Quod Deteris Potiori insidiari solet</i>
<i>Heres</i>	<i>Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres</i>
<i>Immut.</i>	<i>Quod Deus Immutabilis sit</i>
<i>Leg. All.</i>	<i>Legum Allegoriae</i>
<i>Leg. ad Gaium</i>	<i>De Legatione ad Gaium</i>
<i>Migr. Abr.</i>	<i>De Migratione Abrahami</i>
<i>Mut.</i>	<i>De Mutatione Nominum</i>
<i>Qu. Gn.</i>	<i>Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesin</i>
<i>Qu. Ex.</i>	<i>Quaestiones et Solutiones in Exodum</i>
<i>Sac.</i>	<i>De Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini</i>
<i>Som.</i>	<i>De Somniis</i>
<i>Vit. Mosis</i>	<i>De Vita Mosis</i>
<i>Pirqe R. El.</i>	<i>Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer</i>
PL	Migne, J. (ed.), <i>Patrologia latina</i>
PR	<i>Pesikta Rabbati</i>
<i>Pr. Jos.</i>	<i>Prayer of Joseph</i>
<i>Pr. Man.</i>	<i>Prayer of Manasseh</i>
<i>Ps.Clem.</i>	<i>Pseudo Clement</i>
<i>Ps. Ph.</i>	<i>Pseudo Philo</i>

<i>Pss. Sol.</i>	<i>Psalms of Solomon</i>
PS	Pseudepigrapha Series
PTg	Palestinian Targum
PTA	Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen
PVTG	Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti graece
[Qumran Literature]	See <i>JBL</i> 107 (1988), p. 585 or Charlesworth, J.H. <i>The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the New Testament</i> (SNTS MS 54, Cambridge: C.U.P., 1985), p. xxi.
<i>RAC</i>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
Rec.	Recension
<i>RHPR</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
<i>RQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
<i>RTP</i>	<i>Revue de théologie et de philosophie</i>
<i>Shep. Hermas</i>	<i>Shepherd of Hermas</i>
<i>Mand.</i>	<i>Mandates</i>
<i>Sim.</i>	<i>Similitudes</i>
<i>Vis.</i>	<i>Visions</i>
<i>Sim. En.</i>	<i>Similitudes of Enoch = 1 Enoch 37-71</i>
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series
SBLMS	SBL Monograph Series
SBLSCS	SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSP	SBL Seminar Papers
SBLTT	SBL Texts and Translations
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SJ	Studia judaica
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SI.	Slavonic
SSS	Semitic Studies Series
SN	Studia Neotestamentica
SNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia theologica</i>
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judea
<i>Syr. Baruch</i>	<i>Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch = 2 Baruch</i>
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha
TA	Theologisches Arbeiten
TAQ	Lohse, E. (ed.), <i>Die Texte aus Qumran: Hebräisch und Deutsch</i>
TDNT	Kittel, G., Friedrich, G. (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , 10 vols.
<i>Test. Abr.</i>	<i>Testament of Abraham</i>
<i>Test. Ben.</i>	<i>Testament of Benjamin</i>
<i>Test. Levi</i>	<i>Testament of Levi</i>
<i>Test. Jos.</i>	<i>Testament of Joseph</i>
<i>Test. Sol.</i>	<i>Testament of Solomon</i>
Tg.	Targum
<i>Tg. Onq.</i>	<i>Targum Onquelos</i>
<i>Tg. Neof.</i>	<i>Targum Neofiti I</i>
<i>Tg. Ps.-J.</i>	<i>Targum Pseudo-Jonathan</i>
<i>Tg. Yer. I</i>	<i>Targum Yerusalmi I</i>
<i>Tg. Yer. II</i>	<i>Targum Yerusalmi II</i>

Th.	Theodotion
TQ	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
TRu	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
TS	<i>Theological Studies</i>
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
TZ	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UBS <sup>3</sup>	United Bible Societies, <i>The Greek New Testament</i> (3rd edition).
VC	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
<i>Vit. Ad. Evae</i>	<i>Vita Adae et Evae</i>
vs.	verse(s)
VE	<i>Vox Evangelica</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Bible Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZBKNT	Zürcher Bibel Kommentare Neue Testament

## CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

### §1.1 PREVIOUS STUDY OF THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE APOCALYPSE

The christology of the Apc has not received the same attention that many other areas of NT christology have received. But the treatment which has been accorded it is by no means negligible.

#### §1.1.1 General Studies of the Christology of the Apocalypse of John

The first major study of modern times of the christology of the Apc has been generally credited to **Büchsel**. His Halle dissertation published in 1907 surveyed christological titles and themes, and made the substantive point that the image of the Lamb is not derived from a single source.<sup>1</sup> The natural successor to Büchsel was **Holtz** who examined the 'Christustitel', 'Christusprädikate', and 'Christusaussagen' of the Apc within a twofold time scheme, and concluded that the christology of the Apocalypse is essentially an *Erhöhungschristologie*.<sup>2</sup>

Shortly after this **Comblin** produced a comparable, though not quite as rigorous study.<sup>3</sup> Focusing on the influence of the Servant of Yahweh (cf. Is 53.7), Comblin developed the thesis that the christology of the Apc represented a new synthesis of the Son of Man, Servant, and Messiah.<sup>4</sup>

Each work has attracted criticism,<sup>5</sup> and both Holtz and Comblin criticise each other,<sup>6</sup> but

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<sup>1</sup>Büchsel, *Christologie*, esp. pp. 1-18, 26. Note: all references are given by name and short title, except in the case of commentaries *on the Apc itself* which are simply given by the author's name; full references may be found in the Bibliography.

<sup>2</sup>Holtz, *Christologie*, 60.

<sup>3</sup>Comblin, *Christ* (1965).

<sup>4</sup>Comblin, *Christ*, 233ff.

<sup>5</sup>Against Holtz, note especially Van Unnik, "Worthy", 445-461 (criticism of Apc 5 as an



no full-length published work has replaced these studies.<sup>7</sup> From our perspective the essential flaw of both studies is that their attempts to delineate the christology according to one or two leading ideas require the manipulation of certain pieces of evidence. Thus Holtz, consistent with the idea of an *Erhöhungschristologie*, insists that the title ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ (Apc 3.14) refers to what Christ has become through his exaltation rather than to his pre-existence.<sup>8</sup> Comblin attempts to maintain a clear, consistent distinction between Christ as 'Messiah' and as 'Son of Man', yet we find the 'Son of Man' saying 'I am ... the living one' (1.17), which is a title belonging to the Messiah (in Comblin's schema).<sup>9</sup>

The period between Büchsel and Holtz/Comblin was marked by a number of smaller studies of the christology of the Apc. Some are presented in the 'Introduction' to commentaries,<sup>10</sup> others in articles,<sup>11</sup> or chapters of books,<sup>12</sup> or in the course of studies of NT christology as a whole.<sup>13</sup> None of these develop the subject of the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc. We can only mention here those studies which are notable in some way. **Ellwanger**, for example, offers the surprising assertion that the speaker in Apc 21.7 is Jesus, and that in 1.8 παντοκράτωρ is applied not to God but to Jesus.<sup>14</sup> **Scott** argues, against the generally held view, that it is doubtful if John regarded Christ as being 'in any full sense divine'.<sup>15</sup>

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enthronement scene); Caird, "Review", 141-143 and Schussler Fiorenza, *Justice* (1985), 44-45 (criticism of time scheme). Against Comblin, note especially Bovon, "Christ", 68-70 and Hohnjec, *Lamm*, 18-19, 25-26 (denial that the Servant contributes to the christology to the extent Comblin supposes). Cf. Kraft, "Offenbarung", 81-98.

<sup>6</sup>Holtz, *Christologie* (2<sup>1971</sup>), 241-244; Comblin, *Christ*, 237-240.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Kraft, "Offenbarung", 86, 'Von den beiden Büchern Comblins und Holtz' macht keines das andere überflüssig'. The author is aware of, but not yet able to attain, a dissertation which appears to rival Holtz and Comblin for comprehensiveness: Engelbrecht, Johannes Jacobus, *The Christology of the Book of Revelation*, D.Th. Diss., University of Pretoria, 1980 [Afrikaans text].

<sup>8</sup>Holtz, *Christologie*, 153.

<sup>9</sup>Comblin, *Christ*, 50, 195ff.

<sup>10</sup>E.g. Charles, i, cxi-cxiv; Beckwith, 312-317; Swete, clv-clix. .

<sup>11</sup>E.g. Beck (1942); Schmitt, "Interpretation" (1960).

<sup>12</sup>E.g. Scott, *Revelation* (1939).

<sup>13</sup>E.g. Cullmann, *Christology* (2<sup>1963</sup>); Hahn, *Hoheitstitel* (1963).

<sup>14</sup>Ellwanger, "Christology", 515.

<sup>15</sup>Scott, *Revelation*, 116. Cf. Swete, clv-clix; Charles, i, cxii.

The period since Holtz and Comblin has seen a significant growth in studies on the christology of the Apc. Notable among these are the following. **Bovon** offers in place of Holtz and Comblin 'un classement moins doctrinal et plus naturel des données de l'Apocalypse' which focuses on the relation between Christ and the church, and between Christ and the nations.<sup>16</sup> Although within a study ranging beyond the confines of the Apc, **U.B. Müller** develops a thesis of two christologies, or more precisely, a christology (developed by the seer) and a messianology (already lying in the Jewish sources incorporated into the Apc).<sup>17</sup> Although Müller's overall study has been influential his thesis concerning the christology of the Apc has not generally commended itself.<sup>18</sup>

Alongside Müller we may mention **Edwards**,<sup>19</sup> and **Ford**,<sup>20</sup> who seek to divorce Jewish elements from Christian in the characterization of christology and messianology in the Apc. Both projects fail, among other reasons, for want of credible arguments to justify the characterization of Apc 4-22 as 'Jewish'. By contrast we may note the careful arguments, with special attention to christological features, given by **Lohse** in support of an affirmative answer to the question 'Wie christlich ist die Offenbarung des Johannes?'<sup>21</sup> Also worth noting in this connection is the sustained argument by **Cook** that the christology of the Apc enjoys a thematic unity through the whole book.<sup>22</sup>

An assessment of the status of Jesus Christ in the Apc, similar to that of Scott (noted above) is made by **Casey**, who argues that 'the lamb is carefully distinguished from God, and he is not said to be divine'.<sup>23</sup> But other scholars have had no difficulty in affirming a 'high christology' for the Apc. **Caird**, for example, argues that John believes that 'the glory of God has been seen in the face of Jesus Christ' (cf. 2 Cor 4.6). Consequently Christ bears 'all the attributes of deity' in his initial portrayal (1.12-16), is marked by the titles of God (e.g. 22.13), and, as the Lamb, has his name coupled together with the name of God (e.g.

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<sup>16</sup>Bovon, "Christ" , 70. Cf. Jankowski, "Chrystus" (1982).

<sup>17</sup>Müller, *Messias*, 161-213.

<sup>18</sup>So Holtz, *Christologie*, 244; Lohse, "Menschensohn", 85 n.8; De Jonge, "Use", 280.

<sup>19</sup>Edwards, "Christological" , esp. p.139.

<sup>20</sup>Ford, 12-19.

<sup>21</sup>Lohse, E., "Wie christlich", 321-338; see pp. 328-333 for christology of the Apc.

<sup>22</sup>Cook, *Christology* , esp. pp. 59-123.

<sup>23</sup>Casey, *Jewish*, 142.

22.1,3). In short, 'God, once hidden from human sight, [is] now revealed in the known person of his Son'.<sup>24</sup> A similar conclusion is reached by **Schillebeeckx** who argues that the secret name in Apc 19.12 signifies that 'Revelation explicitly maintains the mystery of the eschatological identity of the person of Jesus ... The author evidently means to suggest that the nature of Christ is intrinsically bound up with that of God himself'.<sup>25</sup> Most recently **Bauckham** has argued that the pattern of 'I am' self-declarations by God (1.8, 21.6) and Christ (1.17, 22.13) reveals 'the remarkable extent to which Revelation identifies Jesus Christ with God'.<sup>26</sup> In particular, 22.13 (where Christ is 'the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end') reveals 'unambiguously that Jesus Christ belongs to the fullness of the eternal being of God'. Accordingly the Apc implies neither an adoptionist christology, nor that John understands Christ as a second god. Thus the worship of Jesus in the Apc (cf. 5.9-13, 22.1-3), a work which is distinctly monotheistic in outlook, 'must be understood as indicating the inclusion of Jesus in the being of the one God defined in monotheistic worship'.<sup>27</sup>

Just as we noted for the period between Büchsel and Holtz/Comblin, christological matters in the Apc since the time of Holtz/Comblin have been dealt with *inter alia* in general treatments of NT or early Jewish Christian christology.<sup>28</sup>

### §1.1.2 Studies of Specific Themes and Titles in the Christology

The most frequently occurring title, 'the Lamb', has received the greatest treatment.<sup>29</sup> The only full-length monograph devoted entirely to the Lamb in the Apc was produced by **Hohnjec**.<sup>30</sup> Discerning a need for a thorough 'exegetical-theological examination',<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Caird, 289-301. Cf. Boring, 102-103.

<sup>25</sup>Schillebeeckx, *Christ*, 432-462; citation from p. 443.

<sup>26</sup>Bauckham, *Theology*, 54-55.

<sup>27</sup>Bauckham, *Theology*, 56-60, citations from pp. 56-7 and 60 respectively.

<sup>28</sup>E.g. Longenecker, *Christology*, esp. 63-113 *passim*; Schnackenburg, "Christologie", 367-374; Dunn, *Christology*, esp. pp. 90-92; De Jonge, *Christology*, 137-139.

<sup>29</sup>Dodd, *Interpretation*, 230-238; with response by Barrett, "Lamb", 210-218. Harlé, "L'Agneau", 26-35. Hillyer, "Lamb", 228-236. D'Sousa, *Lamb* (1968). Mounce, "Christology", 42-51 (despite the generalist title most attention is paid to 'the Lamb'). Bauckham, "Figurae", 109-125 (particular attention is paid to the Lamb as part of the visionary imagery of John which features 'visualized forms of metaphorical figures' [p.116]). Guthrie, "Lamb", 64-71. Läßle, "Geheimnis", 53-58. Laws, *Light*, esp. pp. 4-25, 41.

she concludes that the Lamb, although influenced by OT imagery as Comblin and Holtz recognised, is an original creation of the author which expresses the christology of the Apc in miniature.<sup>32</sup>

The most impressive article in recent years on the Lamb offers new insight into the derivation of ἀρνίον as a word applied to Jesus Christ. **Bergmeier** suggests that the Lamb should be understood as a prophetic figure, and he offers a novel hypothesis for the origin of the Lamb symbolism. He dismisses the possibility that it lies in the 'milieu chrétien d'Ephése', or in Jewish messianic descriptions, or in astrology (i.e. the sign of Aries). Rather, Bergmeier understands the Lamb in the Apc to have its meaning because of its relationship to Christ: it has messianic predicates because it represents Christ. The Lamb must be understood as the sacrificial lamb ('Opferlamm'), though not necessarily as the paschal lamb. As the sacrificial lamb the Lamb is the symbol for the crucified Messiah.<sup>33</sup>

Bergmeier then tackles the question which has never been satisfactorily answered,<sup>34</sup> why is ἀρνίον used, and not πάσχα,<sup>35</sup> ἀμνός,<sup>36</sup> or πρόβατον?<sup>37</sup> He argues that as a prophetic figure the Lamb recalls a once famous prophesying lamb of Egyptian origin whose title in Greek reports is τὸ ἀρνίον, and whose description contains some interesting parallels to that of the Lamb of the Apc.<sup>38</sup> Bergmeier concludes that Christ as τὸ ἀρνίον results from John adopting this Egyptian lamb and aligning it with the early Christian idea of Christ as the sacrificial lamb.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Hohnjec, *Lamm* (1980).

<sup>31</sup>Hohnjec, *Lamm*, 21, cf. 167-168.

<sup>32</sup>Hohnjec, *Lamm*, 162.

<sup>33</sup>Bergmeier, "Buchrolle", 225-233.

<sup>34</sup>See Mounce, "Christology", 43, for a review of the various proposals.

<sup>35</sup>Cf. 1 Cor 5.7.

<sup>36</sup>Cf. Is 53.7 (LXX), Jn 1.29, 36; 1 Pet 1.19; *Test. Jos.* 19.8, *Test. Ben.* 3.8.

<sup>37</sup>Cf. Is 53.7 (LXX). Note that ἀρνίον is found in Jer 11.19 (LXX) [cf. Origen, *Comm. Jn.* 6.53(35)]. The Greek Rec. of 1 *En.* 89.45 uses ἀρνίον and κρῖος (cf. 1 *En.* 90.9).

<sup>38</sup>Bergmeier, "Buchrolle", 234, where full references to the original material may be found. A readily accessible discussion may be found in McCown, "Hebrew", 392-396; cf. Griffiths, "Apocalyptic", 285-287 (who fails to find the connection Bergmeier makes).

<sup>39</sup>Bergmeier, "Buchrolle", 235.



Curiously, although the title 'the Son of Man' is used with a great degree of frequency in commentaries, monographs, and articles concerned with the Apc, the fact is that strictly speaking no such title occurs in the Apc: the phrase used is ὁμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου (1.13, 14.14), not ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. In the course of our chapters on Apc 1.13-16 and 14.14 we will engage with various studies concerned with 'Son of Man' themes,<sup>40</sup> some of which develop, or at least mention in passing, the angelological background to the portrayal of Christ in these texts.

Other titles and themes have received slight, though not necessarily superficial treatment. The expression ὁ χριστός has been examined by **De Jonge** and **Sabugal**.<sup>41</sup> The theme of 'witness' has been taken up by **Reddish** who argues that *martyrdom* is the primary motif of the Apc, and *martyr* christology is the primary christology.<sup>42</sup> 'Witness' in the Apc is integrally related to 'suffering', a point developed by **Satake** who argues that Christ's function as redeemer in the Apc is not so much directed towards sinners as towards suffering Christians.<sup>43</sup> **Leivestad** and **Rissi** both propose that the centre of the christology of the Apc lies in the verb νικάω.<sup>44</sup> **Gerhardsson** examines the christological statements in the ecclesial letters, demonstrating that they not only intentionally asserted the true Lord over the false Caesar, but also encouraged Christians in their hour of need.<sup>45</sup> **Van der Osten Sacken** reflects on 'Taufchristologie' in Apc 1.5-6.<sup>46</sup>

**Boring** in two articles takes up matters largely neglected through the preoccupation with the titles and 'standard' themes in the christology of the Apc. In the first he draws out the idea of a 'narrative' christology.<sup>47</sup> In the second he focuses on how the voice of Jesus is to be 'identified and understood within the multiplicity of voices that address the reader from the pages of the Apocalypse'.<sup>48</sup> **Lohse** examines the relationship between "Apokalyptik

<sup>40</sup>E.g. Scott, "Behold", 127-132; Casey, *Son* (1979); Lohse, "Menschensohn" (1982), 82-87; Jones, *Study* (1990).

<sup>41</sup>De Jonge, "Use" (1980); Sabugal, "El titulo" (1972).

<sup>42</sup>Reddish, "Martyr", 85-95.

<sup>43</sup>Satake, "Christologie" (1991). Cf. Wolff, "Gemeinde" (1981).

<sup>44</sup>Leivestad, *Christ*, 212; Rissi, "Kerygma", 3-17, esp. 7-8.

<sup>45</sup>Gerhardsson, "Aussagen" (1977). Cf. Aune, "Influence" (1983).

<sup>46</sup>Van der Osten Sacken, "Christologie" (1967); cf. Schussler Fiorenza, *Priester*, 168-276.

<sup>47</sup>Boring, "Narrative" (1992).

association with the historical Christ-event.<sup>49</sup>

Finally, we note an article by **Fischer** on the Christianness of the Apc which devotes a small but profound section to the christology of the Apc.<sup>50</sup> He perceives John to be expressing the form of Christ in four ways: (i) Co-regent of God, (ii) Supreme Archangel, (iii) Son of Man-Judge, (iv) The One Sacrificing Himself for Us. Jesus as the Co-regent has the attributes of God the Pantokrator: 'he is in the fullest sense co-regent of God as creator and judge'. The idea that Christ is the Supreme Archangel is not developed by Fischer, but it arises out of Apc 12.10-12 where Christ is honoured as victor after Michael's struggle with the dragon (12.7).<sup>51</sup> This article is unusual in the range of studies on the christology of the Apc in that it refers to Christ as an angel. But even then it is only the briefest of references.

The paucity of material concerning christological issues such as the possibility of angel christology or the question of the influence of angelology on the christology, may be compared with the abundance of material concerning almost every other issue. A dissertation on the subject of the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc appears, therefore, to be a worthwhile endeavour.

This field of study is by no means virgin soil, however, as some study has been done, arising not so much out of study of the christology of the Apc as out of the study of angelology in the context of apocalypses, apocalypticism, and *merkabah* mysticism. We now turn our attention therefore to this work and to related concerns, especially angel christology.

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<sup>49</sup>Lohse, "Apokalyptic", 66.

<sup>50</sup> Fischer, "Christlichkeit" (1981).

<sup>51</sup>Fischer, "Christlichkeit", 170.

## §1.2 ANGELOLOGY AND ANGEL CHRISTOLOGY

In 1941 **Werner** argued that the oldest christology was in fact an angel christology.<sup>52</sup> For example, behind the conception of Christ as 'Messiah-Son of Man' was 'a high angelic being' (cf. 1 *En.* 46.3) and the Son of Man was represented as 'the Prince of Angels' (e.g. Mk 8.38, Mt 13.41-42, Lk 22.43).<sup>53</sup> Critical response to this thesis was swift<sup>54</sup> and decisive,<sup>55</sup> although some recent critical assessments have not been totally dismissive.<sup>56</sup>

Some speculation about angel christology in the NT has continued in recent years. It is noticeable, however, that this is mostly in connection with the latest NT books, such as the Fourth Gospel and Jude.<sup>57</sup>

**Daniélou** and **Longenecker** avoided replicating Werner's 'extreme thesis' by arguing for 'angelomorphic christology' as a feature of Jewish Christianity. In this view the development of christology was influenced by the angelology of the OT so that the title 'Angel' was given to Christ or angels as heavenly intermediaries provided models for christology. But neither scholar argues that angel christology was the earliest christology or that Christ was an angel, rather, 'angelomorphic categories' were attributed to Christ.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Werner, *Die Entstehung des Christlichen Dogmas* (Bern: Paul Haupt, 1941, 1954). We have used the ET, Werner, *Formation* (1957).

<sup>53</sup>Werner, *Formation*, 120-124.

<sup>54</sup>Michaelis, *Engelchristologie* (1942); with vigorous response in Werner, *Formation*, 130 n.1.

<sup>55</sup>E.g. Barbel, *Christos*, 348, 'im Neuen Testament von einer Engelchristologie nichts zu verspüren ist'; cf. Balz, *Methodische*, 208; Kretschmar, *Studien*, 220-222, and, more recently, Dunn, *Christology*, 154-158, 322 n.106.

<sup>56</sup>E.g. Hengel, *Son*, 84, 'A real *angel christology* could only become significant right on the fringe of the Jewish-Christian sphere ... Werner much exaggerated the role of "angel christology" in early Christianity'. Cf. Knight, *Disciples*, 73.

<sup>57</sup>E.g. Fossum, "Kyrios" (1987), with reply by Bauckham, *Jude*, 310-312. Knight, *Disciples*, 91, sees an angel christology in Jn 8.58 and 12.41; contrast with Dunn, *Christology*, 154-158. Bühner, *Gesandte*, 316-433, discerns angelological influence in the background to the christology of the Fourth Gospel; note also Segal, "Ruler", 258-259. Sanders "Dissenting" (1969) argues for an angelic background to Phil 2.5-11.

<sup>58</sup>Longenecker, *Christology*, 26-32; Daniélou, *Theology*, 117-146; cf. Carr, *Angels*, 143ff; Fossum, "Jewish-Christian" (1983).

More recently **Rowland** has opened up a different, although related aspect of the discussion.<sup>59</sup> Namely whether some visions of glorious angels in Jewish apocalyptic writings implied 'some kind of bifurcation in the conception of God', so that, even if the earliest Christians did not think of Christ as an angel, aspects of Jewish angelology may have provided a means for grasping how Christ could be a divine being alongside God.<sup>60</sup> Rowland's work is of particular interest to us because he develops his thesis with the christophany in *Apc* 1.13-16 as one focus.

In essence Rowland argues that *Ezek* 1.26-28, 8.2-4, and *Dn* 10.5-6 disclose a trend whereby the human form of God (*Ezek* 1.26-28) is separated from the divine throne chariot and functions as 'a quasi angelic mediator' (*Ezek* 8.2-4) similarly to the angel in *Dn* 10.5-6. On the one hand the form of the angel in *Dn* 10.5-6 appears to have been influenced by Ezekiel, especially the theophany in ch.1.<sup>61</sup> On the other hand the figure in *Ezek* 8.2-4 may be compared with 'one like a son of man' in *Dn* 7.13: both are heavenly figures who are spoken of in 'quasi-divine terms'.<sup>62</sup>

The divine status of the Danielic son of man figure, according to Rowland, is even more apparent in *Dn* 7.13 LXX which speaks of the figure coming 'as the Ancient of Days' rather than 'unto the Ancient of Days'.<sup>63</sup> The LXX variant was probably responsible for the identification of the risen Jesus with the Ancient of Days in *Apc* 1.14.<sup>64</sup>

A similar explanation may be given for the background to the glorious angel Yahoel in *Apc. Abr.* 10-11 (an apocalypse dating from a similar period to the *Apc*).<sup>65</sup> This suggests that the developments Rowland adduces were part of a broad tendency in Jewish angelology. In this tendency the conception of God is bifurcated: alongside God is another divine figure who acts in God's place with the form and character of God.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Rowland, "Vision" (1980); *Heaven* (1982); "Man" (1985).

<sup>60</sup>As recognised by, e.g., Dunn, *Christology*, xxiv (whence the citation) and Hurtado, *God*, 74.

<sup>61</sup>Rowland, "Vision", 1-5; *ibid.*, *Heaven*, 94-101.

<sup>62</sup>Rowland, *Heaven*, 97.

<sup>63</sup>This matter will be examined more closely in §2.5, where Hebrew and Greek versions are set out.

<sup>64</sup>Rowland, *Heaven*, 97-98.

<sup>65</sup>For text, see §3.2.1.

In sum: the appearances of the risen Jesus in *Apc* 1 and of certain other glorious angels may be explained in terms of developments in Jewish theology and angelology in which a glorious angel 'embodied the attributes of the glorious God whom the prophet Ezekiel had seen by the river Chebar'.<sup>67</sup>

We shall have much more to say about Rowland's proposal in subsequent chapters. Apart from any shortcomings which we may be able to expose in Rowland's work on *Apc* 1 he has allowed room for further work on the influence of angelology on the christology of the *Apc* because he says almost nothing about the christology in the rest of the *Apc*.<sup>68</sup>

Alongside Rowland's work we may mention related contributions. **Segal** examined rabbinic traditions about the (so-called) 'two powers' heresy, in which, contrary to the strict monotheism of rabbinic Judaism, scripture was interpreted 'to say that a principal angelic or hypostatic manifestation in heaven was equivalent to God'.<sup>69</sup> The opposition of the rabbis to this heresy is dated by Segal to the second century CE, but with the observation that 'the rabbis' second-century opponents had first-century forebears', such as Philo's talk of a 'second god' and Paul's polemic against angelology in Gal 3.19-20.<sup>70</sup> As far as Segal could discern, an interest in the principal angel or in hypostases which was *heretical* had not developed in the first century CE.<sup>71</sup> The interest in the glorious angel Yahoel in the *Apc. Abr.*, for example, is 'not clearly heretical'.<sup>72</sup>

**Fossum** investigated the origins of the Gnostic demiurge, with particular reference to Samaritan religious traditions. He attempted to show that the demiurge, as conceived in Gnosticism, was preceded by 'Jewish ideas about the creative agency of the hypostasized divine Name and the Angel of the Lord'.<sup>73</sup> An example of such agency is Yahoel in the

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<sup>66</sup>'Bifurcating' is used by Rowland, "Vision", 2; our explanation in the second part of the sentence draws on Rowland, *Heaven*, 97-98.

<sup>67</sup>Rowland, *Heaven*, 103.

<sup>68</sup>Note one small remark about *Apc* 10.1 [Rowland, *Heaven*, 102].

<sup>69</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 18.

<sup>70</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 260-262.

<sup>71</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 192, 196, 200.

<sup>72</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 196. Cf. summary remark in Hurtado, *God*, 32, 'an interest in angelic beings is one thing and the worship of them another'.

*Apc. Abr.*<sup>74</sup> A named angel represents a shift from the stage when the Angel of the Lord was more or less indistinguishable from God: the Angel of the Lord now has personality and personal existence.<sup>75</sup> According to Fossum this development which envisaged, or at least tended to envisage, another power alongside God predates the Christian era.<sup>76</sup>

Detailed consideration of Fossum's work would take us into Samaritan material and into consideration of Gnosticism. We cannot do this and keep our project within space limitations so that we will not take up in the main body of the dissertation the questions he raises. Hence we offer here a few brief criticisms of his approach.

First, Fossum does not substantiate his claim that angels such as Yahoel 'shared God's own ... nature or mode of being'.<sup>77</sup> Secondly, Fossum does not demonstrate that a second power alongside God such as the Angel of the Lord was worshipped in the preChristian era.<sup>78</sup> Thirdly, Fossum supports his argument with evidence drawn from periods later than the first century CE. It is always problematic when developments attested in later evidence are read back into earlier stages of religious history.<sup>79</sup>

Rowland, Segal and Fossum, therefore, have explored evidence concerning the shift from strict monotheism to some kind of dualistic or binitarian position in some Jewish circles. Taking the interpretation of the angel Yahoel as a kind of yardstick, Segal is least inclined to see heretical developments in the first century CE, Fossum is most inclined, while Rowland's position is one in which sees the potential for heretical development in, or even before, the first century CE.

**Hurtado** takes up the challenges posed by (e.g.) Rowland and Fossum. He argues that principal angel figures, in common with exalted patriarchs (such as Moses and Enoch), and

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<sup>73</sup>Fossum, *Name*, v.

<sup>74</sup>Fossum, *Name*, 319-321, 333

<sup>75</sup>Fossum, *Name*, 337.

<sup>76</sup>Fossum, *Name*, 307ff, 318, 332.

<sup>77</sup>Fossum, *Name*, 333.

<sup>78</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 38.

<sup>79</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 38. An extreme example of this tendency is Fossum's citing of the Magharian sect's teaching about the Angel of the Lord, which is attested to in 10th and 12th century writings! [*Name*, 329-332].

concept of 'divine agency'. Hurtado argues that divine agency 'operated within the traditional Jewish concern for the uniqueness of God'.<sup>80</sup>

In other words, Hurtado argues, against Rowland and Fossum, that traditions concerning the chief divine agent involved no 'mutation' in the monotheistic belief and devotional practice of post-exilic Judaism. In particular Hurtado challenges Rowland and Fossum's understanding of the significance of Yahoel in *Apc. Abr.* 10-11. The glorious appearance of this angel is not an expression of the belief that the divine Glory had become a personalised divine agent.<sup>81</sup> Rather, the portrayal of Yahoel is a creative attempt to show 'the visual majesty accorded to the angel chosen by God as his chief agent'.<sup>82</sup> The majesty of Yahoel is not evidence for 'a bifurcation of the deity', rather it is a reflection of 'the pattern of ancient imperial regimes [which] required that the figure holding the position of God's vizier should be described in majestic terms'.<sup>83</sup>

Positively, Hurtado advances the hypothesis that the divine agency tradition contributed to the development of the earliest christology. Briefly, the exalted Jesus was understood to be the chief divine agent,<sup>84</sup> but a 'mutation' in belief took place whereby Jesus Christ was included in the devotional thought and practice of the early Christians as 'a second object of devotion alongside God'.<sup>85</sup>

Hurtado is not the only critic of Rowland and Fossum,<sup>86</sup> but he is the one who has responded most fully to their work. Further consideration of Hurtado's positive case for the development of early christology cannot be undertaken here. For his primary concern is with the earliest stage of christological development, some decades before the appearance of the *Apc.*<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 38.

<sup>81</sup>Fossum, *Name*, 319-320; Rowland, *Heaven*, 102-103. Rowland is a more hesitant on this matter than Fossum.

<sup>82</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 88.

<sup>83</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 89.

<sup>84</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 93-99.

<sup>85</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 100, cf. 99-124.

<sup>86</sup>Cf. Dunn, *Christology*, xxiv-xxvi; Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung*, 143-147; Kim, *Origin*, 244-246.

At the heart of Hurtado's criticism of Rowland and Fossum, and of his hypothesis concerning the development of christology lies the importance of worship as a test of doctrine. It is the absence of evidence for the worship of a second 'divine' being (whether hypostasis, angel, or patriarch) which cautions Hurtado against claims such as Fossum's that there were substantial modifications of monotheism in post-exilic Judaism.<sup>88</sup> Conversely, it is the worship of Jesus which sets the Christian concept of divine agency on its head compared with its Jewish counterpart.<sup>89</sup>

Hurtado's work has been subjected to a critical review by **Rainbow**.<sup>90</sup> The details of this cannot be elucidated here, save to note that Rainbow identifies a class of intermediaries not considered as a separate category by Hurtado, namely, 'eschatological figures in the Bible' (e.g. Enoch). The importance of this category is that a figure manifestly distinct from God (i.e. not a personification) yet conceived of having 'an aureola of deity' (i.e. not a patriarch or angel) could have been considered worthy of worship. Rainbow argues that a separate category is appropriate because

'Hurtado's test of cultic veneration is not applicable to eschatological beings. No one would offer worship to a person who was still awaited in the future'.<sup>91</sup>

But worship might be offered to a person whose followers were convinced he was a now-present-eschatological figure. Such conviction could have arisen if Jesus convinced his followers that he would share in the status of the one God as Messiah in the terms set forth in Ps 110.1 and Dn 7.13. This would explain the worship of Jesus by the first Christians. But to maintain this hypothesis it would have to be demonstrated that texts such as Mt 26.64/Mk 14.62, where Jesus brings together Ps 110.1 and Dn 7.13 at his trial, were historically reliable. A tall order - as Rainbow admits!<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>87</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 119-120, does reflect on the christophany in Apc 1 but does so in terms of its value as a guide to religious experiences of earlier generations of Christians. There is no evidence, however, to prove that this kind of vision, which is unique in the NT writings because of its detail, was experienced in the first years of Christianity.

<sup>88</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 38; cf. Dunn, *Partings*, 219.

<sup>89</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 100.

<sup>90</sup>Rainbow, "Monotheism", (1991).

<sup>91</sup>Rainbow, "Monotheism", 88 n.22.



When Hurtado emphasises the importance of worship as a test for developments within or away from monotheism he acknowledges his debt to **Bauckham** who examines the worship of Jesus in apocalyptic Christianity, principally in connection with the *Apc* and the *Ascension of Isaiah*.<sup>93</sup> Since the worship of Jesus has less significance in an environment with a lax attitude to monotheism, Bauckham first establishes that, at least in the circles represented by the two apocalypses in question, there was a strict adherence to monotheism.<sup>94</sup> The evidence for this lies principally in the refusal of angels to be worshipped (*Apc* 19.10, 22.8; *Asc. Is.* 7.21f, 8.5). With this evidence may be contrasted those passages which explicitly acknowledge Jesus' worthiness to be worshipped (e.g. *Apc* 5.8-12, *Asc. Is.* 9.28-32). Bauckham then draws the conclusion that Jesus was placed 'on the divine side of the line which monotheism must draw between God and creatures'.<sup>95</sup>

In this article we find the interface between angelology and christology considered in direct relation to the *Apc* (and to the *Asc. Is.*). Bauckham argues that there is 'a sharp theological distinction between Christ and angels'.<sup>96</sup> This distinction is demonstrated in three ways. First, Christ is worshipped and not the angels. But, secondly, this worship arises out of the fact that only Christ is *worthy* to open the scroll. The angels also have a role in the implementation of the divine purposes, but no special worthiness is demanded for this role and no praise results from its fulfilment.<sup>97</sup> Thirdly, this distinction parallels that made in respect of the giving of the revelation. Jesus 'belongs with God as giver, while the angel belongs with John as instrument' in the transmission of the revelation.<sup>98</sup>

The work of Rowland and Fossum has opened up the possibility that Jewish monotheism before the beginning of Christianity was at least potentially weakened to allow for some kind of binitarian or dualistic position to be held. But recently two scholars have independently

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<sup>92</sup>Rainbow, "Monotheism", 88-90. For a different, but in our opinion unconvincing, set of criticisms of Hurtado see Knight, *Disciples*, 57-109, esp. p. 97.

<sup>93</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", (1981); cf. Hurtado, *God*, 38.

<sup>94</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 322-327.

<sup>95</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 335.

<sup>96</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 338 n.42.

<sup>97</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 330.

<sup>98</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 329, cf. 330.

promoted the view that, except for a small minority of Jews, strict monotheism *never arrived* in ancient Judaism. That is, the ancient dualism of El and Ba'al/Yahweh never lost its influence through the First and Second Temple periods.

Thus **Hayman** argues the startling thesis that

'it is hardly ever appropriate to use the term monotheism to describe the Jewish idea of God, that no progress beyond the simple formulas of the Book of Deuteronomy can be discerned in Judaism before the philosophers of the Middle Ages, and that Judaism never escapes from the legacy of the battles for supremacy between Yahweh, Ba'al, and El from which it emerged'.<sup>99</sup>

The implications of this view for the development of early christology are obvious:

'The fact that functionally Jews believed in the existence of two gods explains the speed with which Christianity developed so fast in the first century towards the divinization of Jesus'.<sup>100</sup>

In similar vein **Barker** argues that

'pre-Christian Judaism was not monotheistic in the sense that we use that word. ... There were many in the first-century Palestine who still retained a worldview derived from the more ancient religion of Israel in which there was a High God and several Sons of God, one of whom was Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel. Yahweh, the Lord, could be manifest on earth in human form, as an angel or in the Davidic king. *It was as a manifestation of Yahweh, the Son of God, that Jesus was acknowledged as Son of God, Messiah and Lord.*'<sup>101</sup>

Lest it should be thought that all recent scholarship is heading in the direction of Hayman and Barker we might also profitably note **Casey's** vigorous defence of Jewish monotheism

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<sup>99</sup>Hayman, "Monotheism", 2.

<sup>100</sup>Hayman, "Monotheism", 14.

<sup>101</sup>Barker, *Angel*, 3, [the italics are Barker's]. On heterodox Judaism before the Christian era see also Quispel, "Ezekiel" (1980).

as the bedrock from which Christianity was hewn with the aid of a Hellenistic chisel.<sup>102</sup> The difference between Casey and Barker, for example, is neatly illustrated in their differing responses to Philo's talk of the *Logos* as 'a second god' (*Qu. Gen. ii.62*). For Casey this 'indicates that the theoretical limit of Jewish monotheism may appear to be breached by an occasional sentence'.<sup>103</sup> Barker, by contrast, citing *Qu. Gen. ii.62*, states that 'Philo is quite clear what he meant by *Logos*; he was describing a second God'.<sup>104</sup> She sums up her discussion of Philo with this remark: 'Philo shows beyond any doubt that the Judaism of the first Christian century acknowledged a second God'.<sup>105</sup>

The details of the cases advanced by Hayman and Barker in support of each argument need not detain us here since they go beyond the scope of this inquiry. We can, however, make two brief observations in response. First, it is noticeable that the *Apc*, which offers quite a lot of evidence (in their terms) for Jesus as a second God, *nevertheless* appears to work out its christology in a strongly monotheistic context. On the one hand the angel refuses worship and directs John to worship *God* (not God and Jesus, 19.10, 22.9). On the other hand the worship at the throne 'of God and the Lamb' in 22.1,3 is directed to 'him' - a singular pronoun.<sup>106</sup> Secondly, if, as Barker asserts, 'the great angel' is the second God, it is not clear what she makes of the fact that in the *Apc* there are at least two 'great angels', Jesus (as in 1.13-16) *and* the 'mighty angel' in *Apc* 10.1. Her case would be better served if Jesus was the *only* 'great angel' in the *Apc*.<sup>107</sup>

### §1.2.1 Merkabah Mysticism

We now return to the starting point for Rowland's proposal, i.e. Ezek 1. Interest in this chapter is at the heart of the esoteric traditions known as *merkabah mysticism*. *Merkabah* is the Hebrew word for 'chariot' and *merkabah mysticism* may be formally defined in terms of 'an esoteric, visionary-mystical tradition centred upon the vision of God, seated on the

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<sup>102</sup>Casey, *Prophet* (1991).

<sup>103</sup>Casey, *Prophet*, 85. Cf. Dunn, *Christology*, 220-228. For an unequivocal statement of the oneness of God in Philo see *Leg.* iii.81.

<sup>104</sup>Barker, *Angel*, 116.

<sup>105</sup>Barker, *Angel*, 131.

<sup>106</sup>See further below, §6.2.

<sup>107</sup>Cf. Barker, *Angel*, 201-203.

celestial throne or Merkabah'.<sup>108</sup> At the heart of this tradition is the exegesis of texts featuring visions of the divine throne, or throne-chariot, and its occupant such as Ezek 1, Dan 7, Is 6, and Ex 24. Its particular relevance to early christology lies in its opening 'the window on a troubling ambiguity in the being of the Jewish God'.<sup>109</sup> Halperin, for example, draws attention to the problem of the living creature with a face like a calf (or, ox) and its recall of the worship of the golden calf at Sinai (Ezek 1.10, Ex 32).<sup>109a</sup> But also perceived as dangerous was reflection on 'the Glory' which led either to its identification as a subordinate, created being (as in Gnosticism) or to the identification of a human being with the Glory (as in Christianity).<sup>110</sup>

The relationship between apocalypticism and *merkabah* mysticism has been the subject of much discussion. Gruenwald has argued that apocalypticism has a close relationship with *Merkabah* mysticism.<sup>111</sup> Rowland, admitting the uncertainty of the connection between the two phenomena, draws attention to the common interest shared between them.<sup>112</sup> There is, of course, no doubt that in the case of the Apc itself it shares with *merkabah* mysticism an interest in the divine throne (cf. Apc 4). But it is not clear that John's throne-vision was influenced by Jewish mystical practice and teaching as opposed to simply being influenced either by an exegetical interest in Ezek 1 or by the interest in Ezek 1 represented in apocalyptic tradition.<sup>113</sup>

There is in fact a lack of consensus over the dating of the origins of the *merkabah* mysticism which is attested to, reflected upon, and expressed in Jewish literature such as the Talmud and the *Hekhalot* literature.<sup>114</sup> Both sets of texts date from the period after the

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<sup>108</sup>Murray-Jones, "Mysticism", 1-31. Scholem, *Trends*, 63, points out four mystical preoccupations: (i) God in his aspect as Creator of the Universe, (ii) The vision of the celestial realm, (iii) Songs of the angels, (iv) The structure of the *merkabah*.

<sup>109</sup>Halperin, *Faces*, 449.

<sup>109a</sup>Halperin, *Faces*, 157-193.

<sup>110</sup>Murray-Jones, "Mysticism", 7, who notes the warning against such speculations in M. Hagigah 2.1; cf. Quispel, "Ezekiel" (1980).

<sup>111</sup>Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic* (1980), esp. pp. 29-72.

<sup>112</sup>Rowland, *Heaven*, 340-348.

<sup>113</sup>Scholem, *Trends*, 43, puts the point neatly: no one knows if (e.g.) 1 *En.* and *Apc. Abr.* 'reproduce the essentials of the esoteric doctrine taught by the teachers of the Mishnah'.

<sup>114</sup>For 'Introduction' to these writings see Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 98-234. The 'classic' intersection of apocalyptic and mystical writings is 3 *Enoch*, also known as *Sefer Hekhalot*, dating from the fifth or sixth century CE. For the *Hekhalot* writings in Hebrew see Schäfer, *Synopse* (1987).

first century CE. But when did the traditions they attest to originate? Some scholars have argued for origins later than the first century,<sup>115</sup> while others have argued for origins within the first century CE.<sup>116</sup> In short, the problem remains unresolved as to whether the (apparent) parallels between (e.g.) the Apc and Jewish rabbinic and mystical writings concerned with the *Merkabah* represent the influence of one (set of traditions lying behind the writings) on the other or the mutual interaction of the two.<sup>117</sup> To attempt to settle this issue is beyond the scope of the present project, and consequently we will largely explore the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc without reference to rabbinic and mystical literature.<sup>118</sup>

### §1.2.2 Angel Christology in the Apocalypse

Apart from Rowland's work cited above little has been written *in extensio* about angel christology in the Apc. **Bakker**, for example, in an important article on angel christology, only discusses the Book of Hebrews among NT works.<sup>119</sup> Major contributors to the discussion in this century of angel christology scarcely pause to discuss the possibility in respect of the Apc.<sup>120</sup> An exception is **Karrer** who devotes a short but important *Excursus* to the question of 'einer Engelchristologie in der Apk'. He argues that Apc 1.5

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<sup>115</sup>Notably, Halperin, *Merkabah* (1980), and *Faces* (1988); Schäfer, "New Testament", 19-35, who argues, *contra* Scholem, *Gnosticism*, 14-19, that *merkabah* mysticism does not provide the background for Paul's famous account in 2 Cor 12.

<sup>116</sup>Most recently, Morray-Jones, *Merkabah* (1989), who offers a modified version of the hypothesis advanced by Scholem, *Trends*, 40-79, and *Jewish Gnosticism*, esp. pp. 14-19, 40, and developed by Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, esp. 73-97, while offering a rebuttal of (particularly) the case advanced by Halperin (see note above); cf. Fossum, "New" (1991).

<sup>117</sup>Halperin, *Faces*, 87-96, from the perspective of one favouring a post-first century CE origin for *merkabah* mysticism, draws out the significance of the Apc 'as a source for early developments in Jewish *merkabah* exegesis' (p.87). Particularly intriguing is the parallel between the 'sea of glass' (around the divine throne, Apc 4.6, 15.2) and the warning in *b. Hagigah* 14b, [when nearing the *merkabah*], 'do not say, "Water, water" ', which appears to be linked to the idea that the sea is the place of chaos; cf. Scholem, *Trends*, 52-53.

<sup>118</sup>On *merkabah* mysticism in general, and in its relationship to christological development in the first few centuries CE, see additionally (e.g.) Fossum, "Christology", 260-287; Morray-Jones, "Mysticism" (1992); Chernus, "Visions", 123-146; Rowland "Visions" (1979).

<sup>119</sup>Bakker, "Christ" (1933).

<sup>120</sup>E.g. Werner, *Formation* (1957) offers no discussion of Apc 1.13-16, 14.14, or 19.11-16.

and 14.14 particularly show signs of the influence of angel christology.<sup>121</sup> **Charlesworth** made a proposal which we can, with a little broadening of our horizons, just squeeze into a discussion of 'angel christology'. He argues that in 1.12 the Greek is best translated 'to see *the voice*' and that in view here is 'the hypostatic voice of God'. The application of this idea to Christ means that 'A Jewish title had been reminted Christologically'.<sup>122</sup> **Brighton** examines the mighty angel in Apc 10.1. He concludes that since this angel serves as 'an icon of Christ' then it illustrates 'an angel Christology'.<sup>123</sup> But this is inaccurate. The correct conclusion to his analysis is that a 'Christ angelology' is illustrated in Apc 10.

### §1.2.3 Conclusion

Our survey of previous work on the christology of the Apc suggested that there was work to be done on the question of angel christology in the Apc. We then saw that a particular line of inquiry has been opened up by Rowland. The implications of his proposal have been developed and responded to in terms of the wider question of the origins of christology. With respect to the Apc itself Rowland has raised the question of the influence of angelology on its christology. His point has not been to demonstrate that the Apc has an angel christology but an 'angelomorphic christology'.<sup>124</sup> Rowland has examined Apc 1.13-16 but has not pursued other christological texts in the Apc which might have been influenced by angelology. Other scholars have drawn attention to the possibility that some kind of angel christology is in the background to or even explicit within the Apc itself. All of which suggests that there is room for further work along the following lines:

- (1) A re-examination of Apc 1.13-16 with critical response to Rowland.
- (2) A wider examination of the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc.

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<sup>121</sup>Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung*, 147-149.

<sup>122</sup>Charlesworth, "Roots" (1986), citation from p. 40.

<sup>123</sup>Brighton, *Angel* (1991), 203.

<sup>124</sup>Rowland, "Man", 100.

### §1.3 THIS DISSERTATION: TERMS, AIMS AND SCOPE

Our aim is to investigate 'the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc'. By 'the christology of the Apc' we mean the portrayal of the form, function, and status of Jesus Christ through accounts of visions and auditions, titles, and acclamations. By 'angelology' we mean talk about angels, especially that which is attested in written material from the OT and from Jewish and Christian apocalypses stemming from the period 200 BCE to 200 CE. Angelology relates to specific propositional statements about angels (e.g. 'one of the seven angels who stand ... before the glory of the Lord', Tob 12.15), to stories of angelic involvement in human and heavenly affairs (e.g. Ezek 9, 3 *En.* 16.1-5), and to accounts of angelophanies (e.g. Dn 10.5-6, *Jos. Asen.* 14.8).<sup>125</sup> We define 'angels' as heavenly beings distinct from God and from human beings, who exist to serve God as messengers, as the heavenly congregation at worship, and as agents of the divine will fulfilling a variety of other functions.<sup>126</sup>

By 'the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc' we mean the shaping and determining of the christology of the Apc by the adoption and adaptation of angelological motifs, images, and concepts.<sup>127</sup>

We use the term 'influence' deliberately because it is more general in its meaning than 'dependence'. To look for christological material which *depended* on angelology would be invidious for we would have to determine that John consciously intended to draw on angelology for his portrayal of Jesus. To look for signs of the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc is to set ourselves not so much an easier task but one which is more amenable to yielding results.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>'Angelophanic' refers to appearances of angels, 'theophanic' to appearances of God, and 'epiphanic' refers to majestic and glorious appearances of any being, whether divine, angelic, or human.

<sup>126</sup>Cf. Carr, *Angels*, 25-43, 127-129; Aune, "Magic", 488-489.

<sup>127</sup>Cf. Betz, "Problem", 137, describes influences as 'direct adaptation of concepts, traditions, and terminologies'.

<sup>128</sup>Cf. discussion of influence/dependence of the Apc by/on biblical sources, Ruiz, *Ezekiel*, 122-124.

We set about our task in the following way. First of all we investigate 'the context' of the christology of the Apc in Jewish and Christian apocalyptic traditions and related writings. That is we seek to understand the christology in terms of both angelology prior to and contemporaneous with the Apc and angel christology which followed the Apc. The 'agenda' here has been largely set by Rowland but we will extend the scope of the material which he has considered.

This investigation, which constitutes Part One of the dissertation, begins with the angelology of three OT writings which have been influential on the Apc, Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Angelology in Ezekiel and Daniel is inextricably connected to the theophanies in both books so that inevitably our discussion moves strictly beyond the bounds of 'angelology'. We then consider the 'principal angels' in apocalypses and related writings outside of the OT. Our particular interest is with accounts of angelophanies which (a) have been influenced by passages such as Dn 7.9 and 10.5-6, and (b) offer some kind of parallel to the christophany in Apc 1.13-16. (By 'principal angel' we mean a leading angel such as an 'archangel' like Michael or Gabriel.<sup>129</sup> Where one angel is superior to all others we will use the term 'chief angel'.)

Epiphanies featuring angels correspond in some instances to epiphanies featuring exalted humans. A link between the two is sometimes explicit inasmuch as the human is described as 'like an angel' (cf. 1 *En.* 106.5-6). We consider such accounts and the more general subject of humans who attain to high office because it serves to remind us that if Christ appears like an angel then it does not necessarily imply that he is anything other than an exalted human being. Jesus Christ is called 'the *Logos* of God' in Apc 19.13 while appearing in angelomorphic form. For this reason we then consider writings in which the *Logos* features as an angelomorphic figure.

Finally in Part One we consider further the question of angel christology. This study takes us into the period after the composition of the Apc but nevertheless remains within the bounds of the 'context' of the christology of the Apc. If angelology has influenced the christology of the Apc then it is conceivable that the result is an 'angel christology'. But, as we will show, 'angel christology' includes a number of distinctive possibilities and knowing this permits us to clarify our understanding of the christology of the Apc.

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<sup>129</sup>Cf. Segal, *Powers*, 187



In Part Two of the dissertation we consider christological material in the Apc itself. Our starting point is Apc 1.1 where we find God, Jesus Christ and an angel connected through their joint participation in the transmission of the revelation to John. We briefly consider the relationships between God and Jesus and between Jesus and the angel. The first relationship raises the question of whether or not Jesus Christ is ultimately distinct from the angels because he is identified with God. The second relationship raises the question of why *both* Jesus and the angel mediate between God and John. The answer suggests one way in which angelology has influenced the christology of the Apc. We then consider in four successive chapters the three visions of Christ which are most likely to have been influenced by angelology: 1.13-16, 14.14, and 19.11-16.

Four important points need to be made about the investigation which we have just outlined.

First, by restricting ourselves to the various passages we consider in the study of the relationship between Jesus and the angel and to the visions in Apc 1.13-16, 14.14, and 19.11-16 we do not claim that these are the only christological passages which reflect the influence of angelology. We are confident, however, that to demonstrate such influence on other passages would be a worthy project in its own right.

Secondly, the influence of the OT on the Apc is well-known,<sup>130</sup> and thus it is reasonable to consider that the angelology of the OT, in particular of Zechariah, Ezekiel and Daniel, may have influenced the christology of the Apc. The influence of Jewish and Christian apocryphal and pseudepigraphal writings on the Apc is less clear.<sup>131</sup> Whatever view may be held of the *genre* to which the Apc should be assigned,<sup>132</sup> it is indubitable that the Apc

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<sup>130</sup>See now Beale, "Revelation" (1988) and literature cited therein.

<sup>131</sup>Parker, "Scripture", 42-48, finds literary parallels with pseudepigraphal apocalyptic literature but without demonstration of direct literary influence. Charles, i, lxxv, finds at least indirect evidence for knowledge of *T. Levi*, 1 *En.* [cf. Charles, *APOT*, ii, 180], *As. Moses*, and, less probably, 2 *En.* and *Pss. Solomon*. In the light of reassessed datings since the early decades of this century it would be preferable to speak of common knowledge of traditions and motifs found in such works.

<sup>132</sup>Discussion ranges over the categories 'letter' (e.g. Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung* [1986]), 'apocalypse' (e.g. Collins, J.J., "Pseudonymity" [1977], Yarbrow Collins, "Early Christian", 70-72), and 'prophecy' (e.g. Mazzaferri, *Genre* [1989]); Schussler Fiorenza, *Justice*, 168-170, amalgamates all three categories; Linton, "Reading", 161, argues for a 'hybrid genre'.

includes a number of elements which connect it to apocalyptic literature. For the Apc contains the principal features of this literature: 'the revelation of divine mysteries through visions',<sup>133</sup> and 'mediated revelation, otherworldly realities, and transcendental eschatology'.<sup>134</sup> Whether or not John was directly influenced by writings such as *Sim. En.* or *Jub.*, there are certainly subjects of common interest between the Apc and such writings. A survey of the angelology of the Apc in §1.4 suggests that one of these subjects was angelology. This does not mean that (say) the angelology of *Jub.* has influenced the Apc in the sense that John was directly familiar with this work, but it does suggest that considering the angelology of *Jub.* will enlighten us as to the nature of the angelology with which John was familiar.

Thirdly, notwithstanding the above point, our investigation of the context of the christology of the Apc is inevitably limited. On the one hand it is important to our overall study that we cover the areas we have just mentioned. On the other hand it is important that we consider at least some aspects of these areas in a reasonable amount of detail. This means, however, that we must neglect entirely or almost entirely the angelology of the targumic, rabbinic, and gnostic literature. It also means that we can only make a brief mention of the Hellenistic 'daemon' context of the christology,<sup>135</sup> and that we must neglect entirely the socio-political context of the christology.<sup>136</sup>

Fourthly, our investigation proceeds on the basis that 'influence' and 'visionary experience' are compatible concepts. It is, of course, theoretically possible that a man named John had absolutely no knowledge of the OT or of apocalyptic and related traditions yet wrote an account of his visionary experiences which coincidentally recalled the language of these writings. It is much more likely that if the Apc represents genuine visions experienced by

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<sup>133</sup>Rowland, *Heaven*, 70.

<sup>134</sup>Collins, J.J., "Jewish", 29; cf. *ibid.*, "Introduction", 9; Hanson, *Dawn*, 9-11.

<sup>135</sup>Betz, "Problem", 134-139, rightly argues that 'extra-Jewish' influences have been significant in the development of apocalypticism; Yarbrow Collins, "History" (1977), offers a refinement of Betz's thesis. Both articles use as an example the 'angel of the waters' in Apc 16.4-7. On the Hellenistic context of the Apc see Van Unnik, "Worthy" (1970); Moore, "Jesus Christ" (1982); Aune, "Magic" (1987).

<sup>136</sup>On the socio-political context of the Apc see Aune, "Matrix" (1981); Beagley, *Sitz* (1987); Downing, "Pliny's" (1988); Le Grys, "Conflict" (1992); Klauck, "Sendschreiben" (1992); Thompson, *Revelation* (1990).

John then these were influenced by the OT and other traditions. Dreams and visions do not normally take place within a mind which is a *tabula rasa*. The content and structure of a vision may not exactly reflect any previously experienced events or any pattern of ideas and images already stored in the mind, but they will draw on what is already known.

We can readily imagine John meditating on passages such as Ezek 1, Dn 7 and 10 and subsequently having a vision which consisted of elements drawn from these familiar passages. Of course John may have had visions which had nothing to do with Ezekiel and Daniel and everything to do with what he ate for lunch. But presumably the visions which he would have considered worthy of publication would have been those which bore some resemblance to the visionary tradition with which he was familiar.<sup>137</sup> Similarly, we can also readily imagine that when John wrote down what he 'saw' he attempted to describe it in a way which conformed to the visionary tradition with which he was familiar.<sup>138</sup> In other words there was probably an element of interpretation of what he saw. The point we wish to make is that if John had visionary experiences then this is entirely compatible with discussing the possible 'influences' on his mind both in terms of the period prior to a vision and to the process of finding the 'right words' to describe such experience.<sup>139</sup>

It is not necessary therefore to answer the question whether John had visions, though we are inclined to the view that he did have.<sup>140</sup> Of course, if John did not have visionary experiences (or at least did not have visionary experiences relating to Apc 1.13-16, 14.14, and 19.11-16) then we are certainly right to presume that the Apc may be approached as a text which reflects the influence of previous texts and of traditions known to its author.

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<sup>137</sup>Cf. Beale, *Revelation*, 332-333.

<sup>138</sup>Hartman, *Prophecy*, 105-106, conforming to convention does 'not exclude a basis of extraordinary experience'.

<sup>139</sup>On visionary experience and its transposition to a literary medium see Hartman, *Prophecy*, 102-112; Stone, "Apocalyptic", 421-427; Bauckham, "Role", 72; Kim, *Origin*, 216; Jeske, "Spirit" (1985), esp. pp. 456, 462-464, argues against ἐν πνεύματι (e.g. 1.10, 4.2) reflecting the ecstatic condition of the writer.

<sup>140</sup>On the genuineness of (some) apocalyptic visions see Russell, *Method*, 158-202; Stone, "Apocalyptic", 420-428; Rowland, "Apocalyptic", 173. On visionary experiences in the early church see Dunn, *Jesus*, 177-179, 213-216. On the main features of 'epiphany visions' see Kim, *Origin*, 205-216.

A number of other points remain to be made about methodology, texts, terms, and other presuppositions.

First, we examine texts from a historical critical perspective. We will have a particular concern with Apc 1.13-16 to discuss the 'history of tradition', that is, to critically discuss suggestions made about developments behind this text and to offer our own proposal concerning this.

Secondly, the author of the Apc is a man named 'John' (Apc 1.1). There is no consensus as to the identity of this man (i.e., as to whether he was an 'apostle', 'elder', 'disciple' or otherwise).<sup>141</sup> We will simply work with the assumption that this author was a Christian prophet familiar with the OT and (as we have already argued) with Jewish apocalyptic traditions about angels. We habitually refer to the author as 'John', though occasionally as 'the seer'. (Citations of the Gospel bearing the name of John will be in the form 'Jn 3.16' but general references will be to the 'Fourth Gospel'. To avoid confusion the term 'Johannine' is not used).

Thirdly, we will read the text of the Apc as essentially the work of John himself. That is, we read the Apc in line with the trend in recent scholarly study of the Apc to affirm that it is a unified composition from one hand.<sup>142</sup> This does not mean that John did not incorporate sources, but that the result has not been a clumsy pastiche but a work that expresses what the author wished to say.

Fourthly, with neither expertise in textual criticism nor space to include a detailed discussion of the history of the text of the Apc we will rely on the authority of the Nestle-Aland (twenty-sixth) edition. At appropriate points we will discuss important textual problems but at no point does this lead to a disagreement with the Nestle-Aland edition.

A similar point may be made about the use of *BHS* for the Massoretic text of the OT and, in general, for Rahlf's *Septuaginta* for the LXX and for Theodotion.<sup>143</sup> We use the *NRSV* for the English translation of both the NT and OT, but have substituted the word 'Yahweh' for

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<sup>141</sup>Schussler Fiorenza, *Justice*, 18-19; Yarbro Collins, *Crisis*, 25-50.

<sup>142</sup>Schussler Fiorenza, *Justice*, 16 (summarising modern scholarship), 159-203 (offering her own proposal).

<sup>143</sup>An exception is our extended discussion of Dn 7.13 LXX in §2.5.

'LORD' where this occurs in OT passages.

In general we rely on English translations of apochryphal and pseudepigraphal writings. Where appropriate we refer to underlying texts. In an attempt at some kind of consistency we normally work with the English translations provided in *OTP*, *NTA*, and *DSSE* with occasional recourse to other translations such as those in *AOT*. Citations from Philo and Josephus are taken from the Loeb editions of their writings.

Fifthly, we follow the majority of scholars in presuming that the *Apc* dates from c.96 CE. Although some internal evidence points to a date c. 68,<sup>144</sup> the external evidence of Irenaeus is impressive and not easily displaced.<sup>145</sup> A date in the sixties, however, would not greatly affect the course of our discussion.

Finally, there is one set of terms which we must mention, namely, 'divine' and 'divinity'. We will use the adjective 'divine' in a Judeo-Christian context principally with reference to Yahweh/God: that is, in descriptions of the activity or throne or form of God. Talk of the risen Jesus in *Apc* 1.13-16 bearing 'divine characteristics' would mean that the appearance of Jesus incorporates characteristics otherwise associated with the appearance of God, or talk of Jesus claiming 'divine titles' would mean that he claims titles which otherwise belong only to God. Occasionally we will speak of the 'divinity of Jesus Christ'. By this we will mean that Jesus Christ both has status as God (either as a second God or as one identified with God) and is essentially distinct from the created order of beings.

Occasionally we will refer to the possibility that (say) a Roman emperor was believed to be 'a divine being'. By this we will mean that the figure in question was thought to be another 'god' within the Roman pantheon of gods. Talk of an angel as 'a divine being' will depend on the context, but essentially an angel as a divine being will mean that either the angel was believed to be a second God alongside the God of Jewish and Christian belief or the angel was identified in some way with God.

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<sup>144</sup>E.g. Robinson, *Redating*, 221-253; Bell, "Date" (1979); more recently, Gentry, *Before*, 333-337; Moberly, "When", 376-377, argues for the winter of 69-70 CE but allows for publication at a later date.

<sup>145</sup>So, e.g., Sweet, 21-27; Yarbro Collins, *Crisis*, 54-83.

## §1.4 THE ANGELOLOGY OF THE APOCALYPSE

In this section we aim (a) to set out certain assumptions about angels and angel-like figures in the Apc, and (b) to demonstrate that the Apc reflects familiarity with the angelology found both in the OT and in Jewish apocalyptic writings.<sup>146</sup>

In what follows we do not attempt to cover every aspect of the angelology of the Apc,<sup>147</sup> or to relate it to every aspect of angelology outside of the Apc.<sup>148</sup>

### §1.4.1 Some Assumptions

First, 'the angels (ἄγγελοι) of the seven churches' (1.20, cf. 2.1 par.) are heavenly beings rather than human beings such as messengers, church leaders, or prophets,<sup>149</sup> or personifications of the life or spirit of the churches.<sup>150</sup> Briefly, the impressive symbolism of the angels as 'stars' and their juxtaposition with the 'seven spirits' (3.1) is inconsistent with the 'angels' as humans.<sup>151</sup> Understanding the 'angels' as 'personifications' seems a strange conclusion when 'the church' is capable of being addressed in its own right as a body of people.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>146</sup>OT = Old Testament which for this dissertation includes all the writings commonly included in the Septuagint.

<sup>147</sup>We know of no monograph on the angelology of the Apc. An extensive survey of the angelology of the Apc was begun by Michl in his work, *Engelvorstellungen* (1937): it deals with the living creatures, the seven spirits, and the four angels. This was the first of a projected three volumes but we can find no indication that the other two were published.

<sup>148</sup>For surveys of angels in Jewish, Gnostic, and Christian literature see Michl, "Engel", 54-258 (pp. 64-84 for specific treatment of angels in Jewish apocalypses); Bietenhard, *Welt*, 102-142; Kaplan, "Angelology" (1948); and Schäfer, *Rivalität*, 10-32 (for angelology in Apochrypha and Pseudepigrapha) and 41-74 (for angelology in rabbinic literature). See now Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien* (1992) on the angelology of pre-rabbinic Judaism. (Unfortunately this monograph was sighted too late to be considered for discussion in this dissertation).

<sup>149</sup>E.g. McNamara, *New Testament*, 198-199. Human 'messengers' (LXX: ἄγγελος) are mentioned in Hag 1.13, Mal 1.1, 2.7, 3.1. On the angels of the churches as messengers see Kraft, 52.

<sup>150</sup>Cf. Beckwith, 445; Charles, i, 34; Lohmeyer, 18; Swete, 22; Satake, *Gemeindeordnung*, 154.

<sup>151</sup>Cf. Beckwith, 445-446. Note an angelic star in Apc 9.1-2.

<sup>152</sup>On the identity of the ecclesial angels, see further Bousset, 200-202; Kraft, 50-52; Lohmeyer, 18, and Hemer, *Letters*, 32.

Secondly, 'the seven spirits' (1.4, 3.1, 4.5, 5.6) are not angels despite the similarity between their location in 4.5 and the location of the seven angels in 8.2: ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστήκασιν/ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου respectively. Since this assumption removes 'the seven spirits' from consideration under the heading 'influence of angelology' to 'influence of pneumatology' we will not rehearse familiar arguments in support of it. Although controversial, this assumption is well supported by many scholars.<sup>153</sup>

Thirdly, we suppose the four apocalyptic horsemen in Apc 6.1-8 to be symbolic figures rather than angels. Consideration of the fourth horsemen, 'Death' suggests that he is a personification rather than 'the angel of death'. The statement in Apc 20.13 that 'Death and Hades gave up the dead that are in them (ἐν αὐτοῖς)' implies that Death and Hades are thought of simultaneously in both personal and locational terms. This suggests that 'Death' is best understood in 6.8 as a 'personification' rather than 'angel'.<sup>154</sup> Since each figure shares the same form it is likely that they each belong to the same category, that is, each is a personification like 'Death'.

#### §1.4.2 Angelology in the Apocalypse

##### Seven Angels

Various groups of seven angels are found in the Apc (e.g. 1.20, 8.2, 15.6-7). Within the OT this feature corresponds to seven 'men' in Ezek 9.2 and to seven angels in Tb 12.15. There is, in fact, a notable parallel between Apc 8.2 and Tb 12.15:

οἱ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστήκασιν (Apc 8.2),

οἱ παρεστήκασιν καὶ εἰσπορεύονται ἑώπιον τῆς δόξης κυρίου' (Tb 12.15, Cf. Lk 1.19; 1 *En.* 40.2).

Seven angels are known in apocalyptic literature (1 *En.* 20.3 [Greek Recension; six only in Ethiopic], 87.1, 90.21, *Test. Levi* 8.1).<sup>155</sup> A related feature which is not known in the OT is

<sup>153</sup>E.g. Brüttsch, i, 46; Prigent, 17; Bauckham, "Role", 17; Molina, *Espiritu*, 27; Dix, "Seven", 233; Bruce, "Spirit", 336. Against: e.g., Allo, 8-9; Lohse, 14; Michl, *Engelvorstellungen*, 138-160.

<sup>154</sup>Cf. Lohse, 40-41; Prigent, 107-113; Allo, 76-85; Charles, i, 161-171.

plural 'angels of the presence':<sup>156</sup> the angels who stand before God in *Apc* 8.2 appear to be such angels (cf. *Jub.* 2.2, 1 *QSB* 4.24-26, 1 *QH* 6.13). Finally, the trumpet blowing angels in *Apc* 8.2 recall *Apc. Moses* 22.1 (cf. 1 *Thes* 4.16).

### Four Angels

Four angels hold back the four winds (*Apc* 7.1) and four angels are found at the river Euphrates (*Apc* 9.14-15). The first reference particularly recalls four chariots interpreted as the four winds (Zech 6.1-6, cf. Jer 49.36, Dn 7.2). But groups of four (arch)angels are specifically mentioned in 1 *En.* 9.1, 40.9-10, 54.6, 71.9, 1 *QM* 9.15-16. Note also 'the angels of the spirits of the winds' (*Jub.* 2.2, cf. 1 *En.* 60.12, 69.22). The four angels at the river Euphrates may be 'the angels of punishment' (*Apc* 9.14-15, cf. 14.10)<sup>157</sup> which is a class of angel mentioned in 1 *En.* 53.3 and *Test. Levi* 3.3.

### Holy Angels

The ἀγγέλων ἁγίων (*Apc* 14.10) recall the 'holy angels' (distinguished from the angels of the presence) in *Jub.* 2.2,18. Note also, 1 *En.* 60.4, 71.9, 2 *En.* 1.2,1 *QS* 11.8, and *Shep. Hermas, Vis.* 3.4.1-2.<sup>158</sup>

### Michael

'Michael and his angels' fight with 'the dragon and his angels' (*Apc* 12.7). Michael is referred to in Dn 10.13,21,12.1, as well as in numerous other texts, e.g.,1*QM* 17.5-8, 1 *En.* 20.1, 69.14, 2 *En.* 33.10, Jude 9, and *Apc. Abr.* 10.18. Michael quarreling with the devil is mentioned in, e.g., Jude 9 and *Vit. Ad. Evae* 13-16.<sup>159</sup> In other texts a quarrel is described but the angel is not named, e.g., 1 *QS* 3.20-24, *Test. Dan.* 6.1-3, *As. Moses* 10.1-2.

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<sup>155</sup>Cf. seventy angels in Tg. Yer. I Gn 11.7.

<sup>156</sup>A singular 'angel of the presence' appears in Is 63.9 MT.

<sup>157</sup>Charles, i, 250.

<sup>158</sup>Cf. Tob 12.15 where according to the Vaticanus and Alexandrinus recensions the angels are ἐπὶ τὰ ἁγίων ἀγγέλων. Cf. Michl, *Engelvorstellung*, 231-232 n.7.

<sup>159</sup>For a detailed studied of Michael, cf. Luken, *Michael* (1898); and now, Rohland, *Erzengel* (1977).



### The Angel with Authority over Fire

'The angel who has authority over fire' (Apc 14.18, cf. 8.5, 16.8-9).<sup>160</sup> It is not clear whether the authority of this angel is restricted to the temple<sup>161</sup> or extends over the whole of nature. The 'angel of fire' is not a feature of the OT but is a feature of apocalyptic literature and related writings. The angel of fire is variously identified: Nathaniel, (*Ps.-Ph.* 38.3); Gabriel, (*3 En.* 14.3); Michael (*Tg. Job* 25.2). Note also *Jub.* 2.2.<sup>162</sup>

### The Angel of the Waters

The third bowl-angel is 'in charge of the waters' (16.4-5). As with the 'angel of fire' the 'angel of the water(s)' is not known in the OT but is familiar from other writings. Gabriel, for example, is the angel of the waters in *Tg. Job* 25.2. Note also the 'angels ... in charge of the forces of the waters' (*1 En.* 66.2, cf. 60.20-23, *2 En.* 19.4).<sup>163</sup>

### The Angel over the Abyss

This angel is known as Abaddon or Apollyon (Apc 9.11). Abaddon is cited in parallel with Sheol in *Job* 26.6, *Prv* 15.11, 27.20. In *Job* 28.22 Abaddon, along with Death is personified (cf. *Apc* 6.8).<sup>164</sup> Note the angel Eremiel who is 'over the abyss and Hades' (*Apc. Zeph.* 6.13), and the angel Uriel who is over 'the world and Tartarus' (*1 En.* 20.2 [some Greek MSS]).

### The Angel who Refuses to be Worshipped

Twice in the *Apc* an angel refuses to be worshipped by John (19.10, 22.9). This motif is hinted at in *Tb* 12.16-22 but explicitly present in *Apc. Zeph.* 6.12 and *Asc. Is.* 7.21.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>160</sup>Cf. Kraft, 205.

<sup>161</sup>Cf. Swete, 188.

<sup>162</sup>Bousset, *Religion*, 371.

<sup>163</sup>Cf. Lueken, *Michael*, 52-56, who discusses texts featuring both Michael and Gabriel as the angel of water/fire; Yarbrow Collins, "History" (1977). Note the very extensive list of angels over nature in *3 En* 4 has no angel of water(s).

<sup>164</sup>Cf. *1QH* 3.8-10, where Death is personified as a woman in the throes of labour producing a 'man-child', a 'Marvellous Mighty Counsellor'.

This brief survey suggests that the Apc reflects knowledge of angelology both within and outside the OT. This conclusion, along with the 'agenda' set by Rowland's work on the influence of angelology on christology, provides good reason to proceed in succeeding chapters to examine angelology and related subjects in the OT and in apocalyptic and other writings outside the OT.

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<sup>165</sup>For full discussion of this motif, and for further texts, see Bauckham, "Worship" (1981).

# **PART ONE**

**THE CONTEXT OF THE APOCALYPSE'S CHRISTOLOGY IN  
JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN APOCALYPTIC TRADITIONS AND  
RELATED WRITINGS:**

**ANGELOLOGY, ANGELOMORPHIC FIGURES, AND ANGEL  
CHRISTOLOGY.**

## CHAPTER TWO

# ZECHARIAH, EZEKIEL, AND DANIEL: ANGELOLOGY AND EPIPHANIES

### §2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we examine material concerning angels, especially angelophanies, along with other epiphanies. We begin with the Book of Zechariah because one of the angels referred to is the 'angel of Yahweh' and this provides an opportunity to briefly go to the earlier parts of the OT where the 'angel of Yahweh' is a notable feature. We then proceed to the Books of Ezekiel and Daniel.

### §2.2 ZECHARIAH

When the word of God came to the prophet Zechariah (1.7) he recorded an encounter with various angelic figures. We set out the first few verses of this account in order to assist our clarification of who these figures are:

'In the night I saw a man (איש) riding on a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen; and behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses. 9. Then I said, "What are these, my lord?" The angel who talked with me (המלאך הדבר בי) said to me, "I will show you what they are". 10. So the man (איש) who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, "They are those whom Yahweh has sent to patrol the earth". 11. Then they spoke to the angel of Yahweh (מלאך יהוה) who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have patrolled the earth, and lo, the whole earth remains at peace" ' (Zech 1.8-11).

There are two individual angels here. One is 'the angel who talks with me' (hence, 'the talking angel'). The other is the 'man' or 'angel of Yahweh'. No riders for the coloured horses are mentioned so it would appear that they are understood to be equivalent to angels.

The talking angel has a role as interpreter of heavenly visions (the so-called *angelus*

*interpretes*). In Zech 1.9, 1.18-21, 4.1-7, and 5.5-6.8 the talking angel shows and/or interprets various matters to Zechariah. It seems reasonable to presume that when we read in 3.1 that 'he showed me (וַיִּרְאֵנִי)' the 'he' refers to the talking angel. But in this case what Zechariah is shown is 'the high priest Joshua standing before the angel of Yahweh'. There is no reason to think that the angel of Yahweh in 1.11 does not equate with the angel of Yahweh in 3.1. Consequently we conclude that the talking angel is distinct from the angel of Yahweh.<sup>1</sup>

The role of the talking angel is parallel to that of the angel in the Apc who both reveals and interprets visions (cf. Apc 17.1-7). It is interesting therefore to note a description of this angel which recalls the talking angel, ὁ λαλῶν μετ' ἐμοῦ (Apc 21.15; cf. ὁ ἄγγελος ὁ λαλῶν ἐν ἐμοί, 1.9 LXX), and to observe that a function of this angel recalls a function of the talking angel, namely, to measure Jerusalem (Apc 21.16; cf. Zech 2.2[6]).

Conceivably the 'man' (Zech 1.8) and the 'angel of Yahweh' (Zech 1.11) could be distinct beings. The two different designations suggest that two distinct traditions may have contributed to Zech 1.8-11. This would not necessarily mean, however, that in the present text two different figures were to be understood since 'man' (אִישׁ) is a common designation for an angel (of Yahweh) in the OT (cf. Jdgs 13.6, Ezek 9.2, Dn 10.5).<sup>2</sup> When both figures are described as occupying the same place ('among the myrtle trees', 1.8,11) it is likely that they are meant to be understood as one and the same figure.

What do we learn about the angel of Yahweh in Zechariah? First, the angel is a *heavenly being of high (if not the highest) rank*: he leads the equine patrol (1.11), and he commands those standing before him to take off the filthy clothes of Joshua (3.4). Secondly, the angel has a *mediatorial* role. The angel intercedes with God (1.12: although when the answer is given it is to the 'talking angel', 1.14, cf. Ez 40.3ff, Hag 1.13).<sup>3</sup> But in a later scene the angel of Yahweh is the mediator when God communicates to a human (3.6-10). The intercessory role of the angel of Yahweh shows that he is not to be identified with Yahweh. The fact that his intercession concerns the plight of Jerusalem and Judah is reminiscent of

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Meyers and Meyers, *Zechariah 1-8*, 110, 183; Mitchell, *Zechariah*, 120.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 189-190; Stier, *Gott*, 75.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Stier, *Gott*, 71-74.

the angel, Michael, who acts as the patron of Israel (Dn 10.21, 12.1).<sup>4</sup>

Thirdly, the angel of Yahweh appears to represent Yahweh as judge and presider in the divine council (Zech 3.1-10).<sup>5</sup> In this scene Joshua and Satan appear before the angel of Yahweh. Whether or not v.2 introduces Yahweh into the scene (so the MT and LXX but not the Peshitta which speaks of 'the angel of Yahweh'),<sup>6</sup> this scene shows the angel of Yahweh as a figure akin to the vizier - the powerful official to whom the supreme ruler delegates rule, authority, and power.<sup>7</sup>

In the final reference to the angel of Yahweh in Zechariah we read,

'on that day ..... the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of Yahweh, at their head' (MT: וּבֵית דָּוִד כְּאַלְהִים כְּמִלְאָךְ יְהוָה לִפְנֵיהֶם; LXX: ὁ δὲ οἶκος Δαυιδ ὡς οἶκος θεου, ὡς ἄγγελος κυρίου ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν, Zech 12.8).

Here the angel of Yahweh recalls the angel whom God promises to send ahead of Israel in their journey through the wilderness (Ex 23.20-21). This angel certainly has a vizier-like function since he is delegated the task of leading the people of God on behalf of God and he is invested with tremendous authority since God says of him, 'my name is in him'. Although the reference in Zechariah is in a part of the book which may be distinct from ch. 1-6,<sup>8</sup> this part of the book is alluded to a number of times in the Apc.<sup>9</sup>

Thus we suggest that John's familiarity with Zechariah most likely extended to the idea of an angel functioning as the representative of God invested with considerable power and authority.

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<sup>4</sup>Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 190.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Dn 7.9-10; Job 1.6, 2.1.

<sup>6</sup>That the Peshitta reading represents the original reading is argued for by, e.g., Stier, *Gott*, 77, and Mitchell, *Zechariah*, 149, 153. The Peshitta offers a smoothing over of a difficulty which suggests that it may be a corrective rather than an original reading. On the other hand 'Yahweh' rather than 'the angel of Yahweh' could represent an omissive error in transcription.

<sup>7</sup>Stier, *Gott*, 79; cf. Newsom, "Angels", 251.

<sup>8</sup>This is, for example, the only reference to the angel of Yahweh or to any angel outside of Zech 1-6.

<sup>9</sup>E.g. Apc 21.7 cf. Zech 8.8; Apc 3.17 cf. Zech 11.5; Apc 11.2 cf. Zech 12.3; Apc 1.7 cf. Zech 12.10ff; Apc 16.16 cf. Zech 12.11; Apc 8.7 cf. Zech 13.9; Apc 21.25 cf. Zech 14.7; Apc 21.6, 22.1 cf. Zech 14.8; Apc 19.6 cf. Zech 14.9; Apc 22.3 cf. Zech 14.11.

Obviously this raises the question whether this angel may have contributed to the portrayal of Jesus Christ in the Apc, just as the 'talking angel' appears to have influenced the portrayal of one of the angels in the Apc. To this question we shall return in chapter eight.

### §2.2.1 Excursus: The Angel of Yahweh Prior to Zechariah

We have argued that the the angel of Yahweh in Zechariah is an angel who is distinct from Yahweh, though one with a close association with Yahweh. But talk about the angel of Yahweh in Zechariah naturally leads to consideration of other accounts of the angel of Yahweh in which a distinction between the angel of Yahweh and Yahweh is not so readily discernible. For example, in the incident when Hagar encounters the angel of Yahweh (מַלְאֲכֵי יְהוָה) at the spring on the way to Shur (Gn 16.7-14), the narrator concludes in this way after the angel of Yahweh has spoken to her (16.11-12):

'So she named Yahweh who spoke to her, "You are El-roi"

(וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמֵי־יְהוָה חִדְבָּר אֵלֶיָּה אֵתָּה אֵל רֹאִי);

for she said, 'Have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him?' (Gn 16.13).<sup>10</sup>

While Eichrodt concludes that 'Hagar realizes and states explicitly that she has seen Yahweh himself',<sup>11</sup> Stier concludes that she had experienced the help of God through an angel.<sup>12</sup> Discussion of such passages<sup>13</sup> includes explanations such as

- (i) the (so called) 'Logos' theory (the angel is the *Logos* or second person of the trinity),
- (ii) the 'Interpolation' theory (reference to the angel is added to soften the bold anthropomorphism of a passage),

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<sup>10</sup>A number of text critical issues are involved in this verse, and it should be noted that the meaning of the second clause is uncertain. But the relevant point that Hagar is believed to have encountered Yahweh and not merely an angel is not affected by these issues.

<sup>11</sup>Eichrodt, *Theology*, ii, 26.

<sup>12</sup>Stier, *Gott*, 35-39. Takahashi, "Oriental's", 346-8, who speaks about the 'fluctuation or fluidity between God and angels' in the OT.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Gn 18.1-33, 21.17, 22.11, 31.11, 32.24-30, 48.16, Ex 3.2, 14.19, Num 22.22-35, Jdgs 2.1-4, 6.11-24, 13.3-21. Note interpretations of such passages in other OT writings, e.g., Hos 12.3-4.

(iii) the 'Representation' theory (the angel speaks for God but is not God - the so-called 'Gottesich'), and

(iv) the 'Identity' theory (the angel is a manifestation of Yahweh himself).<sup>14</sup>

We cannot here either examine all the issues raised by these passages,<sup>15</sup> or discuss the explanations just listed.

We will, however, state our position on the matter. In agreement with Eichrodt we suggest that in some passages the 'angel of Yahweh' is 'a specific medium of divine revelation', which exists side by side with the angel as 'the created messenger of God'.<sup>16</sup> That is, unlike the situation in Zechariah, there are occasions when the angel of Yahweh is indistinct from Yahweh. On these occasions the angel of Yahweh is 'a form of Yahweh's self-manifestation which expressly safeguards his transcendent nature', a form in which Yahweh 'can temporarily incarnate himself in order to assure his own that he is indeed immediately at hand'.<sup>17</sup>

In sum: on some occasions in the OT 'the angel of Yahweh' is ultimately indistinguishable from Yahweh, but on other occasions, especially in Zechariah, 'the angel of Yahweh' is distinct from Yahweh, yet nevertheless invested with power and authority to represent Yahweh.

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<sup>14</sup>Cf. Heidt, *Angelology*, 95-100; Hirth, *Gottes*, 13-21.

<sup>15</sup>See further Stier, *Gott*, 1-95; Hirth *Gottes* (1975); Eichrodt, *Theology*, ii, 23-29; Von Rad, *Theology*, i, 285-289.

<sup>16</sup>Eichrodt, *Theology*, ii, 29. Cf. Dunn, *Christology*, 150, ' "The angel of Yahweh" is simply a way of speaking about God'.

<sup>17</sup>Eichrodt, *Theology*, ii, 27. On God assuming a form see Barr, "Theophany", 32.



## §2.3 EZEKIEL

The influence of Ezekiel on the Apc in a variety of contexts is sure and uncontroversial.<sup>18</sup> Here we examine accounts of theophanies and angelophanies in Ezekiel which are important for the development of our dissertation, especially those found in Ezek 1, 8-10, 40, and 43. We examine theophanies, as well as angelophanies since, as we shall see, in some cases it is difficult to distinguish one from the other.

### §2.3.1 Ezekiel 1

We have already been alerted in chapter one to the importance of Ezek 1 for *merkabah mysticism*. In the background to the vision of the *merkabah* are passages such as Ex 24.10 and Is 6.1:

‘and they saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there was something like a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness’ (Ex 24.10).

Here there is little detail about the form of God which Moses, Aaron, and the elders apparently saw. The detail given is mostly concerned with the surroundings.<sup>19</sup> But the use of *precious stone* imagery is notable as it is a recurring feature of theophanies and angelophanies.

‘In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord (אֲדֹנָי) sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple’ (Is 6.1).

The second passage describes Isaiah's vision of the Lord. Once again there is little detail.<sup>20</sup>

These visions may be contrasted with the *more detailed* vision of the celestial throne and its occupant in Ezek 1. The first part of this account is devoted to ‘the living creatures’, to

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<sup>18</sup>Cf. Ruiz, *Ezekiel* (1989); Vanhoye, "L'utilisation" (1962); Goulder, "Apocalypse" (1981).

<sup>19</sup>Barr, "Theophany", 32.

<sup>20</sup>See further on these and other *merkabah* texts such as 1 En. 14 in Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 29-72.

the fiery phenomena seen in and around them (e.g., 'fire flashing forth', 1.4; 'sparkled like burnished bronze', 1.6; and 'flash of lightning', 1.14), and to 'the wheels' whose movement they inspire (1.4-21). The second part of this account concerns something above the living creatures which is 'like a dome' (דמות רקיע, 1.22-25). The climax of the vision is then described as follows:

'And above the dome over their heads there was something like a throne (דמות כסא), in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was something that seemed like a human form (דמות כמראה אדם). 27 Upward from what appeared like the loins I saw something like gleaming amber, something that looked like fire enclosed all around; and downward from what looked like the loins I saw something that looked like fire, and there was a splendour all around. 28 Like the bow in a cloud on a rainy day, such was the appearance of the splendour all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord (מראה דמות כבוד יהוה). When I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of someone speaking.'

Who is the enthroned figure in Ezek 1.26-28? At the beginning of his account Ezekiel says that he has seen 'visions of God' (1.1). At the end he says that he has seen 'the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Yahweh' (1.28). The directness of the first statement is qualified by the tentativeness of the second. But the clear impression is given that the human form on the throne is a manifestation of God himself.<sup>21</sup> The development and content of the vision underlines this. The immediate experience is of the living creatures and of the wheels (1.4-21). But then Ezekiel's attention is directed to ascending levels above the living creatures (1.22-28).

On the first level is 'something like a dome', on the second level is 'something like a throne', on the third level is 'something like the form of a man'. The fact that (a) there is no higher level, (b) the figure sits on the likeness of a throne, and (c) there is a tentativeness in describing the enthroned figure anthropomorphically,<sup>22</sup> suggests that the enthroned figure which Ezekiel 'sees' is more than an angelic figure of the highest rank.<sup>23</sup> Ezekiel has

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<sup>21</sup>Fuhs, *Ezekiel*, 22.

<sup>22</sup>Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 1, 122, 'The restraint in the description can be seen in the succession of phrases denoting approximate similarity'.

<sup>23</sup>Dunn, *Partings*, 218, sees significance in the fact that the description of the enthroned figure in

'seen' a manifestation of God. But it can scarcely be the case that Ezekiel has seen God in the fullness of his transcendent being. Procksch, for example, argues that Ezekiel has not seen 'die Urgestalt der göttlichen Herrlichkeit, sondern nur die εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ'.<sup>24</sup>

That the manifestation of Yahweh should be perceived in human form is hardly surprising for two reasons. First, there are other occasions in the OT when Yahweh appears to human beings in human form. Abraham saw Yahweh in the form of a man (Gn 18.1-2). Isaiah saw Yahweh 'sitting on a throne, high and lofty' (Is 6.1) - a description indicative of an anthropomorphic figure. Secondly, if humanity is made in the image of God (Gn 1.26) then there is a certain logic to the manifestation of God taking human form.<sup>25</sup>

The importance of the *merkabah* vision for the Apc lies mainly in its influence on the theophany in Apc 4. Some influence from Ezek 1 is discernible in the christophany in Apc 1, but its minimal influence<sup>26</sup> is all the more striking when we consider the epiphany in Ezek 8.2 which gives the impression that the fiery man-like figure on the divine throne can leave the throne and appear before a human being as though an angel.

### §2.3.2 Ezekiel 8

In Ezek 8.1-4 the prophet experiences a vision in which a fiery figure appears who is almost exactly the same as the figure on the divine throne in Ezek 1.27.

'I looked, and there was a figure that looked like a human being; below what appeared to be its loins it was fire, and above the loins it was like the appearance of brightness, like gleaming amber' (Ezek 8.2).

Rowland is not the only scholar to have seen in the developments between Ezekiel and Daniel the hypostatization of the form of God,<sup>27</sup> but one of his particular contributions has

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Ezek 1.26 is very tentative. The descriptions of some glorious figures in apocalyptic literature show greater boldness because 'they were *not* descriptions of God himself'.

<sup>24</sup>Procksch, "Berufungsvision", 144.

<sup>25</sup>Procksch, "Berufungsvision", 148.

<sup>26</sup>Cf. discussion in §8.3.

<sup>27</sup>Cf. Procksch, "Berufungsvision", 149; Balz, *Methodische*, 94, 'Menschenwesen in Dan 7.13 als

been to draw out the significance of Ezek 8.2 for the background to the christophany in Apc 1. For this reason we consider Ezek 8.2 in a little detail. Rowland has argued that consideration of Ezek 1.26-28 and 8.2-4 permits the conclusion that,

‘What has happened is not so much the splitting up of divine functions among the various angelic figures but the separation of the form of God from the divine throne-chariot to act as quasi-angelic mediator’.<sup>28</sup>

According to Rowland this development lies behind both the ‘son of man’ figure in Dn 7.13 and the glorious ‘man’ in Dn 10.5-6. Of the latter Rowland makes the point that ‘here is the beginning of a hypostatic development similar to that connected with divine attributes like God’s word and wisdom’. Since Dn 10.5-6 figures prominently in the background to Apc 1.13-16, Rowland’s proposal suggests that the christology of the Apc is the culmination of the development we have just outlined.

Certainly there are a number of striking similarities to be found between Ezek 8.2 and 1.26-27. But there are also a number of interesting discrepancies which must be considered. We first cite Ezek 1.26-27 and 8.2 in Hebrew:

וממעל לרקיע אשר על־ראשם כמראה אבן־ספיר דמות כסא  
ועל דמות הכסא דמות כמראה אדם עליו מלמעלה:  
27 וארא כעין חשמל כמראה־אש בית־לה סביב ממראה מתניו  
(Ezek 1.26-27), ולמעלה וממראה מתניו ולמטה ראיתי כמראה־אש ונגה לו סביב:

ואראה והנה דמות כמראה־אש ממראה מתניו  
(Ezek 8.2). ולמטה אש וממתניו ולמעלה כמראה־זוהר כעין חשמלה:

The figure in 8.2 is ‘like the appearance of fire’ according to the MT (דמות כמראה־אש) but ‘like a man’ according to the LXX (ὁμοίωμα ἀνδρός). The apparatus to BHS suggests on the basis of the LXX reading that the MT should read דמות כמראה־איש. This suggestion is certainly plausible since the change from an original איש to אש is a subtle but satisfactory

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“Absplitterung” der göttlichen Herrlichkeitserscheinung in Zusammenhang mit der ezechielischen Tradition’.

<sup>28</sup>Rowland, *Heaven*, 97.

means of softening the anthropomorphism inherent in the description

דמות כמראה איש.<sup>29</sup>

But in this case there is a change from אדם (1.26) to איש (8.2) which is consistent with the two figures being distinct.

Both figures according to the MT are דמות כמראה but according to the LXX the first figure is ὁμοίωμα ὡς εἶδος ..... while the second figure is ὁμοίωμα ..... That is, the LXX maintains the MT's reserve in describing the human form on the heavenly throne, 'a likeness like the image of ....' (1.26), but appears to lessen the reserve in the case of the second figure, 'a likeness ....' (8.2). This could reflect the perception that there was a difference between the two figures.

In Ezek 1.27 the upper part of the figure is described before the lower part. In 8.2 this order is reversed. Moreover, there are slight differences in the descriptions of each part:

(i) The upper part: for the description of the second figure זתר replaces אש; the order of the first two comparisons is reversed; and the phrase בית-ילה סביב is omitted.

(ii) The lower part: the comparison כמראה-אש is simply reduced to the word אש; and the phrase ונגה לר סביב is omitted.

The apparent reserve in 8.3 when speaking of the hand of the figure would certainly be consistent with the fiery figure being an appearance of Yahweh. But it is noticeable that the word תבנית is used for 'the form' in 8.3, a word which is not found in Ezek 1.22-28.<sup>30</sup>

Consequently the description of the second figure corresponds to an abbreviated and slightly altered version of the first. It is not inconceivable therefore that the two figures are distinct, though the differences between the two descriptions scarcely require that we deny the two figures are one and the same.

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<sup>29</sup>Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, 216.

<sup>30</sup>This is not to deny that תבנית is equivalent to דמות, see further Barr, "Image", 15-17 p.158ff, Kim, *Origin*, 204-205.

Hurtado has responded to Rowland's proposal by suggesting that it is doubtful that 8.2-4 'can support the momentous development Rowland describes'. Hurtado notes that 8.2-4 does not reveal that the figure has separated from the throne of 1.26-28, nor does it describe an empty throne. Rather, the conclusion of the vision (8.4) implies an identical scene to that found in 1.26-28 and gives 'no indication of the sort of "separation" or "splitting" of God's *kabod* ("glory") from the throne such as Rowland alleges'. Further, it is not the case that Ezek 10.4, which Rowland notes as a text which speaks of the glory of Yahweh rising above the cherubim,<sup>31</sup> provides support for Rowland's case.<sup>32</sup>

Our examination of Ezek 8.2 given above lends support to Hurtado's critique of Rowland because we have seen that it is not necessary to conclude that the figure in 8.2 is the same as the figure in 1.27. That the figure in 8.2 is an angel has been plausibly argued for by Zimmerli. He recognises that the similarity in the descriptions in 1.27 and 8.2 appears to be a compelling reason to conclude that Yahweh is in view in 8.2, as a number of commentators have done.<sup>33</sup> He argues nevertheless that since

'Yahweh otherwise only encounters the prophet visibly in the form of the כבוד (cf. also the Priestly Code), the "man" here must refer to the figure of the heavenly messenger'.

The similarity in the appearances of the figures in 1.27 and 8.2 arises, according to Zimmerli, because 'a cliché-like description of a heavenly being is used in 1.27 for Yahweh and in 8.2 for a heavenly messenger'.<sup>34</sup>

In favour of this proposal is the following observation. In Ezek 43.4-5 the 'spirit' and the *kabod* are quite distinct:

'As the glory of Yahweh entered the temple by the gate facing east, the spirit (רוח) lifted me up, and brought me into the inner court; and the glory of Yahweh filled the temple'.

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<sup>31</sup>Rowland, *Heaven*, 96, 280.

<sup>32</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 87.

<sup>33</sup>Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 1, 236, notes Cooke, Herrmann and Fohrer.

<sup>34</sup>Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 1, 236. Cf. Fuhs, *Ezekiel*, 49.

The *kabod* (so to speak) does one thing, the spirit another. They are, in this passage, distinct beings.<sup>35</sup> In 8.3 the fiery figure appears to be identified as 'the spirit (רוח)'. In 8.3-4 we observe that (a) the spirit performs the same action as in 43.4-5, that is lifting up the seer, and (b) the *kabod* is seen *as a result of the spirit's action* (8.4), that is, as apparently distinct from the agent. This suggests that, as in 43.4-5, the *kabod* and the spirit are to be distinguished in 8.3-4. In turn, this means that if the spirit is the fiery figure then the fiery figure is not to be identified with the *kabod*: the figures in 1.27 and 8.2 are likely therefore to be distinct.

Even if the figures are not distinct it does not follow that Rowland's proposal carries the day. If the figures in 8.2 and 1.27 are the same then the figure in 8.2 could be understood as a full manifestation of Yahweh himself rather than a bifurcated manifestation as Rowland envisages. Such an event in general terms would not be without precedent since Yahweh appeared as a 'man' to Abraham in Gn 18.1-2. On other occasions, as we have been reminded above, the angel of Yahweh has appeared to humans in a manner which makes him indistinguishable from Yahweh.<sup>36</sup> The apparent softening of אִישׁ to אַשׁ in the MT would then be 'eloquent testimony' to a later Jewish reponse to the anthropomorphic theophany in Ezek 8.2.<sup>37</sup>

In short: the figure in Ezek 8.2 is difficult to understand. Careful consideration of this figure does not require the conclusion that it represents the beginnings of a significant development whereby the divine *kabod* begins to function separately from the throne of God as a 'quasi-angelic mediator'. We suggest that there is reason to think that the fiery figure in 8.2 is distinct from the *kabod*.

### 2.3.3 Ezekiel 9-10

The next epiphany which we consider in Ezekiel is not controversial. In Ezek 9.2 seven

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<sup>35</sup>Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 2, 414.

<sup>36</sup>Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 90; cf. Black, "Throne-Theophany", 59; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 1, 236; Rowland, *Heaven*, 97, is unsure whether Ezek 8.2 can be connected with the angel of Yahweh who speaks and acts as though he were God himself.

<sup>37</sup>Black, "Throne-Theophany", 59 n.6.

'men' are featured, of whom one, a scribe, is clearly the leader. The consensus among commentators is that the scribe in Ezek 9.2 is an angel.<sup>38</sup> Here is the first occasion in biblical material that we have a reference to a leading group of angels (as all the men are to be understood) which numbers seven.

'And six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his weapon for slaughter in his hand; among them was a man clothed in linen, with a writing case at his side. They went in and stood beside his bronze altar' (Ezek 9.2).

In Ezek 10 we have a further occurrence of the *merkabah* vision in which the 'scribe' interacts with the living creatures (10.6-8). This suggests that there is no reason to think of this man as anything other than a principal angel, probably the chief angel. We shall demonstrate later that this man may lie in the background to the glorious 'man' in Dn 10.5-6, and possibly directly in the background to the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16.

#### §2.3.4 Ezekiel 40 and 43

The introduction to the vision of the temple in Ezek 40.1-2 is followed by an encounter with

'a man ... whose appearance shone like bronze (והנה איש מראהו כמראה נחשת)' (40.3).

This man can scarcely be confused with Yahweh since (a) his description as a 'man' lacks the tentativeness which is a feature of Ezek 1.26-28, and (b) the comparison with 'bronze' is not found in Ezek 1.26-28.<sup>39</sup> Thus this figure is an example of an angel with a glorious appearance.<sup>40</sup> The description of this figure is important because it appears (as we shall see shortly) to have contributed to the description of the glorious 'man' in Dn 10.5-6.

Finally we note Ezek 43.1-4 where the seer has a further *merkabah* vision, one which is of interest to us because it appears to be the source for John's description of the glorious

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<sup>38</sup>Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 104; Bousset, *Religion*, 368; Black, "Throne-Theophany", 59; Rowland, *Heaven*, 96.

<sup>39</sup>Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2*, 348; cf. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 430, 'he does not possess the splendour of the divine Being'.

<sup>40</sup>Against Kim, *Origin*, 206.



angel in Apc 18.1-2.

### §2.3.5 Conclusion

Examination of epiphanies in Ezekiel raises a number of issues and points of interest. In particular we have argued that the fiery figure in Ezek 1.26 is to be distinguished from the fiery figure in Ezek 8.2 which raises doubts about the validity of Rowland's proposal concerning the background to the christophany in Apc 1.13-16. We have also argued that the 'man' in Ezek 40.3 is an angel and not a manifestation of God.

## §2.4 DANIEL

The Book of Daniel, composed between 168 and 165 BCE,<sup>41</sup> at the height of the crisis for Jewish religion posed by Antiochus Epiphanes, is of immense significance for angelology in general and for the angelology and the christology of the Apc in particular.<sup>42</sup> It introduces the first named angels in the OT, Gabriel (8.16, 9.21), and Michael (10.13, 21, 12.1). It initiates the idea in the canonical scriptures that Michael is the angel who guards or protects Israel (10.21, 12.1), and that angelic princes preside over other nations (10.13, 20). It presents an account of the appearance of an angelic figure in more detail than is found in any other OT book (10.5-6).

### §2.4.1 Daniel 7.9

The *merkabah* vision in Dn 7.9 is of special significance because of its links with part of the description of the risen Jesus in Apc 1.14.

'As I watched, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days (עתיק יומין) took his throne, his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire. (10) A stream of fire issued and flowed out from his presence. A thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgement, and

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<sup>41</sup>So most modern commentators.

<sup>42</sup>On the influence of Daniel on the Apc see Beale, *Daniel* (1984).

the books were opened' (Dn 7.9-10).

This vision contains three important angelological features. First, it incorporates a number of images (such as *snow*, *hair*, *wool*, and *fire*) which are taken up in theophanies (e.g. 1 *En*. 14.20, 46.1) and epiphanies of angels and angelomorphic figures (e.g. 1 *En* 106, *Jos. Asen.* 14.8, 22.7, *Apc. Abr.* 11.1-3, and *Apc* 1.14). Secondly, the throne is set in an angelic environment: a multitude of angels serve and attend the Ancient of Days. Thirdly, it sets the scene for the arrival of the Danielic son of man in 7.13.

The Ancient of Days (עתיק יומין) appears not only in resplendent form, but on a throne (Dn 7.9), with a stream of fire flowing out of his presence and with myriads of beings standing in attendance to him (7.10). In Dn 7.13 (according to MT and Th.) the 'one like a son of man' comes to the Ancient of Days and is presented before him. In Dn 7.13 LXX the 'one like a son of man' comes as the Ancient of Days, and those present come to him. The final reference to the Ancient of Days occurs in Dn 7.22. When 'the horn' made war on the holy ones he prevailed over them (7.21), 'until the Ancient of Days came; then judgement was given for the holy ones of the Most High' (7.22).

What might John have believed about the identity of the Ancient of Days? It is noticeable that in *Apc* 4 (i.e. the theophany of the *Apc*), there is nothing about the vision of God which draws on Dn 7.9.<sup>43</sup> This could be due to John believing that the Ancient of Days was not God. Alternatively, it is possible that John had a subtle understanding of the Ancient of Days which identified him with both God and an angel. Yarbrow Collins, for example, proposes that the Ancient of Days was 'a distinguishable manifestation of God as a high angel'.<sup>44</sup>

Certainly the Ancient of Days was understood by some interpreters in the first centuries CE to be an angel. For example, in the *Hekhalot* text, the *Visions of Ezekiel*, the Ancient of Days appears to be identified with the Heavenly Prince of the Third Heaven.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Cf. discussion below §7.4.

<sup>44</sup>Yarbrow Collins, "Tradition", 557.

<sup>45</sup>Cf. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 140. Kraft, 45, notes that in the middle ages the AD was a type of Christ.

But we must ask if it is likely that an interpreter of Dn 7.9 such as John, who (a) shows familiarity with *merkabah* traditions (cf. *Apc* 4), and (b) depicts only the *divine* throne as one which is surrounded by attendants (*Apc* 4-5), would have understood the Ancient of Days to be an angel?

The answer would appear to be that it was unlikely. The Ancient of Days appears to be God.<sup>46</sup> Emerton has argued, for example, that whatever may be the mythical background of Dn 7.9-13, from Maccabean times - that is, when monotheistic doctrine was a touchstone of Jewish identity - we may presume that the Ancient of Days was understood to be God.<sup>47</sup> The reference to the coming of the Ancient of Days for judgement, for example, recalls texts which speak of the coming of God for judgement (cf. *Zech* 14.5; *Ps* 96.13; *Joel* 3.12). Further, the title 'Ancient of Days' is redolent with symbolism which may be properly associated with God such as longevity, pre-existence, and wisdom.

It could be argued that the appearance of the Ancient of Days with details given about his clothing and the hair of his head appears to be contrary to the OT precept that no one may see God and live (cf. *Ex* 33.20; *Jdgs* 13.22). Such a vision is, however, in line with accounts in *1 Kgs* 22.19 ('I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven standing beside him ...') and *Is* 6.1 ('I saw Yahweh sitting on a throne ...'). Accordingly John, who demonstrates some familiarity with the idea of God seated on a throne amidst his heavenly council in *Apc* 5,<sup>48</sup> would probably have understood the Ancient of Days to be an appearance of God.

Another possibility is that the conjunction of both 'the Ancient of Days' and 'the Most High' (עליונין; cf. (τοῦ) ὑψίστου, (LXX) Th.) in Dn 7.22 could have led John to presume that two different beings were implied. That is, on the premise that there was one God only, the Ancient of Days could have been differentiated from the Most High.<sup>49</sup> But John could have readily understood the two different titles in the one verse to form a parallel so that only one being was meant. That is, the Ancient of Days and the Most High were understood to be one and the same God. We know that John was a committed monotheist

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<sup>46</sup>Cf. Casey, *Son*, 23.

<sup>47</sup>Emerton, "Son", 239. Cf. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 165.

<sup>48</sup>Müller, H-P, "Ratsversammlung", 257-260.

<sup>49</sup>Caragounis, *Son*, 75, distinguishes between the Ancient of Days and the Most High in Dn 7.22; although in his view the Ancient of Days is God while the Most High is the Danielic son of man!

(cf. 19.10, 22.3-4,9) so he could hardly have been averse to understanding Dn 7.22 in this way.

There is, in fact, evidence that in some broadly contemporary Jewish circles Dn 7.9 was understood to portray God and not his angel. Thus a tradition ascribed to R. Akiba (c. 110-132 CE) interprets the thrones in Dn 7.9 as

'One (throne) for Him, and one for David' (b. Hagigah 14a).<sup>50</sup>

The first throne is that of the Ancient of Days, who is clearly understood to be God, while the second is for the Davidic messiah who is identified with 'one like a son of man' (Dn 7.13).<sup>51</sup>

Finally, our reference above to a *Hekhalot* text in favour of the Ancient of Days as an angel may be set alongside another text, *Sepher ha-Razim*, in which the statement 'He is the Ancient of Days' unequivocally refers to God.<sup>52</sup>

In short: we suggest that John most likely recognised that the Ancient of Days was God appearing in human form with white hair and clothing.

#### §2.4.2 Daniel 7.13

Our next figure of interest in Daniel is the enigmatic and mysterious כִּבְרֵ אֱנוֹשׁ in 7.13 who appears to lie behind the 'one like a son of man' in Apc 1.13 and 14.14.

'As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a son of man (כִּבְרֵ אֱנוֹשׁ) coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him' (Dn 7.13).

Two important and interrelated questions arise from this verse. First, what kind of figure is 'one like a son of man'? Secondly, what is the identity of the figure?

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<sup>50</sup>B. Sanhedrin 38a; 98a.

<sup>51</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 47-48.

<sup>52</sup>Morgan, *Sepher*, 84.

The description 'like a son of man' suggests a figure who is not actually human and therefore likely to be angelic.<sup>53</sup> Collins, for example, argues that the figure is angelic and identifies him as the archangel Michael.<sup>54</sup> Others have argued that the figure is the angel Gabriel.<sup>55</sup>

The accompaniment of the figure by 'clouds' suggests that the figure has divine status since clouds are invariably associated with theophanies in the OT (i.e. apart from references to clouds as natural phenomena). Emerton points out that 'if Dan 7.13 does not refer to a divine being then it is the only exception out of about seventy passages [i.e. featuring 'cloud(s)'] in the OT'.<sup>56</sup> Feuillet argues that Dn 7 has been influenced by Ezek 1 so that the son of man figure in Dn 7.13

'appartient nettement à la catégorie du divin et est comme une sorte d'incarnation de la gloire divine au même titre que la silhouette humaine contemplée par Ézékiel (1,26)'.<sup>57</sup>

But the correspondence between the son of man in 7.13 and the 'people of the holy ones of the Most High' in 7.27 has led others to propose that the son of man is a symbolic figure who represents Israel. Casey, for example, argues that the figure is 'pure symbol representing the saints of Israel'.<sup>58</sup> Black, who interprets the son of man figure in Dn 7.13

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<sup>53</sup>Contrast with the description of the human Abel in angelophanic terms as 'like unto a son of God' (*Test. Abr. Rec. A.* 12.5).

<sup>54</sup>Collins, *Vision*, 144; Day, *Conflict*, 172-177, who also argues that Michael originates in the god Baal. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 172, points out that the lack of identity of the figure is important, 'a facet which interpretation has to preserve', and notes that if Michael is envisaged in Dn 7.13 then it is odd that he does not appear at 7.18,22,27.

<sup>55</sup>E.g. Zevit, "Implications", 90; Fossum, *Name*, 279 n.61; Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 551. Cf. Scherman and Zlotowitz, *Daniel*, 206.

<sup>56</sup>Emerton, "Origin", 232. Cf. Feuillet, "Le fils", 187, 321; Procksch, "Berufungsvision", 148-49. Müller, *Messias*, 27, suggests the clouds merely indicate the heavenly location of the scene. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 171, astutely points out that 'with any of these approaches, since the one advanced in years stands for God, it is difficult to attribute the same significance to this second figure'.

<sup>57</sup>Feuillet, "Fils", 188-189. Cf. Balz, *Probleme*, 80-94; Delcor, "Sources", 311 Müller, *Messias*, 34f disputes the thesis that the Danielic son of man originates in Ezek 1.26 or Ezek 9.2.

<sup>58</sup>Casey, *Son*, 39. Cf. Driver, *Daniel*, 88, 'the ideal and glorified people of Israel'; Völter,

in corporate terms, suggests he was understood by Daniel as 'nothing less than the *apotheosis* of Israel in the End-Time'.<sup>59</sup>

The apparent link between the Danielic son of man and Israel has led some to ponder the messianic associations of the figure.<sup>60</sup>

The origin of the Danielic son of man is a matter of continuing discussion. We have already mentioned Feuillet's suggestion, for example, that the figure originates in the fiery man-like figure on the throne in Ezek 1.26-28. But it has been pointed out that this passage does not give a reason for there being *two* figures in Dn 7.13.<sup>61</sup> This problem is resolved if we presume the underlying influence of the Canaanite myth of El and Baal for which parallels with Dn 7.9-13 can be adduced.<sup>62</sup> But such a presumption faces the difficulty of plausibly explaining why a (by that time) ancient myth should influence the Book of Daniel which is strict in its adherence to monotheism.<sup>63</sup> Other hypotheses about the origin have been proposed but we cannot discuss these here.<sup>64</sup>

Even if the origin of the son of man figure lies in a ditheistic myth or in the *merkabah* vision (or both) it does not follow that either the author of Daniel or his subsequent readers understood the son of man figure to be a divine figure. Why would Daniel recount a vision in which two apparently divine figures appear? If the author of Daniel had any inkling of the ditheistic connotations of his account it could be argued that he either would have refrained from including it or would have clarified the status of the son of man figure. When other phrases comparable to *כבר אנוש* (7.13) are applied to angelic figures in Daniel (e.g. *לבר-אלהין* 3.25; *כמראה גבר*, 8.15; *כדמות בני אדם*, 10.16; *כמראה אדם*, 10.18) it

"Menschensohn", 173-174: a celestial being who represents Israel.

<sup>59</sup>Black, "Throne-Theophany", 62.

<sup>60</sup>Horbury, "Messianic" (1985); Rowe, "Is" (1982).

<sup>61</sup>E.g. Rowland, *Heaven*, 97.

<sup>62</sup>E.g. Emerton, "Son", 225-242; Day, *Conflict*, 160-167. For criticism of this view see Müller, *Messias*, 35f; Ferch, "Daniel 7" (1980); Kim, *Origin*, 208. Colpe, "ἄνθρωπος", 415-419, critically reviews arguments for and against, with the conclusion that the Canaanite hypothesis provides 'the closest parallel'.

<sup>63</sup>Cf. Kim, *Origin*, 208 n.6; Rowland, *Heaven*, 96-97. Day, *Conflict*, 165-166 offers a convincing explanation to overcome this difficulty.

<sup>64</sup>See, for example, discussion in Day, *Conflict*, 157-160, and literature cited there.

seems reasonable to consider that in fact an angelic figure is in view.<sup>65</sup>

Our discussion so far has brought out something of the deeply controversial nature of the debate over the meaning of 'one like a son of man' in Dn 7.13. We cannot attempt to resolve this debate here, but we offer the following points about how John may have understood Dn 7.13.

First, the fact that John includes 'cloud' in an angelophany (Apc 10.1) and envisages a 'cloud' as a vehicle of transport for the two (non-divine) witnesses (11.12), suggests that he would not necessarily have interpreted the son of man figure in Dn 7.13 as a divine being because of his coming with the clouds. Moreover, John's commitment to monotheism (illustrated in e.g. Apc 19.10, 22.1,3,9) suggests that he would not have thought that two divine figures were originally envisaged in Dn 7.13. Secondly, the application of the descriptive phrase ὁμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Apc 1.13 and 14.14 to a single figure (a) without corporate overtones, and (b) with angelic characteristics,<sup>66</sup> suggests that John would have understood the son of man figure in Dn 7.13 to have been an angel.

### §2.4.3 Daniel 10

Other important angelic figures are 'seen' or 'heard' in Dn 7-12. The one of most interest to us is described as follows:

'I looked up and saw a man clothed in linen, with a belt of gold from Uphaz around his waist. 6 His body was like beryl, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his voice like the roar of a multitude' (Dn 10.5-6).

One of the important questions concerning the figure in Dn 10.5-6 is whether or not this figure is an angel. It is conceivable, for example, that such a glorious figure, who strikes fear and awe into Daniel (10.8), and who appears to be superior to Michael (e.g. 10.13) could be an appearance of God.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>65</sup>Cf. Day, *Conflict*, 167-169; Collins, *Apocalyptic*, 84.

<sup>66</sup>See argument in §8 and §9.

<sup>67</sup>Cf. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 291.

But in 10.11 we read the statement 'for I have now been sent to you' (כי עתה שלחתי אליך). This statement would seem to indicate that the figure who says it is separate from God, who is presumably the sender.<sup>68</sup> In 10.10 Daniel describes how 'a hand touched me'. The fact that the hand is not 'his hand' raises the question whether a different figure from the one in Dn 10.5-6 touches Daniel and thus is the 'sent one'.

Nevertheless it seems reasonable to conclude that one figure is present to Daniel through 10.5-15 (noting that the figure in 10.10 is unquestionably present through to 10.15 at least). The speech in 10.11 includes the instruction to 'pay attention to the words I am going to speak to you'. It makes very good sense to think of this instruction as issuing not from a second figure but from the same figure whose words have already impressed themselves upon Daniel as 'like the roar of a multitude' (10.6), and at the sound of whose words Daniel falls into a trance (10.9). It would seem appropriate therefore to understand the remarks about sending and coming as applying to one and the same figure in Dn 10.5-6 and 10.10-15. Similar arguments may be brought forward in favour of the conclusion that just one figure is present to Daniel through 10.5-21.<sup>69</sup> It is not necessary to present them here since for our purposes it suffices to show that the one figure is present in 10.5-15.

Consequently the figure in Dn 10.5-6 is not an appearance of God but one who has been sent by God. Since the figure is described as 'a man', which is often an alternative term for an 'angel',<sup>70</sup> we conclude that the glorious figure in Dn 10.5-6 is an angel.

Breaking down the description of the figure in Dn 10.5-6 into its constituent parts leads us into consideration of the literary background to this description. Where applicable, words and phrases which are used in descriptions of heavenly creatures elsewhere in the OT and are reminiscent of the given phrase from Dn 10.5-6 are recorded alongside.

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<sup>68</sup>Montgomery, *Daniel*, 420, who makes the point that despite 'the dependence upon Ezek 1 he cannot be the Deity, for he was "sent".'

<sup>69</sup>Goldingay, *Daniel*, 291, explains that 'It is not clear how many supernatural beings are involved in the scene [i.e. Dn 10]' and notes that, e.g., in '12.5-6 there are two others apart from the man in linen, and so it may also be here'. But nothing he says refutes what we have said. Supporters of the argument for one figure in Dn 10 include Halperin, *Faces*, 76; Charles, *Daniel*, 257, 260.

<sup>70</sup>Cf. Barr, "Theophany", 37.



man: והנה איש אחד לבוש בדים  
(Ezek 9.2, ואיש אחד בתוכם לבוש בדים).

waist: ומתניו חגרים בכתם אופז<sup>71</sup>  
(Jer 10.9, וזהב מאופז; Ezek 1.27; 8.2; Ezek 9.2, וקסת הספר במתניו).

body: וגויתו כתרשיש  
(Ezek 1.16; cf. Ezek 10.9, 28.13,20; Song 5.14), ומעשיהם כעין תרשיש

face: ופניו כמראה ברק  
(Ezek 1.13; cf. Nah 2.5, 3.3; Hab 3.11), ומן האש יוצא ברק; Ezek 1.14;<sup>72</sup> cf. Nah 2.5, 3.3; Hab 3.11).

eyes: ועיניו כלפידי אש  
(Ezek 1.13; Nah 2.5), כנחלי אש בערות כמראה הלפדים

arms and legs: וזרעתי ומרגלתי כעין נחשת קלל  
(Ezek 1.7, וכף רגליהם ככף רגל עגל ונצצים כעין נחשת קלל),  
Ezek 40.3; cf. 9.2), והנה איש מראהו כמראה נחשת

words: וקול דבריו כקול המון  
(Is 13.4, cf. Ezek 1.24; 10.5; 43.2), קול המון

The language used of the epiphany in Dn 10.5-6 thus shows affinity with a number of passages found in the OT. Of particular interest, in view of our discussion above about the possible significance of Ezek 1.26-28 and 8.2 for the development of angelology, are the links between Dn 10.5-6 and Ezekiel:

(i) the throne-vision in Ezek 1 including the descriptions of the phenomena surrounding the throne,

(ii) the man clothed in linen (9.2), and

<sup>71</sup>Some MSS. read אופז.

<sup>72</sup>BHS Apparatus, following Targum.

(iii) the man whose appearance shone like bronze (40.3).

Some of the language used in Dn 10.5-6 draws on language other than that found in Ezekiel. The reference to 'gold from Uphaz' alludes to Jer 10.9 where the reference is to the gold used in the manufacture of idols. The description of the sound of the figure's words as 'like the roar of a multitude' (כקול המון) alludes to Is 13.4, where the reference is to the sound made as Yahweh of Hosts musters an army for battle. This is notable since, if Daniel had Ezek 1 in mind then he refrained from drawing on any of the three comparisons provided there in connection with the sound of the wings of the living creatures: מים רבים כקול, כקול-שדי, כקול מחנה (Ezek 1.24).<sup>73</sup>

Although there seems to be a wide range of influence on the development of the description of the Danielic figure, two parts of this influence are outstanding.

First, the opening phrase in Dn 10.5, והנה איש-אחד לבוש בדים, so clearly recalls the heavenly scribe in Ezek 9.2 (ואיש-אחד בתוכם לבוש בדים) that it is worth considering the possibility that Daniel believes he is seeing a reappearance of this creature.

Secondly, the number of allusions to the living creatures, and to the phenomena closely connected to them, such as the wheels of the throne-chariot, suggests that in Daniel's mind the descriptions of the heavenly scribe and the living creatures have become merged. It is intriguing therefore to observe that (a) in Ezek 10 we find both the man clothed in linen and one of the living creatures featuring together in another vision: at one point the two figures actually make contact (10.7), and (b) the living creatures are themselves said to have human form: ומתוכה מעין דמות אדם להנה (1.5).

Thus in Daniel 10 the vision of the heavenly scribe appears to have been developed through the incorporation of imagery from the living creatures and associated phenomena around the divine throne. The result is a figure of extraordinary majesty and status but with no implication that the figure is anything other than an angel.

This explanation of the origin of the glorious 'man' is at variance with those offered by, for

<sup>73</sup>Montgomery, *Daniel*, 409, sees the Danielic simile as a summary of the three given in Ezek 1.24.

example, Rowland and Halperin.

Rowland emphasises the connection between the glorious 'man' and the human figure seen by Ezekiel on the divine throne. Thus,

the word מתניו is found in Ezek. i.27 in the prophet's description of the human figure, and the more explicit references to the different parts of the angel's body in Dan. x.6 look like a development of the more reserved outlook of Ezek. i.27'.<sup>74</sup>

This statement is open to at least two criticisms. First, the word מתניו which is found in Ezek 1.27 is *also found in Ezek 9.2*. Clearly this connection with Ezek 1.27 is ambiguous. Given the strong evocation of the figure in Ezek 9.2 through the description of the clothing of 'the man' in Dn 10.5 we must question whether there is any need to suggest a link with Ezek 1.27. If the fiery figure is in the background to the glorious 'man' then it is strange that there is only *one* word which is common to Ezek 1.26-27 and Dn 10.5-6.

Secondly, to argue that 'the different parts of the angel's body in Dan 10.6 look like a development of the more reserved outlook of Ezek 1.27' is to overlook the point that the different parts of the angel's body are satisfactorily explained, as we have done above, as a development of the portrayal of the man clothed in linen in Ezek 9.2.<sup>75</sup>

Halperin argues that Dn 10 is a new 'seeing' of Ezekiel's throne-theophany. He puts forward the view that the alternative description of the 'man' in Dn 10.16 (i.e., כדמות בני אדם) 'seems to correspond to the human-like being who appears at the climax of the *merkabah* vision (Ezek 1.26-28; cf. דמות כמראה אדם, 1.26)'.<sup>76</sup> The 'monstrosity' in Dn 10.5-6 corresponds to the 'terrifying multiplicity' which overwhelmed Ezekiel in the first part of Ezek 1. By contrast, the 'less intimidating form' in Dn 10.16-19 corresponds to the form which spoke to Ezekiel in a manner which 'the prophet's humanity could deal with' (i.e. in Ezek 1.26-3.27).<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Rowland, "Vision", 3.

<sup>75</sup>In other words, we agree with Rowland inasmuch as we believe that there was some intentionality in John's use of Ezek 1; cf. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 291.

<sup>76</sup>Halperin, *Faces*, 76.

<sup>77</sup>Halperin, *Faces*, 76, does not actually specify which part of the first chapters of Ezekiel he has

Halperin rightly recognises the influence of Ezek 1.4-25 on Dn 10.5-6 but wrongly matches the figure in Dn 10.16 with the one in Ezek 1.26. The latter is seated on the throne and is a manifestation of God, whereas the former is (a) not directly related to the throne in any way, and (b) appears to be some kind of colleague of Michael (10.13,21). In short, one is a manifestation of God and the other is not.

The movement from 'terror' to 'comfort' in Dn 10 may be analogous to that in Ezek 1, but this is scarcely sufficient grounds for understanding Dn 10 as a re-expression of the throne-theophany.<sup>78</sup>

We stand, therefore, by our proposal that the origin of Dn 10.5-6 ultimately lies in Ezek 9.2 rather than in Ezek 1.26.

Finally, we briefly consider the question of the identity of the figure in Dn 10.5-6. If we assume that only one figure is present in Dn 10 then we may presume that John understood that this angel was *not* Michael (cf. 10.13,21). The other great named angel in Daniel is Gabriel (Dn 8.16, 9.21). There is certainly some similarity between the role of the angel in 10.12 and that of Gabriel in 9.20-23,<sup>79</sup> and the traditional identification of the angel in Dn 10 has in fact been Gabriel.<sup>80</sup>

Nevertheless the angel is not named, and there are other possible identifications which could be made: for example, as the figure *who speaks to Gabriel* in 8.16.<sup>81</sup>

As originally composed therefore the vision of the glorious 'man' in Dn 10.5-6 was the vision of an angel. Both the form of the figure with its evocation of intimate proximity to the divine throne and the rank of the figure, as the equal if not the superior of 'prince' Michael, suggest

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in mind.

<sup>78</sup>Halperin sees Dn 10 as a renewing of the throne-theophany but neglects to discuss this possibility in connection with Apc 1.13-16 (cf. *Faces*, 87-96).

<sup>79</sup>Goldingay, *Daniel*, 291; Collins, *Apocalyptic*, 134.

<sup>80</sup>Cf. Montgomery, *Daniel*, 420; Bousset, *Religion*, 377. Charles, *Daniel*, 257-258, argues vigorously that the angel is not Gabriel.

<sup>81</sup>Bampfylde, "Prince", 129-130.

that this angel is the highest angel in the heavenly hierarchy.<sup>82</sup>

## §2.5 DANIEL 7.13 LXX

A notable feature of the christophany in Apc 1.13-16 is that imagery is drawn from Dn 7.9,13 and 10.5-6. An important explanation which has been proposed for this combination is that it reflects the influence of the LXX version of Dn 7.13.<sup>83</sup> But Dn 7.13 LXX raises a number of questions so we devote a whole section to considering them.

Whereas in the MT and Theodotion, 'one like a son of man' comes *unto* the Ancient of Days, in the LXX 'one like a son of man' is said to come *as or like* the Ancient of Days. The relevant passages in full are as follows:

Dn 7.13 (MT), *BHS* (1967/77), Aramaic:

חזה הוית בחזוי ליליא  
וארו עמדענני שמיא כבר אנש אחז הוה  
ועדעתיק יומיא משה וקדמוהי הקרבוהי:

Dn 7.13 according to Theodotion:

ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὄράματι τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἶδον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ  
ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενος καὶ ἕως τοῦ παλαιοῦ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἔφθασε  
καὶ προσήχθη αὐτῷ.<sup>84</sup>

Dn 7.13 according to Ziegler (1954):

ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὄράματι τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἶδον ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ  
ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἦρχετο καὶ ἕως τοῦ παλαιοῦ ἡμερῶν παρῆν καὶ οἱ  
παρεστηκότες προσήγαγον αὐτόν.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup>Charles, *Daniel*, 257, 'not only a supernatural being, but one holding a preeminent dignity amongst such beings'. Bousset, *Religion*, 328, argues that the figure is Gabriel and that originally he was the highest angel though subsequently superseded by Michael.

<sup>83</sup>Rowland, "Vision", 2.

<sup>84</sup>Ziegler, *Susanna*, 169-170.

(Note: this is Ziegler's reconstruction of MS. 88 [see below] on the basis of ancient witnesses such as Tertullian, Cyprian, and Consultationes and with the presumption that ὡς is a corruption of ἕως.<sup>86</sup> Ziegler did not know of the existence of Pap. 967 reading for Dn 7.13).<sup>87</sup>

Dn 7.13 according to Codex Chisiasmus (MS. 88; Chigi MS; 9th/11th century CE; Origen's Hexapla) and the Syro-Hexaplar (=Syh; early 7th century CE):

ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὄραματι τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ  
ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἦρχετο καὶ ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν παρῆν καὶ οἱ  
παρεστηκότες παρῆσαν αὐτῷ.<sup>88</sup>

Dn 7.13 according to Kölner Teil des Papyrus 967 (2nd/early third century CE):<sup>89</sup>

ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὄραματι τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ  
ἦρχετο ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου καὶ ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶ(ν) παρῆν καὶ οἱ  
παρεστηκότες προσῆγαγον αὐτῷ.<sup>90</sup>

Our concern here is not with the variants in the translation of  $\text{עַל}$  (cf. *μετὰ/ἐπὶ*) but with the difference between  $\text{עַל/ἕως}$  (MT/Th./Ziegler respectively) and ὡς (MS 88/Syh/P. 967). Whereas the former means that the 'one like a son of man' came unto 'the Ancient of Days' with the corollary that the two are distinct figures, the latter means that 'one like a son of man' came as or like 'the Ancient of Days' with the corollary that the two figures might be identified with each other. (Note: in the rest of this section 'LXX' with reference to Dn 7.13 will mean the textual tradition reflected in MS. 88/Syh and Pap. 967. References to the reconstructed

<sup>85</sup>Ziegler, *Susanna*, 169-170.

<sup>86</sup>Ziegler, *Susanna*, 169-170

<sup>87</sup>Cf. Lust, "Daniel 7.13", 62. Pap. 967 according to Kenyon, *Chester*, 27, has a lacuna from 7.11-7.14.

<sup>88</sup>Conveniently found in Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*, ii, 914. This reading can also be reconstructed from Ziegler, *Susanna*, 169-170.

<sup>89</sup>This date according to Geissen, *Septuaginta-Text*, 18.

<sup>90</sup>Geissen, *Septuaginta-Text*, 108. Lust, "Daniel 7.13", 63, argues that this is the original LXX reading.

text of Ziegler will always use his name.)

We may think of the influence of Dn 7.13 LXX on the christophany in Apc 1 taking place by one of at least two possible means.

First, Dn 7.13 LXX may have contributed to an apocalyptic tradition in which elements from Dn 7.9 were combined with elements from Dn 7.13 and 10.5-6. Subsequently this tradition influenced the mind of John. Thus Rowland, for example, reflecting on *Jos. Asen.* 14.8-9, *Apc. Abr.* 11.1-3, and Apc 1.13-16, all of which include a description of the hair of a glorious figure in terms of Dn 7.9, suggests that they

‘all reflect an exegetical tradition which (a) knew of the identification of the man-like figure with the Ancient of Days implied by the LXX variant, (b) identified the human figure of 7.13 as an angelic being, and (c) as a result linked [Dn 7.13] with the parallel angelophany in Dn 10.5f.’<sup>91</sup>

Secondly, John may have been influenced directly by Dn 7.13 LXX, in similar fashion to the exegetical tradition outlined above and with a similar conclusion.

An obvious problem with both of these explanations is that the LXX variant may not have occurred early enough to have been known by either John or his antecedents. Although the dating of Pap. 967 to the second century CE allows that the variant ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶ(ν) stems from a period earlier than the composition of the Apc<sup>92</sup> there are nevertheless reasons for exercising due caution in this matter.

First, cogent arguments have been made in favour of the explanation that the change from ἕως to ὡς is due to a transcriptional error.<sup>93</sup> It is conceivable therefore that the error

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<sup>91</sup>Rowland, "Man", 107. Cf. Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 551-552.

<sup>92</sup>Montgomery, *Daniel*, 304; Lust, "Daniel 7.13", 66-69.

<sup>93</sup>See Montgomery, *Daniel*, 304; Ziegler, *Susanna*, 170, with refutation in Bruce "Greek", 25-26. Recently, Pace Jeansonne, *Greek*, 96-99, has supported Ziegler against Bruce. Note, however, Rowland, "Man", 109 n.11, who argues that θαλάσσης, found in some MSS of the LXX for Dn 10.6, may be a 'theologically motivated change' rather than a textual corruption, and points out that it is found in Pap. 967.

occurred no earlier than Pap. 967 itself, that is, no earlier than the second century CE. Even if a two stage error is supposed,<sup>94</sup> it is conceivable that the first stage did not occur before the composition of the *Apc.*

Secondly, the possibility has been raised that far from contributing to texts such as *Apc* 1.14, *Dn* 7.13 LXX may reflect their influence.<sup>95</sup> Alternatively, *Dn* 7.13 LXX may have arisen in a Christian milieu, one in which an identity between 'one like a son of man' and the Ancient of Days was commonly supposed.<sup>96</sup>

Thirdly, the evidence for the significance of *Dn* 7.13 LXX being drawn out in Jewish or Christian texts which reflect on *Dn* 7 is scarce.<sup>97</sup> Although contemporary texts such as *Apc. Abr.* and *Jos. Asen.* suggest the influence of the LXX variant<sup>98</sup> it is noteworthy that 1 *En.* 46, which is strongly influenced by *Dn* 7, betrays no sign of the influence of *Dn* 7.13 LXX.<sup>99</sup>

Fourthly, Segal has suggested that ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν(v) may have originated as a defence against the 'two powers' heresy. That is, ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν(v) was understood to mean that 'one like a son of man' and the Ancient of Days were one and the same figure in order to undermine the view that alongside God was a principal angel or exalted messiah.<sup>100</sup> In this case it is likely that the reading arose in the time of R. Akiba (c. 110-132).<sup>101</sup> Yarbrow Collins, however, makes the point that the LXX reading need not have arisen from a theological intention.<sup>102</sup> Once in circulation an erroneous reading could have attracted a theological meaning. Thus *Dn* 7.13 LXX may not so much have arisen out of opposition to 'two powers' heresy as have simply been welcomed and promoted by those opposed to this heresy.<sup>103</sup> Segal's proposal also faces the problem of whether ὡς meant

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<sup>94</sup>Pace Jeansonne, *Greek*, 98.

<sup>95</sup>Delcor, "Sources", 304.

<sup>96</sup>Bruce, "Greek", 26.

<sup>97</sup>Dunn, *Partings*, 314 n.50.

<sup>98</sup>See discussion in Rowland, "Man" (1985).

<sup>99</sup>Cf. Swete, 16.

<sup>100</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 201-202, with earlier discussion on the 'dangers' of *Dn* 7.9-13 on pp. 34-53. The key rabbinic texts include *PR Piska* 21 100b, b.Hag. 14a, and b.Sanh. 38b.

<sup>101</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 47-49.

<sup>102</sup>E.g. Lust, "Daniel", 64-69, argues that the intention of the LXX was to identify the two figures in *Dn* 7.13.



that the two figures were equated.<sup>104</sup>

Yet these are only cautions. We cannot rule out the possibility that Dn 7.13 LXX stems from a time earlier than the Apc.

Consideration of the actual language of the Apc is not much help in determining whether Dn 7.13 LXX may have been an influence on John. We cannot rule out the possibility that John was acquainted with the LXX of Daniel.<sup>105</sup> In particular, although the use of μετὰ in Apc 1.7a rather than ἐπὶ suggests that John may have known a Greek recension of Dn 7.13 closer to the MT and Theodotion than to the LXX,<sup>106</sup> we cannot rule out the possibility that John was familiar with Dn 7.13 LXX or something akin to it.<sup>107</sup> Various words and phrases in Apc 1.13-16, for example, recall the LXX (of both Daniel and Ezekiel), although it is conceivable that the explanation for this lies in John translating the underlying Hebrew/Aramaic in a similar way to the LXX.<sup>108</sup> At least two explanations are possible for why Apc 1.7 could reflect the Theodotion version yet Apc 1.14 could reflect the LXX version of Dn 7.13.

First, it is conceivable that Apc 1.7a reflects a remembrance of Dn 7.13 in Aramaic (or Hebrew) and, that John, like Theodotion, translated אב with μετὰ. Conversely, Apc 1.14 could be a reflection of the fact that Dn 7.13 LXX was *also* known to John.

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<sup>103</sup>Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 555-557.

<sup>104</sup>Cf. Fossum, *Name*, 319.

<sup>105</sup>Thus Beale, "Reconsideration", 540-543, while recognising that many scholars favour the influence of Theodotion (or a related recension), argues that John had some acquaintance with the LXX; so also Schmidt, "Semitisms", 602; Trudinger, "Observations" (1966), while arguing forcefully for the influence of Aramaic targums or similar does not (e.g. p. 84) rule out minor influence by the LXX. On the influence of Theodotion on the Apc cf. Salmon, *Introduction*, 548-550; Charles, i, lxvi-lxviii, sees the influence of LXX and a pre-Theodotionic revision of the LXX.

<sup>106</sup>Cf. Bousset, 189; Charles, i, 17-18; Grelot, "versions", 386; Montgomery, *Daniel*, 304; Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 541, 546.

<sup>107</sup>Note that Apc 14.14 has ἐπὶ τὴν νεφέλην.

<sup>108</sup>Cf. Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 548-552; Trudinger, "Observations", 85 n.2; and discussion below, §8.3.

Secondly, it is conceivable that Apc 1.7 and Apc 1.13-16 reflect different sources and that each of these in turn was influenced by different versions of Dn 7.13. Briefly, Apc 1.7 conflates Dn 7.13 with Zech 12.10, a feature which is also found in Matt 24.30, and which has led to the suggestion that a common tradition has informed both NT texts.<sup>109</sup> This tradition would then reflect Dn 7.13 as found in Theodotion. Apc 1.13-16 is more or less similar to other accounts of epiphanies, probably dating from a similar period, which raises the question whether a common tradition has informed this text. This tradition, as Rowland proposes, would then reflect the influence of Dn 7.13 LXX.<sup>110</sup>

In short: consideration of the language of the Apc, in particular the language of Apc 1.7 and 1.13-16 does not rule out the possibility of the influence of Dn 7.13 LXX. Nevertheless our examination above has certainly not determined that the Apc was influenced by Dn 7.13 LXX.

### §2.5.1 The Interpretation of Daniel 7.13 LXX

We have assumed in the above discussion that knowledge of Dn 7.13 LXX would have naturally led to the identification of the Ancient of Days with 'one like a son of man'. But would this have been so? It is possible, for example, that the second ὡς could be a temporal and not a comparative particle with the following καὶ understood to introduce a main clause. The last part of 7.13 LXX would then be rendered 'when (ὡς) the Ancient of Days arrived, then (καὶ) the bystanders were present before him'.<sup>111</sup> But this is unlikely since (a) ὡς is never used in a visionary context in Daniel (or in Ezekiel) with a temporal meaning, and (b) ὡς is already used in the same sentence in Dn 7.13 with a comparative meaning.<sup>112</sup> But if ὡς does not have a temporal meaning must we conclude that ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶ(ν) implies that the 'one like a son of man' is identified as the Ancient of Days?<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>109</sup>Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 541-547, and literature cited there.

<sup>110</sup>The principal texts are *Apc. Abr.* 11.1-3 and *Jos. Apen.* 14.8-9. Cf. citation of each, §3.2 below, and discussion in relation to Apc 1.13-16, §8.4 below.

<sup>111</sup>Lust, "Daniel", 65. Cf. Bruce, "Daniel", 25.

<sup>112</sup>Lust, "Daniel", 65.

<sup>113</sup>E.g. Lust, "Daniel", 67, 'In the LXX text, the 'Ancient of Days' and the 'Son of Man' are one and the same symbol'.

In fact we should be cautious about drawing such a conclusion. First, in the phrase ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου a possible reading of ὡς is that the figure is not identified with a particular son of man but has the appearance of a son of man, that is, has human form. By analogy ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν(v) would signify not that the figure comes ‘as the Ancient of Days’ meaning ‘identical to the Ancient of Days’. Rather, it would signify that the figure comes in a similar manner (e.g. with a host of attendants) or with a similar appearance to the Ancient of Days.

Thinking along these lines we could imagine the LXX variant arising, for example, because ‘one like a son of man’ was understood to be Michael, that is, ‘who is like God?’ and accordingly was described as ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν(v) because he was deemed to be similar to God in appearance.<sup>114</sup>

Our major point here, however, is simply that the presence of the phrase ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν(v) in Dn 7.13 LXX need not have been understood as signifying that ‘one like a son of man’ and the Ancient of Days were identical. The force of our criticism means that those who suppose an identity need to demonstrate conclusively that ὡς is able to underpin such an identity.

Secondly, it was surely not the case that every reader of Dn 7.13 LXX was ignorant of alternative forms of the text. We have already seen that John, for example, appears to have been familiar with versions of Daniel similar to the MT and Theodotion. If he knew both variants of Dn 7.13 (i.e. ὡς παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν(v) and ἕως τοῦ παλαιοῦ τῶν ἡμερῶν) it is conceivable that he accepted Dn 7.13 LXX as a valid reading without denying the fact that Dn 7.13 otherwise signifies two distinct beings. In this case a sensible interpretation would have been that Dn 7.13 featured two non-identical figures who were similar in appearance.

### §2.5.2 Conclusion

Dn 7.13 LXX may well have been influential on the development of epiphanies in which details from Dn 7.9 were combined with details from Dn 7.13 and/or Dn 10.5-6. But there is some doubt as to whether this variant was in circulation early enough to have influenced

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<sup>114</sup>The author is not aware of this connection between Michael and Dn 7.13 LXX having been made before.

texts such as Apc 1.13-16. In any case, even if it stems from the time before the Apc this does not of itself guarantee that it was known by John. Consequently we will be justified in looking for alternative explanations for the incorporation of Dn 7.9 into epiphanies.

If Dn 7.13 LXX was known to apocalypticists such as John it does not follow that they automatically deduced that the Danielic son of man and the Ancient of Days were identified. They may well have only concluded that the appearance of the two figures was similar.

## **§2.6 EXCURSUS: THE SON OF MAN IN THE GOSPELS, SIMILITUDES OF ENOCH, 4 EZRA, and SYR. BARUCH.**

We have dealt at some length with the son of man figure in Dn 7.13 because the description of Jesus as 'one like a son of man' in Apc 1.13 and 14.14 appears to most directly recall Dn 7.13. Despite familiarity with traditions enshrined in the four gospels, including one directly concerning 'the Son of Man' (Apc 3.5, cf. Mt 10.32-33=Lk 12.8-9),<sup>115</sup> John does not use the title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. This does not mean that Christian traditions about Jesus as the Son of Man have made no impact on the Apc. It could well be, for example, that such traditions directed John's mind to meditate upon Dn 7.13 and to identify the son of man figure found there with his Lord.

It is well known that Dn 7.13 influenced texts outside the NT such as the *Sim. En.*, 4 Ezra, and *Syr. Bar.* - all works which may well date from the same period as the Apc itself.<sup>116</sup>

In 1 *En.* 46 the seer has a vision which has a marked similarity to that found in Dn 7.9-13:<sup>117</sup>

<sup>115</sup>See discussion in, e.g., Vos, *Synoptic*, 75-94; Bauckham, "Synoptic", 162-176; Yarbrow Collins, "Tradition", 559-562, argues that it should not be assumed that Apc 3.5 reflects knowledge of a 'Son of Man' saying.

<sup>116</sup>4 Ezra: c. 100 CE [so Metzger, *OTP*, i, 520]; *Syr. Bar.*: c. 100-120 CE [so Klijn, *OTP*, i, 617]; *Sim. En.*: Stone and Greenfield, "Pentateuch", 51-60, argue that the *Sim. En.* is a contemporary of the Qumran texts (even though absent from them) with final composition in 1st cent. CE; Collins, "Son", 451-452, argues that absence from Qumran does not require a date after 70 CE since other pseudepigrapha with undisputed early dates are also absent; Knibb, "Date", 359, argues for a late first century CE date while Mearns, "Dating", 369, argues for the late 40s CE.

<sup>117</sup>On the two son of man figures see further Muilenberg, "Son" (1960). Parallels between the two passages are set out in Beale, *Daniel*, 97-100 and Caragounis, *Son*, 101-2. Casey, "Use", 20-22, argues that Dn 7.9 has influenced 1 *En.* 46.

'At that place, I saw the Head of Days. And his head was white like wool, and there was with him another individual, whose face was like that of a human being. His countenance was full of grace like that of one among the holy angels. And I asked the one - from among the angels - who was going with me, and who revealed to me all the secrets regarding the One who was born of human beings, "Who is this, and from whence is he who is going as the prototype of the Before-Time?" And he answered me and said to me, "This is the Son of Man, to whom belongs righteousness, and with whom righteousness dwells' (1 *En.* 46.1-3).<sup>118</sup>

It is striking that here the son of man figure is *not* described with details drawn from Dn 7.9 and 10.5-6. The Enochic son of man is more explicitly likened to the angels than is the case with the son of man figure in the Apc. The Enochic son of man is comparable to the son of man in the Apc in at least one respect (both have a weapon coming from their mouths, 1 *En.* 62.2, Apc 1.16). It is possible that he is understood as a pre-existent figure (cf. 1 *En.* 48.3, 6),<sup>119</sup> a possibility that also pertains to the son of man figure in the Apc.<sup>120</sup> One of the most striking aspects of the portrayal of the Enochic son of man is that he appears to be an object of worship (cf. 1 *En.* 46.5, 48.5 and compare with, e.g., the praise of the Lamb in Apc 5.9-13). As is the case with the Apc we must not presume that 'Son of Man' is used as a title for this Enochian figure.<sup>121</sup>

In 4 Ezra (= 2 Esdras 3-14), a late first century apocalypse,<sup>122</sup> the seer records part of a night dream as follows:

'As I kept looking the wind made up something like the figure of a man come up out of the heart of the sea. And I saw that this man flew with the clouds of the heaven ...' (4

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<sup>118</sup>Isaac, *OTP*, i, 34.

<sup>119</sup>Recently argued by Collins, "Son", 455; contrast with Manson, "Son", 183-5, who argues for 'pre-mundane election' rather than 'pre-mundane existence'; VanderKam, "Righteous", 179-182.

<sup>120</sup>The white hair of the figure (Apc 1.14) might symbolise existence from ancient times, according to Swete, 16; cf. Apc 1.17; 3.14; 13.8; 22.12-13.

<sup>121</sup>Collins, "Son", 452. For other informative studies of the Enochic son of man see, e.g., Collins, J.J., "Representative" (1980); Sjöberg, *Menschensohn* (1946); Casey, *Son* (1979); and now VanderKam, "Righteous", 169-191, with further literature cited therein.

<sup>122</sup>Stone, *Ezra*, 10, argues for the latter part of Domitian's reign (81-96 CE).

Ezra 13.3, NRSV).

The influence of Dn 7 is clear,<sup>123</sup> the more so because this chapter of Daniel has influenced the preceding chapters in 4 Ezra. The most important versions of 4 Ezra are in Latin and Syriac. In the Syriac the manlike figure is described as 'yk dmwt' dbrns' which means the original may have been בר אנשא or בן אדם.<sup>124</sup> Comparison with the Apc is interesting: the figure that comes up out of the sea is not the 'one like a son of man' but his antitype the beast (Apc 13.1). In 4 Ezra the manlike figure holds no weapon (4 Ezra 13.9, cf. Apc 1.16, 14.14, 19.15). But his mouth is associated with judgement, although it is 'a stream of fire' (4 Ezra 13.4, 10-11) rather than a sword which comes out of his mouth (cf. Apc 1.16, 19.15). There is no elaboration of the form of the figure unlike the case in Apc 1.13-16, 14.14.

Other differences may be noted but the impression is reasonably clear that the author of 4 Ezra has incorporated elements from Dn 7 (and elsewhere) independently of the manner in which John has done so. Nevertheless 4 Ezra and the Apc may share some common features:

(i) just as the Apc identifies 'one like a son of man' (at least in 1.13) as 'the son of God' (2.18) so 4 Ezra, according to some witnesses, identifies the manlike figure as the son of God (cf. 'my Son', 13.32, 37);<sup>125</sup>

(ii) it has been argued that 4 Ezra 13 involves similar ironic parody to the Apc.<sup>126</sup>

In *Syr. Bar.* we find another notable example of the influence of Dn 7 on visionary material (*Syr. Bar.* 53). But neither the vision nor the subsequent interpretation specifically mention a son of man figure. Rather, there is talk of 'my Servant, the Anointed One' (70.9, cf. 72.2).

Most recently Collins has reopened the question of common assumptions being held in the

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<sup>123</sup>Stone, *Ezra*, 384.

<sup>124</sup>Collins, "Son", 460.

<sup>125</sup>Stone, *Ezra*, 392, notes for 13.32, 37, 'son' according to Latin and Syriac MSS but other witnesses offer variants, e.g., 'my servant', 'my youth'. Stone suggests that underlying these translations was πᾶλις (servant, child) or עבד.

<sup>126</sup>So Beale, "Problem" (1983).

first century CE about the figure in Daniel's vision. Without reaching the conclusion that these assumptions amount to 'a "Son of Man" concept', he argues that anyone speaking in the late first century of a figure reminiscent of Dn 7.13 'would evoke a figure with distinct traits which go beyond what was explicit in the text of Daniel's vision'.<sup>127</sup> These traits include (a) being an individual (rather than a collective symbol);<sup>128</sup> (b) being 'the messiah'; (c) pre-existent 'and therefore a transcendent figure of heavenly origin'; (d) taking a more active role in the destruction of the wicked than was explicit in Daniel.

Thus the *Apc* does not stand alone as a work from the period around the turn of the first century which has been influenced by Dn 7. But the differences between the *Apc*, *Sim. En.*, 4 *Ezra*, and *Syr. Bar.* in their expression of this influence demonstrate that each work presupposed the freedom to restate the earlier vision of Daniel in terms relevant to the situation in which each author lived and to acknowledge developments in the understanding of the role of the son of man figure.

## §2.7 CONCLUSION

We have reviewed angelology and epiphanies in the Books of Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. We have attempted to shed some light on difficult issues, such as the significance of Dn 7.13 LXX, in order to keep our later discussion of the christology of the *Apc* as uncluttered as possible. In the course of our review we have suggested that aspects of the development behind the christophany proposed by Rowland are open to doubt. In particular we see the origins of the glorious 'man' in Dn 10.5-6 lying in the angel introduced in Ezek 9.2 as 'a man clothed in linen' rather than in the theophany in Ezek 1. The latter has undoubtedly contributed to the portrayal in Dn 10.5-6 but not in such a way that we need conclude that the 'man' is anything other than an angel. This point is confirmed since the 'man' is 'sent' and therefore clearly distinct from God.

We have suggested that John considered the son of man figure in Dn 7.13 to have originally have been envisaged as an angel. We have argued that the apparent influence of Dn 7.13 LXX on the christophany in *Apc* 1.13-16 is open to doubt. Finally, we noted that the treatment of Dn 7 in first century Jewish and Christian writings implied a freedom to

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<sup>127</sup>Collins, "Son", 466.

<sup>128</sup>Cf. Black, "Throne-Theophany", 73.

§2 Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Daniel

restate the vision of Daniel in a manner relevant to the new situations facing the people of God.



## CHAPTER THREE

# PRINCIPAL ANGELS

### §3.1 INTRODUCTION

We have examined Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Daniel in order to draw out certain features of the angelology of each book. In doing so we have inevitably been drawn to consider the theophanies which are described in Ezekiel and Daniel. We have also briefly examined the son of man figure in other writings.

Now we turn to accounts of principal angels in apocalypses and related writings. Our initial concern is with exalted angels whose appearance more or less parallels that of the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16. That is, we consider principal angels who appear in glorious and majestic form: we describe these as 'glorious angels', not because we think they are identified with the *kabod* of God but simply because the extraordinary splendour of their appearance is aptly summed up in the word 'glorious'. We will then look at other matters relating to principal angels, such as whether or not they were worshipped.

## §3.2 GLORIOUS ANGELS

### §3.2.1 The *Apocalypse of Abraham*: Yahoel

In *Apc. Abr.*, probably dating from late in the first century CE,<sup>1</sup> Abraham meets up with a glorious angel who guides him on his heavenly journey:

'The angel he sent to me in the likeness of a man came, and he took me by my right hand and stood me on my feet. And he said to me, Stand up, Abraham, friend of God who has loved you, let human trembling not enfold you! For lo! I am sent to you to strengthen you and to bless you in the name of God, creator of heavenly and earthly things, who has loved you. Be bold and hasten to him. I am laoel [= *Yahoel*], and I was called so by him who causes those with me on the seventh expanse, on the firmament, to shake, a power through the medium of his ineffable name in me'...  
(*Apc. Abr.* 10.5-9)

'And I stood up and saw him who had taken my right hand and set me on my feet. The appearance of his body was like sapphire, and the aspect of his face like chrysolite, and the hair of his head like snow. And a kidaris (was) on his head,<sup>2</sup> its look that of a rainbow, and the clothing of his garments (was) purple; and a golden staff (was) in his right hand. And he said to me, "Abraham." And I said, "Here is your servant" (*Apc. Abr.* 11.1-3).<sup>3</sup>

The majestic description of Yahoel recalls both the description of the exalted angel in Dn 10.5-6 (cf. 'a man', 'His body was like beryl') and the description of the Ancient of Days in Dn 7.9 (cf. 'his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool'). Further, the

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<sup>1</sup>After 70 CE and before c.150 CE (Rubinkiewicz, R., *OTP*, i, 683); possibly later than this (Pennington, *AOT*, 365-367); but Box, *Apocalypse*, xv, dates *Apc. Abr.* to shortly after 70 CE; Halperin, *Faces*, 103-104, argues that despite some Christian redaction *Apc. Abr.* may be treated as 'a product of early Judaism'; in short: we accept a late first-century date as probable. The oldest known form of *Apc. Abr.* is in Slavonic. Note Charlesworth, *New Testament*, 32, who sounds a note of caution about using *Apc. Abr.* in NT research.

<sup>2</sup>Rubinkiewicz, *OTP*, i, 694, notes that *kidaris* in the LXX means a 'headdress' (Ex 39.28), and a 'turban' (Zech 3.5).

<sup>3</sup>Rubinkiewicz, *OTP*, i, 693-694.

*merging* of these descriptions from Daniel in the one figure parallels the christophany in *Apc* 1.13-16 which also blends together elements taken from *Dn* 7.9 and 10.5-6.<sup>4</sup> The probable dating of the composition of the *Apc* and the *Apc. Abr.* to a common period, however, suggests it is likely that each account is independent of the other and raises the question whether they draw on a common tradition which has blended together elements taken from the theophany in *Dn* 7.9 and the angelophany in *Dn* 10.5-6.<sup>5</sup> We have already drawn attention to Rowland's suggestion that the blending of *Dn* 7.9 and 10.5-6 in angelophanies reflects the influence of *Dn* 7.13 LXX.<sup>6</sup> If *Apc. Abr.* stems from the same period as the *Apc* or later then the doubts we have expressed about the influence on *Dn* 7.13 LXX similarly apply here.

Yahoel is arguably the chief angel within the angelology of *Apc. Abr.*<sup>7</sup> Certainly no other angel is portrayed in such a glorious manner, or has such power or status. Yahoel has three outstanding characteristics. First, the fact that he is 'a power through the medium of his ineffable name in me' (10.9). This suggests that Yahoel is identified with the Exodus angel (cf. 'for my name is in him', *Ex* 23.21).<sup>8</sup> Secondly, the nature of Yahoel's functions:

- (i) to keep the cherubim or living creatures under control;
- (ii) to teach,
- (iii) to restrain Leviathan and subdue the reptiles,<sup>9</sup>
- (iv) to destroy idolators, and
- (v) to bless God-fearers such as Abraham (10.10-14).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>See chapter eight.

<sup>5</sup>Box, *Apocalypse*, 49 n.6, notes a general resemblance to the christophany in *Apc* 1.13-16 but with differences in most details.

<sup>6</sup>See §2.5.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Segal, *Powers*, 196.

<sup>8</sup>Box, *Apocalypse*, 46 n.5, draws attention to a similar statement about Metatron in *b. Sanhedrin* 38b.

<sup>9</sup>Some MSS. add a reference to a function 'to loosen hell and to destroy those (or he) who wonder at dead things' [Pennington, *AOT*, 376 n.7; cf. Rubinkiewicz, *OTP*, 694, who includes this in the main body of the text as *Apc. Abr.* 10.11; see further Box, *Apocalypse*, 48 n.1].

<sup>10</sup>Cf. Halperin, *Faces*, 112-113, sums up the functions concerning the living creatures, Leviathan and the reptiles, and hell, '[Yahoel] must suppress the dark and inimical forces of the cosmos'.

Thirdly, the fact that Yahoel speaks of Michael as an associate: 'And with me Michael blesses you forever' (10.17). The impression is given that Yahoel is superior to Michael, who is never referred to again in the apocalypse.

In recent years the status of Yahoel has been debated.<sup>11</sup> Is he an angel, albeit the chief angel? Or, noting his superiority over the living creatures, is he more than this? For example, is Yahoel presented as a figure who is the result of a 'bifurcation' in the being of God?<sup>12</sup> The latter possibility is based primarily on his description as 'a power through the medium of his ineffable name in me' (*Apc. Abr.* 10.9). This feature is, of course, underlined by the juxtaposition of *Yah* and *El* in his name - indeed 'Yahoel' as a name for God is also found in this apocalypse (*Apc. Abr.* 17.11).<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, a number of observations may be made which favour both a clear distinction between God and Yahoel and an understanding of Yahoel as a being who was *not perceived* as the product of bifurcation within the deity.<sup>14</sup> First, the figure is described as an 'angel'.<sup>15</sup> Secondly, Yahoel acts in response to God's initiative (e.g. 'I am sent to you', 10.7; 'I am he who is appointed by his command', 10.10). He acts on behalf of God (e.g. 'to bless you in the name of God', 10.7). But he never acts in his own right. Thirdly, at the end of *Apc. Abr.* 10, Yahoel states, 'And with me Michael blesses you forever' (v.17). This suggests that whatever great status Yahoel may have, he is a being who belongs to the same ontological category as Michael. That is, he is an angel and not a divine being. Fourthly, Yahoel is clearly depicted as one who *worships God* rather than as one who is worshipped (17.2). The *Apc. Abr.* does not show Abraham attempting to worship Yahoel.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Cf. Rowland, *Heaven*, 101-103; Hurtado, *God*, 87-90; Fossum, *Name*, 319.

<sup>12</sup>The term 'bifurcation' in this context refers to the separation of some aspect of the divine being which then takes on an independent or semi-independent life of its own. Cf. discussion in Hurtado, *God*, 85-90.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Box, *Apocalypse*, 46 n. 5; Fossum, *Name*, 318; Halperin, *Faces*, 105. A similar composite name, Jael, is found in *Vit. Ad. Evae* 29 [as a name for God]. On the origin of 'Yahoel', cf. Scholem, *Gnosticism*, 43-55. Fossum, *Name*, 319-320, suggests that Yahoel is the *kabod* of God. Note also magic texts dating from talmudic (or later) period which barely distinguish between the angel Yeho'el and Yah = God (Naveh and Shaked, *Amulets*, 13, 159-161, cf. 135).

<sup>14</sup>Allo, 13.

<sup>15</sup>Cf. *Apc. Abr.* 10.5; 12.1,2,6; 13.1; 14.10; 15.3; 16.1; 17.3.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. Hurtado, *God*, 87-89.

In short: Yahoel is extraordinarily exalted in status and glorious in form. The treatment of Yahoel in the *Apc. Abr.* suggests that speculation about the glorious appearance and exalted status of an angel *within the bounds of monotheism* was reaching its zenith.<sup>17</sup>

### §3.2.2 *Joseph and Aseneth: An Unnamed Angel*

*Jos. Asen.* is better described as a 'romance' than as an 'apocalypse'.<sup>18</sup> It probably comes from the Egyptian Diaspora from a Jewish milieu similar to one from which many Christians were recruited.<sup>19</sup> It was originally written in Greek,<sup>20</sup> most likely between the beginning of the last century BCE and the first decades of the first century CE.<sup>21</sup> In the following passage Aseneth sees a glorious angel:

ἰδοὺ ἀνὴρ ὁμοίος κατὰ πάντα τῷ Ἰωσήφ τῇ στολῇ καὶ τῷ στεφάνῳ καὶ τῇ  
ράβδῳ τῇ βασιλικῇ πλὴν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ἦν ὡς ἀστραπὴ καὶ οἱ  
ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φέγγος ἡλίου καὶ αἱ τρίχες τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ ὡς  
φλόξ πυρὸς καὶ αἱ χεῖρες καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὥσπερ σίδηρος ἐκ πυρός.<sup>22</sup>

[Aseneth looked and saw] and behold a man in every way like Joseph, with a robe and a crown and a royal staff. But his face was like lightning, and his eyes were like the

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<sup>17</sup>Cf. Segal, *Powers*, 196.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. Philonenko, *Joseph*, 53-98; Kee, "Setting", 394-398.

<sup>19</sup>Burchard, "Importance", 104.

<sup>20</sup>The texts of *Jos. Asen.* are referred to as *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d*. The most important are *a* and *d*. Group *a* texts are longer (for critical edition see "Le livre de la Prière d'Aseneth" in Batiffol, *Studia Patristica*, Paris, 1869-90, 1-115), group *b* are shorter (for critical edition see Philonenko, *Joseph*, 128-221; ET in *AOT*). In *OTP* Burchard presents the English translation of his 'preliminary new text': arguing that *d* is a shortened text, Burchard offers a reconstruction which is like *a* for length, like *d* in wording, and leans towards *b* (*idem*, *OTP*, ii, 181; cf. "Importance", 105). Burchard's Greek recension may be found in *DBAT* 14 (1979), 2-53 or in Denis, *Concordance*, 851-859.

<sup>21</sup>Burchard, "Importance", 104, sums up the consensus view as: *Jos. Asen.* was written no later than 117-138 CE (the reign of Hadrian), possibly no later than 98-117 CE (the reign of Trajan), and no earlier than 100 BCE. Holtz, "Interpolationen", 67-71, on the basis of features in *Jos. Asen.* unparalleled in Jewish literature, argues that Christian interpolations are integral to the oldest attainable text.

<sup>22</sup> Philonenko, *Joseph*, 178. The variations between *a* and *d* are minor here, at least until φλόξ πυρός.

light of the sun, and the hairs of his head like flames of fire, and his hands and his feet like iron from the fire' (Jos. Asen.14.8-9).<sup>23</sup>

The description of the heavenly figure as 'a man in every way like Joseph' (14.8) is consistent with the fact that he is also described as 'chief of the house of the Most High' (14.7, cf. 15.12) similar to Joseph's position as chief of the house of Pharaoh. It is likely that this figure is in fact Michael, particularly in view of the fact that the term ἀρχιστράτηγος is used (e.g.14.7). Although there are impressive links between the story of this angel's involvement with Aseneth and the theophany in Ezek 1 (cf. 'chariot of fire', *Jos. Asen.* 17.6),<sup>24</sup> there is no reason to think of this figure as other than an angel.

The form of this angel is similar in a number of respects to the angel in Dn 10.5-6. The face of both angels is the same, but the descriptions of the eyes are different (cf. 'like flaming torches', Dn 10.6).

The description of the hair of the angel is notable. Like the descriptions of the risen Jesus and Yahoel this description draws on Dn 7.9 but in terms of 'flames of fire' rather than 'wool' or 'snow'. It is difficult to determine whether this might be due to a mistaken memory of the contents of Dn 7.9, or to the desire to distinguish the angel from the Ancient of Days, or otherwise.

The fact that when ὡς φλόξ πυρὸς is found in Apc 1.14 it is describing the eyes of Jesus is but one example of the absence of exact points of comparison between the two figures so we have no compelling reason to think that either epiphany is dependent on the other.

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<sup>23</sup>The author's own translation.

<sup>24</sup>Enumerated in Kee, "Setting", 400-401.

### §3.2.3 The *Apocalypse of Zephaniah*: Eremiel

After encountering various mighty angels Zephaniah experiences the following angelophany, according to this second century CE apocalypse:<sup>25</sup>

'Then I arose and stood, and I saw a great angel standing before me with his face shining like the rays of the sun in its glory since his face is like that which is perfected in its glory. And he was girded as if a golden girdle were upon his breast. His feet were like bronze which is melted in a fire. And when I saw him, I rejoiced, for I thought the Lord Almighty had come to visit me. I fell on my face; and I worshipped him. He said to me, Take heed. Don't worship me. I am not the Lord Almighty, but I am the great angel, Eremiel, who is over the abyss and Hades, the one in which all of the souls are imprisoned from the end of the Flood, which came upon the earth, until this day' (Apc. Zeph. 6.11-13).<sup>26</sup>

There are in fact a number of 'great angels' in this apocalypse. For example, there are 'lords' who sit on thrones seven times as bright as the sun (Apc. Zeph. A).<sup>27</sup> In Apc. Zeph. 4.1-10 Zephaniah walks with 'the angel of the Lord' and sees a multitude of terrifying angels whose 'eyes were mixed with blood' - these angels seem to be under the authority of the angel of the Lord for Zephaniah pleads with him not to give these angels authority over him. One angel is described with his hair 'spread out like the lionesses' (6.8-10) - a later verse identifies this angel as Satan (6.17). References to other great angels are to be found at 7.9, 9.1,3, 10.1, and 12.1.

There is no reason to think of Eremiel as anything other than a mighty angel. Elements of the description of Eremiel recall the glorious figure in Dn 10.5-6 (cf. description of feet and girdle) although there are variations (Eremiel's face is like the 'sun' rather than 'lightning'),

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<sup>25</sup>Wintermute, *OTP*, 500: between 100 BCE and 175 CE; Philonenko, *Joseph*, 109: beginning of second century CE. Language: Sahidic, Akhmimic. The title 'Apocalypse of Zephaniah' may not be appropriate [cf. Bauckham, "Apocalypses", 100-103] but we follow *OTP*'s practice in the matter. For brief 'Introduction' to the apocalypse (apart from those given in *OTP* and *AOT*) see Himmelfarb, *Tours*, 13-16.

<sup>26</sup>Wintermute, *OTP*, i, 513; cf. Kuhn, *AOT*, 922-923.

<sup>27</sup>Wintermute, *OTP*, i, 508.

and omissions (no description of Eremiel's clothing, body, eyes, or voice). With respect to Dn 7.9 we note that there is no description of the head or hair of Eremiel.

Eremiel's appearance stands comparison with that of the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16 (common elements: golden girdle, face like the sun, and feet like bronze).<sup>28</sup> The second of these common elements cannot be explained in terms of Dn 10.5-6 which raises the question whether one apocalypse has influenced the other or whether both have drawn on common sources. But the sunlike face of Eremiel is familiar from other writings (e.g. 2 *En.* 1.5, *Test. Abr. Rec. A.* 12.9, 13.10). Other common features between the two apocalypses such as an angel's refusal of worship (*Apc. Zeph.* 6.13, cf. *Apc.* 19.10, 22.89), and an angel in charge of the underworld (*Apc. Zeph.* 6.13, cf. *Apc.* 1.18, 9.11) are not sufficiently close to require the conclusion that one is dependent on the other.<sup>29</sup>

### §3.2.4 Further Accounts of Glorious Angels

Angels with glorious appearances are in fact a widespread feature of ancient Jewish and Christian apocalyptic and related literature. In the *Test. Abr., Rec. A* (c. 100 CE?)<sup>30</sup> two archangels serve the patriarch Abel: 'the sunlike angel' (ὁ ἄγγελος ὁ ἡλιόμορφος, 12.9, 13.10) and 'the fiery angel' (ὁ ἄγγελος ὁ πύρινος, 12.10, 13.11).<sup>31</sup> In the same testament 'Death' manifests itself as a glorious angel wearing a bright robe and having a sunlike appearance and fiery cheeks (ὄψιν ἡλιόμορφον ... τὰς παρειάς αὐτοῦ πυρὶ ἀστράπτων, 16.8-9, cf. 17.15). In *Apc. Paul*, a late fourth century CE document (?),<sup>32</sup> angels are seen 'with faces shining like the sun; their loins girt like girdles'.<sup>33</sup>

In the *Sim. En.* the only extensive description of the form of angels occurs when Enoch ascends to the heavens. He sees 'the sons of the holy angels' treading upon 'the flame of fire; their garments were white - and their overcoats - and the light of their faces was like

<sup>28</sup>For citation of Apc 1.13-16 see §7.2.

<sup>29</sup>Cf. Bauckham, "Worship", 325; Himmelfarb, *Tours*, 16.

<sup>30</sup>See below, §4.1.6.

<sup>31</sup>Greek from Stone, *Abraham*, 32; cf. parallels with *Apc. Zeph.* 3.5-9. Sunlike beings are also found in *Test. Abr.* 2.6, 7.5. On the angelology of *Test. Abr.* see Kalenkow, "Angelology", 153-162.

<sup>32</sup>Rebell, *Neutestamentliche*, 253. But there is some evidence that the apocalypse was known in the third century CE, see Yarbrow Collins, "Early Christian", 85; Himmelfarb, *Tours*, 18.

<sup>33</sup>Duensing, *NTA*, ii, 764.



snow' (1 *En.* 71.1).<sup>34</sup> Here the language recalls Dn 7.9 (more so than 1 *En.* 46.1), though without mention of the head or hair of the angels. It is noticeable that the comparison with *snow* is applied to the face.

The value of 2 *Enoch* in the present context is difficult to assess since there is no consensus about its provenance or dating and it could stem from prior to the Christian period or as late as the end of the Middle Ages.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless it features an extensive angelology, including an account of two glorious 'men' with faces 'like the shining sun', eyes 'like burning lamps', mouths from which fire comes out, and arms 'like wings of gold' (2 *En.* 1.4-5, *Short Rec.*, *Long Rec.* similar; cf. 19.1).<sup>36</sup> The Longer Recension adds that 'their hands were whiter than snow'.<sup>37</sup> Thus the comparison with *snow* is applied here to hands.<sup>38</sup> Other broadly similar examples of glorious angels are found within the *Apc* itself (*Apc*10.1-3, 15.6-7).

Some accounts of glorious angels express the majestic appearance of the angels in more general terms. Thus in the *Ladder of Jacob*, whose origins may lie in the first century CE,<sup>39</sup> the angel Sariel is 'very beautiful and awesome' (3.3).<sup>40</sup> In 2 Macc 3.25-26, a horse with a 'rider of frightening mien', followed by two 'men ... remarkably strong, gloriously beautiful and splendidly dressed' come to the rescue of the Jews. In 3 Macc 6.18 'two glorious angels of fearful aspect' are seen.

The appearance of some angels is described in the Qumran literature. In 4Q 'Amram<sup>b</sup> 1.13-15, for example, one of the angels mentioned is fearsomely dark, while another has a face like a snake.<sup>41</sup> In 4Q405 23ii the 'spirits' = 'princes' (i.e. angels) are described in terms of 'colours in the midst of an appearance of whiteness', they are compared to 'sparkling fine

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<sup>34</sup>Isaac, *OTP*, i, 49.

<sup>35</sup>Andersen, *OTP*, i, 95-97.

<sup>36</sup>Andersen, *OTP*, i, 107.

<sup>37</sup>Andersen, *OTP*, i, 106.

<sup>38</sup>Note *Jos. Asen.* 5.5, 'four horses white as snow'.

<sup>39</sup>Lunt, *OTP*, ii, 404.

<sup>40</sup>Lunt, *OTP*, ii, 408. Note that the distinction in this passage between an earlier theophany and the angelophany, in contrast with *Apc. Zeph.* 6.11-13 where a theophany is indistinguishable from an angelophany until a clarifying statement is made.

<sup>41</sup>Cf. Davidson, *Angels*, 290.

gold'.<sup>42</sup>

The fact that between Dn 7.9, 1 *En.* 71.1 and 2 *En.* 1.5, the application of *snow* imagery moves from clothing, through faces to hands suggests that the apocalypticists who set down the accounts of angelophanies worked freely within certain constraints. A traditional image, in this case *snow*, is faithfully retained, but its application is wide ranging. Similar points can be made in respect of *fire* and *sun* imagery.

### §3.2.5 Excursus: The *Merkabah* Vision in 1 *Enoch* 14

In the angelophanies which we have been considering there have been descriptive elements such as comparison with the 'sun' which are not found in Daniel or Ezekiel. It is worth noting therefore the theophany in 1 *En.* 14, which may stem from as early as 250 BCE,<sup>43</sup> could be a possible source for these images. Space precludes a full citation, but two verses illustrate the point:

'a lofty throne - its appearance was like crystal and its wheels like the shining sun' (1 *En.* 14.18),

'And the Great Glory was sitting upon it - as for his gown, which was shining more brightly than the sun, it was whiter than any snow' (1 *En.* 14.20).<sup>44</sup>

Angelophanies which may have been influenced by this theophany tended to feature the eyes or the face of the angel being compared with the sun. Thus it is unlikely that the angels concerned were interpreted as divine beings since 1 *En.* 14.21 is quite clear that the face of God itself could not be seen:

'None of the angels was able to come in and see the face of the Excellent and the Glorious One, and no one of the flesh can see him' (1 *En.* 14.21).<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>DSSE, 229. Note also 4Q403 1 ii, where *fire* imagery predominates, reminiscent of Ezek 1.

<sup>43</sup>Black, *Enoch*, 151.

<sup>44</sup>Isaac, *OTP*, i, 21.

<sup>45</sup>Isaac, *OTP*, i, 21.

Finally, we note that Dn 7.9 is likely to represent an abridgement of 1 *En.* 14.<sup>46</sup>

### §3.2.6 Conclusion

Despite the fact that theophanic imagery is found in descriptions of glorious angels, none of the angels we have referred to is anything more than an angel. Apocalypticists appeared to work from a 'limited stock of imagery',<sup>47</sup> though applying the imagery in a variety of ways.

## §3.3 PRINCIPAL ANGELS WITHOUT GLORIOUS FORM

In this section we consider other principal angels who have a high, if not the highest status amongst angels, but whose form is not described (or, at least, not in the detailed way which we have observed above). We do so in order to extend our discussion of whether Jewish and Christian angelology included a principal angel who shared in the divine status and/or being of God.

1 *En.* 61.10 gives one conception of the heavenly hierarchy:

'And he will call all the host of the heavens, and all the holy ones above, and the host of the Lord, the Cherubim, and the Seraphim and the Ophanim, and all the angels of power, and all the angels of the principalities, and the Chosen One, and the other host which is upon the dry ground and over the water'.

Another description is given in *Jub.* 2.2 which begins with 'the angels of the presence and the angels of the holiness' (described in 2.18 as 'these two great classes') and goes on to list various angels responsible for aspects of nature. More elaborate hierarchies are found in 2 *En.* 8.1-9.15 and 3 *En.* 17-29. In some works a hierarchy is implicitly supposed because we are introduced to a group of leading angels with the implication that all other angels belong to a lower rank (e.g. *Tb.* 12.15). In the *Sabbath Shirot* seven 'sovereign Princes' are mentioned (4Q403 1i 1-29) as well as seven 'deputy Princes' (4Q400 3 ii 2, cf. 4Q405 13 7).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>So Glasson, "Son" (1977), Black, *Enoch*, 151-152.

<sup>47</sup>Dunn, *Christology*, xxiv.

<sup>48</sup>Cf. Newsom, *Songs*, 32-33.

### §3 Principal Angel

This brief survey of conceptions of the angelic hierarchy suggests that when the *Apc* presents the four living creatures, the elders (e.g. ch. 4-5), Michael (12.7), various glorious angels (e.g. 10.1, 18.1), and groups of four and seven angels (e.g. 7.1, 8.2) it is a sign of its author's familiarity with the idea of an angelic hierarchy.

1 *En.* 61.10 does not refer to one angel as the chief angel. Some passages in *Sim. En.* suggest that Michael was effectively the chief angel (e.g. 60.4, 68.3-5, 69.14-15) while 1 *En.* 24.6 explicitly mentions Michael as chief angel. Nevertheless, within the whole of the first Enochian corpus it is groups of leading angels which command attention: either four angels (e.g., 1 *En.* 9.1, 40.9, 64.6, 71.9), or seven angels (e.g., 1 *En.* 20.3<sup>49</sup>). More explicit references to an angel as chief are found in, e.g., *Jos. Asen.* 14.7, 15.12, *Pr. Jos.*, and *As. Mos.* 10.2. In *Jos. Asen.* 14.7, 15.12 and *As. Mos.* 10.2 the chief angel is unnamed, though likely to be Michael. In *Pr. Jos.* the chief angel is 'Jacob-Israel'. In *Dn* 10 and *Apc. Abr.* 10 Michael is mentioned but is unlikely to be the chief angel. Thus there was no consistent identity for the chief angel. The fluidity over the identity of the chief angel suggests that John was at liberty to portray Jesus Christ as the chief angel.

If we are to locate the christology of the *Apc* in its angelological context then there are other issues to be explored than the possibility that Jesus was identified as the chief angel. In what follows we explore issues such as the status of angels, the transformation of angels, and the worship of angels.

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<sup>49</sup>Six angels mentioned in Ethiopic, seven in Greek recension.

### §3.3.1 Raphael

Stories of angels interacting with humans are commonplace in the OT. Sometimes the angel is initially mistaken for a man (e.g. Jdgs 13.1-23). The outstanding story of angelic deception is the story of Raphael in the Book of Tobit.<sup>50</sup> Raphael comes to earth in order to help Tobit and Sarah. Until the moment of his return to heaven Raphael deceives Tobit and Sarah into thinking that he was a human being (Tob. 12.19).<sup>51</sup>

Raphael is the 'complete' angel! He functions as guide, revealer, intercessor, healer, exorcist, and tester (cf. Tb 12.11-20).<sup>52</sup> There are certainly resonances here with the angelology of the Apc: revealing truth is a function of at least one angel in the Apc (cf. Apc1.1, 22.6,16), mediating prayer is another (cf. Apc 8.3), and Raphael, like the trumpet angels 'stands before' God (Tb 12.15, cf. Apc 8.2).<sup>53</sup> But there is nothing which directly connects Raphael with Jesus Christ in the Apc (contrast *Asc. Is.* 11.17 where the Beloved feigns feeding at the breast of Mary).<sup>54</sup>

For our present purposes the importance of Raphael lies in his example as a heavenly being who successfully conceals his true nature while effectively functioning as a human being.

That an angel should descend to earth, appear to be human and perform such roles as Raphael does is suggestive of a background model for NT christology - one which has not been extensively reflected upon by scholars.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Language: Greek. Date: Tb 1-12 [50-100 BCE], 13-14 [post 70 CE], according to Zimmerman, *Tobit*, 24, 25-27 respectively.

<sup>51</sup>See further, Knight, *Disciples*, 104-106.

<sup>52</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 90, suggests that Raphael's function as 'tester' means that he is identified as the angel of Yahweh who was sent to test Abraham (Gn 22.11-18).

<sup>53</sup>In addition to angelological material from Tobit which seems to be reflected in the Apc we may also note parallels between the visions of Jerusalem in each book (Tb 13.9-17, cf. Apc 21.10-21).

<sup>54</sup>Knight, *Disciples*, 104-110.

<sup>55</sup>An exception is Knight, *op. cit.*, 104-110; cf. Segal, "Ascent", 1372. On Raphael see Michl, "Engel", 252-254.

### §3.3.2 Jacob-Israel

In a text known as *The Prayer of Joseph* we read of an extraordinary angel. The main source for this text is Origen, *Comm. Joh.* 2.189-190, which means that its *terminus a quo* is 231 CE. However it has been argued that a first century CE date for the original text is quite possible.<sup>56</sup>

'I, Jacob, who is speaking to you, am also Israel, an angel of God and a ruling spirit. Abraham and Isaac were created before anywork. But, I, Jacob, who men call Jacob but whose name is Israel am he who God called Israel which means, a man seeing God, because I am the firstborn of every living thing to whom God gives life. And when I was coming up from Syrian Mesopotamia, Uriel, the angel of God, came forth and said that I [Jacob-Israel] had descended to earth and I had tabernacled among men and that I had been called by the name Jacob. He envied me and fought with me and wrestled with me saying that his name and the name that is before every angel was to be above mine. I told him his name and what rank he held among the sons of God. Are you not Uriel, the eighth after me? and I, Israel, the archangel of the power of the Lord and the chief captain among the sons of God? Am I not Israel, the first minister before the face of God? And I called upon my God by the inextinguishable name' (Pr. Jos. Fragment A).<sup>57</sup>

It is possible that the *Prayer* envisages Jacob as a heavenly being who has adopted human form in an attempt to deny the uniqueness of Jesus by presenting another example of a heavenly power descended from God who becomes a human.<sup>58</sup> But even if this text has been influenced by Christian ideas, the idea of a heavenly being *appearing* to be human was not new to Judaism (cf. Gn 18.1-8, Tobit 12.11-15). Hence this example need not be

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<sup>56</sup>E.g. Smith, J.Z., "Prayer", 26 n4, who notes parallelism between *Pr. Jos.*, Philo and other hellenistic Jewish material (which not only points to a first century date, but to an Alexandrian provenance); but he recognises the implications of 'eight' archangels which could reflect second century developments, [*idem*, p. 47 n.52]. Dunn, *Christology*, 21, argues that a date for the *Pr. Jos.* before the second century CE is difficult to maintain on the grounds that it presupposes 'a more developed ranking among the archangels' than is found elsewhere in the 1st century CE. But it is conceivable that *Pr. Jos.* was at the forefront of developments in ranking.

<sup>57</sup>Smith, J.Z., *OTP*, ii, 713.

<sup>58</sup>Knight, *Disciples*, 90, counters this idea by noting Origen's silence about any such polemic.

understood solely as a kind of apologetic strategem. It may well represent the possibility that some Jewish circles, even in the first century C.E., comfortably accommodated (a) the idea that an angel could take on human form, and (b) the possibility of pre-existence for a human being.<sup>59</sup>

According to J.Z. Smith it is a 'moot question' whether Jacob-Israel is, viz., 'a thoroughly docetic figure ...[or] an appearance and incarnation of a heavenly power ...or a heavenly messenger'.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless *Pr. Jos.* opens up interesting possibilities for the discussion of first century CE angelology and christology. In particular it raises the question whether Jewish angelology independently and (more or less) simultaneously with the earliest christology developed the idea that a heavenly being could become incarnate.

In short: if Jesus Christ were believed to have been an angel, within the context of Jewish angelology this belief was not necessarily incompatible with the belief that he had once been a human being.

### §3.3.3 Michael

We have already briefly considered Michael. One of his roles was believed to be the protection of Israel. This role may have its roots in an enigmatic text in Deuteronomy 32.8-9:

'When the Most High apportioned the nations, when he divided humankind, he fixed the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the gods  
(בני ישראל, MT; ἄγγέλων θεοῦ, LXX); 9 Yahweh's own portion was his people, Jacob his allotted share'.

This passage is something of a 'storm-centre' in the debate over the origins of and adherence to the monotheism of Israelite religion.<sup>61</sup> Briefly, the LXX implies that

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<sup>59</sup>For 'Introduction' to *Pr. Jos.* see Smith J.Z., "Prayer" (1978). Note Smith, M., "Account", 743, who finds no less than five Palestinian teachers of the first century CE whose followers believed them to have been an 'appearance or incarnation of a particular supernatural power', and concludes, p. 749, that such belief was 'reasonably common in first century Palestine'. A major difficulty with this proposal is its reliance on reading prior reality into later writings.

<sup>60</sup>Smith, "Prayer", 60-61.

<sup>61</sup>See, e.g., recent discussion about non-monotheistic Israelite religion by Hayman, "Monotheism",

responsibility for each nation was given to an angel of God. The LXX presupposes an original בני עליון, but the MT has בני ישראל. If the Hebrew originally had בני עליון instead of בני ישראל then Deut. 32.8-9 could mean that Yahweh was one of the sons of the Most High, that is, the son to whom Israel was assigned. In other words, two divine beings are in view: (1) Elyon who is superior to (2) Yahweh.<sup>62</sup> That the Hebrew may have actually been בני עלן rather than בני ישראל is suggested by a Qumran fragment.<sup>63</sup>

Much remains speculative here. The possibility that 'Elyon' and 'Yahweh' are parallel references to the same being must not be discounted.<sup>64</sup> Deuteronomy is a work noted for its monotheism so that the possibility that it includes a text which denies monotheism needs to be viewed carefully.<sup>65</sup>

What we can see, however, is that the special role which is envisaged in Deut 32.8-9 for Yahweh over Israel, is transferred to Michael according to other writings such as Daniel.<sup>66</sup> Why and how this should be so cannot detain us here. What we can recognise is that Michael takes up a role of Yahweh. This fact alone may account for the high status of Michael within the angelic hierarchy.

#### §3.3.4 The Angel of Truth

The 'Angel of Truth', also known as the 'Prince of Light'<sup>67</sup> has a special role over 'the children of righteousness' within the Qumran writings. In this he is contrasted with his opposite, 'the Angel of Darkness' who rules over 'the children of falsehood' (1 QS 3.20-22). In carrying out this role the Prince of Light works in partnership with God:

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esp. p.6, and Barker, *Angel*, esp. p.4-27.

<sup>62</sup>Eissfeldt, "El", 28-30.

<sup>63</sup>Skehan, "Fragment", 12-15, esp. p.12; cf. Barker, *Angel*, 5-11.

<sup>64</sup>Cf. *Sir.* 17.17, *Jub.* 15.31-32.

<sup>65</sup>Mullen, *Divine*, 204, argues for the identification of Elyon and Yahweh.

<sup>66</sup>Cf. *Ps.-Clem.* Recognitions 2.42 and Homilies 18.4. Note *Jub.* 15.32 which denies that any angel has been appointed over Israel.

<sup>67</sup>Davidson, *Angels*, 147.



'The Angel of Darkness leads all the children of righteousness astray ..... But the God of Israel and His Angel of Truth (ומלאך אמתו) will succour (עזר) all the sons of light' (1QS 3.20-24, cf. 1 QM 13.10, 17-5-8).<sup>68</sup>

In texts such as these there is 'a limited form of cosmic dualism' which in no way diminishes the position of God as superior to all angels.<sup>69</sup> Although other texts such as 1 QH 11.13 refer to the angels as 'the everlasting host' there is no hint or support given to the idea that the angels and God are coeval.<sup>70</sup> God is transcendent over the Angel of Truth.

We need not doubt that the Prince of Light is an angel, noting that the term 'prince' (שר) is used of angels in Daniel (e.g. Dn 10.20-21).<sup>71</sup> Though we should observe that the Prince of Light is specifically identified as a 'spirit' (רוח) in 1 QS 3.25. Clearly the 'Prince of Light' corresponds to the angel Michael in respect of his function as the guardian angel of Israel,<sup>72</sup> but whether the Prince of Light should be identified as Michael continues to be debated.<sup>73</sup> The antipathy between the Angel of Truth/Prince of Light and the Angel of Darkness corresponds to that found in Apc 12.7 where Michael and his angelic army fight against the dragon and his angelic army.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>DSSE, 65. Hebrew from TAQ, 10.

<sup>69</sup>Davidson, *Angels*, 309.

<sup>70</sup>Davidson, *Angels*, 290.

<sup>71</sup>Davidson, *Angels*, 147-148.

<sup>72</sup>Cf. DSSE, 53.

<sup>73</sup>Yadin, *Scroll*, 235-236 argues for identification with Michael. Davidson, *Angels*, 148-149 agrees with Yadin, while arguing against identification with Uriel, (so Wernberg-Møller, *Manuel*, 71). Bampfylde, "Prince", 132-133 argues that since the Angel gives help 'to the kingdom of Michael' (1 QM 17.6) he is not Michael. She equates him with the 'Prince of Host' in Dn 8.11 and the 'man' in Dn 10.5-6.

<sup>74</sup>On parallels between the Apc and Qumran writings see Böcher, "Johannes-Apokalypse", 3894-3897; Comblin, *Christ*, 106-119.

### §3.3.5 Melchizedek

The high status of the Angel of Truth/Prince of Light is mirrored in a passage about Melchizedek in a Hebrew text from Qumran dating from no later than 50 CE.<sup>75</sup>

‘For this is the moment of the year of Grace for Melchizedek. [And h]e will, by his strength, judge the holy ones of God, executing judgement as it is written concerning him in the Songs of David, who said, ELOHIM [אלוהים] has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods [אלוהים] he holds judgement [Ps 82.1]. And it was concerning him that he said, (Let the assembly of the peoples) return to the height above them; EL (god) [אל] will judge the peoples [Ps 7.7-8]’ (11QMelch).<sup>76</sup>

In this fragmentary document, of which we have only included a small part, Melchizedek is a heavenly being of great status, possibly to be identified with Michael,<sup>77</sup> but in any case with the Prince of Light.<sup>78</sup> Notable is the application of אל and אלוהים to Melchizedek.<sup>79</sup> Normally these Hebrew words mean ‘God’, or ‘god’, but they are not always applied to deities: cf. Moses ‘as a אלוהים’ to Aaron, (Ex 7.1). In some contexts they can mean ‘judge’,<sup>80</sup> which would be appropriate in this instance since Melchizedek executes the judgements of God. In one instance, 1 Sm 28.13, אלוהים refers to the ghost of Samuel.

Nevertheless, 11QMelch involves the interpretation of scriptures in which אלוהים would normally be understood as a reference to God.<sup>81</sup> Thus Melchizedek’s action on behalf of God seems to be analogous to, say, the angel of Yahweh on those occasions in the OT when he acts, speaks, and inspires reaction as though it were God actually

<sup>75</sup>Horton, *Melchizedek*, 73, 80.

<sup>76</sup>DSSE, 301 = lines 9-11a of text given in De Jonge & van der Woude, “11Q Melchizedek”, 302.

<sup>77</sup>De Jonge & van der Woude, “11Q Melchizedek”, 305, note that this identification is not made explicit in available Qumran texts; explicit identification is only found in certain medieval Jewish texts; cf. Dunn, *Christology*, 152-153; Horton, *Melchizedek*, 81.

<sup>78</sup>So Bampfyld, “Prince”, 133.

<sup>79</sup>Horton, *Melchizedek*, 75.

<sup>80</sup>DSSE, 300.

<sup>81</sup>Cf. Ps 82.1-2; 7.7-8; Is 52.7. Note Carmignac, “Le document” (1970), who argues that the Qumran author means God, not Melchizedek, when אל/אלוהים are used in scriptural quotations; cf. response from Delcor, “Melchizedek”, 133-134; Segal, *Powers*, 194.

present.<sup>82</sup>

Melchizedek is probably to be understood as one of the אֱלֹהִים, that is, as an angel.<sup>83</sup> Certainly there is no reason to think that the author of 11QMelch would have thought of Melchizedek another divine being alongside the deity.<sup>84</sup> Thus Melchizedek appears to be an angel who can stand in for God in the heavenly council (cf. Zech 3.1).

### §3.3.6 The Angel of the Presence

An angel described as 'the angel of the presence' has an important role in the saving of Israel in two different texts. Is 63.9 according to one reading says of Israel,

'In all their distress he was distressed; the angel of his presence saved them

(בכל-צרתם לא צר ומלאך פניו הושיעם);

in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;

he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old'.

This reading corresponds to the following pointing of the first five words which we have cited in Hebrew:

בְּכָל-צָרְתָם לֹא צָר וּמְלָאךְ.

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<sup>82</sup>Horton, *Melchizedek*, 77, suggests that אֱלֹהִים applied to Melchizedek indicates that 'he was regarded as some sort of super-human figure'.

<sup>83</sup>De Jonge & van der Woude, "11Q Melchizedek", 304, 321-322. Cf. Fitzmyer, "Light", 37; Milik, "Milki-sedeq", 95-144. On Melchizedek as an angel see Laubscher, "Angel", 51. On the early Christian belief that Melchizedek was an angel, rather than a man, cf. De Jonge & van der Woude, "11Q Melchizedek": Appendix, 323-326. Cf. 4Q491 fr.11: 1 [= Michael] am reckoned among the gods' (אֱנִי עִם אֱלֹהִים אֲתַחֲשֵׁב) [DJD vii, 27].

<sup>84</sup>Cf. Casey, *Prophet*, 93. Contrast 11QMelch with 4Q403 1 i 30-46 which speaks of אֱלֹהִים (e.g. lines 31, 32, 33), but in a context where the אֱלֹהִים are urged to praise God. Newsom, *Songs*, 211-212, translates אֱלֹהִים as 'godlike beings'.

Another reading is possible, however, which corresponds to the LXX and to the following pointing of the same words:

בְּכָל־צָרָתָם: לֹא צָר וּמַלְאָךְ (cf. ἐκ πάσης θλίψεως οὐ πρέσβυς οὐδὲ ἄγγελος, LXX; i.e. 'in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them').

The variant readings are evidence of a significant debate over whether God acted alone or through an agent.<sup>85</sup> That some Jews believed that God did act through an agent designated the 'angel of the presence' is supported by consideration of a passage from *Jub.* 48.

*The Book of Jubilees* is for the most part a retelling of Gen 1.1 to Ex 15.22. It was originally composed in Hebrew, although the only complete text is in Ethiopic.<sup>86</sup> Paleographic dating of fragments found at Qumran point to a date prior to 100 BCE.<sup>87</sup> On internal grounds a date between *ca.* 163 and *ca.* 140 BCE has been proposed.<sup>88</sup> *Jub.* unveils a developed angelology, with a particular emphasis on angels with responsibility for different aspects of nature (2.2).<sup>89</sup>

One angel in particular stands out because of his role as the revealer of the content of the book (1.27, 2.1). This angel is in fact 'the angel of the presence who went before the camp of Israel' (1.29).<sup>90</sup> In *Jub.* 48 the angel retells the story of Exodus 7-14. Of particular interest are these verses:

'And despite all the signs and wonders, Prince Mastema was not shamed until he had become strong and called to the Egyptians so that they might pursue after you with all the army of Egyptians with their chariots, and with their horses, and with all the

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<sup>85</sup>Stier, *Gott*, 153-155.

<sup>86</sup>Cf. VanderKam, *Studies*, 95.

<sup>87</sup>Wintermute, *OTP*, ii, 43.

<sup>88</sup>VanderKam, *Studies*, 283, prefers a date between *ca.* 163 and *ca.* 152 BCE; Wintermute, *OTP*, ii, 44, suggests a date between 161 and 140 BCE.

<sup>89</sup>Wintermute, *OTP*, ii, 55. For Ethiopic text see VanderKam, *Jubilees: A Critical Text* (1989).

<sup>90</sup>Fossum, *Name*, 260, argues that this angel is Michael (on the basis of, e.g., 1 *En.* 60).

multitude of the people of Egypt. 13. And I stood between the Egyptians and Israel, and we delivered them out through the midst of the sea as through dry land. 14. And all the people whom he brought out to pursue after Israel, the Lord our God threw into the middle of the sea ... 18. And on the fourteenth day we bound him so that he might not accuse the children of Israel ...' (Jub. 48.12-14, 18).<sup>91</sup>

The angel's description of his own role in foiling the intentions of Mastema takes up an element present in the Book of Exodus itself (cf. 'the angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them ...', Ex 14.19). But in *Jub.* this element is extended. In Ex 7-14 on a number of occasions the principal intervening figure on Israel's side is Yahweh himself (e.g. Ex 11.1; 12.29; 14.21), so that the angel of God seems almost incidental to the action. But in *Jub.* the angel acts in partnership with God, and plays a major role in the support of Israel. It is true that the angel nevertheless signifies that the principal actor is still God (e.g. *Jub.* 48.14), but an altogether different impression is conveyed in *Jub.* to that in Exodus.

Here then is an example, well before the Christian era, which represents a belief in God working in partnership with an angel. God does not work through the angel in such a way that the angel is incidental to the action. Whether this kind of view has provoked the antithetical reading of Is 63.9 which asserts that it was 'no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them' or whether it is drawn from the reading of Is 63.9 as 'the angel of his presence saved them' we cannot be sure. Nor is it easy to determine the exact status of the angel of the presence in *Jub.* when *Jub.* 15.32 explicitly expresses the view that God has not appointed an angel over Israel but rules Israel directly.

What is the significance of *Jub.* 48? Hayman, for example, has argued that it is 'just one example of how Jewish angelology reveals a pattern of religion that is anything but monotheistic'.<sup>92</sup> But is this a fair comment? The angel is not worshipped nor is he ever presented as the equal of God. Rather, his equal (and opposite) is Mastema. The angel's use of 'we' implies cooperation between God and the angel. But there is no reason to think that this has any implications for the divine status of the angel.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>Wintermute, *OTP*, ii, 139-140.

<sup>92</sup>Hayman, "Monotheism", 8.

<sup>93</sup>Gammie, "Dualism", 368-369, argues that this is 'ethical dualism', reflecting the battle between

The combination 'God', 'the angel of the Presence', and their foe 'Mastema' corresponds to the combination of 'God', 'the Angel of Truth', and the 'Prince of Darkness' in the Qumran literature.<sup>94</sup> Once again we find an angel working in partnership with God to foil the plans of the anti-God power.

### §3.3.7 Metatron

No survey of 'principal angels' is complete without consideration of Metatron. The texts which report his existence and activity are all post-first century CE. 3 *Enoch* (also known as *Sepher ha-Hekhalot*), for example, dates from well past the end of the first century CE.<sup>95</sup> B. Hagigah15a suggests that traditions involving Metatron might date from early in the second century CE. For the visionary involved in the events it describes, Aher, *alias* Elisha ben Abuya, lived *ca.* 110-135 CE. Whether the story actually dates from such a period (or even earlier) is another matter.<sup>96</sup>

Metatron is God's 'servant, the angel Metatron, Prince of the Divine Presence' (3 *En.* 1.4).<sup>97</sup> He is no ordinary angel as the following observations drawn from 3 *Enoch* demonstrate. In 3 *En* 4.2 we are told that Metatron is Enoch. In 3 *En* 8 Metatron is bestowed with qualities such as wisdom and holiness, while in ch. 9 he is blessed, enlarged in stature, and given every splendour and brightness. In 10.1 Metatron receives 'a throne like the throne of glory', and in 10.3-5 the Holy One appoints Metatron as his vice-regent, as 'a prince and a ruler over all the denizens of the heights', to hear whatever any angel or prince has to say in God's presence, and to command things in the name of God. In 12.5 Metatron is called 'the lesser Yahweh', a name which is explicitly connected with the angel of good and evil in *Jub.* Note that Hurtado, *God* (1988), Rowland, *Heaven* (1982), and Barker, *Angel* (1992), fail to discuss the implications of *Jub.* 48.

<sup>94</sup>Contrast, however, the recognition at Qumran of Michael's special role over Israel (e.g. 1 QM 17.5-8) with *Jub.* 15.32 which denies such a role to any angel.

<sup>95</sup>Alexander, *OTP*, i, 229. Cf. Odeberg, *Enoch*, 41, 'the latter half of the third century CE'; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 196, compiled ... probably in the 6th century CE'.

<sup>96</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 60, argues that the tradition is a 'late addition to the Babylonian Talmud'. On the origin of Metatron traditions, see Scholem, *Gnosticism*, 43-48; Odeberg, *Enoch*, 79-146; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 195-198.

<sup>97</sup>Alexander, *OTP*, i, 256.

Ex 23.21 of whom Yahweh said 'My name shall be in him'.<sup>98</sup> All of these factors contribute to the background of the dramatic story which follows:

[Metatron speaks]: 'At first I sat upon a great throne at the door of the seventh palace, and I judged all the denizens of the heights on the authority of the Holy One, blessed be he. .... But when Aher came to behold the vision of the chariot and set eyes upon me, he was afraid and trembled before me. His soul was alarmed to the point of leaving him because of his fear, dread and terror of me, when he saw me seated upon a throne like a king, with the ministering angels standing beside me as servants and all the princes of the kingdoms crowned with crowns surrounding me. Then he opened his mouth and said, "There are indeed two powers in heaven". Immediately a divine voice came out from the presence of the Shekinah and said, "Come back to me, apostate sons, apart from Aher". Then Anapi'el YHWH, the honoured, glorified, beloved, wonderful, terrible and dreadful Prince, came at the command of the Holy One, blessed be he, and struck me with sixty lashes of fire and made me stand on my feet' (3 *En.* 16.1-5).<sup>99</sup>

This story appears to have been told in order to make a specific point, namely, that there is only one power in heaven.<sup>100</sup>

The fact that Metatron is identified with Enoch and is called 'the lesser Yahweh' suggests that he results from the fusion of the exalted patriarch Enoch (cf. 1 *En.* 71.14) with the angel Yahoel (*Apc. Abr.* 10).<sup>101</sup> If this is so then the speculation about the status of angels and exalted patriarchs such as Enoch has gone beyond the point reached in the case of Yahoel. Impressive though Yahoel is, he is perceived as a non-divine being. But with Metatron the situation is altered - this angel has become, for some at least, 'a second power in heaven'. Such an explanation is significant in another way for it provides another reason

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<sup>98</sup>Cf. b. Sanhedrin 38b.

<sup>99</sup>Alexander, *OTP*, i, 268. Cf. b. Hagigah 15a. The two versions are set out in parallel in Rowland, *Heaven*, 335-336; see also discussion in Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 205-206.

<sup>100</sup>Cf. Segal, Powers, 102; Odeberg, *Enoch*, 85-86. Note b. Sanh. 38b which rejects the notion that Metatron can be worshipped.

<sup>101</sup>Alexander, *OTP*, i, 244; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 195, notes that this is the only occasion in *Hekhalot* literature that Enoch is identified with Metatron, and, p.200, notes that only in *Tg Ps.-J Gn* 5.24 is such identification made elsewhere in midrashic and Talmudic literature.

why we should accept that speculation about Metatron stems from the second century CE, since both *Apc. Abr.* and *Sim. En.* probably stem from no earlier than the mid to late first century CE.<sup>102</sup>

### §3.3.8 Principal Angels in the New Testament

We have so far concentrated attention on angelology in Jewish apocalypses and related literature. When we turn to the NT (outside the Apc) we find that angels are very much the subordinates of God. There is no confusion as to whether this or that encounter with an 'angel of the Lord' is actually an encounter with God. In descriptions of such encounters there is no attempt made to worship the angel. The title 'the angel of the Lord' does not appear to be applied to any one angel but is used as a title for distinctive angels of God.<sup>103</sup>

The NT (outside the Apc) mentions 'angels' (plural) on some sixty occasions, so that the idea that angels are important feature of God's world is well attested. In the light of this observation it is striking to find that there is so little material concerning the more important angels (e.g. 'Michael' is only mentioned in Jude 9). This paucity suggests that either Jesus was held to have made the role of these angels redundant or that in the light of the glory and exaltation of Jesus to God's right hand angels were of less importance as mediators between God and humanity.

### §3.3.9 Conclusion

Principal angels in literature before the end of the first century CE were known to occupy roles as representative of God, and even as (junior) partner to God. But only beyond this period do we find an angel who is recognised (by some) as another power alongside God in heaven.

We have observed that angels were believed to function in two ways which corresponded

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<sup>102</sup>Scholem, *Trends*, 44 suggest the merger may have been as late as the third or fourth centuries CE; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 200, views the exaltation of Enoch as a polemic against Christianity; Segal, *Powers*, 63-64, sees the origins for the mediating principal angel in the first century CE but cannot demonstrate that this angel was identified with Metatron.

<sup>103</sup>Hirth, *Boten*, 29-30.



to beliefs about the activity of Jesus Christ. First, angels could appear to be human, and, in one case, even to have become incarnate. Secondly, angels could act in partnership with God and to represent God as a kind of vizier - even to be designated 'God'.

### §3.4 THE WORSHIP OF ANGELS?

None of the texts we have examined so far can reasonably be construed as implying that angels were worshipped by Jews prior to the rise of Christianity. The example of Metatron suggests that concomitant developments to the worship of angels, such as the claim that there were 'two powers' in heaven, stem from a period later than the first century CE.

It is true that the *Kerygma Petrou* refers to 'Jews ... worshipping angels'.<sup>104</sup> But this is likely to be a pejorative characterization of Jewish cultic practice rather than accurate description of the actual situation.<sup>105</sup> Conversely, it has been plausibly argued that the reference in Col 2.18 to the θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων refers to the worship performed by angels (cf. the Angel Liturgy at Qumran)<sup>106</sup> rather than to humans worshipping angels.<sup>107</sup>

This and other relevant literature normally cited in support of the claim that angels were worshipped in 'Greco-Roman Jewish Circles' has been examined by Hurtado.<sup>108</sup> He concludes that there is no evidence which implies that the worship of angels was 'a regular part of ancient Jewish cultic practice'. Nevertheless Hurtado recognises that it would be unwise to presume that no ancient Jew ever compromised monotheism by participating in the worship of angels.<sup>109</sup> Rainbow, in his review article of Hurtado's book, *One God, One Lord*, agrees with Hurtado's assessment although he questions Hurtado's argument as 'not altogether convincing'.<sup>110</sup> In its place Rainbow offers a different argument which

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<sup>104</sup>Schneelmacher, *NTA*, ii, 100. *Idem*, 95, dates *Kerygma Petrou* to between 80 and 110 CE.

<sup>105</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 33-34.

<sup>106</sup>Found in Newsom, *Songs* (1985); *DSSE*, 221-230.

<sup>107</sup>Francis, "Humility", 126-134.

<sup>108</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 28-34.

<sup>109</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 35.

<sup>110</sup>Rainbow, "Monotheism", 83, who notes *Ps.-Ph.* 13.6 as a text overlooked by Hurtado [though this text scarcely amounts to sufficient reason to reject Hurtado]. Also overlooked are those texts in *Sim. En.* in which the son of man figure or Chosen One is apparently worshipped (1 *En.* 48.5, 62.6,9). The 'worship' of this figure could be explained as the worship of an eschatological figure (cf.

concludes that whatever angel worship which may have taken place must have been 'a declension from a socially shared ideal'. Rainbow suggests that the fact 'εἰς and μόνος formulae' are reserved for God alone within Judaism (in contrast to pagan applications of these formulae to plural gods and goddesses) corroborates this conclusion.<sup>111</sup>

An important point with respect to the Apc can be made in the light of these comments.

When John describes the angel's refusal of worship in Apc 19.10 and 22.9 it may have been because he wished to counter a tendency in the church in Asia Minor to worship angels,<sup>112</sup> or because he wished to warn against the inauguration of angel worship as a deviation from monotheism.<sup>113</sup> In either case it is noticeable that the worship commended by the angel is the worship of God alone. That is, John does not envisage the worship of Jesus as an alternative to angel worship or propose that Jesus is to be preferred to an angel as an object of worship. John's concept of worship is firmly monotheistic in line with the major, if not universal, practice of ancient Judaism. When the Apc depicts Jesus as the object of worship (e.g. 5.9-12, 22.1-4) then it presupposes that Jesus is able to be worshipped because in some way he is identified with God rather than because an existing practice of angel worship provides a precedent for a second figure to be worshipped alongside God.<sup>114</sup>

In short: the worship of Jesus in the Apc is unlikely to have been a matter which was directly influenced by the worship of angels.

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Rainbow's discussion of this, *op. cit.*, 88 n.22) or as 'eschatological subjection of men to God's vicegerent' (Bauckham, "Worship", 339 n.47).

<sup>111</sup>Rainbow, "Monotheism", 83, with literature cited in n.14.

<sup>112</sup>So, e.g., Swete, 245; Beckwith, 729; Morris, 228.

<sup>113</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 30.

<sup>114</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 331.

### §3.5 CONCLUSION

We have examined a number of angels who conduct the affairs of God not as mere underlings but as powerful ministers within the divine government. Some angelophanies are reminiscent of theophanies. Yahoel has the divine name. Melchizedek is designated *elohim*. The angel of the presence, according to *Jub. 48*, talks of acting with God in terms of 'we'.

It is noticeable, however, that the power, majesty, and close relationship to God of these angels never results in the angel being worshipped or acclaimed as a second power in heaven before the end of the first century CE according to the literature we have examined. We do not (and cannot) claim that angels were never worshipped or acclaimed by some Jews and Christians on some occasions before 100 CE. But we can observe that such practices seem to have had a minimal impact on the apocalypses and related writings which feature glorious angels of high status. In the particular case of the Apc it would appear that the worship of Jesus is not a matter influenced by angelology.

We have also observed that there is no consistent identity for the chief angel. Thus there is no reason to think that one angelic figure was the subject of speculation about sharing in divine status or standing alongside God as an equal. The variety of angels observed in the position of chief angel and the fact that in some cases four or seven angels form the leading group of angels, suggests that the significance of an apparent dualism between God and one outstanding angel should not be exaggerated.

Some angels, such as Raphael and Jacob-Israel, open out the possibility of a powerful angel coming to earth, either feigning human appearance or indwelling a known figure, in order to function in the service of God.

In short: although glorious in form and exalted in status, the angels considered here push at the boundaries of monotheism but in the end do not break it before the second century CE (and even then with a strong and vigorous response). In other words, the angelology which influenced the christology of the Apc was, in all likelihood, an angelology in which an angel was an angel and not a divine being.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# ANGELOMORPHIC FIGURES

### §4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we extend our study of the context of the Apc's christology to include the study of figures who may be compared with angels in some way. First we consider accounts of exalted humans - both those who appear in glorious form like the angels we have just considered and those who do not have their form described but whose status is similar to that of the principal angels. Our special interest is in those whose form is similar to the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16 (i.e. Noah and Jacob). Inevitably our discussion of each figure is limited: for example, although Philo has something to say about most of the figures referred to, we will only consider what he has to say about Moses. Secondly we consider the *Logos* in writings which speak of him as an angelomorphic figure (i.e. the Wisdom of Solomon and the writings of Philo).

### §4.2 EXALTED HUMANS

#### §4.2.1 Adam

In *Test. Abr.* Abraham sees a glorious figure whose appearance 'was terrifying, like the Master's' (11.5). Abraham enquires of Michael as to the identity of 'this most wondrous man' (11.9). He is told that it is 'the first former Adam who is in such glory' (11.10).<sup>1</sup> Specific details of the form of this figure are not given.<sup>2</sup>

Speculation about Adam as the glorious archetypal man has been drawn into discussion of (so called) Adam christology in recent years.<sup>3</sup> References in texts such as *Vit. Ad. Evae* 13-16<sup>4</sup> to the worship of Adam as 'the image of God' have fuelled hypotheses

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<sup>1</sup>Sanders, *OTP*, i, 888. Note also 4Q504 frag. 8, 'Thou has fashioned A[dam], our [f]ather in the likeness of [Thy] glory' [*DSSE*, 220].

<sup>2</sup>On *Test. Abr.* see further, Nickelsburg, *Studies* (1976).

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Dunn, *Christology*, 98-128, with further references in notes, pp. 305-315.

<sup>4</sup>Johnson, *OTP*, ii, 252, dates *Vit. Ad. Evae* to the end of the first century CE. This does not

concerning the worship of Adam as a precursor to the worship of Christ.<sup>5</sup> A tendency to suppose the existence of an 'Adam speculation' or 'Adam myth' in ancient Judaism has been criticised recently by Levison who argues that diversity rather than unity is the characteristic of portraits of Adam in texts dated between 200 BCE and 135 CE.<sup>6</sup> The corollary of this conclusion is that caution needs to be exercised before presuming that worship of Adam was a widespread phenomenon in pre-Christian Judaism.<sup>7</sup> For example, Steenburg who specifically addresses the question of the influence of the worship of Adam on the worship of Christ,<sup>8</sup> does not adequately account for the fact that the worship of Adam in *Vit. Ad. Evae* 13 is commanded by God rather than a natural response to the perception that Adam was a divine being.

#### §4.2.2 Abel

We have already considered glorious angels and Adam in *Test. Abr.* One of the more detailed epiphanic account features the patriarch Abel:

'And between the two gates there stood a terrifying throne with the appearance of terrifying crystal, flashing like fire. And upon it sat a wondrous man, bright as the sun, like unto a son of God. Before him stood a table, like crystal, all of gold and byssus'

καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν δύο πυλῶν ἴστατο θρόνος φοβερὸς ἐν εἴδει κρυστάλλου φοβεροῦ ἐξαστράπτουν ὡς πῦρ καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἐκάθητο ἀνὴρ θαύμαστος ἠλιόρατος ὁμοίος υἱῷ θεοῦ (*Test. Abr. Rec. A* 12.4-5).<sup>9</sup>

preclude its preservation of earlier traditions.

<sup>5</sup>E.g. Steenburg, "Worship" (1990). Steenburg, *op. cit.*, 95, points out that Hurtado, *God* (1988) overlooks the worship of Adam as 'a crucial warrant for the worship of Christ'. Dunn, *Christology*, 98-128, does not discuss the worship of Adam.

<sup>6</sup>Levison, *Portraits*, esp. pp. 13-14, 159-160.

<sup>7</sup>The author is grateful to Prof. L. Hurtado for drawing his attention to Steenburg and Levison's discussion of this matter.

<sup>8</sup>Steenburg, "Worship", 96-107.

<sup>9</sup>Sanders, *OTP*, i, 889. 'Byssus' is linen. Date: c.100 CE (*Idem*, 875); Kalenkow, "Angelology", 157 argues for a second cent. CE date; Turner, *AOT*, 394-395, argues for an original testament dating from c.0 CE with *Rec. A* dating from 3rd cent. CE, and *Rec. A* from 6th cent. CE. Greek from

Describing Abel as 'like a son of God' implies that he is like one of the angels.<sup>10</sup> This may be contrasted with the description of an angel or heavenly being as 'like a (son of) man' (e.g. Ezek 1.26, Dn 7.13, 10.5,16).<sup>11</sup> The epiphany of Abel, as with some angelophanies, incorporates theophanic elements. Thus 'a terrifying throne with the appearance of terrifying crystal, flashing like fire' may be compared with the throne-theophanies in Ezek 1, esp. v.4, 22, 26, and in 1 *En.* 14.8-24, esp. v.10, 18.<sup>12</sup>

### §4.2.3 Enoch

According to Gn 5.24 Enoch did not die but was simply taken by God. This remarkable detail appears to be responsible for considerable speculation about his life reflected in the Enoch cycle and elsewhere. Typical is the following account:

'Then an angel came to me [= Enoch], and greeted me with his voice and said to me, You, son of man, who art born in righteousness, and upon whom righteousness has dwelt, the righteousness of the Head of Days will not forsake you' (1 *En.* 71.14).<sup>13</sup>

Many scholars hold that the son of man figure first revealed in 1 *En.* 46.3 is subsequently revealed to be Enoch himself in 71.14.<sup>14</sup> Charles believing this to be anomalous suggested an emendation to the text but this proposal has been generally thought to be dubious.<sup>15</sup> Recently Collins has argued that the supposed identification is problematic.<sup>16</sup> In brief, he argues that 1 *En.* 70.1 makes a clear distinction between Enoch and the heavenly son of man and that the son of man in 71.14 who 'was born in righteousness' is different from the Son of Man in 46.3 who 'has' righteousness. Collins concludes,

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Stone, *Testament*, 28.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. *Asc. Is.* 9.9. Philo, *Sac.* 5, describes Abraham as having 'inherited incorruption and became equal to the angels (ἴσος ἀγγέλοις γεγονώς)'.  
<sup>11</sup>Cf. Kim, *Origin*, 211-212.

<sup>12</sup>Knight, *Disciples*, 89.

<sup>13</sup>Isaac, *OTP*, i, 50.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. Collins, J. J., "Son", 453.

<sup>15</sup>Charles, *APOT*, ii, 237; cf. Collins, "Son", 453.

<sup>16</sup>Collins, "Son", 453-459. Cf. Collins, "Representative", 111-33; contrast with Casey, "Use", 22-23, who affirms the identity between Enoch and the son of man.

‘Enoch, then, is a human being in the likeness of the heavenly Son of Man, and is exalted to share his destiny. According to 1 *En.* 62.14, 71.17, other righteous human beings too will enjoy length of days with *that* Son of Man’.<sup>17</sup>

Thus Collins cautions against readily assuming that 71.14 represents a set of beliefs that a human being could be exalted to the preeminent position in heaven (i.e. apart from that held by God).

Nevertheless 3 *En.* 4.2 and *Tg Ps-J Gn* 5.24 clearly identify Enoch with Metatron,<sup>18</sup> which suggests that some ancient interpreters held that Enoch was exalted to the highest position in heaven.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, we note that description of the glorious angelomorphic form of Enoch is not unknown, at least in one of the later apocalypses:

‘an old man whose face shone like the sun’ (*Apc. Paul* 20).<sup>20</sup>

#### §4.2.4 Noah

In the *Epistle of Enoch* we find this description of the appearance of Noah at his birth:

‘And his body was white as snow and red as a rose; the hair of his head as white as wool and his *demdema*<sup>21</sup> beautiful; and as for his eyes, when he opened them the whole house glowed like the sun - (rather) the whole house glowed even more exceedingly. 3. And when he arose from the hands of the midwife, he opened his mouth and spoke to the Lord with righteousness. 4. And his father, Lamech, was afraid of him and fled and went to Methuselah his father; 5. and he said to him, “I have

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<sup>17</sup>Collins, “Son”, 455-457, citation from p.457.

<sup>18</sup>Odeberg, *Enoch*, 80.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. 1Qap Gen 2.20, ‘he shared the lot [of the angels]’ (so *DSSE*, 253) where Enoch appears to be less than the highest ranked heavenly figure. Note also 2 *En.*22.6 (the angelification of Enoch?).

<sup>20</sup>Duensing, *NTA*, ii, 771.

<sup>21</sup>Isaac, *OTP*, i, 86 note g: ‘This Eth. word has no equivalent in English. It refers to long and curly hair combed up straight, what one calls ..... “afro” in colloquial English’.

begotten a strange son: He is not like an (ordinary) human being, but he looks like the children of the angels of heaven to me; his form is different, and he is not like us. His eyes are like the rays of the sun, and his face glorious. 6 It does not seem to me that he is of me, but of angels; and I fear that a wondrous phenomenon may take place upon the earth in his days' (1 Enoch 106.2-6).<sup>22</sup>

The appearance of Noah shocks Lamech and leads him to conjecture whether he is really his son or 'of the angels'. Enoch is able to reassure Lamech (via Methuselah) that Noah is in fact his son (1 *En.* 106.7-19). Consequently Noah is a human with angelomorphic form. Various details recall angelophanies and theophanies we have already discussed.

The comparison of the body 'as white as snow' recalls Dn 7.9 ('his clothing was white as snow') - the additional detail, 'red as a rose' may reflect the fact that this epiphany is about a new-born baby.<sup>23</sup> The description of Noah's hair, 'white as wool', corresponds to Dn 7.9 ('the hair of his head like pure wool').

The eyes of Noah are compared to the 'rays of the sun', which is different from Dn 10.6, where the eyes are compared with fire.<sup>24</sup> The 'sun' imagery in 1 *En.* 106.2,5 could be due to the influence of 1 *En.* 14.18,20 where comparison with the sun is found, although not in connection with the face of God. The face of Noah is simply 'glorious', which again is different to Dn 10.6 where the face is 'like lightning'. In 1 *En.* 106 the effects of the bright appearance of Noah are given which is a further difference in comparison to Dn 10. Differences such as these suggest that the influence of Dn 10.5-6 on this epiphany is minimal if not non-existent.

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<sup>22</sup>Isaac, *OTP*, i, 86. For Greek version (which does not represent the original language of 1 *En.* 106) see Black, *Graeca*, 43. For reconstructed Aramaic text see Milik, *Enoch*, 207; cf. Fitzmyer, *Genesis*, 167.

<sup>23</sup>Note that the later writing, (*Akhmim*, or *Greek*) *Apc. Peter*, (a secondary edited version of the apocalypse dating from c. 133 CE which is best preserved in Ethiopic [Bauckham, "Peter", 4718; Yarbro Collins, "Early Christian", 72]), describes the bodies of Moses and Elias as 'whiter than any snow and redder than any rose' [Duensing, *NTA*, ii, 681]. Other parallels between the two accounts may be drawn.

<sup>24</sup>The comparison with the sun may reflect traditions concerning the astral gods, Sunya, Mitra, Varuna, [Gressmann, *Ursprung*, 111].





Some scholars have dated 1 *En.* 106 prior to 161 BCE<sup>25</sup> which would mean that the similarities between 1 *En.* 106.2 and Dn 7.9 could then be due to common dependency on a third source such as 1 *En.* 14.18-20 which includes comparison with snow, although not in connection with the hair of God. A more certain period of composition, however, is the first century BCE<sup>26</sup> which would allow for the influence of Dn 7.9.

The inclusion of the comparisons 'white as wool', 'white as snow', and 'like the sun' in the description of Noah is significant. If it represents the influence of Dn 7.9 or 1 *En.* 14 then these comparisons are applied to a figure who is not divine. Noah is (so to speak) superhuman, but Lamech draws the conclusion that he is angel-like rather than God-like. That is, the epiphany of Noah cautions against assuming that the presence of comparisons with wool, snow, and sun in the description of an exalted figure carries with it the implication that the figure is divine.<sup>27</sup>

#### §4.2.5 Jacob

In *Pr. Jos.* the form of the angel Jacob-Israel is not described. But in *Jos. Asen.* the patriarch Jacob appears to Aseneth in angelomorphic form:

'And Aseneth saw him and was amazed at his beauty, because Jacob was exceedingly beautiful to look at, and his old age (was) like the youth of a handsome (young) man, and his head was all white as snow (ἡ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ πᾶσα λευκὴ ὡσεὶ χιῶν), and the hairs of his head were all exceedingly close and thick like (those) of an Ethiopian, and his beard (was) white reaching down to his breast, and his eyes (were) flashing and darting (flashes of) lightning (οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ χαροποιοὶ καὶ ἔξαστράπτοντες), and his sinews and his shoulders and his arms were like (those) of an angel, and his thighs and his calves and his feet like (those) of a

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<sup>25</sup>So Charles, *APOT*, ii, 168. Collins, *Apocalyptic*, 53, suggests pre 160 BCE is plausible though not certain.

<sup>26</sup>Milik, *Enoch*, 5, 56-57, 59, suggests 100-0 BCE on the basis of fragments found at Qumran. See now Nickelsburg, *ABD*, ii, 512, who assesses the Qumran evidence as indicating a date 'before the middle of the first century BCE'.

<sup>27</sup>For other 'birth legends' of Noah see Josephus, *Ant.* 1.72-108; *Jub.* 4-10, 1Qap Gen 2; and 1 Q19 fr. 3 [*DJD* i, 84-6]; cf. Fitzmyer, "Elect", 371; VanderKamm, *Enoch*, 174-177; Hultgard, "Judentum", 551, relates the birth legends of Noah to the birth of Zarathustra.

giant. And Jacob was like a man who had wrestled with God' (*Jos. Asen.* 22.7).<sup>28</sup>

This passage is found in the *a* (or longer) recension but not in the *d* (or shorter) recension so that if *a* is an expansion of an earlier recension (rather than *d* being a contraction of an earlier recension) then it is possible that this passage is late enough to reflect the influence of *Apc* 1.14 itself.

The form of Jacob suggests the influence of *Dn* 10.6 ('his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches'), although the mention of 'flashing and darting' may represent more directly the influence of *Ezek* 1: 'fire flashing forth continually' (v.4); and 'The living creatures darted to and fro, like a flash of lightning' (v.14, cf. v.13). Nothing else about the appearance of Jacob suggests the influence of *Dn* 10.5-6, so that again, as in the case of Noah above, it would appear that the influence of *Dn* 10.5-6 on a glorious figure is minimal if not non-existent.

The additional detail concerning the thickness of the hair recalls the use of the word *demdema* in the description of Noah's hair (*1 En.* 106.2), but otherwise there is no reason to presume that Jacob's description has been influenced by *1 En.* 106.

Jacob has a beard, unlike the Ancient of Days, the risen Jesus, Noah, Yahoel, and the angel in *Jos. Asen.* 14.8-9. But beards are not unknown on exalted patriarchs (cf. Adam in *Test. Abr.* 11.6).

Some parts of the form are clearly influenced by the known wrestling prowess of Jacob. But the significance of comparing sinews, shoulders, and arms to those of an angel is not entirely clear.

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<sup>28</sup>Burchard, *OTP*, i, 238. Greek from Burchard's reconstructed text in Denis, *Concordance*, 857 col. i.

Jacob's head compared with 'snow',

ἡ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ πᾶσα λευκὴ ὡσεὶ χιῶν,

recalls Dn 7.9,

περιβολὴν ὡσεὶ χιόνα, καὶ τὸ τρίχωμα τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ ἔριον  
λευκὸν καθαρόν, LXX;

ἔνδυμα αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ χιῶν λευκόν, καὶ ἡ θριξ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ  
ἔριον καθαρόν, Th.

Closer correspondence, however, is to be found with Apc 1.14 and *Apc. Abr.*:

'the hair of his head like snow' (*Apc. Abr.* 11.2),

ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον λευκὸν ὡς χιῶν (*Apc.*  
1.14).

It is scarcely conceivable that the white head of Jacob is intended as a divine attribute since there is no reason to think that Jacob has become a divine being. Since the old age of Jacob is mentioned, his white head presumably symbolises the ripe age to which he has attained. Once again we find, as in the case of Noah above, that description of the head of a glorious figure is not necessarily indicative of divinity.

#### §4.2.6 Aseneth

We have already considered a glorious angel and the exalted human, Jacob, in *Jos. Asen.*, both of whom appear to Aseneth. But Aseneth herself appears in glorious form in the course of preparing to marry Joseph:

'... her finest robe that shone like lightning (ὡς ἀστραπήν), and she put it on. And she tied a resplendent royal girdle round her waist - and this girdle was of precious stones. And she put golden bracelets round her hands, and golden boots on her feet, and a costly necklace about her neck; and she put a golden crown (χρυσὸν στέφανον) upon her head, and in the crown, in front, were the costliest of stones. ... and her face was like the sun (τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῆς ὡς ὁ ἥλιος), and her eyes like the rising morning star (Jos. Asen. 18.3-5, cf. 14.15-17).<sup>29</sup>

Here Aseneth is transformed into a heavenly beauty. This physical transformation symbolizes her conversion to the faith of Israel.<sup>30</sup> She becomes a creature not dissimilar to an angel (see 20.6).<sup>31</sup> Particularly noticeable in this respect are the descriptive elements 'robe ... like lightning', 'girdle ... of precious stones', 'face ... like the sun', and 'eyes like the rising morning star'. Dn 10.5-6 seems to be in the background here but more distantly than in the case of the angel in *Jos. Asen.* 14.8-9. The transformation of Aseneth in this way enables her to match her husband's glory which has already been described in *Jos. Asen.* 5.5-7.<sup>32</sup>

#### §4.2.7 Moses

We cannot here go into all the material which is available about Moses as an exalted human,<sup>33</sup> but in *The Exagoge of Ezekiel the Tragedian* and in the writings of Philo we have sufficient evidence for the belief that Moses attained an extraordinary position in relation to God.

In *The Exagoge*, a second century BCE text,<sup>34</sup> Moses has a vision in which he sees a throne at the top of Mt. Sinai:

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<sup>29</sup>Cook, *AOT*, 491-492. We depart from our normal practice of citing from *OTP*, because *AOT* follows Philonenko, from whose edition, p.192, the Greek text is cited.

<sup>30</sup>On the transformation of Aseneth see Kee, "Setting", 404-405.

<sup>31</sup>Cf. Charlesworth, "Righteous", 136-137.

<sup>32</sup>See Kee, "Setting", 404, on the significance of the solar imagery in the description of Joseph.

<sup>33</sup>See, e.g., Meeks, "Moses" (1968) and note that various texts adduced as evidence for the deification of Moses at best incorporate traditions dating from earlier than 100 CE.

<sup>34</sup>200 - 100 B.C.E. [Jacobsen, *Exagoge*, 8-13; *OTP*, ii, 804].

A noble man was sitting on it (70),  
with a crown and a large sceptre in his  
left hand. He beckoned to me with his right hand,  
so I approached and stood before the throne.  
He gave me the sceptre and instructed me to sit  
on the great throne. Then he gave me the royal crown (75)  
and got up from the throne ....

An interpretation of the vision is then given:

(*Raguel*) My friend, this is a good sign from God. (83)  
May I live to see the day when these things are fulfilled.  
You will establish a great throne,  
become a judge and leader of men .... (*The Exagoge*: 70-86).<sup>35</sup>

Moses' dream is unique.<sup>36</sup> The apparent replacement of God ('A noble man') by Moses is intriguing. It differs, for example, from Jesus' account in *Apc* 3.21 that he 'sat down *with* [his] Father on his throne'. It is also different from the example of Abel who sits on a 'fearsome throne' but seems to be the representative of God (i.e. on a separate throne) rather than to have replaced God (*Test. Abr.* 12.4-5).

Many but not all scholars argue that Moses is depicted here as the vice-regent of God.<sup>37</sup> Certainly the interpretation of *Raguel* downplays the supreme position of Moses as an exalted patriarch.<sup>38</sup> The assumption of the divine throne is interpreted as the establishment of a great earthly rulership for Moses, rather than as the transformation of Moses into a divine being.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Translation from Jacobsen, *Exagoge*, 55. Greek text in e.g. Eusebius, *Praep.* 9.28-9.

<sup>36</sup>Jacobsen, *Exagoge*, 90.

<sup>37</sup>So Meeks, *Prophet*, 148-9, and "Moses", 359; Hurtado, *God*, 57-59; contrast with van der Horst, "Moses", 21-29; Goodenough, *Light*, 290-291, but see response by Jacobsen, "Mysticism", 272-273. Holladay, "Moses", 448-452, argues that Moses is portrayed as *mantis* similar to Apollo and not as king, also with response by Jacobsen, "Mysticism", 287-289.

<sup>38</sup>Jacobsen, "Mysticism", 273.

<sup>39</sup>For detailed discussion of the dream and its interpretation see further Jacobsen, *Exagoge*, 89-

Even if Moses on the divine throne does not signify his transformation into a divine being the imagery in the dream is striking for it suggests that speculation about human ascent to the divine throne dates from well before the Christian era.

#### Moses According to Philo

Moses occupies a very important place in the aims and intentions of Philo's project to recast the Pentateuch in a manner which engaged with the Hellenistic milieu in which he lived. It is of course not possible to provide here more than a snapshot of Philo's treatment of Moses. Of particular interest is Philo's designation of Moses as θεός. For example:

'There are still others, whom God has advanced even higher, and has trained them to soar above species and genus alike and stationed them beside himself. Such is Moses ... (9) ... He gifted him with no ordinary excellence, such as that which kings and rulers have, wherewith to hold sway and sovereignty over the passions of the soul, but he appointed him as god (ἀλλ' εἰς θεὸν αὐτὸν ἐχειροτόνει), placing all the bodily region and the mind which rules it in subjection and slavery to him' (*Sac.* 8-9).

'Again, was not the joy of his partnership with the Father and Maker of all magnified also by the honour of being deemed worthy to bear the same title? For he was named god and king of the whole nation (ὄλου τοῦ ἔθνους θεὸς καὶ βασιλεύς), and entered, we are told, into the darkness where God was, that is into the unseen invisible, incorporeal and archetypal essence of existing things. Thus he beheld what is hidden from the sight of mortal nature, and, in himself, and in his life displayed for all to see, he has set before us, like some well-wrought picture, a piece of work beautiful and godlike, a model for those who are willing to copy it' (*Vit. Mos* I.158).

Philo does not appear to use the word θεός in connection with Moses in order to assert that he is another God, a rival or an equal partner to God, since what Moses has become is entirely dependent on the power of God (cf. *Vit. Mos.* i.148-163). Rather, Moses as 'god and king of the whole nation' (*Vit. Mos.* i. 158) seems to be something akin to the

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97. On Jewish traditions about Moses cf. Jeremias, "Μωυσης", 849-864.

archangel Michael as prince over Israel (cf. Dn 10.21), while as 'god [over] all the bodily region and the mind which rules it in subjection and slavery' (*Sac.* 9) he seems to be an archetypal good man.<sup>40</sup> But if Moses is not 'the God', then he is described by Philo as having at least the kind of elevated honour and heavenly rank which we have just seen in *The Exagoge*.<sup>41</sup> In this connection we may also note *Sirach* 45.2 where Moses is described as having been made 'equal in glory to the holy ones'.

Philo's treatment of Moses appears to demonstrate the extraordinary extent to which a human being could be conceived to be highly exalted and to enjoy access to the hiddenness of God within the confines of monotheism. Moses in this context corresponds to an angelic figure such as Yahoel. Yet we cannot deny that a certain ambiguity attaches to Moses when seen in Philonic perspective. In *Qu. Ex.* 2.40, for example, there is talk of Moses being 'divinized', although it is not possible to know what Greek word Philo originally used or exactly what was meant by this idea.<sup>42</sup>

### Moses in Glorious Form

Finally, we note that in a second century CE apocalypse Moses is presented in glorious angelomorphic form:

'And behold, there were two men, and we would not look on their faces, for a light came from them which shone more than the sun, and their raiment also was glistening ... And the other, great, I say, shines in his appearance more than hail (crystal) ... like the rainbow in water was his hair ...' (*[Ethiopic] Apoc. Peter* 15).<sup>43</sup>

The two glorious figures are identified as 'Moses and Elias' (*[Ethiopic] Apoc. Peter* 16).

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<sup>40</sup>Cf. Abel as the embodiment of holiness in the same passage (*Sac.* 9). In *Det.* 161-162 Philo denies that Moses actually became a god; cf. Hurtado, *God*, 62.

<sup>41</sup>Space does not permit discussion of how Philo extends the conception of Mose's exaltedness; cf. Segal, *Powers*, 171-172; Goodenough, *By Light*, 199-234.

<sup>42</sup>Cf. Goodenough, *By Light*, 224-229; Segal, *Powers*, 171-172; with evaluation in Hurtado, *God*, 59-63.

<sup>43</sup>Duensing, *NTA*, ii, 680-681.

#### §4.2.8 Samuel

We have adduced examples of exalted humans who appear in glorious form implicitly or explicitly reminiscent of glorious angels. By contrast, in the example cited below, we have a description of Samuel in which his form is said to be theomorphic. The background to this account lies in 1 Sm 28.13f where the 'medium at Endor' reports to Saul that she sees the ghost of Samuel as '(a) god(s) (אלהים, MT; θεοὺς, LXX) coming up out of the ground'. When Josephus recounts this incident he includes the following details:

'the woman, beholding a venerable and godlike man (ἄνδρα σεμνὸν καὶ θεοπρεπῆ ταραύττεται) was overcome and, in her terror ... 333. she replied that she saw someone arise in form like God (τῷ θεῷ τινα τὴν μορφὴν ὅμοιον) ...' (Jos. Ant. 6.332-333).

There can be no question here of Samuel being thought to be a divine being by either the author of 1 Samuel or by Josephus. Probably Josephus is not intending to imply that he knows what the form of God is. Rather he is interpreting what the woman said: she does not literally see God/god(s) but Samuel in the form of God/god(s).<sup>44</sup>

#### §4.2.9 Transformed Humans?

We have noted so far in this chapter humans whose appearance is described as 'like the angels' or 'like the sons of God' (e.g. Noah in 1 *En* 106.2-5, Jacob in *Jos. Asen.* 22.7; Abel in *Test. Abr. Rec. A* 12.4-5). In the case of Noah we observed that his appearance raised the question of whether he was actually an angel but we saw that the answer was negative: Noah was human. In the case of Aseneth (*Jos. Asen.* 18.3-5) we saw that her angelomorphic appearance was the result of a transformation. In this section we consider the question of whether humans were believed to be *transformed* from human beings into angels or angel-like beings.

We have already noted some examples of humans translated to heaven without any implication that they were transformed into another kind of being (such as Enoch according

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<sup>44</sup>Cf. Kim, *Origin*, 212-213.



to Gn 5.24, Sir. 44.16). Other texts imply, perhaps ambiguously, that certain humans such as Enoch and Moses could be transformed on entry to heaven (e.g. 1 *En.* 71.14, Sir. 45.2 respectively), while in a later text such as 3 *En.* 4.2 Enoch is transformed into the angel Metatron. These men were outstanding for their righteousness. Similarly Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who, in Philo's view, join Moses in having been made 'like the angels' (*Sac.* 5-10, cf. *Mos.* 2.290),<sup>45</sup> and Isaiah, who reports how he was transformed and became 'like an angel' (*Asc. Is.* 9.30 Latin<sup>2</sup>/Slavonic). But there are texts which suggest that all the righteous will become like the angels (e.g. 1 *En.* 104.2; *Syr. Bar.* 51.1,5,10,12; 1QS 11.7f; 1 QH 3.22, 4.24f, 6.13, 11.12f; 1 QSa 2.3-11; *Shep. Hermas, Vis.* 2.2.7, *Sim.* 9.25). In Mk 12.25 Jesus makes the point that the resurrected ones are 'like the angels in heaven' and consequently no longer marry. According to Dunn the belief that such transformation of the righteous takes place

'probably owes something to the belief that Adam/man was "created exactly like the angels" (1 *En.* 69.11), "a second angel" (2 *En.* 30.11, cf. Gen 1.26)'.<sup>46</sup>

It is noticeable that in most of these examples humans do not actually become angels, only 'like angels'.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless Charlesworth, surveying a more extensive body of writings than is possible here, concludes that at least as early as 100 CE the concept of humans being transformed into angels was developing in Judaism.<sup>48</sup>

If we depart for a moment from our stated intention to focus on Jewish and Christian literature, we may note that transformation of various kinds of beings (including humans) was certainly a feature of the wider Hellenistic milieu in the first century CE. In a noteworthy passage Plutarch sets forth the doctrine, which he attributes to Hesiod, that there are four classes of beings: 'gods, demigods, heroes ... and last of all men (θεοὺς εἶτα δαίμονᾶ εἶθ ἥρωας τὸ δ' ἐπὶ πασῶν ἀνθρώπων). Plutarch further asserts that transmutation between the different classes is possible, both from gods downwards and from humans upwards (*Mor.: Def. Orac.* 415a-c).<sup>49</sup> Heroes were both figures who were once considered gods and

<sup>45</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* 3.96-7, 4.326.

<sup>46</sup>Dunn, *Christology*, 105.

<sup>47</sup>Smith, "Ascent" (1990), argues that 4QM<sup>a</sup> reflects the influence of 'speculation on deification'. But this stretches the meaning of 'I shall be reclined with the gods' (line 19,35) which implies elevation to the level of the 'gods', i.e. the angels, rather than deification.

<sup>48</sup>Charlesworth, "Righteous", 145.

human figures who came to be worshipped.<sup>50</sup> Two outstanding heroes, who have been the subject of comparison with Christ, are Heracles and Asclepius.<sup>51</sup>

We noted in respect of angelic transformation that some texts envisaged all the righteous becoming like angels. Tabor makes the point that in the wider Hellenistic context the special examples of apotheosis were part of the broader perception that 'the proper goal of human life is to escape the bonds of mortality'.<sup>52</sup> The Apc itself appears to cohere with these observations when on the one hand Jesus is entitled ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (2.18) and on the other hand each believer who 'conquers' is promised by God that αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι υἱὸς (21.7).

Another aspect of human transformation in the first century CE was the tendency to deify Roman emperors. Thus Vespasian - who generally refused divine honours - joked before his death 'Vae ... puto deus fio'.<sup>53</sup> By the end of the first century deification of the emperor was obligatory and used as a test to identify Christians. The fact that Pergamum was the first centre of the imperial cult in Asia Minor may explain the reference in Apc 2.13 to 'the place where Satan has his throne'.<sup>54</sup> Several chapters in the Apc contain references to the imperial cult: 4.11 probably stands opposed to the practice of offering praise to the emperor; 'King of kings and Lord of lords' in 17.11 and 19.16 probably 'claims a higher authority than the emperor'; the 'first beast' in ch. 13 is to be interpreted as the Roman emperor with special reference to the imperial cult.<sup>55</sup> Deification of the emperors seems to have been somewhat provisional. Deification was proposed for Tiberius by Caligula but was

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<sup>49</sup>On heroes, gods and demigods see further, Plutarch, *Pelopidas*, 16; Philo, *Leg. ad. Gaium*, 78-114; Seneca, *De Benef.* 1.13; for secondary literature, e.g., Dillon, *Middle*, 317-319.

<sup>50</sup>*OCD*, 506 col. 11. On the worship of Heroes see further Farnell, *Hero-Cults* (1921).

<sup>51</sup>The question of the influence of such figures on NT christology cannot detain us here: see, e.g., Holladay, *Theios* (1977). On Heracles see Knox, "Christology", 232-247; on Asclepius see Edelstein, *Asclepius*, ii, 132-138; Kee, "Self-Definition" (1982), *idem. Miracle*, 78-104.

<sup>52</sup>Tabor, *Things*, 78.

<sup>53</sup>Suetonius, *Lives*, 8.23.4.

<sup>54</sup>Jones, "Christianity", 1034; cf. Aune, "Form" (1990) who argues that the 'letters' to the churches have the form of royal decrees and the function of contrasting Christ and God with the Roman emperor.

<sup>55</sup>Jones, "Christianity", 1034-1035.

not agreed to because relationships between Tiberius and the senate were strained at the time of his death. Caligula believed in his own divinity but he was not deified after his death.<sup>56</sup>

We have no reason to think that John thought of Jesus Christ as a human who became 'a god' - if he believed that Jesus was 'deified' then this must have meant a transformation in which Jesus came to share in the identity of the one God. But we cite the deification of the emperors as an example of the extent of beliefs about human transformation in the milieu to which John belonged.

In short: John, writing towards the end of the first century CE, as a Jewish Christian in a province of the Roman empire must have been familiar, to some degree at least, with the possibility that ordinary people, even more so an extraordinary figure of righteousness such as Jesus Christ, could be transformed after death into a being of higher status. We cannot be confident, however, that John would have been familiar with the idea that a human could become an angel.<sup>57</sup> More likely he believed that humans could become like the angels.

#### §4.2.10 Conclusion

We have seen in our representative but not exhaustive survey of exalted humans that such figures were depicted in glorious form indistinguishable from the form of the glorious angels. Just as we observed that the inclusion of theophanic imagery in the descriptions of glorious angels did not mean that such angels were divine beings so also with the inclusion of theophanic imagery in the descriptions of exalted humans such as Abel and Noah. Similarly to the principal angels there was talk of these figures having exalted status, with the term θεός, for example, applied to Moses. As with the angel Yahoel this kind of talk raises the question whether the boundaries of monotheism were broken prior to 100 CE within Jewish circles. The answer appears to be no. At the most humans such as Abel and Moses represent God as a vizier-like figure, or, in the case of Enoch, they appear to be identified

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<sup>56</sup>Jones, "Christianity", 1026-1027. Note Casey, R.P., "Christologies", 267, who wonders what 'son of God' would have meant to the centurion at the cross (Mk 15.39) 'since to a pagan the expression would indicate a "hero" of semi-divine, semi-human origin, or, in later times, an emperor'.

<sup>57</sup>In this discussion we have focused on humans becoming angels. On the related question of the transformation of humans into the *kabod* see now Morray-Jones, "Mysticism" (1992).

with the greatest heavenly figure apart from God.

Finally we noted material which demonstrates the widespread belief in the possibility of human transformation in ancient times.

### §4.3 THE LOGOS AS AN ANGELOMORPHIC FIGURE

In the previous section we dealt with material which implied that humans could become angels or angel-like creatures. In this section we consider the case of the *Logos* of God becoming an angel or at least an angel-like being. For one aspect of Jesus as an angel-like figure in the Apc which we will consider is his appearance in Apc 19.11-16 as the angelomorphic Rider who has the name 'the *Logos* of God'. We first consider Wis. 18.15 which many commentators cite as background material for Apc 19.13. We then reflect on Philo's treatment of the *Logos*. There is no particular reason to think that John was familiar with Philo's writings but we consider what Philo says about the *Logos* because it is packed with material concerning the *Logos* as an angel or, at least, as an angelomorphic being. Finally we briefly reflect on the *Memra* of the Targums since this is sometimes thought to be equivalent to the *Logos*.

#### §4.3.1 The *Logos* in the Wisdom of Solomon

In the course of a retelling of the story of the killing of the Egyptian first-born the following description of the destroyer (מַשְׁחִית) referred to in Ex 12.23 appears:

'your all-powerful word (λόγος) leaped from heaven, from the royal throne, into the midst of the land that was doomed, 16 a stern warrior carrying the sharp sword of your authentic command, and stood and filled all things with death, and touched heaven while standing on the earth' (Wis 18.15-16).

The destroyer is portrayed as the *Logos* of God. It is noticeable though that the description of the *Logos* resembles that of the angel of Yahweh in 1 Chr 21.15-16. This angel who is described as both the 'destroying angel' (מַלְאֲכַי הַמַּשְׁחִיתִים, v.15), and as the 'angel of Yahweh' (מַלְאֲכַי יְהוָה, v.15,16) is sent to destroy Jerusalem (v.15). David sees the

angel 'standing between earth and heaven' (v.16). The angel has a sword in his hand (v.16). In other words the *Logos* recalls the (destroying) angel (of Yahweh) both in appearance and in function as described in 1 Chr 21.15-16.<sup>58</sup>

In Ex 12.23-29 Yahweh and the 'destroyer' are virtually indistinguishable (analogous to some appearances of the angel of Yahweh). But in 1 Chr 21.15-16 the destroying angel is distinct from Yahweh (since the angel is subordinate to God). In Wis 18.15 the fact that the *Logos* belongs to the 'royal (i.e. divine) throne' and is not commanded to descend to earth but spontaneously leaps down from the throne implies that the *Logos* is not understood as a figure distinct from God.<sup>59</sup> There is no reason then to conclude that the *Logos* in Wisdom is understood to be an angel. Rather his portrayal draws on a similar story which features the angel of Yahweh. We cannot and do not need to go into the question of whether the *Logos* is better understood as a personification than as a hypostasis. (In Apc 19.13 Jesus the Rider is neither a personification nor a hypostasis). But with a number of scholars we conclude that in Wis. 18.15-16 we have a poetic attempt to express God's activity in the world. Talk of the *Logos* in Wisdom involves literary personification rather than the assertion of hypostatic existence.<sup>60</sup>

In other words talk of the *Logos* in Wisdom as an angelomorphic figure does not obscure the fact that it is the activity of God himself that is in view.

#### §4.3.2 The *Logos* In the Writings of Philo

Philo is justifiably famous as an outstanding Jewish theologian and apologist for his religion. Since his writings can be almost certainly dated before 50 C.E.,<sup>61</sup> they form a valuable record of at least one stream of Jewish thought prior to the composition of the Apc.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Goodrick, *Wisdom*, 357.

<sup>59</sup>Note that in the parallel case of the portrayal of *Sophia* the situation is more ambiguous: in Wis 9.4 *Sophia* 'sits by your throne' (not 'on' it!), but in 9.4 God is urged to send *Sophia* 'from the throne of your glory'.

<sup>60</sup>So Dunn, *Christology*, 163-176, 213-220; Goodrick, *Wisdom*, 358, and Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxviii-xxxix, 'the *Logos* ... a rhetoric-poetical personification of the Divine will and energy'.

<sup>61</sup>Goodenough, *Philo*, 2.

<sup>62</sup>Goodenough, *By Light*, 80, argues that Philo is as close to the Sadducees as Paul is to the Pharisees.

One of the most frequently cited passages from Philo in study of the background to christology is the following:

'But if there be any as yet unfit to be called a son of God, let him press to take his place under God's Firstborn, the Word (λόγον), who holds the eldership among the angels, their ruler as it were (ὡς ἄν ἀρχάγγελον). And many names are his, for he is called, 'the Beginning' (ἀρχή), and the Name of God and His Word, and the Man after his image and 'he that sees', that is Israel' (*Conf.* 146).<sup>63</sup>

In this passage the relationship of the *Logos* to God is a little vague: is he an archangel, a creature separate and distinct from God? or is he (so to speak) the visible face of God? In support of an affirmative answer to the first alternative we might cite *Heres* 205, for example, where the *Logos* is described as one who 'pleads with the immortal as suppliant for the afflicted mortality and acts as ambassador of the ruler of the subject'. This role is the *Logos*' 'special prerogative' and involves standing between creature and Creator. The *Logos* appears to be a *mediator between God and creation*.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless more competent authorities than the present writer have considered what Philo has to say about the *Logos* and have concluded that the *Logos* is inseparable from God.

Thus Dunn argues that although some references, such as *Heres* 205, *Qu. Ex.* II.94, and *Immut.* 138, suggest Philo thought of the *Logos* as a being entirely distinct from God,<sup>65</sup> consideration of the whole panoply of references to the *Logos* yields the conclusion that 'the *Logos* of God is God in his self-revelation'.<sup>66</sup> In passages such as *Conf.* 146 an expression like 'God's Firstborn, the Word' is a manner of speaking about God in his self-revelation and not a declaration that God has begotten or created a being who in some real sense has a separate existence from God.

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<sup>63</sup>Cf. *Migr. Abr.* 174-175.

<sup>64</sup>Dunn, *Christology*, 294 n.6, comments that *Heres* 205-206 'should not be taken as any more than a typically Philonic allegorical identification of the *Logos* with Moses'.

<sup>65</sup>Dunn, *Christology*, 220, who also notes *Cher.* 36; *Sac.* 119; *Agr.* 51; *Conf.* 146; *Qu. Gen.* II.62.

<sup>66</sup>Dunn, *Christology*, 230; cf. Casey, *Prophet*, 84: 'The *logos* effectively functions as the aspect of God by which people know him'; Sandmel, "Philo", 24, 'The *Logos* ... is the immanent facet of the transcendent *To On*'.

Winston concludes his analysis of Philo's writings on the *Logos* as follows:

'The Philonic *Logos* is thus not literally a second entity by the side of God acting on his behalf, nor is it an empty abstraction, but rather a vivid and living hypostatization of an essential aspect of Deity, the face of God turned toward creation'.<sup>67</sup>

One passage in particular bears these conclusions out with the aid of a vivid metaphor:

'Why, then, do we wonder any longer at His assuming the likeness of angels, seeing that for the succour of those that are in need He assumes that of men? Accordingly, when He says "I am the God who was seen of thee in the place of God" (Gen. xxxi.13), understand that He occupied the place of an angel 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. 239 For just as those who are unable to see the sun itself see the gleam of the parhelion and take it for the sun, and take the halo round the moon for that luminary itself, so some regard the image of God, His angel the Word, as His very self (οὐτως καὶ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰκόνα, τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ λόγον, ὡς αὐτὸν κατανοοῦσιν). 240 Do you not see how Hagar, who is the education of the schools, says to the angel "Thou art the God that didst look upon me"? (Gen. xvi. 13); for being Egyptian by descent she was not qualified to see the supreme Cause' (*Som.* i.238-240).<sup>68</sup>

Philo argues that God assumes the likeness of angels as a gracious gesture to the spiritually immature. The consequence is that some folk, such as Hagar, mistakenly conclude that to have seen the angel is to have seen God's 'very self'. This mistake is analogous to concluding that the parhelion is the sun or the lunar halo is the moon. Philo distinguishes between 'the image of God' and God's 'very self'. Yet, continuing the analogy with the

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<sup>67</sup>Winston, *Logos*, 49-50; cf. Tobin, "Logos", 351, '[Logos] was not a straightforward description of a being other than God. It was a real aspect of the divine reality through which God was related, although indirectly, to the universe'.

<sup>68</sup>Wolfson, "Angel", 96, states that, 'Philo never calls the *Logos* an angel'. Barker, "Imagery", 87, rightly says that this statement is incredible; she cites *Conf.* 146, but note, additionally, *Leg. All.* 3.177; *Conf.* 28; *Heres* 205; *Som.* i.239; *Cher.* 3.35; *Mut.* 87; *Migr. Abr.* 173).

parhelion and the lunar halo, the distinction between the image of God and the very self of God does not involve separation. The parhelion is intrinsically linked to the sun and the lunar halo to the moon. To see the image of God may be quite different from seeing God in his essential being but it is not to see a separate being from God.

In *Som.* i. 238-240 the 'image of God' is 'His angel the Word'. When God assumes the likeness of angels he expresses himself as the *Logos*. The *Logos* is the manifestation of God and the form of the *Logos* is the form of an angel. It would seem incorrect to conclude that the *Logos* is an angel in his nature, that is, that the *Logos* is a created being distinct and separate from God. For the *Logos* is inseparable from God. It would appear that the *Logos* for Philo is not an angel but the *Logos* can appear angelomorphically. Conversely, in relation to God the *Logos* is not God in his essential being but God's self-revelation.<sup>69</sup> The *Logos* is not a true intermediary being but a means of communication between God and humanity.

But *Som.* i.238-240a makes the point that the *Logos* was capable of being misunderstood. Not every ancient interpreter of the *Logos* had the acumen of Philo (or of Dunn and Winston!). When discussing *Som.* i.227-241 and *Qu. Gen. ii. 62* (... the second God, who is His *Logos* [πρὸς τὸν δεύτερον θεόν, ὃς ἐστὶν ἐκείνου λόγος] ...) Segal rightly observes,

'It takes but a small leap of the imagination, based on Philo's discussion of those "incapable of forming any conception of God whatsoever without a body" [*Som.* i, 236] to suspect that there were others in Philo's day who spoke of a "second god" but who were not as careful as Philo in defining the limits of the term'.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>Thus Philo distinguishes between 'Him who is truly God' signified by the anarthrous title ὁ θεός, and 'His chief Word' who has the anarthrous title θεὸς (*Som.* i.229-230). Cf. Casey, *Prophet*, 84-85.

<sup>70</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 163; see further discussion, p. 163-166. Note also Segal's conclusion, *op. cit.* 23, that 'Philo's concept of the *Logos* is a combination of Platonic ideas of divine intermediation and the Stoic world spirit. *Logos* is equivalent with the intelligible world; but, because it can be hypostasized, the *logos* can also be viewed as a separate agent and called a god. Hence any Jew who shared Philo's ideas of nature of divinity could be a prime a candidate for the charge of "two powers in heaven".'



This is a very important point for it suggests that in the case of Apc 19.13 *one possibility* is that Jesus the Rider is 'the *Logos* of God' as a figure separable and distinct from God. Yet we must also consider in our later discussion of this passage the possibility that as 'the *Logos* of God' Jesus the Rider is the angelomorphic manifestation of the deity.

### §4.3.3 The *Memra*

*Memra* is a word which is perhaps best left untranslated. It has as much to do with the Name of God as with the Word of God. Thus Hayward defines *Memra* in this way:

'*Memra* is God's 'HYH, His Name for Himself expounded in terms of his past and future presence in Creation and Redemption'.<sup>71</sup>

If Hayward's definition of the *Memra* is correct, then the *Memra* is not to be understood as an intermediary being who is distinct from God. Thus Segal argues that

'*Memra*, *yekara*, and *shekinah* [as] used in the targumim and midrash ... are never clearly defined as independent creatures. It rather appears that rabbinic concepts of *memra*, *shekina*, *yekara* avoid the implications of independent divinity and are possibly meant to combat them'.<sup>72</sup>

There are important distinctions to be made between the *Memra* and Philo's *Logos*, which seems to have been developed without knowledge of *Memra*-theology.<sup>73</sup>

Nevertheless the *Memra*, which is often translated as 'Word', is sometimes held to have influenced *Logos*-christology such as that found in the Fourth Gospel.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Hayward, *Memra*, 147.

<sup>72</sup>Segal, *Powers*, 182-183; cf. *id.*, 23. So also Sabourin, "MEMRA", 84-85.

<sup>73</sup>Hayward, *Memra*, 137-139. Cf. Sandmel, "Philo", 40, who argues that the use of *Memra* in the Targums is not so much to bridge the gap between man and deity as to introduce a gap: 'The *memra* is to be classified with euphemism, not with philosophic constructs'.

<sup>74</sup>E.g. Hayward, "Holy Name" (1978); McNamara, "*Logos*" (1968).

With respect to Apc 19.13 Hayward has argued that Wis 18.14-16 is probably using 'Targumic *Memra*-theology', and that

'the similarity of [the *Logos* of God in Apc 19.13] with that of the *Wisdom* writer ... makes it probable that the *Memra* is in the background, especially as God's Name is expounded in *Memra*-fashion elsewhere in the work [i.e. Apc 4.8,10]'.<sup>75</sup>

Hayward draws attention to the parallel between the *Logos* of God going forth to effect redemption of the faithful at the end of time and *Tg. Neof. Ex 12.42*,<sup>76</sup> where the *Memra* goes out to accomplish the redemption of Israel on the last night of the old age.<sup>77</sup>

Thus some sort of parallel can be established between Jesus the Rider as the *Logos* of God and the *Memra*, and there may be an indirect influence from *Memra* theology via Wis 18.15. The question of the relevance of the Targums to NT study remains an open question and it is beyond the scope of this study to attempt to resolve it.<sup>78</sup> What we may profitably note is that if *Memra* theology lies behind Jesus as the *Logos* of God then it constitutes support for the idea that Jesus in the Apc is not completely separate and distinct from God.

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<sup>75</sup>Hayward, *Memra*, 120-121. Note that McNamara, *New Testament*, 230-233, does not discuss the origin of the *Logos*-name when he examines the targumic background to Apc 19.11-16.

<sup>76</sup>Cf. Díez Macho, *Neophyti 1*, ii, 77-79, 441.

<sup>77</sup>Hayward, *Memra*, 132-133.

<sup>78</sup>See, e.g., Tobin, "Logos", 352, on problem of dating of the Targums with respect to their relevance to NT questions.

#### §4.4 CONCLUSION

We have extended our discussion of the angelological context of the christology of the *Apc* to include angelomorphic figures such as exalted humans and the *Logos*. With respect to humans we have seen that they were 'seen' in similar glorious appearance to the most glorious of the angels and that they were believed to occupy the highest place next to God but never with the implication that monotheism was being diluted. With respect to the *Logos* we have argued that God in his self-revelation sometimes appeared in the likeness of an angel. A certain ambiguity, however, is integral to presentations of the *Logos* in Wisdom and in Philo's writings so that it would not be inconceivable that some conceptions of the *Logos* held that he was a separable and distinct figure alongside God. If the *Memra* lies behind *Apc* 19.13 then we must consider that Jesus as the *Logos* is identified with God in some way rather than distinguished from God.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# ANGEL CHRISTOLOGY

### §5.1 INTRODUCTION

An investigation into the influence of angelology on christology inevitably raises the question of whether the result is an 'angel christology'. We have already briefly reviewed the main contributions to the discussion of angel christology in the NT in this century. We saw that a firm 'no' has been the answer to the proposal of Werner, although more recently other scholars have reopened the debate and taken it in new directions under the heading 'angelomorphic christology'. In this chapter we review various texts which refer to Christ as an angel or as like an angel in some sense. We aim to demonstrate the variety of ways in which the angelic or angelomorphic Christ was perceived in order to extend our knowledge of the possible interpretations which we might place on the christology of the Apc which has been influenced by angelology.<sup>1</sup> It is beyond the scope of this chapter to exhaustively survey all the available material on angel- and angelomorphic-christology.<sup>2</sup>

### §5.2 ANGEL- AND ANGELOMORPHIC-CHRISTOLOGY IN THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CENTURIES

#### §5.2.1 Justin

Justin, who died in 165 C.E., wrote the following passage:

'Now the Word of God is His Son, as we have said before. And he is called Angel (ἄγγελος) and Apostle; for he declares whatever we ought to know, and is sent forth to declare whatever is revealed ..... being of old the Word, and appearing sometimes in the form of fire (ἐν ἰδέῃ πυρός), and sometimes in the likeness of angels (ἐν εἰκόνι ἄσωμάτων); but now, by the will of God, having become man for the human

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<sup>1</sup>Barbel, *Christos*, 286, notes six varieties; while Trigg, "Angel", 37, notes four.

<sup>2</sup>See Barbel, *Christos*, 47-180; Daniélou, *Theology*, 117-145; and Trigg, "Angel" (1991) for fuller studies.

race' (*Apol.* i. 63).<sup>3</sup>

Justin's writings are (a) among the earliest Christian documents in which a christological interpretation of the OT angelophanies and theophanies is found, and (b) the only known texts of the first and second centuries C.E. in which such an interpretation is explicitly found.<sup>4</sup>

In the passage we have cited three different aspects of Christ as an 'angel' are found:

(i) Christ has the title 'Angel' (ἄγγελος). This derived from Is 9.5 LXX (καὶ καλεῖται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Μεγάλης βουλήs ἄγγελος),<sup>5</sup>

(ii) Christ functions as an angel or messenger because he 'declares whatever we ought to know',

(iii) Christ sometimes appeared 'in the likeness of angels' - depending on which dispensation he was in he would appear as fire, an angel, as a human being.

Nothing here suggests that Justin believed that ontologically Jesus Christ had the nature of an angel.<sup>6</sup> Bakker, however, has observed that while giving Christ the title 'Angel' did not necessarily *imply* his identification with one of the angels nevertheless,

'as the title 'Angel' conveyed the whole cyclus of conceptions implied in it, the *danger* of Jesus being identified with an angel generally, or even with a special angel was not imaginary'.<sup>7</sup>

In the following passage from Justin it is possible that we have an example of the non-avoidance of this danger:

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<sup>3</sup>*ANCL*, ii, 61.

<sup>4</sup>Trakatellis, *Pre-Existence*, 59.

<sup>5</sup>*Dial.* 76. Cf. Leuken, *Michael*, 76.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Trakatellis, *Pre-Existence*, 63.

<sup>7</sup>Bakker, "Christ", 257; Cf. Werner, *Formation*, 140.

'But both Him, and the Son who came forth from Him and taught us these things, and the host of the other good angels who follow and are made like to Him, and the prophetic Spirit, we worship and adore' (*Apol* i.6).<sup>8</sup>

This passage appears to imply that Justin worshipped angels. Since elsewhere Justin gives no hint of such a practice (e.g. *Apol*. i. 13,16,61), some have supposed that there may be some carelessness in Justin's expression, which could be remedied by supposing that he meant to say either 'the Son ... taught us *about* these things and *about* the host of the other good angels', or 'the Son ... taught us *and* the host of other good angels ... *about these things*'.<sup>9</sup> Yet we cannot be sure that Justin was careless. He may have meant what he said, however anomalous and inconsistent it appears to be.<sup>10</sup>

This passage is also interesting because on the one hand the implication of 'the other good angels' is that the son is one of the angels, and on the other hand the fact that the angels 'are made like to Him' appears to imply that the angels are changed in some way to make them conform to the Son. Goodenough has argued that because there is a similarity between Christ and the angels which goes beyond that of function - relating to matters such as origin, nature, and character - Justin was prompted to make his statement in *Apol*. i.6 'to the great discomfort of later Christian Apologists'.<sup>11</sup> He has also argued that the confusion inherent in Justin's position, between the *Logos* as unique and distinct from the angels and the *Logos* as essentially similar to the angels is 'entirely Philonic'.<sup>12</sup>

In short: the first passage from Justin demonstrates three aspects of Jesus Christ as an 'angel' which have nothing to do with Christ actually being an angel while the second passage implies a certain ambiguity as to whether Justin thought that Christ was an angel.

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<sup>8</sup>ANCL, ii, 11. Cf. *Dial*. 100.

<sup>9</sup>So Trollope, *Justini*, I, 28-29.

<sup>10</sup>So Trollope, *Justini*, i, 27. Commenting on *Apol*. i. 6, Bauckham, "Worship", 335, notes that 'there were probably early Christian circles in which a general neglect of the limits of monotheism in worship accompanied the emergence of the worship of Jesus'.

<sup>11</sup>Goodenough, *Justin*, 156 cf. 192-193.

<sup>12</sup>Goodenough, *Justin*, 157 (also, pp. 114-115, 117); note, e.g., *Conf*. 146 (τὸν ἀγγέλων πρεσβύτατον, ὡς ἂν ἀρχάγγελον) with *Som*. i. 239 (τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ λόγον). Such 'confusion' is also witnessed to in *Shep. Herm.*, see below. On the probable influence of Philo on Justin see also Trakatellis, *Pre-Existence*, 47, 53-92; Segal, *Powers*, 224; and compare *Dial*. 56.1/*Mut*.15, and *Dial*. 56.4,10/*Vit. Mos*. i.66.

### §5.2.2 Origen

With Origen (c.185-254) we are moving at least a century away from the Apc. In part the value of considering Origen's contribution to angel christology lies in the fact that it highlights what is *not said in the Apc*. In *De Princ.* 1.3.4, Origen passes on an interpretation he has received concerning the two seraphim in Is 6.3, namely, that they are Christ and the Holy Spirit. Nothing in the Apc betrays familiarity with this interpretation. Similarly, the expression ἄγγελος μεγάλης βουλήs found in Is 9.5 LXX was also influential in the christology of Origen (cf. citation below),<sup>13</sup> but not in the christology of the Apc.<sup>14</sup>

Origen envisages Jesus Christ functioning as an 'angel' (e.g. *Comm. Joh.* i.277) but in another passage he introduces a 'dispensational' interpretation:<sup>15</sup>

'The Savior, therefore, in a way much more divine than Paul, has become "all things to all", that he might either "gain" or perfect "all things". He has clearly become a man to men, and an angel to angels (γένονεν ἀνθρώποις ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἀγγέλοις ἄγγελος). (218) No believer will have any doubt that he became a man; and we may be convinced that he became an angel if we observe the appearances and words of the angels when [some angel appears with authority] in certain passages of Scripture when the angels speak. For example, "An angel of the Lord appeared in the fire of a burning bush. And he said, I am the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob". But also Isaias says, "His name shall be called angel of great counsel" (ἄγγελος μεγάλης βουλήs). (219) The Savior, therefore, is first and last, not that he is not what lies between, but it is stated in terms of the extremities to show that he himself has become "all things". But consider whether the "last" is man, or those called the underworld beings, of which the demons also are a part, either in their entirety or some of them' (*Comm. Joh.* i. 217-219).<sup>16</sup>

Origen suggests that Jesus becoming 'an angel to angels' is not simply a feature of the past

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<sup>13</sup>Cf. Trigg, "Angel", 37-42.

<sup>14</sup>In fact there is no trace of the influence of Is 9.5 in any form in the Apc.

<sup>15</sup>So Trigg, "Angel", 44.

<sup>16</sup>Translation from Heine, *Origen*, (Vol. 80), 76-77.

before his becoming a man (cf. Justin, *Apol.* i.63), but also a continuing feature of his (post-resurrection) ministry. Trigg describes this 'dispensational' interpretation as follows:

'the Son's taking on angelic nature corresponds to taking on human nature in the Incarnation'.<sup>17</sup>

In other words Origen does not suppose that Jesus has an angelic nature in any permanent sense,<sup>18</sup> but he believes that for a temporary period he had become an angel.

### §5.2.3 Tertullian

Tertullian (c. 160 - post 220), who was also familiar with the title 'Angel of Great Counsel', made a vigorous denial of the belief that Christ was an angel like Gabriel or Michael. In the process he affirmed that as the 'Angel of Great Counsel' Christ held the office of messenger:

'Dictus est quidem magni consilli angeli, id est nuntius, officii, non naturae vocabulo ... Non ideo tamen sic angelus intelligendus ut aliqui Gabriel et Michael' (*De Carne Christi* 14).

Talbert suggests that Tertullian's 'distaste for angel christology derives in large measure from its docetic implications'.<sup>19</sup>

This distaste was apparently not shared by everyone as we see in the next citation, which concerns the Ebionites.

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<sup>17</sup>Trigg, "Angel", 37.

<sup>18</sup>Origen explicitly denies this in *Contra Celsum* 5.53; *Comm. Matt.* 13.26; cf. Trigg, "Angel", 45-47.

<sup>19</sup>Talbert, "Redeemer", 434.



#### §5.2.4 The Ebionites

A number of ancient writers refer to the Ebionites' view of Jesus as an angel. A notable example is Epiphanius:<sup>20</sup>

'And [the Ebionites] say that for this reason Jesus was born of the seed of man and was chosen and that he therefore was called Son of God according to the election because Christ descended upon him from above in the form of a dove. (4) They do not say that he was born of God the Father but that he was created as one of the archangels (and even higher) and that he is Lord over the angels as also over everything the Almighty has created' (Epiphanius, *Panarion* 30.16.3-4).<sup>21</sup>

Here we find an angel christology, in which Jesus does not simply look like an angel or function like an angel, but Jesus has an (arch)angelic nature rather than a divine nature. We may note here the expression of a christology which holds that Christ reappears throughout the ages.<sup>22</sup> Daniélou argues that Christ is identified here with Michael.<sup>23</sup> Schoeps argues that the Ebionites were 'adoptionists' in the sense that they believed that Christ was an angelic being who entered Jesus at baptism.<sup>24</sup>

Another group of early Jewish Christians who seem to have promoted an angel christology in which Christ is an angel by nature were the Elkesaites (a movement which may have had its beginnings in the reign of Trajan, early in the second century C.E.,<sup>25</sup> cf. Hippolytus, *Refutatio omn. haer.* 9.13.2-3).

<sup>20</sup>Klijn, *Evidence*, 13 n.1, dates this report before 428 CE.

<sup>21</sup>Klijn, *Evidence*, 189. Cf. Epiphanius, *Haer.* 30.16.3-4, 30.17.6, 19.4.1, 53.1.9; cf. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 1.26: Cerinthus taught that Christ was a spiritual being who descended upon Jesus; Tertullian, *De Carne Christi* 14: 'So then, even as he is made less than the angels while clothed with manhood, even so he is not less when clothed with an angel. This opinion could be very suitable for Ebion who asserts that Jesus is a mere man ...' [Klijn, 109].

<sup>22</sup>So Klijn, *Evidence*, 73, who notes that this conception is only found in Epiphanius' accounts of the Ebionites and the Elkesaites, and that it has a number of variations: cf. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 30.3; 53.1.8; Hippolytus, *Refutatio omn. haer.* 9.14.2; 10.29.

<sup>23</sup>Daniélou, *Theology*, 125-126.

<sup>24</sup>Schoeps, *Theologie*, 80-82.

<sup>25</sup>Hippolytus, *Refutatio omn. haer.* 9.13.4; cf. Klijn, *Evidence*, 55-56.

### §5.2.5 The Testament of Solomon

This testament probably began as a Jewish document in the first century CE and was extended and developed by a Christian author in the third century CE.<sup>26</sup>

'I said to him, "By what angel are you thwarted?" He said, "By the one who is going to be born from a virgin and be crucified by the Jews".' (Test. Sol. 22.20).<sup>27</sup>

In this passage Christ is apparently an angel but with no indication given whether this angel christology is dispensational or functional in character.<sup>28</sup>

### §5.2.6 Epistula Apostolorum

This second century CE document, possibly of Egyptian provenance,<sup>29</sup> involves an apparent identification between Christ and the angel Gabriel:

'Do you know that the angel Gabriel came and brought the message to Mary? And we said to him, "Yes, O Lord", And he answered and said to us, "Do you not remember that I previously said to you that I became like an angel to the angels?" And we said to him, "Yes, O Lord". And he said to us, "At that time I appeared in the form of the archangel Gabriel to (the virgin) Mary and spoke with her, and her heart received (me); and she believed and laughed; and I, the Word, went into her and became flesh; and I myself was servant for myself, and in the form of the image of an angel; so I will do after I have gone to my Father' (*Epist. Apost.* 14).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Whittaker, *AOT*, 735; Duling, *OTP*, i, 942. *Test. Sol.* is extant only in Greek.

<sup>27</sup>Duling, *OTP*, i, 984; cf. Whittaker, *AOT*, 749, '... born of a virgin, since angels worship him, and who is to be crucified by the Jews'. Duling, *OTP*, i, 984 note a, cites MSS P and Q as providing an even longer version of this verse.

<sup>28</sup>Charlesworth, "Righteous", 144, suggests that it is difficult to decide whether 'Jesus' portrayal here as an angel is the result of angelic transmogrification or is the disclosure of a primordial (preearthly) form'.

<sup>29</sup>Rebell, *Neutestamentliche*, 119; Duensing, *NTA*, i, 191; Ehrhardt, "Judaeo-Christians", 368.

<sup>30</sup>Duensing, *NTA*, i, 198-199.

Strictly speaking Christ is not identified with the angel Gabriel. Rather 'he takes the form of Gabriel in his function as messenger of God'.<sup>31</sup>

### §5.2.7 The Ascension of Isalah

This apocalypse is a composite document consisting of a Jewish apocalypse, known as 'The Martyrdom of Isalah' (ch.1-5) and a Christian apocalypse known as 'The Ascension of Isalah' (ch. 6-11). To make matters confusing the Jewish part may itself be composite, incorporating a Christian addition (3.13-4.22).<sup>32</sup> The entire document is found only in Ethiopic, although this is probably a translation of a Greek original.<sup>33</sup> Fragments are found in Greek, and partial versions in Latin and Slavonic.<sup>34</sup> The dating of the apocalypse is not easy to determine. Fragments found for both parts suggest a *terminus ad quem* of ca. 350 for the complete document.<sup>35</sup> Knibb suggests a date of ca. 100 for *Asc. Is.* 3.13-4.22 and a date between 100 and 200 CE for *Asc. Is.* 6-11.<sup>36</sup> Recently, Knight has argued for a date before the end of the first century CE for the whole document.<sup>37</sup> If this is so then a comparative study between *Asc. Is.* and the *Apc* would be well worthwhile. Here we can only draw attention to a few points of immediate relevance.

In a recent study of the christology of *Asc. Is.* Knight argues that two particular strands in Jewish angelology were influential. The first, reflected in a variety of apocalypses, supplied the idea of God having a vizier, and is reflected in the ambiguous position of the Beloved (i.e. Christ) as both subordinate to God (*Asc. Is.* 9.40) and worshipped by the angels (*Asc. Is.* 7.17, 9.27ff, 10.6ff).<sup>38</sup> The second, the story of the descent of Raphael in the Book of Tobit, influenced the 'descent narrative' of the Beloved in *Asc. Is.* 10.17ff.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Talbert, "Redeemer", 433. Further on *Epist. Apost.* see Schmidt, *Gespräche* (1919); with response from Ehrhardt, "Judaeo-Christians", 367-371. Daniélou, *Theology*, 131, notes a parallel to *Epist. Apost.* 14 in *Sib. Or.* 8.456-461.

<sup>32</sup>Barton, *AOT*, 780.

<sup>33</sup>Barton, *AOT*, 781.

<sup>34</sup>All found conveniently in parallel columns in Charles, *Ascension*, 83-139. Additionally, fragments are found in Sahidic and Akhmimic.

<sup>35</sup>Barton, *AOT*, 780-781.

<sup>36</sup>Knibb, *OTP*, ii, 149-150.

<sup>37</sup>Knight, *Disciples*, 53, 160-161. Cf. Daniélou, *Theology*, 12-13 who dates the whole work to the 80s; Robinson, *Redating*, 240 n.98 dates it to the 60s.

<sup>38</sup>Knight, *Disciples*, 95-103.

Although he provides no detailed study of the Apc, Knight draws the Apc into one of his main conclusions:

'The *Ascension of Isaiah*, like the Book of Revelation, used angelological motifs to present Christ as akin to God, while remaining his subordinate. Both strands need careful consideration, to balance them against each other. They tell us that the christology has an angelological basis'.<sup>40</sup>

We certainly agree that angelological motifs have influenced the christology of the Apc. We are, however, less certain than Knight that this influence extends to the worship of Jesus in the Apc.<sup>41</sup> Although the Book of Tobit appears to have been familiar to John, the 'descent narrative' of the Apc (i.e. Apc 12.1-4) is not comparable to the descent of Raphael.

The Apc and *Asc. Is.* both describe Jesus as the object of worship alongside God (Apc 5.13, 22.1-4; *Asc. Is.* 7.17) and both describe the refusal of an angel to be worshipped (Apc 19.10, 22.9; *Asc. Is.* 7.21).<sup>42</sup>

The question of whether Jesus is an angel or at least assumes the form of an angel in *Asc. Is.* is not easily resolved. Certainly Jesus is described as worshipping God in the company of other angels (*Asc. Is.* 9.40-42). This does not mean that he is an angel. But it is noteworthy that in this same passage one of the angels is 'the angel of the Holy Spirit'. This description recalls a passage in Origen where the two seraphim in Is 6.3 are interpreted as Christ and the Holy Spirit (*De Princ.* i.3.4) and a passage in Hippolytus where the Elkesaites are said to teach that there were two angels of giant dimensions, one being 'the son of God' and the other 'the Holy Spirit' (*Ref. omn. haer.* 9.13.2-3).<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Knight, *Disciples*, 104-110.

<sup>40</sup>Knight, *Disciples*, 73-74. Cf. Bauckham, "Worship", 334, who sees elements of angel christology in the background to *Asc. Is.* but argues that the christology of the apocalypse is better defined in terms of worship - where Christ is sharply distinguished from the angels - than in terms of angel christology. On the christology of *Asc. Is.* see further Werner, *Formation*, 122-123, 132; and summary of recent debate between Pesce and Simonetti in Knight, *Disciples*, 74-75.

<sup>41</sup>See above §3.4.

<sup>42</sup>See further Bauckham, "Worship" (1981).

<sup>43</sup>The 'angel of the Holy Spirit' has led to conjecture that this might be Gabriel. Daniélou, *Theology*,

Also interesting with respect to the question of Jesus being conceived as an angel is *Asc. Is.* 9.27-31. Here Isaiah sees one 'whose glory surpassed that of all' (v.27), and who is worshipped by all the righteous and the angels (v. 28-29). Verse 30 then reads (according to the Ethiopic):

'And he was transformed and became like an angel'.<sup>44</sup>

But according to the 'Latin<sup>2</sup>' and 'Slavonic' MSS, it reads:

'And I was transformed again and became like an angel'.<sup>45</sup>

Thus *Asc. Is.* 9.30 (Eth.) suggests that the appearance of Jesus is transformed and becomes like an angel. Knibb explains that this was 'for the sake of Isaiah',<sup>46</sup> meaning that only in this form could Isaiah take in the vision of the Beloved (cf. 9.37 where the vision of the 'Great Glory' overwhelms Isaiah). *Asc. Is.* 9.33 says of the angel of the Holy Spirit that

'his glory was not transformed'.

This implies that, by contrast, the glory of the Beloved was transformed. Some commentators and translations (e.g. *AOT*) read 'my glory' instead of 'his glory', but there is no textual support for this in the Ethiopic, Latin, or Slavonic versions.<sup>47</sup>

The Latin<sup>2</sup>/Slavonic version of 9.30 suggests that it was Isaiah who was transformed, presumably so that he is drawn into the angelic chorus. The word 'again', absent in 9.30

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127, argues for identification with Gabriel (noting, esp. *Asc. Is.* 11.4), and suggests, p.129-130, that 2 *En.* 21.3-22.5 presents Gabriel performing similar functions to the angel of the Holy Spirit in *Asc. Is.*. Bauckham, "Worship", 334, disagrees. Cf. Charles, *Ascension*, 20.

<sup>44</sup>Knibb, *OTP*, ii, 171.

<sup>45</sup>Barton, *AOT*, 805. Note that *AOT*'s reading is in the main body of the text with the alternative as a footnote, whereas the reverse is the case with *OTP*'s reading.

<sup>46</sup>Knibb, *OTP*, ii, 171 note o2.

<sup>47</sup>Charles, *Ascension*, 66-67, recognises that Eth., Latin 2, and Slavonic Mss for 9.33 support the Eth. for 9.30 but argues that all are corrupt and that, e.g., 'transfiguravit' in 9.33 is 'a primitive error'. His argument for this is not convincing.

(Eth.), recalls *Asc. Is.* 7.25 where Isaiah says that he is being transformed as he goes up from heaven to heaven.

While *Asc. Is.* 9.30 (Lat.<sup>2</sup>/Sl.) coheres with 7.25, it is more readily explained as a correction to the idea that the Beloved becomes an angel than the converse. We can further observe that the idea that the Beloved has become 'like an angel' fits with the subsequent portrayal of him as worshipping alongside the 'angel of the Holy Spirit' and the other angels in *Asc. Is.* 9.40-42.

In *Asc. Is.* 9.30 (Eth.) the transformation of the Beloved into an angel seems to imply that this is a *mercy* bestowed on the seer rather than an indication of the *ontic nature* of the Beloved. Nothing in 9.30 encourages belief that the Beloved was an angel in terms of his permanent essential being. In reality, 9.30 suggests, the Beloved shares in the nature of God, and cannot be comprehended by mere mortals unless changed into a non-threatening form.

With respect to the christology of the *Apc* our discussion of *Asc. Is.* 9.30 raises the important possibility that the angelomorphic appearance of Jesus is not a sign that he is an angel but a clue to his real ontic nature. That is, because Jesus is identified with God he has to be transformed into an angel-like being in order to be seen by a human.

### §5.2.8 The Shepherd of Hermas

This writing, which could be contemporaneous with the *Apc* but most likely stems from the second century CE,<sup>48</sup> refers to Jesus on a number of occasions as τοῦ σεμνοτάτου ἀγγέλου (e.g. *Vis.* 5.2; cf. *Mand.* 5.1.7), or τοῦ ἁγίου ἀγγέλου (e.g. *Sim.* 5.4.4) or ὁ ἔνδοξος ἄγγελος (e.g. *Sim.* 7.1-3 ) or ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου ἐκεῖνος (*Sim.* 7.5).<sup>49</sup> Thus the christology of the *Shep. Hermas* appears to be closer to a full-blown 'angel christology' than to an 'angelomorphic christology'.

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<sup>48</sup>Rebell, *Neutestamentliche*, 267: c.140-155 C.E. [cf. Muratorian Canon]; Robinson, *Redating*, 352: c.85 C.E.

<sup>49</sup>Cf. *Sim.* 8.1.2; 8.2.1. Daniélou, *Theology*, 119, points out that ἔνδοξος ἄγγελος and σεμνότατος ἄγγελος applied to the *Logos* is a characteristic feature of *Shep. Hermas*. On the angelology of *Shep. Hermas* see Carr, *Angels*, 143-144.

The following passage is particularly interesting:

'And the great and glorious angel is Michael (ὁ δὲ ἄγγελος ὁ μέγας καὶ ἔνδοξος Μιχαήλ), who has power over this people and governs them' (*Sim.* 8.3.3).

Since in *Sim.* 9.1.3 the 'glorious angel' is the Son of God,<sup>50</sup> the author apparently envisages either two equivalent glorious angels, Michael and Christ, or he identifies Michael with Christ.<sup>51</sup>

There is no evidence elsewhere in *Shep. Hermas* to suppose that the angel Michael is thought of as an equivalent figure to Christ. As leader of the angels Christ takes up a function of Michael so that it is conceivable that Michael has been identified with Christ. Charlesworth, however, points out that

'Identity does not follow from identical functions; and transference of traditions associated with Michael to expressions about Christ does not justify the equation of Michael and Christ'.<sup>52</sup>

Various solutions have been offered to this problem. Werner, for example, identifies Michael with Christ.<sup>53</sup> Daniélou argues that once the seven archangels were understood as six archangels with the *Logos* as their leader (cf. *Sim.* 9.12.7-8) it was natural that Michael's name - as the name of the chief archangel in Jewish tradition - should be applied to the *Logos*.<sup>54</sup> Pernveden argues that *Sim.* 8.3.3 signifies a functional identity rather than a personal identity between the Son of God and Michael. We find an angel functioning instead of the Son of God (cf. *Mand.* 5.1.7, where justification is attributed to an angel, for

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<sup>50</sup>Cf. *Sim.* 9.12.7-8: 'The glorious man, said he, is the Son of God'.

<sup>51</sup>E.g. Collins, "Son of Man and Saints", 66. Cf. Longenecker, *Christology*, 26 n.5.

<sup>52</sup>Charlesworth, "Righteous", 150 n.27.

<sup>53</sup>Werner, *Formation*, 135.

<sup>54</sup>Daniélou, *Theology*, 124. Cf. Barbel, *Christos*, 230. Pernveden, *Concept*, 62-63, cautions against readily assuming that in *Sim.* 9.12.7-8 Christ is the seventh angel since some Jewish material refers to only six archangels (cf. 1 *En* 20 [Ethiopic]). Carr, *Angels*, 144, following Hippolytus, *Eis ton Daniel* iv.36, suggests that 'a distinctive line of thought from Ezek 9.2 'is being developed'.

another example). The explanation for these occurrences is the existence of a 'gradually delegated authority' in which Michael, for example, stands between the Son of God and humankind as mediator. Consequently neither *Sim.* 8.3.3 nor *Mand.* 5.1.7 justify us speaking of 'an angel-christology in the true meaning of the term'.<sup>55</sup> Finally we note Moxnes who argues that there is one supreme angelic figure who is 'the son of God, Christ' but that the texts concerned should not be interpreted as 'dogmatic statements about Christ'.<sup>56</sup>

Correspondence of some kind between Jesus Christ and Michael is a feature of a number of other texts as the following examples demonstrate.

### §5.2.9 The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

The date of the *Testaments* is problematic. In their present form they may date from the second century CE.<sup>57</sup> But in their present form they have almost certainly been influenced by Christian ideas.<sup>58</sup> The original texts date from after the time of the Septuagint (c.250 BCE), and may have been composed in the reign of John Hyrcanus (137-107 BCE).<sup>59</sup> Thus the *Testaments*, despite Christian redaction, may witness to pre-Christian developments in Jewish angelology.

'Draw near to God and to the angel that intercedes for you, because he is the mediator between God and men for the peace of Israel. He shall stand in opposition to the kingdom of the enemy' (*Test. Dan* 6.2).<sup>60</sup>

'And he said, "I am the angel that intercedes for the nation of Israel, so that no one may destroy them completely for every evil spirit is ranged against them". 7 And afterwards I woke up, and I blessed the Most High and the angel that intercedes for the nation of Israel and all the righteous' (*Test. Levi* 5.6-7).<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Pernveden, *Concept*, 60-62.

<sup>56</sup>Moxnes, "God", 50.

<sup>57</sup>De Jonge, *AOT*, 512.

<sup>58</sup>De Jonge, "Christian", 195-246; *ibid.*, "Once More", 311-319; Braun, "Testaments", 516-549.

<sup>59</sup>Kee, *OTP*, i, 777-778.

<sup>60</sup>Kee, *OTP*, i, 810.

<sup>61</sup>De Jonge, *AOT*, 528 (following the *editio maior* of M.de Jonge). We cite this version because it



Longenecker has argued that in these texts there 'seems to be a transposition from the Jewish theme of the intercession of the angel Michael for the nation Israel to the Jewish-Christian theme of the mediatorship of Christ'.<sup>62</sup> The reason for this conclusion is because 'Israel' has been enlarged here to 'men' and 'all the righteous' in general (cf. 1 Tim 2.5),<sup>63</sup> and because the opposition is not simply from 'the enemies of Israel', but from 'the kingdom of the enemy'.<sup>64</sup> Thus these texts, if they have been redacted according to Christian principles, may bear witness to the influence of a 'primitive Christian angel-christology'.<sup>65</sup>

The link between Christ and Michael appears to be explored in later material such as the Pseudo-Clementine writings (*Homilies* 18.4, *Recognitions* 2.42).<sup>66</sup> In the former the 'Son' takes up 'the Hebrews as his portion' (cf. Michael as patron angel of Israel) and in the latter Christ is 'one among the archangels who is greatest'. According to Daniélou, this means that the Son of God is identified with Michael.<sup>67</sup>

#### §5.2.10 The Cessation of Angel Christology

Finally we note that angel christology largely died out after the fourth century CE. This was mainly due to it being an intrinsically subordinationist christology. It was incompatible with the development of the *homoousian* doctrine which culminated in the Trinitarian orthodoxy of Nicea.<sup>68</sup> It also came to have Arian associations. Beyond the fourth century, therefore, there has been little adherence to angel christology.<sup>69</sup>

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illustrates Longenecker's point in contrast to Kee, *OTP*, i, 790, which follows the critical edition of R.H. Charles.

<sup>62</sup>Longenecker, *Christology*, 26; he also cites in respect of the identification of Michael with Christ Hermas, *Sim.* 8.3.3, and 2 *En* 22.4-9 (which passage Daniélou, *Theology*, 124-125, describes as 'unskilful christianisation').

<sup>63</sup>Cf. De Jonge, "Christian Influence", 246 n.1.

<sup>64</sup>Daniélou, *Theology*, 125. Cf. 1 QM 17.5-8.

<sup>65</sup>Hollander and de Jonge, *Testaments*, 291.

<sup>66</sup>Date: before 360 CE [Irmischer, *NTA*, ii, 534].

<sup>67</sup>Daniélou, *Theology*, 126-127.

<sup>68</sup>Werner, *Formation*, 137.

<sup>69</sup>Daniélou, *Theology*, 117. Werner, *Formation*, 137, notes traces of the development of angel christology in the Paulicians, Bogomils, and mediaeval Catharists - and in the writings of one E.W. Hengstenberg in the 19th century. For discussion of references to Christ as 'angel' in the liturgy see

### §5.3 CONCLUSION

Reviewing some of the texts which speak of Jesus Christ as an 'angel' in the first Christian centuries we have seen that a number of possibilities were expressed. Perhaps most frequent was the application of the title 'Angel (of Great Counsel)' to Christ. In some cases Christ *functions* as an angel, in other cases Christ becomes an angel for a dispensation analogously to his becoming human. In *Asc. Is.* 9.30 'the Beloved' appears to be transformed into an angel as a concession to Isaiah who otherwise could not look on him. A 'full-blown' angel christology was clearly denied by some such as Tertullian and Origen, but others such as the Ebionites and Elkesaites appeared to have subscribed to the belief that Jesus Christ was created an (arch)angel. In some writings the relationship between Michael and Christ is ambiguous: possibly they were identified, but a valid interpretation would be that Christ was held to have taken over Michael's various roles.

In short: talk of Jesus as an angel in the first centuries CE largely fell under the category 'angelomorphic christology', since Jesus was entitled 'Angel', perceived to be like an angel in function and to temporarily have the form of an angel; but only infrequently was he held to be an angel in his essential nature.

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Barbel, *Christos*, 269-284. Note also references to 'Christ, Michael, Gabriel' on amulets and in inscriptions connected with Syrian Christianity in the fourth century, cf. Lueken, *Michael*, 118; Werner, *Formation*, 136; and Barbel, *Christos*, 262-269.

## §5.4 CONCLUSION TO PART ONE (CHAPTERS TWO TO FIVE).

In four chapters we have all too cursorily surveyed material concerning angels, angelomorphic figures, epiphanies, and angel or angelomorphic christologies.

In Chapter Two we examined angelology and epiphanies in Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. One of the main functions of this examination was to review aspects of Rowland's proposal concerning the background to the christophany in Apc 1.13-16. We argued that there was good reason to doubt that (a) the figure in Ezek 8.2 represented a bifurcation in the deity, (b) the figure in Dn 10.5-6 represented a development through Ezek 1.26-28 and 8.2-4, and (c) Dn 7.13LXX had influenced the combination of Danielic texts in Apc 1.13-16. Positively we argued that the figure in Dn 10.5-6 represented a development of the angel in Ezek 9.2.

In Chapter Three we examined principal angels with glorious form and/or exalted status. We argued that the presence of theophanic imagery in an angelophany was not a sign that the angel concerned was other than an angel. We had already seen in Zechariah that the angel of Yahweh occupied the position of God's vizier and we found a number of other examples of this. But in no case before the second century CE did this lead to the infringement of monotheism. Examining the subject of the worship of angels we could not rule that this practice never occurred before the second century CE, but we argued that even if it did occur then it was unlikely to have influenced the worship of Jesus in the Apc. In sum: an angel was an angel and if the limits of monotheism were broken through angelological speculation before the end of the first century CE then this was probably not significant for the christology of the Apc.

With respect to exalted humans in Chapter Four we reached similar conclusions. Theophanic imagery in the description of angelomorphic humans did not mean that they were divine, nor, in the case of Moses, did the application of the word θεός mean that Moses had been deified. Just as angels could appear to be human (e.g. Raphael, Jacob-Israel), so humans could become like angels, in line with conceptions about transformation in the wider Hellenistic milieu. Conversely, with the *Logos* we found transformation in a different direction: the self-revelation of God could manifest himself as an angel.

In the final chapter in Part One we have seen that Jesus as an 'angel' in the first Christian centuries could mean a number of things most of which were to do with Jesus being like an angel rather to do with Jesus being an angel in his essential nature. Here again we saw transformation into an angel being expressed: for example, Jesus became an angel so that Isaiah could look on him (*Asc. Is.* 9.30 Eth.), and Jesus became an angel in order to minister to angels (Origen, *Comm. Joh.* i.277).

With these results in mind we can turn to consider the christology of the *Apc.* We do so with a number of important questions to consider in the light of our investigation in Part One. For example, having questioned Rowland's explanation for the developments behind the christophany in *Apc.* 1.13-16 can we bring forward an alternative explanation? What is the significance of the angelomorphic Jesus in the *Apc.*: is he an exalted human or an angel or otherwise?

## **PART TWO**

**THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE APOCALYPSE:**

**JESUS CHRIST IN RELATION TO GOD AND THE ANGEL, THE  
VISIONS OF CHRIST**

## CHAPTER SIX

# GOD, JESUS, AND THE ANGEL

### §6.1 INTRODUCTION

With this chapter we begin the second part of the dissertation which focuses on the christology of the Apc. We have already indicated that only a limited examination of the christology is possible. In this chapter we investigate Jesus in relation to God and in relation to the angel of the revelation. The results of this investigation are a prerequisite for the chapters which follow in which we consider the visions in Apc 1.13-16, 14.14, and 19.11-16.

The christology of the Apc begins with Apc 1.1:

'The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place; he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John'

Ἐποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἣν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει, καὶ ἐσήμανεν ἀποστείλας διὰ τοῦ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ τῷ δούλῳ αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννῃ (Apc 1.1).

Here Jesus Christ is located in a 'chain of transmission'<sup>1</sup> which begins with 'God' and ends with 'his servants'. The central links in the chain are 'Jesus Christ', 'his angel', and 'John'. John and the servants reside on earth. God, Jesus Christ, and the angel are located in heaven. In this chapter we aim to understand better the relationships between (a) God and Jesus Christ, and (b) Jesus Christ and the angel (whom we refer to as 'the revealing angel'). We examine the first relationship in order to be clear from the start whether our investigation into the influence of angelology on the christology is an investigation which relates to the portrayal of a being with no divine status at all or to the portrayal of a being who in some sense is divine. We examine the second relationship in order to develop the ways in which Jesus Christ in the Apc is like (and unlike) the angels.

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Boring, 64-67; Sweet, 57-58.

## §6.2 GOD AND JESUS CHRIST IN THE APOCALYPSE

In Chapter One we noted that a few interpreters of the Apc have argued that there is nothing which requires the conclusion that Jesus Christ is understood to be divine.<sup>2</sup> But most interpreters have drawn the conclusion that the evidence is strongly in favour of the opposite conclusion: Jesus Christ in the Apc is divine.<sup>3</sup> Karrer, for example, while recognising that there are subordinationist components in the christology of the Apc concludes that

‘der Schwerpunkt und die Tendenz der Christologie der Apk nicht auf die Subordination, sondern auf die Gleichordnung und mehr noch die Identifizierung Jesu Christi als Gottes Sohn mit Gott selbst hinläuft’.<sup>4</sup>

At the heart of the case for the divinity of Jesus Christ in the Apc lie two observations. First, Jesus is worshipped. Secondly, Jesus is identified with God.<sup>5</sup> Since it is convenient for our subsequent investigation to consider these matters beforehand we do so now. Since the majority position supports the conclusion that Jesus is divine within the Apc we briefly rather than exhaustively consider these matters. This means that we will have through the rest of the dissertation a working hypothesis that Jesus is divine. We will, of course, question this hypothesis if and when the occasion arises.

### §6.2.1 The Worship of Jesus

There is no doubt that worship in the Apc is constrained in the direction of a single object of worship. Not once but twice, in 19.10 and 22.9, the angel spurns John's attempts to worship him and exhorts him to 'worship God' (τῷ θεῷ προσκύνησον). In 22.3-4 the

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<sup>2</sup>See §1.1.1.

<sup>3</sup>E.g. Brütsch, iii, 87; Allo, 331; Prigent 354; Lohse, 105; Ritt, 117; Roloff, 211; Swete, 303; Mounce, 393; Beasley-Murray, 339 [all references relating to discussion of Apc 22.13]; Caird, 290; Bauckham, *Theology*, 63; Comblin, *Christ*, 15.

<sup>4</sup>Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung*, 148-149.

<sup>5</sup>A recent restatement of the 'non-divine' position by Casey, *Jewish Prophet*, 141-143, does not do justice to the worship of the Lamb in Apc 5, and omits discussion of the crucial text, 22.13.

heavenly worshippers gather round the 'throne of God and of the Lamb'. Consistent with the single throne in view is the description which follows in which the 'servants' are 'his servants' and their worship is directed towards 'him'. Thus:

καὶ ὁ θρόνος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀρνίου ἐν αὐτῇ ἔσται, καὶ οἱ δοῦλοι αὐτοῦ  
λατρεύσουσιν αὐτῷ (4) καὶ ὄψονται τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα  
αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων αὐτῶν (Apc 22.3-4; cf. 11.15).

When we then turn back to the heavenly vision in Apc 4-5 we notice on the one hand that God is worshipped in a hymn (4.11) which is closely paralleled by a hymn to the Lamb (5.12) and on the other hand the culmination of the worship in 5.8-13 is the addressing of a hymn to both 'the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb' (5.13). The implication seems clear: Jesus the Lamb is worshipped but the impression that he is a second object of worship is only fleeting. The highpoint of the heavenly worship is the 'joint worship of God and Christ, in a formula in which God retains the primacy'.<sup>6</sup>

When we also observe that the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fall down before the Lamb (5.8) and that only the Lamb - of all beings in heaven and on earth - has been adjudged 'worthy' (5.2-5) it is reasonable to conclude that the worship of Jesus in Apc 5 is not the worship of a principal angel or of one who is simply an exalted human being, but the worship of one who is distinguished from creatures and conjoined with the Creator. As the object of worship Jesus Christ is divine.<sup>7</sup> But Jesus Christ is not merely 'associated with' the Creator, he is bound with him such that together they form a single object of worship. This of course implies that the divinity of Jesus is not something he enjoys in his own right but something which he enjoys because he is conjoined with God into a unity. In this light the use of single pronouns in 22.3-4 appear to refer to God and Jesus Christ together.

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<sup>6</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 330-331, citation from p.331.

<sup>7</sup>Sweet, 127.



### §6.2.2 The Identity Between Jesus and God

In Apc 22.12-13 we find the following statement:

Ἴδου ἔρχομαι ταχύ, καὶ ὁ μισθός μου μετ' ἐμοῦς ἀποδοῦναι ἑκάστῳ ὡς τὸ ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ. 13 ἐγὼ τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος (Apc 22.12-13).<sup>8</sup>

The words Ἴδου ἔρχομαι ταχύ suggest that Jesus is the speaker for the following reasons. First, in 2.16 and 3.11 the words ἔρχομαι ταχύ come directly from the risen Jesus. Secondly, in 22.20 the words ναί, ἔρχομαι ταχύ are followed by the response, Ἀμήν, ἔρχου κύριε Ἰησοῦ.<sup>9</sup>

If the speaker in 22.12 does not continue speaking in 22.13 then the new speaker could only be God (on the grounds that two of the three titles have already been attributed to him, 1.8, 21.6) or an angel (speaking on behalf of God or Jesus Christ). But it is rare that God speaks directly in the Apc: only definitely at 21.5-8, and probably at 1.8, although the latter could represent a reported speech of God. There is no precedent provided in the Apc for an angel to speak for Jesus or God by taking up the first person or using titles.<sup>10</sup> Consequently in neither case is there sufficient reason to overturn the natural reading of 22.13 that ἐγὼ belongs to the subject of ἔρχομαι in 22.12. That is, we may understand that Jesus is the speaker in 22.12-13.<sup>11</sup>

Turning to the content of 22.12-13 we find that the statement concerning the intention to

<sup>8</sup>There is no justification for the claim by Charles, ii, 219, that v.12 follows v.13.

<sup>9</sup>In Apc 22.7 we find ἴδου ἔρχομαι ταχύ following the speech of the angel in 22.6 which raises the question whether the angel speaks these words. Note also ἔρχομαι σοι (2.5) which is to be attributed to Jesus, and ἔρχομαι ὡς κλέπτῃς (16.15) which (we would argue) also comes from Jesus. On the significance of ἴδου ἔρχομαι ταχύ as a counter to contemporary magical practice, see Aune, "Magic", 491-493.

<sup>10</sup>*Contra* Swete, 302-303; Vanni, "Dialogue", 358; Hartman, "Form", 147; Giblin, *Revelation*, 218; Beckwith, 776; Boring, "Voices", 344. It is striking that Boring, *op. cit.*, 341, accepts 16.15 as 'the voice of Jesus' but does not appear to allow that in 22.12 Jesus may again interject.

<sup>11</sup>So Ritt, 116-117; Roloff, 211; Scott, W., 446; Swete, 302-303; Vanni, "Dialogue", 358; Hartman, "Form", 147; Giblin, *Revelation*, 218.

repay (καὶ ὁ μισθὸς μου μετ' ἐμοῦ ἀποδοῦναι ἐκάστω ὡς τὸ ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ) recalls a prophecy concerning God in Is 40.10:

'See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him'

(:וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה לְפָנָיו וְיָבֹא בְּכֹחַ יָדָיו וְיִיָּסֵף בְּרִגְלוֹ מִן הַיָּם, MT; ἰδοὺ κύριος μετὰ ἰσχύος ἔρχεται καὶ ὁ βραχίων μετὰ κυριείας, ἰδοὺ ὁ μισθὸς αὐτοῦ μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ ἔργον ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ, LXX).<sup>12</sup>

Noting the similarity between ἀποδοῦναι ἐκάστω ὡς τὸ ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ (22.12) and δώσω ὑμῖν ἐκάστω κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ὑμῶν (2.23) we see that where Is 40.10 has been modified in Apc 22.12 it has been modified in (approximate) conformity with a statement already made by Jesus in Apc 2.23.

Jesus then proceeds to make the astonishing claim in v.13:

ἐγὼ τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος.

Two of the titles in 22.13 recall 'I am' statements made by God earlier in the Apc:

ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ (1.8, 21.6) and,

ἐγὼ [εἰμι] τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος (21.6).<sup>13</sup>

The remaining title recalls Jesus' own statement in 1.17:

ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος (1.17, cf. 2.8).

In this context - the appearance of the risen Jesus to John - this could simply mean that Jesus, being the first to rise from the dead (cf. Apc 1.5), is 'first and last' with respect to the

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<sup>12</sup>Cf. Is 62.11.

<sup>13</sup>Charles, ii, 220 draws attention to the Orphic roots of ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος; cf. Beasley-Murray, 339; Aune, "Magic", 489-491.

church (cf. Col 1.18). But the statement in Apc 1.17 takes up two 'I am' sayings attributed to God in Isaiah:

אני ראשון ואני אחרון; Ἐγὼ πρῶτος καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ ταῦτα (Is 44.6 MT/LXX), and

אני ראשון אף אני אחרון; ἐγὼ εἰμι πρῶτος καὶ ἐγὼ εἰμι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (Is 48.12 MT/LXX).

When we also consider that in 22.13 'the first and the last' is parallel to 'the Alpha and the Omega' and 'the beginning and the end' it would appear that its application to Jesus Christ extends beyond his relationship to the church. For 'the Alpha and the Omega' and 'the beginning and the end' applied to God speak of the eternal life of God from which all things originate and in which all things find their fulfilment. The implication of 22.13 is that Jesus Christ participates in the eternal being of God acting as agent of creation (cf. 3.14) and as eschatological judge (cf. 22.12).<sup>14</sup> Since Apc 22.13 consists of 'I am' statements the identity of Jesus with God would therefore appear to be at the level of *being* and not merely at the level of *function*.<sup>15</sup> In the light of our review of the worship of Jesus which brought out the strictly monotheistic character of the Apc we can scarcely conclude that 22.12-13 signifies that Jesus is another God. Just as the worship of Jesus in the Apc is the worship of Jesus conjoined with God in a unity so the 'I am' statements must signify that Jesus is '[included] in the eternal being of God'.<sup>16</sup>

That Apc 22.13 constitutes a declaration about the divinity of Jesus Christ is consistent with other observations we can make about the portrayal of Jesus in the Apc. Two observations in particular are important. First, the location of Jesus the Lamb as 'in the midst of the throne' (7.17). Secondly, the reference to the throne as 'the throne of God and of the Lamb' (22.1,3) leading into the use of singular pronouns in 22.3-4: 'his servants will worship him, they will see his face and his name will be on their foreheads'.

In other words the christology which we are having to deal with in the Apc is a (so-called)

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<sup>14</sup>Cf. Bauckham, *Theology*, 54-58.

<sup>15</sup>Cf. discussion of this point in Bauckham, *Theology*, 62-63.

<sup>16</sup>Bauckham, *Theology*, 58. Cf. Brütsch, iii, 87; Allo, 331; Prigent, 354; Lohse, 105; Ritt, 117; Roloff, 211; Michl, *Engelvorstellungen*, 181.

'high christology'. This is, however, not to say two things. First, it is not to say that the Apc already enshrines a viewpoint which approximates to the later christology of Nicea and Chalcedon.<sup>17</sup> Secondly, it is not to say that 'Jesus is God' without remainder. Jesus is the 'son of God' (2.18) and never the 'Father' (e.g. 1.6), and God who is Father is also ὁ παντοκράτωρ (e.g., 1.8, 4.8, 11.17), a title never given to Jesus.<sup>18</sup>

In what follows we will therefore have as a presupposition the apparent perception in the Apc of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

### §6.3 JESUS CHRIST AND THE REVEALING ANGEL

According to Apc 1.1 Jesus Christ is both the *Offenbarungsmittler* since he acts on behalf of God, and the *Offenbarer* since the revelation which is revealed bears his name.<sup>19</sup>

The first three verses of the Apc are likely to be a 'superscription', that is, an introduction added after the completion of the rest of the book. This is suggested by the words ἐμαρτύρησεν (v.2) and γεγραμμένα (v.3) which imply that the author is writing with his completed work before him.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless from a narrative critical perspective Apc 1.1-3 is the first part of the book which is read (or heard). Thus it sets up an expectation that the angel will be mentioned again in those parts of the work which refer to the process of receiving the revelation.

In Apc 1.1 it is not immediately clear who the referent of αὐτοῦ is in the expression διὰ τοῦ ἄγγελου αὐτοῦ τῷ δούλῳ αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννῃ. On the one hand, if Jesus is the subject of ἐσήμανεν ἀποστείλας then it is possible that αὐτοῦ refers to him. On the other hand, it is also sensible to understand the verse as saying that Jesus made the revelation known by

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<sup>17</sup>Swete, clviii.

<sup>18</sup>See further on the distinction between God and Christ in Holtz, "Gott", 262-263.

<sup>19</sup>Pesch, "Offenbarung", 17-18. Boring, "Voice", 356, helpfully distinguishes between God as the 'ultimate source', the angel as the 'intermediate source', and Jesus Christ as the 'definitive source'. Cf. Karrer, *Offenbarung*, 98. The genitive at the beginning of Apc 1.1 is subjective: the revelation belongs to Jesus Christ, so Charles, i, 6; Kraft, 20; Beckwith, 418; opposed are, e.g., Ford, 373 and Pesch "Offenbarung", 17.

<sup>20</sup>Beckwith, 417-423, esp. 421; Kraft, 18.

sending it through the angel of God to John, the servant of God. A further possibility is that, as Lohmeyer argues, in the ambiguity ('Schwebenden') of the meaning of αὐτοῦ 'the fundamental unity of God and Christ comes to characteristic expression'.<sup>21</sup> This possibility makes sense in the context of a superscription. For it would then be taking up the fact that in Apc 22.3-4 such unity appears to be signalled. In Apc 1.1 then it is likely, though not certain, that the angel is understood to be subordinate to Jesus Christ and God together.

It has been argued that τοῦ ἄγγελου refers to Jesus as God's 'messenger'.<sup>22</sup> But this does not make good sense of the fact that an angel is involved in the transmission of the revelation later in the Apc (e.g. 17.1), nor does it make sense if God and Jesus Christ together send the 'angel'. We conclude with the vast majority of scholars that τοῦ ἄγγελου refers to an angel. Angels as mediators and interpreters of divine revelation are in fact familiar figures in apocalyptic literature (e.g., *Jub* 1.27, *Jos. Asen.* 14.14, *Asc. Is.* 6.13, 2 *Esd* 4.1, *Dn* 8.15, 1 *En* 1.2, 43.3, 72.1, 5Q 15, cf. 1 QH 18.23).<sup>23</sup>

The next place to look for this angel would appear to be Apc 22.6, for here the angel is referred to in a similar way to Apc 1.1.

'And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true, for the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place".'

Καὶ εἶπέν μοι· οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι πιστοὶ καὶ ἀληθινοί, καὶ ὁ κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν προφητῶν ἀπέστειλεν τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει (Apc 22.6).

Whether the speaker is the angel himself,<sup>24</sup> or another (e.g. Jesus Christ),<sup>25</sup> need not concern us here. The role of the angel is δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει. In 1.1 the same expression is found but it is associated with the intentions of God expressed through Jesus Christ. Thus in 22.6 the action of the angel is described in a

<sup>21</sup>Lohmeyer, 6; cf. Holtz, *Christologie*, 202.

<sup>22</sup>Schmitt, "Christologische", 262.

<sup>23</sup>Cf. Davidson, *Angels*, 311.

<sup>24</sup>Beckwith, 772.

<sup>25</sup>Charles, ii, 217.

way which indicates that it fulfils the purpose of God.

At this point Jesus is out of view (unless he is the speaker). In Apc 22.16, however, where Jesus is the speaker, we find a reference to an angel which is different from 22.6 yet appears to share a common concern with the transmission of the revelation.

'It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star'.

Ἐγὼ Ἰησοῦς ἔπεμψα τὸν ἄγγελόν μου μαρτυρῆσαι ὑμῖν ταῦτα ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις. ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ῥίζα καὶ τὸ γένος Δαβὶδ, ὁ ἀστὴρ ὁ λαμπρὸς ὁ πρωϊνός (Apc 22.16).

The fact that Jesus 'sends' this angel suggests that the angel is a subordinate of Jesus. There are instances in which an angel 'sends' another angel (e.g. 1 *En.* 60.4) or an angel commands another angel to do something (e.g. Apc 14.18) so that 22.16 by itself does not signal that Jesus is co-equal with God as the superior to the angel. But having authority over the angel is consistent with our previous conclusion that Jesus is identified with God in the Apc.<sup>26</sup>

The use of μαρτυρῆσαι in 22.16 rather than δεῖξαι as in 22.6 and 1.1 raises the question whether the angel in 22.16 is the same angel as the one in 22.6 and 1.1. The difference in verbs could be explained, however, in terms of the frequent association between Jesus and μαρτ-root words in the Apc.<sup>27</sup>

There are in fact other differences between the descriptions of the angel in 22.6 and 22.16:

(i) a different verb for sending is used (πέμπω, v.16; cf. ἀποστέλλω, v.6),

(ii) ταῦτα (v.16) is the content of the angel's testimony instead of ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει (v.6),

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<sup>26</sup>Beasley-Murray, 342; Griblin, *Revelation*, 219.

<sup>27</sup>Apc 1.2,5,9, 12.17, 19.10, 20.4, 22.20.

(iii) there is no mention of 'servants' (δούλοι) as the recipients of the angel's testimony in v.16 (cf. ὑμῖν ... ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐκκλησιαῖς).

These differences are not necessarily significant, however. Although the two verbs for 'sending' can be distinguished in meaning they are effectively synonyms.<sup>28</sup> Ταῦτα could refer to the content of 22.14-15,<sup>29</sup> but it is found in 22.8 where John describes himself as ὁ ἀκούων καὶ βλέπων ταῦτα meaning that he has heard and seen ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει (22.6).<sup>30</sup> It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that ταῦτα in 22.16 equates with ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει in 22.6 (and 1.1). The addressees of the angel's testimony, ὑμῖν ..... ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις, appears to involve a twofold group: ὑμῖν referring to John and his fellow servants the prophets,<sup>31</sup> and ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις referring to all the other Christians in Asia Minor.<sup>32</sup> Such a twofold group is consistent with τοῖς δούλοις in 22.6.

If there is no major difference between the descriptions of the angel in 22.6 and 22.16 then the angels could be one and the same. That this is in fact so is implied by Apc 1.1 which only envisages one angel acting as intermediary between God/Jesus and John/servants.<sup>33</sup>

According to Apc1.1, 22.6, and 22.16 the angel is a key link in the chain of transmission. The expectation is raised in Apc 1.1 that the reader will subsequently find clear indications that the angel participates in the transmitting of the revelation to John. But we never find a scene in which God or Jesus send an angel to John.

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<sup>28</sup>Rengstorf, "ἀποστέλλω", 405, notes that in the Fourth Gospel πέμπειν is always used of the sending of the Spirit by Jesus.

<sup>29</sup>So Vanni, "Dialogue" 358-359.

<sup>30</sup>Swete, 300.

<sup>31</sup>Aune, "Prophetic Circle", 111; Beckwith, 777, 'it is best explained as referring to the prophets in general'.

<sup>32</sup>Here ἐπὶ with the dative means 'for', so Beckwith, 777, who notes Eph 2.10: ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς. That ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις has a general reference to Christians is implied by its correspondence with ἐπὶ λαοῖς καὶ ἔθνεσιν καὶ γλωσσαις καὶ βασιλεῦσιν πολλοῖς, Apc 10.11 [Swete, 305].

<sup>33</sup>In theory the ἄγγελος in Apc 22.16 could be John (so, Schmitt, "Christologische", 262), but in practice this term is never used of John or any human in the Apc.

Yet taking up the description in 22.6 of the revealing angel's activity, ie., δείξει τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει, it is possible to see signs of the presence of the revealing angel in the narrative. We can only offer limited argumentation in support of the proposals we make, which are relevant but not crucial to our main argument.

First, in Apc 4.1-2a John describes what he sees when heaven is opened before him:

Μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ θύρα ἠνεωγμένη ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἡ φωνὴ ἡ πρώτη ἦν ἠκουσα ὡς σάλπιγγος λαλούσης μετ' ἐμοῦ λέγων· ἀνάβα ὦδε, καὶ δείξω σοι ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα. (2) Εὐθέως ἐγενόμην ἐν πνεύματι ... (Apc 4.1-2a).

Here the speech of an unidentified figure corresponds closely to the description of the angel's activity in 22.6. The speaker is unlikely to be God himself since (a) characteristically God does not speak in the Apc (with the exception of 1.8, 21.5-8), and (b) there is no reason to think that God would introduce John to the vision of himself. The speaker could be Jesus<sup>34</sup> since he has just been speaking (having completed dictation of the seventh ecclesial letter in 3.22) and the words δείξω ... ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα (4.1) reflect the description of Jesus' role in Apc 1.1.<sup>35</sup> Yet two observations count against Jesus as the speaker. First, the description of the speaker as ἡ φωνὴ ἡ πρώτη ἦν ἠκουσα ὡς σάλπιγγος suggests a new speaker is in view and not Jesus who has just been speaking.<sup>36</sup> Secondly, the dramatic impact of the opening to the second part of the heavenly vision (5.1-5) is heightened if the pretence is maintained that Jesus is absent throughout the vision prior to this point.<sup>37</sup>

The speaker in 4.1 could be one of the numerous anonymous voices that are heard through the Apc (e.g. 14.13a) or even the Spirit (e.g. 14.13b). But comparing the language used in 4.1 with 17.1-3, 21.9-10 (cf. δείξω σοι ... ἐν πνεύματι)<sup>38</sup> as well as 22.6

<sup>34</sup>So, e.g., Prigent, 82

<sup>35</sup>Cf. Beckwith, 495.

<sup>36</sup>Charles, i, 108, argues that ἡ φωνὴ ... λέγων is an editorial addition but recognises that if the voice in 1.10 is that of an angel then it could also be the case here.

<sup>37</sup>Cf. Bousset, 243; Charles, i, 108.

<sup>38</sup>We cannot here go into the question of what being 'in the spirit' actually meant for John. See



suggests that in fact the revealing angel is the speaker here.<sup>39</sup>

But if the revealing angel is the speaker in 4.1 then the implication of the words ἡ φωνὴ ἡ πρώτη ἦν ἤκουσα ὡς σάλπιγγος is that he is also present in 1.10-11, where John hears a φωνὴν μεγάλην ὡς σάλπιγγος (v.10) which then issues him with instructions to write down what he 'sees' (v.11).<sup>40</sup>

This view contrasts with an important study by Charlesworth on 'the voice' in Apc 1.10-13 in which he argues that τὴν φωνὴν in 1.12 is a christological term adapted from Jewish talk about hypostases. But it is noteworthy that Charlesworth (a) does not consider the identity of 'the voice' from the perspective of Apc 4.1, and (b) recognises that in some instances in Jewish literature 'the voice' is to be identified as an angel.<sup>41</sup>

If 'the voice' in 1.10-12 is in fact an angel then as John turns to 'see the voice' (1.12)<sup>42</sup> there is a switch in *persona*, for John does not see the (angelic) voice but Jesus as 'one like a son of man' (1.13). This feature may appear to be somewhat strange but it corresponds to a feature we have already observed in Zech 1.8-13. In this passage the focus of attention switches backwards and forwards between the 'angel of Yahweh' and 'the angel who talked with me'.

In Apc 10.1ff a 'mighty angel' appears holding a 'little scroll' and commissions John to 'prophesy again'. Although the description of this angel has nothing in common with the descriptions given in Apc 1.1, 1.10, 4.1, 22.6 and 22.16, there does not seem to be any decisive reason against understanding this angel to be the revealing angel.<sup>43</sup> Jesus

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<sup>39</sup>Holtz, *Christologie*, 110 n.3; Swete, 13; Lohse, 34; Roloff, 40.

<sup>40</sup>Holtz, *Christologie*, 110 n.3; Lohmeyer, 14; Lohse, 18; Roloff, 40; Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung*, 104 n.66. Against: Allo, 11; Prigent, 25; Loisy, 77; Beckwith, 436,495; Bousset, 193; Farrar, 65.

<sup>41</sup>Charlesworth, "Jewish Roots", 32; cf. Kuhn, *Offenbarungsstimmen*, 115, who recognises that in some instances in apocalyptic tradition 'the voice' is an angel, e.g., *Apc. Abr.* 19.1 (unfortunately Kuhn has nothing to say about Apc 1.12).

<sup>42</sup>We agree with Charlesworth, "Jewish Roots", 20-25, when he argues that this is the correct translation of βλέπειν τὴν φωνὴν, (so NIV, contrast NRSV, NEB: 'to see whose voice'). Cf. Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act 5, sc.1: 'I see a voice'.

<sup>43</sup>See the argument given in Bauckham, *Theology*, 80-82, and Brighton, *Angel*, 111-122, 181-192.

himself is described in different ways in the Apc, and since Apc 1.1 mentions only one revealing angel it is likely that the angel in Apc 10.1 is *the* revealing angel.

In Apc 17.1 an angel - one of the bowl-angels - appears who says that he will 'show' (δείξω) John certain things. Here again the revealing angel appears to feature in the narrative. This angel is present through 17.1-18, and reappears in 19.9-10.<sup>44</sup> In 21.9 an angel, also described as 'one' of the bowl-angels, appears and also says that he will 'show' (δείξω) John certain things. Again, since only one revealing angel is referred to in 1.1 we may presume that one and the same bowl-angel is meant. This angel is present with John through to at least 22.5, is referred to by John in 22.8, and certainly speaks with him in 22.9-11, if not in 22.6.<sup>45</sup>

The apparent absence of the revealing angel in the main body of the narrative of the Apc has led some scholars to posit a 'synchronic' interpretation of Apc 1.1.<sup>46</sup> That is, the revelation is given by God, Jesus, and the angel who each speak for the other in an essentially non-hierarchical process of transmission. The more traditional 'diachronic' interpretation may be upheld, however, if we recognise that the revealing angel is implicitly present in the main body of the narrative in 4.1 and 10.1 - both of which places are highly significant in the unfolding of the revelation.

We have already noted that there is some disagreement as to whether the angel speaks in 22.6. Disagreement over the identity of the speaker occurs with a number of verses in Apc 22.6-21. Thus, for example, there is considerable diversity over the identity of the speaker in 22.14-15. Suggestions have included the revealing angel,<sup>47</sup> John,<sup>48</sup> Jesus,<sup>49</sup> a spokesman for the community,<sup>50</sup> and a process of modulation in which the voice of the

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We disagree, however, with Bauckham's assertion, p.82 (cf. Bousset, 182; Pesch, "Offenbarung", 21), that the revealing angel 'does not appear in the book until 10.1'.

<sup>44</sup>The 'he' in Apc 19.9-10 can only be an angel. On the revealing angel in Apc 17-22 cf. Giblin, "Correlations", 495.

<sup>45</sup>Note the verb δείκνυμι used with reference to this angel in 21.10 and 22.1, 22.8.

<sup>46</sup>E.g. Boring, "Voice", 350-356.

<sup>47</sup>Vanni, "Dialogue", 358-359.

<sup>48</sup>Beckwith, 776, 'The speaker may be Christ, but probably the Apocalypticist'.

<sup>49</sup>Hartman, "Form", 'Christ, the speaker of vv. 12-16 ...'.

<sup>50</sup>Giblin, *Revelation*, 218, 'vv.14-15 are best assigned ... to a spokesman for the community'.

angel fades into the voice of Jesus.<sup>51</sup> We do not intend to resolve these disagreements here.<sup>52</sup> Rather we will simply note those places where the angel as speaker has been supported.

The angel as speaker has been supported for: Apc 22.6,<sup>53</sup> 22.7,<sup>54</sup> 22.9-11,<sup>55</sup> and 22.14-15.<sup>56</sup>

Apc 22.6-7 is probably significant for the relationship between Jesus and the angel. On the one hand if the speaker changes from the angel in 22.6 to Jesus in 22.7,<sup>57</sup> then Jesus and the angel function closely together. The sudden interjection of Jesus into the dialogue would then mirror the sudden change from the angel to 'one like a son of man' according to our interpretation of 1.10-13.<sup>58</sup> Jesus can be envisaged 'waiting in the wings' - his main part is coming up shortly in 22.12-16. At the concluding words of the angel in 22.6, ἐν τῷ χεῖρι, he 'throws his voice' with the apt rejoinder, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔρχομαι ταχύ. It is the angel who is 'on stage', however, and John is confused by the collocation of the voice of Jesus and the presence of an angel whose appearance is reminiscent of the risen Jesus.<sup>59</sup> He falls down to worship only to be rebuked in such a way that he is in no doubt that it is the angel and not Jesus who stands before him!

On the other hand if the angel continues speaking through 22.6-7 then he can scarcely be

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<sup>51</sup>Boring, "Voice", 344, 358; cf. Farrar, 225, [on 22.10-15] 'one inspired utterance runs on - it is John's, the angel's, Christ's'.

<sup>52</sup>On the question of the attributions of the speeches in Apc 22.6-21 see further Vanni, "Dialogue", (1991) [with response from Aune, "Intertextuality", 147]; Boring, "Voices" (1992); Gaechter, "Original Sequence" (1949); Hartman, "Form", (1980); Giblin, *Revelation*, 218; Rissi, *Future*, 84.

<sup>53</sup>Vanni, "Dialogue", 357; Hartman, "Form", 145.

<sup>54</sup>Hartman, "Form", 145; Loisy, 389. Note that some discern two speakers in 22.7: e.g. Vanni, "Dialogue", 357, who attributes 22.7a to Jesus and 22.7b (the beatitude) to the angel.

<sup>55</sup>Vanni, "Dialogue", 357; Hartman, "Form", 146; Giblin, *Revelation*, 218.

<sup>56</sup>Vanni, "Dialogue", 358-359.

<sup>57</sup>Note the change from the third person, εἶπεν, in 22.6 to the first person, ἔρχομαι, in 22.7, and the words, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔρχομαι ταχύ, which are characteristic of Christ, so Vanni, "Dialogue", 357; cf. Roloff, 209; Allo, 329; Ritt, 115.

<sup>58</sup>A similar interruption may be found in 16.15; cf. Caird, 207-208.

<sup>59</sup>Giblin, *Revelation*, 217-218, 'His impulse (v.8) to worship the angel, a matter on which he had already been corrected (19:10), becomes more intelligible here as a somewhat confused response to the two speakers in vv.6-7'.

held to be announcing his own coming with the words καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔρχομαι ταχύ. Rather the angel would be speaking on behalf of Jesus, suggesting that he acts as representative for Jesus analogous to the angel of Yahweh in certain situations in the OT.<sup>60</sup>

Nevertheless we must also recognise that it has been argued that Jesus is the speaker through 22.6-7,<sup>61</sup> in which case 22.6-7 contributes little to our understanding of the relationship between Jesus and the angel.

In short: consideration of the texts which suggest the revealing angel is present in the narrative of the Apc indicate that this angel probably works closely with Jesus Christ.

### §6.3.1 The Functional Equivalence of Jesus and the Revealing Angel

We have already seen in our discussion of Apc 1.1 that both Jesus and the revealing angel function as intermediaries between God and John. If the angel gives the command to write down what John 'sees' (1.11) then the similar command given by Jesus (1.19) suggests a certain functional equivalence. Whether or not the angel in Apc 10 is the revealing angel this angel also shares a similar function to Jesus since both commission John for his prophetic task. Comparison between Apc 22.16 and 22.20 suggests another instance in which Jesus and the angel function equivalently.

Ἐγὼ Ἰησοῦς ἔπεμψα τὸν ἄγγελόν μου μαρτυρῆσαι ὑμῖν ταῦτα ... (Apc 20.16).

Λέγει ὁ μαρτυρῶν ταῦτα· ναί, ἔρχομαι ταχύ. Ἄμην, ἔρχου κύριε Ἰησοῦ (Apc 22.20).

The words in 22.20, ναί, ἔρχομαι ταχύ, suggest that ὁ μαρτυρῶν is Jesus (cf. Apc 2.16, 3.11, 22.12). This suggestion is confirmed by (a) the use of ναί which is Jesus' response to the invocation in 22.17a for him to come,<sup>62</sup> and (b) the response in 22.20c, Ἄμην

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<sup>60</sup>Hartman, "Form" 145.

<sup>61</sup>Charles, ii, 217.

<sup>62</sup>Vanni, "Dialogue", 361.

ἔρχου κύριε Ἰησοῦ. The introduction in 22.20, λέγει ὁ μαρτυρῶν ταῦτα, indicate that John is reporting the words of Jesus.<sup>63</sup> Jesus, of course, is known in the Apc as ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός (1.5), and as ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός καὶ ἀληθινός (3.14), so that describing Jesus as ὁ μαρτυρῶν ταῦτα is not surprising in itself.

In 22.16 Jesus describes the function of the angel with the word μαρτυρήσῃ. The angel has been sent to 'testify' or 'witness' to the churches. In that verse the matters which he testifies to are described with the word ταῦτα. Thus describing Jesus as ὁ μαρτυρῶν ταῦτα implies a *functional* equivalence between Jesus Christ and the revealing angel. Both function as witnesses to the 'things' of God.

The functional equivalence between the angel and Jesus is striking in view of the apparent identity of Jesus with God. But our interest here is in the question why Jesus and the angel appear to double up in their roles.

It is possible in fact that the doubling up between Jesus and the angel serves at least two important purposes. First, if John had portrayed the angel at every point where Jesus is involved in the transmission of the revelation his readers could have lost any sense of the direct involvement of their risen Lord in their time of trial. By portraying the Lord of the church in a similar role to the angel he reminds the church that their Lord is close at hand in her hour of need. Secondly, if John never involved the angel in the process of transmission then his readers conceivably might think that the risen Jesus was an angel *tout simple*. By juxtaposing Jesus and the angel yet distinguishing between Jesus and the angel (e.g. Jesus is never designated ἄγγελος, the angel is not worshipped) John sets up a point of comparison which cautions against the conclusion that Jesus was actually an angel.

Some sense therefore can be made of the relationship between Jesus and the revealing angel which is characterized by functional equivalence.

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<sup>63</sup>Beckwith, 779; Giblin, *Revelation*, 220; Hartman, "Form", 148, 'a direct address through the mouth of the prophet to the audience'. Note that Beckwith, 780, sees ὁ μαρτυρῶν ταῦτα as a reference to 1.2 rather than to 22.18 (which he understands as the words of John), while Hartman, *op. cit.*, 148, sees the words as a reference to 22.18 *if* these are the words of Jesus - a possibility he is open to.

## **§6.4 CONCLUSION**

Apc 1.1 presents Jesus Christ in relationship to God and to the angel of the revelation. Jesus appears to be identified with God. Yet he is also functionally equivalent to the angel with whom he appears to work closely on several occasions. Angelology appears therefore to have influenced the christology of the Apc in the sense that it has provided a means for Jesus to be presented in a way which underlines his closeness to the church in her hour of need.

The identity of Jesus with God and the likeness of Jesus to an angel are two important results which will feature prominently in the next four chapters in which we focus on the three visions found in Apc 1.13-16, 14.14, and 19.11-16.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# THE CHRISTOPHANY IN APOCALYPSE 1.13-16 (PART A)

### §7.1 INTRODUCTION

In Apc 1.9-20 we have an account of the commissioning of John to write down 'the revelation of Jesus Christ' (1.9-20). The account of this commissioning is dominated by the appearance of an exalted figure. In four verses John describes the form of the figure in some detail (1.13-16). The figure goes on to speak words which identify him with the risen Jesus Christ: 'I was dead, and see, I am alive forever and ever' (1.18).<sup>1</sup> Thus John is the recipient of a christophany.

The christophany has, of course, been the subject of a great deal of study.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter and the next we confine ourselves to reflection on the christophany in keeping with our overall aim. Although the christophany is often related to its presumed background, it has not been compared in depth with the other epiphanies in the Apc (that is, with the angelophanies, and with the theophany in Apc 4). Accordingly in this chapter we compare the christophany with the other epiphanies. In practice we consider not only Jesus in relation to the angels and to God but also in relation to the living creatures and to the elders. The results of this chapter's investigation will be useful for our discussion in the next chapter of the christophany in the light of its background.

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<sup>1</sup>No commentator disputes this.

<sup>2</sup>See commentaries for symbolic significance of the details of Christ's appearance; for a detailed form-critical analysis of the expanded passage, 1.9-20, see Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung*, 139-147; Holtz, *Christologie*, 116-128, remains the 'standard' study.

First of all we review the text of Apc 1.12b-16:

καὶ ἐπιστρέψας εἶδον ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς 13 καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν λυχνιῶν ὅμοιον υἷόν ἀνθρώπου ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη καὶ περιζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν. 14 ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον λευκὸν ὡς χιῶν καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρὸς 15 καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης καὶ ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ ὡς φωνὴ ὑδάτων πολλῶν, 16 καὶ ἔχων ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ ἀστέρας ἑπτὰ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ῥομφαία δίστομος ὀξεῖα ἐκπορευομένη καὶ ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος φαίνει ἐν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ.

No major textual critical matters arise from this passage. The phrase ὅμοιον υἷόν ἀνθρώπου is noteworthy for its 'strange defiance of grammar'.<sup>3</sup> Except in 14.14 where this phrase recurs, John consistently uses the dative after ὅμοιον (e.g. 1.15, 2.18, 4.3: nineteen times in all). Beckwith concludes that this grammatical oddity is evidently intended.<sup>4</sup> Mussies argues that because ׀ formed a single word with the following substantive in Hebrew and Aramaic then this might account for 'the idea that ὅμοιος and its complement had to show grammatical concord'.<sup>5</sup> Ozanne proposes that ὅμοιον υἷόν ἀνθρώπου represents a feature known as '*kap veritatis*' and should be translated as 'the very Son of Man' or 'the Son of Man himself'.<sup>6</sup> But this begs the question why John did not simply use ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

## §7.2 JESUS AND THE ANGELS

The form of most angels is entirely neglected by John. We are given no clues in phrases such as 'Michael and his angels' (12.7) as to what constitutes the form of these angels. Some angels have a certain object with them, such as a trumpet (e.g. 8.7) or a sickle (e.g. 14.17), which suggests that these creatures must have at least one limb! In the case of the trumpet-angels they presumably have legs and feet since they stand before God (8.2), and the blowing of trumpets suggests that they had hands, arms, *and* mouths.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Swete, 15.

<sup>4</sup>Beckwith, 437.

<sup>5</sup>Mussies, *Morphology*, 139.

<sup>6</sup>Ozanne, "Language", 7-8.



Three angels appear in Apc 10.1, 15.6-7, 18.1 who are described in sufficient detail to warrant discussion of their form in comparison to the risen Jesus in 1.13-16.<sup>8</sup> Relating these appearances to the christology of the Apc and to the christophany in particular has been a neglected feature of discussion of the christology of the Apc.<sup>9</sup>

### §7.2.1 'Another mighty angel' (Apocalypse 10.1-3)

Καὶ εἶδον ἄλλον ἄγγελον ἰσχυρὸν καταβαίνοντα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ περιβεβλημένον νεφέλην, καὶ ἡ ἴρις ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὡς στῦλοι πυρός, 2 καὶ ἔχων ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ βιβλαρίδιον ἠνεωγμένον. καὶ ἔθηκεν τὸν πόδα αὐτοῦ τὸν δεξιὸν ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸν δὲ εὐώνυμον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, 3 καὶ ἔκραξεν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ ὡσπερ λέων μυκᾶται. καὶ ὅτε ἔκραχεν, ἐλάλησαν αἱ ἑπτὰ βρονταὶ τὰς ἑαυτῶν φωνάς (Apc 10.1-3).

As ἄλλον ἄγγελον ἰσχυρὸν this angel is the successor to the 'mighty angel' who appears in 5.2.<sup>10</sup> Like the glorious angel in 18.1 the mighty angel in 10.1 is seen καταβαίνοντα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. Being wrapped in a cloud (περιβεβλημένον νεφέλην) and having a rainbow over his head (καὶ ἡ ἴρις ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ) is unique to this angel in the Apc (cf. the heavenly woman, περιβεβλημένη τὸν ἥλιον, 12.1). No other angel has a voice 'like a lion roaring', though there are numerous references to angels crying out with a φωνῇ μεγάλῃ (cf. 7.2, 14.7, 9, 15, 19.17; ἰσχυρῶ φωνῇ, 18.2).

Having a sunlike face (τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος) and fiery legs (καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὡς στῦλοι πυρός), however, is reminiscent of the appearance of the risen Jesus

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Michl, *Engelvorstellung*, 189 n.6.

<sup>8</sup>We reject Barker, "Temple", 72, when she attempts to interdict critical reading of angelophanies: it is simply wrong to assert that 'the same angel is intended in each case'.

<sup>9</sup>E.g. Rowland, *Heaven*, only discusses the christological aspect of one angelophany (Apc 10.1), and then it is but a brief mention (cf. p.102). Most recently, Brighton, *Angel*, 199-203, discusses the christological significance of the angel in 10.1.

<sup>10</sup>A few witnesses, e.g., P 2053  $\mathfrak{B}^k$ , omit ἄλλον which could be an attempt to equate the mighty angels in 5.2 and 10.1; cf. Allo, 120.

(cf. ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος φαίνει ἐν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ, 1.16, cf. Mt. 17.2; οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ ὡς ἐν κομίνῳ πεπυρωμένης, 1.15). The association of this angel with 'cloud' corresponds to associations with 'cloud(s)' for Jesus Christ in Apc 1.7 and 14.14.

Some elements of the angelophany recall angelophanies and epiphanies in other writings (e.g.):

'a *kidaris* (was) on his head, its look that of a rainbow' (Apc. Abr. 11.2).

'his face shining like the rays of the sun in its glory' (Apc. Zeph. 6.11; cf. 1 En. 106.2; lightning-like face: Jos. Asen. 14.8, Dn 10.6).

αἱ χεῖρες καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὥσπερ σίδηρος ἐκ πυρός, (Jos. Asen. 14.9; cf. Dn 10.6, Apc. Zeph. 6.11, Ezek 1.27, 8.2).

'the angel of Yahweh standing between earth and heaven' (1 Chr 21.16, cf. Wis 18.16)

The angelophany also recalls various theophanies:

'around the throne is a rainbow (ἴρις) that looks like an emerald' (Apc 4.3).

'like the bow (τόξου)<sup>11</sup> in a cloud on a rainy day, such was the appearance of the splendour all around' (Ezek 1.28).<sup>12</sup>

'you have wrapped yourself with a cloud (ἐπεσκέπασας νεφέλην, LXX) so that no prayer can pass through' (Lam 3.44).

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<sup>11</sup>Cf. Ezek 1.4 (ὁ ἐβραῖος) where ἴρις is used rather than ἠλέκτρον and discussion later in this section.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. Gn 9.13 (the rainbow of the covenant). In connection with the 'clothing' of the angel compare *Odes. Sol.* 4.7-8, 'Because your seal is known and your creatures are known to it. And your hosts possess it and the elect archangels are clothed with it'.

'Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud" ' (Ex 19.9; cf. Ex 20.21; Ps 96(97).2).

'Now the garments which the supreme Word of Him that IS puts on as raiment are the world, for He arrays Himself in earth and air and water and fire and all that comes forth from these' (Philo, *Fug.* 110).

'Yahweh my God ... You are clothed with honor and majesty, wrapped in light as with a garment. ... you make the clouds your chariot' (Ps 104.1-3; cf. Is 19.1).

'I looked, and a hand was stretched out to me, and a written scroll was in it' (Ezek 2.9).

'Then I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll written on the inside and on the back' (Apc 5.1).

'but the Lord thundered with a mighty voice (ἐν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ) that day against the Philistines' (1 Sm 7.10).

'they shall go after the Lord, who roars like a lion (ὡς λέων ἐρεύξεται)' (Hos 11.10).<sup>13</sup>

'The brightness [of God's glory] was like the sun', (Hab 3.4).<sup>14</sup>

Also in the background to the angel as one wrapped in *cloud* and with legs like *pillars* of fire are the following passages:

יגנפ תומע; ὁ στῦλος τῆς νεφέλης (Ex 14.19 MT, LXX respectively).

יגנפ ושא תומעב; ἐν στύλῳ πυρὸς καὶ νεφέλης (Ex 14.24 MT, LXX respectively; cf. Ex 13.21).

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<sup>13</sup>Cf. Am 3.8.

<sup>14</sup>Ford, 162, speaks of 'hints at a theophany' in the appearance of the angel. For a full discussion of the details of the form of the mighty angel see Brighton, *Angel*, 80-122 and Ford, 161-163.

'When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend (יָרַד עַמּוּד הָעָנָן; κατέβαιναν ὁ στύλος τῆς νεφέλης) and stand at the entrance to the tent' (Ex 33.9).

'I [Sophia] dwelt in the highest heavens, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud (ἐν στύλῳ νεφέλης, LXX)' (Sir 24.4).

The description of the angel setting his feet on the land and the sea is not found elsewhere in angelophanies prior to the Apc, although its implication that the angel is of immense size recalls the angel of Yahweh which David sees standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite (1 Chr 21.16).<sup>15</sup> The resting of the right foot on the sea gives the impression that the sea is as stable as the land to the angel which is a reversal of the usual connotations in Jewish tradition of the sea as a place of chaos.<sup>16</sup> If this is so then the sea is comparable to the 'sea of glass' in front of the divine throne (Apc 4.6; cf. 15.2), and just possibly we have another element in the account of the angelophany which draws on theophanic tradition. The conjunction of 'sea' and 'earth' is an idiom for the 'whole world',<sup>17</sup> which also underlines the majesty of this angel.

It follows from the analysis above that the mighty angel in Apc 10.1 stands firmly in the tradition of the principal angels. But the angelophany in Apc 10.1-3 does not reproduce any one angelophany. Indeed it extends the tradition with its own blend of angelophanic and theophanic elements.<sup>18</sup> In the context of the Apc this angel is notable since no other angel carries explicit images which connote the visible and audible presence of God such as the rainbow, the cloud, and the leonine voice, and no other angel so closely resembles Jesus Christ.

There are four features of the angel's appearance which bear further consideration.

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<sup>15</sup>Brighton, *Angel*, 141-144, and 166-167 finds no pertinent antecedent figure in Jewish material for an angel of great size. But he overlooks 1 Chr 21.16 and Wis 18.16. Later *Hekhalot* writings such as *Shi'ur Qomah* are concerned with the size of the divine body, cf. Cohen, *Shi'ur*, 9.

<sup>16</sup>Swete, 124.

<sup>17</sup>Lohmeyer, 82; cf. Ex 20.4,11; Ps 69.34.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. Lohmeyer, 81; Kraft, 147.

First, the association of the rainbow with the angel is intriguing. The word used, ἴρις, is also used in Apc 4.3 to describe the immediate surrounds of the divine throne. This fact alone suggests that the rainbow imagery in 10.1 is a theophanic element in the description. Nevertheless, the rainbow has other associations with God. In Gen 9.11-17 the rainbow is a sign of God's *mercy*, of his covenant to never again flood the earth to destroy it (cf. τὸ τόξον μου τίθημι ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ, v.13 LXX).<sup>19</sup> In Ezek 1.28 the *glory* of God is described as 'like the bow in a cloud on a rainy day' (ὡς ὄρασις τόξου, ὅταν ᾗ ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὑέτου, LXX). There is no reason why we should deny that the angel represents God in both these aspects.<sup>20</sup>

Apc 4.3 and 10.1 do not use the word τόξον found in Gen 9.13 LXX and Ezek 1.28 LXX. The goddess of the rainbow and one of the messengers of the gods was Ἴρις (e.g. Homer, *Iliad* 8.398; Virgil, *Aeneid*, 10.73) so that John, who was not averse to blending Jewish and pagan material together into his work,<sup>21</sup> may have chosen ἴρις for this reason.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless the use of ἴρις in 4.3 which reflects strongly the influence of Ezek 1 raises the question why τόξον was not employed. One explanation, put forward many years ago,<sup>23</sup> but rarely discussed,<sup>24</sup> is that ἴρις derives from Ezek 1.4 according to a version known as 'the Hebraios' and attested in Origen's *Hexapla*.<sup>25</sup> Ezek 1.4 records the beginning of Ezekiel's call vision where he sees a stormy wind with a great cloud that is surrounded by brightness and flashing light. In the middle of it, according to the *Hebraios* version, was a light 'like the appearance of a rainbow' (ὡς ὄρασις ἰριδος, cf. ὡς ὄρασις ἠλέκτρον, LXX).

No corroborating evidence for either explanation is at hand. In any case each explanation is consistent with the thought that the angel comes as a distinguished representative of God and the rainbow illustrates this.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. Caird, 125, Ford, 161-162; Allo, 120; Brütsch, i, 394.

<sup>20</sup>Brighton, *Angel*, 100.

<sup>21</sup>Most noticeably in Apc 12, cf. Yarbro Collins, *Combat*, 57-83; Court, *Myth*, 106-121.

<sup>22</sup>Brighton, *Angel*, 101; cf. Charles, i, 115.

<sup>23</sup>Montgomery, "Education", 75.

<sup>24</sup>E.g. Halperin, *Faces*, 526, notes it, but Brighton, *Angel* (1992), and most if not all commentators overlook it.

<sup>25</sup>The citation from the Hebraios translation is in Field, *Hexapla*, ii, 768 [In full: φῶς γὰρ ἐν μέσῳ αὐτοῦ, ὡς ὄρασις ἰριδος, καὶ αὐτὴ διειδῆς ἦν ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν].

Secondly, the fact that the angel descends from heaven wrapped in a cloud also has definite theophanic connotations. In texts such as Ex 19.9 and 33.9 'cloud' is the means by which God becomes present with his servant Moses while preserving the hiddenness of his essential being. In texts such as Lam 3.44 and Ps 104.3 'cloud(s)' are used by God for the purpose of separating himself from humanity and for the purpose of movement. The *conjunction* of 'rainbow' and 'cloud' in 10.1 recalls Ezek 1.28,<sup>26</sup> where both images are part of the description of the *kabod*. Yet we must also allow that in other OT texts 'cloud(s)' are associated with beings other than God (e.g. Dn 7.13, Ex 14.19-20), and that in the Apc 'cloud' is used as a vehicle for the two (creaturely) witnesses of God to ascend to heaven (11.12).

Thus although 'cloud' is a theophanic element incorporated into the description of the angel it is not necessarily an indication that the angel is divine. Rather, as with the 'rainbow' it signifies that close association between the angel and God. The angel acts on behalf of God just as the angel of God went before the Israelites (Ex 14.19, cf. 23.20) in exactly the same way as God himself did (Ex 13.21, 14.24).<sup>27</sup>

The third feature which commands our attention is the resemblance of the mighty angel to the glorious 'man' in Dn 10.5-6. In Apc 10.5-6 the angel raises his right hand and swears by God that 'There will be no more delay'. This action closely reflects the action of 'the man clothed in linen' in Dan 12.7:

ἤρεν τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ τὴν δεξιὰν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν 6. καὶ ὤμοσεν ἐν τῷ ζῶντι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ὅς ἔκτισεν τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, ὅτι χρόνος οὐκέτι ἔσται (Apc 10.5b-6).

ואשמע את־האיש לבוש הבדים אשר ממעל למימי היאר  
וירם ימינו ושמאלו אל־השמים וישבע בחי העולם כי למועד מועדים  
:וירם ימינו ושמאלו אל־השמים וישבע בחי העולם כי למועד מועדים  
:וירם ימינו ושמאלו אל־השמים וישבע בחי העולם כי למועד מועדים (Dn 12.7 MT).

<sup>26</sup>Kraft, 147.

<sup>27</sup>Kraft, 147, understands the angel as an 'Engel des Herrn'. Cf. Ford, 163; Brighton, *Angel*, 79-93.

... Ἔως καιροῦ συντελείας· καὶ ὕψωσε τὴν δεξιὰν καὶ τὴν ἀριστεράν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ᾤμοσε τὸν ζῶντα εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα θεὸν (Dn 12.7 LXX).

... καὶ ὕψωσεν τὴν δεξιὰν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν ἀριστεράν αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ᾤμοσεν ἐν τῷ ζῶντι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ὅτι (Dn 12.7 Th.).

In both Apc 10.5b-6 and in Dn 12.7 the angel raises his right hand to heaven and swears by the living, eternal God. Although other passages such as Deut 32.40 may be in the background here, other observations suggest that Dn 12 is in view in Apc 10. Both passages feature angels, and both are concerned with scrolls (Apc 10.2, 8-10; Dn 12.4, cf. 10.21). Also, a few verse further on, in Apc 11.2-3, a period of time is mentioned concerning the desecration of the temple and the holy city: 'forty-two months' or 'one thousand two hundred and sixty days' which is drawn from Dn 12.7 ('time, times, and a half' which equates to forty-two months) and 12.11 ('one thousand two hundred and ninety days').

The 'man clothed in linen' in Dn 12.7 can only be the angel in Dn 10.5-6.<sup>28</sup> This angel has 'a face like lightning' and 'legs like the gleam of burnished bronze' so that there is some resemblance to the mighty angel in Apc 10. Moreover the mighty angel in Apc 10 commissions John for prophetic ministry just as the angel in Dn 10 commissions Daniel for ministry as guardian of the truth. At the very least these observations suggest that the vision of the mighty angel in Apc 10 draws on the vision of the 'man clothed in linen' alongside the other sources which we have already mentioned.<sup>29</sup> The significance of this observation will be elucidated in the next chapter.

Fourthly, it is noticeable that John does not fall down in awe or to attempt to worship the angel. Presumably at this point he was well aware that he was in the presence of a creaturely angel notwithstanding the theophanic elements in his appearance.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup>Montgomery, *Daniel*, 475.

<sup>29</sup>Cf. Charles, i, 259.

<sup>30</sup>This observation counts against Brighton's conclusion that the appearance of the angel in Apc 10 suggests 'an angel-theophany' [*Angel*, 79]. In view of John's reaction to the christophany in Apc 1.17 we would expect that if the angel in 10.1 conveyed the sense of being in the presence of God then John would also fall down. In any case 'angel-theophany' is a confusing term.

In sum: the mighty angel in 10.1 is glorious in a manner which suggests that he comes as some kind of plenipotentiary of God. His appearance recalls a wide range of theophanies and angelophanies, including the angelophany in Dn 10.5-6.<sup>31</sup>

With the preceding discussion in mind we now turn to consider the mighty angel in relation to Jesus Christ. In both form and function the angel resembles the risen Jesus who, like the angel, commissions John in Apc 1.13-16.<sup>32</sup> In general terms, both have a glorious appearance about which specific details concerning the clothing, head, face, legs and voice of each figure are given; in particular, the faces of both are compared with the sun. But there are distinctions which can be made between the two, since in no case is there an *exact* resemblance between the details in the descriptions of each: for example, although both faces are 'like the sun', different words are used for the face of each figure (ὄψις, πρόσωπον).<sup>33</sup>

The resemblance between the two figures has led some interpreters to equate them. Thus the Elkesaites, for example, are reported as holding the view that Christ is a power whose length is '96 miles' and whose breadth is '24 miles'.<sup>34</sup> Others certainly have understood the angel to be Jesus Christ,<sup>35</sup> even in the present century.<sup>36</sup> But the description of the angel in Apc 10.1-3 has no one component which exactly resembles the components of

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<sup>31</sup>The outstanding form of the angel in Apc 10.1 undermines the claim that the Apc is 'anti-angel' [e.g. Boring, "Voice", 338].

<sup>32</sup>Brighton, *Angel*, 161, argues that the first commissioning in Apc 1.9-20 is for the revelation to the seven churches while the object of the second is 'all nations' (10.11).

<sup>33</sup>Cf. Bergmeier, "Buchrolle", 236, 'Es ist wahrscheinlicher, daß ein Christ die Christophanie nach angelologischem Vorbild gestaltet als umgekehrt die Angelophanie der Christusvision angleicht'.

<sup>34</sup>So Epiphanius, *Pan.* 19.4.1; cf. Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.17.6; 53.1.9; Hippolytus, *Ref. omn. haer.* IX. 13. 2-3. Daniélou, *Theology*, 121, argues that the colossal stature of the *glorious angel* is characteristic of Jewish Christian teaching, cf. *Shep. Herm.* 9.6.1.

<sup>35</sup>E.g. Primasius, Bk 3, 'Dominum Christum descendendum de caelo'; Victorinus, 88-89; Augustine, 2430-2431. Ruperti T., 1006, accepts that the angel is Christ but denies that this is the nature of Christ, rather this is his *officium*.

<sup>36</sup>E.g. Scott, 219; Brighton, *Angel*, 5 also cites Wellhausen, J., *Analyse der Offenbarung Johannis* Berlin: Weidmannische Buchhandlung, 1907, 14; cf. Rowland, *Heaven*, 102, 'it is not easy to differentiate between [the angel in Apc 10.1] and the risen Christ who appears to John on the island of Patmos'.



the christophany in Apc 1.13-16. Nor is there any descriptive detail in the rest of ch. 10 which is suggestive of the angel being Jesus: for example, the angel does not speak alone and on his own authority but is supplemented by a voice from heaven (10.4) and he swears by God (10.6), unlike Jesus in 1.17-20, who speaks with the sovereign 'I am'. In fact since the figure is clearly understood as an ἄγγελος (10.1,5,8,10), a term never used of Jesus in the Apc, it is unlikely that the mighty angel in Apc 10 is meant to be Jesus.<sup>37</sup>

Yet the points of similarity between the angelophany and the christophany raise the question whether the angel comes as the representative of Jesus Christ. Giblin, for example, suggests that although the angel is identified with neither God nor the risen Jesus, with his sun-like face and fiery legs 'he seems to be a stand in for the Lord'.<sup>38</sup>

This suggestion faces the difficulty that, with the glorious angels of apocalyptic literature in mind, there seems to be no reason to link the angel specifically to Jesus - with respect to the sunlike face and fiery legs the angel is simply a typical glorious angel. Nevertheless the angel can be thought of as the angel of God *and of Jesus* since, as we have seen in §6.3, this angel is likely to be the revealing angel.

In sum: the mighty angel in Apc 10 stands in the tradition of the glorious angel we have studied earlier in this dissertation. Despite a certain similarity between the two this angel is not Jesus Christ. If this angel is the revealing angel then it is the angel of God and of Jesus Christ. The mixture of theophanic and angelophanic imagery associated with the appearance of this angel underlines this conclusion. His presence in the narrative indicates that the conception of the heavenly world in the Apc is broad enough to include alongside Jesus glorious angels with similar form and function. It also indicates familiarity with the conclusion we reached in Part One that angelophanies and epiphanies of angelomorphic figures incorporated theophanic imagery without the corollary that the figure concerned was divine.

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<sup>37</sup>Cf. Arethas, 635-642; Andreas, 306; Swete, 124; Bousset, 307-308; Caird, 125-126; Charles, i, 258-259; Lohse, 50; Prigent, 151; Allo, 120; Loisy, 194, 'un ange est un ange'; Dunn, *Christology*, 156, who overstates the distinction between Christ and the angels in the Apc; and Brighton, *Angel*, 184-186, who notes the lack of godly fear in the response of the seer to the angelophany.

<sup>38</sup>Giblin, *Revelation*, 109. Cf. Brighton, *Angel*, 79; Kraft, 147; Caird, 125-126.

### §7.2.2 The Seven Bowl-Angels (Apocalypse 15.6-7)

The next detailed angelophany in the Apc involves not one but seven angels.

ἐνδεδυμένοι λίνον<sup>39</sup> καθαρὸν λαμπρὸν καὶ περιεζωσμένοι περὶ τὰ στήθη ζώνας χρυσᾶς (Apc 15.6).

Whether these angels are a reappearance of the trumpet angels (Apc 8.2-11.19) need not detain us here.<sup>40</sup> Our interest is in the resemblance between these angels and Jesus Christ.

The clothing of the angels does not recall the clothing of any other angels in the Apc, but it does recall clothing worn by angels in other writings:

'and [the sons of the holy angels] garments were white - and their overcoats - and the light of their faces was like snow' (1 *En* 71.1; cf. Ezek 9.2, Dn 10.5).

'with a belt of gold from Uphaz around his waist' (καὶ τὴν ὀσφὺν περιεζωσμένος βυσσίνῳ, LXX; καὶ ἡ ὀσφὺς αὐτοῦ περιεζωσμένη ἐν χρυσίῳ Ωφαζ, Th., Dn 10.5).

'and he was girded as if a golden girdle were upon his breast' (*Apc. Zeph.* 6.11).

Although the form of the bowl angels does not include as many details as the mighty angel in Apc 10, the role of these angels as agents of the judgement of God, the fact that one of the angels is the angel of the revelation,<sup>41</sup> and that the group consists of seven angels

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<sup>39</sup>So N-A<sup>26</sup>; also Swete, 195; Lohmeyer, 129; Bousset, 394. A C 2053 2062 have λίθον (cf. Ezek 28.13). Some witnesses (e.g.  $\Phi$ <sup>47</sup> (H) 046) have λίνουιν. Charles, ii, 38, suggests βύσσινον (cf. 19.14).

<sup>40</sup>One interesting question is whether there are two groups of angels or one group appearing twice. If there are two groups it is conceivable that one group consists of deputies to the other group, on analogy with the seven 'deputy princes' mentioned in 4Q400 3 ii 2, cf. 4Q405 13 7.

<sup>41</sup>The equation bowl-angel = revealing angel = mighty angel (Apc 10.1) is possible providing we accept that a heavenly being can appear in different form on separate occasions.

suggest that these are angels of high rank.

In 15.6-7 the appearance of the seven bowl-angels calls to mind the appearance of Jesus in the christophany in Apc 1. These angels are described as:

ἐνδεδυμένοι λίνον καθαρὸν λαμπρὸν καὶ περιεζωσμένοι περὶ τὰ στήθη ζώνας χρυσᾶς (15.6-7),

while the corresponding description of Jesus is:

ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη καὶ περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν (1.13).

At this point the differences between these angels and Jesus are slight: the robes of the angels are described with more precision, and different words are used for 'chest'. Of course, we are not told anything more than this about these angels, whereas Jesus is described with much more detail in the christophany. The resemblance between Jesus and the bowl-angels may account for John's attempt in 19.10 and 22.9 to worship the bowl-angel who functions as the revealing angel.

### §7.2.3 The Angel with Great Authority (Apocalypse 18.1)

The next angelophany involves a single angel again.

Μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον ἄλλον ἄγγελον καταβαίνοντα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔχοντα ἐξουσίαν μεγάλην, καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐφωτίσθη ἐκ τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ. 2 καὶ ἔκραχεν ἐν ἰσχυρῷ φωνῇ λέγων, (Apc 18.1-2a).

In view of the glorious appearance of the angel in 18.1 it is striking that he is simply described as ἄλλον ἄγγελον.

The description of the angel appears to draw on Ezek 43.2 which describes the coming of the 'glory of God' from the east. In particular the lighting up of the earth by the angel recalls the following description,

וַיִּבְרַח מִבְּבַדוֹ הַרְאָהוּ אֶת הַיָּדָיו; καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐξέλαμπεν ὡς φέγγος ἀπὸ τῆς δόξης κυκλόθεν,  
(Ezek 43.2; cf. Is 6.3).

However the description of the angel's voice (ἐν ἰσχυρᾷ φωνῇ) is noticeably different from that found in Ezek 43.2, כַּכֵּן מִיָּמַי רַבִּים; ὡς φωνὴ διπλασιαζόντων πολλῶν. The usual description of an angel's voice in the Apc is ἐν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ (5.2, 7.2, 10.3, 14.7,9,15, 19.17; cf. 1 Sm 7.10 LXX).

The description of this angel as having 'great authority' begs the question, how did John know this? It seems reasonable to surmise that one possibility was that he drew this conclusion from features of the angel's appearance which symbolised authority in much the same way as the purple robes and golden staff of Yahoel (*Apc. Abr.* 11.3) and the robe, crown, and royal staff of the angel in *Jos. Ase.* 14.8 symbolised their authority. But it may be that John recognised the authority of the angel simply because of his generally glorious appearance - an appearance which he describes in terms which reflect most directly not the traditions concerning glorious angels but the description of the appearance of the glory of God himself (cf. Ezek 43.1-2).<sup>42</sup> Swete suggests that 'so recently has he come from the Presence that in passing he flings a broad belt of light across the dark Earth'.<sup>43</sup>

The appearance of this angel differs from the risen Jesus, the mighty angel in Apc 10.1,<sup>44</sup> and various other principal angels in having a glorious appearance *without* component parts being described such as a shining face and fiery legs.<sup>45</sup>

There is only one specific point of comparison with the description of Jesus Christ in the Apc. Of this angel it is said that he has 'great authority' (ἔχοντα ἐξουσίαν μεγάλην), and in Apc 2.26-28 and 12.10 there is reference to the 'authority' (ἐξουσία) of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>42</sup>So Charles, ii, 95. Ford, 296.

<sup>43</sup>Swete, 223.

<sup>44</sup>Brighton, *Angel*, 193, however, makes the point that the angel's glory might light up the whole earth because he is of immense size.

<sup>45</sup>Cf. the general descriptions of glorious figures such as Adam (*Test. Abr.* 11.10) and Sariel (*Ladd. Jac.* 3.3).

In another context, one which was not dominated by Jesus Christ and not also inhabited by the mighty angel in Apc 10.1 and the bowl-angels in 15.6-7, this glorious angel would surely be considered a quite extraordinary and unique angel. In particular it would be tempting to identify this angel as the visible *kabod* of God (especially in the light of the links between Apc 18.1 and Ezek 43.2). Yet in the Apc this angel is not unique. He is one of a number of glorious angels. Just as the rainbow over the head of the angel in Apc 10.1 does not mean that he is divine, the proper conclusion to draw is that the angel in 18.1 is not the *kabod* but that he reflects the *kabod* (as Swete points out in the comment cited above).<sup>46</sup>

#### §7.2.4 Conclusion

If Jesus is greater than the glorious angels in the Apc then he is very great indeed, for the form of these angels, in which angelophanic and theophanic elements are adopted, adapted, and blended together, indicates that they are of the highest status before God. Conversely, the resemblance between Jesus and these angels suggests that the form of the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16 is typically angelic (a subject we will pursue further in Chapter Eight). Also important for later discussion is the observation that theophanic imagery in the angelophanies in Apc 10.1 and 18.1 does not lead to the conclusion that the respective angels are anything other than angels.

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<sup>46</sup>The same point could be made in respect of Moses whose glory had to be veiled (Ex 34.29-35) but whose status as a human being and not a divine being was not thereby altered.

### §7.3 JESUS, THE LIVING CREATURES, AND THE ELDERS

We have looked at the glorious risen Jesus in the light of the glorious angels in the Apc. Now we turn to consider two sets of beings who, if not actually angels, are like angels in various respects, and who command our attention here because of their exalted status as those privileged to exist in and around the divine throne.

#### §7.3.1 The Four Living Creatures

Whether or not the living creatures who surround the throne (e.g. Apc 4.6) are angels need not detain us. The living creatures are the creatures who live closest to the throne and for this reason are worth considering in relationship to Jesus Christ who is also closely associated with the throne (e.g. Apc 7.17). In this section we will consider the description of the living creatures in the Apc before reflecting on their relationship to Jesus Christ.

As the vision of heaven unfolds before John's eyes he sees

'Around the throne, and on each side of the throne (Καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου), ..... four living creatures (ζῶα) full of eyes in front and behind' (Apc 4.6).

Each creature has six wings (4.8), and they sing, day and night, an acclamation to God (4.9). Each creature recalls an earthly creature: the first, a lion; the second, an ox; the third, a human face; and the fourth, a flying eagle (4.7).

That the form of these creatures owes a considerable debt to the four living creatures of Ezekiel's call-vision (cf. Ezek 1.4-25) and to the cherubim of Ezek 10.10-14 is affirmed by most, if not all commentators on the Apc.<sup>47</sup> But there are notable differences between the two conceptions of the living creatures. Since, for our present purpose these differences are not of special significance, we will simply give the most obvious ones.

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<sup>47</sup>E.g. Beckwith, 500-502; Sweet, 120; Caird, 64; Swete, 69-70; Lohmeyer, 45-46; Kraft, 99. For an extended treatment of the Four Living Creatures, which pays special attention to their background in Ezekiel, see Michl, *Engelvorstellungen*, 5-111.

First, the living creatures in Ezekiel *each* have four faces (human, ox, lion, eagle, 1.6,10; cherub, human, lion, eagle, 10.14) whereas in the Apc each living creature only has one face in a simplification of the scheme he has received from Ezekiel.<sup>48</sup> Secondly, whereas in Ezek 1.6 the appearance of the living creatures is described as 'of human form', in the Apc the forms of the living creatures are taken from the types of faces in Ezek 1.6 so that in three cases they appear to have the form of an animal (lion, ox, flying eagle). Only in one case is the face of the creature 'like a human face' (Apc 4.7) but we are left uncertain as to whether this means the creature as a whole has human form. Thirdly, the living creatures, according to Ezekiel, are associated with movement in terms of wheels (1.15-21) and lie *under* the divine throne (1.22). The impression is given of a (so-called) throne-chariot, and not simply a throne as in Apc 4 where the living creatures are stationary, and their main function in the heavenly vision is to praise God (4.9, cf. 5.13-14,7.1-12, 19.4).<sup>49</sup>

The praise of the living creatures, involving the use of the Trisagion (Apc 4.8), recalls the call-vision of Isaiah, in which six-winged seraphs are seen in attendance *above* the throne and they are heard to praise God using the Trisagion (Is 6.2-3). Thus the living creatures in the Apc seem to be a blending of the seraphim of Isaiah and the cherubim of Ezekiel.<sup>50</sup> A conclusion which is confirmed by the observation that the living creatures in the Apc are neither above nor below the divine throne, but 'around the throne and on each side of the throne' (4.6). Halperin suggests that, since the living creatures in the Apc are 'full of eyes all around' (4.8, cf. the '*ophannim*' in Ezek 1.18; 10.12) and since a similar trisagion is attributed in *Sim. En.* to the 'cherubim, seraphim, ophannim', the living creatures are 'composite of all three orders'.<sup>51</sup>

In the Apc the living creatures not only praise God. They hold 'a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints' (5.8). They command the four apocalyptic horsemen (6.1,3,5,7).<sup>52</sup> One of the living creatures gives the seven bowl-angels 'seven

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<sup>48</sup>Cf. Charles, i, 121. Note that in *Apc. Abr.* 18.4-5 traces of the more complex scheme of Ezekiel remain: 'each one had four faces. One face was like a lion's, another like a man's, another like an ox's, and another like an eagle's - each one had four heads'.

<sup>49</sup>Cf. Bietenhard, *Welt*, 62.

<sup>50</sup>Cf. Swete, 71; Lohmeyer, 46; Bousset, 250. Note 1 En 72.8-13 in which four of the archangels are closely associated with the Head of Days.

<sup>51</sup>Halperin, *Faces*, 91.

golden bowls full of the wrath of God' (15.7). In these ways the living creatures function like the angels.

One important question which the living creatures raise is how they can be both ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου and κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου (4.6). Does this mean that (say) two living creatures are 'in the middle of the throne' and two are on an imaginary circle running around the throne?<sup>53</sup> Or does it mean that all four living creatures are on an imaginary line running around the throne in such a way that each is positioned opposite the middle of each side of the throne?<sup>54</sup>

Recently Hall has offered a way out of something of a scholarly *impasse* over this question by proposing that, in addition to other sources, John draws on Ex 25.17-22 and 37.6-9 for his model of the heavenly throne. In Ex 25.17-22 Moses commands the craftsmen to make cherubim for each end of the mercy-seat, to be 'of one piece' with the mercy-seat. The mercy-seat, as part of the ark of the covenant, was later interpreted as God's throne (Jer 3.16-17). Solomon sat on such a throne, although lions are featured instead of cherubim (1 Kgs 10.18-19). Thus the 'raw materials for interpreting the living creatures as part of God's heavenly throne' were in place before the Common Era. In Jewish literature through the next ten centuries there is evidence of the conception that the living creatures were not distinct from the divine throne (as in Ezekiel) but constituent parts of it (e.g., Josephus, *Ant.* 3.137, *Pirq. R. El.* 4).

Hall concludes that in this light ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου is 'a perfectly natural way to describe the position of the living creatures'. Just as the legs, arms, and back of a chair are within the space taken up by a chair, so the living creatures are ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου, which he translates as 'within the space taken up by the throne'. So also, the living creatures are κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου, just as a chair is surrounded by legs, arms

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<sup>52</sup>Halperin, *Faces*, 92, argues that these actions represent the darker side of the living creatures.

<sup>53</sup>Note Kraft, 98, who suggests that 'throne' means both 'heaven' and 'the divine throne' (cf. Ps 33.14), so that Apc 4.6 means that the four living creatures are in the middle of heaven and around the throne.

<sup>54</sup>Cf. Swete, 70, suggests 'the figures are so placed that one of the ζῶα is always seen before the Throne, and the other on either side of it and behind, whether stationary or moving round in rapid gyration' [cf. Ezek 1.12f]; Lohmeyer, 45, is against the idea that each creature is in the middle of each side of the throne.



and back. The living creatures are nevertheless *living* creatures so they are not described as 'affixed' or 'sculpted' on the divine throne.<sup>55</sup>

We cannot examine the merits of this explanation in detail, but its importance lies in the fact that it makes the point that the living creatures may be integrally associated with the divine throne.

If this explanation is correct then it sheds light on the interpretation of the position of the Lamb in 5.6 where he appears

ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν  
πρεσβυτέρων.

Charles has plausibly pointed out that ἐν μέσῳ ... ἐν μέσῳ is equivalent to the Hebrew יְבִי ... יְבִי which would mean that the Lamb was between the throne and the living creatures on the one hand and the elders on the other.<sup>56</sup> But a Greek reader without knowledge of Hebrew would presumably have inferred, in the light of 3.21, 7.17, 22.1,3, that the Lamb was on the throne *in the midst* of the living creatures. Hall's explanation implies the latter interpretation is in fact likely to be correct.<sup>57</sup>

Whether or not Hall's explanation is correct it is undoubtedly true that the description, ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου, gives an impression of the close, intimate proximity of the living creatures to the presence of God on his throne. Such proximity in some Jewish circles led to speculations about the ox-like creature as a second power in heaven.<sup>58</sup>

The living creatures then, are extraordinary creatures who exist in the closest proximity to the divine throne short of being placed in the midst of it. Yet it is noticeable that the living creatures are inferior to Jesus for they bow down before the Lamb (5.8) and worship him (5.12). This suggests that the divinity of Jesus Christ is confirmed. For on the one hand Jesus Christ exists at the very centre of the divine throne, in a Father-Son relationship

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<sup>55</sup>Hall, "Living", 609-612.

<sup>56</sup>Charles, i, 140.

<sup>57</sup>Hall, "Living", 612-613.

<sup>58</sup>Halperin, *Faces*, 157-193.

(7.17, 3.21) and on the other hand Jesus the Lamb is worshipped by the most exalted of all heavenly beings apart from God himself.

### §7.3.2 The Twenty-Four Elders

In the vision of the open heaven in Apc 4, John sees a total of twenty-five thrones. Apart from the divine throne itself, there are twenty-four thrones which surround it, each occupied by an elder 'dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads' (4.4). The main function of the elders appears to be worshipping God: whenever the living creatures acclaim God the elders fall before God and worship him by casting their crowns and singing a song of praise (4.10-11, cf. 5.14; 11.16-18; 19.4). The elders also acclaim the Lamb in song (5.12). Some functions are shared with the living creatures: like them the elders also hold harps and bowls of incense (5.8), and they share with them the acclamation in the rejoicing over the marriage of the Lamb (19.4). One of the elders functions as the *angelus interpres* (7.14). Thus even if not angels the elders are attributed with angelic functions.<sup>59</sup> The identity of the elders is somewhat enigmatic, but the question of their identity need not detain us here.<sup>60</sup>

Consideration of the elders in relation to Jesus Christ in the Apc calls forth at least three observations.

First, the elders share with God and Jesus the fact that they are entitled to sit on a throne in heaven. Strictly speaking John never sees the throne of Jesus, although it is mentioned in 3.21. He does see the Lamb in the middle of the divine throne (7.17), he is told that Jesus shares his Father's throne (3.21), and he refers to the divine throne as 'the throne of God and of the Lamb' (22.1,3). The other reference to thrones in the Apc which are not specifically tied to either God or Jesus is in 20.4 where John sees 'thrones and those seated on them were given authority to judge'. Most commonly these thrones are thought to belong to the martyrs.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 66.

<sup>60</sup>For a detailed discussion of the elders see Satake, *Gemeindeordnung*, 137-150; for discussion of the elders and parallels in rabbinic and *Hekhalot* literature see Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 64-67, with conclusion that the elders function as elders but enjoy a privilege accorded to the just and not the angels, viz. sitting in heaven.

Secondly, the wearing of golden crowns by the elders is paralleled by 'one like a son of man' in Apc 14.14.<sup>62</sup>

Thirdly, like the living creatures, the elders fall down before the Lamb (5.8) which suggests the elders are distinct from Jesus.

### **§7.3.3 Conclusion**

The living creatures and the elders are similar to the angels in certain respects although in strict ontological terms it would possibly be incorrect to classify them as angels. Both sets of beings occupy extraordinary positions in heaven. The living creatures are close to the divine throne, possibly even integral to it. The elders occupy thrones. Yet both sets of beings are inferior to Jesus Christ who occupies an even more central position on the divine throne. From this perspective the divinity of Jesus Christ in the Apc is confirmed.

## **§7.4 THE CHRISTOPHANY AND THE THEOPHANY**

The appearance of the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16 apparently mixes both angelophanic and theophanic elements. Exploring these elements in the light of their background is our task in the next chapter. If the appearance of the risen Jesus does incorporate theophanic elements we might expect this to be underlined by reminiscences of the theophany in Apc 4. In this section we seek to determine whether or not this is so. Accordingly we compare the christophany and theophany as follows.

First, we consider 'location'. The encounter with Jesus appears to take place on earth. By contrast, at the beginning of the theophany John sees a door open in heaven, hears an invitation to ascend (4.1), and finds himself, if not in heaven, then close by looking in (cf. 'there in heaven stood a throne ...', 4.2).

The comparison of locations gives the impression that Jesus is able to move between

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<sup>61</sup>So Beckwith, 739; Caird, 252; Sweet, 288.

<sup>62</sup>See citation and discussion in §9.2 .

heaven and earth, whereas God remains in heaven. This impression is confirmed inasmuch as we never find God in the Apc outside of heaven. Both Jesus and God, however, are perceived by the human visionary ἐν πνεύματι (1.10, 4.2).

God is the one seated on the throne (4.2, cf. 4.3,9,10). This is his particular location. The throne is located in the centre of the thrones of the twenty-four elders (4.4).<sup>63</sup> It was the first thing which John noticed when he looked into heaven (4.2). But when John first encountered the risen Jesus there was no connection with any throne (cf. 1.10-20).

Secondly, we compare the form of Jesus and of God.

The form of the risen Jesus includes the following features:

- (i) anthropomorphism ('like a son of man', 1.13),
- (ii) comprehensive detail (with references to hair, head, eyes, face, clothing, hands, legs, mouth, and voice, 1.13-16),
- (iii) theophanic influence in Apc 1.14 (cf. Dn 7.9),
- (iv) description of the voice; and a report of Jesus' speech (1.15,17-20).

By contrast the form of God has the following features:

- (i) veiled anthropomorphism (see further comment below),
- (ii) sparse detail: reference to the hand in 5.1, and to a likeness to precious stones in 4.3,
- (iii) no influence from the theophany in Dn 7.9,<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Cf. Hurtado, "Revelation" (1985) on the significance of the elders for the throne vision.

<sup>64</sup>Beale, *Daniel*, 154-228, argues that Apc 4 is modelled on Dn 7. But the argument is unsustainable in view of the dominance of Ezek 1-3 in the background to Apc 4-5. In any case there is no influence from Dn 7.9 on Apc 4.3.

(iv) no description of the voice of God, and no speech attributed to God.

We may assume that the form of God in Apc 4-5 is anthropomorphic since God is described as the one 'seated' on the throne, and John sees 'the *right hand* of the one seated on the throne' (5.1). When John actually describes the form of God, however, he simply says 'the one seated there looks like jasper and carnelian' (ὄμοιος ὁράσει λίθω ἰάσπιδι καὶ σαρδίῳ, 4.3). When so many details demonstrate the dependency of Apc 4 on the throne-vision in Ezek 1,<sup>65</sup> it is particularly striking that in Apc 4.3 John departs from the script (so to speak) which provides an explicit anthropomorphic manifestation of God, אדם כמראה דמות (Ezek 1.26).<sup>66</sup> John appears, therefore, to be uncomfortable with the thought of God appearing anthropomorphically.<sup>67</sup>

Although Dn 10.6 uses mineral imagery (שׁוֹנֵי כְהַרְשֵׁי־שׁ, MT; τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ θαρσις, LXX=Th.) John omits this from his vision of the risen Jesus.<sup>68</sup> By contrast, John employs mineral imagery to describe in a veiled manner the form of God (Apc 4.3). In other words John refrains from using the theophanic elements of the christophany in his theophany and from using the angelophanic element of his theophany in his christophany. The impression is given that the *form* of Jesus and the *form* of God are sharply distinguished. That is, the manifestation of Jesus Christ is not a manifestation of God.<sup>69</sup>

A third point of comparison concerns the attendants for each figure. Apart from the (possible) presence of the revealing angel (Apc 1.10-12), the risen Jesus is alone during his encounter with John. In the theophany, by contrast, God is surrounded by various beings: the four living creatures (4.6b), the twenty-four elders (4.4), the seven spirits of God

<sup>65</sup>No commentator disputes this.

<sup>66</sup>Halperin, *Faces*, 89, 'John turns the human-like shape of Ezekiel's God into a blur of colour'. Charles, i, 113, says 'no form is visible'; and, p.115, argues that the rainbow contributes to the veiling of the one on the throne. Cf. Kraft, 96. Rowland, *Heaven*, 99, draws attention to Ezek 28.13 where 'the king of Tyre' is covered with precious stones including ἰάσπιν and σάρδιον. But if Ezek 28.13 is part of the developing heavenly man tradition then it admits no direct parallels to Apc 4.3 (or to Dn 10.5-6, where mineral imagery is also found): common indebtedness is likely to explain the links between Ezek 28.13 and Apc 4.3/Dn 10.5-6.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Black, "Throne-Theophany", 59 n6.

<sup>68</sup>Some MSS of the LXX compare the 'body' to θαλάσσης, notably Pap. 967.

<sup>69</sup>Against Farrar, 66, 'The Jesus of the Resurrection ... is not seen as the Man of Nazareth transfigured but as the Divine Glory personified'.

(4.5). In 5.11 we are told that John hears 'the voice of many angels surrounding the throne'.

Fourthly, we may note that there is no comparable throne vision for Jesus Christ in the Apc. Although there is an explicit reference to a throne for Jesus,

'To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on *my throne* (τῷ θρόνῳ μου)' (3.21a),

this throne is never actually 'seen' in the heavenly visions in the Apc.<sup>70</sup>

#### §7.4.1 Conclusion

Comparison between the christophany and theophany in the Apc reveals the lack of shared imagery between the form of Jesus and the form of God.<sup>71</sup> In particular it is noteworthy that the theophany in Apc 4.3 does not appear to draw on Dn 7.9 in contrast to the christophany in Apc 1.14. It would appear that even if Jesus Christ is otherwise identified with God, the form of the risen Jesus is sharply distinguished from the form of God.

### §7.5 CONCLUSION

Comparing the risen Jesus to the glorious angels, the living creatures and the elders in the Apc shows that in certain respects Jesus is similar to each, though also distinct. In the particular case of the form of Jesus there is a degree of similarity with the form of the mighty angel in Apc 10.1-3 and the bowl-angels in Apc 15.6-7. The form of Jesus would appear to be the form of an angel. This conclusion is consistent with the observation that the form of Jesus appears to be sharply distinguished from the form of God in Apc 4.3.

Yet we have no reason to question our supposition that Jesus Christ in the Apc is divine which is confirmed through comparison between Jesus and the living creatures. Great though the living creatures are they do not occupy the centre of the divine throne and they themselves bow the knee to Jesus the Lamb.

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<sup>70</sup>Unless it is the 'great white throne' of Apc 20.11 or the 'cloud' on which 'one like a son of man' sits in Apc 14.14 which may be a kind of mobile throne (see discussion in §9.2).

<sup>71</sup>Cf. Buchsel, *Christologie*, 32.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

# THE CHRISTOPHANY IN APOCALYPSE 1.13-16 (PART B)

### §8.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter we examined the christophany in Apc 1 in comparison with epiphanies found elsewhere in the Apc. In this chapter we examine the christophany in the light of epiphanies in the OT and apocalyptic and related writings. Our particular focus in this examination will be the angelophanic and theophanic background to the christophany in order to draw out the significance of the angelophanic and theophanic elements in the christophany. In order to keep our focus on our goal we will not attempt to offer an exhaustive examination of every aspect of the christophany which in any case would only repeat what is already available in the best commentaries.

As we have made clear in Chapter One, the study of the christophany in terms of the influence of angelology has been undertaken before. We intend our contribution to draw out the weaknesses in previous work and to offer new insights into the significance of the angelological influence.

### §8.2 THE SETTING OF THE CHRISTOPHANY

Although our main interest is in the form of the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16, there are in fact possible angelological influences on Apc 1.12-13a worth considering.

καὶ ἐπιστρέψας εἶδον ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσαῖς 13 καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν λυχνιῶν ὁμοιον υἷὸν ἀνθρώπου (Apc 1.12-13a).

Why does John 'see' the risen Jesus amidst the seven lampstands (Apc 1.12-13a)? A good deal of attention has been paid to the origin of the 'seven lampstands',<sup>1</sup> which almost

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<sup>1</sup>McNamara, *New Testament*, 192-199, reviews the main lines of inquiry before offering his own hypothesis concerning the influence of *Tg Yer. I Ex 39.37*.

certainly draws on Zech 4.1-2.<sup>2</sup> The setting in general terms, that is, Jesus in the midst of fire, may have a basis in Ezekiel 1 where the living creatures in human form are seen in the middle of fire (ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ πυρός, 1.4). Another possible influence could be Dn 3.25(92) where Nebuchadnezzar sees

'four men unbound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt and the fourth has the appearance of a god'.<sup>3</sup>

'In the middle of the fire' is rendered in the LXX by ἐν τῷ πυρί and in Theodotion by ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ πυρός. The fourth figure in Aramaic is לברא־אלהין דמ, in the LXX is ὁμοίωμα ἀγγέλου θεοῦ, and in Theodotion is ὁμοία υἱῷ θεοῦ. It is certainly conceivable that picture of the fourth man in the furnace suggested to John a setting for Jesus (cf. ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, Apc 2.18) in the midst of the seven (flaming) lampstands. If this is the case then this aspect of the christophany has been influenced by angelology since the description of the figure in the furnace suggests that he was an angel.<sup>4</sup>

We suggest that another angelological influence may be considered which draws on Zechariah. This book, as we have just noted, is most likely a source for the seven lampstands so that it is appropriate to look further into this book in connection with Apc 1.12-13a.

We have already discussed the angelology of the Book of Zechariah on the basis that this is a text that John was familiar with. We saw that Zechariah has a vision of a figure variously styled 'a man' (אִישׁ, ἀνήρ, 1.8) or the 'angel of Yahweh' (מלאך יהוה, 1.11). We also saw that alongside this angel is another angel which we designated 'the talking angel' (Zech 1.9). Parallels were noted between the talking angel of Zechariah and the revealing angel of the Apc.<sup>5</sup> Since the talking angel works closely with the angel of Yahweh in Zech 1 and since (arguably) the revealing angel works closely with 'one like a son of man' in Apc 1 it would appear worth considering whether there is in fact any other correspondence between the

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<sup>2</sup>E.g. Farrar, 65, who draws attention not only to the mention of the lampstand there but also to the fact that John 'sees' the lampstand.

<sup>3</sup>Beale, *Daniel*, 159.

<sup>4</sup>Montgomery, *Daniel*, 214-216.

<sup>5</sup>See §2.2



angel of Yahweh and the risen Jesus.

Zechariah sees the angel of Yahweh riding on a red horse (Zech 1.8). This has no connection with Apc 1,<sup>6</sup> but in the same verse the figure is also described as follows:

‘He was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen’ (עמד בין ההדסים אשר במצלה) א״ו, MT; καὶ οὗτος εἰστήκει ἀνὰ τῶν δύο ὀρέων τῶν κατασκίων, LXX; 1.8).

In Zech 1.11, where the man is identified as the angel of Yahweh, the same observation is repeated with slight variations in both the MT and the LXX:

עמד בין ההדסים א״ו, MT; τῷ ἐφεστῶτι ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν ὀρέων, MT; (cf. 1.10).

Thus both the angel of Yahweh and the risen Jesus are seen ‘in the midst’ of something (cf. ἐν μέσῳ τῶν λυχνιῶν, Apc 1.13). At first sight there does not seem to be much connection between a grove of myrtle trees and seven lampstands. Closer inspection, however, suggests that the difference between the trees seen by Zechariah and the lamps seen by John should not be overemphasised.

Although we do not know much about the detail of ‘the seven golden lampstands’ which John saw, it would appear that John sees seven individual lampstands rather than the seven branched *menorah* of the Tabernacle in the desert,<sup>7</sup> or of the post-exilic temple.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless the number ‘seven’ in conjunction with ‘golden lampstands’ resonates strongly with the *menorah* with its seven lamps. The interesting thing about the *menorah* is that it was an object depicted in a tree-like manner: it had six branches and cups shaped like almond blossoms (Ex 25.31-40). The comparison between the *menorah* and the myrtle trees is weak and should not be pressed too far.<sup>9</sup> But it does not seem implausible to suppose that the scene with the angel of Yahweh in Zech 1.8 suggested to John the scene in which Jesus appears ‘in the midst’ of the lampstands.

<sup>6</sup>This detail appears to lie behind other aspects of the Apc (e.g. 6.3, 19.11).

<sup>7</sup>McNamara, *Targum*, 192. Cf. Ex 25.37; 37.17-24; 39.37; 40.4; Lev 24.2-4; Nu 8.2.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. Ford, 382; Beckwith, 437; Swete, 15; Sweet, 71; Caird, 24, ‘whereas Israel was represented by a single candelabra with seven lamps, the churches are represented by seven separate standing lamps ... each local congregation ... is the church universal in all its fullness’.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. Mitchell, *Haggai*, 188, for a description of the myrtle tree.

Other connections between the angel of Yahweh and Jesus can be made. In general terms both figures may be compared as the vizier of God in the perception of Zechariah and John respectively. In particular the angel of Yahweh has in common with Jesus the Lamb responsibility for 'patrolling' the earth. In Zech 1.8 the function of the horses which accompany the angel of Yahweh are described in this way:

'They are those whom Yahweh has sent to patrol (ךלחהל; τοῦ περιοδεῦσαι) the earth' (1.10; cf. 6.7).

This description is strikingly similar to the interpretation given in Zech 4.10 about the seven lips on the seven lamps on the golden *menorah* seen in Zech 4.1-3:

'These seven are the eyes of Yahweh, which range through the whole earth' (:ןארהאר; ממשוטים, MT; οἱ ἐπιβλέποντες ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν, LXX; 4.10).

In the Apc itself Zech 4.10 appears to have influenced the description of Jesus the Lamb:

ὀφθαλμοὺς ἑπτὰ οἱ εἰσιν τὰ ἑπτὰ πνεύματα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπεσταλμένοι εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν (Apc 5.6).

Consequently it seems possible that John saw a correspondence between Jesus and the angel of Yahweh as presented in Zechariah. The initial vision of the angel of Yahweh portrays him in the midst of a grove of myrtle trees. We suggest that this picture may have contributed to the initial setting of the risen Jesus 'in the midst of seven golden lampstands' in Apc 1.12-13a.

### §8.3 THE CHRISTOPHANY AND ITS CONTEXT IN DANIEL, EZEKIEL, AND OTHER OLD TESTAMENT TEXTS.

We begin considering the christophany in its context in Daniel, Ezekiel, and other OT texts by comparing Apc 1.13-16 with Dn 10.5-6, the epiphanic account which most closely corresponds to it. The variations between the two accounts will serve to introduce the other OT texts which have influenced the christophany. In the citation of Apc 1.13-16 below all words which appear to directly reflect the influence of Dn 10.5-6 in the Hebrew are in Bold type; words which may have been influenced by Dn 10.5-6 but more probably draw on other sources are underlined.

καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν λυχνιῶν ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου **ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη**  
**καὶ περιζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν.** 14 ἡ δὲ  
κεφαλή αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον λευκὸν ὡς χιῶν καὶ οἱ  
ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρὸς 15 καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι  
χαλκολιβάνῳ ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης καὶ ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ ὡς  
φωνὴ ὑδάτων πολλῶν, 16 καὶ ἔχων ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ ἀστέρας  
ἑπτὰ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ῥομφαία δίστομος ὀξεῖα ἐκπορευομένη  
καὶ ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος φαίνει ἐν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ (Apc 1.13-  
16).

5 ואשא את־עיני וארא והנה איש־אחד לבוש

: בדים ומתניו חגרים בכתם אופז :

6 וגיותו כתרשיש ופניו כמראה ברק ועיניו כלפידים א

: וזרעתיו ומרגלתיו כעין נחש קלל וקול דבריו כקול המון (Dn 10.5-6 MT)

In the citations of Dn 10.5-6 below, words which are also found in Apc 1.13-16 are underlined:

καὶ ἦρα τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς μου καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος εἷς ἐνδεδυμένος  
βύσσινά καὶ τὴν ὀσφὺν περιεζωσμένος βυσσίνῳ, καὶ ἐκ μέσου αὐτοῦ φῶς,  
6 καὶ τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ θαρσις, καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ ὄρασις  
ἀστραπῆς, καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ λαμπάδες πυρός, καὶ οἱ βραχίονες  
αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ πόδες ὡσεὶ χαλκὸς ἐξαστράπτων, καὶ φωνὴ λαλιᾶς αὐτοῦ  
ὡσεὶ φωνὴ θορύβου (Dn 10.5-6 LXX).

καὶ ἦρα τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς μου καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀνὴρ εἷς ἐνδεδυμένος  
βαδδιν καὶ ἡ ὀσφὺς αὐτοῦ περιεζωσμένη ἐν χρυσίῳ Ωφαζ, 6 καὶ τὸ σῶμα  
αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ θαρσις, καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ ὄρασις ἀστραπῆς, καὶ οἱ  
ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ λαμπάδες πυρός, καὶ οἱ βραχίονες αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ  
σκέλη ὡς ὡσεὶ ὄρασις χαλκοῦ στίλβοντος, καὶ ἡ φωνὴ τῶν λόγων αὐτοῦ  
ὡς φωνὴ ὄχλου (Dn 10.5-6 Theodotion).

The amount of material in bold type in the citation of Apc 1.13-16 demonstrates that the dominant source in the background is the description of the glorious man in Dn 10.5-6. Most of the imagery directly mirrors that found in Dn 10.5-6. Some imagery, however, reflects a merging of imagery from Dn 10.5-6 and other sources. Thus

(i) both epiphanies make reference to the eyes of the figure but the comparison in Apc 1.14, ὡς φλόξ πυρός, most directly reflects Dn 7.9 (LXX/Th) rather than Dn 10.5-6 (ὡσεὶ λαμπάδες πυρός, LXX/Th.). Nevertheless φλόξ is a possible translation of דִּבְלָה.<sup>10</sup>

(ii) reference to the voice of Jesus corresponds to a reference in Dn 10.6 to the sound of the words of the man, although the actual comparison of the voice of Jesus, ὡς φωνὴ ὑδάτων πολλῶν,<sup>11</sup> draws most directly on Ezek 1.24/43.2 (כִּי קוֹל מִיַּם רַבִּים; ὡς φωνὴν ὑδατος πολλοῦ, 1.24; ὡς φωνὴ διπλασιαζόντων πολλοῦ, 43.2).

<sup>10</sup>Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 549.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. variant πληθους λαλοῦ in MS. 143, Apc 1.15 [cited in Beale, *Daniel*, 160 n.18].

(iii) reference to the face of Jesus (1.16) corresponds to a reference to the face of the glorious figure in Dn 10.5-6. But in the latter the face is compared with 'lightning' whereas the face of the exalted Jesus is compared with 'the sun' (καὶ ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος φαίνει ἐν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ).<sup>12</sup> An immediate reminiscence is of the transfiguration of Jesus as reported in Matthew's gospel (καὶ ἔλαμψεν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος, Mt 17.2). But the added detail that the shining is 'with full force' also recalls the ending of the Song of Deborah in which the wish is expressed that the friends of Yahweh would be

'like the sun as it rises in its might' (וַיִּבְרָא, מִשְׁפַּח מִשְׁפַּח כַּחֲצַב וַיִּבְרָא, MT; καὶ οἱ ἀγαπῶντες αὐτὸν ὡς ἔξοδος ἡλίου ἐν δυνάμει αὐτοῦ, LXX (Vaticanus); Jdgs 5.31).<sup>13</sup>

Whereas the citation of Apc 1.13-16 is full of Bold type reflecting the influence of Dn 10.5-6 (Hebrew), the citations of Dn 10.5-6 LXX and Th. show less signs that John has been influenced by either of these Greek versions. For example, John follows neither in his description of the robe of Jesus (ποδήρη, 1.13, rather than βύσσινα/βαδδιν), although it is possible that John is reflecting the influence of Ezek 9.2 LXX (cf. ἐνδεδικώς ποδήρη). In his description of the chest band of Jesus John uses περιζωσμένον which is also found in Dn 10.5 LXX/Th. But he uses ζώνην (cf. Ezek 9.2 LXX) rather than βυσσίνω (Dn 10.5 Th.), and μαστός rather than ὄσφύς (Dn 10.5 LXX/Th.).

Similarly with the description of the feet of Jesus (Apc 1.15).<sup>14</sup> Here an additional clause, ὡς ἐν καμίνω πεπυρωμένης, is found in Apc 1.15 which has no basis in Dn 10.5-6. Beale suggests that this echoes a phrase found in Theodotion's rendering of the story of the three men consigned to the furnace, καμίνου τοῦ πυρὸς τῆς καιομένης (Dn

<sup>12</sup>Elsewhere in the NT ὄψις is only found at Jn 7.24, 11.44.

<sup>13</sup>When most of the background material to 1.13-16 is taken from Ezekiel and Daniel it is notable that John draws on Jdgs 5.31 for his description of the face of Jesus. John knew about stars functioning as divine agents (cf. Apc 8.10-11; 9.1) and his attention may have been drawn to Jdgs 5.31 via Jdgs 5.20, 'The stars fought from heaven, from their courses they fought against Sisera'. Cf. Beale, *Daniel*, 163.

<sup>14</sup>Intriguing here is the use of χαλκολίβανον rather than χαλκός (Dn 10.6 LXX/Th.) - the latter is used by John elsewhere, cf. Apc 18.12. The derivation and exact meaning of χαλκολίβανον are a matter of conjecture, although it probably refers to 'a high-quality metal alloy of the copper, bronze, or brass type' [Hemer, *Letters*, 111].

3.26(93)).<sup>15</sup> This is a valuable suggestion, but it relies on John's familiarity with Theodotion which we cannot be completely certain about. We must always keep in mind the possibility that John may not have been familiar with either the LXX or Th.<sup>16</sup> The additional clause could be readily explained as an extension of the imagery in Dn 10.6 or as an image in keeping with the emphasis on fiery imagery in Ezek 1 (especially vs. 4, 7, 13, and 27)

John follows the pattern of the description in Dn 10.5-6, but not exactly; and he omits and adds to the pattern.<sup>17</sup> Thus John, like Daniel, envisages a man-like figure, but describes him as 'one like a son of man' rather than as 'a man'. John, like Daniel, describes the clothing, girding, feet (= legs), eyes, voice (= sound of his words), and face of the glorious figure appearing before him. But John omits mention of the arms and the body of the figure; he adds a description of 'the hair and the head' of the figure; and he varies the order in which the aspects of the form are mentioned (Apc: man, clothing, girding, eyes, feet, voice, face; Dn: man, clothing, girding, face, eyes, legs, voice).<sup>18</sup> John also describes the risen Jesus as having a sword in his mouth and holding seven stars in his right hand, details which are not found in Daniel's vision.

The variety in order of elements between the two accounts suggests that John is not mechanically following Dn 10.5-6. This may be accounted for because the influence is upon visionary experience and in the process some details were jumbled, or because John was quoting from memory.

Another issue arising from comparison of Apc 1.13-16 and Dn 10.5-6 is the omission of 'the body' of Jesus. The reason for the omission of any reference to the body of the risen Jesus is not clear. Holtz has explained the absence as a solution to a problem in the Danielic vision: in the earlier vision the body of the 'man' *and* the garment covering the body are described. This confusing state of affairs is remedied by replacing the description of the body with the description of the head and hair of Jesus.<sup>19</sup> Rowland points out that reference to the body of the 'man' is absent in the Peshitta of Dn 10 and suggests that both

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<sup>15</sup>Beale, *Daniel*, 161; cf. Farrar, 67.

<sup>16</sup>See Thompson, "Apocalypse", 102-108, esp. 107; cf. Mussies, *Morphology*, 352-353.

<sup>17</sup>Farrar, 67.

<sup>18</sup>For a fuller form-critical comparison between Apc 1 and Dn 10 see Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung*, 139-147 esp. p. 144.

<sup>19</sup>Holtz, *Christologie*, 117.

here and in apocalyptic texts such as Apc 1.13-16 the absence is due to reverential reasons, analogous to the reluctance in texts such as 2 *En.* 22.1-3<sup>20</sup> to describe details of a theophany.<sup>21</sup> Another possible explanation, however, could be that John wished to avoid confusion between the appearance of God and the appearance of Jesus. In describing the form of God in Apc 4.3 John uses the imagery of precious stones (ὄμοιος ὁράσει λίθω ἰάσπιδι καὶ σαρδίω, cf. Dn 10.6 LXX, Th.: ὡσεὶ θαρσις). Thus to compare the body of Jesus with a precious stone would only blur the distinction between the appearance of God and the appearance of the risen Jesus.

A further difference between the two visions worth noting is that the Danielic figure says that he has been 'sent' to Daniel (נִלְשׁ, MT; ἀπεστάλην, LXX=Th.; Dn 10.11), but the exalted Jesus does not say this to John.<sup>22</sup> Conceivably this fact has no significance - Jesus was 'sent' but simply omitted to mention it, or John omitted to record it if it was mentioned. But it is a suggestive feature of the christophany when we consider other information given about Jesus Christ in the Apc. If Jesus shares the throne of God (cf. Apc 3.21, 7.17) then it could be that he comes as a being coordinate with, rather than subordinate to, God. In this case we would not expect Jesus to say that he had been 'sent'.

There are similarities in the response of each seer to the respective epiphanies. John falls down, as though dead, at the feet of the exalted figure who appears before him (1.17). The figure reaches out his right hand, touches John and says to him 'do not be afraid' (μὴ φοβοῦ, 1.17). A similar set of events follows the epiphany in Dn 10.5-6, but mixed in with other events, as the following outline shows:

Daniel's strength leaves him (10.8) and as the figure talks he falls into a trance on his face (10.9). Then a hand touches Daniel and rouses him to his hands and knees (10.10). The figure speaks, but does not immediately offer words of comfort (10.11). Daniel continues trembling during the initial speech, which is followed by the words 'do not be afraid, Daniel' (μὴ φοβοῦ, Δανιηλ, 10.12 LXX=Th.). Further communication continues, but Daniel remains shakey and is twice more comforted by touch (10.16,18), and once more is told not to fear (μὴ φοβοῦ, 10.19 LXX=Th.)

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<sup>20</sup>Andersen, *OTP*, i, 136.

<sup>21</sup>Rowland, "Man", 105.

<sup>22</sup>See §2.4.3 for argument that there is only one figure experienced by Daniel in Dn 10.

Thus common to the two responses of John and Daniel to their respective epiphanies are the following events: falling down, touching by an exalted figure, comforting words. Clearly John does not model his experience in detail on that of Daniel, and the common features are by no means unique to these two accounts of epiphanies (cf. Dn 8.18, 4 Macc 4.10, Mt 28.4, Lk 24.5, Act 9.4-6, *Test. Job* 3.1-5.2, *Jos. As.* 14.3-15.10.). This suggests that John sees his experience as part of a continuing epiphanic tradition, and not simply a repetition of Daniel's experience. The similarity in the responses of the two seers and the lack of explicit reference to John attempting to worship the risen Jesus suggests that his response is commensurate with the christophany as an epiphany akin to an angelophany.

Finally, the sword coming out of the mouth of Jesus (Apc 1.16) is both entirely independent of any epiphany in the OT and clearly dependent on 'messianic' texts such as Is 11.4 and 49.2.<sup>23</sup> Whatever else we may say about the nature and position of the risen Jesus he is clearly understood in the Apc as the *Christ* or *Messiah* (cf. 1.1,2; 11.15; 12.10; 20.4,6) and the inclusion of this detail is entirely understandable as an illustration of this fact.

In short: the angelophany experienced by Daniel in Dn 10.5-9 plays a significant role in the account of the christophany experienced by John in Apc 1.13-20. Yet the influence of this angelophany is not such that John slavishly copies every detail provided by it. Some differences such as comparing the face of Jesus with the sun rather than with lightning do not appear to be significant. But others, such as the lack of reference to Jesus having been 'sent', may signify that the risen Jesus is a being in a different kind of relationship to God than the glorious 'man' in Dn 10.5-6.

We now proceed to discuss in further detail the influence of Dn 7.9,13, and Ezek 1.24/43.2, and 9.2.

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<sup>23</sup>Cf. Beale, *Daniel*, 162-163, on the use of these texts in passages elsewhere in the Apc featuring allusion to both Zechariah and Daniel. Among apocalyptic texts featuring a heavenly son of man, cf. 1 *En.* 62.2, 4 *Ezr* 13.4, 10-11, for other references to the mouth as a weapon of judgement.



### §8.3.1 The Christophany and Daniel 7.9

The second greatest influence on the christophany is Dn 7.9 which is exclusively reflected in Apc 1.14:

ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον λευκὸν ὡς χιῶν καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρός (Apc 1.14).

Every word in Apc 1.14, except for the phrase καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ reflects the influence of Dn 7.9 MT, although, as we shall demonstrate below, a number of differences between the two verses can be observed.

תיהוה

עד די כרסון רמיו ועתיק יומין יתב

לבושה כתלג חור ושער ראשה כעמר נקא

:קרסיה שביבין דינור גלגלדי נור דלק: (Dn 7.9 MT)

In the following citations of the Greek versions of Dn 7.9 we have underlined those words which appear in Apc 1.14:

ἔθεώρουν ἕως ὅτε θρόνοι ἐτέθησαν καὶ παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν ἐκάθητο ἔχων περιβολὴν ὡσεὶ χιῶνα καὶ τὸ τρίχωμα τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ ἔριον λευκὸν καθαρὸν ὁ θρόνος ὡσεὶ φλόξ πυρός (Dn 7.9 LXX).

ἔθεώρουν ἕως ὅτου θρόνοι ἐτέθησαν καὶ παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν ἐκάθητο καὶ τὸ ἔνδυμα αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ χιῶν λευκὸν καὶ ἡ θρίξ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ ἔριον καθαρὸν ὁ θρόνος αὐτοῦ φλόξ πυρός οἱ τροχοὶ αὐτοῦ πῦρ φλέγον (Dn 7.9 Th.).

Although the description of the head and hair in Apc 1.14 is undoubtedly influenced by Dn 7.9, it is by no means the case that the model provided by Dn 7.9 has been slavishly followed. Most notably Dn 7.9 refers to an enthroned figure, but there is no hint in Apc 1 that the risen Jesus is enthroned. Whereas Dn 7.9 speaks of 'the hair of his head', and uses

a singular noun for 'hair', Apc 1.14 refers to 'his head and the hairs'. In Apc 1.14 the head and hairs of Jesus are likened both to 'white wool' (cf. 'pure wool', MT/Th.; 'pure white wool', LXX) and to 'snow' - the latter comparison in Dn 7.9 is applied to the garment of the Ancient of Days. There is no mention of the eyes of the Ancient of Days in Dn 7.9. Reference to this aspect of the exalted Jesus draws instead on the example of the figure in Dn 10.5-6. But the form of the comparison which is applied to the eyes appears to draw on the description of the throne in Dn 7.9 and not on the description of the eyes in Dn 10.5-6.<sup>24</sup>

Charles has explained the change from 'the hair of the head' (Dn 7.9) to 'the hair and the head' (Apc 1.14) as due to a merging of imagery from Dn 7.9 and 1 *En.* 46.1. The latter text says of 'the Head of Days' (i.e. the equivalent of the Ancient of Days) that his 'head was white like wool' (cf. Dn 7.9, 'the hair of his head like pure wool'; 1 *En.* 106.2, 'the hair of his head white as wool').<sup>25</sup> But such an explanation faces the difficulty that, because of the dating of the *Similitudes of Enoch*,<sup>26</sup> John may not have known of *Sim. En.* in its written form.

The descriptive detail ὡς χιῶν in Apc 1.14, which is drawn from the description of the robe of the Ancient of Days, is somewhat awkwardly placed in the description of the head and hair. Moreover, since we have already been told that the hair and head are λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον λευκὸν this description seems to be redundant. If a visionary experience lies behind Apc 1.13-16 then the inclusion of ὡς χιῶν is a sign that John is interpreting his experience: the hair is not just described as white with an appropriate comparison to clarify the degree of whiteness, its whiteness is described in such a way that it recalls the whiteness found in Dn 7.9.<sup>27</sup>

On the face of it John has transferred the description of the throne of the Ancient of Days to the description of the eyes of the exalted Jesus, ὡς φλόξ πυρὸς (Apc 1.14, cf. Dn 7.9

<sup>24</sup>Note that the fiery character of heavenly beings goes back much further than Dn 7.9/Dn 10.5-6. In Ex 3.2, for example, the angel of Yahweh appears to Moses 'in a flame of fire out of a burning bush' (MT: הַסֵּנֶה מִתּוֹךְ שֹׁרֵפֶת אֵשׁ, LXX: ἐν φλογὶ πυρὸς ἐκ τοῦ βάλτου).

<sup>25</sup>Charles, i, 28.

<sup>26</sup>See discussion above, §2.6 n.118.

<sup>27</sup>Charles, i, 28, says that ὡς χιῶν is "manifestly a marginal gloss". It is awkward, but its inclusion can be explained as we have just done.

LXX/Th.). But we cannot be sure that John had either Greek version of Dn 7.9 in mind, so that it is possible that his description of the eyes, which is a satisfactory translation of  $\text{שׂא עיניו כלפידי}$  (Dn 10.6), only coincidentally reflects the description of the divine throne. Nevertheless, when so much else in Apc 1.14 is drawn from Dn 7.9 it is likely that this comparison is also drawn from there.

What John does not do is extensively model the risen Christ on the Ancient of Days. Christ is not enthroned, nor accompanied by a retinue of heavenly figures. His garment (already described in 1.13) does not reflect that of the Ancient of Days. John describes the 'eyes' of his figure with material drawn from Dn 7.9 even though the eyes of the Ancient of Days are not mentioned there.

If John knew of a Greek version of Dn 7.9 then it is likely that it was the LXX. Thus, (with Apc 1.14 first, Dn 7.9 second for each equation):

(i)  $\omega\varsigma \xi\rho\iota\omicron\nu \lambda\epsilon\upsilon\kappa\omicron\nu$  =  $\omega\varsigma\epsilon\acute{\iota} \xi\rho\iota\omicron\nu \lambda\epsilon\upsilon\kappa\omicron\nu$  (LXX, Theodotion omits  $\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\kappa\omicron\nu$ ),

(ii)  $\omega\varsigma \phi\lambda\omicron\xi \pi\upsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$  =  $\omega\varsigma\epsilon\acute{\iota} \phi\lambda\omicron\xi \pi\upsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$  (LXX, Theodotion omits  $\omega\varsigma\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ ).

In short: John draws on Dn 7.9 to furnish imagery for his description of the risen Christ. Some of this is additional to what was available in Dn 10.5-6 (where there is no mention of either the head or the hair of the figure). The comparison  $\omega\varsigma \phi\lambda\omicron\xi \pi\upsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$  appears to be drawn from Dn 7.9 as an alternative to an available comparison in Dn 10.6.

### §8.3.2 The Christophany and Daniel 7.13

The first phrase in the description of the exalted Jesus,  $\delta\mu\omicron\iota\omicron\nu \upsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\upsilon$  requires thoughtful consideration. The figure in the Apc is not  $\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$  or  $\acute{\alpha}\nu\eta\rho$  (Dn 10.5, LXX, Th. respectively) which we might expect given the influence of Dn 10.5-6 on the christophany. Rather the figure is described as  $\delta\mu\omicron\iota\omicron\nu \upsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\upsilon$  (1.13). For many interpreters of the Apc this expression has recalled in the first instance the description of the Danielic son of man in Dn 7.13:  $\text{שׂא כבב ר אנס}$ , MT;  $\omega\varsigma \upsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\upsilon$  LXX, Th.. But was it John's intention to allude to this figure or is there some other interpretation to be placed on

the use of the expression?

In favour of the traditional understanding that ὁμοιον υἱον ἀνθρώπου is an allusion to Dn 7.13 is the fact that prior to the christophany John indisputably draws on Dn 7.13 and links Jesus Christ with this verse. In Apc 1.7 John prophesies about the 'pierced one', that is, Jesus. The opening words of the prophecy, Ἴδου ἔρχεται μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν, recall the manner of the coming of the Danielic son of man (LXX: ἰδοὺ ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὡς υἱος ἀνθρώπου ἦρχετο. Th.: ἰδοὺ μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὡς υἱος ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενος, Dn 7.13).<sup>28</sup>

It is true that the Danielic son of man is not specifically referred to in Apc 1.7. That is to say, it is conceivable that John simply uses an expression derived from Dn 7.13 without any implication that he is doing so because he thinks that the son of man figure there is linked in some way to Jesus Christ. It is possible, for example, that the prophecy in Apc 1.7, which is an amalgam of Dn 7.13 and Zech 12.10, had become a traditional form by the time of the composition of the Apc.<sup>29</sup>

Nevertheless there is reason to think that John does see a connection between the risen Jesus and the Danielic son of man, for in Apc 1 there are two motifs *other than those found in 1.7* which resonate with motifs found in Dan 7. Firstly, Jesus Christ is entitled ὁ ἀρχων τῶν βασιλείων τῆς γῆς (Apc 1.5). This rank places him in a similar position to the Danielic son of man who is given 'dominion and glory and kingship' (Th: ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ ἡ τιμὴ καὶ ἡ βασιλεία), so that 'all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him' (Dn 7.14). Secondly, John's self-reference as a brother and companion to his readers ἐν τῇ θλίψει καὶ βασιλείᾳ καὶ ὑπομονῇ ἐν Ἰησοῦ (Apc 1.9) resonates with some of the concerns of Dn 7. There we find the 'holy ones of the Most High' receiving the kingdom (τὴν βασιλείαν, Dn 7.18 LXX=Th., cf. Dn 7.27) in the context of tribulation (cf. Dn 7.21, where they have war made against them by 'the horn').<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup>Lohse, "Menschensohn", 82-83; Scott, "Behold", 127-132.

<sup>29</sup>Cf. Beale, *Daniel*, 155, 'Matthew 24.30 may have suggested the combination to John but it is also possible that he made a free rendering since he adheres more closely to the OT text than does Matthew'; Beale further suggests, p. 155-156, that the combination may reflect interest in the equation 'stone' (cf. Dn 2.34-35) = 'son of man' (Dn 7.13) and the 'stone' in Zech 12.3-4. Other texts which may be cited in connection with Apc 1.7 include *Epist. Barn.* 7.9-10; *Did.* 16.6. See further Bousset, 189-190; Kraft, 35-36.

Moreover, these observations pertain only to the links between Apc 1 and Dn 7. But there are a number of other allusions elsewhere in the Apc to Dn 7,<sup>31</sup> so that it would be most remarkable if the influence of the Danielic son of man on the portrayal of the risen Jesus were non-existent. We might also note in this connection a point made by Rowland concerning Apc 14.14 where the expression ὁμοιον υἱον ἀνθρώπου is also to be found: the fact that in 14.14 the phrase is linked with ἐπὶ τὴν νεφέλην makes a connection between 14.14 and Dn 7.13 almost certain. It would be strange therefore if there was no such connection in the parallel case in 1.13.<sup>32</sup>

Against the traditional conclusion that the expression ὁμοιον υἱον ἀνθρώπου is an allusion to Dn 7.13 is an argument promoted in recent years by Casey. He has argued that the difference between ὁμοιον υἱον ἀνθρώπου (Apc) and ὡς υἱος ἀνθρώπου (Dn: LXX, Th.) is not insignificant. He suggests that John does not have the Danielic son of man in mind here. His reasoning is twofold. First, that ὁμοιον is standard usage in visionary material. Secondly, that for a writer of semitic Greek such as John, terms equivalent to *bar enash* and *ben adam* are normal language when referring to 'a man'. Hence ὁμοιον υἱον ἀνθρώπου does not by itself point to any particular text. If anything, Casey suggests, this phrase refers to Dn 10.16 Th., where we find

ὡς ὁμοίωσις υἱοῦ ἀνθρώπου

(cf. LXX: ὡς ὁμοίωσις χειρὸς ἀνθρώπου; MT: כדמו בני אדם).<sup>33</sup>

Casey's point that ὁμοιον υἱον ἀνθρώπου does not point to any one text by itself is indisputable. The expression coheres closely with a number of variant phrases used in Ezekiel and Daniel, as we can observe:

<sup>30</sup>Cf. Beale, *Daniel*, 173; Holtz, *Christologie*, 110. Beale, *op. cit.*, 156,158, also notes a parallel between Dn 7.11 LXX (ἐθεώρουν τότε τὴν φωνὴν .... ὧν .... ἐλάλει) and Apc 1.12 (βλέπειν τὴν φωνὴν ἣτις ἐλάλει).

<sup>31</sup>Beale, "Revelation", 318, 'Among allusions to Daniel, the greatest number come from Daniel 7'.

<sup>32</sup>Rowland, "Man", 104.

<sup>33</sup>Casey, *Son*, 144.

ὁμοίωμα ἀνθρώπου (Ezek 1.5 LXX)  
 ὁμοίωμα ὡς εἶδος ἀνθρώπου (Ezek 1.26 LXX),  
 ὁμοίωμα ἀνδρὸς (Ezek 8.2 LXX),  
 ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου (Dn 7.13 LXX=Th.),  
 ὡς ὄρασις ἀνθρώπου (Dn 10.18 LXX=Th.)  
 ὡς ὁμοίωσις υἱοῦ ἀνθρώπου (Dn 10.16 Th.).<sup>34</sup>

Casey's argument, however, is not convincing. There is no particular reason to deny that ὁμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is a satisfactory translation of the underlying Aramaic of Dn 7.13.<sup>35</sup> Even if John knew of a Greek version of this verse such as the LXX or Theodotion, there seems to be no reason to deny that his rendering is a fair alternative to these versions, coming as it does from the hand of one who almost never reproduces his sources exactly.<sup>36</sup> But the most important objection to Casey's argument is the fact it is impossible in the light of the links between Apc 1.7 and Dn 7.13 elucidated above to accept that there is no allusion to the Danielic son of man in Apc 1.13. When Casey himself accepts that Apc 1.14 has been influenced by Dn 7.9,<sup>37</sup> it is difficult to accept that Apc 1.13 has not been influenced by Dn 7.13. Casey rightly draws attention to the possibility that ὁμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου has been influenced by Dn 10.16 Th., but the question remains why John does not strictly follow the example of Dn 10.5 Th. and simply describe Jesus as ἀνὴρ. Finally, the latter part of the first century saw an upsurge in meditation on Daniel, as evidenced in 4 Ezra and *Syriac Baruch*, and, as we have seen, in passages such as Apc 1.7 and 1.13-16. It seems reasonable to presume, against Casey, that for John this process included reflection on the mysterious and extraordinary figure in Dn 7.13.

A good point however can be made in the light of the above discussion. That is, given that the glorious 'man' of Dn 10 and that the son of man figure in Dn 7.13 lie in the background to the christophany, it is possible that ὁμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is best understood as a kind of hybrid formula which combines ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου/שׁוֹכֵר כְּבָר and ὡς ὁμοίωσις υἱοῦ ἀνθρώπου/בְּנֵי אָדָם כְּדַמּוֹת in an attempt to signify that both Danielic figures lie in the

<sup>34</sup>Cf. Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung*, 142.

<sup>35</sup>Even if, as Casey, *Son*, 148, argues, the terms consists of 'two semitisms'.

<sup>36</sup>Charles, i, 36, for example, has pointed out that John uses ὁμοιον synonymously in meaning and construction with ὡς, since elsewhere in the Apc (except 14.14) ὁμοιον is found with the dative. But see comment by Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung*, 142 n.27.

<sup>37</sup>Casey, *Son*, 146.

background to the christophany.<sup>38</sup>

Finally, we concur with the increasing consensus that the expression ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is not to be interpreted as equivalent to the title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου<sup>39</sup> found in the NT gospels.<sup>40</sup>

In conclusion: it is likely that the expression ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Apc 1.13 is an allusion to the mysterious 'one like a son of man' in Dn 7.13. This expression possibly has a triple meaning. In addition to forging a link with Dn 7.13 it serves to indicate that the risen Jesus is a heavenly being in the tradition of the heavenly beings who are described as human-like in Daniel, Ezekiel, and apocalyptic literature. The use of ὅμοιον rather than ὡς may be due to a desire on the part of John to underline the influence of both the figures in Dn 7.13 and 10.5-6, 16 on the christophany.

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<sup>38</sup>Beale, *Daniel*, 159, argues that Dn 3.25(92) Th. (ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ πυρός ... ὁμοία υἱῷ) is in the background (cf. Apc 1.13: ἐν μέσῳ τῶν λυχνιῶν ὅμοιον υἱὸν). His confidence in John's familiarity with Theodotion is not sufficiently underpinned. Nevertheless, he recognises that Dn 10.16 and Dn 7.13 are also in mind.

<sup>39</sup>E.g. Müller, *Messias*, 157; Lohse, "Menschensohn", 86-87; Casey, *Son of Man*, 144f. Contrast with Longenecker, *Christology*, 86 n.103; NRSV which has 'one like the Son of Man' in Apc 1.13; and Charles, i, 27.

<sup>40</sup>This is not to deny that the inclusion of ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in the description of the risen Jesus may allude to the son of man sayings in the gospels but this is only in passing. The primary allusion goes behind the gospels to the human-like angelic and divine beings who appear in Ezekiel and Daniel; and of these beings the son of man in Dn 7.13 is particularly in view [*contra Vos, Synoptic*, 146].

### §8.3.3 The Christophany and Ezek 9.2

ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη (Apc 1.13).

לבש בדים (Ezek 9.2 MT),

ἐνδεδυκὼς ποδήρη (Ezek 9.2, cf. 9.3,11, LXX).

καὶ περιζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν (Apc 1.13).

וקסר הספר במתניו (Ezek 9.2 MT),

καὶ ζώνη σαμφείρου ἐπὶ τῆς ὀσφύος αὐτοῦ (Ezek 9.2, cf. 9.3,11, LXX).

The description of the clothing of Jesus, ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη, recalls the description of the clothing of the glorious 'man' in Dn 10.5 as well as the clothing of the heavenly scribe in Ezek 9.2.<sup>41</sup> The link with the latter is highlighted by the LXX, which uses a virtually identical Greek phrase to Apc 1.13 (in contrast to Dn 10.5 LXX, Th.). But since we have reason to question whether John was familiar with the LXX we cannot be certain from a linguistic point of view that he particularly had the heavenly scribe in mind.<sup>42</sup> We must keep in mind that the description of the clothing in Dn 10.5 is the same in Hebrew in Ezek 9.2:

לבוש בדים (Dn 10.5) = לבש בדים (Ezek 9.2).

Thus it is quite possible that John's own rendering of this phrase in Greek happens to be the same as that found in Ezek 9.2 LXX. Nevertheless it is noticeable that Apc 1.13 also describes a chestband around Jesus, τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην, which incorporates the word ζώνην. This word reflects the vocabulary of Ezek 9.2 LXX rather than Dn 10.5 LXX/Th., though this need not signify the influence of either the Greek or Hebrew versions of Ezek

<sup>41</sup>Cf. Rowland, "Man", 107.

<sup>42</sup>Sometimes this description of Jesus' clothing is thought to also refer to his priestly character (so Lohmeyer, 15; Holtz, *Christologie*, 118; cf. Ex 28.4; 29.5; Jos. *Ant.* 3.7.4). But Charles, i, 27, correctly notes that this is not necessarily the case: 'the long robe used here is simply as an Oriental mark of dignity; cf. Buchsel, *Christologie*, 32; Kraft, 45, sees a link here with Wis 18.24, but he attributes the robe mentioned there to 'der endzeitliche Führer, der göttliche Logos' - but 18.24 surely refers to Aaron (cf. Num 17.11-26).



9.2 since ζώνην is a common word<sup>43</sup> which could be accounted for in a number of ways.

The fact that the man clothed in linen marks the foreheads of the human inhabitants of Jerusalem with a *tau* on their foreheads (תוֹתוּיָתוּ עַל־מִצְחָם, 9.4) may be significant. The Hebrew letter *tau* resembles a cross and thus the placing of this mark on the foreheads of those who are to be saved could have been construed by a Christian reader of Ezekiel as an anticipation of the work of the cross.<sup>44</sup>

Even if John made no such connection it is possible that passages from Ezekiel are in the background to the christophany simply because this book is influential throughout most of the Apc. In particular in Chapter Seven we remarked on the influence of Ezekiel on the theophany in Apc 4, and the angelophanies in 10.1-3 and 18.1-2. In other words, although nothing about the language of Apc 1.13 requires the conclusion that Ezek 9.2 is in the background, it would not be surprising if it was.

#### §8.3.4 The Christophany and Ezek 1.24/43.2

καὶ ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ ὡς φωνὴ ὑδάτων πολλῶν, (Apc 1.15).

כְּקוֹל מִים רַבִּים (Ezek 1.24 MT),  
ὡς φωνὴν ὑδατος πολλοῦ (Ezek 1.24 LXX).

וְקוֹלוֹ כְּקוֹל מִים רַבִּים (Ezek 43.2 MT),  
καὶ φωνὴ τῆς παρεμβολῆς ὡς φωνὴ διπλασιαζόντων πολλῶν (Ezek 43.2 LXX).

The description of Jesus' voice resembles the description of the sound of the wings of the living creatures who surround the divine throne in Ezek 1.24. That a descriptive detail associated with the living creatures should be incorporated here is not surprising in view of our earlier observations about the close links between Jesus Christ and the living creatures

<sup>43</sup>E.g., in the NT it is found in Mt 3.4, 10.9, Mk 1.6, 6.8, Acts 21.11.

<sup>44</sup>Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 106-107, cites Jerome as an ancient Christian who proposed this interpretation. Some rabbinic interpreters identified the man clothed in linen as Gabriel (e.g. b. Yoma 77a, b. Shabbath 55a).

in the Apc. But Jesus' voice also resembles the sound of the *kabod* coming from the east in Ezek 43.2.

The fact that John had an alternative image available in his dominant source, i.e. כקול המון (Dn 10.6), raises the question whether some special significance is to be attached to this description of the voice of Jesus. In particular, is John linking Jesus to the *kabod*? This is possible but we should note three points. First, this detail could simply reflect the fact that John's mind was steeped in the language of the theophanies and angelophanies of Daniel and Ezekiel so that ὡς φωνὴ ὑδάτων πολλῶν was a comparison which readily sprang to mind rather than a carefully chosen image full of theological intent. Secondly, to the extent that the comparison draws on the description of the living creatures in Ezek 1.24, the process in Dn 10.5-6 is continued, in which the description of the scribe in Ezek 9.2 is supplemented with details from the description of the living creatures and the environs of the divine throne. Thirdly, we have already seen in §7.2.3 that Ezek 43.2 has influenced the description of the angel in Apc 18.1-2 without the corollary that the angel has been identified with the *kabod*.

In sum: the description of the voice of the risen Jesus takes us to the theophanies in Ezek 1 and 43, but this does not mean that the christophany is essentially different in character to the angelophanies in Dn 10.5-6 or Apc 18.1-2.

### §8.3.5 Conclusion

Thus, the christophany read against its OT context reveals a diverse background. For our purposes the key points are the dominant influence of the angelophany in Dn 10.5-6, the strong influence of the theophany in Dn 7.9, and the influences of angelophanies in Dn 7.13 and (possibly) Ezek 9.2, and theophanies in Ezek 1.24 and 43.2. This combination of texts suggests a continuation of the process which we have discerned behind Dn 10.5-6 where the vision of an angel has its roots in an earlier angelophany (Ezek 9.2) supplemented by other epiphanic details.

Thus the christophany appears to all intents and purposes to be an angelophany or the epiphany of an angelomorphic being. Such a conclusion coheres with our suggestion in

§8.2 that John saw a correspondence between Jesus Christ and the angel of Yahweh in Zech 1.8.

#### §8.4 THE CHRISTOPHANY AND ITS CONTEXT IN EPIPHANIC TRADITION OUTSIDE THE OLD TESTAMENT

We have considered the christophany in terms of its OT epiphanic background, now we turn to consider it in comparison with epiphanies from outside the OT. First we recite Apc 1.13-16 again, but rather than recite the epiphanies we considered in Chapters Three and Four again, we cite those parts which offer at least a reasonably close comparison with the christophany.<sup>45</sup>

The Risen Jesus:

καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν λυχνιῶν ὅμοιον υἷὸν ἀνθρώπου ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη καὶ περιζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν. 14 ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον λευκὸν ὡς χιτῶν καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρὸς 15 καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης καὶ ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ ὡς φωνὴ ὑδάτων πολλῶν, 16 καὶ ἔχων ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ ἀστέρας ἑπτὰ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ῥομφαία δίστομος ὀξεῖα ἐκπορευομένη καὶ ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος φαίνει ἐν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ (Apc 1.13-16).

Glorious Angels:

'... and the aspect of his face like chrysolite, and the hair of his head like snow ... and the clothing of his garments (was) purple; and a golden staff (was) in his right hand' (Apc. Abr.11.1-3).

'Then I arose and stood, and I saw a great angel standing before me with his face shining like the rays of the sun in its glory since his face is like that which is perfected in its glory. And he was girded as if a golden girdle were upon his breast. His feet were like bronze which is melted in a fire.' (Apc. Zeph. 6.11-13).

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<sup>45</sup>An alternative table of comparison may be found in Rowland, "Man", 102-103.

ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος ὅμοιος κατὰ πάντα τῷ Ἰωσήφ τῇ στολῇ καὶ τῷ στεφάνῳ καὶ τῇ ῥάβδῳ τῇ βασιλικῇ πλὴν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ἦν ὡς ἀστραπή καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φέγγος ἡλίου καὶ αἱ τρίχες τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρός καὶ αἱ χεῖρες καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὡς περ σίδηρος ἐκ πυρός (*Jos. Asen.*14.8-9).

#### Exalted Humans:

'... the hair of his head as white as wool ... as for his eyes, when he opened them the whole house glowed like the sun ... He is not like an (ordinary) human being, ... His eyes are like the rays of the sun, and his face glorious.' (1 *En.* 106.2-5).

'[Jacob] ... , and his head was all white as snow (ἡ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ πᾶσα λευκὴ ὡσεὶ χιῶν), ... his eyes (were) flashing and darting (flashes of) lightning (οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ χαροποιοὶ καὶ ἐξαστράπτοντες) ...' (*Jos. Asen.* 22.7).

In §3.2.4 and §4.2 we noted other examples of glorious angels and exalted humans whose form at least in a general sense compares with the form of the risen Jesus. For example, 'the sunlike angel' (ὁ ἄγγελος ὁ ἡλιόμορφος, *Test. Abr. Rec. A* 12.9, 13.10), 'the fiery angel' (ὁ ἄγγελος ὁ πύρινος, *Test. Abr. Rec. A* 12.10, 13.11), 'Death' as a glorious angel (ὄψιν ἡλιόμορφον ... τὰς παρειὰς αὐτοῦ πυρὶ ἀστράπτων, *Test. Abr. Rec. A* 16.8-9, cf. 17.15), and Abel, ἄνθρωπος θαύμαστος ἡλιόρατος ὅμοιος υἱῷ θεοῦ (*Test. Abr. Rec. A* 12.4-5), angels who tread upon 'the flame of fire; their garments were white - and their overcoats - and the light of their faces was like snow' (1 *En.* 71.1), and two glorious 'men' with faces 'like the shining sun', eyes 'like burning lamps', mouths from which fire comes out, and arms 'like wings of gold' (2 *En.* 1.4-5, *Shorter Rec.*).

We do not include for comparison here the theophany in 1 *En.* 14. Although it features imagery such as 'snow' it is not done in connection with the hair or head of the form of God (14.20), and, in contrast to the christophany, the face of God cannot be seen (14.21). We also exclude 1 *En.* 46.1 ('his head was white like wool') from consideration since it is essentially a repetition of Dn 7.9 and does not describe the form of the Head of Days in

further detail.

Two points are particularly important. First, the inclusion in the christophany of details found in the theophany in Dn 7.9 is not unique to the christophany. It is a feature of four other epiphanies of angels and exalted humans. Secondly, with the exception of the 'sword in the mouth' the elements of the christophany correspond to elements found in angelophanies and epiphanies of angelomorphic figures: humanlike form, wearing a robe and a girdle, white head and hair, fiery eyes, burnished feet, voice, holding something in the hand, and a sunlike face. Of these elements only description of the voice, which is found in Dn 10.6 though with a different comparison applied, is not found in the epiphanies we examined in Chapters Three and Four.

In other words, in the context of epiphanies in apocalyptic and related writings outside the OT the christophany compares favourably with angelophanies and with epiphanies of angelomorphic figures. This conclusion, of course, coheres with our conclusion in the previous chapter that within the Apc the christophany is more closely aligned with the angelophanies than with the theophany in Apc 4.

According to our argument the christophany is essentially an angelophany. When examined in the context of the Apc itself, the epiphanic tradition of the OT, and the epiphanic tradition of apocalyptic and related writings outside the OT, the form of the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16 is effectively the form of an angel. Thus, whereas Caird, for example, says that 'John has seen the risen Christ, clothed in all the attributes of deity',<sup>46</sup> we would say that John has seen Christ clothed in all the attributes of a glorious angel.

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<sup>46</sup>Caird, 26.

## §8.5 THE ANGELOMORPHIC JESUS IN APOCALYPSE 1.13-16

We have argued that the form of the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16 is the form of an angel. In this section we discuss this conclusion further, and examine its implications. We do so for two reasons. First, it appears to contradict the fact that we are conducting this investigation on the supposition that in the Apc Jesus Christ is divine. Secondly, the assumption that Apc 1.14 illustrates the divinity of Jesus Christ is widely held. In spite of our argument so far, could the christophany effectively be a theophany?

Mostly the contents of Apc 1.14 are understood in terms of a connection with the Ancient of Days: the usual implication being that Jesus Christ shares in the divinity of the Ancient of Days.<sup>47</sup> Many readers have come to the Apc with a prior belief in the divinity of Christ and consequently have assumed that the resemblance to the Ancient of Days is a reflection of this fact.<sup>48</sup> Thus our conclusion is at variance with this approach to the christophany.

Bauckham, however, has listed four reasons for the description of the white head and hair of Christ:<sup>49</sup>

- (i) 'an attempt to share John's visual impression of the resplendent Son of Man',
- (ii) 'a conventional item in literary descriptions of heavenly beings',
- (iii) a reflection of 'John's high christology' because this feature belongs to the Ancient of Days,
- (iv) 'a symbol of Christ's [eternal] pre-existence'.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Brütsch, i, 86; Scott, W., 441; Lohse, 18; Roloff, 43.

<sup>48</sup>Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 553.

<sup>49</sup>Bauckham, "Figurae" 109-110.

<sup>50</sup>Cf. Allo, 13; Prigent, 28; Swete, 16, who notes that this was the view of ancient commentators such as Andreas, but argues that the idea should not be pressed since white hair 'suggests decay whereas Jesus Christ is unchangeable'.

In response to these possibilities we would suggest that the first two have a high degree of probability:

(i) Recalling our discussion in §1.3 about visionary experiences and their origin and interpretation, it seems quite plausible to suppose that Apc 1.14 reflects the influence of Dn 7.9 as part of the seer's stockpile of images but without the requirement that images from Dn 7.9 could only be applied to manifestations of the deity.

(ii) the number of other epiphanies which, like Apc 1.14, reflect the language of Dn 7.9, suggest that there may well have been an element of conventionality about the inclusion of such imagery.

The apparent independence of the Apc from contemporary texts in which accounts of epiphanies featuring Dn 7.9 occur raises the question whether the Apc might constitute a special case. In particular it raises the question whether John may have intended to draw attention to the divinity of Jesus Christ by the inclusion of details from Dn 7.9, despite the fact that in other more or less similar epiphanies no such intention was present. But our argument in §7.4 that the theophany in Apc 4 and the christophany in Apc 1 share no common details suggests that this was not John's intention.<sup>51</sup>

Another objection to our proposal that the form of the risen Jesus is 'typically angelic' is that Apc 1.13-16 reflects the influence of Dn 7.13 LXX which appears to identify the son of man figure with the Ancient of Days. But we have already discussed a number of questions concerning the influence of Dn 7.13 LXX on the christophany. We came to the conclusion that the evidence for such influence is by no means overwhelming. We also argued that if such an influence was present in Apc 1.13-16 it is likely that it was an expression of the belief that 'one like a son of man' and the Ancient of Days were similar in appearance, rather than that they were identified together as two manifestations of the one being.

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<sup>51</sup>Thus when Beale, "Revelation", 321, in the context of discussion about intentional use of the OT says that 'the Son of Man is clearly portrayed as a divine figure in Revelation 1' our point is that this is by no means clear: Jesus could have been portrayed as an angelic figure.

Consequently, if Dn 7.13 LXX has influenced the christophany in Apc 1 then it is not necessarily an indication that the portrayal of the glorious figure is illustrative of his divinity. Such influence is consistent with the supposition that this figure is an angel or an angelomorphic figure.

If Dn 7.13 LXX has not influenced Apc 1.13-16, and if Apc 1.13-16 is independent of texts such as *Apc. Abr.* 11.1-3 and *Jos. Asen.* 14.7 can we bring forward an alternative explanation as to how material from Dn 7.9 may have been combined with material from Dn 7.13 and 10.5-6?

Rowland, for example, notes an alternative to his own preferred hypothesis concerning Dn 7.13 LXX. Having argued that there are close connections between Dn 10.5f and Ezek 1,<sup>52</sup> Rowland suggests that

‘From a very early stage the connections between Dan 10.5f and descriptions of theophanies were recognized, and as a result items from these theophanies contributed to the later use of Dan 10.5f’.<sup>53</sup>

Rowland does not elaborate but this explanation is plausible and it coheres with our suggestion that Dn 10.5-6 developed through conflating details from Ezek 9.2 with details from other epiphanies including the theophany in Ezek 1.

Yarbro Collins argues that while the Danielic son of man is Michael from the point of view of the composition of the Book of Daniel it does not follow that John made this identification. She suggests that the designation of the revealing angel as a ‘man’ in 8.15 (cf. *ἀνθρώπου*, LXX) may have suggested that this angel, identified as Gabriel, was the same angel as in 7.13. The similarity in revealing functions between this angel and the angel in Dn 10 may have suggested that the angel in Dn 10 was also Gabriel. In turn this means that the angels in Dn 7.13 and 10.5-6 were identified and this would explain ‘why elements from Dan 7:13 and Dan 10:5-6 are conflated to describe the heavenly being of Rev 1:12-16’.<sup>54</sup> Further,

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<sup>52</sup>E.g., Rowland, “Vision”, 3.

<sup>53</sup>Rowland, “Man”, 106.

<sup>54</sup>Yarbro Collins, “Tradition”, 551.



the Ancient of Days was 'a distinguishable manifestation of God as a high angel', and probably identified with Gabriel by John.<sup>55</sup>

We have already discussed (and denied) the possibility that the Ancient of Days was interpreted as an angel.<sup>56</sup> But we also dispute the first part of Yarbrow Collins' proposal as we have outlined it. For this approach overlooks the fact that John is just as likely to have read Dn 7.16 and made a connection with 8.16.<sup>57</sup> In the former Daniel seeks out 'one of the attendants' to explain the vision to him, in the latter Gabriel is commanded to go to Daniel to interpret the vision. It seems as reasonable to presume that John identified these two figures as that he identified 'one like a son of man' with Gabriel. But if the figure in Dn 7.16 is Gabriel then he cannot be 'one like a son of man' who is certainly not 'one of the attendants'.<sup>58</sup>

Another explanation is possible. We have examined above the epiphany of the angelomorphic Noah in 1 *En.* 106.2-6. This epiphany occurs in a text which is undoubtedly older than the Apc, dating from no later than 0 BCE, and possibly as early as 161 BCE.<sup>59</sup> It is, of course, possible that this text has been influenced by Dn 7.9. But it might share with Dn 7.9 a common indebtedness to 1 *En.* 14.<sup>60</sup> In any case there is no reason to presume the influence of Dn 7.13 LXX since Noah is not linked in any way to the Danielic son of man. Our explanation begins then, with the existence of the epiphany of Noah as a glorious being who has a body white as snow, hair as white as wool, and eyes like the sun.

Three points about 1 *En.* 106.2-6 are significant in the present context.

First, it provides a model of a glorious figure who stands more or less alongside the glorious 'man' in Dn 10.5-6. In particular, because he has white hair, Noah is a model of a glorious figure whose description extends the scope of the description found in Dn 10.5-6.

Secondly, 1 *En.* 106 is indisputably older than the Apc, unlike Dn 7.13 LXX.

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<sup>55</sup>Yarbrow Collins, "Tradition", 557-558.

<sup>56</sup>See §2.4.1.

<sup>57</sup>Day, *Conflict*, 171-172.

<sup>58</sup>Zevit, "Implications", 490, is confusing on this point.

<sup>59</sup>See above, §4.2.4.

<sup>60</sup>See above §4.2.4.

Thirdly, the influence of 1 *En.* 106.2-6 directly or indirectly on epiphanies such as *Apc* 1.13-16 is by no means inconceivable given that it includes a comparison to the sun, a feature absent in Ezekiel and Daniel. Thus *Apc* 1.16, where the face of Jesus is like the sun shining in full force, and *Apc* 10.1, where the face of the angel is like the sun, could be evidence for at least an indirect reflection of the influence of 1 *En.* 106.5 ('His eyes are like the rays of the sun').

Consequently the existence of the epiphany of Noah in 1 *En.* 106 from long before the time of the *Apc* could explain why the christophany is broader in its range of images than *Dn* 10.5-6. Such an explanation does not presuppose that John actually knew 1 *En.* 106, only that John was familiar with apocalyptic tradition influenced by 1 *En.* 106. This explanation does not necessarily contradict Rowland's explanation (i.e. *Dn* 10.5-6 attracted theophanic imagery) but it has the significant advantage of providing a specific example of a description of an epiphany which includes white hair, comparison with snow, and comparison with the sun.

It is true that the actual language used to describe the risen Jesus is mainly drawn from Daniel and Ezekiel. Our explanation does not undermine this observation but complements it by providing a reason why the disparate portrayals in *Dn* 7.9 and 10.5-6 should have been brought together.

A consensus appears to be forming around the view that *Dn* 7.13 LXX is the key to the conflation of *Dn* 7.9,13 and 10.5-6 in *Apc* 1.13-16.<sup>61</sup> But this consensus appears to be forming without the exercise of due caution over the question of whether *Dn* 7.13 LXX was early enough to be an influence or over the question of the meaning of *Dn* 7.13 LXX. We argue that this need for caution is sufficient to warrant consideration of other possibilities such as 1 *En.* 106. The importance of 1 *En.* 106 has been overlooked by scholars such as Hurtado, Rowland, and Yarbrow Collins in their discussion of the christophany.

In short: the traditional interpretation of *Apc* 1.14, that the divinity of Jesus Christ in the *Apc* is being illustrated, is only one of several interpretations. In the light of our examination

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<sup>61</sup>In addition to Rowland and Yarbrow Collins note also Aune, "Prophecy", 421.

of the christophany in comparison with epiphanies both within and outside the Apc we have argued that this traditional interpretation is not supportable for the form of the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16 is typically angelic.

We have questioned the influence of Dn 7.13 LXX on the christophany along with two other explanations for the conflation of imagery from Dn 7 and 10 which is found in Apc 1.13-16. Positively we have argued for the possibility that 1 *En.* 106.2-5 lies in the background to Apc 1.13-16 and could explain this combination of images. Of particular importance is the fact that 'sun' imagery is used in 1 *En.* 106.2-5 but is not found in epiphanic accounts in either Ezekiel or Daniel. This explanation is consistent with the observation that Jesus is presented in the form of an angel.

#### **§8.5.1 Jesus as an Angelomorphic Human?**

If the form of the risen Jesus is 'typically angelic' does it mean that Jesus is being presented as though he were an angel or as an exalted human figure like Noah (1 *En.* 106) and Jacob (*Jos. Asen.* 22)?

Three observations suggest that Jesus is being presented as an angelic rather than as a human figure. First, Jesus is described as ὁμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου (Apc 1.13), which is similar to descriptions of angels in Daniel and Ezekiel (as we saw above in §8.3.2). Secondly, whereas the description of Abel, ὁμοιος υἱῷ θεοῦ (*Test. Abr. Rec. A* 12.4) signals that the human Abel is like an angel, the description ὁμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου (Apc 1.13) appears to signal that Jesus is like a human, in other words, that the risen Jesus is no longer human, although he has human form. Thirdly, the functional equivalence of Jesus to the revealing angel suggests that he is presented as an angel in correspondence to this functional equivalence.

#### **§8.5.2 Jesus as an Angel?**

If Jesus is not being presented as a divine being or as a human being then he is almost certainly being presented as an angel. But if Jesus looks like an angel and functions like an angel, is he in fact an angel in the perception of the Apc?

One crucial observation we can make, however, is that the 'man' in Dn 10.5-6 also reappears in Dn 12.7-8 and that the latter account is taken up in Apc 10 (as we have argued above in §7.2.1). Since we have distinguished between Jesus Christ and the mighty angel in Apc 10 it would appear that the story of one angel has influenced the descriptions of two beings in the Apc. This suggests that neither Jesus nor the mighty angel has been identified with the 'man' in Dn 10.5-6. Rather the information supplied in Daniel has simply contributed to the descriptions of two different figures. In other words it would appear that in this case the 'man' in Dn 10 and 12 is not the *object* of interpretation, but the *means* of interpretation for John.<sup>62</sup> Dn 10.5-6, for example, has not been reinterpreted in Apc 1.13-16 so that the risen Jesus is a reappearance of the 'man', rather it has contributed to the vision of the risen Jesus.<sup>63</sup> This point is reinforced by the observation that while details from Dn 10.5-6 dominate Apc 1.13-16 there is very little in the latter which is an exact reproduction of the former. In short: it is unlikely that Apc 1.13-16 implies that Jesus is identified with the angel in Dn 10.5-6.<sup>64</sup>

The situation with the Danielic son of man is slightly different. First, whereas the 'man' in Dn 10.5-6 appears directly to Daniel in his present situation, the vision of 'one like a son of man' in Dn 7.13 has a futuristic aspect. The author of Daniel 'sees' the future vindication of Israel and the judgement of her enemies (cf. Dn 11.2-12.1 which looks forward to 'the time of the end'). Whether the author thought in terms of the immediate future or the distant future is immaterial here. The point is that John, who writes a book which still looks ahead to the future vindication of God's people (cf. Apc 6.10), must have either believed that 'one like a son of man' had yet to come or had come in the form of Jesus of Nazareth and would yet come again. Apc 1.7 suggests that in fact he identified 'one like a son of man' with Jesus 'the pierced one' and looked for his second coming as the final vindication of God's people. In other words the description of the risen Jesus as ὁμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου may not simply be a phrase influenced by Dn 7.13 but an implicit declaration that 'one like a son of man' envisaged by Daniel was in fact Jesus Christ.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Cf. Yarbro Collins, "Review", 735, commenting on the failure of Beale, *Daniel*, 319, to properly make this distinction.

<sup>63</sup>Cf. Kretschmar, *Studien*, 222.

<sup>64</sup>Contrast Hippolytus, *Eis ton Daniel*, iv.36.4-6.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. Beale, "Revelation", 329.

Since we have already noted that 'one like a son of man' in Dn 7.13 was probably understood to be an angel, does this mean that John identified Jesus with this angel?

Even if John recognised Dn 7.13 as portraying 'one like a son of man' as an angel,<sup>66</sup> this does not necessarily mean that he thought that Jesus was an angel. The very fact that John presents his revelation in terms of Danielic language and concepts suggests that he was offering to the church an updating of what the Book of Daniel contained.<sup>67</sup> Thus it is conceivable that John may have thought that whereas Daniel 'saw' an angel in Dn 7.13, the reality was that 'one like a son of man' was not an angel, only similar to an angel.

Thus if John understood 'one like a son of man' in Dn 7.13 to be the angel Michael it would not follow that he understood Michael and Jesus Christ were to be identified. We shall have more to say about this in a later chapter. We have already suggested that the Apc represents a kind of successor to previous revelations such as the Book of Daniel. In keeping with this it is plausible to suppose that John believes he understands the secret things of God better than those before him. 'One like a son of man' appeared to have been Michael, but now he is known to be Jesus Christ. In particular, from John's Christian perspective, Dn 12.1 with its talk of Michael delivering Israel, must have been read as a mistake (it was not Michael who arose to save Israel but Jesus Christ) or a statement needing greater clarification (what was actually meant was that a figure *like* Michael would arise to save Israel).

If we then reject the identification of Jesus with the angels in Dn 7.13 and 10.5-6 we are nevertheless left with the thought that Jesus appears to be construed as a kind of successor to both - to Michael as saviour and to Gabriel as mediator of revelation. This notion should not seem surprising in view of our discussion in Chapter Five about connections between Jesus and Michael/Gabriel in various Christian texts in the first centuries of the Christian era.

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<sup>66</sup>Cf. Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 550.

<sup>67</sup>See 1QpHab 7 for an example of the belief that previous prophets and visionaries received only a limited revelation; cf. discussion in Halperin, *Faces*, 69; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 21-22, suggests that apocalypticists believed that 'The prophetic utterances had to await an apocalyptic revelation for their inner truth to be made explicit'; contrast with Stone, "Apocalyptic", 423.

It would appear then that although presented as an angel in Apc 1.13-16 the risen Jesus is not actually thought to be an angel in his essential nature. This conclusion is consistent with the fact that nowhere in Apc 1 (or in the rest of the Apc) is Jesus ever designated or entitled ἄγγελος. Our observations about the similarity between Jesus and the angels in the Apc in terms of form and function have always been accompanied by observations that Jesus is distinct from the angels. We have no reason to believe that Jesus was perceived to be an angel. At the most he was an angelomorphic being according to his presentation in Apc 1.13-16.

### §8.5.3 Resolving a Paradox

We have argued in Chapter Six that Jesus in the Apc is a divine being to the extent that he belongs with God as the object of heavenly praise (5.13, 22.1-4), shares the divine throne (3.21, 7.17, 22.1-3), and is identified with God in a series of 'I am' statements (22.13). Jesus Christ in the Apc lies 'on the divine side of the line which monotheism must draw between God and creatures'.<sup>68</sup> *Inter alia* we have noticed above that the divinity of Jesus in respect of Apc 1.13-20 is supported (though not required) by the fact that there is no reference to Jesus having been 'sent' - in contrast to the glorious 'man' in Dn 10.11 (and to Yahoel in *Apc. Abr.* 10.7). What 'one like a son of man' has to say in Apc 1.17-18 is crucial. When Jesus speaks in 1.17-18 John hears the following words:

μη φοβοῦ· ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος 18 καὶ ὁ ζῶν, καὶ ἐγενόμην νεκρὸς καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶν εἰμι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων καὶ ἔχω τὰς κλείς τοῦ θανάτου καὶ τοῦ ἄδου.

At first sight these statements are commensurate with Jesus' status as some kind of exalted, angel-like, human being. To die and to be alive simply refers to Jesus resurrection. To have the key to Death and Hades is to have an authority attributable elsewhere in the Apc to an angel (e.g. 9.1, 20.1, cf. *Apc. Zeph.* 6.13). The statement ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος could be interpreted in terms of Jesus' relationship to the church as, for example, the 'first-born from the dead' (cf. Apc 1.5, Col 1.18).<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 335.

<sup>69</sup>Note that Uncial A offers πρωτότοκος as an alternative to πρῶτος.

But our discussion in §6.2.2 suggested that ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος must be interpreted in the light of 22.13. It is not simply a statement about Jesus in relationship to the church but about Jesus in relationship to the whole of creation and history. It is a statement which identifies Jesus Christ with God. In this light we may then read the power over Death and Hades as a divine prerogative.<sup>70</sup> Likewise the statement that Jesus is ὁ ζῶν may be seen as a further alignment of Jesus Christ with God.<sup>71</sup> The conjunction of ὁ ζῶν with εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων recalls, for example,

'He who lives forever (Ὁ ζῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) created the universe' (Sir 18.1),<sup>72</sup>

and the description of God in the Apc itself,

τῷ ζῶντι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων (Apc 4.9,10, 10.6, 15.7).

It would appear therefore that John 'sees' an angelomorphic figure but 'hears' one who is identified with God. John does not 'see' a theomorphic figure but he 'hears' one who shares in the eternal being of God. Thus we have something of a paradox - a 'divine-angelic' being. But the paradox can be resolved when we recall some observations made in the course of our survey of the context of christology of the Apc. In *Asc. Is.* 9.30 (Eth.) we saw that the implication of this reading was that Jesus was transformed into an angel so as not to overwhelm Isaiah. Justin (*Apol.* i.63) and Origen (*Comm. Joh.* i. 217-219) both talk about Jesus taking up angelic form temporarily for specific purposes. In *Test. Abr.* 16.8-9 Death manifests itself in the form of an archangel. In other words, we suggest that in the perception of the Apc, Jesus appears as an angelomorphic figure as a temporary measure, analogously to these examples. Jesus is not an angel but he takes up the form of an angel temporarily.

<sup>70</sup>E.g. *Tg. Yer.* / Deut 28.12; *Tg. Yer.* / Gn 30.22; cf. Aune, "Magic", 484-489, argues for the influence of the goddess Hekate.

<sup>71</sup>Cf. Swete, 19. Note God as אֱלֹהִים (θεὸς ζῶν), יְהוָה (ζῆ Κύριος), אֲנִי (ζῶ ἐγώ) in the OT: Deut 32.40; Josh 3.10; Ps 41(42).3, 83(84).3; Is 49.18; Jer 5.2; Hos 1.10 (2.1); and as θεὸς ζῶν or ὁ θεὸς ὁ ζῶν in Mt 16.16, 26.63; Acts 14.15; Rom 9.26; 2 Cor 3.3; 6.16; 1 Thess 1.9; 1 Tim 3.15, 4.10; Heb 3.12; 9.14, 10.31; 1 Pet 1.23.

<sup>72</sup>Cf. Dn 4.34; 12.7; 1 En 5.1.

At least two reasons to support this interpretation can be brought forward. First, if Jesus were appearing as a divine being then it might have given the impression that there are two Gods. But John takes some trouble to underline the fact that there is only one God. In Apc 19.10 and 22.9 the angel says 'worship God' not 'worship God and Jesus'. In Apc 22.3-4 singular pronouns are used, even though both God and the Lamb are in view (cf. οἱ δοῦλοι αὐτοῦ λατρεύουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ ὄψονται τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ).<sup>73</sup>

Secondly, according to our analysis of Apc 4.3, the true form of God is veiled from human sight. If we take seriously the identity between God and Jesus Christ then the true form of Jesus Christ is likely to be integrally bound up with that of God. Consequently, the true form of Jesus Christ must also be veiled from human sight. It is noticeable that when Jesus is 'seen' in the midst of the throne it is in the form of the Lamb (7.17) - a symbolic image rather than a portrayal of the essential form of Jesus Christ. Also important in this connection is the secret name of Jesus in Apc 19.12 which hints that the true nature of Jesus Christ is bound with God.<sup>74</sup> Thus when Christ appears to humans he assumes a form which can be taken in by the human eye. He takes up the form of a mighty and glorious angel.

We can put this another way. When Jesus was on earth interacting with humanity he was incarnate in human form. Now that he has ascended to heaven he adopts the form of the main class of heavenly being who interact with humanity, namely, angels. Analogous to his human incarnation Jesus becomes 'incarnate' as an angel. In presenting Jesus in this way John preserves the unity of God and Jesus Christ. There are obvious resonances here with the 'dispensational' angel christology of Origen (cf. §5.2.2). But in *Comm. Joh.* i.217-219 Jesus becomes an angel for the sake of the angels, whereas in the Apc Jesus is presented as angel for the sake of his church.

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<sup>73</sup>Cf. Bauckham, "Worship", 331, 'John is evidently reluctant to speak of God and Christ together as a plurality. Their 'functional unity' [Holtz, *Christologie*, 202] is such that Christ cannot be an alternative object of worship, but shares in the glory due to God'. Cf. Beasley-Murray, 332; Holtz, *Christologie*, 202.

<sup>74</sup>So Schillebeeckx, *Christ*, 443.



This explanation has two important implications. First, that the glorious appearance of Jesus is not the appearance of Jesus the exalted human but the appearance of Jesus the divine being (but now temporary angel). Secondly, that the figure which is seen in Apc 1.13-16 is not 'the angel of Christ's presence',<sup>75</sup> at least not in the sense of an angel who stands in for Christ. Jesus Christ the living one is really present to John in the form of an angel.

## §8.6 CONCLUSION

We have set ourselves the task of investigating the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc. Our study of Apc 1.13-16 has determined that angelology has influenced the vision of Jesus Christ. In appearance Jesus is like an angel. Each element of his form recalls the appearance of other glorious angels and angelomorphic beings. The form of the Ancient of Days is also recalled, but when Apc 1.14 is read against the background of a number of epiphanies which feature similar imagery it is questionable that the divinity of Jesus Christ is being illustrated. Rather Jesus is being presented as a glorious angel - most likely, in fact, as the successor to Michael and Gabriel.

The process by which elements from Dn 7.9,13 and 10.5-6 became conflated is often explained in terms of the influence of Dn 7.13 LXX. We consider this to be far from an assured result and have put forward an alternative explanation based on 1 *En.* 106. 2-6.

Paradoxically, although Jesus appears in an angelomorphic form, he is identified with the being of God. We have explained this in terms of another set of observations drawn from study of angelology and angel christology: that the form of an angel can be taken up temporarily by a non-angelic being.

We now proceed to study 'one like a son of man' in Apc 14.14 with a view to determining whether what is said there corroborates our findings so far.

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<sup>75</sup>Farrar, 67.

## CHAPTER NINE

# ‘ONE LIKE A SON OF MAN’ IN APOCALYPSE 14.14

### §9.1 INTRODUCTION

We have examined ‘one like a son of man’ in Apc 1.13, a figure identified as the risen Jesus. To continue our investigation of the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc we now examine ‘one like a son of man’ in Apc 14.14. Although many commentators identify this figure as Jesus Christ not all do so. The controversy largely arises from the fact that in 14.15 the next figure in the sequence is described as ἄλλος ἄγγελος suggesting that the figure in 14.14 is himself an angel. Consequently our major task is to reconsider the identity of the son of man figure. Out of this discussion we develop our reflection on the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc.

We begin by citing Apc 14.14-16 and then discussing various issues which arise from it:

Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ νεφέλη λευκὴ, καὶ ἐπὶ ἣν νεφέλην καθήμενον ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, ἔχων ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ στέφανον χρυσοῦν καὶ ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ δρέπανον ὀξύ. 15 καὶ ἄλλος ἄγγελος ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ ναοῦ κράζων ἐν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ τῷ καθήμενῳ ἐπὶ τῆς νεφέλης· πέμψον τὸ δρέπανόν σου καὶ θέρισον, ὅτι ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα θερίσαι, ὅτι ἐξηράνθη ὁ θερισμὸς τῆς γῆς. 16 καὶ ἔβαλεν ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῆς νεφέλης τὸ δρέπανον αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ ἐθερίσθη ἡ γῆ.<sup>1</sup>

The phrase ἄλλος ἄγγελος in 14.15 is intriguing. It is one of six occurrences in 14.6-20. In 14.8,9,17, and 18 this expression occasions no difficulty *per se*, since the angels referred to clearly follow the appearance of a previous angel, and thus are appropriately described as ἄλλος ἄγγελος, that is, as ‘another angel’. Our previous discussion of the phrase ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου has shown that it is a kind of expression used with reference to angelic figures. It would be quite reasonable to construe ἄλλος ἄγγελος in 14.15 as meaning

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<sup>1</sup>There is no major text critical issue affecting this passage.

'another angel, following the appearance of an angel described in human terms'. But the fact that (a) ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is taken by many commentators to refer to Jesus Christ, and that (b) Jesus is commonly supposed to be distinct from the angels raises the question whether ἄλλος ἄγγελος in 14.15 *necessarily* implies that the figure in 14.14 is an angel.

Consideration of 14.6 suggests that the answer to this question is negative for in this verse ἄλλος ἄγγελος occurs with no immediate reference point in view. The nearest previous reference to angel(s) is in 12.7, where Michael and the dragon and their armies of ἄγγελοι fight each other.

A number of explanations for ἄλλος in 14.6 have been brought forward. We need not concern ourselves with those which are consistent with the conclusion that ἄλλος in 14.15 does not necessarily refer to 'one like a son of man' in 14.14. For example, explanations that ἄλλος in 14.6 is a stylistic device,<sup>2</sup> or that ἄλλος ἄγγελος means 'again, an angel',<sup>3</sup> or 'another, an angel',<sup>4</sup> or that it is referring to 'die aktualisierende Stimme Gottes'.<sup>5</sup> We may note that, in principle, there is no reason why a previous angel some way back in the narrative should not be in view since in the case of ἄλλον ἄγγελον ἰσχυρὸν in 10.1 the previous angel appears to be ἄγγελον ἰσχυρὸν in 5.2.<sup>6</sup>

At least one explanation, however, is consistent with the understanding that ἄλλος in 14.15 does mean that the figure in 14.14 is an angel. For example, it is possible that ἄλλος in 14.6 is not actually original. If ἄλλος was absent from the original text of 14.6,<sup>7</sup> then it is arguable that an original ἄλλος in 14.15 should not be understood to refer any further back than to the immediately preceding figure in 14.14 since 14.6 does not provide a precedent for an ἄλλος with no immediate referent in view. Nevertheless, the originality of ἄλλος in 14.6 is well supported,<sup>8</sup> and the point is established that ἄλλος does not have

<sup>2</sup>Holtz, *Christologie*, 130 n.2; Lohmeyer, 123.

<sup>3</sup>Lohmeyer, 121.

<sup>4</sup>Charles, ii, 12; cf. Beckwith, 655; with refutation by Holtz, *Christologie*, 129 n.3.

<sup>5</sup>Van Schaik, "Apok", 221-225, citation from p.222. The principal objection to this explanation and to the previous one is that elsewhere in the Apc ἄλλος ἄγγελος means 'another angel'.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. discussion in Bousset, 383, and Holtz, *Christologie*, 130 n.2 re (possible) previous angels.

<sup>7</sup>E.g. Ɔ<sup>47</sup> Ɔ Ɔ sa.

<sup>8</sup>Ἄλλος ἄγγελος in 14.6 is supported by , e.g., Ɔ<sup>2</sup> A C P 051, 1006. Cf. Beckwith, 655. Holtz,

to refer to the immediately preceding figure.

Positively, it has been argued that a plausible reference for ἄλλος in 14.15 exists in the angel in 14.9.<sup>9</sup> This possibility has been denied by, e.g., Charles 'since [14.6-11] and [14.14-20] are quite distinct visions'.<sup>10</sup> But even if the visions are distinct this is scarcely a reason to deny that ἄλλος could refer back to 14.9. The bounds of possibility are not stretched by supposing that when the two visions were conjoined ἄλλος was added to 14.15. This could have been done, for example, to lend a semblance of continuity to 14.6-20 as a whole, or to match each angel in the second vision with each angel in the first.

Bousset also denied the '14.9' solution. He argued that in 14.14-20 the author has reworked an apocalyptic source which was concerned with a 'Weltgericht' into one concerned with a 'Vorgericht', in the process downgraded the 'Weltrichter' to the rank of the angels,<sup>11</sup> and consequently added ἄλλος to ἄγγελος in 14.15 in the original material.<sup>12</sup> This approach, however, is questionable on the grounds that it is difficult to understand why John or a redactor would have wished to downgrade the son of man figure to the level of the angels.<sup>13</sup>

Van Schaik describes the '14.9' solution as the simplest but most improbable solution.<sup>14</sup> But this comment is an unelaborated and unwarranted judgement. For at least two reasons we may in fact argue that 14.9 supplies the antecedent angel to the ἄλλος ἄγγελος in 14.15.

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*Christologie*, 130 n.2; Metzger, *Textual*, 751. The suggestion by Weiss [cited in Beckwith, 666, and Van Schaik, "Apok", 218] that 14.6 was originally ἄλλον ἄετον (cf. similarities between 14.6 and 8.13 where an ἀετός also flies in mid-heaven announcing a message) has no textual support that we are aware of.

<sup>9</sup>E.g. Swete, 185; Beckwith, 662.

<sup>10</sup>Charles, ii, 21. With Vos, *Synoptic*, 144, and Holtz, *Christologie*, 128 we reject Charles, ii, 18-19, when he proposes that v.15-17 is an interpolation made by someone who regarded the figure in 14.14 merely as an angel.

<sup>11</sup>Bousset, 391.

<sup>12</sup>Bousset, 389.

<sup>13</sup>Van Schaik, "Apok", 218; cf. Beckwith, 667-668; Kraft, 192.

<sup>14</sup>Van Schaik, "Apok", 218.

First, all the angels mentioned in 14.6-20 are involved in one way or another with the judgement of God.<sup>15</sup> The three angels in 14.6-9 *announce* the judgement. (Even the holy angels in 14.10, who are not part of the series of angels in 14.6-20, watch the *punishment* of the condemned). The three angels in 14.15-20 act to *carry out* the judgement - two give commands and one wields the sickle. In this sequence of angels the angel in 14.15 is 'another angel', the next after the angel in 14.9.

Secondly, that each of the six angels should be described as ἄλλος ἄγγελος could result from conforming to a traditional pattern. The ἄλλοι ἄγγελοι in 14.6-20 plus the son of man figure make a group of seven heavenly figures.<sup>16</sup> On the one hand a group of *seven* conforms to the concept of a leading group of seven heavenly beings. Describing the six angels in the same way underlines the mostly homogeneous nature of the group.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand a group of six leading angels is not unknown (cf. 1 *En.* 20 [*Eth.*]) and describing each angel as ἄλλος ἄγγελος would be consistent with the possibility that John envisages six archangels accompanying 'one like a son of man'. In other words, the angel in 14.15 is ἄλλος ἄγγελος in order to conform the participants of the vision(s) in 14.6-20 to a traditional Jewish pattern. Accordingly the angel in 14.15 is the next *angel* after the one in 14.9.

In sum: it is not necessary to suppose that ἄλλος ἄγγελος in 14.15 implies that the figure in 14.14 is an angel. It is plausible to suppose that the expression ἄλλος ἄγγελος in 14.15 arises because the angel is understood as the angel who follows the angel in 14.9.

Another subject in Apc 14.14-20 which we may refer to in the 'Introduction' is the theme of judgement symbolised by the harvest and the vintage. 'One like a son of man' and one of the angels each have a sickle in order to gather the crop. In 14.15 the son of man figure is told to 'reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is fully ripe'. The son of man figure swings his sickle 'and the earth was reaped' (14.16). An angel

<sup>15</sup>Beckwith, 662-663.

<sup>16</sup>Müller, *Messias*, 197.

<sup>17</sup>The difference between the first group of three ἄλλοι ἄγγελοι and the second group, whereby the second and third angels of the first group are ἄλλος ἄγγελος δεύτερος and ἄλλος ἄγγελος τρίτος respectively, but the angels of the second group are not described with ordinal numbers, suggests that two groups of angels are in view. But this does not mean that an overall group with two parts is not in view.

appears with a sickle and is told to reap, but this time it is in terms of gathering 'the clusters of the vine' (14.18). The angel gathers 'the vintage of the earth' and throws it into 'the great winepress of the wrath of God' (14.19). The winepress is then trodden and an extraordinary amount of blood flows for 'two hundred miles' (14.20).

The material here has been the subject of an ongoing debate. Issues raised include the following:

(a) the meaning of the symbolism: e.g., both harvest and vintage symbolise the ingathering of the elect,<sup>18</sup> the harvest symbolises the ingathering of the elect but the vintage symbolises the judgement of the unrepentant nations,<sup>19</sup> the harvest symbolises the one judgement on good and bad alike while the vintage represents the vengeance of God on the wicked.<sup>20</sup>

(b) the history of the tradition: e.g., 14.15-17 is an interpolation,<sup>21</sup> 14.14-20 is a reworked apocalyptic source which downgrades a 'Weltrichter' to an angel,<sup>22</sup> 14.14-19 is the reworking of synoptic gospel traditions,<sup>23</sup> 14.14-20 represents the development of early christological tradition independently of the synoptic gospels.<sup>24</sup>

As far as we can see the issue (a) has little bearing on the identity of 'one like a son of man' in 14.14. Whatever interpretation is placed on the harvest and vintage nothing requires that the son of man figure be identified either as Christ or as an angel.

Issue (b) has some bearing on the question of the identity of the figure. If, for example, John has incorporated a Jewish source involving angels then it is possible that 'one like a son of man' in 14.14 is an angel. Nevertheless we must always ask with this kind of issue whether the source material is determinative for the interpretation of the resultant

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<sup>18</sup>Caird, 191-194.

<sup>19</sup>Lohmeyer, 129; Holtz, *Christologie*, 134-135; Vos, *Synoptic*, 151; Bauckham, *Theology*, 94-98.

<sup>20</sup>Beckwith, 661-665.

<sup>21</sup>Charles, ii, 18-19.

<sup>22</sup>Bousset, 389.

<sup>23</sup>Vos, *Synoptic*, 144-152; with refutation in Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 562-566.

<sup>24</sup>Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 566-568.

composition.<sup>25</sup> We have already seen in the previous chapter that although 'one like a son of man' in Dn 7.13 was probably identified as an angelic figure it did not follow that in Apc 1.13 John thought that 'one like a son of man' was an angel. A similar situation would apply with respect to 14.14. That is, we must determine the nature of the son of man figure according to the text as presented by John rather than according to the (presumed) history of tradition behind the text.

Finally, we note that the text in the background to the angel's command in 14.15 is undoubtedly Joel 3.13 (= 4.13 MT):

'Put in the sickle, for the harvest (קציר) is ripe. Go in, tread, for the winepress is full. The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.'<sup>26</sup>

In 14.15 only the words 'for the hour to reap has come' (ὅτι ἤλθεν ἡ ὥρα θερίσαι) in the angel's message have no analogy with Joel 3.13.<sup>27</sup> In 14.18 the angel is told to gather in the grapes which are ripe. This expands on Joel 3.13 where no mention is made of 'grapes' or 'clusters of the vine' or the grapes being ripe. Joel 3.13 in fact appears to combine two harvests - grain and grape - in one illustration of judgement.<sup>28</sup>

Who says the words in Joel 3.13 to whom is a little uncertain. Joel 3.11 ends with a request to God, 'Bring down your warriors, Yahweh' (הנחת יהוה גבוריך), Joel 4.11 MT); but 3.12 ends, so it would seem, with God speaking, 'for there I will sit to judge all the neighbouring nations'. Consequently when 3.13 begins with the words 'Put in the sickle' it is not immediately obvious whether this is a *request to God* to begin his judgement or an *instruction given by God* for his people on earth to enact the judgement for God.

In short: various issues arise concerning the vision of 'one like a son of man' in the context of Apc 14.6-20, but none of these either rule out or rule in any particular identity for the son of man figure.

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<sup>25</sup>Cf. Gaechter, "Original", 485, 'you can never trust John to endorse [parallel ideas in the OT] even if he should borrow from their imagery'.

<sup>26</sup>Almost certainly the Hebrew rather than the LXX version is used by John, cf. Lohmeyer, 128.

<sup>27</sup>Holtz, *Christologie*, 131.

<sup>28</sup>Cf. Holtz, *Christologie*, 133 n.2. Bauckham, *Theology*, 95.

## §9.2 APOCALYPSE 14.14 WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE FORM OF THE FIGURE

We now turn to examine the vision of 'one like a son of man'. Our underlying purpose is to determine the identity of this figure.

The introduction to the appearance of the figure in 14.14, Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ νεφέλη λευκή, is similar to the introduction to the appearance of the Lamb on Mount Zion in 14.1: Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ τὸ ἀρνίον ... .<sup>29</sup> By contrast we may observe that the corresponding beginning to the appearance of the first ἄλλος ἄγγελος is the briefer formula, Καὶ εἶδον ἄλλον ἄγγελον (14.6). Elsewhere in the Apc εἶδον alone is frequently found in connection with visions of all kinds of beings,<sup>30</sup> but εἶδον with ἰδοὺ is found only at the beginning of the following visions:

- (a) the vision of the open heaven (4.1),
- (b) the visions of the first, third, and fourth apocalyptic horsemen (6.2, 5, 8),
- (c) the vision of the great international crowd before the throne and before the Lamb (7.9),
- (d) the vision of the Lamb on Mt. Zion (14.1),
- (e) the vision of 'one like a son of man' (14.14),
- (f) the vision of the apocalyptic Rider (19.11).

Thus the introductory formula to Apc 14.14 is found on most other occasions to introduce a vision which features (i) either explicitly or implicitly the divine throne (4.1, 7.9), or (ii) Jesus as the Lamb (7.9, 14.1) or as the Rider (19.11). The exceptions are the three visions featuring apocalyptic horsemen.<sup>31</sup> Consequently we cannot state a rule such that Καὶ

<sup>29</sup>Van Schaik, "Apc 14", 225 n21.

<sup>30</sup>E.g. Apc 1.12; 5.1,6; 6.1;7.1; 8.2; 10.1; 13.1,11; 15.1; 17.3; 18.1; 20.1,11; 21.1.

<sup>31</sup>With, e.g., Rissi, "Rider", 416, we hold that the first horseman in Apc 6.2 is an anti-Christ figure.



εἶδον, καὶ ἶδόν is normally used in visions concerning either God or Jesus Christ or both together. But the use of this phrase in 14.14 is consistent with the identification of 'one like a son of man' in 14.14 with the risen Jesus.<sup>32</sup>

We now turn to consider the description of the content of the vision phrase by phrase. We cite the phrase in question first and then list under it related phrases in the Apc and in the background literature. For convenience in setting out we cite each new phrase at the beginning of a new page.

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<sup>32</sup>Cf. Holtz, *Christologie*, 131 n.3.

(i) νεφέλη λευκή

Related Material in the Apoc

Jesus: Ἴδου ἔρχεται μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν (1.7).

another mighty angel: περιβεβλημένον νεφέλην (10.1).

two witnesses: ἀνέβησαν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ (11.12).

Background Material

'coming on the clouds of heaven' (ἐπι τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ..... ἦρχετο, LXX; μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ... ἐρχόμενος, Th.) Dn 7.13.

'you make the clouds your chariots' (ὁ τιθεὶς νέφη τὴν ἐπίβασιν, Ps 103(104).3).

'Cloud (νεφέλη) and darkness are all around him' (Ps 96(97).2).<sup>33</sup>

'Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud (νεφέλης)"  
' (Ex 19.9; cf. 20.21).

'And I saw that this man flew with the clouds of heaven' (4 Ezra 13.3).

'And behold a cloud was coming up from the great sea' (Syr. Bar. 53.1).

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<sup>33</sup>Swete, 185, suggests that the 'white cloud' in 14.14 is 'not the dark storm-cloud which to the Hebrew mind suggested the inscrutable mystery of unrevealed Deity ..... but the symbol of light and blessing'.

## Discussion

John sees a 'white cloud'. This recalls at least three sets of figures:

- (i) God in terms of OT references to his appearance in, and movement on cloud(s),
- (ii) 'one like a son of man' in Dn 7.13, and related figures in 2 Esd. 13.3 and *Syr. Bar.* 53.1,
- (iii) figures in the Apc such as Jesus (1.7), the mighty angel (10.1) and the two witnesses (11.12).

Whereas the figure in 14.14 sits 'on' (ἐπὶ) the cloud, the reference in 1.7 speaks of Jesus coming 'with' (μετὰ) the clouds. If Dn 7.13 is in view in 14.14 (as it certainly is in 1.7) then it recalls the LXX rather than Theodotion (as in 1.7).<sup>34</sup> Of course, in neither 1.7 nor 14.14 is there sufficient evidence to be sure that John was drawing on either version of Dn 7.13.

If Jesus is the figure on the cloud then it is noticeable that there are three specific differences between 1.7 and 14.14: the former has τῶν νεφελῶν, the figure comes (ἔρχεται), and comes μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν, whereas the latter has νεφέλη λευκή, the figure simply is (that is, there is no reference to 'coming' ), and the figure is ἐπὶ τῇ νεφέλῃ. None of these differences precludes the identification of the figure as Jesus, but they do allow for the possibility that the figure is different to the one envisaged in 1.7, that is, different to Jesus.

In sum: a white cloud seen at the beginning of the vision sets up a number of expectations as to who might become present in the vision - God, Jesus, a heavenly being. By itself it does not point unerringly to any one figure.

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<sup>34</sup>Cf. Scott, "Behold", 127.

(ii) καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν νεφέλην καθήμενον

[Cf. τῷ καθημένῳ ἐπὶ τῆς νεφέλης (14.15), ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῆς νεφέλης (14.16)].

Related Material in the Apc

God: ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον καθήμενος (4.2).

third rider: ἵππος μέλας, καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπ' αὐτὸν (6.5).

Jesus: ἵππος λευκὸς καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπ' αὐτὸν (19.11).

unknown: θρόνους καὶ ἐκάθισαν ἐπ' αὐτοὺς (20.4).

Background Material

'I [Sophia] dwelt in the highest heavens, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud' (ὁ θρόνος μου ἐν στύλῳ νεφέλης, Sir 24.3).<sup>35</sup>

ᾄψασθε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ δεξιῶν καθήμενον τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐρχόμενον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (Mk 14.62, cf. ... ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν, Mt 26.64).

τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλῃ μετὰ δυνάμεως καὶ δόξης πολλῆς (Lk 21.27).

'... Apollo ... urbemque uidebat nube sedens atque his uictorem ad fatur lulum' (Vergil, *Aen.* 9.638-640).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Cf. Holtz, *Christologie*, 130 n.1, 'Der Menschensohn kommt als καθήμενος auf der Wolke. Weder Dan 7.13; IV Esra 13.1ff; Mc 13.26 par. noch Apc 1.7 (13) bietet eine Analogie dazu'. But Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 564, points out that the Son of Man sits on his throne of glory in 1 *En.* 69.27 (cf. 55.4, 61.8, 62.3).

<sup>36</sup>Noted by Casey, *Son*, 148.

## Discussion

Although we have referred to the figure in 14.14 as 'one like a son of man' the most frequent description of the figure in 14.14-16 is 'The one seated on the cloud', (three times).

Why should the figure be seated on a cloud? It is noticeable that describing the figure as 'the one seated on the cloud' parallels the descriptions in the Apc of God as 'the one seated on the throne', and of the occupants of thrones in 20.4. This raises the question whether the cloud is a kind of throne. *Sophia* has her throne in a 'pillar of cloud' because this enables her to move around (cf. the 'pillar of cloud' leading Israel in the desert, Ex 14.19). Therefore it is reasonable to suppose that when the crowned figure in 14.14 sits on a 'cloud' we are to understand that a mobile throne is in view. This point could explain why a single cloud is seen rather than the plural clouds of Apc 1.7.<sup>37</sup>

If a mobile throne is in view then ultimately in the background lies the chariot throne of Ezek 1.26 which lies in the midst of 'a great cloud (LXX: νεφέλη μεγάλη) with brightness around it' (Ezek 1.4).

The fact, however, that in Apc 11.2 a cloud is the means of transport for the two witnesses, and that in Apc 10.1 an angel is 'wrapped in a cloud' means that the location of the figure in Apc 14.14 is consistent with the figure being an angel. The possible allusion to Ezek 1.26 nevertheless keeps in view the possibility that the figure is somewhat greater than an angel.

Finally, one argument against the figure being an angel is that there was a rabbinic tradition that angels could not fold their legs and hence could not sit.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless there appears to have been at least one exception to this 'rule' in a contemporary apocalypse, since *Asc. Is.* 7.21 gives the impression that an angel sat on a throne in each of the six heavens below the seventh and highest heaven.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Vos, *Synoptic*, 146-147 draws attention to Lk 21.27 where the Son of Man comes ἐν νεφέλῃ.

<sup>38</sup>Cf. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 60, 66-67, who cites *Bereshit Rabbah* as a source.

<sup>39</sup>As Gruenwald, *op. cit.*, 60, recognises.

(III) ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου .

#### Related Material in the Apc

Jesus: ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου (1.13).

#### Background Material

'one like a son of man (ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου)' (Dn 7.13 LXX; Th.).

'in appearance like a man' (*Apc. Abr.* 10.5).

'one in the form of a son of man (ὡς ὁμοίωσις υἱοῦ ἀνθρώπου Th. cf. LXX: ὡς

ὁμοίωσις χειρὸς ἀνθρώπου; MT: כדמות בני אדם)' Dn 10.16.

[Further references may be found in §8.3.2].

#### Discussion

By contrast with the previous phrase, the words ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου have a clear and specific reminiscence within the Apc to just one other figure, the risen Jesus in 1.13. The fact that the same phrase is used in the descriptions of the one seated on the cloud and of the exalted Jesus inevitably raises the question, Are the two figures identical?<sup>40</sup> A final answer to this question must be held over until we have completed our examination of the various aspects of the figure in 14.14. But at this stage it is worth noting three points.

First, that ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου recalls other phrases applied to various heavenly figures in the OT. As we saw in the previous chapter this fact has led some scholars to conclude that ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is a typical apocalyptic turn of phrase which signifies a man-like being and could be simply intended to designate an angelic being. Consequently it is

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<sup>40</sup>Small variations of ὅμοιον and υἱὸν in some witnesses do not affect this point.

possible that while ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου recalls the description of Jesus in Apc 1.13, it does so only in the sense that Jesus and the figure in 14.14 are *similar kinds of human-like beings*.

Secondly, the fact that the next detail in the description of the figure's form also directly mirrors a detail in the description of the form of the twenty-four elders (cf. (iv) below) suggests that no one detail was intended as an indicator of the figure's identity. Rather, John may have 'borrowed' details from here and there within his 'stock of imagery',<sup>41</sup> so that it is merely coincidence that one detail mirrors a detail in the description of the risen Jesus. In our discussion in chapter seven concerning the form of the bowl-angels we noted a similarity between the description of their form and the description of the form of the exalted Jesus (ἐνδεδυμένοι λίνον καθαρὸν λαμπρὸν καὶ περιεζωσμένοι περὶ τὰ στήθη ζώνασ χρυσᾶς, Apc 15.6; cf. ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη καὶ περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν, Apc 1.13). No scholars, however, as far as we are aware, have suggested that this means that Jesus is one of the bowl-angels.

Thirdly, it is possible that if John did wish to emphasise a link between the figure in 14.14 and the exalted Jesus by his use of the phrase ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου then it was merely a link between, and not an identity between the two figures which was signified. If the figure in question is meant to be identified as Jesus through the provision of a detail also found in Apc 1.13-16 it is surprising that there are *no other* details which link this appearance to the christophany in Apc 1.13-16 (and to other aspects of the portrayal of Jesus in the Apc). In this respect we may contrast the figure in 14.14 with the apocalyptic Rider in 19.11-16 where (a) two details (eyes like flames of fire, sword in mouth, 19.11,15) link the figure with the exalted Jesus in Apc 1.13-16, and (b) other details connect the figure with the portrayal of Jesus elsewhere in the Apc (e.g., rule with a rod of iron, 19.15 cf. 2.26-28, 12.5; the name 'King of kings and Lord of lords', 19.16 cf. 17.14).

In short, the use of the phrase ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in the description of the figure in 14.14 does not necessarily mean that the figure is Jesus Christ and could mean that the figure is an angel.

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<sup>41</sup>Dunn, *Christology*, xxiv.

There is no doubt that the description of the figure here draws on the figure in Dn 7.13. Even though there are obvious differences with Dn 7.13 (e.g. singular 'cloud' here versus 'clouds' in Dn 7.13) the conjunction of 'cloud' and 'one like a son of man' mean that it is impossible that Dn 7.13 is not alluded to here.<sup>42</sup> Vos has argued that the allusion is distant with the immediate source for Apc 14.14 lying in the 'gospel tradition' (i.e. Mk 14.62/Mt 26.64).<sup>43</sup> But this argument is difficult to sustain when ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is preferred to ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.<sup>44</sup> The use of the former expression suggests that, whatever knowledge of the synoptic gospel tradition John may have had, Dn 7.13 was firmly in mind as well.

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<sup>42</sup>Contra, Casey, *Son*, 148, who does not allow for a *cumulative* case for dependency on Dn 7.13.

<sup>43</sup>Vos, *Synoptic*, 146-147.

<sup>44</sup>Yarbro Collins, "Tradition", 563-566 offers an extensive refutation of Vos' proposal.



(iv) ἔχων ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ στέφανον χρυσοῦν.

#### Related Material in the Apc

the twenty-four elders: ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν στεφάνους χρυσοῦς (4.4).

the locusts: ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν ὡς στέφανοι ὅμοιοι χρυσοῦ (9.7).

the heavenly woman: ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτῆς στέφανος ἀστέρων δώδεκα (12.1)

Jesus: ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ διαδήματα πολλὰ (19.12).

conquering figures: δώσω σοι τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς (2.10),

κράτει ὃ ἔχεις, ἵνα μηδεὶς λάβῃ τὸν στέφανόν σου (3.11),

ἐδόθη αὐτῷ στέφανος καὶ ἐξῆλθεν νικῶν (6.2).

#### Background Material

'a golden crown upon her head' (χρυσοῦ στέφανον περιέθηκεν ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτῆς, *Jos. Asen.* 18.5; cf. 5.5, 21.5; 2 Sm 12.30).<sup>45</sup>

#### Discussion

Whereas the previous detail in 14.14, ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, is exactly the same as that found in the description of the risen Jesus in 1.13, this detail is exactly the same (except in respect of number) as one of the details in the description of the twenty-four elders (4.4).<sup>46</sup> Undoubtedly the son of man figure (and the elders) wear a golden crown as a sign

<sup>45</sup>'Crowns' are a feature of a number of other apocalypses and testaments (e.g. *Test. Abr. Rec. A.* 7.5; *T. Levi* 8.2, *T. Ben* 4.1, *Ps. Sol.* 2.2, *Gk. Apc. Bar.* 6.2, *Gk. Apc. Esdr.* 6.17; *T. Job.* 6.21), but references to 'golden crowns' appear to be restricted to the references cited in *Jos. Asen.* [according to Denis, *Concordance* (1987)].

<sup>46</sup>This correlation seems to undermine Müller, *Messias*, 193-197, who argues that Apc 14.14-20 is a

of their heavenly rank.<sup>47</sup> But there is no reason to think that 'one like a son of man' is one of the elders. For the fact that the locusts in 9.7 have on their heads ὡς στέφανοι ὅμοιοι χρυσοῦ suggests that the wearing of golden crowns is considered by John to be a general mark of majesty (in this case aped by the locusts) rather than a particular insignia of the elders.<sup>48</sup>

Crowns (though not described as 'golden') are also linked with the theme of conquering in 2.10, 3.11, and 6.2 so that it is possible that the son of man figure wears a crown because he has 'conquered'. In this case the son of man figure would most probably be Jesus Christ, who has conquered (cf. 3.21 where 'conquering' is linked with possession of a 'throne'), unlike the angels who are never directly associated with this theme.<sup>49</sup>

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Jewish source untouched by John. In turn this has implications for Müller's understanding of the christology of the Apc, cf. Holtz, *Christologie*, 244-245, Lohse, "Menschensohn", 85 n.8, De Jonge, "Use", 280.

<sup>47</sup>Satake, *Gemeindeordnung*, 144.

<sup>48</sup>Trebilco, *Jewish*, 110.

<sup>49</sup>Charles, ii, 20.

(v) ἔχων ..... ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ δρέπανον ὄξύ.

#### Related Material in the Apc

Jesus: ἔχων ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ ἀστέρας ἑπτὰ (1.16; cf. 1.17,20; 2.1).

third rider: ἔχων ζυγὸν ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ (6.5 cf. 6.2,4,7).

'another mighty angel': ἔχων ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ βιβλαρίδιον ἠνεωγμένον (10.2 cf. 10.5,8,10).

'another angel': ἔχων καὶ αὐτὸς δρέπανον ὄξύ (14.17).

'another angel': τῷ ἔχοντι τὸ δρέπανον τὸ ὄξύ (14.18).

'Babylon': ἔχουσα ποτήριον χρυσοῦν ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτῆς (17.4).

an angel: ἄλυσιν μεγάλην ἐπὶ τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ (20.1).

#### Background Material

'Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe' (Joel 3.13).

#### Discussion

In all instances of χεῖρ alone in the Apc it is never used of God or Jesus, although it is used in conjunction with δεξιός in the case of Jesus in 1.17. It is difficult to know whether this observation has any significance, but if it does then it is indicative of the figure being an angel.

Although there is no mention of the χεῖρ of the angel who has a sharp sickle (14.17-18) there are a number of parallels between this angel and 'one like a son of man' in 14.14.

First, both figures are spoken to in a similar way:

(to the son of man figure) πέμψον τὸ δρέπανόν σου καὶ θέρισον, ... (14.15).

(to the angel) πέμψον σου τὸ δρέπανον τὸ ὄξυ καὶ τρύγησον ... (14.18).

Secondly, both figures act similarly in response to their instructions:

(‘one like a son of man’) ἔβαλεν ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῆς νεφέλης τὸ δρέπανον αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ ἐθερίσθη ἡ γῆ (14.16).

(the angel) ἔβαλεν ὁ ἄγγελος τὸ δρέπανον αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν γῆν καὶ ἐτρύγησεν τὴν ἄμπελον τῆς γῆς ... (14.19).

In other words, ‘one like a son of man’ has a sickle in his hand, he is commanded to use it, and he uses it. All of which is replicated in the case of one of the angels who also feature in the vision. Clearly a functional similarity between ‘one like a son of man’ and an angel is consistent with the conclusion that the former is himself an angel. But, as we have seen in previous chapters, elsewhere in the Apc we find Jesus Christ functioning like an angel. In the next section we endeavour to resolve the ambiguity inherent in the description of the figure in 14.14.

### §9.2.1 Conclusion

We have investigated each part of the vision of the son of man figure in 14.14. No one aspect requires that the figure be identified in a particular way.

One important conclusion we can draw is that the form of the figure seems to be due to John’s own conception whatever sources may have influenced him. ‘One like a son of man’ in Dn 7.13 does not sit on a cloud holding a sickle nor does he wear a golden crown. No principal angel that we are aware of sits on a cloud holding a sickle. Conversely, we have been able with each aspect of 14.14 to find a fairly close parallel within the Apc itself. This suggests that 14.14 is a passage whose form and content has been shaped by John

himself whatever sources may lie behind it.

### §9.3 THE IDENTITY OF THE FIGURE IN APOCALYPSE 14.14

Many, indeed most commentators identify the figure as Jesus,<sup>50</sup> but a number do not, preferring to understand the figure as an angel.<sup>51</sup> Nothing we have discussed so far suggests that we look outside these two possibilities for the identity of the figure.<sup>52</sup> In what follows we examine the arguments for the figure as an angel and for the figure as Jesus Christ.

#### §9.3.1 The Figure is an Angel?

It is true that there is little in 14.14 which points clearly to the figure being an angel, since no angel in the Apc is described as seated on a cloud, as wearing a golden crown, or as ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου. However an angel does have a sickle (14.17), and 'cloud' is associated with an angel (10.1). The wearing of golden crowns by the elders (who are often understood as angelic creatures) suggests that there is no intrinsic problem with an angel wearing a golden crown. There are a number of examples outside the Apc of angels being described in similar terms to ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου (e.g. Dn 10.16, cf. discussion in §8.3.2).

Nevertheless the argument in favour of angelic identification faces this difficult question, What kind of angel would be depicted in such impressive terms as the son of man figure in Apc 14.14?

The obvious answer to this question is 'an angel of similar status to the mighty angel in Apc 10.1'.<sup>53</sup> This mighty angel, we may recall, was marked by theophanic imagery such as

<sup>50</sup>E.g., Charles, ii, 19; Lohse, 78; Prigent, 233; Scott, W., 305; Brutsch, ii, 180; Allo, 222; Farrar, 166-167; Holtz, *Christologie*, 129-130, Lohse, "Menschensohn", 85.

<sup>51</sup>E.g., Kraft, 197; Ritt, 77; Loisy, 273; Kiddle, 285; Coppens, "Mention", 229; Casey, *Son*, 148-149.

<sup>52</sup>We do not envisage God as a possible identity for the son of man figure on the grounds that in Apc 4.3 John takes the trouble to obscure the anthropomorphism of the being on the divine throne as portrayed in the original *merkabah* vision of Ezekiel (cf. Ezek 1.26-27). In Apc 14.14 the figure is unmistakably anthropomorphic and therefore unlikely to be a manifestation of God.

cloud and rainbow and christophanic imagery such as a sunlike face and fiery legs. The figure in 14.14 is also marked by theophanic (cf. 'seated on a white cloud', 14.14) and christophanic imagery (cf. 'like a son of man', 14.14). In particular, we could think of ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου as simply an element in the description of the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16 which has been selected to link the angel to Jesus in a similar manner to the sunlike face of the mighty angel in 10.1 (cf. 1.16). In other words ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου can be understood as a direct link to Jesus (and not just a general indicator that an angel is being described, *pace* Casey) but without the implication that the figure is thereby to be identified as Jesus.

But the mighty angel in 10.1 is noticeable for having christophanic characteristics which are *similar* but not *the same as* those of the risen Jesus. Both figures have a sunlike face, but different language is used in each case, as we have observed above. John links this angel to Jesus yet distinguishes him from Jesus. In 14.14 ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is exactly the same phrase used in 1.13 and thus the son of man figure is not clearly distinguished from Jesus.

Since John carefully designates majestic heavenly figures such as the one in 10.1 as an 'angel' it is curious that in 14.14 he fails to do this but offers the phrase ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου. In the context of the Apc, where the only other occurrence of this phrase refers to Jesus, the use of this phrase is misleading if the figure in 14.14 is an angel. Why not say that he saw an 'angel' seated on the cloud?

In sum: the son of man figure, despite similarity to an angel in function, and despite the fact that his description is consistent with his being an angel, is unlikely to be an angel (unless Jesus Christ is himself an angel).

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<sup>53</sup>Cf. Brütsch, ii, 182; Loisy, 273.

### §9.3.2 The Figure is Jesus?

While recognising that ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου does not necessitate the conclusion that the figure is Jesus Christ, the fact remains that (a) the only other occurrence of this expression in the Apc is in the description of the risen Jesus (1.13) and (b) no other heavenly figure is described as 'like a son of man', 'like a man' or similar (with the exception of the face of the third living creature, 4.6). The argument for the figure in 14.14 being Jesus begins from the fact that ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is also found in the description of the risen Christ in 1.13. It gathers strength from the observation made above that the introduction to the vision in 14.14 recalls the introductions to other visions of Jesus, particularly at the beginning of ch. 14. A key observation is that not only is the figure described as ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου but it is also seen sitting on a cloud. This association recalls Dn 7.13 - a text which, as we have seen, is applied by John to Jesus in Apc 1.7 and 1.13. In the light of this application it seems entirely reasonable to presume that when John saw the son of man figure seated on the white cloud he understood that he was seeing a vision of Jesus.<sup>54</sup>

Finally, the description of the figure as one seated on the cloud suggests that the cloud is a kind of throne. No angel in the Apc is described as seated on a throne. It is true that elders are seated on thrones (and have golden crowns) but there is no other reason to think that the figure is one of the elders. Jesus, however, has his own throne (3.21) so it seems reasonable to presume that he is the figure seen seated on the white cloud.

We must nevertheless consider at least three problems with the identification of the son of man figure in 14.14 with Jesus.

First, if the figure is Jesus, why is there not a further characteristic to make the conclusion sure? We noted above that in 19.11-16 there is more than one characteristic to link the Rider to earlier appearances of Jesus. Why then, if the figure in 14.14 is Jesus, do we not find one further characteristic to confirm this? A possible answer, however, is that although the figure is Jesus and not an angel, nevertheless John was not averse to portraying Jesus *as though he were an angel*. In other words, there is deliberate ambiguity in the

<sup>54</sup>Contrast with Casey, *Son*, 148-149.

description. We shall consider this possibility below.

The second and third problems have been clearly expressed by Morris in his commentary on the Apc.<sup>55</sup>

The second problem is that the command which is issued by the angel in 'rather peremptory terms' is difficult to reconcile with the identification of the son of man figure as Jesus. Morris recognises that the command could be understood as one which comes from God with the angel as 'no more than a messenger'. In the Gospels and in Acts Jesus does not know the time of the end which is the prerogative of the Father (e.g. Mk 8.32, Acts 1.7),<sup>56</sup> yet when due allowance is made for this it remains curious, according to Morris, that the exalted Christ is commanded in such a fashion as occurs in 14.15. In short: it is strange that Jesus should be commanded by an angel.

The third problem is that it is 'more than curious' that one who shares his Father's throne requires an angel to inform him of his Father's will. Ignorance on the part of the incarnate Jesus about the time of the end is explicable but ignorance on the part of the Lamb who is seen in the midst of the throne (7.17) is not.<sup>57</sup>

In sum: there are two connected problems: (a) the fact that if the figure is Jesus then he is ordered by an angel, (b) the content of the order suggests a certain ignorance on the part of Jesus. We will devote the next section to a solution to these two problems.

### §9.3.3 Towards A Solution

Morris' analysis, however, of the angel commanding the son of man figure contains within it the seeds of a reply to the point he makes.

In particular, the role of the angel as an intermediary is worth considering further. We noted above that a certain ambiguity hangs over the question of the speaker in Joel 3.13 (which

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<sup>55</sup>Morris, 184. Lohse, "Menschensohn", 87, makes much of the "göttliche Vollmacht" of the figure in 14.14, but offers no discussion of these problems.

<sup>56</sup>Cf. Beckwith, 663; Sweet, 186; Vos, *Synoptic*, 150.

<sup>57</sup>Morris, 184.



lies behind Apc 14.15). Is the speaker God or is it the prophet? Does 'Swing the sickle' amount to a command from God to Judah to act in judgement on his behalf or to a request from Judah through the prophet to God to carry out his judgement? If Joel 3.13 was interpreted in the latter way then the angel in Apc 14.15 could be understood not as a messenger from God but as a messenger from the believers. That is, the angel, who 'comes from the temple', brings a request from struggling Christians for the judgement to begin. In this regard it is interesting that the first two angels in 14.15-20 come from the 'temple' and the third from the 'altar'. For it is at the altar that the 'prayers of the saints' are offered up by an angel to God (8.3-4).<sup>58</sup> It is true that this interpretation still leaves us with an angel commanding Jesus but the difficulty is lessened because that angel is no longer an intermediary between God and Jesus with the impression given that Jesus is subordinate to both.

Since Joel 3.13 is ambiguous we must consider the alternative interpretation, that the angel is a messenger of God and delivers a *command* to an apparently *ignorant* Jesus Christ?<sup>59</sup> The explanation that the situation here is akin to those occasions in the gospels and in Acts when Jesus states that not even he knows the time of the end has been rightly questioned by Morris. The command is given in a manner which begs the question, would the exalted Jesus be spoken to in that way? The apparent ignorance of Jesus begs the question, would the heavenly Jesus - the intimate of the divine throne - not be privy to his Father's will?

An explanation for the angel issuing a divine command to Jesus, however, is readily available. By giving an angel this role rather than (say) simply having God command Jesus (cf. 16.1,17), John provides a role for an angel so that the number of angels in 14.6-20 reaches six, and the number of heavenly beings becomes a group of seven. In this role the angel could be understood as an alternative to the hypostatic voice of God.<sup>60</sup>

The problem of the preremptory character of the command is perhaps best explained as a matter of style. The angel's words are what they are because they follow the model provided in Joel 3.13. From a literary critical perspective the sharpness of the command could be also

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<sup>58</sup>Cf. Allo, 222-223.

<sup>59</sup>Cf. Prigent, 233-234.

<sup>60</sup>Holtz, *Christologie*, 132-133; but disputed by Müller, *Messias*, 190; cf. Ford, 246.

understood as a device to attract the reader's attention. The point of the command is not to galvanise 'one like a son of man' into action but to alert the reader to the imminence of the harvest.<sup>61</sup>

The major problem, however, is the apparent ignorance of Jesus as to the time of harvest. The important observation to make is that although the apparent ignorance concerns the time of the harvest (cf. ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα θερίσαι, v.15) the time is itself linked to the *readiness* of the crop to be harvested (cf. ὅτι ἐξηράνθη ὁ θερισμὸς τῆς γῆς, v. 15). The use of ἐξηράνθη is interesting because it conveys the idea of fruit or grain on the verge withering, that is, it signifies 'that the precise moment has come for reaping'.<sup>62</sup> We suggest that the time of the harvest is not envisaged as a fixed point in history which God has known ahead of time, but a time which depends on various factors.<sup>63</sup> That is, factors which affect the ripening process of the harvest. We do not propose to develop this point in detail but we offer as a supporting observation the response to the cry of the souls under the altar in Apc 6.9-11. When the souls cry out 'how long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?' (v.9) the answer is reported as follows:

'They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number would be complete both of their fellow servants and of their brothers and sisters who were soon to be killed as they themselves had been killed' (v.11).

Here the time of the judgement on the inhabitants of the earth depends on a certain number of martyrs being attained. That is, the judgement is dependent on human factors such as the level of the intensity with which the persecution of Christians is pursued. We suggest, therefore, that in 14.15 a similar situation prevails. The ripening of the harvest is contingent on the action of human agents of the beast. This raises the possibility that Jesus' ignorance could be explained in terms of his absence from heaven when it becomes known that the number is complete, that is, that the harvest is ripe. It follows that Jesus' ignorance of the time for harvest need not pose a problem along the lines of 'how can one so close to God not know the mind of God'. Rather, Jesus' ignorance can be understood as due to his being separated from God at the point at which God concludes that the harvest

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<sup>61</sup>The author is indebted to Dr. A.J.M. Wedderburn, Durham, for this point.

<sup>62</sup>Swete, 186.

<sup>63</sup>Cf. Swete, 186.

should be cut.

Apc 14.14-16 appears to be just such an occasion. Jesus as the son of man figure is clearly in closer proximity to earth than to heaven. On the one hand the angel comes from the 'temple', that is, heaven,<sup>64</sup> which implies that Jesus is no longer there, and on the other hand Jesus is close enough to earth to reap it with his sickle.<sup>65</sup>

To sum up: the solution to the problem of Jesus' apparent ignorance lies in understanding Jesus to be actually separate from the divine throne at this point. So long as this separation is understood as *temporary* there is no contradiction between the general assumption in the Apc that Jesus Christ is associated with God 'in the midst of' the divine throne and the particular event in which an ignorant Jesus is commanded by an angel. Since the knowledge of the time for harvest is *contingent* on human factors (relating to the suffering inflicted upon the church) the ignorance of Jesus is understandable. In 14.14 the situation of Jesus is analogous to that of a commando dropped behind enemy lines awaiting the final order to proceed with his mission - a final order which depends on the assessment of data received back in HQ. Accordingly 14.15 is the account of the passing on of this order.

#### §9.3.4 Conclusion

The difficulties with identifying 'one like a son of man' in Apc 14.14 with Jesus Christ are not insuperable and this identification is to be preferred to that in which 'one like a son of man' is an angel. Nevertheless 'one like a son of man' has a number of angelic characteristics.

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<sup>64</sup>Beckwith, 663.

<sup>65</sup>Minear, "Cosmology" (1962) does not deal with the relation between heaven and earth which is presupposed here; we do not see that his important study on the cosmology of the Apc rules out our explanation.

## §9.4 THE ANGELOMORPHIC JESUS IN APOCALYPSE 14.14

In the previous chapter we argued that Jesus *temporarily assumes the form of an angel* when he is seen by John at the beginning of the narrative. With respect to Apc 14.14 we have observed that there are a number of features which suggest that although distinct from the angels, 'one like a son of man' is presented as though he were an angel.

First, 'one like a son of man' appears in the middle of a series of six angels, making in all a series of seven heavenly beings. Secondly, he is succeeded by an angel described as ἄλλος ἄγγελος (14.15) which gives the impression that Jesus is an angel.<sup>66</sup> Thirdly, he performs a similar function to one of the angels. Fourthly, his appearance as 'one like a son of man' is similar to angels and angelomorphic figures in other apocalyptic literature. Fifthly, the wearing of a crown recalls the appearance of the elders who, if not angels, are angelomorphic creatures.

One response to this presentation of Jesus has been to recognise that there are 'traces of an angel-christology' here.<sup>67</sup> Bauckham suggests that Apc 14.14f '*seems* to imply that Christ can be called an angel'. But he argues that this has been 'reduced to relative insignificance by the sharp theological distinction between Christ and angels'.<sup>68</sup> It is true that there is a distinction between Jesus Christ and the angels in the Apc inasmuch as angels offer praise to the Lamb in heavenly worship (5.9-12) whereas worship offered to angels in heaven is absent and human attempts to worship an angel are vigorously rejected (19.10, 22.9).

Nevertheless Bauckham's point assumes that the distinction between Christ and the angels is continuous throughout the narrative. We have argued above that 14.14 represents a change in the situation of Jesus. He is separate from the divine throne. He seems to require direction through an angel. It is possible, therefore that the distinction between Christ and the angels is less than 'sharp' at this point. That is, the angelic Jesus in 14.14-20 is more closely aligned with the angels than with God. We suggest that in 14.14-20 we see Jesus

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<sup>66</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 338 n.42. Giblin, *Revelation*, 143.

<sup>67</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 338 n.42.

<sup>68</sup>Bauckham, "Worship", 338 n.42.

taking up angelic form and serving alongside angels because this is how John envisages Jesus Christ manifesting himself. It is not that Jesus is an angel in his nature (and thus we might speak of a 'fullblown' angel christology) but that Jesus *temporarily* adopts angelic form for the purposes of action towards humanity and takes his place alongside angels rather than over and above them. In other words we suggest that if 14.14-15 bears 'traces' of an angel christology then we have to do with traces of a *dispensational* angel christology.

Karrer develops the remark of Bauckham cited above. He sees Jesus Christ portrayed 'in angelophaner Tradition' but more pithily than in Apc 1.13-16. He sees a further difference between 1.13-16 and 14.14: in the latter the appearance of Jesus is integrated into a series of angels. Both 1.13-16 and 14.14 have been formulated 'unter dem Einfluß einer entstehenden Engelchristologie'. This emerging angel christology at a later point is witnessed to, e.g., by Justin, *Apol.* i.63, *Dial.* 127.4. There is some evidence that it remained an influence in Asia Minor for some time.<sup>69</sup> Karrer further points out that John does not shun 'Archontenterminologie' (cf. Apc 1.5a), which was later rejected by the church because of its angelological tradition. Also, in Apc 1.1 there is 'eine subordinatianische Komponente' in the christology because God gives the revelation to Jesus Christ. Yet the 'Tendenz' of the christology of the Apc is not towards subordination but to 'Gleichordnung und mehr noch die Identifizierung Jesu Christi als Gottes Sohn mit Gott selbst'. In the Apc, according to Karrer, we run into an early stage in christological development when the tension between the status of Jesus and the maintenance of monotheism is not yet resolved.<sup>70</sup>

With much of this analysis we are in agreement. But we question whether it is most accurate to speak of the influence of an emerging angel christology behind 1.13-16 and 14.14. Our study of 1.13-16 has suggested that John takes up a 'typical' description of an exalted angel and applies it to the risen Jesus. Our study of 14.14 has suggested that John may have drawn on both Danielic material and imagery already woven into the fabric of his visions to create a picture of Jesus which is characteristically John's own. In other words the influence on these two passages may well be the developing angelology of Jewish apocalyptic traditions rather than an emerging angel christology in Christian circles. That is,

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<sup>69</sup>So Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung*, 148 n.45.

<sup>70</sup>Karrer, *Johannesoffenbarung*, 147-149.

the Apc may represent the beginning of angel christology, at least in Asia Minor, rather than representing a stage in the development of an already existing angel christology. If this is so then John has anticipated the later dispensational angel christology of Origen.

Another response to 14.14 worth noting has been made by Giblin who suggests that although the son of man figure is Jesus Christ, he appears 'as an "angel".' One reason for regarding Jesus as an angel is that 'he is God's special emissary in judging mankind'. But Giblin then suggests that a more likely explanation lies in the idea of "distancing". That is, apocalyptic language distinguishes between the reality of a person and the representation of a person. John 'sees' Jesus Christ, a real person, yet does not, in 14.14, see him as he really is: what he sees is Jesus present *in a vision*, a representation of Jesus. Giblin does not say much more than this but we presume he means that Jesus appearing to be an angel in a vision is not to be taken as evidence that Jesus *is* an angel in his real nature.<sup>71</sup>

This explanation accords with ours inasmuch as it is compatible with the idea that Jesus *temporarily* appears like an angel.

## §9.5 CONCLUSION

We have argued that 'one like a son of man' in Apc 14.14 is an appearance of Jesus Christ. The identification is not without difficulties, but the difficulties can be resolved if we understand that this appearance of Jesus involves a *temporary* separation from the divine throne and the *temporary* assumption of angelic form and function. In other words, the portrayal of Jesus Christ in 14.14 is considerably influenced by angelology. In form and function Jesus is like the angels. He appears as a seventh angelic figure in a series of seven such figures.

We suggest that it is preferable to understand Apc 14.14 as a portrayal of Jesus Christ influenced by angelology which anticipates later developments in angel christology rather than as a portrayal which reflects existing developments in angel christology.

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<sup>71</sup>Giblin, *Revelation*, 143.

## CHAPTER TEN

# THE RIDER IN APOCALYPSE 19.11-16

### §10.1 INTRODUCTION

In Apc 19.11-16 we have a vision of a heavenly rider whose appearance suggests that he is identical to the figure in the christophany in Apc 1.13-16. Many details in this vision are quite different from that of the christophany. Consequently we have some reason for thinking that reflection on this vision might extend our discussion of the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc. We first of all cite Apc 19.11-16 and then discuss a number of preliminary issues before examining four features which show definite signs of angelological influence.

Καὶ εἶδον τὸν οὐρανὸν ἠνεωγμένον, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἵππος λευκὸς καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπ' αὐτὸν [καλούμενος] πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός, καὶ ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ κρίνει καὶ πολεμεῖ. 12 οἱ δὲ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ [ὡς] φλόξ πυρός, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ διαδήματα πολλά, ἔχων ὄνομα γεγραμμένον ὃ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ αὐτός, 13 καὶ περιβεβλημένος ἱμάτιον βεβαμμένον αἵματι, καὶ κέκληται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ. 14 Καὶ τὰ στρατεύματα [τὰ] ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ ἐφ' ἵπποις λευκοῖς, ἐνδεδυμένοι βύσσινον λευκὸν καθαρὸν. 15 καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ἐκπορεύεται ῥομφαία ὀξεῖα, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῇ πατάξῃ τὰ ἔθνη, καὶ αὐτὸς ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥαβδῷ σιδηρᾷ καὶ αὐτὸς πατεῖ τὴν ληνὸν τοῦ οἴου τοῦ θυμοῦ τῆς οργῆς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ παντοκράτορος, 16 καὶ ἔχει ἐπὶ τὸ ἱμάτιον καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν μηρὸν αὐτοῦ ὄνομα γεγραμμένον· Βασιλεὺς βασιλέων καὶ κύριος κυρίων (Apc 19.11-16).

#### §10.1.1 The Identity of the Rider

The Rider of the white horse is certainly Jesus Christ. First, we find the Rider 'called Faithful and True' (καλούμενος πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός, 19.11), which recalls the description of Jesus Christ as 'the faithful witness' (ὁ μάρτυς, ὁ πιστός, 1.5), and 'the faithful and true

witness' (ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός, 3.14).

Secondly, his eyes resemble those of the exalted Jesus who appears to John in the earlier christophany (οἱ δὲ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρός, 19.12; οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρός, 1.14, cf. 2.18).

Thirdly, the sword in the mouth of the Rider also draws on the earlier appearance of the risen Jesus (καὶ ἐκ στόματος αὐτοῦ ἐκπορεύεται ῥομφαία ὀξεῖα, 19.15; καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ῥομφαία δίστομος ὀξεῖα ἐκπορευομένη, 1.16, cf. 2.12).

Fourthly, the allusion to Ps 2.9 in Apc 19.15 (ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ) corresponds to a similar allusion made (a) by Jesus about himself (ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ ὡς τὰ σκεύη τὰ κεραμικὰ συντρίβεται, 2.26-28) and (b) in the vision of the woman who bears a son (ὅς μέλλει ποιμαίνειν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ, 12.5).

Finally, the Rider bears the name, 'King of kings and Lord of lords' (ἐπὶ τὸν μηρὸν αὐτοῦ ὄνομα γεγραμμένον· Βασιλεὺς βασιλέων καὶ κύριος κυρίων, 19.16), which mirrors the description of (Jesus) the Lamb (τὸ ἀρνίον νικήσει αὐτούς, ὅτι κύριος κυρίων ἐστὶν καὶ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων, 17.14).<sup>1</sup>

### §10.1.2 Text Critical Issues

A number of text critical issues are raised by this passage. But for our purposes only one is significant, namely the question of whether or not βεβαμμένον is the correct reading in 19.13:

καὶ περιβεβλημένος ἱμάτιον βεβαμμένον αἵματι.

Both N-A<sup>26</sup> and UBS<sup>3</sup> read βεβαμμένον in the main body of the text.<sup>2</sup> That is, the Rider wears a robe 'dipped' or 'washed' or even 'dyed'<sup>3</sup> in or with blood. In the apparatus to these

<sup>1</sup>So Lohse, 93; Allo, 279; Prigent, 291.

<sup>2</sup>N-A<sup>26</sup> cites as witnesses A 051 1R.



editions variants to βεβαμμένον stemming from the verbs ραίνω and ραντίζω (both meaning 'I sprinkle') are listed.

Thus, N-A<sup>26</sup>/UBS<sup>3</sup> list:

ῥεράντισμένον, P (1006.1841).2329 *al*;  
περιρεραμμένον, **N**<sup>(2)</sup>;  
ἔρραμμένον, (1611).2053.2062;

in addition UBS<sup>3</sup> cites:

ῥεραμμένον, 1611, Origen;  
περιρεραντισμένον, **N**<sup>C</sup> syr<sup>ph</sup>? Cyprian;  
ἔρραντισμένον, 172.256.792.911.

Some scholars have argued that βεβαμμένον is not a convincing choice.<sup>4</sup> On the one hand βεβαμμένον could be a copyist's error from ῥεραμμένον which itself might be original (all other variants could plausibly stem from this)<sup>5</sup> or a variant of one of the forms of ραίνω and ραντίζω. On the other hand the undoubted influence of Is 63.3 on Apc 19.13 suggests that βεβαμμένον is unlikely to be original since the underlying verb פתן is rendered in the LXX by ραίνω or ραντίζω, but never by βάπτω.

Curiously Is 63.3 LXX itself does not use either ραίνω or ραντίζω and in fact is a rather free translation of

וַיִּזְנוּ עַל־בִּגְדֵי וְכָל־מַלְבָּשֵׁי אֲנָאִתִּי (their juice spattered on my garment and stained all my clothes), thus:

καὶ κατέθλασα αὐτοὺς ὡς γῆν καὶ κατήγαγον τὸ αἷμα αὐτῶν εἰς γῆν.

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<sup>3</sup>BAG, 132-133.

<sup>4</sup>E.g. Kraft, 249; Swete, 248.

<sup>5</sup>Swete, 248; cf. Westcott and Hort, *New Testament*, ii, 139 (= Appendix), who argue that 'all variations are easily accounted for if the form used was ῥεραμμένον'.

In some MSS associated with the (so-called) Lucianic recension, however, we find ἐρραντίσθη is used. But even if John was familiar with the idea that βάπτω was an inappropriate verb with which to translate הני, it does not follow that he felt constrained not to use βάπτω. John in a number of places exercises freedom in his use of sources. He does not merely adopt his sources; he also adapts them.<sup>6</sup> Βεβαμμένον is a word which carries definite Christian connotations. It is conjugated from βάπτω which is a cognate of βαπτίζω. The noun associated with the latter verb, βάπτισμα, is employed in the gospels as an allusion to the Cross (Mk 10.38, Lk 12.50). Thus it is possible, as some scholars have observed, that John, by virtue of his choice of vocabulary,<sup>7</sup> deliberately alludes to the death of Jesus on the Cross.<sup>8</sup>

Alternatively, Prigent has pointed out that βεβαμμένον may reflect the influence of the PTg of Gn 49.11,<sup>9</sup> a passage which in turn has been influenced by Is 63.3.<sup>10</sup> In *Tg. Yer. II* and *Tg. Neof.* a warrior figure is described whose clothes are 'soaked in the blood' (לבושוי מעגעגין באדמה).<sup>11</sup>

We need not go into the complex question of whether the PTg witnesses to a reading of the text which dates from the first century CE or earlier.<sup>12</sup> The relevant point here is that the PTg reminds us that someone like John, who was undoubtedly familiar with synagogue

<sup>6</sup>Charles, ii, 133-134. Rissi, *Future*, 24, argues for a minimal influence of Is 63.1-3 in 19.13-15.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Ford, 321.

<sup>8</sup>Hanson, *Wrath*, 176; Sweet, 232, 282. Rissi, *Future*, 24. Cf. Boring, 196: 'This view that the eschatological Divine Warrior is red with his own blood rather than that of his enemies ..... is analogous to the idea that Christians wash their garments and make them white in the blood of the Lamb (7.14)'. Swete, 249, '[John] could hardly have failed to think also of the blood of the Lamb'.

<sup>9</sup>Note that Gn 49.9 is in the background to Apc 5.5, and Gn 49.11 is behind Apc 7.14, so that John's familiarity with Gn 49 is not in doubt even if his familiarity with the Targum(s) to Gn 49 may be questioned.

<sup>10</sup>Prigent, 294-295. Cf. McNamara, *New Testament*, 232; Grelot, "L'exégèse", 374-381.

<sup>11</sup>According to Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 1042: "rolled in blood"; and according to Sokoloff, *Dictionary*, 395: "soiled with blood". The author is grateful to Dr. Robert Hayward, Durham, for his clarification of various matters concerning this phrase.

<sup>12</sup>McNamara argues for the PTg reflecting, for the most part, traditions which date from the early Christian and pre-Christian eras. One reason adduced for this is the apparent witness of the NT to the antiquity of these traditions and within the NT a major witness is the Apc (e.g. *New Testament*, 189-237.) More recently, Syrén, *Blessings*, 105 n.116 has questioned McNamara's thesis, and specifically commented on the latter's work on Apc 19: 'whether the relationship is actually one of dependence on the PTs on the part of Rev. 19, as McNamara rather unreflectedly maintains, is a question not so easily answered'.

practice (cf. Apc 2.9, 3.9), could well have been influenced not only by the Hebrew text of the OT, but also by the kinds of interpretations which eventually became encapsulated in the Targums. Thus we need not suppose that the only *Vorlage* for Apc 19.13 was provided by Is 63.3. It is quite possible that an interpretative reading of Gn 49.11 was also in the background and that as a consequence the (unexpected) use of βεβαμμένον is to be explained by this.<sup>13</sup>

As far as the suggestion that βεβαμμένον is an error for ῥεραμμένον is concerned we can only note that the latter is scarcely supported by as strong support from the textual witnesses as the former enjoys. Moreover, from an original verb stemming from ῥαίνω or ῥαντίζω there are no texts which suggest reasons for changing it to βεβαμμένον. Conversely, it is quite plausible to explain the variants cited in the apparati as natural attempts to correct βεβαμμένον in the light of Is 63.3.<sup>14</sup>

In sum: there is no reason to overturn the judgement of the editors of N-A<sup>26</sup> and UBS<sup>3</sup> that βεβαμμένον was found in the original text of Apc 19.13. Later in this chapter we shall explore the possible significance of the use of this word.

### §10.1.3 The Interpretation of the Blood Imagery

A related issue is the question of the meaning of the phrase βεβαμμένον αἷματι. It has been argued that the blood stems from the enemies of God and the Rider,<sup>15</sup> from the martyr deaths of the Rider's followers,<sup>16</sup> from the Rider himself,<sup>17</sup> from the enemies and

<sup>13</sup>That is, as a translation of גגג, to roll.

<sup>14</sup>Charles, ii, 133-134; cf. Metzger, *Textual*, 761-762; Bousset, 431 n2, who argues that βεβαμμένον became ῥεραμμένον by a scribal error, and the other variants are then corrections of ῥεραμμένον.

<sup>15</sup>E.g. Charles, ii, 133; Beckwith, 733; Kraft, 249; Bousset, 431; Holtz, *Christologie*, 172; Prigent, 295. Note that "Edom" (Is 63.1) was a code word for Rome in some first century CE circles: see, e.g., 4 Ezra 6.8-10; cf. Hunzinger, "Babylon", 69-71, and Grelot, "L'exégèse", 373. Charles', ii, 133, explanation that the blood belongs to the Parthian kings and their armies (cf. Apc 17.14) is not sustainable. There is no necessary connection between 17.14 and the Parthians; further, if 17.14 is fulfilled anywhere in the Apc then it is in Apc 19.11-21 (so Caird, 243; cf. Hanson, *Wrath*, 175, "This is a desperate expedient!").

<sup>16</sup>E.g. Caird, 242-244.

<sup>17</sup>E.g. Sweet, 283; Brüttsch, ii, 302; Farrar, 197; Rissi, "Erscheinung", 89; cf. Swete, 248-249.

from the Rider,<sup>18</sup> and from both the followers and the Rider.<sup>19</sup> Finally, there is the view of Lohmeyer that the blood simply acts as a sign of victory, so that it is not necessary to ask whence it came.<sup>20</sup>

We cannot here enter into a detailed attempt to resolve this issue which is relevant but not vital to our subsequent discussion in this chapter. We would suggest, however, that in view of the wide range of solutions offered, and in view of the fact that no consensus seems about to be reached, that consideration be given to the possibility that βεβαμμένον αἷματι is a multivalent image that incorporates all the above suggestions. That is, βεβαμμένον αἷματι alludes to the blood of the slain Lamb,<sup>21</sup> to the blood of the enemies of the Rider (either looking backwards to Apc 14.20<sup>22</sup> or forwards to the slaughter envisaged in 19.17-20 or both),<sup>23</sup> to the blood of the martyrs,<sup>24</sup> and symbolises the victory of the Rider.

These suggestions are by no means the limit of what the bloodied robe alludes to. It is conceivable, for example, that the robe, which must have been reminiscent of the purple robes of imperial office,<sup>25</sup> also symbolised the Rider's kingly status, along with the diadems

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<sup>18</sup>E.g. Allo, 280.

<sup>19</sup>Boring, 196, emphasises the blood as the Rider's own, but also says, "In contrast to the divine warrior of Isaiah 63.1-3, the source for this imagery, this blood is not the blood of his enemies but his own martyr blood in union with the martyr blood of his followers who, like him, have suffered/testified at the hands of Rome."

<sup>20</sup>Lohmeyer, 155.

<sup>21</sup>Charles, ii, 133, argues that the Rider is the Slayer not the Slain, but overlooks the explicit link between the Rider and the Lamb (19.16, cf. 17.14), and the fact that the Lamb is a wrathful figure (6.16-17, cf. 19.15).

<sup>22</sup>Space does not permit discussion of the identity of the treader of the vintage in 14.20. That it is Jesus is argued by, e.g., Bauckham, *Theology*, 97. Caird, 242-244, interprets 14.18-20 as "a profound disclosure about the great martyrdom", and hence suggests that the blood stains are "the indelible traces of the death of [the horseman's] followers." But Apc 14.18-20 is most naturally read as an account of the slaying of God's enemies (cf. Yarbro Collins, *Combat*, 37). The enigmatic phrase "outside the city" (14.20) recalls the crucifixion of Jesus (cf. Heb 13.12-13) and hence is suggestive of martyrdom, but it does not require the interpretation Caird proposes since it could, for example, be meant ironically: God's enemies are killed in the same location as God's son.

<sup>23</sup>Cf. Rissi, *Future*, 24, who draws attention to the difficulty that the bloodied garment is seen *before* the Rider slaughters the enemies; but Beckwith, 733, had already solved this problem.

<sup>24</sup>Cf. Boring, 196-197. Note also the references to the blood of the martyrs in passages preceding Ac 19.11-16: Apc 16.6, 17.6, 18.24, 19.2. It is reasonable to suppose that the Rider who come in judgement (19.11) comes to avenge this blood (cf. 19.2).

<sup>25</sup>Caird, 213.

(19.12) and the name 'King of kings and Lord of lords' (19.16).

#### §10.1.4 Possible Interpolations In Apocalypse 19.12 and 19.13

Later in this chapter we will reflect on the angelological associations of the 'secret name' (19.12) and the '*Logos*-name' (19.13). Here we consider briefly the suggestions that (a) the *Logos*-name is an addition to the text by an unknown hand in an attempt to solve the mystery of the secret name,<sup>26</sup> and that (b) on stylistic and exegetical grounds the secret name is an interpolation.<sup>27</sup> We will address these two matters in turn.

##### The *Logos*-Name: An Interpolation?

There is, in fact, good cause to presume that the clause, καὶ κέκληται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (Apc 19.13), is germane to the whole passage. First, there is no text-critical reason to presume that the clause containing the *Logos*-name has been interpolated. Secondly, it is possible to think of reasons other than explanation of the unknown name to account for the employment of the *Logos*-name. We will elaborate on this below, but it suffices for now to simply draw attention to the appropriateness of the *Logos*-name for Jesus Christ as the one who reveals the truth of God.

##### The secret name: an interpolation?

Charles has made three observations to support the notion that the clause which contains this name, ἔχων ὄνομα γεγραμμένον ὃ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ αὐτός (Apc 19.12), is an interpolation:

- (i) the clause represents an unnatural intrusion in the description of the Rider,
- (ii) the parallelism of the verse is restored when the clause is omitted,
- (iii) it contradicts the statement in 19.13 about a known name (i.e. the *Logos*-name).

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<sup>26</sup>E.g. Bousset, 431; cf. Charles, ii, 134.

<sup>27</sup>E.g. Charles, ii, 132-133.

(i) and (ii) are fair observations. First, the reference to the secret name interrupts a descriptive series which, *without* this name, runs through the items *eyes, head, clothing, name* (i.e. the *Logos*-name). Secondly, the clause in which this name occurs begins with ἔχων and not καὶ, unlike each of the other clauses; and when this clause is omitted the remaining clauses exhibit a certain parallelism as Charles demonstrates.

Yet neither of these observations prove that the clause in which the secret name occurs is an interpolation. They simply highlight the awkwardness of the composition of the Rider's description.

Furthermore, there is no text-critical reason to suppose that this clause did not belong to the original text of the Apc. Although there is a textual variant involved within the clause itself this does not imply that the clause as a whole is an interpolation. In fact this variant offers supporting evidence for the originality of the clause. Thus instead of the majority reading,

ἔχων ὄνομα γεγραμμένον ὃ οὐδεις οἶδεν εἰ μὴ αὐτός καὶ,

some witnesses have

ἔχων ὀνόματα γεγραμμένα καὶ.<sup>28</sup>

The latter reading then links the *name* motif to the description of the head so that the Rider's head 'has many crowns having names written (on them)'. The intrusive element introduced by the secret name is removed by submerging reference to 'names' into the description of the *head*, and its mystery is dissolved by omission of ὃ οὐδεις οἶδεν εἰ μὴ αὐτός. The textual variant, then, has every appearance of being precisely the kind of correction which later scribes, uncomfortable with the awkwardness of the original clause, would make in order to make the text both more intelligible and stylistically coherent.

Charles' third objection, that the secret name is contradicted by the disclosure in the next verse of the *Logos*-name is most unsatisfactory. This objection implies that the Rider can

<sup>28</sup>Witnesses to this variant reading include 1006.1841.1854.2030 ƆR<sup>K</sup> syh.

have only one name. Yet even without the unknown name or the *Logos*-name the Rider has more than one name (cf. 19.11,16). There is no good reason why the Rider should not have one secret name in addition to having three disclosed names.<sup>29</sup>

On the positive side of the argument for the clause's originality is the fact that the idea of a secret name for Jesus Christ is not unknown in contemporary apocalypses.<sup>30</sup>

In sum: there seems to be no reason to overturn the judgement of modern editions of the Greek NT which retain the clauses in which the secret name and the *Logos*-name feature in Apc 19.12-13.

### **§10.1.5 The Non-Angelic Characteristics of the Rider**

In our investigations into the appearance of Jesus Christ in Apc 1.13-16 and 14.14 we found that most of the descriptions given corresponded to descriptions of angels or angelomorphic figures either in the Apc itself or in other apocalyptic literature and related writings. In Apc 19.11-16 this situation does not prevail. A number of elements in the description of Jesus the Rider admit of no particular angelological influence. These elements include: being called Faithful and True and coming to judge and make war in righteousness (19.11), the blood-stained robe (19.13), trampling the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God, striking down the nations, having a sharp sword in the mouth, and, ruling the nations with an iron rod (19.15). Most if not all of these details reflect the influence of texts, often characterized as 'messianic', which look forward to the coming of a human agent of the divine purposes (e.g., Ps 2.9, Is11.4, 49.2, 63.1-3).

### **§10.1.6 Angelological Influence on the Description of the Rider**

Our present concern, however, has to do with angelological influence on the portrayal of Jesus Christ in Apc 19.11-16. We have already observed that a number of features of the portrayal serve to identify the Rider with portrayals of Jesus Christ elsewhere in the Apc. In

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<sup>29</sup>Cf. Philo, *De Conf.*, 146, "[The Word] has many names, "The Beginning," and the Name of God, and the Word and the Man according to his image, and "the one who sees," that is, Israel."

<sup>30</sup>E.g. *Asc. Is.* 9.5: "... the Lord Christ, who will in the world be called Jesus; but his name you cannot hear until you have left your body".

particular, two aspects of the description link the Rider to 'one like a son of man' in Apc 1.13-16. Thus,

(i) οἱ δὲ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ [ὡς] φλόξ πυρός, 19.12;

cf. καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρός, 1.14.

(ii) καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ἐκπορεύεται ῥομφαία ὀξεῖα, 19.15;

cf. καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ῥομφαία δίστομος ὀξεῖα ἐκπορευομένη, 1.16.

The first detail stands firmly, as we have seen, in the tradition of the glorious principal angel, while the second detail underlines the messianic character of Jesus. Unlike the vision of the exalted Jesus in Apc 1.13-16 we are told little about the physical form of the Rider. It is possible of course that the two details provided which recall the earlier vision are meant to imply that all the other features described there are also present here. There is nothing in 19.11-16 which rules this possibility out. There is simply nothing said, for example, about the wearing of a belt, the colour of the hair, and the appearance of the face.

Admittedly, there is a difference with respect to the wearing of a robe. Apc 1.13 has ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη, while 19.12 has περιβεβλημένος ἱμάτιον. But these two descriptions are not necessarily contradictory. They could in fact be complementary descriptions with ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη referring to an inner garment and περιβεβλημένος ἱμάτιον referring to an outer cloak.

Although there is little resemblance in appearance between Jesus as 'one like a son of man' (14.14-16) and Jesus as the Rider (19.11-16) it is interesting to compare the opening to each vision:



Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοὺ νεφέλη λευκή, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν νεφέλην καθήμενον ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου ... (Apc 14.14).

Καὶ εἶδον τὸν οὐρανὸν ἠνεωγμένον, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἵππος λευκὸς καὶ καθήμενος ἐπ' αὐτὸν [καλούμενος] ... (Apc 19.11).

Essentially the introduction to each vision is the same (καὶ εἶδον ... καὶ ἰδοὺ) and the initial object seen has the same colour (λευκός). In each case the figure seated on the white object is Jesus Christ.

Thus the Rider is essentially the same angelomorphic figure who appears in Apc 1.13-16 and 14.14. What is then of interest are at least four features of the Rider which are not found in either of the previous visions but which, as we shall demonstrate, suggest that yet more angelological material has influenced the portrayal of Jesus Christ in the Apc.

The four features which we will consider are:

- (i) Jesus as a rider on a horse,
- (ii) leadership of the heavenly armies,
- (iii) the secret name,
- (iv) the *Logos* -name.

## §10.2 JESUS CHRIST AS A RIDER ON A HORSE

Καὶ εἶδον τὸν οὐρανὸν ἠνεωγμένον, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἵππος λευκὸς καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπ' αὐτὸν ... (Apc 19.11).

It is noticeable that none of the 'messianic' texts influential on this vision such as Gn 49.11, Ps 2.9, Is 11.4, 49.2, 63.1-3 depict a figure riding a horse into battle. Indeed Is 63.1-3 specifically envisages a figure '*marching* in his great might'. Gn 49.11 mentions the foal and the donkey's colt of Judah, but there is no reference to their employment in battle. In the Gospels Jesus is shown entering Jerusalem on horseback (Mt 21.1-11, *par.*). But in this story Jesus is not depicted as a warrior, indeed the fact that he was described as riding a donkey suggests that, in the view of the evangelists, he came as an envoy of peace rather than as an instigator of war.<sup>31</sup>

In the first instance the appearance of the Rider on a white horse directly recalls the appearance of the rider on a white horse in Apc 6.2.

ἰδοὺ ἵππος λευκός, καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἔχων ..., 19.11.

ἰδοὺ ἵππος λευκός καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπ' αὐτὸν [καλούμενος] ..., 6.2.

Whether we recognise the first rider as an appearance of Jesus Christ, or as an appearance of the anti-Christ, matters little for the present purpose.<sup>32</sup> The resemblance between the two riders suggests that the background to Apc 6.2 is also the background to Apc 19.11, even if the background material has been applied in different ways. In particular the coloured horses of Zech 1.8 and 6.1-8 appear to have contributed to the vision in Apc 6.1-8, and there is no reason to suppose that they are not also in the background to 19.11-16.<sup>33</sup> It is striking, however, to note that with one exception no riders are mentioned in Zech 1.8 and 6.1-8, so that the horses are not explicitly viewed as the conveyances of angels.<sup>34</sup> The exception is, of course, the reference in Zech 1.8 to 'a man riding on a red

<sup>31</sup>Michel, "ἵππος", 337.

<sup>32</sup>Contrast (e.g.) Rissi, "Rider", 416 [anti-Christ], with Sweet, 137-138 [Christ].

<sup>33</sup>Cf. Charles, ii, 131.

<sup>34</sup>Swete, 84, says that John has borrowed 'only the symbol of the horses and their colours'.

horse'. We have already raised the possibility that the 'man', also described as the 'angel of Yahweh' lies in the background to the beginning of the vision of 'one like a son of man' in Apc 1.12-13. The description of this angel could, at best, have only been slightly influential in the vision recorded in Apc 19.11-16. For, (a) the colour of the horse is changed, 'red' to 'white', and (b) in Zechariah the angel does not lead an army into battle. Given that Zechariah was a book which made an important contribution to the development of the visions of the Apc it seems reasonable to presume that Jesus as a rider on a white horse reflects at least the partial influence of the visions of coloured horses in Zech 1.18 and 6.1-8.

There are in fact other passages which refer to heavenly figures mounted on horseback who come to earth with militaristic intentions. In 2 Macc. 3.1-40, the story of the attempt by Heliodorus, the agent of King Seleucus of Asia, to plunder the treasury of the temple in Jerusalem, we find that heavenly intervention saves the day. First appears 'a magnificently caparisoned horse, with a rider of frightening mien' (3.25). After the horse has struck Heliodorus with its hooves, two young men who appeared with the rider flog him severely (3.26). The two young men are described in 3.26 in such a way that their appearance must have been akin to that of the various exalted figures we have looked at in the course of the previous chapters: they are 'remarkably strong, gloriously beautiful and splendidly dressed' (τῆ ῥώμῃ μὲν ἐκπρεπεῖς, κάλλιστοι δὲ τὴν δόξαν, διαπρεπεῖς δὲ τὴν περιβολήν).

The 'rider of frightening mien' has little specifically in common with the Rider in the Apc. The former has no names. He has 'armour and weapons of gold' rather than 'a sword coming out of his mouth'. He does not lead heavenly armies. Nevertheless the Maccabean rider is an example of a figure on horseback who comes from God (cf. 3.24) in order to carry out the judgement of God. While there is no explicit reference to this figure as an angel it is difficult to think of the figure as being anything other than an angel.

In another Maccabean passage, 2 Macc 10.29-31, five angelic horsemen also feature in saving the Jews from a difficult situation.

There is no specific recall of either of these passages in Apc 19.11-16 but they illustrate the fact that angels on horseback intervening from heaven in human affairs were a feature of Jewish angelology. It is, of course, quite unnecessary to suppose that any sort of

angelological influence lies behind the portrayal of Jesus as the Rider on horseback. Military commanders riding on horseback were a familiar feature of the world in which John lived. Nevertheless it is striking that within writings such as the Book of Zechariah and 2 and 3 Maccabees angelic horsemen were to be found and this raises the possibility that this aspect of angelology was influential on the vision in 19.11-16.<sup>35</sup>

### §10.3 LEADER OF THE HEAVENLY ARMIES

Καὶ τὰ στρατεύματα [τὰ] ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ ἐφ' ἵπποις,  
ἐνδεδυμένοι βύσσινον λευκὸν καθαρὸν (Apc 19.14).

The Rider is accompanied by the heavenly armies (note: singular στρατεύματος in 19.19). The composition of the armies has been the subject of some debate. Noting the reminiscence in 19.14 to 17.14 where the Lamb is accompanied by 'called and chosen and faithful', and in particular, noting the parallel between ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ (19.14) and οἱ ἀκολουθοῦντες τῷ ἀρνίῳ ὅπου ἂν ὑπάγῃ (14.4), some scholars have argued that the armies are composed of the martyrs.<sup>36</sup> Others have argued that the martyrs are beyond such battles and consequently the armies consist of angels.<sup>37</sup> In favour of this identification is the fact that heavenly armies of angels have already made an appearance in Apc 12.7,<sup>38</sup> and the fact that an army consisting of angels on horseback is not unknown in the background literature: e.g., 'angels on horseback' (ἔφιπποι ..... ἄγγελοι, 4 Macc. 4.10-11).<sup>39</sup>

It is difficult, in fact, to find good reason to rule one or other alternative out. Although the phrase ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ is reminiscent of the description of the martyrs in 14.4, οἱ ἀκολουθοῦντες τῷ ἀρνίῳ, this phrase can be explained simply as a natural

<sup>35</sup>Cf. Prigent, 291; Michel, "ἵππος", 337.

<sup>36</sup>E.g. Beckwith, 731; Sweet, 283; Caird, 244; Farrar, 199; cf. Prigent, 296; Charles, ii, 135.

<sup>37</sup>E.g. Kraft, 250. Cf. Bousset, 432; Lohse, 94; Rissi, *Future*, 25; Satake, *Gemeindeordnung*, 142.

<sup>38</sup>Swete, 250; cf. Allo, 281. Cf. Bauckham, "Note", 137, who notes (as examples of the interpretation of οἱ ἄγγελοι in Zech 14.5 as the angelic army of the 'divine Warrior') Mt 16.27, 25.31, Mk 8.38, Lk 9.26, 2 Thess 1.7, (*Ethiopic Apc. Peter* 1, *Sib. Or.* 2.242, and (probably) 1 Thess 3.13.

<sup>39</sup>In Hab 3.8 'horses' form part of God's army, but there is no mention of angelic riders. In 1 QM 12.7-12 the angelic army is not specifically described as riding on horseback; but there is reference to 'the host of His spirits is with our foot-soldiers and horsemen' (וְרַחֲמֵי יְהוָה עִמָּנוּ וְפָרְשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל, 12.9).

description of a group who follow a leader and thus does not exclude the possibility that the heavenly armies are composed of angels. The phrase ἐφ' ἵπποις λευκοῖς (19.14) recalls the appearance of the rider in 6.2 (καὶ ἰδοὺ ἵππος λευκός, καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἔχων τόξον) but although the earlier rider is certainly not a martyr there is no reason why we should then conclude that the riders are exclusively angels. Nor does the fact that the riders wear 'white' clothing point to any one class of being. The martyrs and followers of Jesus (Apc 3.4b-5a; 3.18; 6.11; 7.9,14; 19.8), Jesus Christ (1.13), the twenty-four elders (4.4), the seven bowl-angels (15.6), 'the great city' (18.16) all have clothing reminiscent of the armies in heaven. The two descriptions closest to that found in Apc 19.14 belong respectively to the 'the bride of the Lamb' (i.e., the martyrs) and to the angels. Thus (with words in common with 19.14 underlined),

The bride of the Lamb:

καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῇ ἵνα περιβάληται βύσσινον λαμπρὸν καθαρόν. τὸ γὰρ βύσσινον τὰ δικαιώματα τῶν ἁγίων ἐστίν (19.8).

The seven bowl-angels:

ἐνδεδυμένοι λίνον καθαρόν λαμπρὸν (15.6).

The heavenly armies:

ἐνδεδυμένοι βύσσινον λευκὸν καθαρόν (19.14).

If we cannot decisively rule out one of the alternatives, is it possible that the armies in fact consist of both angels and martyrs? This possibility is in fact not unsupported by commentators.<sup>40</sup> Nor is it without parallel in contemporary apocalyptic literature. *Asc. Is.* 4.14, for example, envisages the coming of 'the Lord with his angels and with the hosts of the holy ones' (where the 'holy ones' are the saints).<sup>41</sup> We conclude, then, that most likely

<sup>40</sup>E.g. Lohmeyer, 155.

<sup>41</sup>Noted by Bauckham, "Note", 138, who argues that 1 *En.* 1.9 in Codex Panopolitanus is to be similarly understood. Space does not permit an account of other parallels between *Asc. Is.* 4.14-18 and Apc 19.11-20.3. Cf. 1 QM 12.4: 'with Thy holy Ones [and with all] Thine Angels'.

the Rider leads heavenly armies consisting of both angels and martyrs.<sup>42</sup>

But if the Rider leads heavenly armies consisting of martyrs and angels then we may ask what this signifies about the Rider.

On the one hand it is possible that the Rider has taken up an angelic role. The idea that an angel leads the heavenly army has ancient roots. The earliest indication lies in the entitlement of an angel as 'the commander of the army of Yahweh' (שֶׁרֶץ צְבָאֵי יְהוָה; ἄρχιστράτηγος δυνάμεως κυρίου, Josh. 5.13). The title ἄρχιστράτηγος subsequently came to be applied in a wide range of apocalyptic writings to the angel who commanded the angelic hosts of God. In some texts this angel is Michael (e.g. 2 *En* 2.28, 33.10, *Test. Abr. Rec. A*, 7 and 19, *Apc. Esd.* 4.24). In other texts the ἄρχιστράτηγος is unnamed (e.g., *Jos. Asen.* 14.7).<sup>43</sup>

On the other hand there are occasions when the leadership of the heavenly forces is in the hands of Yahweh himself. Yahweh is a warrior (e.g. Ex 15.3), who leads Israel into battle (e.g. Deut 7 and 10). Ps 68, for example, seems to have Yahweh in view as leader of the heavenly army. Yahweh 'rides upon the clouds' (v.4), 'scatters kings' (v.14), and is accompanied by 'mighty chariotry, twice ten thousand' (v.17). Thus Longman argues that in Apc 19.11-16 we find 'a description of Christ the Divine Warrior which ... connects him with Yahweh the Divine Warrior in the OT'.<sup>44</sup>

Our recognition of the identification between Jesus Christ and God on the basis of texts such as Apc 22.13 means that we cannot rule out the possibility that in Apc 19.11-16 Jesus is being depicted as the 'Divine Warrior'. Further, our supposition that the Book of Zechariah was well-known to the seer means that we must reckon with the possibility that John had in mind a text such as Zech 14.5 ('then Yahweh my God will come, and all the holy ones with him') and thus saw Jesus the Rider as one who acted in the place of God. But we suggest

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<sup>42</sup>Bauckham, "Note", 138, overlooks this possibility in Apc 19.14 and understands the armies to consist of the martyrs.

<sup>43</sup>Greek text from Philonenko, *Joseph*, 178. Philonenko, *idem*, argues that the angel is in fact Michael. Dan 8.11 LXX also mentions the *archistrategos*, but it is not clear whether this is a reference to an angelic figure (so, Bampfylde, "Prince", 130), or to God (so, Driver, *Daniel*, 116; Charles, *Daniel* 207; Montgomery, *Daniel*, 335).

<sup>44</sup>Longman, "Divine", 298; cf. Schmitt, "Christologische", 287.

that it is more likely that Jesus the Rider was being depicted as one who had taken up an angelic role when he led out the armies of heaven. For we know from Apc 12.7 that John was familiar with the idea that Michael was the leader of the heavenly army. In that verse Michael and the angels fight the dragon and his angels and drive them out of heaven. In 19.19 the Rider and his army fight against the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies. The location of the second battle is undoubtedly the earth, and the opponents are different to those in the first battle, although not unrelated since the beast is the chief agent of the dragon (Apc 13.2). Nevertheless a similar battle is being waged, between the forces of God and the forces of the anti-God power and it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that Jesus the Rider is presumed to have taken over from Michael as the commander of the heavenly army.

The possibility that John may have thought of Jesus as one who superseded Michael is already raised in the Apc in 12.7-10. In Apc 12.7-9 we are informed that Michael and his angels have been responsible for the defeat of the dragon and his angels. The heavenly response to this is notable for its reference to Christ, even though there has been no mention of any role for him in the war against the dragon. Thus John hears a voice proclaiming,

'Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ' (Apc 12.10).<sup>45</sup>

Collins argues that this is an example of 'angelic christology'. The role allotted to Michael is transferred to Jesus Christ.<sup>46</sup> Certainly the thought that Jesus is leader of the heavenly armies in 19.14 instead of Michael is consistent with this understanding of 12.7-10. We have seen in our survey of angel christology that close links between Jesus and Michael were a relatively common feature of ancient Christian writings and inscriptions. In the *Shep. Herm. Sim.* 8.3.3, Michael and Jesus even appear to be identified.<sup>47</sup> Yet careful consideration of this passage led to the conclusion that Jesus is not necessarily being understood as an angel or being identified with Michael. Similarly our discussion in §8.5.3

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<sup>45</sup>Further on Christ in Apc 12, see Satake, "Sieg" (1975).

<sup>46</sup>Collins, J.J., *Vision*, 146.

<sup>47</sup>*Shep. Herm. Vis.* 3; *Sim.* 8.3.3, 9.12.7-8; cf. discussion above, §5.2.8; Longenecker, *Christology*, 26 n.5.

raised the possibility that the risen Jesus in Apc 1.13-16 may have been understood as one who has superseded Michael. In Apc 19.14 there seems to be no particular reason to think that Jesus leading the heavenly armies means that he is either an angel *per se*, or that he is identified with Michael. Rather, the role of Michael seems to have been transferred to him. That Jesus and Michael are not to be identified is supported by the consideration that the heavenly armies which the Rider leads is not the army in 12.7 but one which has expanded to include the martyrs: the larger army is led by one who is greater than Michael.

Why might John have depicted Christ as one who superseded Michael? We have already suggested that reflection on Dn 12.1-2 may have led to the conclusion that the son of man figure as given in Dn 7.13 was the angel Michael. John must have been struck by the relevance of the prophecy in Dn 12.1-2 to Jesus Christ. The nexus of themes in Dn 12.1-2, resurrection, judgement, deliverance, book, is mirrored in the Apc, but with the crucial difference that it is not Michael who has arisen to effect salvation for the people of God, and to be the key figure in connection with judgement, resurrection, and the book of life, but Jesus the Lamb. In the Apc it is those written *in the Lamb's* book of life who will be saved (13.8, 17.8). The painful struggle of the church would cease when Jesus *came in glory* (cf. 1.7, 22.20). *Salvation* was through Jesus Christ and his death on a cross (cf. 1.5-6, 5.9) and not through Michael. Consequently it is reasonable to presume that John believed that Daniel understood God's intentions in a limited way. Michael had a role to play in the salvation of God's people - hence John includes the reference to Michael and his angels defeating the dragon and his angels (12.7) - but the most important role belonged to Jesus Christ. Thus in 12.10 it is not Michael who is glorified but Christ. In 19.14 it is not Michael who leads the army of angels and martyrs it is Jesus the Rider.

In other words, the role prophesied for Michael in Dn 12.1-2 may have led to the conclusion that some attributes and actions associated with Michael should be transferred to Jesus Christ.

In sum: when John portrays Jesus the Rider as the leader of the heavenly armies he appears to be transferring a role associated with Michael to Jesus. Once again the portrayal of Jesus shows the influence of angelology.



## §10.4 THE SECRET NAME

In the vision of the Rider, Jesus has several names, πιστός καὶ ἀληθινός (Apc 19.11),<sup>48</sup> ὄνομα γεγραμμένον ὃ οὐδείς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ αὐτός (Apc 19.12), ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (Apc 19.13), and βασιλεὺς βασιλέων καὶ κύριος κυρίων (Apc 19.16).<sup>49</sup>

This feature is different from the visions in Apc 1.13-16 and 14.14 where 'one like a son of man' is neither named nor 'called' anything. In view of the influence of 'messianic' texts on Apc 19.11-16 it is interesting that none of these names is drawn from Is 9.6 which gives several names for God's chosen one:

'For a child has been given for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace'.

We have already noted in our review of Origen that the expression Μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος which is found in the LXX version of this verse has had no influence on the Apc.

It is not our intention to either examine each of the four names in 19.11-16 or to explore the ones we have chosen exhaustively. Rather we will simply draw attention to the fact that two of the names have particular angelic connections and explore the significance of this for the portrayal of Jesus Christ in Apc 19.11-16. In this section we consider the 'secret name':

ἔχων ὄνομα γεγραμμένον ὃ οὐδείς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ αὐτός (Apc 19.12).

This name may be linked to Jesus' own words about 'names' in the letters to the seven churches. To the conquering Christians at Pergamum Jesus promises hidden manna and a white stone. On the stone will be written a name:

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<sup>48</sup>Note 3 Macc 2.11 as the only occasion in the LXX when πιστός and ἀληθινός are found together (where they refer to God).

<sup>49</sup>On 'king of kings and lord of lords' see Beale "Origin" (1985) who argues that in 17.14 this title draws on Dn 4.37 LXX, with approval from Slater, "Revisited" (1993) using Apc 19.11-21 as a parallel.

καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ψῆφον ὄνομα καινὸν γεγραμμένον ὃ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ ὁ λαμβάνων (2.17).

To the conquering Christians at Philadelphia Jesus promises that he will write on them

'the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God ... and my own new name (καὶ τὸ ὄνομά μου τὸ καινόν)' (3.12):

The close parallel between 19.12 and 2.17 suggests something of a conundrum. On the one hand Jesus' secret name is described in 19.12 in the same way as the 'new name' of the conquering Christians. Since Jesus also receives a 'new name' (3.12) it would be reasonable to conclude that the name in 19.12 is Jesus' 'new name'. On the other hand the name in 19.12 is one which no one knows except Jesus whereas the 'new name' of Jesus is one which will be written on the foreheads (presumably, cf. 14.1) of the conquering Christians. That is, Jesus' 'new name' appears to be a public name in contrast to his 'secret name'. We conclude, therefore, that although the form of words used to introduce the secret name of Jesus suggests that the 'new name' of Jesus is in view, in fact another name is meant.

Presumably the common factor between 2.17 and 19.12, then, is not anything to do with newness but something to do with the private character of the names. In this case it is noticeable that the names in 2.17 are inscribed on 'white stones'. A number of explanations for these stones have been advanced,<sup>50</sup> and an explanation which accounts for the combination of *stone*, *inscribed name*, and *secrecy* as a kind of amulet in which the name has power to secure protection against evil powers cannot be ruled out.<sup>51</sup> This explanation would then imply that the point of Jesus having a secret name in 19.12 is that it is a sign of his power to conquer evil.

Few commentators have drawn attention to the angelic roots of the concept of a heavenly being with a mysterious or secret name. One exception is Swete who points out that the

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<sup>50</sup>See, e.g., Beckwith, 462-463; Swete, 39-40; Hemer, *Letters*, 96-105.

<sup>51</sup>Beckwith, 463 favours this explanation. Hemer, *Letters*, 103, however, concludes that 'the popular amulet theory is more problematical'.

question of an unknown angelic name arises in the story of Jacob's struggle at Jabbok (Gn 32.22-32) and in the story of the appearance of the angel of Yahweh to Manoah (Jdgs 13.2-25).<sup>52</sup>

In the first story Jacob wrestles with 'a man' through the night prior to his meeting with Esau (Gn 32.22-32). At daybreak their struggle ends with the man blessing Jacob and telling him that he will henceforth be called 'Israel'. Jacob then asks the man to tell him his name. The man responds with the question

'Why is it that you ask my name?' (למה זה תשאל לשמי; Ἰνα τί τοῦτο ἐρωτᾷς τὸ ὄνομά μου, Gn 32.30 MT/LXX respectively).

He then blesses Jacob. Recognition dawns for Jacob who names the place Peniel, saying

'For I have seen God face to face and yet my life has been preserved' (Gn 32.30).

In the second story the angel of Yahweh replies to Manoah's enquiry as to his name in similar vein:

'Why do you ask my name? It is too wonderful' (למה זה תשאל לשמי והוא פלאי; Ἰνα τί τοῦτο ἐρωτᾷς τὸ ὄνομά μου; καὶ αὐτό ἐστιν θαυμαστόν, Jdgs 13.18 MT/LXX respectively).

There is no direct link between these stories and the secret name in Apc 19.12. We are not told, for instance, in the OT stories that the name is only known to the angel, just that the humans concerned may not know. Conversely, in Apc 19.12 we are not told that the secret name is 'wonderful'. The three passages are only related in the sense that when we are told that the Rider has a name which 'no one may know' there is engendered a sense of mystery which resonates with the refusal of the angels who appear to Jacob and to Manoah to divulge their names.<sup>53</sup> Thus, the secret name of the Rider may reflect indirectly at least the influence of two ancient angelophanies.

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<sup>52</sup>Swete, 248.

<sup>53</sup>Contrast with *Jos. Asern.* 15.12 where the influence of Jdgs 13.17-18 is clear.

The secret name of the Rider has led to various explanations concerning its significance. Some scholars have stressed the connection between 'name' and the 'being' of a person. Holtz, for example, suggests that just as a name expresses the being of a person so the secret name expresses the innermost being of Christ.<sup>54</sup> Other scholars have suggested that the secret name is the *Tetragrammaton*, the name of God itself.<sup>55</sup> Some scholars, however, in line with what we have just mentioned concerning the connection between 'name' and 'white stone', have pointed to the ancient belief that there is a connection between the name and the power of a being.

Bousset, for example, suggests that the name is kept secret from the Rider's adversaries according to the ancient view that power resides in a person's name.<sup>56</sup> Beckwith argues that mention of the name 'is based on the current belief in the marvellous power of a secret name'.<sup>57</sup> He cites *1 En* 69.14 as evidence for this:

'His name was (then) Beqa; and he spoke to Michael to disclose to him his secret name<sup>58</sup> so that he would memorize this secret name of his, so that he would call it up in an oath in order that they shall tremble before it and the oath'.<sup>59</sup>

If the secret name of the Rider is indicative of the Rider's power to conquer then it is interesting to see that the text quoted by Beckwith in support of his interpretation of the secret name also mentions Michael! In *1 En* 69.14 Michael has a secret name which is sought in connection with a powerful 'oath'. Although the connection between the name and the oath is not clearly explained the impression given is that the oath involves swearing by a name so that the greater the name the more powerful the oath which invokes it. The oath is described in a manner which invites comparison with 'wisdom' in respect of its role as God's agent in the inauguration and maintenance of creation (cf. *Prov* 8.22-30, *Wis* 7.22-8.1). Thus the writer of *Sim. En.* speaks, for example, of how

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<sup>54</sup>Holtz, *Christologie*, 174; see also Caird, 242; Swete, 248; Schillebeeckx, *Christ*, 442-443; cf. Kraft, 248-249.

<sup>55</sup>Allo, 280, following Cullmann, *Christology*, 314; cf. Prigent, 293-294; Farrar, 198. Note *Odes Sol.* 4.8 where the angels are clothed with the Divine Name.

<sup>56</sup>Bousset, 431; cf. Lohmeyer, 155

<sup>57</sup>Beckwith, 732.

<sup>58</sup>Some MSS 'the secret name'.

<sup>59</sup>Isaac, *OTP*, i, 48. Note also *Asc. Is.* 9.5; *Ecclus.* 47.18; *Pr. Man.* 3. *Ps. Clem. Homilies* 16.18.

'By that oath, the sea was created' (69.18), and

'By the same oath the sun and moon complete their courses of travel, and do not deviate from the laws (made) for them, from the beginning (of creation)' (69.20).<sup>60</sup>

Michael's role in this work of creation is significant for the oath is placed in his hand (1 *En.* 69.15).<sup>61</sup> Moreover, 1 *En.* 69.27 describes rejoicing in heaven because 'the name of that (Son of) Man was revealed to them'.<sup>62</sup> Obviously there is much more that can be said about this enigmatic episode in *Sim. En.* but our concern is simply to demonstrate that in *Sim. En.*, a document likely to be contemporaneous with the *Apc.*, the motif of a *secret name* is associated with an angel.

That the secret name according to 1 *En.* 69 has a certain kind of power and is able to enhance the oath which appears to be analogous to *Sophia* in its function in creation suggests that the name may be some form of the Name of God itself.<sup>63</sup> Such a name in association with an angel is not unknown in Jewish angelology when we recall the name 'Yahoel', a name applied to the chief angel (and to God) in the *Apc. Abr.*. Whether the secret name of the Rider might be something similar we can only speculate. What we can be fairly confident in concluding, however, is this: that the possession of a secret name by the Rider is a sign of angelological influence on this portrayal of Jesus Christ.

There is one final aspect of the secret name to which we can draw attention in the present context. We have already noted in §1.1.1 the argument of Schillebeeckx that the secret name implies that the 'nature of Christ is intrinsically bound up with that of God himself'.<sup>64</sup> In other words the secret name appears to be a sign of a kind of dual identity for Jesus Christ. Outwardly visible as an angelomorphic figure, as a lamb, and publicly known by

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<sup>60</sup>Isaac, *OTP*, i, 48.

<sup>61</sup>Just who gives this oath to Michael is unclear. Cf. 'The Evil One (*Aka*) placed this oath in Michael's hand' (Isaac, *OTP*, i, 48); '[Kesbeel, the chief of the oath] placed this oath *Akae* in the charge of the holy Michael' (Knibb, *AOT*, 253). Both translations recognise the difficulty engendered by the word '*Aka*'. Knibb, *AOT*, 253 n.19, suggests it may be a corruption of the word 'other'.

<sup>62</sup>Isaac, *OTP*, i, 49.

<sup>63</sup>Black, *Enoch*, 248, suggests 'the text copied must have contained a version of the consonants אשע the Gematria for אדני יהוה'. Cf. Segal, *Powers*, 196-197.

<sup>64</sup>See p.4 above for fuller citation and reference.

various names and titles, there is in fact another identity for him, with a secret name and with his true nature hidden in God.<sup>65</sup>

## §10.5 THE *LOGOS*-NAME

The fact that the Rider is named ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (Apc 19.13) is noteworthy in the first instance because it is a name which 'stands alone' within the Apc. Whereas the other three names for the Rider may be linked to other entitlements and references to names for Jesus Christ the *Logos*-name is independent of any other such occurrences.<sup>66</sup> Of course the expression ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ in itself is not unique within the Apc since it is used on several occasions, but never as a name. Our first reflection on the significance of the *Logos*-name therefore is to investigate the meaning of the expression ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ where it occurs elsewhere in the Apc.

### §10.5.1 The *Logos* of God in the Apocalypse

Apart from Apc 19.13, ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ is found in the Apc four times:

(i) John describes himself as one who has

'testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw' (1.2).

(ii) John enlarges on how he came to receive the revelation:

'I, John ... was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus' (1.9).

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<sup>65</sup>Cf. Smith, "Prayer", 31 n.13, who argues that the heavenly revealer possessing a (secret) celestial name while having another (known) earthly name is a standard feature of hellenistic revelatory literature (e.g. *Iliad* 20.74: further references, Smith, *ibid.*). See also discussion in Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 175 with reference to *Merkavah Rabbah*.

<sup>66</sup>'Faithful and True' evokes the titles 'the faithful witness' (1.5) and 'the faithful and true witness' (3.14); the secret name recalls 'a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it' (2.17, cf. 3.12); and 'King of kings and Lord of lords' recalls a similar description of the Lamb (17.14).

(iii) the souls of those under the altar are those

'who had been slaughtered for the word of God and for the testimony they had given'  
(6.9).

(iv) John sees the souls of those

'who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God' (20.4).

The fact that the *logos* of God is linked in parallel to the *testimony* of Jesus probably means that the testimony of Jesus is not additional truth but a reformulation of God's truth by Jesus.<sup>67</sup>

If we assume that John was on Patmos because of a negative response to the *logos* of God then on three out of four occasions the phrase 'the *logos* of God' is directly associated with suffering (i.e. 1.9, 6.9, 20.4). Why should exile or death be the experience of the Christian on account of the *logos* of God and the testimony of Jesus? A strong hint is given in 12.17 and 14.12. In the former we are told that the anger of the dragon against the woman who has given birth to the child-messiah leads to his making war on her children. Her children are described as 'those who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus'. In the latter 'the saints' are described as 'those who keep the commandments of God and hold fast the faith of Jesus'. In other words, the *logos* of God as the reason for suffering seems to mean that *the keeping of God's commandments has led to an oppressive reaction by the secular authorities*. (Presumably it is not those commandments which prohibit stealing and murder but those concerned with allegiance to the one God ahead of all other earthly and heavenly powers which have sparked this reaction). Thus the expression 'the *logos* of God' in three out of four instances seems to focus on that truth which demands a commitment which conflicts with the requirements of good citizenship in Asia Minor.

In the remaining instance we have a slightly different emphasis. In 1.2 'the *logos* of God and the testimony of Jesus' are interpreted as 'all that [John] saw':

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<sup>67</sup>Charles, i, 7.

τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὅσα εἶδεν.

In other words, the *logos* of God and the testimony of Jesus are understood as the *particular* revelation which John receives on Patmos. Yet to describe the particular revelation given on Patmos as 'the *logos* of God and the testimony of Jesus' presumably means that it is continuous with *that* to which martyrs such as Antipas and saints who remain alive have already borne faithful witness (cf. 2.13). At the heart of the revelation granted to the churches through John is not some completely new truth but a restatement of what has already been revealed in the history of Israel, the coming of Jesus Christ, and the life of the primitive church. In some respects, however, the revelation contains some new elements since what was formerly a mystery is now explained (cf. 10.7).

What then can we say *from the perspective of the Apc itself* about the significance of the *Logos*-name?

(i) Important here is our investigation above into the significance of βεβαμμένον αἷματι (Apc 19.13). We saw that this image could be understood multivalently and includes an allusion to the blood of the martyrs. In this case the mission of the Rider can be understood as a mission of vengeance and the name 'the *Logos* of God' can be understood ironically. Jesus has the *Logos*-name because he comes to avenge those who have died on account of 'the *logos* of God'. The rejected testimony of the martyrs has (so to speak) become the legal testimony which secures the condemnation of their persecutors.<sup>68</sup> The faithful witnesses such as Antipas (2.13) have not died in vain. Their opponents may have thought that they had made a mockery of the *logos* of God and the testimony of Jesus by moving against the church. But by bearing the name, 'The *Logos* of God', it is the Rider who 'has the last laugh' and taunts the opponents of the church. The *Logos*-name conveys the justification for the Rider's crusade against them.

(ii) If the *logos* of God is that which has come to particular expression through the witness of Jesus, and if it is the revelation of Jesus Christ (1.1), then it is entirely appropriate that the *Logos*-name should be applied to Jesus. The *Logos*-name encapsulates the function of

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<sup>68</sup>Bauckham, "War", 33.



Jesus as the revealer.

But to say that, in the light of what we understand about 'the *logos* of God' elsewhere in the Apc, the *Logos*-name is an *appropriate* name for Jesus the Rider is scarcely to exhaust the significance of this name for the Rider and for our study of the christology of the Apc. One crucial observation may be noted at this point. When the Rider is called 'Faithful and True' (19.11) and is described as having the regal name, 'King of kings and Lord of lords' (19.11), we are told something about the Rider which is true concerning his character and function. These names are not given like so many names as ones which are incidental to the actual nature of the named person. Jesus is called 'Faithful and True' because he is faithful and he is true. He has the regal name because he is indeed king over all kings and lord over all lords. Consequently it is likely that Jesus has the *Logos*-name because he is in his person the *logos* of God. To the extent that we can speak of a personal being called the *Logos* who comes from God (and we shall discuss this point in detail shortly), from the perspective of the Apc Jesus is that being.<sup>69</sup>

It follows from this conclusion that it is worth exploring beyond the confines of the Apc to material which may lie in its background in order to better understand the implications of the *Logos*-name for the Rider.

### §10.5.2 The Biblical Background To The *Logos*-Name

There is no particular link between the Rider with the *Logos*-name and 'the *Logos*' of the Fourth Gospel. There is a general connection inasmuch as both figures have a function in revealing the truth of God. But apart from this 'community of interest' there is no reason to think of mutual influence between Jn 1 and Apc 19.13. Other texts speak of the *logos* (or *rhema*) in terms of similes involving (sharp, two-edged) swords (e.g. Heb 4.12, Eph 6.17). In 19.15 the Rider is shown to have 'a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations' which comes from his mouth. Immediately in the background here are Is 11.4 and 49.2. But there are other texts which focus on the 'mouth' of the Messiah but make explicit the thought that it is the 'word' or 'words' which come out of it which effect the judgement. Thus:

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<sup>69</sup>Against Schillebeeckx, *Christ*, 442-443, who does not sufficiently undergird his claim that ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ is a 'designation' rather than a 'name'; cf. Prigent, 295; Lohse, 94.

'May he destroy the lawless nations by the word (λόγος) of his mouth' (*Pss. Sol.* 17.24, cf. 17.35).

'The word of his mouth slays all the sinners' (1 *En* 62.2).

'I have killed them by the words of my mouth and my judgement goes forth as the light' (אור ומשפטִיך באמרִי־פי ׀ בהרגתִי־ם; ἀπέκτεινα αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥήμασιν στόματός μου, καὶ τὸ κρίμα μου ὡς φῶς ἐξελεύσεται, Hos 6.5 MT/LXX respectively).

However, in none of these texts is the Messiah called or named 'the *Logos* (of God)'.<sup>70</sup>

There is one text, however, which appears to lie behind the portrayal of Jesus as a heavenly figure who comes to judge and make war wielding a sword and is called 'the *Logos* of God'. This is Wis 18.15-16 which we have already reflected on in §4.3.1 above.<sup>70</sup>

'your all-powerful word leaped from heaven (ὁ παντοδύναμός σου λόγος ἀπ' οὐρανῶν), from the royal throne, into the midst of the land that was doomed, a stern warrior carrying the sharp sword of your authentic command, 16 and stood and filled all things with death, and touched heaven while standing on the earth' (Wis 18.15-16).

In two particular ways this passage differs from Apc 19.11-16. First, Wisdom's concern at this point is with the Exodus story rather than the last judgement. Secondly, there is no mention of the *logos* riding on a horse. Differences such as these make it difficult to determine whether John had this passage specifically in mind when describing the Rider as having the *Logos*-name. Nevertheless Wis 18.15-16 is the closest passage in the OT to the portrayal in 19.11-16 of a heavenly figure with the *Logos*-name. It has motifs which resonate strongly with Apc 19.11-16: descent from heaven, warrior figure called *logos*, sword, and

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<sup>70</sup>Prigent, 295; Lohse, 94; Ford, 313, 321. It is interesting to speculate on the possible influence of another text, Hab 3.5, where 'pestilence' goes before God and behind him follows 'plague' (3.5, cf. 'Death' and 'Hades' in Apc 6.8). As a result the nations and mountains are shaken (3.6-12, cf. Apc 6.12-17). The Hebrew consonants for 'plague' are the same as for 'word' (דבר), and in fact the LXX offers λόγος instead of a Greek equivalent for 'plague'. Does John understand Jesus the Rider as 'the plague/logos of God'?

royal connotations. If John was not familiar with Wis 18.15 itself then he was familiar with the kind of understanding represented there.

When we considered Wis 18.15-16 before we saw that it was an example, alongside the writings of Philo, of a tendency to interpret angelological material in the OT. For the writer of Wisdom the 'destroyer' or 'destroying angel' is an expression of the *logos* of God. For Philo 'the angel of Yahweh' is the form in which the *Logos* of God manifests itself. It is interesting therefore to note that in Apc 19.11-16, where so much material illustrates the 'messianic' character of the Rider, that John uses the *Logos*-name. It is true that the *Logos*-name in 19.13 may be simply explained in terms of the Apc itself, as we outlined above: the *Logos*-name ironically illustrates the nature of the Rider's mission to avenge those who have suffered for the sake of the word of God. But when the portrayal of Jesus as the Rider shows signs of the influence of angelology it is conceivable that John uses the *Logos*-name because an angelic figure coming out of heaven on a mission of judgement recalls the kind of thinking represented in Wisdom 18.15-16. John does not just see Jesus Messiah in his vision wielding the sword-like *logos*, he sees the *Logos* of God in person.

In other words, the application of the *Logos*-name to the Rider appears to reflect traditions in which the *Logos* manifests itself in angelic form.

The presence of the *Logos*-name in the portrayal of the Rider raises an important question, namely, what relationship between God and Jesus Christ is in view in 19.11-16? When we examined Philo's writings on the *Logos* we saw that the *Logos* was the self-revelation of God. Talk about the *Logos* was talk about God. Yet we also saw that the way Philo described the *Logos* on occasions could reasonably be interpreted as reference to a being distinct from God.

The fact that John does not simply name the Rider  $\delta \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  but  $\delta \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  raises the question whether an element of subordination is involved: that the Rider as the *Logos of God* is the *Logos* who belongs to God, his appearance is at the behest of God, and he is in fact a being distinct from God. Nevertheless, as we have seen, the *Logos*-name may well reflect the use of the phrase  $\delta \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  elsewhere in the Apc. John may (like the writer of the Fourth Gospel) have known of Jesus as  $\delta \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  but chose to use the fuller

phrase as more appropriate to the context in the Apc.

There is, of course, so little said about the Rider as the *Logos* that it is impossible to decide conclusively what John's understanding of the *Logos* was. What we can draw attention to are the following observations. First, our analysis of Wisdom and Philo's writings showed that on the one hand the *Logos* was understood to be God in his self-revelation and on the other hand the *Logos* could manifest himself in the form of an angel. Secondly, such an understanding is consistent with what we find in the Apc. The *Logos* of God is Jesus Christ, who we know from elsewhere in the Apc is identified with God, and the *Logos* of God appears in angelomorphic form.

In sum: the *Logos*-name is an appropriate name for Jesus as the revealer but it is particularly apt in the vision of the Rider because here Jesus appears in angelomorphic form and in a role reminiscent of the *Logos* in Wis 18.15. Also, the *Logos*-name is entirely suitable for one who is characterized both in terms of his identity with God and his likeness to the angels.

## §10.6 CONCLUSION

In the vision of Jesus as the heavenly, equine warrior we have found a number of signs of angelological influence. In this picture of eschatological war the 'Messiah' sits on a horse, an image more readily associated with OT visions of angels than of prophecies about the Messiah. As leader of the heavenly armies the Rider appears to have taken up the role of Michael as commander of the army of God. Two of the four names have particular angelic associations. Further, the actual form of the Rider suggests that John may have seen a reappearance of the risen angelomorphic Jesus as described in 1.13-16.

As the Rider, then, Jesus Christ is a messianic and angelic figure. Yet this is not the whole of the matter. Having the name, 'the *Logos* of God' suggests that this is no angel *per se* but a being who is to be identified with God, who is located at the heart of the divine throne. This is confirmed by the application of the name, 'King of kings, and Lord of lords' which is used of God by Nebuchadnezzar (Dn 4.37 LXX). It is also possible that the secret name in 19.12 points to this (so to speak) dual identity in which Jesus is 'seen' as an angel and yet in reality

his essential nature is bound up with that of God.

Once again therefore we see Jesus in angelic form carrying out angelic function yet bearing signs of his true nature as one who is coordinate with God rather than subordinate, and as one who comes from the throne of God itself.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

# CONCLUSION

### §11.1 SUMMARY AND RESULTS

We began this dissertation by reviewing previous study of the christology of the Apocalypse and of the significance of angelology for the development of early christology. Out of this review we determined that there was room both to extend the investigation of the influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc and to criticise the most significant proposal in recent times concerning the influence of angelology on the christophany in Apc 1.13-16.

In Part One of the dissertation we examined the context of the christology of the Apc. We investigated the portrayal of angels and angelomorphic figures in OT books and in writings outside the OT and we reviewed various facets of angel christology in the first Christian centuries.

In Part Two we examined aspects of the christology itself. We began with the relationships between God and Jesus Christ and between Jesus Christ and the revealing angel and then examined the three visions of Christ in Apc 1.13-16, 14.14, and 19.11-16.

We have already set out our conclusions to Part One in §5.4. Three results stand out, however, and are worth restating again. First, the influence of Dn 7.13 LXX on the christophany in Apc 1.13-16 is open to doubt, along with other aspects of Rowland's proposal concerning the developments behind the christophany. Thus the way is open for seeking an alternative proposal. Secondly, an angelophany or an epiphany of an angelomorphic figure could include theophanic imagery without any implication that the figure concerned was divine. Thirdly, transformation resulting in a being becoming an angel or an angelomorphic figure was widely attested for the first century CE.

Each of these results has been significant for Part Two of our investigation.

In the first chapter in Part Two (i.e., Chapter Six) we argued that the Apc presents Jesus Christ on the one hand as one who is identified with God and on the other hand as one who is functionally equivalent to the revealing angel. We posed the question, Why does John envisage two intermediaries, Jesus Christ and the revealing angel? The answer, we suggested, lay in the twofold intention to present Jesus as one who even in his risen state was not completely removed from the reality of the church's situation in Asia Minor and to make the angel a point of comparison to ensure that Jesus was not identified as an angel. In this chapter we opened up a paradox in the christology of the Apc: Jesus Christ is identified with God yet functions like an angel.

In Chapter Seven we examined Apc 1.13-16 in comparison to angelophanies and to the theophany in the Apc. Angelophanies in the Apc incorporate theophanic elements, but this does not lead to thinking that the angels are other than angels. We saw that the christophany had more in common with the angelophanies than with the theophany despite its also having theophanic elements. Indeed the christophany and the theophany of Apc 4 appear to be sharply distinguished. Yet comparing Jesus to the living creatures and to the elders confirmed that Jesus was perceived as divine in the Apc. In this chapter we saw the paradox expressed in a different way: Jesus Christ is identified with God yet looks like an angel.

In Chapter Eight we confirmed what is well-known, namely that the language of Apc 1.13-16 reflects the influence of texts from Daniel, Ezekiel, and other OT writings. We also drew attention to the possible influence of Zech 1.8 on the setting of the christophany. Drawing on our study of glorious angels and angelomorphic figures with similar appearances in writings outside the OT we argued that the form of the risen Jesus was the form of an angel. In the light of the traditional view that Apc 1.14, which reflects the influence of Dn 7.9, is illustrative of the divinity of Jesus Christ we sought to strengthen our case. We noted that the influence of Dn 7.9 was a feature of other epiphanies which did not involve divine figures. We confirmed our doubts about the influence of Dn 7.13 LXX and offered an alternative proposal. We suggested that 1 *En.* 106.2-5 provides a model for the christophany and that this model is consistent with our argument that the christophany is similar to an angelophany.

We also argued that although presented as an angelomorphic figure the risen Jesus was probably perceived to be neither an angel nor an angelomorphic exalted human. Rather, the divine Jesus Christ was perceived to have taken up angelic form temporarily in line with some of the angelic transformations we had observed in Part One. In this way the paradox of Jesus Christ's identity with God while being equivalent to an angel in form and function can be resolved.

When we examined Apc 14.14 in Chapter Nine we argued that the son of man figure portrayed there is in fact Jesus Christ and not an angel. Yet our study recognised the ambiguity in the portrayal of Jesus, namely that although not an angel he is portrayed as though he were an angel. We argued in particular that the feature whereby an angel commands an ignorant Jesus to wield his sickle reflects the temporary separation of Jesus from the divine throne. Once again we found that the appearance of Jesus Christ as an angelic figure reflects the perception that temporarily Jesus assumes an angelic mode of being.

We therefore argued that Apc 14.14 is more likely to reflect the influence of angelology than angel christology but that the resulting portrayal of Jesus to a certain extent anticipates the dispensational angel christology of Origen.

Our investigation in Chapter Ten drew out four features of the portrayal of Jesus in Apc 19.11-16 which suggested the influence of angelology: a rider on a horse, leadership of the heavenly armies, the secret name, and the *Logos*-name. We observed that bearing the secret name and the *Logos*-name is consistent with our insight into the temporary assumption of angelomorphic form, for both names suggest that the true nature of Jesus Christ is bound up with God, hidden from human sight.

The major influence of angelology on the christology of the Apc may be explained therefore in the following way. In the perception of the Apc Jesus Christ is divine yet he is presented as equivalent to an angel both in function and form. Our study in Part One led us on the one hand to emphasise that the form of the risen Jesus is the form of an angel and not of a divine being and on the other hand to suggest that the explanation for the appearance of Jesus as an angel lay in the idea that various figures were believed to have been able to be



transformed temporarily into an angel.

The minor influences of angelology on the christology of the Apc are expressed in a variety of ways including the setting of the christophany in Apc 1.12-13, and the angelic characteristics of the son of man figure in Apc 14.14 and of the Rider in Apc 19.11-16.

## **§11.2 BROADER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **§11.2.1 The Christology of the Apocalypse**

We indicated in Chapter One that our consideration of the christology of the Apc would be restricted. It is appropriate, however, to make a few points about the relationship between our investigation and those aspects of the christology which we have not considered.

First, the fact that Jesus Christ in the Apc is also presented as a lamb confirms that our approach is along the right lines. Since he is not consistently presented in angelomorphic form he is unlikely to be an angel in his essential nature. The twofold presentation of Jesus Christ in both angelomorphic and animal form suggests that his true nature is neither as an angel nor as an animal but lies somewhere else.

Secondly, the title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (Apc 2.18) encapsulates at least two aspects of the christology:

(i) the appointment of Jesus as Christ or Messiah (e.g. Apc 2.26-28) which draws on Ps 2.9 where the king is declared by God to be his son (Ps 2.7),

(ii) the identity of Jesus Christ with God.

We would suggest that this title also encapsulates a third aspect:

(iii) the adoption by Jesus Christ of the form and function of an angel, that is, of 'a son of God'.

Thirdly, our conclusions cohere with the possibility that Jesus Christ has existed eternally with God so that one may talk of his 'pre-existence' which is hinted at in *Apc* 3.14 and 13.8.

### §11.2.2 An Early Christology?

There has been something of a tendency in recent scholarship to see in the christology of the Apocalypse the expression of a christology whose comparative age belies the lateness of the book itself. Thus Hurtado has argued that the christophany in *Apc* 1.13-16 is 'probably representative' of visionary experiences in the first decades of the church's life.<sup>1</sup> In a recent article Yarbrow Collins argues that consideration of the 'Son of Man' tradition in the *Apc* leads to the conclusion that,

'In the book of Revelation ... we seem to have an independent development of a very early christological tradition'.<sup>2</sup>

It would be inappropriate in the 'Conclusion' to begin a detailed discussion of such propositions. But it is appropriate to point out that our study points away from such conclusions towards a date for the christology in the likely period of the composition itself.

On the one hand, although the christophany of the *Apc* may reflect an ancient epiphanic account such as 1 *En.* 106.2-5, it compares favourably with angelophanies found in (probably) late first century CE (or later) apocalypses and related writings such as *Apc. Abr.*, *Apc. Zeph.*, and *Jos. Asen.*

On the other hand, John's use of the expression υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου could be satisfactorily explained in terms of John's own meditations on the significance of Daniel in the light of the sacking of Jerusalem and the (threat of) persecutions against the church in Asia Minor in line with the apparently similar meditative activity of the authors of (probably) late first century CE works such as *Sim. En.*, 4 *Ezra*, and *Syr. Baruch*. Further, presenting Jesus Christ as an angelomorphic figure is not well attested by the earliest Christian writings but is at least

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<sup>1</sup>Hurtado, *God*, 120.

<sup>2</sup>Yarbrow Collins, "Tradition", 568.

## §11 Conclusion

hinted at in later works such as *Asc. Is.* and becomes increasingly explicit in literature stemming from the second century and later.

The christology of the Apc would appear, therefore, to be one in keeping with the period of its composition, that is, the latter part of the first century CE.

### **§11.3 FINALLY ...**

It is a commonplace that the Apc is a deep mystery comparable to the sea which is never mastered and continues to yield its treasures through the centuries. The christology of the Apc is not different to the Apc itself in this regard. It has been our privilege to explore deep waters and as a consequence to offer some insights which we trust are profitable to fellow explorers. It is our hope that what has been proposed herein might lead to further exploration by those capable of diving to yet deeper depths than we have been able to do.

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