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The Angel of Revelation -An Angel of God and an Icon of Jesus Christ

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A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Saint Louis University in Partial Fulfillment of
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The angel of Rev 10 is unique in biblical literature in his description and role. The dissertation is a critique of this angel, his person and role and relationship to God and Christ.

The first chapter is an introduction to the subject. The second is a review of interpretations of Rev 10 and its angel. Chapter three sketches the tradition of angel-theophanies in Jewish and Christian writings. In chapter four a critical analysis is given of the appearance of the angel, and in chapter five that of his posture and role. Finally, in chapter six the relationship of the angel and Christ is considered. Chapter seven forms a summary and conclusion of the subject.

The purpose of the dissertation is to determine who the angel is through an examination of his appearance and role and by analyzing his relationship to God and Christ. A search and review of possible sources were made to determine whether such literary aids could help in interpreting the appearance and role of the angel. The relationship of the angel and Christ was also compared and analyzed to discover why the author of Revelation has and uses such an angel.

The conclusion of the dissertation is that the angel of Rev 10 is the angel through whom God and Jesus Christ give the message of Revelation to

John (1:1; 22:6, 16). The angel who thus prophetically commissions John is under the authority of God and acts in the place of Christ. The author of Revelation uses the angel to illustrate the exalted status of Christ as the revelator of God and to enhance his co-regency with God. He also uses the angel to portray the importance of the universality of the message that John is to proclaim.

The angel of Rev 10 then serves as an icon of Christ and illustrates an angel Christology.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the Revelation of St. John angels appear with more frequency than in any other book of the New Testament.[1] The roles that they perform are varied, but mediation is predominant. In the revelatory structure of the book, as it is established in Rev 1:1 (see also 22:6, 16), angels mediate the message of the revelation that God and Jesus Christ give to John and the church.[2] Of the many angels who appear in the book, one stands out because of his dress and role, the angel of Rev 10. He is the only angel in Revelation who is described in terms that reflect the glory of God, and he is the only heavenly figure, in addition to Jesus Christ, who commissions John. Among biblical angelophanies of the Old and New Testaments he bears characteristics found nowhere else.[3] In Revelation these characteristics are used to demonstrate that the angel of Rev 10 acts on behalf of both God and Jesus Christ. This mediating role is unique in Revelation, as well as in the NT and the Christian tradition, though not in the Jewish.

The appearance and commissioning role of the angel of Rev 10 poses two interesting questions. First, if Revelation is a literary unit[4], why does the author use an angel to commission John in Rev 10 when earlier in chapter one

Jesus Christ had already commissioned him.[5] Second, who is the angel and what is the relationship between him and Jesus Christ with whom he shares some of the same insignia?

As early as the sixth century Primasius thought the angel of Rev 10 was Jesus Christ,[6] an interpretation that is held by many to this day.[7] Many commentators, however, believe that the angel is not to be identified as Christ but is only an angel "in the technical sense which is maintained throughout the book."[8]

The purpose of this dissertation is to critically analyze the angel of Rev 10 to determine his relationship with Jesus Christ and the author's use of him as a mediating commissioner. It will be suggested that the angel is not Jesus Christ, but rather the angel of Jesus Christ. While this identification of the angel as Christ's angel is not new,[9] the proposal of the purpose and role of this angel is. It will be proposed that the angel of Christ in the prologue (1:1) and the angel of God and of Christ in the epilogue (22:6, 16) are to be identified with angel of Rev 10, thus setting him forth as the prime revelatory angel of Revelation. It will be shown that the author uses the angel for a two-fold purpose: first, as a picture or icon of Christ's own revelatory role in Revelation; secondly, as a pictorial reminder of the universal importance of the message he mediates.

The subject matter will be introduced in chapters two and three. Chapter two will be a review of the various interpretations of the angel up to

the present; chapter three will offer a review of the tradition of angel-theophanies in Jewish and Christian writings. Chapters four and five will present a detailed analysis of the angel of Rev 10. In chapter four the angel's appearance and dress, together with possible literary sources, will be examined to determine the author's identification of the angel; chapter five will be a similar examination of the angel's posture and role in order to determine the author's use of such an angel. Finally, chapter six will offer a comparative overview of the angel and Jesus Christ in order to come to a possible conclusion as to the relationship between the two.

NOTES

[1]The word "angel" throughout the book of Revelation refers to heavenly beings, with the possible exception of chapters 2 and 3. But even here, as Adela Yarbro Collins (The Apocalypse, New Testament Message, 22, edited by Wilfrid Harrington and Donald Senior [Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1979], 15) suggests, the angels of the seven churches are most likely heavenly beings. The word ἄγγελος appears 176 times in the New Testament, of which number 67 times it appears in Revelation.

[2]In commenting on Revelation 1:1-2 Collins (Ibid., 5), for example, states, "Even Jesus does not communicate directly with each of his followers, but sends his angel to John, who finally bears witness to the other believers concerning what he has seen and heard.

[3]See André Feuillet, "Le chapitre X de l'Apocalypse son apport dans la solution du problème eschatologique," Sacra Pagina, Alterum (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1959): 417. In recognizing the uniqueness of the angel Heinrich Kraft (Die Offenbarung des Johannes, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament; Vol. 16a [Tübingen: Mohr, 1974], 146) entitles Rev. 10:1-7 the "Theophanie durch den Engel des Herrn."

[4]Among the proponents of the literary unity of Revelation are Wilhelm Bousset, Die Offenbarung Johannis, Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, Heinr. Aug. Wilh. Meyer, 6th ed. (Göttingen:Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1906), 142-48; Henry Barclay Swete, The Apocalypse of St. John (London: MacMillan, 1906), xlvi-liv; Günther Bornkamm, "Die Komposition der apokalyptischen Visionen in der Offenbarung Johannis," Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 36 (1937): 132-49; André Feuillet, The Apocalypse, trans. Thomas E. Crane (Staten Island: Alba House, 1975), 32-3; Adela Yarbro Collins, The Combat Myth in the Book Revelation, Harvard Theological Review, Harvard Dissertations in Religion, ed. Caroline Bynum and George Rupp, 9 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 13-44.

[5]A possible answer could be that there were two different sources. Already in the last century Friedrich Spitta (Die Offenbarung des Johannes [Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1889], 103-120) suggested that there were three sources, one Christian and two that were Jewish, that the

author or redactor used. In the present century M. E. Boismard ("'L'Apocalypse', ou 'Les Apocalypses' de S. Jean," Review Biblique 56 [1949]: 507-41) deduced that there were two sources written by the same author, but at different times. But neither suggest that the detecting of different sources is due to two commissioning heavenly figures in Revelation.

[6]Swete, Apocalypse, 126.

[7]J. Wellhausen, Analyse der Offenbarung Johannis (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1907), 14; Philip Carrington, The Meaning of Revelation (London: Society of Propagation of Christian Knowledge, 1931), 173; Donald Gray Barnhouse, Revelation, An Expository Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 179; Walter Scott, Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ (London: Pickering and Inglis, 1956), 219. See also Kraft (Offenbarung Johannes, 147) who identifies the angel with the "angel of the Lord" in the Old Testament.

[8]Swete, Apocalypse, 126. See also R. H. Charles, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1920), 1:258-59; E. B. Allo, Saint Jean L'Apocalypse (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1933), 138; Bousset, Offenbarung, 307-308; Eduard Lohse, Die Offenbarung des Johannes, Das Neue Testament Deutsch (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1966), 60; G. B. Caird, A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine, Harper's New Testament Commentaries (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 125-26; Robert H. Mounce, The Book of Revelation, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 138.

[9]For example, Caird (Commentary on Revelation, 125-26), says, "He bears the delegated attributes of deity, but he is also the angel of Jesus Christ . . . ."

CHAPTER II

THE FUNCTION OF REVELATION 10 WITHIN REVELATION

A REVIEW OF INTERPRETATIONS

Introduction

Chapters ten and eleven (10:1-11:13) form a literary unit which stands as an interlude between the sixth (9:13-21) and seventh trumpets (11:14-19),[1] and which serves as an introduction to the second part of the prophetic message of Rev 12:1-22:5.[2] As an interlude 10:1-11:13 parallels chapter seven, which is an interlude between the sixth (6:12-17) and seventh seals (8:1-5). As an introduction to the second part of the prophetic message 10:1-11:13 parallels chapter one, which serves as an introduction to the first part of the message, chapters two through eleven.[3] In Rev 1:9-20 John is commissioned by Jesus Christ to write to the seven churches things that would be revealed to him. The scroll of seven seals (5:1), which is introduced by the throne scene of God in chapters four and five, has as its contents chapters six through eleven, as indicated by the author's literary use of the seven seals. The first six seals introduce the contents of chapters six and seven. The seventh seal introduces the seven angels of the trumpets (8:1-6) who in turn introduce the contents of chapters eight through eleven. Similarly, John is commissioned a second time

by the angel of Rev 10 to convey to all peoples a prophetic message. The message is depicted as a small scroll in the angel's hand which is given to John to eat (10:2, 8-11).[4]

The interlude of Rev 10:1-11:13 has two parts, 10:1-11 and 11:1-13. Chapter ten, the concern of our study, contains the vision of the angel and scroll by which John is commissioned. Chapter 11:1-13 contains visions which illuminate and introduce the contents of the scroll of the angel in chapter ten.[5] Though chapters ten and eleven (vv. 1-13) form a single literary unit, they may be distinguished from each other,[6] for they form two parts that are each complete in themselves. For example, each part has its own distinguishable function, the first (10:1-11) of commissioning and the second (11:1-13) of illumination. Together they serve as an introduction to the second major portion of the message of Revelation (12:1-22:5). This introduction is placed between the sixth (9:13-21) and seventh trumpets (11:14-19) and therefore is also described as an interlude. As an introduction, 10:1-11-11:13 seems to be misplaced, coming as it does between the sixth and seventh trumpets and not between 11:19 and 12:1. However, the placement of 10:1-11:13 between the sixth and seventh trumpets serves as an interlude similar to the interlude of Rev 7 which comes between the sixth (6:12-17) and seventh seals (8:1-5).[7]

The Angel

The uniqueness of the angel of Rev 10 has long been recognized. Three extant Greek commentaries from the first millennium of the Christian

era, Oecumenius (sixth century), Andreas (sixth or seventh century), and Arethas (tenth century),[8] all interpret the angel to be a created angel who is enveloped by godly powers and symbols. These godly powers and symbols indicate and make visible the heavenly and diversified moral excellence with which God has endowed the angels.[9] Oecumenius says that the mighty angel from heaven came to John for the purpose of retribution and was clothed in a cloud to visibly exhibit his formless and invisible (τὸ ἀειδὲς καὶ ἀόρατον) state as an angel. He bore a bow over his head to indicate his glorious role. His face shone like the sun to display his natural preeminence as a created angel of the heavenly realm.[10]

Commentaries of the Latin Fathers usually identify the angel as Jesus Christ and/or with God.[11] The earliest extant commentary of Revelation is that of Victorinus, bishop of Pettau in Pannonia (d. c. 304).[12] He says that the mighty angel of Rev 10 signifies or portends the Lord Christ because his face was like the sun.[13] Similarly, Augustine in a homily, number seven of nineteen on the exposition of Revelation,[14] identifies the angel as Jesus Christ, appearing as the Lord of the church in his resurrected glory. And later in the sixth century Primasius, bishop of Hadrumetum in North Africa, in a commentary on Revelation also interprets the angel to be Jesus Christ descending from heaven as the Lord of the church.[15]

Several later Latin commentators, in addition to identifying the angel as Jesus Christ, associate him with the angelus magni consilii of Isa 9:6 and with

the angelus testamenti Dei of Mal 3:9. In Isa 9:6 the LXX has the insertion, καὶ καλεῖται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτου Μεγάλης Βουλῆς ἄγγελος, which is absent in the Massoretic text. The child that was to be born, according to the LXX, would be called the "angel of the great council." Bede, for example, states that the angel of Rev 10 is Dominus magni consilii angelus descendit de caelo.[16] He also identifies the angel, because he is enveloped in a cloud, with the Lord who rides on a light or swift cloud as he comes to Egypt as described in Isa 19:1. Similarly, Haymo, bishop of Halberstadt (ninth century), after stating that the angel is Jesus Christ, says that Christ now as the angel of the great council comes to John to announce new things.[17] He also identifies the angel with God who enters Egypt on a cloud. A Latin Father from the twelfth century, Rupert, a scholastic theologian who was abbott of Deutz near Cologne, interprets the angel to be Jesus Christ in his resurrected glory.[18] He too identifies him as the angel of the great council, but in addition he also speaks of him as the angel of God's covenant (Mal 3:1).

Anselm of Laon (d. 1117), known as the "Laudunensis" theologian and who was educated by St. Anselm of Canterbury, summarizes well the Latin tradition concerning the angel of Rev 10.[19] The angel, according to Anselm, was Jesus Christ who comes from heaven so that he can be recognized as a heavenly messenger. The cloud in which the angel is enveloped signifies the incarnation for the sake of man. The rainbow or halo signifies the peace of God with man. The angel's face is like the sun so that he can truly be recog-

nized as Jesus Christ who illuminates everything. And in his posture of standing over land and sea he swears so that he might confirm that as Christ arose from the dead so Christians will arise through him.

The Latin tradition thus recognizes the angel of Rev 10 as Jesus Christ in his resurrected glory, whose description indicates that he is the Lord of the church. The Latin tradition also identifies Jesus Christ as the "angel of the great council" and as the "angel of God's covenant" as prophesied by Isaiah and Malachai.[20]

From the time of the Reformation to the present commentators remain divided in the identification of the angel of Rev 10.[21] In the eighteenth century, for example, Bengal and Grotius continued the traditions of the Greek and Latin Fathers, Bengal agreeing with the Greek Fathers in interpreting the angel as a created heavenly figure, and Grotius more with the Latin Fathers in associating the angel with Jesus Christ.[22] In the last century Alford maintained that the angel could not be Jesus Christ because angels throughout Revelation are everywhere distinct from divine persons.[23] Angels are ministers of divine purposes and are even "invested with such symbols and such delegated attributes as beseem in each case the particular object in view," but they never are identified as the divine person himself.[24] Alford echoes what Züllig had said earlier in the century, who believed that the angel was invested with the insignia and attributes that are elsewhere assigned only to God. The angel was "invested with insignia" because of the great task entrusted to him

by God.[25] However, the investiture of "insignia and attributes" motivated Hengstenberg to retort, "We cannot suppose with Züllig that Jehovah had communicated to the angel his proper insignia, for these are not communicable," and such investiture would be contrary to the divine word, "I will not give my glory to another."[26]

The problem of the identity of the angel at the present time still remains. Perhaps Ford best typifies this inability of concise identification when she says that while Rev 10 describes an angel, "there are also hints at a theophany."[27] These "hints at a theophany" suggest an "oscillation" between angel and divinity similar to that between "angel and Shekinah" in the OT (Exod 13:21; 14:19).[28] The problem, simply stated, is that while the "insignia" of the angel suggest a being of divine status, the overall description in Rev 10 evokes hesitation or denial in identifying the angel as God or Jesus Christ. Barnhouse, for example, finds it difficult to assert that the angel is not Jesus Christ and would like to believe that he is, but is restrained from doing so. In the end he believes that it is safest to say that we cannot be sure whether the mighty messenger is Christ or only an angelic being of an exalted rank like that of an archangel.[29] Foremost among commentators who believe that the angel cannot be Jesus Christ are Charles and Bousset. Charles maintains that while the identification of the angel as God is "ingenious," it is "wholly against not only the present context, but the spirit of later Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic." He continues by saying, "Nor is the strong angel to be identified with

Christ, as Christ is never designated as an angel in the Apoc.."[30] Bousset believes that it is more natural to think of the angel as an angel and not as Christ, for the descriptive characteristics and attributes point to the "overwhelming and glorious appearance of the angel."[31]

But the identification of the angel as God or Jesus Christ also has its adherents. Philip Carrington, for one, interprets the angel to be divine and that we are to see in him God himself in action through his "Word." He is or represents "the whole process of God's revelation," for he is the Logos of God which came to the prophets in the OT.[32] Heinrich Kraft, for another, in a commentary on Revelation published in 1974, some forty years after that of Carrington, also identifies the angel of Rev 10 as a divine figure. But while Carrington interprets the divine figure as the Logos of God, Kraft resorts to the "Angel of Yahweh" idea of the OT as a way of interpreting the angel.[33] The angel is a theophany through which God becomes visible on earth, similar to the way that he was with his people in the Exodus through an angel (Exod 13:21; 14:19). But here in Rev 10 the "Angel of the Lord" is to be understood Christologically because of the sun reflected light of the angel's face, which is the property of the exalted Christ in Rev 1. The angel, according to Kraft, is thus a picture of God's visible presence in Jesus Christ with his people. By implication then, Kraft is saying that the angel is Jesus Christ, and as such plays the same role that the "Angel of the Lord" played in the OT.[34]

To sum up, the identity of the angel in Rev 10 remains an enigma. The

consensus is that he bears the "insignia" of God and Christ. But whether the "insignia" suggest that he is a divine being or a lesser heavenly being clothed in divine attributes, is in question. To date, this question has not been resolved. In chapter three below the "insignia" will be evaluated in detail to attempt to resolve this question.

Literary Structure of Revelation

It is only since the nineteenth century that commentators have begun to analyze the structure of Revelation. In two recent studies by Collins and Mazzaferri,[35] the work that has been done with regard to the structure of Revelation is reviewed, and the importance of the literary structure in coming to an understanding of the book and its message is pointed out. While in the past attention focused on the images and symbols to arrive at an interpretation of Revelation, today attention centers on the structure as well. As a result, there are two important factors that must be studied and evaluated if Revelation is to be correctly understood: the book has a definite and coherent structure; and its images and narrative patterns are best understood in the framework of this structure.

There is, however, no consensus in current research on Revelation with regard to the overall structure of the book, and how the structure should be interpreted. The root of the problem is the presence of numerous parallel passages and repetitions in the book.[36] This problem of repetition and its effect on the meaning of Revelation has long been known. Alcuin as early as

the eighth century recognized the repetitive aspect of Revelation. In his commentary on Revelation, in reference to Rev 10:1, he says that the alium refers not so much to a different or distinct angel, but rather quia aliam visionem repetivit.[37] Haymo, a century later, in his Expositio in Apocalypsin refers to the same thought and clarifies it when he says that the angel is called alium not because it is another angel, but because it is another vision which recapitulates all things that have been revealed up to chapter ten.[38] Rupert of Deutz also exhibits an awareness of the repetitive nature of Revelation in his analysis of chapters one and ten in his commentary on Revelation.[39] That Revelation had an intelligent structure and unity, certainly is not a find only of modern study as the earliest extant commentaries witness.[40] But it is only with modern critical studies, beginning in the nineteenth century, that the structure of Revelation has been analyzed and seen as an important factor in the interpretation of the book, and that the problem of the repetitions has been fully treated.

Modern critical scholarship offers two basic options for explaining the parallels and repetitions in Revelation: they result either from a compilation of different sources or from the literary design of the author.[41] While the commentaries of the church Fathers indicate that the repetitive characteristics were due to the literary design of the author,[42] modern literary-critical scholarship, beginning with the appearance of Völter's analysis of Revelation in 1882, suggested that it was due to the compilation of different sources.[43] Spitta's

commentary in particular is an early example of such an analysis, and more than anyone else he can be called the father of the literary-critical approach to Revelation.[44] Spitta argued that the visions of seven seals, trumpets and bowls each reflect a source based on a seven-fold series.[45] Starting from these three series of seven, he determined that there were altogether three major sources which a redactor put together in the book:[46] A Christian apocalyptic source; a first Jewish apocalyptic source; and a second Jewish apocalyptic source.[47] According to Spitta the three source theory of Revelation answers the problem of the parallels and repetitions, not only between one part of the book and another, but also between apparent parallels within the same chapter.[48] An example of a more recent scholar who uses the source-critical approach is Boismard.[49] Instead of using Spitta's three sevenfold series of seals, trumpets and bowls as a starting point, Boismard uses the frequency of doublets in which opposing descriptions are given,[50] or in which parallel descriptions are given of the same event.[51] He believes that instead of three sources, there were two prophetic compositions of visions written by the same author at different times which were fused into one book by a later author or redactor.[52]

Not all modern critical scholarship has opted for the source-critical theory of Spitta and others. As early as 1906 Swete favored the literary unity of Revelation.[53] He acknowledges that the literary unity of Revelation "has been and still is hotly disputed by scholars of the first rank," but he himself

felt compelled by the evidence at hand, in particular its unity of style, to admit and hold to the literary unity of the book.[54] Even earlier Bousset questioned the source theory and defended the literary unity of Revelation. He believed that the repetitions were a part of the literary design of the author.[55] Thus in both the English and German speaking worlds the source-critical theory was challenged by noted scholars. Several scholars followed Swete and Bousset in looking upon Revelation as a literary unity, but they were not in agreement as to what the literary unity meant for the interpretation of the book.[56] Those who advocate the literary unity of the composition of Revelation are divided as to whether the literary design of the author was planned according to a linear sequence of events, or according to a designed repetition in which the same events were given several times in different ways.[57] This latter alternative was called by Bousset the recapitulation theory.[58]

The recapitulation theory was actually the interpretation of the oldest extant commentary on Revelation, that of Victorinus of Pettua.[59] But the recapitulation theory was pushed aside, together with the literary-unity conception of Revelation, when interest in the literary-critical approach was encouraged by Völter, Spitta and others.[60] When the literary-unity theory was revived by Swete, Bousset and others, they and those who followed them in this theory were divided as to how and in what way this theory was to be applied to Revelation. Some applied it in the linear method of interpretation, while others applied it in the recapitulation method of interpreting the book.[61]

While Swete and Allo leaned towards the recapitulation method,[62] Charles and Weiss, for example, followed the linear method of interpretation.[63] Bousset took the medium position between the linear and recapitulation methods. He is critical of the recapitulation method but acknowledges that one cannot totally dispense with it.[64] What confuses the picture is that while exegetes have interpreted Revelation either in a world-historical view or in an eschatological way, they do so according to a linear or recapitulation design of the structure of the book. Thus, whatever design one follows in interpreting Revelation, one can use it either historically or eschatologically.[65]

While interpreters as Swete and Allo suggested that the recapitulation theory could not be dispensed with in interpreting Revelation as a unified literary composition, it was not until Günther Bornkamm that it became an acceptable scholarly theory. In an article published in 1937, Bornkamm outlined a structure of Revelation in which he espoused the recapitulation theory in a defense of the unified literary structure of Revelation.[66] The visions of the book are organized into two large sections, 8:2-14:20 and 15:1-19:21, each of which is parallel to the other in structure and content.[67] He argued that most of the body of Revelation, the collection of visions, was meant to be the revelation of the contents of the seven-sealed scroll of chapter five, which covered not only the two parallel sections of 8:2-14:20 and 15:1-19:21 but also the visions in 20:1-22:5.[68] The angel and the opened scroll of chapter ten do not play an important role in the schema of the structure as

outlined by Bornkamm. In place of two dominating heavenly figures, the angel and Jesus Christ, there is only the one, Jesus Christ. The angel and the small scroll only serve as an impetus in completing the revelation of the seven-sealed scroll.[69]

In a book published in 1949, Austin Farrer carried the recapitulation theory even further.[70] Farrer saw in Revelation not two parallel sections as did Bornkamm, but six. According to the schema that he suggested, each of the six sections is based on the number seven, for each section has seven parts or visions.[71] He was not the first to realize that Revelation is structured according to a plan of a series of seven.[72] But he was the first to interpret the series-of-seven structure according to the recapitulation theory. Farrer believed that John in Revelation was creating a new form of literature which resulted in "a standing cyclic pattern" which was "the literary miracle of the Apocalypse."[73] The apocalyptic tradition in Judaism is nothing like the literary form of the Christian Apocalypse of John. The apocalypses we know are for the most part formless and have no literary structure. What form they possess is more a continuous paraphrasing of scripture or a repetitious use of lists, as when the Twelve Patriarchs make their testament.[74] In contrast, according to Farrer, the Christian Apocalypse of John was a carefully structured literary composition patterned after the seven days of creation and the Jewish festival calendar and lectionary. In a later commentary on Revelation Farrer changed his emphasis from the liturgical calendar to the "half-week of

tribulation" in Daniel as a basis for the pattern of the series-of-seven structure of Revelation.[75]

More recent scholars who view the composition of Revelation as a literary unit patterned after the series-of-seven schema according to the recapitulation theory are Françios Rousseau and Adela Collins.[76] Rousseau believes that Revelation has a planned structure of the following cycles: a cycle of inaugural visions; a cycle of visions of the throne; and the series-of-seven cycles. This structure of cycles has as its purpose the illustration of two truths: Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega; and the church in heaven is intimately linked with the church on earth.[77] The main part of the message of Revelation is the series-of-seven cycles. The inaugural visions serve as introductions to the series-of-seven cycles, while the throne visions serve as links or transitions from one series-of-seven cycle to another. For example, the first series-of-seven cycle of the seven letters, 1:1-5:14, is introduced by the inaugural vision of Christ, the Son of Man, 1:9-20. The throne vision of 4:1-5:14 links the first series-of-seven cycle to the second series-of-seven, the seven seals beginning in 6:1.[78] Rousseau has difficulty relating chapter ten to his schema of the overall structure of Revelation. The description of the angel appears to him to be redactional. The structure of chapter ten is not solid or cohesive, and it does not seem to fit into the original structure of the book.[79]

Collins agrees with Farrer and Rousseau in maintaining that Revelation is structured according to a series-of-seven organizing principle, but she places

much more importance on chapter ten in her schema.[80] While Farrer sees primarily six parallel sections and Rousseau seven, Collins believes there are five parallel series of visions which make up the body of Revelation.[81] These five series of visions each recapitulate the threefold pattern of persecution, punishment of the nations, and the triumph of God and the Lamb together with the faithful.[82] Each of the five series of visions also recapitulates the same pattern of eschatological events within the above three-fold pattern. The five series of visions are organized in two great cycles, 1:9-11:19 and 12:1-22:5. The first two of the five series are in the first cycle, and the last three are in the second cycle. In the overall structure of Revelation the seven messages of chapters two and three are attached to the first two series of visions in the first cycle. Thus each cycle consists of three series-of-seven.[83] The first cycle is introduced by the vision of the Son of Man (1:9-3:22), and it relates the contents of the seven-sealed scroll of chapters four and five. The second cycle is introduced by the angel of chapter ten, and the opened scroll in his hand symbolizes the revelation contained in the second cycle. The author of Revelation is thus commissioned twice, once for each cycle (Rev 1 and 10). In this schema of the structure of Revelation Jesus Christ and the angel play parallel and equal roles.[84]

In the literary structure as proposed by Mazzaferri, chapter ten also plays an important role, parallel to that of chapter one.[85] According to Mazzaferri's interpretation, the contents of both the seven-sealed scroll of Rev 5

and the scroll of the angel of Rev 10 are the same, that is, the entire prophetic message of the book (4:1-22:5). "Christ's initial command, γράψον, 1:11," applies to the entire book. Similarly, "the commissioning of 10:11 applies to the entire book as well, as John's opening words, 1:1, indicate."[86] While Jesus Christ first communicates to the churches by way of the seven-sealed scroll, he speaks the same message to the world by way of the scroll of the angel. According to Mazzaferri it would be contrary and "utterly foreign" to the prophetic tradition, "including Ezek, John's prime exemplar," to have a "cardinal second commission."[87] But John has two commissions in order to keep with the pattern of revelation of Rev 1:1. John is commissioned by both Christ and the angel not because he is commissioned to prophesy two different messages. Rather, he is commissioned by both Christ and the angel because the revelation comes from Christ through his angel. The overall commissioner is Jesus Christ and thus acts first. The immediate commissioner, however, is the angel, for it is through the angel that John receives the message from Christ (1:1). In this interpretation of the two commissions Mazzaferri ranks first the commission of the angel, for it is from the angel that John actually receives his commission, though the originator of the commission is Christ.[88] But the prophetic message that John is commissioned by Christ and the angel to proclaim is the same. What Mazzaferri does is to make two commissions one. There are two separate descriptions of the one commission to indicate that the commission of John comes from and through two different heavenly figures as

mentioned in Rev 1:1. In addition, the same commission is given by way of two descriptions because there are two different audiences that are to receive the same message, the church (1:1,11) and the world (10:11).[89]

In the structural schema of Revelation proposed by Bornkamm, Farrer and Rousseau Rev 10 does not play the important role that it does in the schema of Collins and Mazzaferri. For Collins chapter ten is comparable to chapter one in that it governs the second cycle of visions as does chapter one the first cycle. This is due to the fact that Collins sees in the structure of Revelation two major parts or cycles, each with its own commissioning scene. For Mazzaferri chapter ten is comparable to chapter one because it gives a second description of the commission described in Rev 1. He interprets the structure of Revelation as one major part with lesser cycles within the one part. Farrer and Rousseau have instead of the two major parts of Collins and the one major part of Mazzaferri three or more, over which chapter one serves as the commissioning scene. Chapter ten, while it is also a commissioning scene, serves more as a continuation or "impetus" of the commissioning scene of chapter one than as a commissioning scene in its own right which introduces a new part of Revelation, as Collins has it, or as the dominant commission of Mazzaferri which repeats the first.

Fueillet had earlier, before Collins and Mazzaferri, laid the ground work for recognizing the importance of the role of chapter ten in the structural schema of Revelation.[90] While he himself did not work out a detailed schema

as did Farrer and Collins, he did recognize that Revelation falls into two major parts, each with its own commissioning scene and each with its own dominating revelatory figure, Jesus Christ and the angel of chapter ten. He believed that our present Revelation is "two successive Apocalypses," one beginning with chapter four and the other with chapter twelve. Each of these "successive Apocalypses," 4:1-11:19 and 12:1-22:5, is whole and complete, each a concrete work in itself.[91] Each part also has its own audience, that of chapters 4-11 the chosen of Israel and that of 12-22 the whole of humanity. While the first part resembles the OT, chapters 12-22 resembles the gospel of Jesus Christ.[92] Specifically, the first part shows the church in relationship to the world of the Jews; the second part concerns the church in relationship to the world.[93] In pointing out the importance of chapter ten in the schema of Revelation, Fueillet compares it more with chapter five than he does with chapter one.[94] He makes more use of the comparison of the scrolls of chapters five and ten than he does of the commissioning figures of Christ and the angel of chapters one and ten as do Collins and Mazzaferri. Nevertheless, he does acknowledge the importance of recognizing the commissioning roles of Christ and the angel.[95]

Critical Analysis of Revelation Ten

As was reviewed above, Spitta espoused the three-source-theory for the composition of Revelation.[96] In Rev 10 he detected two of the three sources. The redactor of Revelation used the two Jewish apocalyptic sources (J^1 and J^2)

to formulate Rev 10 by combining them together with a few editorial additions of his own.[97] For example, the redactor combined the two sources to create the mighty angel of verse one. From J^1 he took the ἄλλον ἄγγελον ἰσχυρὸν καταβαίνοντα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ and from J^2 the description περιβεβλημένον νεφέλην, καί ἡ ἶρις ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος, καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὡς στῦλοι πυρός, καὶ ἔχων ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ βιβλαρίδιον ἠνεωγμένον.[98] According to Spitta, the redactor thus combined an angelophany (J^1) with a theophany (J^2) to create the angel of chapter ten. The source for the dress of the angel (vv. 1b and 2a) in the second Jewish Apocalypse (J^2) was Ezek 2:26-28. Spitta points out that vv. 26-28 of Ezek 1 were the sources of both the theophany of the Ur-Christian Apocalypse in Rev 4:1-3 and of the theophany of the second Jewish Apocalypse (J^2) which we find in Rev 10:1b-2a.[99]

The question is then posed by Spitta: How could the redactor use the angelophany of J^1 together with elements from a theophany of J^2 to introduce the interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpets and yet to bind the two trumpets together? Why did he not use only the theophany. Spitta answers by suggesting that the redactor wanted to introduce into the theophany of his second Jewish source (J^2) the role of Christ, similar to the role of the Lamb which was in his Christian source which he had used to formulate the theophany of Rev 4 and 5. Thus through the angelophany of J^1 the redactor was able to introduce a Christ-like role in the theophany of J^2. From such a combina-

tion of his two Jewish sources the redactor formulated the mighty of angel of Rev 10, an angel that now performed the same role with regard to the seven-sealed scroll of chapter five. The redactor used the mighty angel as a Christ-like figure to recommission John. In Rev 1 he had used from his Christian source the Son of Man as a Christ-like figure to commission John the first time. In chapter ten John is commissioned through receiving and eating the scroll as Ezekiel was commissioned through a similar experience in 1:26-28 and 2:9-3:3. Spitta suggests that for such a combination of a theophany and angelophany, the redactor already had a model in Rev 14:14-16, which Spitta assigns to the second Jewish Apocalypse (J^2). In Rev 14:14-15, according to Spitta, the Son of Man sits on a cloud, and as an angel executes judgment.[100] He believes that the redactor in combining the theophany of J^2 with the angelophany of J^1 was consciously creating the heavenly angelic figure of chapter ten after the pattern of such a combination of a theophany and angelophany which he found in J^2 , Rev 14:14-15. The purpose of the angel-theophany of chapter ten was not to introduce a new book of visions, but rather to act as an Intermezzo between the sixth and seventh trumpet-angels in order to introduce the end-time. Spitta believes that the source for the mighty angel who introduces the end-time was Dan 12.[101]

Boismard, who espoused a two-source theory for Revelation,[102] detected also in chapter ten two sources. But his two sources do not match up with those of Spitta.[103] Nor does Boismard believe the redactor combined a

theophany and an angelophany to create the mighty angel. Rather, the redactor found the angelophany as we have it in chapter ten already in one of his two sources. Boismard's two sources are both Christian sources, written by the same author, John. Spitta's two sources for chapter ten were Jewish in origin and came from different periods and from different authors.[104] Thus two notable literary-source critics of Revelation do not agree in the number of sources, nor are they in agreement as to what the two sources are for chapter ten although they agree as to their number.

Neither Spitta nor Boismard were able to influence scholarship in its study of Revelation. For the most part the literary-source theory of interpretation has been rejected, and in its place scholarship has concentrated on the structure and composition of Revelation as a literary unit.[105] Within the overall structure of Revelation, chapter ten is increasingly being recognized as a pivotal chapter which introduces the second part of the prophetic message of the book. Also the integrity and literary unity of chapter ten is today accepted.[106] While the internal structure of the chapter is recognized as complex, it is a literary unit that contains no contradictions.[107] It is a skilled composition created by the author to serve as an introduction to the complex eschatological picture which is presented in Rev 12:1-22:5.[108]

Feuillet, for example, sees in Rev 10 three episodes: the seer's vision of the angel, verses 1-2; the angel's oath, together with the seven thunders, verses 3-7; and the prophet's investiture, verses 8-11.[109] He suggests that

the basic purpose of chapter ten is the introduction of the period of the preaching of the gospel, and as it serves this purpose, the chapter emphasizes the paradox which is to characterize this period. Although the end is near, still the end must be proceeded by an indeterminate period of waiting so that the gospel can be proclaimed. While the first part of the prophetic message of Revelation, chapters four through eleven, concerns primarily Judaism under the old covenant, Feuillet believes that the second part, chapters twelve through twenty-two, is concerned with the destiny of the church and the gospel. Chapter ten, which the author aptly inserts just before the end of the septet of the trumpets in the first part of Revelation, is a preparation for the second part which pictures the risen Christ as the absolute king of the nations.[110]

Other exegetes, in addition to Collins and Mazzaferri, who recognize chapter ten as an important pivotal chapter in the overall structure of Revelation, as well as its literary unity, are: Gaechter, who suggests that Rev 10 is the chapter that combines chapters 4-11 and 12-20 and relates them to each other; Bowman, who views the chapter as a fascinating interlude in John's drama of Revelation, akin to the "magician's choice" of an individual from his audience to serve as a momentary buffer to his act; and Gager, who says that Rev 10 provides "an indispensable clue to the author's hidden design" and to the understanding of the book as a whole.[111]

Not all modern exegetes, however, are entirely unanimous in the view of the literary integrity and importance of Rev 10. Rousseau, while viewing

chapter ten as a complex composition as does Feuillet, disagrees in recognizing the chapter as a carefully designed composition of the author. Instead, he believes that the chapter is not a solid design of the author, but rather the synthetic product of the redactor. For example, he suggests that verses 1c and 11 are a synthetic description of the millennium of 20:4-6.[112]

Summary

With few exceptions scholars have recognized the importance of chapter ten and its angel in the structure and interpretation of Revelation. While the purpose of this dissertation is not to evaluate and propose a literary structure of Revelation,[113] the above review of such proposals has been offered in order to point out the importance of Rev 10, however one interprets the structure of the entire book. That the angel of Rev 10 plays a dominant role in the book is the consensus of scholarship, past and present.[114]

As to the identity of the angel and his exact purpose in the role that he plays, a consensus in the scholarly world has not yet been resolved. A part of the problem is the relationship between the angel and Jesus Christ. Together with this is the perplexing question as to why John uses two commissionings, and by two different heavenly figures. On the one hand, the two heavenly commissioning figures, Christ and the angel, seem to be in competition or unnecessary. Already literary critics in the last century, in particular Völter and Spitta,[115] realized this problem. They sought an answer through source analysis. Though their conclusion that a redactor used different sources which

contained different commissioning figures has had adherents in the present century, in particular Boismard, [116] the majority of scholars has rejected this interpretation. Today there is a majority consensus that the structure of Revelation is a literary unit designed by the author himself. However, yet to be answered is the question concerning the author's use of two investiture figures.[117]

The determination of the identity of the angel is bound up with the question of his relationship to Jesus Christ. But what that relationship is has not been resolved. As a result, scholarship today has arrived at no consensus as to the angel's identity. While the majority of interpreters believe that the angel is not Jesus Christ, a minority still believes that he is, for example, Kraft.[118] But even among those who believe the angel is not Christ, no consensus prevails concerning the author's use of the angel and his role. This may be in part due to the fact that no detailed analysis has to date been made of the angel's appearance and dress and of his posture and role. In addition, no study has been undertaken to determine possible relationships between the angel of Rev 10 and similar angel-theophanies in the Jewish and Christian traditions. It is important then that the above be undertaken before the question of the relationship of the angel and Christ can be addressed.

NOTES

[1]Charles Homer Giblin ("Revelation 11:1-13: Its Form and Contextual Integration," New Testament Studies 30 [1984]: 434) prefers to call 10:1-11:13 an "enlargement" rather than an "interlude." He does so because he believes that 10:1-11:13 serves the purpose of clarifying the future. However, the majority of interpreters refer to this section of Revelation as an interlude. See G. R. Beasley-Murray, The Book of Revelation, New Century Bible (London: Butler and Tanner, 1978), 168-73.

[2]Collins (Combat Myth, 31) and André Feuillet ("Essai d'Interpretation du Chapitre XI de l'Apocalypse," New Testament Studies 4 [1957-58]: 183) divide the two parts into chapters 4-11 and 12-22. While this division of the parts prevails today, Friedrich Jacob Züllig (Die Pforte zur Offenbarung Johannis [Stuttgart: E. Schweizerbarts, 1840 and 1843], 1:129-32) divided the two parts into chaps. 4-7 and 8-22. See appendix for further discussion on this matter.

[3]Collins, Combat Myth, 20-1; Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 415-7.

[4]There is some question as to the contents of the scroll of the angel. While Collins (Combat Myth, 27) and Feuillet ("Le chapitre X," 416-17) believe the contents are Rev 11-22, others as Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:260); Mounce (Rev, 216); and F. F. Bruce ("The Revelation to John," A New Testament Commentary, ed. G. C. D. Howley [London: Pickering and Inglis, 1969], 649) identify the contents as 11:1-13. While it is not the purpose of the present study to evaluate and possibly determine the contents of the angel's scroll, a third possibility is Rev 8-22 (see n. 2 above) because of the author's use of angels to introduce the contents of Rev 8-22. He uses Jesus Christ to introduce the contents of the seven-sealed scroll (Rev 6-7), but from Rev 8 onward angels. See the appendix of the present study where this is discussed as a possible topic for further research.

[5]For example, Collins (Combat Myth, 27) says that it illuminates in the sense of picturing what happens as the message is proclaimed.

[6]Giblin, "Revelation 11:1-13," 435. In fact, as Giblin suggests, the two parts are "relatively isolated" from each other "if only because a different, additional prophetic action is mentioned at the outset" in 11:1.

[7]Ibid., 434. The seventh trumpet (11:14-19), which concludes the second sentenary of visions, pictures the celebration at the consummation of the kingdom of God. It is in view of this consummation, which is still in the future, that John and his readers are introduced to the second major portion of Revelation (12:1-22:5). Thus the introduction (10:1-11:13) of the second major portion is placed as an interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpets and serves the same purpose as the interlude of chapter seven does between the sixth and seventh seals in the first sentenary of visions, that of encouragement. As Leon Morris (The Revelation of St. John, The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, ed. R. V. G. Tasker [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969], 136) says, "As in the case of the seals, there is an interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpets. In both cases the effect is to set off the seventh visitation as particularly important." However, chapter seven as an interlude does not in addition serve as an introduction to that which is yet to be revealed as does 10:1-11:13. See Collins (Combat Myth, 16-32) who gives the rationale for such an interlocking parallelism as an aid in interpreting Revelation.

[8]Swete (Apocalypse, cxcvii-cc) gives a list of lost and extant Greek commentaries. For a critical edition see H. D. Hoskier, ed., The Complete Commentary of Oecumenius on the Apocalypse (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1928); and Josef Schmidt, Studien zur Geschichte des Grieschischen Apocalypse-Textes (München: Karl Zink, 1955) vol. 1, pt. 1 for the text of Andreas. For the text of Arethas see J. P. Migne, Patrologia Graeca, 106:493-786.

[9]J. A. Cramer, ed., Catenae Graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum (Oxford: Clarendon, 1880-1884) 8:326-34.

[10]Hoskier, Oecumenius, 105-6.

[11]Swete (Apocalypse, cc-cciv) lists thirteen from the third to the sixteenth centuries.

[12]Johannes Haussleiter, ed., Victorini Episcopi Petauionensis Opera, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Leipzig: G. Freytag, 1916; repr., New York: Johnson Reprint Company, 1965) 46:88; J. P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, 5:317-44.

[13]Ibid., 332-33.

[14]Ibid., 35:2429-32.

[15]Ibid., 68:863-66.

[16]Ibid., 93:160-62.

[17]Ibid., 117:1059-67.

[18]Ibid., 169:1003-16.

[19]Ibid., 162:1536-39.

[20]Other Latin Fathers who similarly interpret the angel are Ambrose (Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, 27, pt. 1:385-99); Tichonius of North Africa in the fifth century (PL, Supp., 1:640-42); Alcuin (PL, 100:1143-46); Bruno of Segni, abbot of Monte Casino in the twelfth century (Ibid., 165:657-60); and Richard, abbot of St. Victor in the twelfth century (Ibid., 196:788-91).

[21]For a list of commentators from the sixteenth century to the present see Swete (Apocalypse, cciv-ccvi); Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:clxxxiii-clxxxix); and Caird (Commentary on Revelation, ix-x).

[22]D. Joh. Alberti Bengelii, Gnomon Novi Testamenti 3d ed. (Berlin: Gust. Schlawitz, 1773) Rev. 10:1. Hugo Grotius, Annotationes in Novum Testamentum (Erlangen/Leipzig: Apud Ioannem Carolum Tetzchnerum, 1756) 2: Rev. 10:1. Grotius says that the angel relates to the person of Christ as angels were used to refer to the person of God in the Old Testament (Angelum, qui Christi personam referrt sicut angeli solebant Dei personam referre sub Veteri Testamento).

[23]Henry Alford, The Greek Testament (Cambridge: Deighton Bell, 1886) 4:649.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Züllig, Offenbarung, 2:140.

[26]E. W. Hengstenberg, The Revelation of St. John (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1952) 1:457. See Wellhausen (Analyse der Offenbarung, 14) who says that "Der Starke ist nach der Beschreibung nicht ein Engel, sondern Christus oder Gott selber."

[27]J. Massyngberde Ford, Revelation, Anchor Bible, Vol. 38 (Garden Cityf: Doubleday, 1975), 162.

[28]Ibid. See Austin Farrer (The Revelation of St. John the Divine [Oxford: Clarendon, 1964], 123) who says that the angel is a "portent and bearer of divinity," and Caird (Commentary on Revelation, 125-6) who says that the angel "bears the delegated attributes of deity, but he is also the angel of Jesus Christ, whose face John has seen shining like the sun (ch. 1:16)."

[29]Barnhouse, Revelation, 179. See Michael Wilcook (I Saw Heaven Opened, The Message of Revelation [Downers Grove: InterVaristy, 1975], 101) who believes that while the angel resembles Christ described in Rev 1, he is most likely the angel of the seventh trumpet.

[30]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:259. Charles does say, however, that the voices of 10:4 and 8 are probably that of Christ. See Swete (Apocalypse, 126); Allo (l'Apocalypse, 138); Mounce (Revelation, 207); Beasley-Murray (Book of Revelation, 170); and Morris (Revelation, 139) who also believe that the angel is not Jesus Christ.

[31]Bousset, Offenbarung Johannis, 307-8.

[32]Philip Carrington, Meaning of Revelation, 173-4.

[33]Kraft, Offenbarung des Johannes, 147.

[34]Ibid. Kraft believes that as in the Exodus when God through his angel was the leader of his people, so also in the time of the Apocalypse will God be present. The angel of Rev 10 takes on the image of God (Albild Gottes) as well as the attribute (Eigenschaft) of the exalted Christ, and thus serves as a picture of God's visible presence in Jesus Christ. See Berry Crebs (The Seventh Angel [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1938], 74) who says that the angel is Jesus Christ who comes down from heaven in the glory of his Father (cf. Matt 16:27); and Scott (Exposition of Revelation, 219) who maintains that the angel is an "uncreated being of divine majesty," the Lord Christ himself.

[35]Collins, Combat Myth, 5-55; Frederick David Mazzaferri, The Genre of the Book of Revelation from a Source-critical Perspective, Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche, Vol. 54 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1989), 331-74.

[36]Collins, Combat Myth, 8, 46-7 n. 21; Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 374.

[37]PL, 100:1143.

[38]Ibid., 117:1059-60. Hymo says that the angel is Jesus Christ, and that because he has come to announce new things, he is called angelus magni consilii as he was prophetically called by the prophet Isaiah (9:6). Alciun says

that John in Rev 10 designates Jesus Christ as an angel because he wishes now to show more fully the prophetic message that John has seen thus far.

[39]Ibid., 169:1003-16. This becomes clear in his treatment of a comparison of chapters one and ten, in particular the Son of Man and the angel. For example, after pointing out both the similarities and differences between the Son of Man and the angel, he concludes that both are Jesus Christ. He appears as the Son of Man in chapter one because he is such by nature, but he appears as the angel in chapter ten because he is exercising his office of revelator.

[40]Andreas of Caesarea, who died in 614, in the prologue of his commentary on Revelation divided the Apocalypse into 24 sections (λόγοι) after the number of the elders in Rev 4:4. Each of these sections was subdivided into three chapters (κεφάλια), an arrangement suggested to Andreas by the three-fold nature of man. See Schmidt, Apokalypse-Textes, I.1:7-11; and Swete, Apocalypse, xxxiii-xxxvi. Oecumenius in the sixth century divided Revelation into 12 λόγοι, and Primasius into 20 sections. See Hoskier, Commentary of Oecumenius, 29, 239; and Iohannes Haussleiter, Die lateinische Apocalypse der alten africanischen Kirche [Erlangen and Leipzig: Andr. Deichert, 1891] 179-83). Swete (Apocalypse, xxxiii) believes that the 72 κεφάλαια of Andreas represent fairly well the natural subdivisions of Revelation. As early as the third century Dionysius of Alexandria, according to Eusebius (HE, vii.25.1), gives evidence of an awareness of Revelation being structured according to divisions of κεφάλαια. See Swete, Apocalypse, xxxiii.

[41]Collins, Combat Myth, 8; Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 8.

[42]For example, Victorinus of Pettau (Haussleiter, Die lateinische Apocalypse, 84, 86); Tyconius and Augustine (Bousset, Offenbarung Johannis, 65-7; and Collins, Combat Myth, 47 n. 26).

[43]Daniel Völter, Die Entstehung der Apocalypse, Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Urchristentums (Tübingen: Mohr, 1882); Die Offenbarung Johannis, keine ursprünglich jüdische Apocalypse (Tübingen: Heckenhauer'sch, 1886). See Bousset, Offenbarung Johannis, 109-11; and Collins, Combat Myth, 9.

[44]Spitta, Die Offenbarung des Johannes. (Halle: Weisenhause, 1889) "Literary-critical" in this context refers primarily to the discernment of written sources. See also Collins, Combat Myth, 9; and Bousset, Offenbarung Johannis, 108.

[45]Spitta, Offenbarung des Johannes, 5-234. See also Bousset, Offenbarung Johannis, 113-4; and Collins, Combat Myth, 9.

[46]In the first section of his commentary Spitta (Offenbarung des Johannes, 5-234) discusses the composition of Revelation, and in the second part (235-463) he offers an explanation of the Quellenschriften.

[47]Ibid., 235-463. Each of the three sources has one of the series-of-seven visions: the Christian source contained the series-of-seven seals; the first Jewish source the series-of-seven trumpets; and the second Jewish source the series-of-seven bowls. Spitta divides the entire book of Revelation into these three sources, together with what the redactor added. (See Bousset, Offenbarung Johannis, 114 for a succinct listing of the three sources and of the contribution of the redactor.) Spitta also placed each source historically: the second Jewish source was written during the time of Pompey (1st century B.C.); the first Jewish source during the time of Caligula (37-41); and the Christian source was written around ten years before the destruction of Jerusalem (70). The activity of the redactor who compiled the present book of Revelation Spitta assigned to the second century (Ibid., 464). Spitta believed that the recognition of the sources was important for the interpretation of Revelation, which importance he discusses at length (Ibid., 464-548). In an appendix to his commentary Spitta gives the entire Greek text of Revelation according to each of the three sources.

[48]For example, Rev 10 is made up from the two Jewish sources which helps to solve the problems inherent in the chapter (Ibid., 103-20).

[49]Boismard, "'L'Apocalypse'," 507-41. For a critical analysis of Boismard's views see Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 14-22.

[50]Boismard, "'L'Apocalypse'," 507. For example, see the reign of the lamb on behalf of God in Rev 4 and 5, and the reign of the beast on behalf of Satan in Rev 12 and 13.

[51]Ibid., 507-8. For example, see the hymn of triumph in Rev 18:20 and 19:1-10, or the war against the Gentiles in Rev 19:11-20 and 20:7-10. See pp. 507-8, 528 for a listing of all the doublets.

[52]Ibid., 509. See p. 528 for a list of the two prophetic visionary sources.

[53]Swete, Apocalypse, xlvi-liv.

[54]Ibid., xlvi.

[55]Bousset, Offenbarung Johannis, 125-48. See Collins, Combat Myth, 9-10.

[56]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:xxxvii-xci; Allo, l'Apocalypse, lxxviii-xcvi, clxxi-clxxx; Günther Bornkamm, "Die Komposition der apokalyptischen Visionen in der Offenbarung Johannis," Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 36 (1937): 132-49; and Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "Composition and Structure of the Book of Revelation," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly 39 (1977): 344-66. For example, Fiorenza (Ibid., 344) says, "The unitary composition of Revelation does not result from a final redactor's arbitrary compilation but from the author's theological conception and literary composition."

[57]Collins, Combat Myth, 8; Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 332-63.

[58]Bousset, Offenbarung Johannis, 8.

[59]Collins, Combat Myth, 8. See n. 42 above; Allo, l'Apocalypse, ccxxxix-ccxliii; and Swete, Apocalypse, ccvii-ccxvi. This interpretation was also followed by Tyconius and Augustine.

[60]Collins, Combat Myth, 8-9. See nn. 42 and 43 above.

[61]Ibid., 8-13. Collins reviews the reasons why she believes the recapitulation method of interpretation was not revived when the literary-unity theory was revived. She suggests that it was because the method was linked with the theory that Revelation prophesied the course of history. She further outlines the revival of the recapitulation method and attributes the revival of it to Bornkamm. She does not mention that scholars such as Swete and Allo had already before Bornkam considered, at least partially, the use of the method. But she is correct in attributing to Bornkamm scholarly respectability with regard to its revival. See Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 330-65.

[62]Swete, Apocalypse, ccxvi-ccxix; Allo, l'Apocalypse, cclxxii-cclxxiv.

[63]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:xxiii; Johannis Weis, Die Offenbarung des Johannes: Ein Beitrag zur Literatur-und Religionsgeschichte, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Vol. 3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1904): 150-1. See Collins (Combat Myth, 10-1) for an evaluation of Charles' use of the linear method in which she criticizes him for not consistently following the method.

[64]Bousset, Offenbarung Johannis, 54-6, 104-6, 140-2.

[65]Collins, Combat Myth, 9-10; Swete, Apocalypse, ccvii-ccxix; and Allo, l'Apocalypse, cclxxii-cclxxiv. Allo prefers to call his method of interpretation, eschatological, but he uses both the eschatological and recapitulation methods. The same can be said of Swete, though he uses no designation or

term to identify the method or methods he follows. See Charles (Commentary on Revelation, clxxxiii-clxxxvii; Studies in the Apocalypse [Edinburg: T & T Clark, 1913]: 1-78) who uses both the historical and eschatological, as well as the philological, methods, but all under the linear theory of design.

[66]Bornkamm, "Komposition."

[67]Ibid., 141-43.

[68]Ibid., 133.

[69]Ibid., 144. Bornkamm says that Rev 10:1-11:14 suddenly breaks into the contents of the seven-sealed scroll, between the sixth and seventh trumpets. He believes the little scroll of Rev 10 serves as a completion of the contents of the seven-sealed scroll. Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 289-95) also believes that the contents of the seven-sealed scroll cover not only 6:1-7:17 but also the two parallel sections of 8:2-14:20 and 15:1-19:21.

[70]Austin Farrer, A Rebirth of Images, the Making of St. John's Apocalypse (London: Dacre, 1949).

[71]Ibid., 36-58. The six sections of Farrer's schema are: seven messages, chapters 1-3; seven seals, 4-7; seven trumpets, 8:1-11:14; seven unnumbered visions, 11:15-14:20; seven bowls, 15-18; and seven unnumbered visions, 19-22. See Collins, Combat Myth, 13-6 for a review of Farrer's schema.

[72]Ernst Lohmeyer, Die Offenbarung des Johannes, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, Vol. 16 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1926): 181-5; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1.xxiii-xxviii; Bousset, Offenbarung Johannis, 142-48; and Eduard Lohse, Die Offenbarung des Johannes, Das Neue Testament Deutsch, Vol. 11 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966): 8-9.

[73]Farrer, Rebirth of Images, 306-7.

[74]Ibid., 395.

[75]Farrer, Revelation, 7-23.

[76]François Rousseau, L'Apocalypse et le milieu prophétique du Nouveau Testament: Structure et prehistoire de texte (Montréal: Bellarmin, 1971); Collins, Combat Myth, 32-55.

[77]Rousseau, L'Apocalypse et let milieu, 28, 157. See Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 23-6 for a review of Rousseau's theory of interpretation.

[78]The seven cycles are the cycle of letters (1:1-5:14), the cycle of seals (6:1-8:1), the cycle of trumpets (8:1-11:18), the cycle of the woman and dragon (11:19-14:5), the cycle of transition which announces the sixth and seventh cycles (14:6-15:4), the cycle of bowls (15:5-19:10), and the cycle of the nations (19:11-22:21), Ibid., 28-31.

[79]Ibid., 19-25, 28-9, 103.

[80]Collins, Combat Myth, 13-44.

[81]Ibid., 32-43. The five series of visions in the schema of Collins are: the seven seals (6:1-8:5); the seven trumpets (8:2-11:19); seven unnumbered visions (12:1-15:4); the seven bowls with the Babylonian appendix (15:1-16:21; 17:1-19:10); and a second series of seven unnumbered visions with the Jerusalem appendix (19:11-21:8; 21:9-22:5).

[82]Ibid., 33.

[83]Ibid., 31-2, 41. The first cycle consists of the seven messages, the seven seals, and the seven trumpets. The second cycle consists of the seven unnumbered visions, the seven bowls, and a second series of seven unnumbered visions.

[84]Ibid., 31-2.

[85]Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 289-95.

[86]Ibid., 292.

[87]Ibid.

[88]Ibid., 292-3. See also 265-79.

[89]For an outline of Mazzaferri, see ibid., 395-6.

[90]Feuillet, Apocalypse, 23-36; "Le chapitre X," 414-29; and "Essai d'interpretation du chapitre XI de l'Apocalypse," New Testament Studies 6 (1957-58) 183-200. Even earlier Spitta (Offenbarung des Johannes, 105-10) had considered the place of chapter ten in the overall structure of Revelation and in the context of the question as to whether chapter ten was only an interlude (Intermezzo) between the sixth and seventh trumpets, or whether chapter ten played a more important role by introducing a new work of which 11:1-13 was the first part. After considering the question, Spitta concluded that the appearance of the angel in Rev 10 did not have as its purpose an introduction of a new book of visions. Rather, the chapter serves as an interlude between the last two trumpet visions and acts as a conclusion of the first

part of Revelation, the source of which was the concluding vision of chapter twelve of Daniel.

[91]Feuillet, Apocalypse, 32-6. The two parts are independent works that could not have been written at the same time. Each part also reaches its own fulfillment.

[92]Feuillet, "Le chapitre X,: 415-6.

[93]Feuillet, "Essai d'Interpretation du chapitre XI de l'Apocalypse," New Testament Studies 4 (1957-58):200. Feuillet calls both parts "books of destinies." In Revelation there are two "books of destinies" because there are two different audiences, and each shows the church in a relationship to two different entities. See "Le chapitre X," 414-6.

[94]Ibid., 416-7.

[95]Feuillet (Ibid., 417) says that the dress of the angel of Rev 10 indicates that he is in the service of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man as pictured in chapter one. Feuillet ("Essai d'interpretation," 200) explains that the Son of Man commissions the first part of Revelation (4-11), with regard to the destiny of the Jews. The angel of Rev 10 commissions the second part (12-22), with regard to the destiny of the world. What Feuillet does not ask is why Jesus Christ controls that part of Revelation which addresses the chosen people of Israel, and why an angel controls the part dealing with the world. A possible answer, which Feuillet does not suggest, could be that Jesus as the Messiah has now taken the place of revelatory angels. But then, why would John use an angel together with Christ as a revelator of the message? These questions are addressed in chapter six.

[96]See pp. 13-16.

[97]Spitta, Offenbarung des Johannes, 103-9.

[98]Ibid., 313-463, 563-4, 572.

[99]Ibid., 108.

[100]Ibid.

[101]Ibid., 109-10, 349.

[102]Boismard, "'L'Apocalypse'," 507-41. Boismard is not the first to advocate the theory of two compositions by the same author. P. L. Couchoud in his commentary, L'Apocalypse, published in 1930 (cited by Feuillet,

Apocalypse, 28) had suggested that the author wrote Revelation in two successive versions.

[103]Ibid., 528. Text 1 contained 1, 2B, 5-7; text 2 contained 2a, 3-4, 8-11. In contrast, Spitta (Offenbarung des Johannes, 109-10, 347-8, 456-63) divided chapter ten according to the following schema of sources: the first Jewish Apocalypse or source contained verses 1a, 2b, 3, 5b, 6 and 7b; the second Jewish Apocalypse contained verses 1b, 2a, (8a), and 9b-11; the redactor added verses 4, 5a, 7a, (8), and (9b-10a) - in verse 8 the redactor changed the wording of the first part of the verse, and similarly he made changes in verses 9-10.

[104]This is not to say that Boismard ("'L'Apocalypse'," 511-2) did not recognize Jewish influence on the sources of Revelation, as for example, the influence of Dan 12:4-13 on verses 4 and 5-7 of Rev 10 and on Rev 22:10.

[105]Feuillet (Apocalypse, 32-3) says, "In general, modern exegetes are less and less favorable to arbitrary hypotheses which would reduce the Apocalypse to a formless collection of various fragments. The unity of thought and of style compel us to see the work as a complete whole." He also suggests that while the author may have used Jewish sources, his work is entirely a Christian work. "Any attempt to delineate the individual Jewish sources seems to be doomed to frustration. John has made all his material entirely his own, and had conferred on it a uniquely Christological character." Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 37) says that "the unity of the book has survived all attacks, and enjoys all but outright support today."

[106]Collins, Combat Myth, 20-1; Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 414-29; Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 292-3.

[107]Feuillet ("Le chapitre X," 423) disagrees with Boismard and takes issue with his division of chapter ten into two different apocalypses.

[108]Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 289-96), on the other hand, believes that it together with Rev 1 introduces the entire message of Revelation. See pp. 20-2 of text.

[109]Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 415. In the second episode Feuillet recognizes two little scenes: the cry of the angel and the seven thunders (vv. 3-4); and the oath of the angel (5-7). The first scene indicates that the universal judgment is still far off, and the second indicates that the end is near. The two sources of these two scenes are Dan 12:4-9 (Ibid., 417-20). The evident sources of the third episode, that of the investiture, are Ezek 2:9-3:4 and Jer 1:5, 10 (Ibid., 420-3). The situation of the sources for the first episode, the vision of the angel, is more complex. His clothing is reminiscent of the Son of

Man of both Dan 7 and Rev 1, but there are also parallels that can be found in Exod 20, Gen 9, Ezek 1 and Rev 4 (Ibid., 451).

[110]Ibid., 423-29.

[111]Paul Gaechter, "Semitic Literary Forms in the Apocalypse and their Import," Theological Studies 8 (1947) 547-73; John Wick Bowman, The Drama of the Book of Revelation (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1955): 69; John G. Gager, Kingdom and Community, The Social World of Early Christianity, Prentice-Hall Studies in Religion Series, ed. John P. Reeder, Jr. and John R. Wilson (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1975): 54.

[112]Rousseau, L'Apocalypse et le milieu, 103-4.

[113]See appendix for a suggested literary structure.

[114]Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 417.

[115]See pp. 14-6.

[116]See p. 15.

[117]Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 289-96) has suggested an answer, but since his work does not deal with this problem as such, he offers no detailed analysis of supporting data. It must be said also that modern scholarship is not the first to realize this problem of two commissioning figures (see pp. 8-10, 14-15 and n. 39 above).

[118]See p. 12.

CHAPTER III

ANGEL-THEOPHANIES IN JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

Definition of Terms

A lexical definition of angelophany would indicate the appearance of a heavenly messenger in some visible form or manifestation. Such a definition presents no problems when the heavenly messenger is clearly something other than the divine being.[1] But when the heavenly messenger or angel presents himself as a divine being, confusion results as to whether we are confronted by an angelophany or a theophany. An example is the heavenly figure in the OT known as the angel of the Lord. He speaks as a representative of God, but at times he clothes himself in the characteristics and speech of God (Gen 16:7-13; 22:15-18; 31:11-13; Exod 3:2-6). The angel on one occasion at least is even worshiped as if he were God (Judg 13:3-22).[2] In this case are we dealing with an angelophany or a true theophany? It depends upon whether one interprets the angel of the Lord as only representative of God, or whether he is in reality God himself in angelic form.[3] The latter interpretation views the angel as a manifestation of God in the way he spoke to the patriarchs of the

OT.[4] In the former interpretation the angel is a separate entity from God who speaks for him as his representative. As such, the angel impersonates God but is not the divine person speaking and acting in his own right.[5] Both of the above interpretations have usually been called theophanies.[6] More recently, however, they have been called or referred to as angelophanies.[7] For the purpose of the present study the term angelophany will be used in reference to a heavenly figure in visible form who is quite clearly not a divine being, but one who only speaks or acts for God. The term theophany will be retained only for that heavenly figure or manifestation who in some visible form is quite clearly God speaking and acting in his own right.

But what term is to be used for that visible appearance of a heavenly figure which at the moment can neither be clearly identified as an angelic figure or as God himself? The angel of the Lord figure of the OT may fit neither of the above two terms when strictly defined.[8] Because he presents himself as an angelic figure speaking and acting as God's representative, the event can be referred to as an angelophany. But because at times he also speaks and acts as if he were God in angelic form, the event could then be referred to as a theophany. Perhaps a third term can be introduced, that of angel-theophany.[9] An angel-theophany would refer to that visible appearance of a heavenly personage who presents himself as an angelic figure, but who also so identifies himself with God that when speaking and acting we are to receive him as God himself - when in actual fact he may not be God but only

his representative. With this term one is not compelled to define the heavenly manifestation as angelic or divine, but as angelic with divine characteristics and implications. The term itself would not necessarily deny or affirm whether the heavenly figure is angelic or divine but would leave the mystery open - one would take the figure to be neither one nor the other but something in-between, because the heavenly manifestation is either an angelic figure impersonating God, or is God himself in angelic form. But at the moment it cannot be conclusively determined which is true. In the present study the term, "angel-theophany," will be so used, together with the two more commonly used terms, "angelophany" and "theophany."

For the purpose of the present study only those manifestations of a heavenly figure in the Judeo-Christian tradition which may fit the above definition of an angel-theophany will be considered. While angelophanies in the strict definition of the term will on occasion be referred to, they will be more fully reviewed only if they can help in the analysis of the angel of Rev 10. This methodology will be followed because this present study will suggest that the angel of Rev 10 is neither a true angelophany nor theophany, but rather an angel-theophany.

Angel-theophanies in the Old Testament

John in Revelation is not the first to use an angel in the commissioning of a prophet.[10] A comparison with other such angelic commissions in the Judeo-Christian tradition might enable us to determine whether they were

influential with John as he created his own commissioning angel of Rev 10. In our comparative sketch and analysis of the Jewish and Christian writings we will limit ourself to that part of the tradition which presents possible angel-theophanies, and not to the whole tradition of prophetic commissions - which would lead us too far afield. Our investigation will further be circumscribed so as to center on those angel-theophanies that are involved in the commission of a prophet.

In Jewish writings there was a tradition or traditions which describe a heavenly figure other than God who commissioned a prophet.[11] It is a literary tradition in which three elements emerge: a heavenly figure in place of God does the commissioning; the investiture is accompanied by phenomena which indicate the divine presence or authority; and the prophet receives the investiture accompanied by a symbolical action.[12] Prophetic commissionings by an angel in the OT appear together with those of God, for not all prophetic investitures were done by an angelic figure. This would indicate that the tradition of a commissioning angel as a stand-in for God developed along side of the tradition in which God is the commissioner.

Examples of God speaking to or commissioning prophets without any mediating angelic figure abound throughout the OT and are far more common than those done by an angel.[13] On the other hand, there are enough descriptions of angelic commissions to justify the idea of an emerging tradition. In this emerging tradition the above three elements also begin to appear. Howev-

er, they are not always present in a particular instance. Nevertheless, when all the angelic prophetic commissionings are viewed together, a composite can be sketched in which the three elements can be noted and delineated. As we review the Jewish tradition, the details of the dress and posture of the angel of Rev 10 will not be examined and compared. This will be done in chapters four and five. Rather, our purpose in this chapter will be the examination of the Jewish writings to determine if any angel-theophanies existed which could possibly have served as models for the angel of Rev 10.

It is not difficult to determine the fact that at times in the OT angelic figures were used in place of God to confront people. Not all of these angelic confrontations by which God appeared to people were prophets. For example, God by way of the angel of the Lord appeared to Hagar, the Egyptian maidservant of Sarah (Gen 16:7-14; 21:17-19) and to the parents of Samson to announce his birth (Judg 13:3-22). Though both of these instances can be classified as true angel-theophanies, especially the latter,[14] no commissioning of a prophet was involved.[15] In fact, of all the angel of the Lord appearances, only one is involved in the commissioning of a prophet, Moses at the burning bush (Exod 3:1-14). In addition to Moses, there are four other prophets who at their commissioning or reception of God's word had angelic figures involved.[16] In the case of Moses and Daniel, angelic figures acted in the stead of God. In other instances, God did the commissioning in the

company of angels who played a part in the commissionings, as in the case of Isaiah, Ezekiel and Zechariah.[17]

In the call or commission narratives of the above five prophets God calls the prophet through the mediation of an angelic figure, or in the company of an angelic figure or figures. In three of the five narratives, Moses, Isaiah and Ezekiel, phenomena accompany the commission of the prophet, phenomena which indicate the divine presence. And thirdly, in the commission or call narratives symbolical actions are described which suggest the involvement of the recipient of the call, that of Moses, Isaiah and Ezekiel.

In the call narrative of Moses as it is described in Exod 3, Moses is called by God through the heavenly figure of the angel of the Lord (v. 2). The appearance of the heavenly figure is that of an angel (v. 2), but the voice is that of God (v. 4) and the speaker identifies himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (v. 6). As said above, here we have a true angel-theophany, for the angel and God are so closely identified that they seem to be one and same.[18]

In later Jewish tradition the angel of the Lord who appeared to Moses in Exod 3 was identified as Michael or Gabriel. Whenever Michael appeared, his appearance was taken to be the "glory" of the Shekinah. At the burning bush the angel acted as the intermediary in the midst of the fire, but it was the Shekinah who descended and spoke with Moses.[19]

Some of Daniel's revelations from God were given by visions and dreams (Dan 7:1; 8:1). The angel Gabriel was on occasion an interpreter of these visions (8:15-16; 9:21-22). But on one occasion Daniel was confronted by a heavenly figure who in the stead of God gave a revelation to him (10:4-7; 12:5-7). The heavenly figure is described as a man dressed in fine linen with a belt of gold around his waist. The body of the man was like chrysolite; his face was like lightning and his eyes were like flaming torches. His arms and legs were like burnished bronze and his voice was loud like the sound of a multitude of people (10:5-6). The word "angel" is not used in the description. Nor is the origin of his presence stated. But from his appearance and action, including that of swearing by God (12:7), it is believed that he was an angelic heavenly figure, associated possibly with the son of man heavenly figure of Dan 7:13-14.[20] However one interprets the "son of man" of Dan 7 in relationship to the "man dressed in linen" of Dan 10 and 12, both appear to be heavenly angelic figures.[21] In particular, the heavenly figure of Dan 10 and 12 is of interest for our present study because of possible source material for the angel of Rev 10. In chapter four this possible source material will be evaluated. But here we wish to point out that this heavenly figure of Dan 10 and 12 is a rare instance in which we have a description of an angelic figure who stands in for God - as is also true of the angel of Rev 10, which will be discussed in chapters four and five.

Throughout the prophetic visions of Zechariah angels play interpretive roles (1:12-13; 2:3; 3:1; 4:1). However, no particular angelic figure stands out who speaks for or in the place of God. Among the angels who stand by Zechariah and interpret the visions is the angel of the Lord (1:12; 3:6), but he is not distinguished in any way from other angels who act as interpreters, except for the designation, angel of the Lord. That the angels act on behalf of God as they interpret the visions and words of God is clear - for example, an angel will say that his word is the word of the Lord (4:6). But there is no indication that any particular angel acts in the stead of God as a commissioner of the prophet.

In the case of Isaiah and Ezekiel, while angelic-like figures are a part of their commission, they have no particular identity of their own. God is in each case the commissioner, and the angelic figures attend him as a part of his glory and play a minor role in the investiture of the prophet. In the call narrative of Isaiah (6:1-13) it is God from his exalted throne (vv. 1, 8) who commissions the prophet. Heavenly angelic-like figures called seraphs, who form God's court (vv. 2-4), attend God in the call and investiture of the prophet. One of the seraphs aids God in the investiture by placing a live coal on the mouth of Isaiah (vv. 6-8). Similarly, the prophet Ezekiel is commissioned by God himself as he is attended by angelic figures of the heavenly court (1:1-2:10). God speaks to Ezekiel (1:25, 28; 2:1-2) after the four-winged heavenly figures have introduced God and his glory to the prophet (1:4-6, 22-28). But again,

no one particular angelic figure stands out who in the stead of God speaks or acts.

Thus, from the OT there are only two examples of an angelic figure who acts in the place of God to commission or speak to a prophet, that of Moses and Daniel.[22] As mentioned above (p. 47), in the case of Moses later Jewish tradition took it that it was the Shekinah who spoke to Moses and not the angel. In the other three instances, that of Zechariah, Isaiah and Ezekiel, while angels were present, they did not act in the place of God as commissioners, but only as interpreters or attendants.

A second element in the call or commission narrative of a prophet in which angels appear is that of the presence of phenomena that accompany the investiture of the prophet, phenomena which indicate the supernatural or divine-like character of the presence of the angelic figure. In the case of Moses it is the burning bush (Exod 3:1-5). Though fire enveloped the bush, it was not consumed. The burning bush thus caught Moses' attention. Moses' attention was focused on a supernatural phenomenon by means of which he was then introduced to the angel who speaks to him (vv. 3-6). The fire of the bush represents the unapproachable holiness and glory of God, for as Moses approaches the bush he is commanded to unloose his sandals, for the ground on which he was standing was holy ground (vv. 4-5). The fire thus indicates the presence of God and his glory as the angel speaks in his stead.[23]

In later Jewish tradition it was thought that God used the flame of a fire to appear to Moses in order to inspire him with courage. Moses would need this courage and so not be afraid when later he came to Sinai and saw its fire. The same tradition also states that God used a thornbush, the lowliest of all trees, to appear to Moses to teach him that no place on earth was devoid of God's presence, not even a lowly thornbush. This was to remind Moses that though Israel was lowly and humble in Egypt, God would come to redeem and deliver them out of Egypt.[24]

In Daniel's meeting with the heavenly figure of the man dressed in linen, there are no super-natural phenomena present. However, the appearance of the man's face like lightning and of his eyes like coals of fire are indications of the divine presence and glory (Dan 10:6).[25] But as such, they are not phenomena that accompany the angel, but rather are a part of his appearance.[26]

The investitures of both Isaiah and Ezekiel were accompanied by phenomena which were portents of God's glory. However, they were not associated with angelic figures as commissioners, for God himself commissioned the two prophets. In the case of Isaiah the heavenly temple of God was filled with smoke and the doorposts and thresholds shook (Isa 6:1, 4). What initiated these tokens of God's glory were the voices of the six-winged heavenly creatures as they praised God (6:2-3). This sets the stage for God to speak to the prophet. Similarly in the call and investiture of Ezekiel, as God com-

missions the prophet, he is accompanied by the phenomena of a whirlwind with a great cloud and lightning together with a rainbow and fire (Ezek 1:4-5, 27-28). But again, the phenomena are not directly associated with the angelic figures. Rather, they, together with the angelic figures attending God, are a part of God's glory (1:28). Though the above phenomena in the call narratives of Isaiah and Ezekiel do not accompany angelic figures as commissioners, they may, nevertheless, be helpful in understanding the call of John through the angel of Rev 10. This is especially true of those in Ezekiel's call narrative.

As in the case of Daniel, Zechariah gives no account or report of supernatural phenomena which accompanied his reception of the word of God. He gives no description of a personal call; he merely states that "the word of the Lord came" to him (Zech 1:1,7; 7:1; 8:1).[27] Angelic figures appear in Zechariah only when the word of God comes by way of a vision,[28] as its guides or interpreters (1:8; 4:1; 5:5).[29]

A third characteristic of the call or commission narratives which contain angelic figures is the involvement of the prophet through a symbolic action. It is an action that the prophet is commanded to do and which illustrates something about his commission or reception of God's word. In the case of Moses' call, it was the rod or staff which became a serpent and his hand which became leprous. These actions were tokens which demonstrated that Moses' ministry would be accompanied by supernatural activities of God in order to encourage people to listen to Moses (Exod 4:2-9).

Isaiah's lips were touched by a burning coal to indicate that he would be empowered by God to speak the message given to him (Isa 6:5-9). Ezekiel received a scroll to eat, which action reminded the prophet of his own involvement in proclaiming the word God would give to him (Ezek 2:7-3:4) - this eating of the scroll is similar to the action of the angel of Rev 10 (vv. 8-10). In the narratives of both Daniel and Zechariah there are no such symbolical actions which accompanied their reception of God's word.[30]

In summary, it can be stated that in the Jewish writings of the OT a tradition which includes heavenly angelic figures in the commission or call of a prophet begins to appear. In two of the five commission narratives reviewed above, a single angelic-like figure in the stead of God commissions or speaks to the prophet (Moses and Daniel). In the other three narratives angelic figures act as attendants as the prophet is commissioned by God (Isaiah, Ezekiel and Zecharia). Such commission narratives contain at times supernatural phenomena which indicate the presence of God, and symbolical actions which illustrate in some way the involvement of the prophet.

We can thus note three elements in those prophetic commission narratives in which the prophet receives his call and message in a visionary form: God in a visible way by means of an angel or in the company of angelic figures issues the call or commission; the investiture of the prophet is accompanied by supernatural phenomena which betoken the presence of God and his glory; and a symbolical action, which involves the prophet, indicates something

about his call. Two of the five commission narratives in which angels appear can be designated angel-theophanies. For in the case of Moses and Daniel, an angelic figure in the place of God commissions or communicates with the prophet and appears with divine-like characteristics.[31]

Angel-theophanies in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

Angelology in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha develops an increasing use of heavenly figures as intermediaries, and an angelic figure can enjoy "considerable status, whose position in the heavenly hierarchy set him apart from the rest of the angels."[32] This development was possibly due to the Jewish thought of the remoteness and transcendence of God, and thus the need for angelic intermediaries.[33] The angel of the Lord figure in the OT seems to have been a model.[34] Whatever its antecedent cause, this angelic figure of status and position is set apart by both his activities and dress, and he begins to take on divine-like characteristics. Not only do we see archangels such as Michael and Gabriel set apart for divine-like purposes, which seem to have already begun in Daniel (8:15-18; 9:20-22; 10:13, 21; 12:1-4),[35] other angelic figures not mentioned in the OT also play the role of a heavenly figure of unique status and position.

For example, the archangel Raphael commissions Tobit (12:6) to proclaim to the world what God had done, which proclamation he was to write down (12:20). Raphael represents God before Tobit for he is one of the seven

angels who stand in attendance before God and enter his glorious presence (3:16-17; 12:15). In II Maccabees two angelic-like figures described as young men of great strength and arrayed in glorious beauty appeared in an apparition to deliver the high priest, Onias, from the Syrians (3:22-34) - but no description is given of their appearance. In the Apocalypse of Zephaniah a great angel by the name of Remiel (or Eremiel) appears to the prophet with such a divine-like appearance that the prophet worships him (6:11-17). This same great angel seems to appear in 4 Ezra 4:36 under the name of Jeremiel and in 2 Apoc. Bar. 55:3 and 63:6 under the name of Ramiel.[36] In 2 Enoch two heavenly figures, Samuel and Raguel, who are gigantic in size and have divine-like characteristics, appear to Enoch in a dream (1:4-8) and are probably to be associated with God in the commissioning of Enoch (33:6-8).[37] Another angel in 2 Enoch also took part in the investiture of Enoch (22:11-12). Named Vretil and designated as one of the Lord's archangels, he is especially known as the angel of wisdom, for he is swifter in wisdom than the other archangels.[38] His primary duty was to record all the Lord's deeds. However, no divine-like characteristics are accredited to him. But the fact that he had access to the secret knowledge of God (access to the heavenly books or tablets of God) could indicate a divine-like authority - especially as seen in his role of mediating the secret knowledge of God to Enoch.

In 3 Enoch the development of a single heavenly figure of considerable status and unique hierarchical position seems to have reached its highest

development in Metatron. Metatron, the highest of the archangels, is God's vice-regent (12:5; 48C:7; 48D:1). Like God himself, he has a throne and rules over the heavenly law court (16:1). He even bears the name or title, The Lesser Yahweh, and as such is identified with the angel of the Lord (12:5; 48C:7). Because he is The Lesser Yahweh, a part of the divine glory is conferred on him (10:1-4; 12:1; 48C). He is described as the recorder or scribe of God (6:3; 48C:1), as the intermediary between God and the angelic world (10:1), as the executor of the divine decrees on earth (48C:10) and as the angel of the Presence (16:1-5). This Metatron is a complex figure.[39] In some respects he is similar to the archangel Michael,[40] but he also is said to be the translated Enoch (4:2). At other times he is identified with the archangel Yaho'el (48D:1), an angel upon whom God's name rests or resides.[41] Moreover, like God he has seventy names, corresponding to the seventy languages of the world, because all the wisdom of the Torah was mediated through him to Moses at Sinai (48D:1-5).[42] And because he mediated the Torah, he is named the Prince of the Torah (48D:C).[43] In the Babylonian Talmud Metatron is additionally identified with the angel of the Exodus who led Israel in the wilderness (Sanh. 38b) and who with God or in the place of him taught "the children" of Israel ('Abod. Zar. 3b). He also may have been the Prince of the Universe (Sanh. 94a) and the Genius of the Universe (Yebam. 16b), though the name of Metatron does not appear. And in the Midrash

Rabbah Metatron is said to have his own heavenly tabernacle in which he offers up the souls of the righteous to atone for Israel.[44]

In the Apocalypse of Abraham the angel of God, Iaoel (Jaoel), is the heavenly guide of Abraham in his visionary journey into the heavenly regions. He comes to Abraham in the likeness of man (10:4), but his appearance is replete with divine-like characteristics (11:1-3) - for example, his body was like sapphire and the hair of his head was like snow (11:2). In at least one instance he seems to take the part of God when he instructs Abraham how to sacrifice (12:7-10),[45] and his name is associated with that of El (17:13).[46] In another instance he is associated with the archangel Michael as a protector and blesser of Abraham (17:17).[47] As in the case of Metatron in 3 Enoch, the angel Iaoel is also identified with the archangel Yaho'el, the angel upon whom the name of God rests.[48]

In addition to the above examples of angels of considerable status in Jewish angelology, there are similar angels of note found in Jewish/Christian angelology. In the Ascension of Isaiah, a composite work of Jewish and Christian thought,[49] Isaiah sees a heavenly figure whose glory surpasses all others, and whom both the righteous and angels worship (9:27-32). As the heavenly court worships him, he is transformed and becomes like an angel, and Isaiah is instructed by an attending angel also to worship him. This heavenly figure who was transformed into an angel is called the "Lord of all praise." After this heavenly figure is introduced to Isaiah, he henceforth refers to him

and addresses him as "my Lord" (9:36, 40; 10:7). Eventually this heavenly angelic figure is identified as Jesus Christ (10:7), who would be born on earth of the virgin Mary (11:2-8). As the vision of Isaiah continues, the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, called also the Lord of the prophets, is laid out before him (11:17-33).[50]

In the Ascension of Isaiah there appears a second preeminent angelic figure who is associated with the Holy Spirit (9:33-36) and who has divine-like status. This heavenly figure is introduced to Isaiah as "another glorious person" whom the heavenly court also worships. In answer to the question by Isaiah, "Who is this one?" the attending angel answers, "Worship him, for this is the angel of the Holy Spirit" (9:33-36). Both the angelic Christ-like figure and the angel of the Holy Spirit seem to be of equal status, for they both are worshiped and sit next to God in his glory - the angelic Christ-like figure at the right of God and the angel of the Holy Spirit at the left (11:32-33).[51] If the Ascension of Isaiah is representative of Jewish/Christian angelology, as has been suggested,[52] then we can see a continuance of the notion of an angelic figure of preeminent status emerging also within the angelology of a Jewish/Christian tradition. But as in the case of the Jewish tradition, there does not seem to be only one angel thus emerging.[53]

According to the church father, Hippolytus (ca. 170-236), there was among the Elkesaites (a Jewish/Christian sect which arose around A.D. 100) a writing which was called the Book of Elkesai.[54] In this book, no longer

extant, a certain Elkesai received a revelation from an angel.[55] The angel was gigantic in size, some 96 miles in height.[56] The revelation was received by Elkesai through a scroll or book (βίβλος) which the angel gave to him. The angel was accompanied by a woman, called the Holy Spirit, whose male child was the Son of God. However, apart from his gigantic size and his association with the Holy Spirit (the woman), no divine-like characteristics are mentioned. Nevertheless, the angel was a heavenly figure who acted on behalf of God in the commissioning of Elkesai. The gigantic angel and his scroll immediately makes one think of the angel and scroll of Rev 10. While the exact date of the Book of Elkesai cannot be determined, a date around A.D. 100 or shortly after would not be out of line. Whether the author of the Book of Elkesai knew the Revelation of John, or possibly the reverse, the angel of unique status in the Book of Elkesai still exhibits the continuance of the tradition of such an angel, in this case within a Jewish/Christian tradition.

It was stated above that the idea or notion of an angel of unique status may have evolved from the perception that God because of his transcendence would at times approach human beings through angelic heavenly mediators.[57] While this is never so stated in connection with the call or commission narratives in the OT, this conception is stated elsewhere and seems to be implied when he called or commissioned a prophet through an angel.[58] For example, when Moses asked to see God's face, God answered that no human being could see his face and live (Exod 33:18-20). Even in places where it says that God

spoke "face to face" with human beings, God did so through media of one sort or another - in the case of Moses it was through the pillar of cloud (Exod 33:9-11) and with Israel it was through fire (Deut 5:4). And when it states that Jacob saw God "face to face," it was done so through the man with whom he wrestled (Gen 32:24,30). One hesitates to say that God could never directly approach a human being, for more often than not God is said to have spoken to prophets without any mention of a mediating angelic figure or phenomena.[59] Yet the idea prevailed that man in his created and fallen state could not bear to see God "face to face" because of his holiness.

God's usual mode of appearing to a human being, therefore, was through mediating angelic figures or mediating phenomena like a cloud or fire. For example, Philo believed that God employed the mediation of angels (Exod 20:18-21) in order that human beings might receive words of God without dismay or fear because of his exceeding might.[60] Thus it seems evident that when God did use an angel to call or commission a prophet, he did so in order to bridge the gap between himself and a human being. The angel he used would be set apart from the ordinary heavenly host in order to bear the honor of representing him and mediating his message.[61]

While at times this particular angel was designated the angel of the Lord,[62] or an archangel like Michael,[63] another designation of such an unique angel was the angel of God's face or presence. Possibly this designation was due to Exod 23:20-23 and 33:41.[64] In Exod 23 God promises to

send his angel, who bears his name,[65] to protect and guide Israel on the way to Canaan. In Exod 33 God says that his presence (his face) would go before Israel until they came to his rest. These two designations, that of God's face and the angel of his name, are brought together in Isa 63:9.[66] In an apparent reference to the Exodus account, Isaiah declares that the angel of God's face saved Israel, redeemed him and carried him along his way.

While no divine-like phenomena are described attending the angel, in the bearing of God's face and presence before Israel, he is a mediating heavenly figure through whom God acted and was present.[67] While the designation, the angel of God's face, is rare in the OT,[68] it seems to be connected with what could be called the angel of the Exodus,[69] the angel who on behalf of God led and protected Israel in the wilderness. He is first introduced in Exod 14:19,[70] in association with the pillar of cloud,[71] and is the same angel of God who protected Israel against the Egyptians. He is also the angel of God's promise who would accompany and protect Israel on the way to the promised land. Because he bore the name of Yahweh, he would not pardon those who would not obey his voice. But if Israel obeyed his voice, then the Lord would defeat Israel's enemies (Exod 23:20-23). Without question then, this angel represented the authority of God and had to be received as such, for he spoke in the name of the Lord. Also, through him God would drive out the inhabitants of Canaan so that the land promised to Abraham would be ready for Israel (Exod 33:1-3).

In Jub (1:27-29)[72] the angel of the presence, who went before Israel, spoke to Moses the word of Yahweh and commanded him to write a history beginning with creation up to when God's sanctuary would be built among them.[73] Such a tradition of an angel of distinction, who represented God's presence and bore his name and who spoke in his name, may have given rise to the tradition voiced in the NT, also present in Judaism, that the Torah was given to Moses through an angel or angels (Acts 7:30, 38, 53; cf. Gal 3:19; Heb 2:2).[74]

Was there one particular angel who filled the role of this majestic and divine-like, elevated status, who bore all of the above appellations and descriptions? Is the angel of the Lord, the angel of God's face and of the Exodus, and the angel of the Torah the same angelic figure? Did Yahweh, when he used an angel of unique status, choose and elevate one particular angel for this role? From the data before us it appears that no conclusive answer can be given.[75] In the entire Jewish tradition of angels of unique status the descriptions and appellations are so varied that one must hesitate to suggest that only one and the same angel was meant. Even in the case of the angel of the Lord, which seems the most prominent, it is not entirely clear that it was always the same angel.[76]

However, Philo suggested that a particular angel could have embodied the various designations of angels of elevated status. He thought that the Logos idea served to explain all of the OT angelic (or even human) manifesta-

tions of the divine presence among humankind.[77] Archangels in the Jewish tradition such as Michael and Gabriel were also candidates for this angel who filled many, if not all, of the designations of elevated angels.[78] Perhaps, when we recognize that the appearance of unique angels who represented God was never intended to indicate one particular angel, we come closer to the truth. Rather, the tradition suggests that God used different angels or heavenly figures to represent himself so as not to center attention on any particular angel - possibly to avoid angelic worship. In reality, God uses angelic figures in various ways and so worship should remain centered on him alone.[79]

According to the tradition, while the angel of unique status who represented God can not be identified as one particular angel, that angel is described with divine-like characteristics, or divine-like phenomena accompany him. Thus, while in appearance an angelic figure is speaking or acting, in reality God speaks and acts through him. At times, a symbolical action can accompany the angel-theophany and illustrate the involvement of the human recipient. It could demonstrate the response of the recipient, as an act of worship (Judg 13:19-20), or indicate something about the mission that the prophet was to undertake (Ezek 2:7-3:4). As noted above, the three elements, the mediating angel, the divine-like characteristics or phenomena, and the symbolical action involving the recipient, are not all always present in a given instance.

Angel-theophanies in Christian Writings

When we come to early Christian literature, the tradition of an angelic figure of unique status does not seem to have evolved to the extent that it did in Judaism.[80] While the traditional role of angels is present within Christian literature, including that of representing God in specific tasks, no particular angel appears to have been set aside for such representation, certainly no angel of unique status. For example, in Hermas we meet angels like those within Judaism.[81] An angel guides and instructs Hermas and is identified as the shepherd and the angel of repentance (Sim. 9,xxiii.5). We also meet an angel of glory who on the one hand is identified as Michael and on the other as the Son of God (Sim. 8,iii.3). This glorious angel has power over people and governs them since he put the law into the hearts of God's people. Evidently this angel is Michael who acts on behalf of the Son of God and is endowed with the divine functions of judgment and punishment and the bestowal of rewards.[82]

In the Apoc. Pet. angels act on behalf of God in various capacities. In particular, they administer the judgment and punishment of God, but they are also pictured as part of the glory of Jesus Christ when he is exalted at the right hand of God.[83] In the Gosp. Pet. two heavenly figures are present at the resurrection of Jesus Christ, reminiscent of Luke 24:4 and John 20:12. But in variance with Luke and John, the two angelic figures in Gos. Pet. attend Jesus as a part of his resurrected glory, and they are described in colossal terms - in

that their stature reaches into the heavens (10:35-36).[84] But again no angel of unique status is described. However, the colossal size of the angels is reminiscent of the gigantic stature of the angel of Rev 10 as indicated by the placement of his feet (v. 2).

The closest that any Christian literature comes to setting aside an angel of unique status is that of the Apocalypse of Paul. Though this writing is quite late for our consideration,[85] it contains a highly developed angelology similar to that found in the Ascension of Isaiah. For example, in the Apocalypse of Paul Michael plays a prominent role. He is called the angel of the covenant and as such is associated with the Son of God (secs. 14 and 44).[86] He leads the whole host of angels and intercedes for the human race before the presence of God (sec. 43). In addition to Michael, the angel of the Lord appears to Paul and brings him to the Mount of Olives where Paul then sees the exalted Christ. The angel of the Lord is not identified, nor is he described in any unique status - though he possibly was the angel that leads Paul throughout his visionary experiences described in the apocalypse.[87]

Summary

There is within the angelology of Judaism the tradition of angels of unique status who can represent or stand in for God. In particular, such angels are used in a revelatory role through which a prophet receives the word of God, or in a commissioning role by which the prophet is called. The angels at times are described with divine-like characteristics, and supernatural phenome-

na can attend their mediating roles. Such characteristics and supernatural phenomena indicate the presence and glory of God. In addition, within the call or commission narrative, there are at times symbolical actions involving the prophet which indicate some aspect of his prophetic call.

In the Christian tradition, as evidenced by early noncanonical writings, no such angels of unique status exist. While Christian angelology is similar to that found in Judaism, no identifiable angels emerge to stand in for God.[88] There appears to be a reluctance to isolate particular angels and to enhance their status, perhaps in deference to the role that the exalted Christ plays.[89] Jesus Christ as the Logos is now the chief mediating revelator of God, and mediating angels were not needed.[90]

The angel of Rev 10 appears to be the exception. As will be shown in chapters four and five, this angel is in keeping with the tradition of angels of unique status found in Judaism. But with this difference. Though the angel is under the authority and glory of God, he stands in for Jesus Christ. In chapter six the relationship between the angel and Christ will be considered, and as a result it will be postulated that the angel of Rev 10 stands in for Christ in order to suggest the transcendence of Christ together with that of God.

NOTES

[1]For example, the angel of the empty tomb of Jesus Christ (Matt 28:5), which angel both Mark (16:5) and Luke (24:4) call a young man or men.

[2]At the conclusion of the angel of the Lord's appearance to Samson's parents, Manoah said that they were doomed to die because they had seen God (Judg 13:22). W. Eichrodt (Theology of the Old Testament, trans. J. A. Baker [London: SCM Press, 1977], 2:24) suggests that when the angel uses the divine "I," this is not to be regarded as "a naive self-identification" but as "a sign of the presence of God."

[3]Eichrodt, Theology, 25-27; Ambroise Montagne, "De l'apparition de Dieu a Moyse sur le Mont Horeb, Exode, ch. iii," Review Biblique 3 (1984): 232-33; C. Goodspeed, "The Angel of Jehovah," Bibliotheca Sacra 36 (1879): 600-606.

[4]Goodspeed, "Angel," 604-606.

[5]Ibid., 600, 604-605; Montagne, "De l'apparition de Dieu," 233-34. Millar Burrows, An Outline of Biblical Theology (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1946), 119-24; Fridolin Stier, Gott und sein Engel im Alten Testament (Münster: Verlag der Aschendorffschen Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1934), 1-40.

[6]Montage, "De l'apparition de Dieu," 233.

[7]Christopher Rowland, The Open Heaven (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 94.

[8]Rowland (Ibid., 94-95) regards the angel of the Lord as an angelophany because he is presented as an angelic being who though he speaks for God and is at times called by the name of God, is, nevertheless, not God himself but his representative. D. S. Russell (From Early Judaism to Early Church [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986], 78) distinguishes between the two with the comment, "God can be mediated only by someone or something virtually identifiable with him - as for example, the angel of presence in the Old Testament. As soon as the angel becomes known by his own name and acquires a character and personality quite distinct from that of the Godhead, he becomes a representative of God rather than a mediator in the true sense of that word." But Russell does not suggest a terminology to reflect this distinction.

John C. Collins (Daniel, with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984]: 8, 13) uses the designations "angelic epiphany" and "Epiphany of a heavenly figure" for that heavenly figure which represents and speaks for God and displays characteristics of the divine.

[9]Spitta (Offenbarung des Johannes, 108) suggested the idea of an angel-theophany in connection with the angel of Rev 10.

[10]The evaluation of Revelation as to whether it is a prophetic work is not the burden of the present study. But for the purpose of analyzing Rev 10 we will refer to it as such. Primarily because John calls Revelation a prophecy both in the prologue (1:3) and epilogue (22:7, 10, 18, 19). And in his commission John is commanded by the angel "to prophesy" to the nations (10:11). On the question as to whether Revelation is a prophetic work in the classical OT sense and tradition see Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 85-156, 259-383. Mazzaferri (Ibid., 374) believes that it is and says in his conclusion, "At every turn and in every possible way John strives earnestly to portray himself as a prophet of the classical school, without forfeiting his Christian heritage," and that John was conscious of "inheriting" the "prophetic mantle."

[11]Mazzaferri (Ibid., 88-91) calls the descriptions of the prophets of the OT "Call Narratives."

[12]Mazzaferri (Ibid., 88-154) in his review of the "Call Narrative" of the OT says, "The prophet is called to office in a relatively standard form comprising the divine confrontation, the introductory word and the commission (Ibid., 153)." Mazzaferri does not differentiate between the confrontation conducted by an angelic heavenly figure from that of God himself as we have done. And what he terms the "word," for our purpose we are linking together with the divine phenomena which accompanies the "word" or call.

[13]Jeremiah's investiture was done without a mediating angel. It is simply stated that "the word of the Lord came" to the prophet (1:4). This is the most common mode by which God commissioned and spoke to a prophet (Hos 1:1; Joel 1:1; Jonah 1:1; Mic 1:1; Zeph 1:1; Hag 1:1; and Mal 1:1). In some instances a visionary mode was used as in the case of Amos, Obad, Nahum, and Habakkuk (see the beginning verses of each book). In the earlier parts of the OT examples of God speaking to or commissioning prophets or patriarchs without a mediating angel are Adam (Gen 3:9), Cain (Gen 4:6), Noah (Gen 7;1), Abraham (Gen 12:1), Jacob (Gen 28:13) and Samuel (I Sam 3:4).

[14]The angel of the Lord looked like an angel of God (v. 6), but he spoke as if he were God (vv. 13-14). However, when Manoah wanted to offer a gift to the angel, he was told by the angel to offer it instead to God (vv. 15-

16). But again, after the burnt offering was given to God, the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the offering and Manoah fell on his face and cried out that they had seen God. In this instance we have a true angel-theophany.

[15]The angel of the Lord appears frequently throughout the OT (e.g., Gen 22:11-19; Exod 14:19-20; Num 22:22-35; 1 Kgs 19:5-8; Ps 34:8; Isa 37:36).

[16]While the five were not called for the same prophetic office, they, nevertheless, were all identified as prophets, either by name or by the action of proclaiming God's word. Moses was called and commissioned to lead God's people out of Egypt and subsequently was the prophet of the Sinai covenant. As such he is referred to as a prophet (Deut 18:18). Of the five, Daniel alone is not called a prophet. But he is called by God to receive revelations (7:1; 10:1), and he was used by God to interpret dreams (2:27-28) - however, in the NT he is once called a prophet (Matt 24:15). In the present study we will use the word "prophet" in the sense of one who has been called or commissioned by God to speak his word. See Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 85-91.

[17]Except for these five, Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah, all the other prophets had commissions in which no angelic figures were involved. See n. 13 above.

[18]See n. 3 above.

[19]S. M. Lehrman, trans., Exodus, vol. 3 of Midrash Rabbah, ed. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon (London: Soncino Press, 1939; 3d repr., 1961), 53.

[20]André Feuillet, "Le Fils de l'Homme de Daniel et la Tradition Biblique," Revue biblique 60 (1953): 184-87; Seyoon Kim, "The 'Son of Man'" as the Son of God (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 15-37.

[21]Feuillet, "Le Fils de l"homme," 187.

[22]Examples of the tradition of angelic figures who act in the stead of God in other instances are not here included. See p. 46 and nn. 14 and 15 above.

[23]Friedrich Lang, "Pûr," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament 6 (1968), 935-36. Another example of fire representing the presence of God when the angel of the Lord was acting in his stead is that of the story of Gideon (Judg 6:20-22). Also at Sinai the glory of God looked like a consuming fire (Exod 24:17).

[24]Lehrman, Exodus, 53.

[25]Feuillet, "Le Fils de l'Homme," 187.

[26]This distinction is made because in the case of the angel of Rev 10 both his appearance and the phenomena which accompany his appearance are indications of God and his glory.

[27]This is true of the majority of the prophets of the OT. See n. 13 above.

[28]In total there are eight visions which came to Zechariah at night. For a list see Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament, An Introduction, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1965), 430.

[29]In one instance at least an angel in a vision tells Zechariah to proclaim the word of God and then tells him what to say (Zech 1:14).

[30]The vision of the flying scroll in Zech 5:1-4 is a possible example of the third characteristic of the call narrative, although it is not directly connected with the prophet's call or commission.

[31]The angel of the Lord who appeared to Moses in Exod 3 appears as an angel but speaks as if he were God (vv. 2, 4-6) - though later Jewish tradition interpreted the voice to be that of the Shekinah (see n. 19 above). In the case of Daniel the heavenly figure bears divine-like insignia indicating that he is acting in the stead of God (see pp. 48, 51 and nn. 18, 19 and 20 above). These insignia will be detailed and evaluated in chapter four as they are compared to the insignia of the appearance of the angel of Rev 10.

[32]Rowland, Open Heaven, 94. For a review of the angelology of the OT see Eichrodt, Theology of Old Testament, 2:194-209; Volkmar Hirth, Gottes Boten im Alten Testament, Theologische Arbeiten, ed. Erich Fascher (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1975), 9-12, 48-109. For a review of angelology in later Judaism see Hans Bietenhard, Die himmlische Welt im Urchristentum und Spätjudentum, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1951), 101-230. For an early example of angelology in rabbinical Judaism see Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer, trans. Gerald Friedlander (London: Hegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1916). This rabbinical work is a haggadic narrative of the torah, from creation to the wandering of Israel in the wilderness. While the final redaction was done probably in the ninth century, it contains material which is much earlier, some of which dates from the first century (pp. liii-liv). This rabbinical lore exhibits a highly developed angelology in which both Michael and Gabriel play prominent roles.

For example, Gabriel was the angel who rescued the three men in the fiery furnace (p. 248) and Michael at times represented God to Abraham (p. 193).

[33]Donald A. Hagner, Hebrews, A Good News Commentary, ed. W. Ward Gasque (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), 10.

[34]Rowland, Open Heaven, 94-123.

[35]For example, in 2 Enoch 24:1 Gabriel is seated at the left hand of God when Enoch is brought before God, and in 1 Enoch 20:7 he is described as the angel who is over the cherubim - according to Jewish angelology Gabriel is the archangel who rules over paradise (Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1971 ed., 2:962-64). The literature on Michael is much more extensive. For example, in 3 Apoc. Bar. Michael is described as the archangel who is the commander of the angels (11:2-8). Peter Rohland (Der Erzengel Michael - Arzt und Feldherr [Beihefte der Zeitschrift für Religions-und Geistesgeschichte 19, ed. Ernst Benz; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977], 10-14, 19-25) claims that Michael is the angel of Josh 5:4, and as such resembles the role of Jesus Christ in Christian theology. In the Apocalypse of Paul (secs. 14 and 44) Michael is identified with the angel of the covenant of Mal 3:1, an identification that Christian theology usually reserves for Jesus Christ (Bruce V. Malchow, "The Messenger of the Covenant in Mal 3:1," Journal of Biblical Literature 103 [1984]: 252-55). Also Michael was on occasion identified as the angel of the Lord, the angel of God's face, and as such was at times even venerated and worshiped (Wilhelm Lueken, Der Erzengel Michael in der überlieferung des Judentums [Marburg: E. A. Huth, 1989], 13-19).

[36]The identification of Eremiel with Jeremiel and Ramiel is suggested by O. S. Wintermute (The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, ed. James H. Charlesworth [Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1983-85]; 1:513, n. c).

[37]It is not entirely clear from the text of 2 Enoch whether the two gigantic angels of 1:4-7 are the same two who are named in 33:6-8. That they are probably the same can be noted from 1:8 where the huge figures tell Enoch that he is to ascend into heaven with them and be presented before God for his investiture.

[38]In the many extant manuscripts of 2 Enoch in Old Slavonic there are several spellings of this angel's name (e.g., Praviul, Verefoil, and Verevil). F. I. Anderson (Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, 1:140, n. r) believes that he resembles Uriel, one of the archangels mentioned in 1 Enoch (9:1-11; 10:1-2), and that the names are similar.

[39]There is no consensus as to the meaning of the name (P. Alexander, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, 1:243). Of the several etymologies that have

been suggested, the one which points to "the second throne," or "the throne next to the divine throne" seems the most plausible.

[40]For a comparison see Alexander, Ibid., 243-44.

[41]Possibly the origin of the archangel Yaho'el came from speculation about the angel whom God promised in Exod 23:20-23 (Alexander, Ibid., 244). According to Exod 23 Israel was instructed to obey this angel, for he would defend Israel and bring them into the promised land, and so God's name would be upon him.

[42]The seventy names are patterned after the names of God which in turn are the seventy angels of the seventy languages of the human race through whom the Torah was to spread to all the people of the earth (48D:5). For a description of the divine voice at Sinai dividing itself into the seventy tongues of the human race, administered by the seventy angels, and the rabbinic sources for such see Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946-54), 3:97, 166 and the Encyclopaedia Judaica 2:962-64. According to Jewish lore the seventy angels are the heavenly princes set over the seventy nations of the earth. They are first mentioned in Deut 32:8 (LXX) where it is said that God divided the nations according to the number of the angels, though the number seventy is not given. In 1 Enoch (89:59-60; 90:22-25), where the number is given, these angels are described as the shepherds of the nations - the Encyclopaedia Judaica (2:963) erroneously says that the number seventy for the first time appears in Sir 17:17, but the number seventy nowhere appears in Sir. And in the Hebrew Testament of Naphtali (8:4-6; 9:1-5) the seventy angels are called the seventy ministering angels of the seventy families, with Michael as their leader (see R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English [Oxford: Clarenden Press, 1913], 2:361-63).

[43]He is also called the Prince of the Divine Presence, Prince of Wisdom, Prince of Understanding, Prince of Glory, Prince of Kings and Rulers (48D:6).

[44]Judah J. Slotki, trans., Numbers, vol. 5 of Midrash Rabbah.

[45]In the Apocalypse of Abraham (12:7-10) Iaoel plays a similar role to that of Yahweh in Gen 15:9-10 when he instructs Abraham concerning sacrifices.

[46]In a hymn of praise which the angel Iaoel teaches Abraham to recite (17:6-21), God is named Iaoel (17:13). As God is named Iaoel, he is described as Abraham's protector.

[47]Iaoel also is the angel who restrains Leviathan, a role that is similar to that of Michael in Rev 12.

[48]See note 41 above. The names Iaoel and Yaho'el may well be the same archangel. G. H. Box (The Apocalypse of Abraham [SPCK; London: MacMillan, 1919], x and 46) believes that Iaoel (Jaoel) plays the same role as that of both Metatron and Michael.

[49]The Ascension of Isaiah is a composite work that divides into two parts: The Martyrdom of Isaiah, chapters 1-5; and the Ascension of Isaiah, chapters 6-11. The Martyrdom of Isaiah is believed to be Jewish in origin, while the Ascension of Isaiah is Christian. But even in the Martyrdom of Isaiah there is an apparent Christian addition or interpolation (3:13-4:22), which is dated from the first century A.D.. The Ascension of Isaiah portion is dated between the first and third centuries A.D. (M. A. Knibb, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, 2:143-54; Rowland, Open Heaven, 267; and Edgar Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha, ed. W. Schneemelcher [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965], 2:634). Jean Daniélou, (The Theology of Jewish Christianity, The Development of Christian Doctrine before the Council of Nicea, trans. and ed. John A. Baker, vol. 1 [London: Darton, Longham and Todd; Chicago: Henry Ragnery, 1964]: 117-18) believes that the Ascension of Isaiah is a type of apocalyptic that represents "one of the most characteristic features of Jewish/Christian literature."

[50]Because of the treatment of this angelic figure with regard to Jesus Christ, the Ascension of Isaiah "has commonly been held to embody an angel-Christology (Richard Bauckham, "The Worship of Jesus in Apocalyptic," New Testament Studies 27 [April, 1982]: 334). Daniélou (Jewish Christianity, 117-18 and "Trinité Angelologie dans la Théologie Judeo-Chrétienne," Recherches de science religieuse 45 [1957]: 5-6) maintains that an angel-Christology did develop within Jewish Christianity and that it was a natural outgrowth of identifying the Logos with the angel of the Lord, an identification which Philo made (Conf. 146; Gen. iv:90; Ex. ii:30). However, Joseph Barbel (Christos Angelos: Die Anschauung von Christus als Bote und Engel in der gelehrten und volkstümlichen Literatur des christlichen Altertums [Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1941]: 18-20) suggests that while it is true that Philo did identify the Logos as the angel of the Lord, he did not, together with all Jewish thought, ever identify the angel of the Lord with the Messiah.

[51]Daniélou (Jewish Christianity, 127-29) identifies the two preeminent angels as Michael and Gabriel - Michael in place of Christ and Gabriel in place of the Holy Spirit. Daniélou bases this identification on the text of the Ascension of Isaiah (3:16) where Michael is introduced as the chief of the holy angels, and who together with the angel of the Holy Spirit will on the third day open the grave of Jesus Christ (see also 3:13-4:22); and on 11:4 where it is

said that the angel of the Spirit was the one who warned Joseph not to divorce Mary - which angel in Matt 1:20 is called the angel of the Lord but whom Daniélou identifies as Gabriel because of Luke (1:11, 19, 26). But Bauckham ("Worship of Jesus," 334) rightly points out that these identifications can not be sustained, for despite the possible confusion of the roles of Christ and Michael, part of which is caused by the Slavonic and Latin versions which have additions at 9:23 and 29 that mention Michael (which addition Kniff [Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, 2:171] does not believe were a part of the original text of the Ascension of Isaiah), it is quite clear from the entire text of the Ascension that Christ and the Holy Spirit are meant. Origin (de Princ. I.iii.4) believed that the angels were the two seraphim of Isaiah 6:2, whom he identified with Christ and the Holy Spirit.

[52]See n. 49 above.

[53]For example, in 2 Enoch (1:4-8; 22:11-12) there appear to be at least three angels thus emerging.

[54]The Elkesaites named themselves after their sacred writing, the Book of Elkesai. This writing professed to contain a revelation that was given to a certain Elkesai (sacred power). They held teachings similar to those of the Ebionites. Almost all of our knowledge of them derives from references in Hippolytus' principal work, Refutation of all Heresies, known now under the title, Philosophoumena (ix,13-17; x,29); and from the most important work of Epiphanius which was also called, Refutation of all the Heresies (xix; xxx,17; liii) - this work is also known as his Panarion, or more commonly just as Heresies. For further information see F. L. Cross, ed., The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (Oxford: University Press, 1957): 447.

[55]For a complete description see Hippolytus' Philosophumena ix, 13-17 (PG, 16.3, 3387-94).

[56]Ibid., 16.3, 3387.

[57]See pp. 54 of text.

[58]Eichrodt (Theology of Old Testament, 2:28) says that because God is beyond a human being's grasp but also a God who reveals himself to a human being in the world of phenomena, the prophetic writer "sought to resolve this difficulty with the help of the mal'ak yhwh - His appearance served to make possible the direct entry of Yahweh into the field of human vision . . . ."

[59]See p. 45 of text and n. 13 above.

[60]De Somnis 1:22.

[61]Eichrodt, Theology of Old Testament, 2:19-20; Hirth, Gottes Botten, 60-117.

[62]See Exod 3:1-6 for an example.

[63]For example, in the Testament of Isaac (2:25) Michael is identified with the angel of the Lord. Gabriel as well was conjectured to be the angel of the Lord (see Stier, Gott und sein Engel, 47-48).

[64]Joseph Addison Alexander, Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1953, repr., 1974), 419; Edward Young, The Book of Isaiah (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 3:481-82.

[65]See n. 41 above.

[66]Young, Ibid., 3:484-88.

[67]A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament, (New York: Scribner, 1910, repr. 1914), 297-98; Eichrodt, Theology of Old Testament, 2:27. The cloud and the pillar of fire (Exod 14:19-20) could, however, be classified as divine-like phenomena.

[68]It appears only in Isa 63:9. It does, however, appear in Tobit where Raphael is designated as one of the "seven angels who stand in attendance on the Lord and enter his glorious presence (12:15)." This suggests that there were seven angels of God's presence or face. However, in I Enoch four angels in particular are mentioned and named as angels of the presence, Michael, Raphael, Gabriel and Phanuel (71:8; cf. 40:1-7; 54:6). These four appear to have a relationship to the four seraphim of Isa 6:2-3 because of the mention of faces and their hymn of praise (I Enoch 40:1-3) - in Apoc. Mos. 40:2 the four are Michael, Gabriel, Uriel and Raphael; and in the War Scroll (1QM 9:15) they are Michael, Gabriel, Sieriel and Raphael.

[69]While the appellation as such is not met in the Hebrew scriptures of the OT or the Pseudepigrapha, the idea of such an angel of the Exodus was. See Num 20:16 and Isa 63:9-14 (cf. Acts 7:30-38). In the Babylonian Talmud Metatron is called the angel of the Exodus (Sanh. 38b).

[70]Unless one connects the angel with the angel of the Lord in Exod 3:2.

[71]The pillar of cloud is first mentioned in Exod 13:21 where it says that God went before Israel in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

[72]In T. Levi 3:7 angels of God's face are mentioned, but only in the plural and no significant status is noted.

[73]Charles (Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, 2:13, n. 27) believes that this history was not the Pentateuch "but a history up to the Messianic kingdom, but Deut. 28-30 may be meant."

[74]In Acts 7:30, 38 a single angel is mentioned, but in Acts 7:53 we find the plural. Because of this tradition, one could possibly say that with the angel of the Exodus there was also thought to be the angel of the Torah. Philo (De Somnis 1:141-43) also speaks or refers to the Law being given to Moses by the mediation of angels (see also Josephus, Ant. xv.5,3). For further references concerning the mediation of angels at Sinai see n. 42 above.

[75]See Stier, Gott und sein Engel, 48-56; and Millar Burrows, An Outline of Biblical Theology (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1946), 120. For example, Burrows says, "It is impossible to determine . . . whether one special messenger . . . is meant, or whether any messenger may be sent for this purpose."

[76]See Stier, Gott und sein Engel, 48. U. Cassuto (A Commentary on the book of Exodus, trans. Israel Abrahams [Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967], 305-306) believes that there was no angel at all. Rather, the expression "an angel of God" was a literary device that simply meant that God would be with his people to guide and prosper them. See also Herman Gunkel (The Legends of Genesis, trans. W. H. Carruth [Chicago: Open Court, 1901; repr. New York: Schocken, 1964], 104-105) who earlier suggested the same thought.

[77]Alan F. Segal, Two Powers in Heaven, Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity, ed. J. Neusner (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), 169-83. See also n. 50 above.

[78]Steir, Gott und sein Engel, 47. See also pp. 60-61 of text and n. 63 above. Rohland (Erzengel Michael, 32-33), however, does not believe that Michael is all that solid in the Jewish tradition. In particular, he is hesitant in identifying the angel of the Lord in his various appearances always with Michael. But the idea that Michael was the angel of the Lord lingered on until quite late as is evidenced by the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus where such an identification is made (Rohland, Ibid., 45, and n. 36). Herm. Sim. (8,2.3) also refers to Michael as the angel of the Lord. Also in both Herm. Sim. (8,2.3) and the Testament of Isaac (2:25) Michael is referred to as the angel of the Lord. Other archangels were also identified with angels of unique status, such as Gabriel and Uriel as the angel of the Exodus (Apocalypse of Elijah 5:5-6) and Ramiel as the angel of the Lord (2 Apoc. Bar. 63:6-7). And in the Testament of Solomon (6:8) God is described as an angel who is called Emmanuel.

[79]When one angel was identified as "the angel" who represented God, the tendency to worship that angel was present. We see hints of this in connection with the angel of the Lord already in the OT (Judg 13:17-22). Herman Gunkel (Legends of Genesis, 104-105) suggested that various appearances of the angel of the Lord were literarily presented so as to veil the theophany in mystery and thus to avoid a cult that could lend itself to the worship of angels.

[80]Even within Judaism one can argue how important or prevalent a role such an unique angel played. Whatever importance angelology, and in particular an angel of unique status, played within Judaism, one notes that such played a lesser role, if any, within Christianity. But it should be noted that just at that time when within Judaism angelology was beginning to reach its full development, Christianity was born (see D. S. Russell, Early Judaism, 77-80 and Bietenhard, Himmlische Welt, 101-42).

[81]There are several angels with varying descriptions identifying the roles they play: the angel of luxury and deceit (Sim. 6, I.5-6); the angel of punishment (Sim. 6, III.2-3); the angel of the Lord (Sim. 8, II.1, 6); guardian angels (Sim. VI.2); angels who serve as God's counselors (Sim. VI.4); and the angels of wickedness and righteousness who attend humankind (Man. II, VI). In addition there is the angel of repentance who instructs Hermas and is described as the overlord of the devil (Man. IV.7; XII).

[82]Daniélou, Jewish Christianity, 119-21 and "Trinité et Angelologie," 9. It is not always clear what the various angels are, or whether one or more angels are being described. The angel of glory who appears to be Michael and who acts on behalf of the Son of God is also identified with the Spirit in the same context (Sim. 8, III.3). Also in Sim. 9, I.1-2 the angel of repentance acts for the Holy Spirit.

[83]This latter description is according to the Ethiopic recension (Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha, 2:671-72).

[84]Ibid., 1.186 and H. B. Swete, The Akmîm Fragment of the Apocryphal Gospel of St. Peter (London: n.p., 1893). While the heads of the two attending angels reached into heaven, the head of Jesus Christ surpassed the heavens.

[85]H. Duensing (Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha, 2:755-56) states that Origen refers to an Apocalypse of Paul, but he says that it could not have been the Apocalypse in the form in which we now have it. The first certain reference to our present Apocalypse of Paul is that of Augustine. Duensing dates it at the end of the fourth century or at the beginning of the fifth.

[86]The text of the Apocalypse of Paul is found in Hennecke (New Testament Apocrypha, 2:755-98). The Apocalypse was originally written in Greek, but we only have extant an abbreviated form, which can be found in K. Tischendorf's Apocalypse Apocraphae (Leipzig: n.p., 1866), 34-69. The most complete and oldest witness to the Apocalypse now extant is that of the Latin translation which was published by M. R. James (Texts and Studies, "Apocrypha Anecdota," [Cambridge: n.p., 1893], 2:3).

[87]The angel of the Lord appears only in the Coptic version of the Apocalypse (see Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha, 2:796).

[88]A possible exception could be that of Michael. However, he is not described in such terms except when he is identified (or confused) with Jesus Christ as in Herm. (see p. 64 of text and nn. 81 and 82 above).

[89]Daniélou (Jewish Christianity, 121-23) says that the chief archangel in Judaism is in Christianity no longer Michael or some other angel of note, but Jesus Christ, around whom the other six archangels gather.

[90]Segal (Two Powers in Heaven, 24-25) believes that the Christian community relied on the Jewish tradition of a "principal angel for its exaltation Christology." Christianity evidently saw in the "principal angel" idea of Judaism a manifestation of the role that Jesus would play (Ibid., ix). See also Barbel, Christos Angelos, 34-36, 47, 192-223, 234-45, 335-52 and Adolphine Baker, "Christ an Angel?" Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 32 (1933): 255-65.

CHAPTER IV

THE ANGEL OF REVELATION 10 - HIS APPEARANCE

The angel of Rev 10 appears to fit the tradition of an angelic figure of "considerable status, whose position in the heavenly hierarchy set him apart from the rest of the angels" in the angelology of Judaism.[1] In Revelation he is the only angel who, in addition to Jesus Christ, commissions the author in his prophetic ministry. His appearance and dress suggest that he commissions John under the authority of God and in the stead of Christ. Supernatural phenomena also attend the angel in his commissioning role to indicate the divine presence. And a symbolical action is a part of John's call which points to his own involvement.

In the NT the angel of Rev 10 is unique in that his appearance suggests an angel-theophany.[2] No other angel in Revelation or in the NT is arrayed with divine-like insignia as is this angel.[3] In the artistic creation of the angel of Rev 10 John seems to be in both the Jewish and Christian traditions. For John uses his angel of "unique status" for the same purpose that such an angel was used in Judaism, to demonstrate the transcendence of God as well as the transcendence of Jesus Christ.

The Introduction of the Angel

The angel is introduced as ἄλλον ἄγγελον ἰσχυρὸν (v. 1).[4] The word ἄλλος (another) indicates that the angel is not one of the seven angels of the trumpets who are introduced in Rev 8:2 and who show to John the seven scenes of the second vision (Rev 8:6-11:19).[5] Though the angel of Rev 10 appears between the sixth trumpet angel (9:13) and the seventh (11:15), he is not one of the seven trumpet angels as demonstrated by his description and role.[6]

The angel of Rev 10 is "another mighty" angel.[7] In Revelation there are three angels who are designated as mighty (ἰσχυρός): the angel in the vision of the seven-sealed scroll and the lamb (5:2); the commissioning angel of Rev 10; and the angel of the millstone in the vision of the fall of Babylon (18:21). The word ἄλλος in Rev 10:1 points to a different mighty angel from the one in Rev 5:2. Thus, while the ἄλλος in its immediate context (Rev 8:6-11:19) implies that the angel of Rev 10 is not one of the seven-trumpet angels, it also serves as a literary indicator that points to the mighty angel of Rev 5:2 as a comparison.[8] The angel of Rev 10 is a mighty angel, but a different one from that of Rev 5:2.

The mighty angel of Rev 5:2 is the angel who with a loud voice introduces the question about the possibility that only the lamb who conquered by his death could open the scroll and its seals (5:2-7).[9] This mighty angel issues a challenge to all creation on behalf of God, "Who is worthy to open the

scroll and loose its seven seals (vs. 2)?" No one can take up the challenge save the conquering lamb who is described as "the lion of the tribe of Judah and the root of David (vv. 3, 5)."[10] By giving such a challenge the angel invites creation to look into the secret council of God and as a consequence dramatically presents the choice of God, the conquering lamb.[11] The angel is thus the herald of God and the servant of Jesus Christ and proclaims the victorious Christ as the only one who can open the scroll. An angel who is designated "mighty" is chosen because the voice of such an angel is needed to proclaim the will of God.[12]

What is the relationship between this mighty angel of Rev 5:2 and the mighty angel of 10:1? As mentioned above, the ἄλλος of 10:1 points to some kind of correspondence. Both are identified as "mighty angels," apparently because of the important role each plays. In the case of the angel of Rev 5:2, it is the role of a herald of God who draws attention to the scroll and the lamb (5:2-7). In the case of the angel of Rev 10, it is the role of a heavenly messenger who is instrumental in commissioning John to proclaim the contents of an opened scroll (10:1-2, 8-11).[13] The ἄλλος suggests then that the angel of Rev 10 is a second angel who plays an important role, similar to that of the angel of 5:2.[14] If the ἄλλον were not present in the text as is the case of some manuscripts,[15] then the angel of 10:1 might be the same angel as that of 5:2.[16] The difficulty with this interpretation is that one would normally

expect the identifying article τόν to appear with the ἄγγελον ἰσχυρὸν, which is not the case.[17]

As the text stands then, the author uses the ἄλλος as a cross-reference to identify a second angel (Rev 10:1) of similar status to that of the angel of 5:2. A second angel who in his importance stands out in a similar fashion to the angel of 5:2. [18] However, only the angel of Rev 10 is described with divine-like tokens and has a role akin to that of Jesus Christ in the commissioning of John.

The word ἰσχυρός appears nine times in Revelation, three of which are used to describe angels (5:2; 10:1; 18:21). In a fourth instance (18:1-2), an angel of great authority cries out with a mighty voice (ἐν ἰσχυρᾷ φωνῇ). This angel of great authority who lights up the earth with his glory (18:1) and who cries out with a mighty voice may be the same mighty angel of 18:21, for both are involved with the announcement of the overthrow of Babylon (18:2, 21) - at least the two angels are described as great in similar though not repetitive terms.[19]

In the LXX the word ἰσχυρός is used several times to translate the Hebrew word אֵל - for which in the LXX the more common words are θεός and κύριος.[20] Most commonly the word ἰσχυρός in the LXX (and its Hebrew equivalents[21]) is used co-extensively with δύναμις of both men and things (e.g., Gen 41:31; Num 13:31). But it is noteworthy that while the LXX uses ἰσχυρός some eleven times in the absolute to translate אֵל it never uses

δύναμις to do so when אֵל is used as a divine appellation - nor does the LXX use any other word with the meaning of strength for אֵל.[22] Also note worthy is the fact that the LXX never uses ἰσχυρός for any heavenly figure other than God. No angel either absolutely or adjectivally is ever named or described with the word ἰσχυρός. This is in keeping with the Hebrew word אֵל which is also never used for any heavenly being but God.[23]

The divine appellation, however, was attached to the name of angels to indicate that they belonged to God or were close to him in the heavenly realm, as in the case of Michael and Gabriel ("Who is like God" and "man of God"). In rabbinic literature it is stated that though the name of God (אֵל) was joined to the name of angels, one was not to imagine God had many faces, thus suggesting that there were many deities in heaven - for there is only one God (Exod. Rab. 29:2).

This pattern set by the LXX in its use of ἰσχυρός as a divine appellation may have carried over into the pseudepigrapha literature of Judaism. For example, in the Apocalypse of Abraham (1st/2nd century A.D.) a voice from heaven which called out to Abraham is identified as the voice of "the Mighty One" (8:1; see also 20:1).[24] Similarly, in 4 Ezra 9:45 (1st century A.D.) the divine appellation, "the Mighty One," appears - to whom all glory is given (see also 2 Apoc. Bar. 56:2; 63:2).[25]

In later Jewish tradition the voice of God is described as powerful and full of majesty (Cant. Rab. 16:3), so much so that no creature could withstand it, even when spoken by an angel (Exod. Rab. 28:6). However, so that the voice of God could be received by human beings, it was tempered or lessoned to the level of the power and comprehension of the human recipient (Exod. Rab. 29:4).

In the NT ἰσχυρός appears 29 times. Of the 20 times that it appears outside Revelation it is used for forces of nature (Matt 14:30), of human beings (1 Cor 1:27), and of human emotions (Heb 5:7). It is used of Jesus Christ where he is called the stronger one in comparison to John the Baptist (Matt 3:11; Mark 1:7; Like 3:16). And it is used in reference to Satan, the chief of the demons (Matt 12:29; Mark 3:27; Luke 11:21). In Revelation, in addition to the four instances with regard to angels, the word is used twice of human beings (6:15; 19:18), once of God (18:8), once of Babylon (18:10), and once in reference to the voice of a great crowd in heaven which is likened to the voice of thunder (19:6).

The author of Revelation is the only writer in either the LXX or the NT who uses ἰσχυρός in reference to angels.[26] Whether he was aware of the LXX's usage of the word for אֵל, his choice of the word for identifying the angel would agree with the LXX's use of it with regard to godly power. The word does not necessarily ascribe to the angel a divine-like power inherent in his own character; rather, it refers to a divine-like power by which he carries

out his role as he acts on behalf of the mighty God. And as in the case of the Jewish tradition of attaching אֵל to the name of angels, it may also be said that because John attaches the ἰσχυρός to the angel of Rev 10, it indicates that the angel belongs to God.

One further thought concerning the word ἰσχυρός should be noted. There is the possibility that the author of Revelation used this very word in order to identify the angel of Rev 10 as Gabriel. Gabriel, whose name means "man (or, mighty one) of God,"[27] is the angel who reveals to Daniel the meaning of the vision of the ram and he-goat (Dan 8:16-26; see also 9:20-27), and may possibly also be the angel clothed in linen who swears with his hands stretched towards heaven.[28] The oath of the angel accompanied by the raising of his hands to heaven is similar to the action of the angel of Rev 10 when he lifts his right hand to heaven and utters an oath (vv. 5-6). The fact that both Michael and Gabriel play roles in Daniel (10:13, 21; 12:1), together with the fact that Michael also has a role in Revelation (12:7), has led to the conjecture that Gabriel also has a role in Revelation, that of the mighty angel of Rev 10.[29] But since this would then imply a play on the name of the angel, this identification does not have strong support. Where the author is sure of his identifications, without hesitation he will use the proper identifying name, as in the case of Michael (Rev 12:7). But where he is in doubt, he will use the word ὅμοιον, as he does in Rev 1:13 with regard to the Son of Man.[30] Otherwise he makes no attempt at identification.

Without being identified as such by the author, could the angel of Rev 10 possibly be Michael. As referred to above, Michael does appear in Rev 12, as the warrior-angel of heaven (vv. 7-9). Though this warrior-like role is different from the mediating role of the angel of Rev 10, could not the same angel fulfill both roles? We do know that in Jewish tradition Michael plays several roles.[31] One such role is that of high priest. In rabbinic literature Michael is described as the angelic priest who in the fourth heaven, Zebul, stands in the heavenly Jerusalem before the temple and altar and offers up offerings (Hag. 12b; cf. Zebah. 62a and Menah. 110a).[32] Both the priestly role of Michael and the prophetic, commissioning role of the angel of Rev 10 suggest angelic roles of importance. Also the appearance or dress of each role would similarly indicate angels of important status. However, there is no indication to suggest that the angel of Rev 10 in his prophetic, commissioning role is Michael - beyond that of a similar role and appearance of status. As said above, where the author of Revelation is certain of his identification, "he will use the proper identifying name." If the angel of Rev 10 is Michael, it seems that the author of Revelation was unaware of it.

John sees the angel coming down from heaven. Heaven is the abode of God (Rev 11:19), and John himself had earlier by means of the Spirit entered the heavenly realm and witnessed God and his court (Rev 4:1-11). The designation "from heaven" indicates that the angel comes from God. This can be derived from the fact that the designation "from heaven" is used in Rev

3:12; 21:2 together with "from God." [33] Elsewhere, God is described as "the God from heaven (Rev 11:3)," and his temple is associated with heaven (Rev 14:17).

Two other times John sees an angel descending from heaven. In Rev 18:1-2 an angel descends from heaven in order to announce the judgment of God. In Rev 20:1-2 an angel descends from heaven to bind Satan. In both instances it is quite clear that the angels are from God and are acting under his authority (Rev 18:5, 20; 20:9-11). The angel of Rev 10 is also from God and acts under his authority.[34] The fact that the angel lifts his hand to heaven and swears by the "one who lives forever (Rev 10:5-6)" supports this interpretation.

In the NT the expression "from heaven" is used at times as a traditional way of saying "from God." For example, in Matt 21:25 the contrast between "from heaven" and "from man" suggests that the expression "from heaven" means "from God."[35] In Revelation this tradition seems evident in the statement, "I heard a voice from heaven (Rev 10:4, 8; 11:12; 14:13)." The source of the voice is not identified but it is either God or some heavenly figure under his authority.[36]

In Jewish tradition the heavenly world consisted of seven heavens.[37] In the seventh and highest heaven, Araboth, dwelt the angels of God's face or presence. According to this tradition if the angel of Rev 10 is an angel of God's presence, then as Michael and Gabriel he would be from the seventh

heaven. If, however, the angel of Rev 10 is thought to be a ministering angel of God's praise, then he would be of the fifth heaven, Ma'on, where such ministering angels dwelt. That such a tradition of a seven-tiered heaven was know at John's time can be attested to from I Cor 12:2. It cannot be said with certainty which heaven John had in mind, if any. Because of the status and appearance of the angel of Rev 10, it would seem that if John did have in mind a particular sphere of heaven, it would be the seventh, indicating that the angel came from the presence of God. Whatever the case, the origin of the angel is the heavenly realm of God and his angelic court.

In summary, the angel of Rev 10 is introduced as a "mighty angel from heaven" because of the apparent extraordinary role that he is to fulfill. Extraordinary in that his role is beyond the usual or customary role of angelic figures in Revelation, that of commissioning John. He is described as "another mighty angel" because he is not the first to thus stand out in his role. But in contrast to the angel of Rev 5:2, the angel of Rev 10 is described in terms that suggest his uniqueness and magnitude.[38]

The Appearance of the Angel

The angel who descends from heaven has an appearance which sets him apart from all other angels in Revelation. Together with Jesus Christ, the angel of Rev 10 is the only heavenly figure whose appearance is described in detail.[39] The immediate impression of his appearance suggests a celestial figure of divine character.[40] Celestial depictions such as cloud and rainbow

and sun are usually reserved for representations of God and are not easily associated with creatures, heavenly or otherwise.[41] Whatever the celestial-like depictions mean, they certainly set aside the angel of Rev 10 as a representative or bearer of the divine presence. And they mark and underline the importance of his role.

The Cloud

The first thing that John mentions is that the angel is clothed with a cloud (Rev 10:1). In biblical literature a cloud is a familiar item, in particular as it is associated with God. In the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT it was used to signify God's presence in the Exodus, in the form of a pillar by which he led Israel (Exod 13:21; Num 9:17-21). On occasion God used the pillar of cloud to protect his people (Exod 14:19-24). A cloud was also used by God when he spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai and at the entrance of the tabernacle (Exod 24:15-16; Deut 31:15-16). This cloud from which God spoke was used in addition to show his glory (Exod 16:10) and to make known his presence, especially in connection with the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant (Exod 40:34-35; Lev 16:2). And lastly, the cloud is referred to as the heavenly vehicle of God (Ps 104:3; Isa 19:11).

God is described as one who covers himself with a cloud. The setting for this is one of judgment. Because God's people have sinned and rebelled, God covers himself with anger as he metes out punishment. Then follows the thought that God covers himself with a cloud so that no prayer can get through

to him (Lam 3:42-44). The cloud is used to conceal God from his people.[42] This reference is of interest because it shows that the cloud was also used as a cloak or covering of God. Though in this instance the cloud is used for concealment, it still carries the idea of a garment or covering. This sense of the cloud as a cover or garment may perhaps be seen or reflected in Ezek 1 with regard to God's glory. The cloud together with lightning and the rainbow form the covering of glory by which God surrounds himself (Ezek 1:4, 28).

In the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT the cloud then was used to indicate God's presence. It could also guide and protect his people. It was also used as a phenomenon through which he spoke to Moses and Israel. In addition, the cloud was an adornment by which God exhibited his glory.[43] However, the cloud of glory could also conceal his presence - similar perhaps to the pillar of cloud that revealed God's presence to Israel while at the same time it concealed Israel from the Egyptians (Exod 14:19-20; Ps 105:39). And lastly the cloud is pictured as a conveyance of God.

On occasion the cloud was associated with a heavenly figure other than God. In Exod 14:19-20 the cloud is seen in connection with the angel of God as he stands between the camps of Israel and the Egyptians for protection of the former. In Dan 7:13 the Son of Man is accompanied by the clouds of heaven as he comes to the Ancient of Days in a heavenly vision. The former example appears to carry the same symbolism as the cloud of God, for in the same context (Exod 14:24) we are told that it was God who through the cloud

protected his people. But the latter may not have the same relationship to the cloud of God. Perhaps all that can be maintained in Daniel is that "The clouds are in contrast to the chaos of waters," and thus represent "the Kingdom of Heaven opposed to the kingdoms of this world."[44] If, however, one were to follow the LXX's translation of Dan 7:13 (ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν),[45] the clouds could then be understood as symbolizing deity or the attribute of the same,[46] and thus imply a theophanic symbol.[47]

In the NT God is described as speaking from a cloud to Jesus in the Transfiguration accounts (Matt 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35). Similar to Dan 7:13, Jesus as the Son of Man will come on (ἐπὶ) the clouds of heaven (Matt 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27).[48] This is reminiscent of the cloud that removed Jesus from the sight of the disciples at his ascension (Acts 1:9; see also Rev 11:12; I Thess 4:17). And in a reference to the Exodus, Paul in 1 Cor 10:1-2 reminds his readers that the fathers were under the cloud when they passed through the sea and were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.[49]

In Revelation the cloud in every instance, seven in all (1:7; 10:1; 11:12; 14:14, 14, 15, 16), is used for supernatural purposes. Jesus Christ is described as the one who comes with clouds (Rev 1:7) and as the one who in judgment sits on a cloud (Rev 14:14-16). In addition, the two witnesses of Rev 11 ascend into heaven on a cloud (v. 12) - reminiscent of Christ's ascension (Acts 1:9). And lastly, the angel of Rev 10 is pictured clothed in a cloud

(vs. 1). The author of Revelation thus follows the tradition evidenced in the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT in which clouds are used as symbols of supernatural personages or events - a tradition which is also followed in the NT as reviewed above.

Does this tradition help to determine the meaning of the cloud of the angel of Rev 10? The cloud is not the conveyance by which the angel descends from heaven.[50] Nor does the angel speak to John from the cloud. Rather, the angel is clothed in the cloud as if it were a garment. The word περιβάλλω, "to throw, lay" or "put around," also means "to clothe" (e.g., Deut 22:12; Matt 25:36; Luke 23:11; John 19:2).[51] In Revelation the word is used in every instance in the sense of "to clothe." For example, the saints of God are clothed in white garments (Rev 3:5, 18; 7:9, 13). Also the twenty-four elders are clothed in white garments (4:4) as is the bride of Christ (19:8). The two witnesses of Rev 11 are clothed in sackcloth and ashes (v. 13). The harlot and Babylon are clothed in purple and scarlet (17:4; 18:6). And Jesus Christ is clothed in a garment that has been rolled in blood (19:13). The only figure in Revelation which is clothed in a cloud is the angel of Rev 10. Perhaps the closest analogy is that of the woman with child who is clothed with the sun as if it were a garment (Rev 12:1).[52]

With the possible exception of God, the angel of Rev 10 is the only figure in the Bible who is depicted clothed in a cloud.[53] As reviewed above, God is once described as covered with a cloud (Lam 3:44). Whether this can

be thought of as a garment or not,[54] it is the closest we have of any other figure who is so pictured. However, in Ps 104:1-3 God is described clothed in splendor and majesty (v. 1). His garment of majesty is likened to light (v. 2). Clouds are then mentioned as his chariot as he rides on the wings of the wind (v. 3).[55] In Lam 3:44 the cloud is a cover by which God conceals himself. This interpretation does not seem appropriate in Rev 10:1. Rather, in keeping with Ps 104:1-3, the cloud seems to be a garment exhibiting or symbolizing a heavenly glory and majesty. If the concealment idea is also to be understood, it could mean that the cloud as a garment conceals the angel's own person and identity so as to show that he is acting on behalf of God and under his authority.[56] Even if the concealment thought is not stressed, the cloud covering the angel would still indicate that he is acting within God's glory and authority.

The cloud then is a token or heraldic emblazonment which suggests that the angel is a herald and messenger of God acting within his glory and under his authority. He bears the mantel of God, for he is God's angel as he carries out his commissioning role.[57] The cloud thus hints at a theophany,[58] but only in so far as the angel acts on behalf of God.

The Rainbow

A second distinguishing mark of the angel's appearance is a rainbow over his head. The word ἶρις is the common Greek word for rainbow or any bright colored circle. Are we to understand the rainbow as a crown-like halo or colored circle around and above the angel's head? Or are we to think of it

as an arch over the angel's head as a rainbow (a half circle) normally appears in nature?[59] A third possibility is that the rainbow was a complete circle which encircled the angel's face as a halo surrounds a bright light - in this case because the angel's face was like the sun (Rev 10:1).[60] The word ἶρις itself in its most common usage suggests a complete circle, for the rainbow was thought to be a complete circle encircling the earth.[61] This would seem to rule out the interpretation that the rainbow over the angel's head was arch-like in shape.[62] Rather, the word suggests that the rainbow was a complete circle, either horizontally encircling the top of the head as a crown, or vertically encircling the face as a halo surrounding a bright light (like the sun). The fact that the rainbow is described as on the head (ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς) would seem to favor the horizontal, crown-like position. But if one sees a close association between the rainbow and the sun-lit face of the angel (Rev 10:1), then the vertical, halo-like position would be favored.[63]

A rainbow (ἶρις) appears one other time in Revelation, in the heavenly vision of God's throne (4:3). John sees a rainbow encircling the throne - in the form of a circle, whether horizontal or vertical cannot be determined.[64] The two instances of ἶρις in Revelation thus seem to imply that in both cases a complete, halo-like circle is meant.[65] However, the rainbow of the throne of God was like an emerald in appearance, suggesting the color green.[66] This would appear to differ in color from the rainbow of the angel. While the color of the rainbow of the angel is not mentioned (Rev 10:1), in the absence of any

such description, it seems most natural to interpret the ἶρις as a rainbow of many colors.[67] However, despite this probable difference in color,[68] there does seem to be an association between the two rainbows. But before such an association is examined, we must first review the Jewish/Christian tradition of the use of the rainbow in a supernatural, symbolical sense.

The word ἶρις does not appear elsewhere in the NT, nor in the LXX.[69] Except for Revelation, the word is not biblical.[70] In the LXX the word that is used is τόξον, which appears some 78 times[71] - it appears only once in the NT, Rev 6:2.[72] Τόξον was the common Greek word for the battle bow, a weapon.[73] Metaphorically it was occasionally employed for the rainbow, possibly because the rainbow appears in the sky as a half-circle or bow-like arch.[74] In the LXX τόξον for the most part represents the battle bow. But twice it appears metaphorically for the rainbow (Gen 9:13 and Ezek 1:28). These two instances are of interest for the present study because of possible source material for the use of ἶρις in Rev 4:3 and 10:1.

In Gen 9:13-16 τόξον designates the rainbow as a sign of the covenant that God made with Noah. In Ezek 1:4, 26-28 it is used to describe a halo-like fiery ring which surrounded the throne of God as a part of his glory.[75] This fiery-like ring or halo is likened to a rainbow in the heavens on a cloudy day (Ezek 1:28). From these two instances it can be deduced that in the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT the rainbow was a symbolical demonstration of both God's covenantal grace and glory.[76]

In rabbinic thought the rainbow was said to have been created on the eve of the sabbath at twilight (Pesah. 54a), and that its chief purpose was to serve as a revelation of God's glory.[77] It was thought that when one sees the rainbow, he should fall on his face because the rainbow is a reminder of God's covenant (Ber. 59a). Furthermore, no one should gaze at the rainbow since a human being cannot bear to look upon God's glory (Ezek 1:28; Isa 6:5; I Kgs 8:11; Exod 24:17).[78]

John's depiction of the rainbow in Rev 4:3 seems then to have its counterpart in Ezek 1:28, for in both instances the rainbow or halo surrounds the throne of God. While many commentators see at least an illusion between Ezek 1:26-28 and Rev 4:3,[79] a few see a more direct illusion or correlation between Gen 9:12-16 and Rev 4:3.[80] However, despite the fact that the rainbows of Ezek 1 and Rev 4 differ in color, fiery red in the former case and emerald green in the latter, the rainbow of Rev 4:3 seems to be patterned after the rainbow of Ezek 1:26-28 more directly than after that of Gen 9:12-16.[81] The function of the rainbow of Ezek 1 is to demonstrate or symbolize the glory of God (v. 28). While no such function is mentioned in Rev 4:3, it can be deduced from its correlation with Ezek 1.

If a correlation is also seen between the rainbow of Gen 9:12-16 and Rev 4:3, then the throne scenes of both Ezek 1 and Rev 4 would be symbols or reminders of God's mercy.[82] Caird, for instance, sees a relation between Rev 4:3 and Gen 9:12-16 rather than with Ezek 1:26-28, yet says that the

rainbow of Rev 4:3 reminds us that God's "mercy is as great as his majesty."[83] That there was a connection between God's glory and his mercy is evidenced by Sir 2:18 where God's greatness or majesty is likened to his mercy (cf. Ps 62:7).

Though the connection between God's glory and mercy is rarely stated, the rainbow in its two metaphorical or symbolical usages in the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT would indicate that such a connection was known. For in these two instances the rainbow is used to remind us of God's covenantal mercy and of his heavenly glory. It is reasonable then to interpret any further such use of the rainbow in the same way, either as representing God's mercy or glory or both.[84] Thus the rainbow around the throne of God in Rev 4:3 may symbolize one or the other, or both. Since the rainbow of John's vision is connected with the throne of God as it is in Ezek 1, it most likely represents the glory of God. However, the mercy of God may be reflected as well. The rainbow then would depict God's glory, in particular as it is seen in his mercy.

Is the same correlation present between the rainbow of God's mercy (Gen 9:12-16) and glory (Ezek 1:26-28) and the rainbow of the angel of Rev 10? While a repetitious use of the rainbow would suggest an affirmative answer, this may not be the case for the angel's rainbow. We are not comparing two throne scenes of God in which God's own glory is depicted. In Rev 10:1 the rainbow surrounds the head of the angel and thus depicts something about the angel and not God. However, since the author of Revelation uses the

same word about both God in Rev 4:3 and the angel in Rev 10:1 - ἶρις in place of τόξον which appears in both Gen 9 and Ezek 1 in the LXX - there appears to be a direct literary relation between the rainbow of God and that of the angel. Whatever the meaning of the rainbow is in Rev 4:3, may then carry over to the rainbow of the angel in Rev 10:1.

In all of biblical literature only God and the angel of Rev 10 are adorned with a rainbow.[85] Since the rainbow in its metaphorical use appears only four times (Gen 9:12-16; Ezek 1:26-28; Rev 4:3; 10:1) this may not at first glance mean all that much. Yet because of the importance that the rainbow plays in its first appearance, that of the visible sign in the Noachian covenant (Gen 9:12-17), each succeeding occurrence attracts attention. For the rainbow serves as a reminder of God's everlasting pledge and promise to Noah (Gen 9:16). Whenever the rainbow would appear in the clouds, God would see it and be reminded of his promise of mercy. When the rainbow next appears, as part of God's garment of heavenly glory (Ezek 1:27-28), are we to see in it a reminder of God's promise of mercy? That this seems to be so is made all the more evident when in Ezek 1:28 it says that the rainbow appears in the clouds, that is, the glory of God in appearance was like a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day. The same may well then be said of the rainbow of God's heavenly glory in Rev 4:3 and of the rainbow of the angel in Rev 10:1. Whenever the rainbow appears, in whatever situation, it recalls God's mercy

and depicts his glory. The angel of Rev 10 would then bear the rainbow as an insignia in order to remind John of God's glory and mercy.

Nevertheless, commentators differ as to whether the rainbow of the angel of Rev 10 is derived from Gen 9:13 or from Ezek 1:28, or, for that matter, from either. Swete believes that the rainbow of the angel is not derived from that of Ezek 1:28 and thus has no correlation with the rainbow of God's glory in Rev 4:3. Rather, he thinks it is "the ordinary bow of many colours connected with the cloud" (Gen 9:13).[86] Feuillet agrees with Swete when he suggests that the rainbow of the angel does not have the same function as that of Rev 4:3 and Ezek 1:28, both of which he believes serve as a depiction of God's splendor and glory. Instead, he believes it designates a remembrance of the covenant rainbow of Gen 9:12-17.[87] On the other hand Bousset relates the rainbow of the angel to both that of Rev 4:3 and Ezek 1:26-28 and thus brings attention to God's glory as the world's judge.[88] Beckwith makes no reference to either Gen 9 or Ezek 1, nor does he relate the rainbow of the angel to that of God in Rev 4:3. The only point he makes is that the article (ἡ) before ἶρις is generic because it is used with natural entities (ἡ γῆ or ὁ ἥλιος).[89] But this is not likely, for ἶρις appears in Rev 4:3 without the article, and, as Bousset suggests,[90] the appearance of the article here in Rev 10:1 is determinative and identifies the rainbow of the angel with that of Rev 4:3. Commentators such as Charles and Ford believe that both Gen 9:12-17

and Ezek 16:26-28 are behind John's use of the rainbow in Rev 10:1 and that the emphasis is on the covenant idea in the former.[91]

Despite this lack of agreement on the symbolical meaning of the rainbow, there is no reason to separate the ideas of mercy and glory from its metaphorical use. Because of the important role that the rainbow plays in the Noachian covenant, the idea of mercy would seem to be implied whenever the rainbow is used metaphorically or symbolically - unless the context would rule otherwise. And it would be most natural to look upon the rainbow as a representation of the glory of God because of its colorful and majestic character in the heavens on a rainy, cloudy day. For it reflects the rays of the sun as it appears through the clouds. Thus the author of Ezek 1:26-28 took the rainbow in its natural setting to be a symbol of God's glory. We suggest then that the rainbow of the angel in Rev 10:1 designates the angel as a messenger of god who acts under the mercy and glory of God. The display of God's glory by means of the rainbow in the throne vision of Rev 4:1-3 bears on the description of the angel and draws attention to the role that he fulfills.

But before we conclude the function of the rainbow with regard to the angel and his role, we must first consider the author's use of ἶρις instead of τόξον. In view of the LXX's avoidance of the word ἶρις, it is a little surprising that John in Revelation employs it. If the metaphorical uses of the rainbow in the OT (Gen 9:12-17; Ezek 1:26-28) were sources for Rev 4:3 and 10:1, why does John not use the same word that the LXX uses, τόξον? John does

use τόξον once in Rev 6:2, where it designates a battle bow. Apparently, a deliberate choice determined John's choice of ἶρις instead of τόξον. It may mean nothing more than correct linguistic usage.[92] However, it might indicate something more, and this, whether accepted or not, must be considered.

In Greek mythology ἶρις was also used as the name of a messenger of the gods. This messenger, known as the goddess of the rainbow, was in particular the attendant and messenger of Juno, the wife and queen of Jupiter. As a messenger, Iris at times wore a robe of many colors, and her appearance would color the sky.[93] This usage of the word ἶρις may have derived from the idea prevalent in the ancient world that a halo similar to a rainbow encircled supernatural beings or deified human beings. It seems that this notion was of Babylonian origin and current among the Greeks and Romans.[94]

John may well have been conscious not only of this mythological use of ἶρις, but also had it in mind when he chose it instead of τόξον. Mazzaferri claims that in Revelation pagan mythology "is prominent and purposeful but infrequent."[95] He comes to this conclusion after a review of possible places in Revelation which could have been influenced by pagan thought.[96] Collins claims that a number of motifs, like that of the dragon and woman in Rev 12 and the beasts of Rev 13, "cannot be adequately understood" only from a "Semitic" background, but manifests "traditional elements" of pagan cultures.[97] Rev 12 is one passage on which there is very wide agreement that John used extra-Jewish traditions.[98]

The author of Revelation, a skillful literary author, on occasion combines both Jewish and mythological ideas and concepts in the creation of his visions. John is not the first to resort to pagan imagery, for he is in a tradition that includes prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures.[99] But he seems to go beyond this tradition in the detailed imagery contained in his visions - for example, his creation of the vision of the woman and dragon in Rev 12.[100] In Rev 10 we may have another example of John's creative blending of both Jewish and pagan sources.

As in the case of Rev 12 where the description of the dragon and woman can only fully be understood from both a Jewish and pagan background,[101] so it may well be true of John's choice of ἶρις in Rev 10:1. Furthermore, such descriptions in which Jewish and pagan elements are combined would be intelligible in a Semitic, Greco-Roman culture.[102] The use of ἶρις would have been understood in such a culture and so possibly have been the reason for John's choice of words.

Whether or not John made a deliberate choice of ἶρις because of its mythological reference, his audience would most likely have so understood it. The rainbow would, thus, remind his readers of both the Jewish idea of God's glory and mercy as well as the mythological notion of the rainbow as a messenger of the gods. John would have placed a rainbow on the head of his angel to indicate that he is an important messenger of God who sits in all of his glory among the heavenly court in the vision of Rev 4. The angel is on a

heraldic mission in which both God's glory and mercy are to be seen and understood.

In summary, the rainbow encircling the head of the angel is a reflection of the rainbow encircling the throne of God (Rev 4:3) and so reminds us of God's glory (Ezek 1:26-28) and mercy through which he has bound himself to the human race (Gen 9:12-17).[103] The rainbow furthermore suggests that the angel's mission is one of mercy.[104] Though the message he gives to John to proclaim is one of judgment and mercy (Rev 10:10-11), the emphasis is on mercy, an emphasis already dramatized in the vision of the throne and the lamb (Rev 5:6, 9-10),[105] and carried out to its conclusion in the vision of the new heaven and earth (Rev 21:1-8; cf. 11:15-19 and 14:1-5).

Face Like the Sun

Thirdly, the angel is described as one who has a face like the sun. While the cloud and rainbow point to a relationship with God, the sun-lit face attests to a relationship with Jesus Christ. For Jesus Christ as the Son of Man is the only other figure in Revelation who is so described (Rev 1:16).[106] Elsewhere in the NT (Matt 17:2), Jesus Christ is also the only figure who is described with a face like the sun.[107] One other reference can be noted, that of Acts 26:13. In Acts 26 Paul before Agrippa gives an account of his conversion. He says that a light more brilliant than the sun focused on (shined around) him. While no description of Jesus' face or person is given, it is clear that he was the one who spoke to Paul through the light (Acts 26:15). Wheth-

er like the sun or more brilliant than the sun, the same impression is given, that of the brightness and brilliance of the exalted being of Christ.[108]

In the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT the precise description of "a face like the sun" is not used. However, the imagery of the sun is used as a metaphor or symbol of an attribute of God. For example, in Isa 60:19-21 the prophet declares that god in the place of the sun will be the everlasting light and glory of Zion. This is so because the glory of the Lord as the light of the people has come (Isa 60:1-3). This light and its brightness is an attribute of God which is likened to the sun (Isa 60:20).[109] The sun also depicts God's blessing on his people. In Ps 84:11 God is referred to as the sun and shield of his people by which he is their source of favor and honor. Similarly in the Aaronic blessing (Num 6:22-27) the blessing of God is associated with his face shining on his people - though the sun is not mentioned. Thus there is the notion that as the sun in its brightness is beneficial to the earth, so God is a blessing to his people.[110]

The first possible association between the sun and a heavenly figure other than God is found in Mal 4:2 where it is said that upon those who revere God's name, the sun of righteousness will arise with healing in its (his?) wings. Also in Dan 10:4-6 in a vision a heavenly being is seen whose body was like a precious stone and whose face looked like lightning, together with eyes like flaming torches.[111] While it is debatable whether the sun of righteousness of Malachi can be thought of as a personal agent,[112] the association of the sun

with righteousness suggests that figuratively the sun stood for that righteousness through which Yahweh would illumine the darkness of Israel's suffering.[113] Exactly what the "face like lightning" of the angelic figure of Daniel means is a little more difficult to determine. Only one other figure in the Bible is said to have an appearance or face as lightning, and that was the angel at the tomb of Jesus (Matt 28:3).[114]

Lightning alone or together with thunder is a phenomenon which traditionally accompanies theophanies (e.g., Exod 19:16; Ps 77:16-18; Ezek 1:13). Thunderstorms with lightning are used to symbolize divine power and glory (Ps 18:9-14; Job 37:2-6).[115] Jesus Christ as the Son of Man at his coming in power and glory is compared to flashes of lightning (Matt 24:27-30; Luke 17:24).[116] In Revelation the phenomena of lightning and thunder, together with loud voices (roars or loud noises), symbolize the power and majesty of God (4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18). These lightnings and thunders and loud voices accompany the vision of the heavenly throne of God (4:5) and the heavenly temple (11:19).[117] But in the other two instances the lightnings and thunders accompany angels as they introduce visions or scenes.

The two instances where lightnings and thunders accompany angels in Revelation are worthy of further comment. In the first instance (Rev 8:5) lightnings and thunders attend angels as they introduce the septet-trumpet cycle of visions (8:1-11:19). In the second instance (16:18) they accompany the angel who introduces the seventh and last scene in the septet-bowl cycle of

visions (16:17-21).[118] Consequently, at both the beginning and end of those portions of Revelation which are under the mediation of angels (the two septet-cycles of the trumpets and bowls) the phenomena of lightnings and thunders and loud voices accompany angels - which phenomena elsewhere are associated only with the heavenly majesty of God.

A heavenly figure with a face like lightning would suggest then that one acts under the majestic authority of God. However, because the imagery of lightning has overtones of power that evoke fear (Exod 19:16; Ps 144:6; Heb 12:18-21),[119] it is perhaps best to see a distinction between a face like lightning and a face like the sun and not to treat them as equivalents.[120] While the symbolism of lightning points to the power of God as he acts in his divine majesty and judgment, the sun points to God as the source of all light by which he brings blessings. Both lightning and sun can evoke awe and thus represent in godly terms that which cannot be approached. But lightning symbolizes God's power in action while the sun symbolizes his righteousness and holiness which are the sources of goodness to man.[121] Thus when angels and the righteous stand before God in heaven, they are described as having faces like the sun (Dan 12:3; 2 Enoch 19:1; Matt 13:43).[122]

From the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT then it can be determined that the sun as a metaphor symbolizes the righteousness of God by which he blesses people. It is the light of his holiness and righteousness by which he dispels the darkness of despair and death. It is a reminder that God is the source of life

for his people, and as such it points to the glory of God which is shared with his people in the New Jerusalem (Isa 60:1-3, 19-21; Rev 21:22-25).[123]

In the Transfiguration we have a preview of this radiant glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (Matt 17:1), the glory that Jesus would enter at his resurrection (Matt 17:9; cf. John 17:1-5; 2 Pet 1:16-18). Jesus Christ is called the icon of God because his being and face reflect God's glory (Heb 1:3; 2 Cor 4:4).[124] When as the Son of Man he is pictured with a sun-lit face, attention is drawn to him as the one who now in his exalted state reflects and radiates God's holiness. He is the one through whom God now "dispels the darkness and death" and brings to man the blessings of his glory (see Mal 4:2; John 8:54; 12:45-46; 14:8-9).

In Revelation John portrays Jesus with a sun-lit face to indicate that in his exalted status he radiates the glory of God because of his death and resurrection (1:16-18).[125] In Revelation the sun-lit face identifies Jesus as the icon of God through whom the face of God shines on his people in mercy and peace (Num 6:24-26; Rev 22:3b-5).[126]

In Rev 21:23-24 the glory of God in Christ is the light of the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem. Jesus Christ is the lamp which radiates the glory of God and thus lights up the city in place of the sun.[127] This passage in Revelation is reminiscent of Isa 60:19 where God is described as the everlasting light and glory of Zion. As such he has displaced the sun. The author of

tion sees this light and glory of God in the exalted person of Jesus Christ as indicated by his sun-lit face.

The description "face like the sun" then identifies the bearer as the one who stands in place of and represents the one who is the source of light, the source of righteousness (see Mal 4:2). In the case of Jesus Christ in Rev 1:16, it indicates that he is the bearer of this light, this righteousness, and as such dispenses the blessings of the righteousness of God to his people. As Moses was the mediator of the Torah to Israel, the glory of which could be seen in the radiance of his face (Exod 34:29-35; see also 2 Cor 3:7-11), similarly Jesus Christ is the mediator of the revelation of those events described in Rev (1:1-3, 9-16; 22:2-7, 16-17). His face shines like the sun not only because divinity shines through his countenance,[128] but also because he is the viceroy of God through whom the righteousness of God reigns over his people in the midst of the events revealed (Rev 1:12-16; 5:5-10; 19:11-16).[129] He is the revealer of God (Rev 1:1-3) and the mediator of God's covenantal mercy which sustains and delivers his people (Rev 14:1-5).[130]

Though angels are associated with light and glory (e.g., Luke 9:26; Acts 12:7; Rev 18:1),[131] and also with the sun (Rev 19:17), [132] only the angel of Rev 10 is described with a face like the sun.[133] It is because of this description that commentators have wondered whether this angel could be Jesus Christ.[134] While the description of a sun-lit face indicates a relationship between the angel and Christ, it does not necessarily commend an identification

of the two, and thus fit the definition of a theophany.[135] For one thing, two different words are used for the face of Jesus in Rev 1:16 and that of the angel in Rev 10:1, ὄψις and πρόσωπον. Both words have the sense of "face," though the prime meaning of ὄψις is "appearance" and that of πρόσωπον, "face."[136] If John intended to identify the angel as Jesus, one might have expected him to use ὄψις for the angel as well. The fact that he doesn't may be an indication that Jesus and the angel are not the same being. Though ὄψις may refer to Jesus' face,[137] as does πρόσωπον with regard to the angel, it could refer to the whole person of Jesus,[138] as it does for example in John 7:24. Thus Jesus's whole being radiates God's glory, while only the face of the angel does so.

A second difference, and a more telling one, is that Jesus' face (or person) is like the sun as it shines in all its power, while that of the angel is only like the sun. This suggests a comparative degree, namely, that Jesus' face is brighter than the angel's. While Jesus' sun-lit face in all its brilliance designates him as the viceroy of God, and thus radiates the very glory of God, the angel's sun-lit face in comparison does not radiate directly the glory of God. Rather, it reflects or images it as seen in Christ's face. Thus there are not two heavenly figures in Revelation who equally radiate the glory of God. Jesus Christ as the viceroy or regent of God radiates the glory of God in his own exalted being, and thus alone is the icon of God's majesty (Rev 5:7-14; 22:13). The angel, on the other hand, reflects the glory of God as it is seen in

the face of Jesus Christ and so is an icon of Jesus Christ and not Christ himself.[139]

Another difference, and possibly a third, is the fact that John does not fall before the angel as he does before Jesus Christ. In Rev 1:17 we are told that John fell at the feet of Jesus as if dead, so overwhelming was the presence of the exalted Christ as the Son of Man. But John does not fall before the angel of Rev 10. We mention this difference here because it is immediately after the description of Jesus' face or appearance like the sun (Rev 1:16) that John falls down. The impression is given that Christ's face or appearance like the sun was that which so overwhelmed John that he fell. This he did not do before the angel. However this may be, the fact that John did not fall before the angel also indicates that the angel was not Jesus Christ.

The supremacy of Jesus Christ is furthermore indicated by the additional descriptive insignia which the angel does not share. The head and hair of Jesus are white (Rev 1:14), as the Ancient of Days in Dan 7:9. His eyes are like flames of fire, similar to the eyes of the heavenly figure in Dan 10:6. Whether these insignia indicate a mark of deity or a mark of honor and wisdom,[140] these divine-like attributes are not given to the angel. The angel is not a regent but a servant under the authority of God and Jesus Christ.[141] The angel is thus the mediator of the revelation that Jesus gives to John (Rev 1:1, 22:6-7, 16).[142] In order to indicate that the revelation is from God

through Jesus Christ, John portrays the angel in insignia of both God (the cloud and rainbow) and Jesus Christ (the sun-lit face).

Legs Like Pillars of Fire

Fourthly, John describes the angel with legs like pillars of fire (Rev 10:1). Nowhere else in biblical literature do we meet a figure so described. However, such a description is reminiscent of the legs of Jesus Christ in Rev 1:15 and of the legs of the angelic figure in Dan 10:4-6.[143] The heavenly figure of Dan 10 is pictured with legs like fired bronze which stand in contrast to the legs or feet of iron and clay of the statue in Dan 2:33, 44.[144] The feet of fired bronze signify strength and stability "which overcomes all opposition and tramples and melts like hot metal anything that stands in the way."[145] The foot or leg represents conquering power and when placed over the vanquished, it means that the conquered are now held in subjection.[146]

In Rev 1:12-20 Jesus Christ as the Son of Man stands before John with legs like fired bronze as the conqueror of death and the grave, which now lie vanquished under his feet (vv. 17-18; cf. I Cor 15:25-26). though the legs of the angel of Rev 10 are like pillars of fire instead of fired bronze, the similarity suggests that no one can stand in the way of the angel.[147] Whatever his mission, it will dominate and prevail. This suggestion is supported by the positioning of the angel's legs on the sea and land (Rev 10:2).

The only other pillar of fire in biblical literature is that of Exod 13-14. Yahweh and his angel led the Israelites in the wilderness by a pillar. During

the day it was a pillar of cloud and at night a pillar of fire (Exod 13:21-22).[148] The pillar was also used to protect the Israelites against the Egyptians (Exod 14:19-20, 24-25). What is of interest to us is that the angel of God is associated with the pillar (Exod 13:21-22; 14:19, 21-22, 24).[149] If this pillar is considered as a source, then the fiery-like legs of the angel could indicate that his role has something to do with the guidance and protection of God. The legs of the angel would thus "recall the pillar of fire and cloud" that gave both protection and guidance to the children of Israel in their wilderness journey.[150] As an angel of God he acts on behalf of Jesus Christ when he recommissions John (Rev 10:8-11). His pillar-like legs of fire indicate the dominance of ascendancy of his mission as it is carried out under the protection and guidance of God.

In the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT the imagery of fire plays an important role in theophanies.[151] It is used to symbolize the unapproachable and overpowering holiness of God's person and glory (Exod 19:10-19; cf. Heb 12:18-21). As such it projects the idea that God in his holiness and glory cannot be approached except by cleansing and purification (Exod 19:10-15).[152] The imagery of fire can illustrate God's judgment (Gen 19:23) because his anger becomes a consuming fire (Deut 4:21-24; 9:3; cf. Heb 12:29) by which he threatens judgment and destruction on the evildoer (Mal 4:1).[153]

In theophanies involving the call of a prophet, fire began to be used as a representative sign of God's presence in his holiness and glory. In the initial

call or commission of Ezekiel God's presence and glory are represented by fire in the form of fiery-like glowing metal (Ezek 1:27-28). In Ezek 8:1-4 God again appears to the prophet, but this time in the fiery figure of a man who from his waist downward was like fire and from his waist upward was bright as glowing metal.[154] However one interprets this fiery figure, whether as a heavenly angelic figure or as God himself in the guise of an angel,[155] it is the Lord God who is addressing the prophet. God in Ezek 1 appears in his heavenly, fiery-like glory and initially commissions the prophet. In Ezek 8 God by means of the fiery figure of a human-like personage recommissions or continues the commission. The imagery of fire in both instances depicts the glory of God, of God's own presence in Ezek 1 and of his presence through the angelic, human-like figure of Ezek 8.

The imagery of fire, associated with the glory of God as he commissioned prophets, possibly began with the episode of the burning bush in Exod 3. At the commissioning of Moses, the appearance of fire together with the heavenly figure of the angel of the Lord seems to have initiated a tradition. A tradition that associates God, fire and an angelic figure. God does the commissioning, the image of fire is used to portray God's presence and glory, and an angelic figure is present to personalize or continue the commissioning.

Fire and an angelic figure were also present when God called Daniel. In Dan 7 fire surrounds and issues from the throne of the Ancient of Days (vv. 9-10). As Daniel receives the vision and its interpretation, he is initially

commissioned. In Dan 10 an angelic figure dressed in linen with fiery-like eyes and legs of gleaming bronze continues the commissioning.

There appears, however, to be no set literary form for this tradition. While it is clear that God initiates the call or commission, the imagery of fire used to depict his presence or glory varies.[156] Also there is no set description of the angelic figure used by God at the initial or in the second commission.[157] Yet despite these variations, a tradition seems to have been established with regard to the call of a prophet. God on occasion would use an angelic figure together with the imagery of fire when commissioning a prophet (cf. Isa 6:5-7).

Initially it seems that this tradition of the call of a prophet had only one commissioning, as in the case of Moses. God and the angel act together as if they were one and the same. God addresses and calls Moses through the angel. The appearance of fire indicates the presence of God as the angel speaks. In later calls of a prophet we note two commissionings, as in the case of Ezekiel and Daniel. The commissioning roles of God and the angel are separated. First God calls the prophet, and then there follows a second commissioning by the angel. In both commissionings fire is present to demonstrate visually the presence of God and his glory.

The author of Revelation follows this tradition in the description of the commissioning of John, but with this difference. Jesus Christ has taken the place of God in the initial commissioning. God is still the originator of the

entire act of the call of John, for it is he who gives the revelation to Jesus Christ (Rev 1:1). But it is Jesus Christ who actually commissions John, to be followed by the commissioning of the angel (Rev 1:9-10; 10:8-10). Also according to the tradition the imagery of fire is present in both of the commissionings of John. In the case of Jesus it is the fiery-like eyes and the legs of fired bronze (Rev 1:15-16), and in the case of the angel it is the legs like pillars of fire (Rev 10:1).[158]

In summary, the fiery, pillar-like legs of the angel suggest a relationship with Jesus Christ. As the Son of Man, Jesus Christ stands before John with legs of fired bronze, so now the angel with legs like pillars of fire stands in place of Jesus Christ in the recommissioning of John.[159] John has patterned this double commissioning after Ezek 8 and Dan 10 where also an angelic figure has taken the place of God in the recommissioning of the prophets. As in the case of Jesus Christ, the pillar-like legs of the angel denote ascendancy and suggest that whatever his mission, it will prevail.[160] The imagery of fire, in the form of pillars with regard to the legs of the angel, reflect the pillar of fire (and cloud) of the Exodus. They thus denote God's protection and guidance with regard to the mission of the angel.[161] And finally, the imagery of fire itself is a reminder of the glory and holiness of God which accompanies the angel on his mission.

Summary and Conclusion

In the creation of the angel of Rev 10 it is apparent that John is following a tradition already established in Jewish literature, the tradition of the call of a prophet by God and an angelic figure. In this tradition the prophet is called through an angel-theophany, not alone by a theophany. For in the call narratives reviewed, that of Moses, Ezekiel, Daniel, and John, God was not alone when he commissioned the prophet (a theophany). Rather, he was accompanied by an angel who played an active part in the commissioning (an angel-theophany). so closely is the angel identified with God that it is difficult to separate the two (as in the case of Moses) or to distinguish between the two. We suggest then that in this tradition we have true angel-theophanies, as distinguished from theophanies in which God alone is present through some visible manifestation other than an angel.[162]

In his description of the angel John also follows an already established Jewish tradition which portrays angelic figures with divine-like emblems or characteristics when they act and speak for God. The angelic figures of Ezek 8 and Dan 10 are within this tradition. Whether John specifically used them as models cannot be completely determined, for his angel differs in both description and dimension (Rev 10:2-4). However, he certainly knew of them, and it is most probable that he patterned the idea of such an angel after them. Other angelic figures from later Jewish writings which are within this tradition may also have been known to John. As reviewed in chapter three (pp. 54-59), they

represent a continuing tradition of which John's angel was a part. Two or three of these angels bear mention again here, together with more detail than given in chapter three.

In the Apocalypse of Zephania (6:11-17) a "mighty" angel named Eremiel appears. He is described with a face that shines like the rays of the sun and has a golden girdle around his waist. His feet (legs?) were like fired bronze. His presence is so awe inspiring that the prophet falls before him and attempts to worship him. This angel may have been known by John. The date of the Apocalypse of Zephaniah is uncertain but it is placed between 100 B.C. and A.D. 175.[163] The possibility that John may have known it is indicated by the parallel between the attempt of Zephania to worship the angel and the prohibition of doing so and the similar action of John in Rev 19:10; 22:8-9. There is also a possible parallel between Zephania's angel and John's with regard to their faces likened to the sun. Probably the most that can be said is that "any parallels that occur are due to borrowing from a common milieu," or if one believes that the parallels suggest a borrowing, it is more likely that John borrowed from the Apocalypse of Zephaniah.[164] At least John was in the same continuing tradition, whether he was acquainted with the angel of Zephaniah or not.

Another mediating angel in the tradition that may have been known to John is that of the angel of God, Iaoel, in the Apocalypse of Abraham (10:3). A description for the angel mirrors that of both the angels of John and Zepha-

niah. The appearance of the body of Iaoel was like sapphire, his face was like chrysolite, the hair on his head was like snow, and on his head was a headdress or turban that looked like a rainbow (11:1-3).[165] His clothing was purple in color, and he had a golden staff in his right hand (11:3). While the appearance of Iaoel and the angel of John are quite different, the one item that they have in common is the rainbow. The angel Iaoel has a turban (like the high priest?) that looked like a rainbow, possibly in the sense that it was colored like a rainbow. Whatever the sense, it is not quite the same as the halo-like rainbow on the head of John's angel. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that of all the mediating angels in the Jewish/Christian tradition, only two have a rainbow of some kind or other, John's angel and the angel of the Apocalypse of Abraham. Again it is not possible to determine whether John knew and used the Apocalypse of Abraham. The probability is that he did not since it was written after A.D. 70 and not later than the middle of the second century.[166]

Other angels or heavenly angelic figures worthy of mention for possible comparison are those of 2 and 3 Enoch. In 2 Enoch (1:4-5) two angels of gigantic size appear whose faces were like the shining sun and whose eyes were like burning lamps - also fire came from their mouths. Their wings were brighter than gold and their hands were whiter than snow. Their names are given as Samoila (or Samuil) and Raguila (33:6).

In 3 Enoch the angel Metatron is given divine-like characteristics and plays a leading mediating role above all other angels, so much so that he is even given the name "The lesser Yahweh" (12:5; 48c:7). He is the highest of the archangels and is God's vice-regent (10:3-6). He even, like God, has his own throne and rules over a heavenly court (16:1). But no description is given of his appearance.[167] Because 2 and 3 Enoch are dated later than John's Revelation (late first century A.D. or later for 2 Enoch and the fifth or sixth century A.D. for 3 Enoch) they can not be considered as possible sources for John's angel.[168] But they are of interest because they exhibit a trait in the tradition of mediating, commissioning angels, that of the endowment of such angels with divine-like tokens and characteristics - a tradition in which John's angel of Rev 10 seems to share.

Several other angels in the Jewish/Christian tradition could be mentioned: the angel Vretil (or Vrevoil) of 2 Enoch, the recorder of God and revelator of God's secrets (22:10-11; 24:1); the two angelic figures of the Ascension of Isaiah who resemble Christ and the Holy Spirit (9:40-42; 10:17-30); also in the same work the angel who attended Isaiah through the visions and who was so sublime and glorious that the prophet worshiped him (7:21), but no description is given of his appearance (7:2-4);[169] and the gigantic angel of the Book of Elkesai.[170] But again these angels and the works that contain them are too late in origin to be considered a sources for the angel of Rev 10.[171]

In the specifically Christian tradition of angelology the idea of a mediating angel of unique status does not seem to have developed to the extent that it did in Judaism. Nevertheless, angels of unique status of varying degrees do appear. For example, the two colossal angels of great brightness at Jesus' resurrection in the Gospel of Peter (10:39-40); the angel of glory in the Shepherd of Hermas (9:12,8); and the role of Michael and the angel of the Lord in the Apocalypse of Paul. But none of these are described with divine-like tokens or characteristics.

The one exception is in the Apocalypse of Paul (12), in which the author describes certain angels that he saw whose faces were shining like the sun. They had their loins girt about with golden girdles, palms in their hands, and they bore the sign of God as well as the name of the Son of God written on their raiment. They are identified as the angels of righteousness because of a holy one in their midst. Though this writing is late (4/5th century) and though no angel of unique status, mediating or otherwise, stands out for our attention, yet it is of interest to note the association between their faces like the sun and the righteousness of God. That the Apocalypse of Paul is indebted to Revelation can be seen, for example, in its use of the twenty-four elders and the four winged creatures that are found in Rev 4:4, 6. However, its angelology seems more dependent on Jewish angelology than on that of Revelation or the NT - in this it is similar to the Ascension of Isaiah.[172]

The Christian tradition in its angelology, unlike that of the Jewish, exhibits no angel other than that of Rev 10 who has unique status and stands in the place of God or Jesus Christ in a mediating role - though various angels appear who represent God or Christ in differing roles as guardians, helpers, and interpreters of God's actions or visions. Nor does any other angel appear who is dressed in divine-like tokens which would move the recipient of his appearance to wonder whether he is in the presence of God. Possibly this is so because tokens of deity were now usually reserved for Jesus Christ.

From this review it is evident that John was following a Jewish tradition in his call narrative, a tradition, however, that seemingly was not continued in the Christian tradition of angelology. It is a tradition that presents an angel of unique status who together with God calls and commissions a prophet. The angel is arrayed in divine-like tokens because he with God or in the place of God calls and commissions the prophet. When the angel in the place of God commissions a prophet, it is a second commission, following one already carried out by God. God then is always the prime commissioner. This primacy is maintained in the second commission because the angel is arrayed in the divine-like tokens or emblems.

As mentioned above, John makes one great change in the tradition. In the place of God he has Jesus Christ as the prime commissioner. When he has the angel carry out the second commissioning, the angel is arrayed not only in the emblems of God's presence and glory, but also in those of Jesus Christ.

So John, while within the tradition, nevertheless, creates a call narrative of his own design. While John's angel acts on behalf of Jesus Christ in the recommissioning, he is still arrayed with the divine-like emblems or tokens, a cloud and rainbow and with imagery of fire. These suggest that God is the source of the message that John is commissioned by the angel to proclaim (Rev 1:1; 10:11; 22:6).

The angel is also arrayed in emblems which point out that he is acting in the place of Christ, the face like the sun and the legs like pillars of fire. He thus is also an angel of Jesus Christ through whom Christ gives the message to John (Rev 1:1; 22:16). In short, he is an icon of Jesus. Consequently, the angel is a representation of the presence and glory of God and also a picture of the commissioning role of Jesus Christ. As such he bears the tokens of God's presence and glory and is an image of Christ's commissioning role as he himself recommissions John.[173]

NOTES

[1]See p. 54 in chapter 3 and n. 32.

[2]Kraft (Offenbarung des Johannes), 146) refers to it as a "theophany through an angel." See p. 1 of chapter 2 and n. 3.

[3]No other angel in all the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is so arrayed with such divine-like tokens. The closest would be the heavenly figure of Dan 10 and 12, but even his divine-like characteristics or tokens pale in comparison to that of the angel of Rev 10.

[4]The discussion of ἄλλος is predicated on the assumption that it is the correct reading in 10:1. As noted in Nestle-Aland (Novum Testamentum Graece, 26th ed., 1979), the majority of manuscript evidence omits the ἄλλον. However, since important manuscripts as Sinaiticus (ℵ), Alexandrinus (A), Ephraemi Rescriptus (C), and Chester Beatty Papyrus 47 have the ἄλλον, it seems the better reading. For a complete listing of the evidence, except for that of the papyri, see H. C. Hoskier, Concerning the Text of the Apocalypse (London: Quaritch, 1929), 2:264.

[5]The third septet overall if one counts the first septet of the seven letters in Rev 2-3. But since the second and third septets are visionary in mode, they are usually distinguished from the first (the seven letters) which is not. See Collins, Combat Myth, 32-43; Ford, Revelation, 46-50.

[6]Swete, Apocalypse, 126; Beckwith, Apocalypse, 580. Another possibility is that the ἄλλος relates to the angel of Rev 8:3, who is also introduced by the word ἄλλος. The "another angel" of 8:3 is the angel who remains by the altar of incense and offered up incense and prayers of the saints. However, if one begins to see the word ἄλλος as a cross-reference to the several angels elsewhere so introduced (Rev 7:2; 8:3; 14:6, 8, 9, 15, 17, 17; 18:1), they could also be corespondents.

[7]Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:258) renders the translation, "another angel, a mighty one." See A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, 2d ed., 39-40.

[8]Caird (Commentary on Revelation, 125) calls the use of ἄλλος ἰσχυρὸς "a deliberate cross-reference" to Rev 5:2.

[9]Swete (Apocalypse, 76) says that such a "strong angel" was "needed to be the herald of a challenge addressed to the whole creation."

[10]A description with messianic and royal overtones. Ford, Revelation, 85-86; Swete, Apocalypse, 77; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:140.

[11]Allo, L'Apocalypse, 175.

[12]Mounce (Revelation, 143) says that since this is the great proclamation of God, "the voice of a strong angel is required." Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 2:139) says that "the strength of the angel is dwelt upon," since "his voice penetrates to the utmost bounds of heaven and earth and Hades."

[13]This role and action of the angel of Rev 10 will be considered in chap. 5.

[14]The third "mighty" angel of Rev 18:21 and his relationship to the angel of Rev 10 will be treated in chap. 6.

[15]See n. 4 above.

[16]For example, Mounce (Revelation, 143, 207) seems to adopt this position.

[17]See Nigel Turner, A Grammar of New Testament Greek, ed. J. H. Moulton (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906-1976), 3:172-74.

[18]Caird (Commentary on Revelation, 125) comments that the first mighty angel's proclamation (Rev 5:2) "prepared the way for the advent of the Lamb" in the throne vision of God's heavenly court. By the cross-reference of "another mighty angel," we are "encouraged to look for a new disclosure comparable to importance to the earlier one."

[19]The identification of the two angels of Rev 18 is possible. For they are similarly described in terms of greatness and are both involved in the judgment of Babylon, the angel in 18:1 announces the judgment while the angel of 18:21 demonstrates the judgment by throwing a mill stone into the sea. See chap. 6 for a further discussion of these two angels.

[20]Seventeen times אֵל is translated by ἰσχυρός, compared to around 166 times by θεός and some 79 times by κύριος. Of the 17 times, ἰσχυρός is used 11 times for אֵל as a divine name and 6 times as an adjective.

[21]It appears some 155 times in the LXX where it is used as translation Greek.

[22]It uses δύναμις only once to translate אֵל (Neh 5:5), but here the word is used in reference to man's strength or ability, a rare instance where אֵל is used for anything other than God. The LXX never uses μέγας or any other word that has the meaning of strength or might to translate אֵל. The LXX does use παντοκράτωρ to translate שַׁדַּי some 16 times. In the NT, in addition to ἰσχυρός for God (once only, Rev 18:1) and of Jesus Christ (Matt 3:11; Mark 1:7; Luke 11:21), δύναμις is used of God only twice in the absolute sense as an appellative (Matt 26:64; Mark 14:62).

[23]Frank M. Cross, Theological Dictionary of OT, 1:242-61.

[24]The Apocalypse of Abraham is known to us only in an Old Slavonic translation. Most probably its original language was Hebrew. There is no available evidence to suggest that a Greek translation was the intermediary. Rather, it appears that the Slavonic translation was made directly from a Hebrew Vorlage (R. Rubinkiewicz, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, ed. Charlesworth, 1:681-83). While it cannot be thus determined that the Greek ἰσχυρός was an intermediary, most probably the Hebrew word behind the Slavonic was אֵל.

[25]4 Ezra is no longer extant in a Greek rendition, save for a small scrap of papyrus found at Oxyrhynchus dating from the 4th century. It is extant in Latin, Syriac and other later versions. While in the case of 4 Ezra the evidence points to a Greek translation as an intermediary between a probable Semitic original, we cannot say with certainty that ἰσχυρός would have been the Greek intermediary, though it is likely (B. M. Metzger, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, ed. Charlesworth, 1:518-20).

[26]ἰσχύς is used in 2 Pet 2:11 of angels and in Dan 4:13 (LXX) an angel is sent from heaven ἐν ἰσχύι.

[27]Greek-English Lexicon of NT, 149. גַּבְרִיאֵל (גֶּבֶר or גִּבּוֹר, "strong man" or "mighty one" and אֵל). The LXX does use ἰσχυρός to translate גִּבּוֹר some 23 times (e.g., Deut 10:17) but never for גֶּבֶר.

[28]Ford, Revelation, 163; James A. Montgomery, The Book of Daniel, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1927; repr., 1972), 475.

[29]Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1.258-59) makes the comment, "If Michael is referred to in viii.3-5, it is possible that Gabriel is referred to here. In that case ἰσχυρός would imply a play on the name of the angel." See also Ford, Revelation, 163.

[30]Swete, Apocalypse, 15. However, Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1.27) while agreeing that the ὅμοιον has a note of ambiguity, believes that it is equivalent to an identification.

[31]See Lueken, Der Erzengel Michael, 13-56.

[32]For a discussion and interpretation see Luken, Ibid., 30-31.

[33]In both Rev 3:12 and 21:2 the new Jerusalem is described as καταβαίνουσα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ.

[34]Mounce (Revelation, 207) suggests that the phrase means, "coming directly from the presence of God."

[35]Commenting on the parallel in Mark 11:30, H. B. Swete (The Gospel According to St. Mark, 3d ed. [London & New York: McMillan, 1909 & 1913], 263) says that "of heavenly origin" means "from God, as the alternative ἐξ ἀνθρώπων shows." Note also Matt 23:22 where heaven is equated with both God and his throne, and Acts 5:38-39 where the contrast is described as between God and man.

[36]For further references see Traub and von Rad, Theological Dictionary of NT, 5:497-538. In a summary statement the authors say "ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ does not simply denote the point in space. . . . The phrase is thus meant to denote the authoritative . . . . As in Mk 11:30 heaven here denotes divine confirmation and origin (531-32)." With regard to the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT it appears that only once is heaven a substitution for the name of God (Dan 4:23) - in this particular reference "a holy one" is seen "coming down from heaven." However, other references as Ps 73:9 and Job 20:27 may reflect the well known later practice of substituting heaven for God in rabbinical writings (Ibid., 509-21).

[37]For a description of the seven heavens see Hag. 12b. The number is not always uniform. In T. Levi 3:1-10 only four heavens are mentioned. Nevertheless, the number seven is the common tradition (cf. 2 Enoch 3-20).

[38]Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 265) calls him "the most exalted and impressive angel in the entire book."

[39]The winged creatures and the twenty-four elders of Rev 4:4-8 are possible exceptions. But since they are a part of the heavenly court and have no mediating roles with John (but see Rev 7:13), they are not considered here. More akin to our consideration could be the seven angels of the seven plagues who are clothed in pure linen with golden belts or cords (Rev 15:6). But no further description is given of their appearance. Mazzaferri (Ibid., 266) says no other angel is "described as fully, feature by feature reminiscent of divinity."

[40]It is not difficult to understand how commentators have interpreted the angel as Jesus Christ in view of his appearance (see pp. 10-12 in chap. 2). As Hengstenberg (Revelation, 457) suggests, the angel "can only be Christ."

[41]Ford, Revelation, 162. Mounce (Revelation, 207) says, "The phrases by which he is described are elsewhere used of deity."

[42]The word in the LXX of Lam 3:44 is ἐπεσκέπασας "to cover over." In Rev 10:1 the word used in reference to the angel and the cloud is περιβεβλημένον, "to put on, to clothe." G. Lohfink (Die Himmelfahrt Jesu [München: Kösel, 1971], 192) believes that the cloud was used at times to conceal God's presence.

[43]On the subject of the cloud as an embodiment and attribute of deity and as theophany see A. Oepke, Theological Dictionary of NT, 902-910.

[44]Montgomery, Daniel, 303.

[45]The Hebrew Massoretic text has עִם־עֲנְנֵי which Theodotion correctly translated as μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν.

[46]Ibid. Yahweh is pictured as riding upon a cloud (Isa 19:1) and the clouds are his chariot (Ps 104:3). If the reading of the LXX (ἐπί) were accepted, then the nuance of deity would more likely be apparent. Jesus as the Son of Man is described as coming upon (ἐπί) the clouds in Matt 24:30. In Mark 13:26 and Luke 21:27 he is described as coming on or in (ἐν) the clouds. In these three NT passages the reference of Dan 7:13 is obvious (Swete, Mark, 312), but apparently the three synoptic authors, while following the LXX rather than a pre-Theodotionic reading, were not quite sure of the exact reading. In Rev 1:7 the reading is μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν, which would be pre-Theodotionic and would follow the Hebrew of Dan 7:13. However, in Rev 14:14-16 the reading is ἐπὶ τὴν νεφέλην.

[47]R. B. Y. Scott, "Behold, He Cometh with Clouds," New Testament Studies 5 (1958/59): 127-32.

[48]See n. 46 above for the variations in the wording.

[49]This seems to be a reference to Exod 13:21-22 where it is said that Yahweh went before Israel in the pillar of cloud as they approached the sea.

[50]Swete (Apocalypse, 126) seems to suggest that the cloud was a means of conveyance when he says that the angel comes "down from heaven, clad in a cloud, the vehicle in which heavenly beings descend and ascend . . . ." But this is not the sense of the cloud here. In every instance in either the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT or the NT when a cloud is described as a conveyance of ascent or descent, the person is always on or with clouds, never clothed with a cloud.

[51]Greek-English Lexicon of NT, 646.

[52]According to Collins (Combat Myth, 71) the woman of Rev 12 is like "a cosmic queen conceived in astral categories" with the sun as her garment. Ford (Revelation, 195) states the connection between the woman and the angel when she says that the woman was "clothed with the sun" as the angel was "clothed with a cloud." Ford (Ibid., 188) furthermore says from a review of all the occurrences of περιβάλλω in Revelation "that there is no doubt that the woman is wearing the sun as her garment."

[53]Oepke, Theological Dictionary of NT, 5:908, n. 34.

[54]See n. 42 above.

[55]In Ps 103:1 the LXX uses ἀναβάλλω instead of περιβάλλω.

[56]Caird (Commentary on Revelation, 125) says of the angel, "He is wrapped in the cloud of divine presence. . . ."

[57]Not unlike the mantle of Elijah that fell to Elisha and which could be said to have symbolized the prophetic office that was now Elisha's (2 Kgs 2:12-15).

[58]Ford, Revelation, 162.

[59]Mounce (Revelation, 207) says that "the bow rests upon the head of the angel like a many-colored turban." For the most part commentators are silent as to how the rainbow is shaped, either as a circle (halo) or as an arch. Some, however, seem to imply that it was a circle because of a comparison to the ἶρις in Rev 4:3 which encircled the throne of God (e.g., Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:259, 114-15; Bousset, Offenbarung, 308, 245).

[60]K. Rengstorf, Theological Dictionary of NT, 3:339.

[61]Liddell-Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, 1:836; Swete, Apocalypse, 68; Rengstorf, Theological Dictionary of NT, 3:339.

[62]The word τόξον would more likely be used if the rainbow on the angel's head was arch-like in appearance, as a rainbow appears in the heavens (Gen 9:13). See Swete, Apocalypse, 68.

[63]As Rengstorf (Theological Dictionary of NT, 3:342, n. 27) says, it is irrelevant whether horizontal or vertical. The sense would be the same, that of the covenantal grace of God.

[64]Ibid. Caird (Commentary on Revelation, 63) seems to imply that the rainbow was vertical when he says that it was "overarching the throne," implying possibly also a half circle.

[65]Swete, Apocalypse, 68, 126; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:115.

[66]There is some question as to the exact meaning of σμαραγδίνω (Rev 4:3). Charles (Ibid., 1:114-15) believes the word retains it's common meaning of the ancient world, that of the color green or shades of it. See also Swete, Apocalypse, 668-69. If the σμαραγδίνῳ was rock crystal and thus colorless, then the rainbow of the throne could be viewed in all its prismatic colors (Mounce, Revelation, 134; see also Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:114). But if the σμαραγδίνῳ was an emerald, then the rainbow would appear green in color.

[67]Swete, Apocalypse, 126; Mounce, Revelation, 207.

[68]While a halo-like rainbow in association with clouds and the rays of the sun usually will appear in the colors of a prism as it reflects the rays of light, as may be the case of the angel's rainbow (Swete, Apocalypse, 126), this may not be the case when a halo is caused by the rays of a bright light as the sun when no cloud or vapor is present. This latter situation may account for the green-like rainbow surrounding the throne in Rev 4:3 (Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:115).

[69]There is one possible occurrence of ἶρις in the LXX, that of Exod 30:24. But the reading is disputed. The text of Exod 30:24 has ἴρεως, which appears to be the genitive of ἶρις. The proper genitive, however, is ἴριδος. Possibly ἴρεως should be read as ἱερέως, the genitive of ἱερεύς - a reading which several manuscripts of the LXX have (Alan England Brooke and Norman McLean, eds., The Old Testament in Greek [Cambridge: University Press, 1909], 1:ii.259).

[70]Rengstorf, Theological Dictionary of NT, 3:342.

[71]Mostly it translates the Hebrew קֶשֶׁת, "bow," and usually means a weapon (e.g., Gen 27:3).

[72]The occurrence of τόξον in Rev 6:2 is not a concern in the present study because it means the weapon, a bow.

[73]For references see Liddell-Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, 2:1805.

[74]In Wis 5:21 the rainbow is likened to a battle bow drawn to its full arch. In Sir 43:11 the rainbow is likened to a bow bent by the hands of God. And in Sir 50:7 it is likened to the shining sun (rays of the sun). This imagery of the rainbow as God's war-bow may be related to the image of flashes of lightning when used to picture God's arrows (Ps 7:13; Hab 3:11). Ford (Revelation, 71) says that the rainbow of Gen 9:13 "appears to be Yahweh's war-bow" and "means that Yahweh sets aside His bow and hangs it up in the clouds as a sign that His anger has subsided."

[75]In Dan 7:9 the throne of the Ancient of Days is like a fiery flame, but the word rainbow is not used.

[76]Rengstorf, Theological Dictionary of NT, 3:340.

[77]See Ford, Revelation, 71 for further references.

[78]Ibid.; Rengstorf, Theological Dictionary of NT, 3:340. The rainbow was also thought by some to be a sign of God's judgment because it also reminded one of the wickedness of humankind (Ford, Revelation, 71).

[79]Ibid.; Swete, Apocalypse, 68; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:114-15; Allo, L'Apocalypse, 68; Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 415.

[80]Caird, Commentary on Revelation, 63; Mounce, Revelation, 135.

[81]Swete (Apocalypse, 68) says that the rainbow of Rev 4:3 is "borrowed" from Ezek 1:26-28, though the "circle of light" in Rev 4:3 is emerald-like in appearance. He furthermore says that "it is precarious to press a reference to the rainbow of the covenant" in Gen 9:13-16. See also Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:114-15.

[82]While not making the connection between Gen 9 and Rev 4, Swete (Apocalypse, 68) does say that the rainbow of Ezek 1 and Rev 4 "may perhaps represent the mercy" of God. Caird (Commentary on Revelation, 63) says that the rainbow of Rev 4:3 reminds us that "there is to be no triumph for God's sovereignty at the expense of his mercy."

[83]Ibid.

[84]I agree for the most part with Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 284) who says, "Only if the copious OT quarry fails should John's sources be sought elsewhere."

[85]The closest parallel is the angel Iaoel in the Apocalypse of Abraham (A.D. 70-150) whose headdress was a turban that looked like a rainbow (11:1-3). See p. 57 of chap. 3 and pp. 117-18 of chap. 4.

[86]Swete, Apocalypse, 68, 126.

[87]Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 415. See also Allo L'Apocalypse, 138; J. P. M. Sweet, Revelation (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979), 177.

[88]Bousset, Offenbarung, 308.

[89]Beckwith, Apocalypse, 580.

[90]Bousset, Offenbarung, 308.

[91]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:259; Ford, Revelation, 161-62.

[92]See p. 94 and n. 61; also p. 95.

[93]Homer's Iliad (8.398), for example. A. R. H. Moncrieff, Classic Myth and Legend (New York: William H. Wise, 1934), 31, 157; Bulfinch's Mythology (New York: Random House, n.d.), 10, 62.

[94]See Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1.115 for sources. Possibly Ps 104:2 reflects this idea when it describes God as clothed with light as a garment.

[95]Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 57.

[96]Ibid., 52-57.

[97]Collins, Combat Myth, 58.

[98]Mazzferri, Genre of Revelation, 52. Collins (Combat Myth, 57-83) is not alone in fostering this suggestion. W. K. Hebrick ("The Sources and Use of the Imagery in Apocalypse 12" [Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, 1971], 43-48, 98, 114) had earlier come to the same conclusion. See also C. Brütsch, La Clarté de l'Apocalypse (Geneva: Editions Labor et Fides, 1966), 133; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:317-318.

[99]An example is Isa 51:9-10 (see also Job 26:12-13). Ibid.

[100]Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 55-56.

[101]Ibid., 56; Collins, Combat Myth,79.

[102]Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 56; Collins, Combat Myth, 76-9.

[103]For this reason Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 295) says that John is confronted "by the most glorious angel in his entire book," and it is proper "to deem him quasi-divine."

[104]One could almost refer to the angel of Rev 10 as an "angel of the covenant" (Ford, Revelation, 163). The designation "angel of the covenant" of God first appears in Mal 3:1, though in Judg 2:1-2 the angel of the Lord is presented as the spokesman of the covenant of God with Israel. However, if one were to choose any figure in Revelation as an "angel of the covenant" of God, Jesus Christ would be the most likely candidate. But since it is a conclusion of this dissertation that the angel of Rev 10 is a picture or icon of Christ's role as the messenger and commissioner of God, in a derivative sense the angel of Rev 10 could so be designated. This will be treated in chap. 6.

[105]This association of God's glory and mercy with Jesus Christ is seen elsewhere in the NT (e.g., Matt 17:5; Luke 2:9; Acts 7:55-56; Jas 2:1). In Rev 19:1-10 salvation and glory are attributed to God because of his judgment of the harlot and deliverance of his people as the bride of the lamb.

[106]There are other figures who are associated with the sun. In Rev 19:17 an angel stands in the sun and issues an invitation to the birds of the heavens to the great feast of God. In Rev 18:1 the angel who announces the judgment of Babylon illuminates the earth with his glory - though the sun is not mentioned. The relationship between the angel of Rev 10 and the above two angels is treated in chap. 6. Finally, there is the woman with child in Rev 12:1 who is described clothed with the sun.

[107]In Matt 17:2 and Rev 10:1 πρόσωπον is used for Jesus and the angel, but in Rev 1:16 the word ὄψις is used for Jesus. Both words have the sense of "face," though the prime meaning of ὄψις is "appearance" and that of πρόσωπον, "face." See Liddell-Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, 2.1283, 1533.

[108]Robert F. O'Toole (Acts 26, the Christological Climax of Paul's Defense, Analecta Biblica 78 [Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978], 62) says that the description of Christ's face like the sun in full power "is close to 'brighter than the sun' of Acts 26:13." O'Toole (Ibid., 63) furthermore says

that the φῶς, which is more brilliant than the sun is one of the phenomena of theophany (Deut 4:12, 15, 33, 36; 5:4, 22-26) which "characterizes the now divine mode of being of Christ."

[109]Ibid., 62.

[110]Sun worship and cult were prominent amongst all the Semitic pantheons (The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, 4.464-65 contains a summary and bibliography). Though forbidden in the OT (Deut 4:19; 17:3; 2 Kgs 23:5), it nevertheless was at times practiced in Israel (2 Kgs 21:3-5; Jer 8:2; Ezek 8:16).

[111]In addition there are instances of human beings who had faces that were bright or shining, as Moses (Exod 34:29, 35), Simon the son of Onias (Sir 50:1-7), and Noah at his birth (1 Enoch 106:5). Also in the future life the faces of the righteous will shine (1 Enoch 38:4; 39:7; 104:2). In rabbinic writings Adam's face before the fall was likened to the sun. Because Adam was created for the service of God as the sun for service of humankind, the ball of Adam's heel and his face outshone the brightness of the sun (Pesiq. Rab Kah. 101; cf. B. Bat. 58a which says that Adam's two heels were like two "orbs of the sun").

[112]Whether the words, sun of righteousness, designated a personal figure or not is doubtful. The common consensus is that it does not (M. P. Smith, Book of Malachi, International Critical Commentary, [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912], 80). Rather, it seems to be a figurative representation of righteousness itself, that is, the righteousness of Yahweh. However, personification of righteousness under the term sun of righteousness cannot be ruled out. To what extent the Israelites were influenced by the cult of the sun-god and thus conceived of a personal agent of God that became recognized as the sun of righteousness, is perhaps impossible to determine conclusively. At least in the case of Malachi it can be said that if he thought of the sun of righteousness as a personal agent, it would most likely have to be in terms of the covenantal theology of the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT - that is, that Yahweh through a personal figure would establish righteousness with his people (Isa 9:1-7; Jer 23:5-6). One difficulty with the identification of the sun of righteousness is that this exact figure, or figure of speech, is nowhere else employed in the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT, nor in the New.

[113]Smith (Malachi, 80) says that "righteousness is here practically equivalent to vindication and victory," as can be seen in Isa 41:2; 45:8; 46:13; 56:1 (cf. Rev 21:23).

[114]In Matt 28:3 it is the angel's appearance (εἰδέα or ἰδέα) that is like lightning (ἀστραπή). In Dan 10:6 it is the angel's face (πρόσωπον). It is possible for εἰδέα to mean also face - compare Theodotion's use of εἰδέα in Dan 1:13-15 to that of the LXX's use of ὄφις for the same Hebrew word (מַרְאֶה). In Luke 24:4 the two men (angels?) at the tomb are dressed in clothing that shone or gleamed like lightning, but nothing is mentioned about their faces.

[115]G. A. Cooke, The Book of Ezekiel, International Critical Commentary [Edinborough: T. & T. Clark, 1936), 15; Ford, Revelation, 73; Swete, Apocalypse, 69-70.

[116]O'Toole, Acts 26, 60.

[117]In these instances the Exodus motif is reflected according to Ford (Revelation, 73).

[118]Thunders and lion-like roars accompany the angel of Rev 10. This is discussed in chapter 5.

[119]Both the angel of Daniel and the angel of the tomb of Jesus evoke fear and trembling because of their faces like lightning. So also do the angels of Rev 4:5; 16:18.

[120]William Hendriksen (The Gospel of Matthew [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973], 989 and More than Conquerors, An Interpretation of the Book of Revelation [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1939, repr., 1975], 71) suggests no distinction is to be noted.

[121]Thus the angel of Dan 10 whose face is like lightning reveals to Daniel events on earth in the end times, power struggles and the final deliverance of God's people (Dan 10-12). The sun of righteousness figure in Mal 4:1-3 plays a role of blessing to God's people in the economy of the day of the Lord.

[122]See also 1 Enoch 38:4; 39:7; 104:2 for similar thoughts, although the sun itself is not mentioned.

[123]The sun as a metaphor seems then to symbolize both the righteousness and glory of God. Specifically it points to the righteousness of God which, when it dispels the darkness of his people, results in the sharing of his glory. Thus the sun also comes to be associated with the glory of God, for "the glory of God manifests itself in light" (Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 2:172; see also O'Toole, Acts 26, 60).

[124]O'Toole, Acts 26, 59-60. In 2 Cor 4:6 Paul says "the knowledge of the glory of God" is "in the face of Christ." In John 1:14 the Logos incarnate is described as the bearer of God's glory. P. E. Hughes (A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977], 42) says that Jesus Christ manifests "nothing less than the essential glory of God himself, corresponding to the shekinah glory which in the Old Testament signified the very presence of God in the midst of his people."

[125]Swete (Apocalypse, 19) says that John "could scarcely have failed to think of the Transfiguration which anticipated the glory of the ascended Christ" when he saw Christ's face like the sun (Rev 1:16).

[126]Twice in the NT Jesus Christ is called the icon (εἰκών) of God, 2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15. The word εἰκών appears 10 times in Revelation, but in every instance it refers to the image of the beast (e.g., 13:14; 20:4).

[127]Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 2:172) says that the lamb as the light of the new Jerusalem "is the predicate and corresponds to ἐφώτισεν αὐτήν in the preceding line, just as τὸ ἀρνίον is the parallel to ἡ δόξα τοῦ θεοῦ."

[128]Ford, Revelation, 383; Allo, L'Apocalypse, 13.

[129]On the use of the title viceroy (or vizier) in biblical theology see Hirth, Gottes Boten, 98-109; Stier, Gott und sein Engel, 62-157.

[130]On the subject of the role of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, in Revelation as the representative of God see J. Comblin, Le Christ dans L'Apocalypse, Théologie biblique 3/6 (Tournai, Belgium: Desclée, 1965), 12-16.

[131]See O'Toole, Acts 26, 61 for a discussion on Luke 9: 26; Acts 12:7.

[132]See n. 106 above.

[133]One tradition suggests that angels began to be associated with Jesus Christ because of the glorious light which attended his resurrection. An Old Latin text of Mark 16:3 exhibited in Codex Bobiensis (4th cent.) says that angels descended from heaven at Jesus' resurrection and ascended with him in the light of God (see Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament [London/New York: United Bible Societies, 1971], 121-22).

[134]See pp. 10-12, chap. 2.

[135]See pp. 42-44, chap. 3.

[136]Liddell-Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, 2:1282, 1533; Greek-English Lexicon of NT, 601-602, 720-21; Theological Dictionary of NT, 6:768-70.

[137]Swete, Apocalypse, 19; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:30-31.

[138]Allo, L'Apocalypse, 12-13.

[139]Feuillet ("Le chapitre X," 417) says that the various descriptions of the angel (the cloud, rainbow and face like the sun) are trademarks which stamp or brand the angel as a servant of Jesus Christ as the Son of Man (see also Brütsch, Clarté de l'Apocalypse, 114). This identification of the angel as the servant of Jesus Christ, however, is seen not so much in the cloud and rainbow, but especially in his face like the sun.

[140]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:28-29; Swete, Apocalypse, 16-17; Ford, Revelation, 383.

[141]Angels are never portrayed as regents or equals in majestic status with God or Jesus Christ. Rather, they are called servants (Rev 19:10; 22:9).

[142]In Rev 1:1 it is stated that the revelatory message, identified as the revelation of Jesus Christ, was given by God to Jesus Christ, who in turn gave it to John through his angel. Jesus Christ thus used an angel to give the revelation to John, but commentators do not agree who this angel was. Ford (Revelation, 373, 375) connects the τοῦ ἀγγελοῦ αὐτοῦ of verse one with the ὁ θεός - God through his angel gave the revelation of Jesus Christ to John. But Swete (Apocalypse, 2) is correct when he maintains that while the significavit nuntianda of the Latin Vulgate implies that the ὁ θεός is the subject, the Greek itself does not support such a rendering. Rather, Jesus Christ is the subject so that as a result the ἀγγελοῦ αὐτοῦ is connected with Jesus Christ - Jesus Christ through his angel gave the revelation to John. Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:1) agrees when he says "it was Christ who sent His angel and signified it to John." Bousset (Offenbarung, 182) earlier maintained the same when he said, "Das Subjekt zu ἐσήμανεν ist wahrscheinlich nicht Gott, sondern Christus. . . ." Allo, (L'Apocalypse, 3) also maintains the same when he says that the message comes to John through the chaine of God, Jesus, and the angel, and the angel belongs to Jesus. This interpretation agrees with Rev 22:16. Ford (Revelation, 163) believes that the angel of 10:1 "is probably the Angel of the Covenant sometimes identified with Yahweh," and identifies the angel as belonging to God and not Jesus Christ.

[143]In Ezek 40:3 the prophet sees in a vision a man whose appearance was like bronze, and in whose hand was a measuring rod. But this is not quite the same. The idea of legs in the form of pillars is not unknown in Jewish

literature. For example, in Cant 5:15 the male lover is described with legs that are like pillars of marble, indicating not only beauty but also strength and support. And in the Apocalypse of Zephania 6:13 the angel Eremiel has feet (legs?) like fired bronze.

[144]The LXX text of Dan 2:33 has the words σκέλη (legs) and πόδες (feet) in their primary meanings. The text of Theodotion has πόδες, but in place of σκέλη it has κνῆμαι which refers to any projecting limb. However, κνῆμαι can mean that part of the leg which is above the foot. While πούς ordinarily means foot, in Rev 10:1 it clearly refers to the leg because of the word pillar (στῦλος). The more correct word for leg would have been σκέλος (John 19:31-33). For fuller discussion see Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:259. In the case of Jesus in Rev 1:15 πόδες most likely carries the common meaning of foot (Charles, Ibid., 1.29).

[145]Ford, Revelation, 383.

[146]Ibid., 162. In Josh 10:24 the army commanders of Israel are instructed by Joshua to put their feet on the necks of the vanquished kings of the Amorites.

[147]See Swete, Apocalypse, 127-28.

[148]In Wis 18:3 the pillar of fire is referred to as a gift of God by which he guided Israel on an "uncharted journey" (cf. Num 14:14; Neh 8:12, 19).

[149]While the angel and the pillar are specifically mentioned together only in Exod 14:19-20, it is quite clear from Exod 13:20-21 and 23:20-23 that this association can be understood wherever the pillar is mentioned.

[150]Mounce, Revelation, 207. See also Caird, Commentary on Revelation, 126.

[151]For a general description of the theophanic role of fire see Lang, Theological Dictionary of NT, 6:935-41.

[152]Not only with regard to human beings but also creation itself (2 Pet 3:10-13).

[153]The consuming fire of God's jealous anger is something before which the sinner and godless cannot dwell (Isa 33:14) and which will never be quenched (Isa 66:24). It is perhaps for this reason that fire becomes associated with suffering in the afterlife and in the popular pictures of hell (Mark 9:47-48; Matt 3:12; 25:41; Rev 20:10, 15; 21:10).

[154]The Hebrew Massoretic text has "the likeness (figure) like the appearance of fire" - דְּמוּת כְּמַרְאֵה־אֵשׁ. The LXX has "the likeness of a man" - ὁμοίωμα ἀνδρός.

[155]Cooke (Ezekiel, 89-90) believes that the figure is no messenger or angel but is Yahweh himself in human form. He comes to this conclusion because of the similarities of the appearance of Yahweh to the prophet in the inaugural vision (Ezek 1:4, 26-28).

[156]The imagery of fire can take the form of a burning bush (Exod 3:2-3); fiery-like glowing metal (Ezek 1:4, 27); a throne of flaming fire (Dan 7:9); a river of fire (Dan 7:10); fiery eyes (Dan 10:6; Rev 1:14); and fiery-like legs (Ezek 8:2; Rev 10:1).

[157]The angelic figure can simply be called an angel or the angel of the Lord (Exod 3:2); a fiery-like figure of a man (Ezek 8:2); a man dressed in linen with a body like chrysolite, a face of lightning with flaming eyes and arms and legs like gleaming bronze (Dan 10:5-6); an angel enveloped in a cloud with a bright halo-like rainbow and face like the sun and with legs like pillars of fire (Rev 10:1).

[158]Other references to heavenly figures in the NT associated with fire include 2 Thess 1:7-8 and Heb 1:7. In the former Jesus is described at his second coming descending from heaven with angels and in a flame of fire. In the latter angels are likened to flames of fire.

[159]That the imagery of fire with regard to Jesus and the angel is not identical is in keeping with Ezek 8:1-4 and Dan 10:4-6. In both instances, the description for the fire of the angelic figures differs from that of God (see pp. 112-13).

[160]The suggestion of dominance is all the more reinforced when the pillar-like legs are noted in the overall picture of the angel, especially his stance as described in Rev 10:2. It is a stance or posture which cannot be dislodged because of the pillar-like legs (Ford, Revelation, 162).

[161]If the pillar-like legs could also be thought of as in motion, then the walk and direction of the angel cannot be opposed. The pillar of the cloud and fire in Exodus gave sure and certain guidance to the Israelites when it moved ahead of them (13:21). The pillar also provided a secure and immovable protection (Exod 14:19-20), for the pillar of cloud and fire never left its position in its guidance and protection (Exod 13:22). In addition to the pillar of cloud and fire, other fiery phenomena as signs of divine protection were the horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (2 Kgs 6:17) and the wall of fire in Zech 2:9 (LXX). In 1 Enoch 90:24 the place of condemnation and the

abyss are full of fire and pillars of fire. In Isa 4:4 it is said that Zion will become holy because the Lord will cleanse her by the spirit of fire.

[162]To the discussion concerning the terms of theophany and angel-theophany (see pp. 55-7, chap. 3), we would then add the following. A true theophany involves only God together with some visible manifestation. An angel-theophany involves both God and an angelic figure, also accompanied by some visible manifestation. In the angel-theophany God and the angel are so closely related that though they may seem to be one and the same, they are not.

[163]O. S. Wintermute, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, ed., Charlesworth, 1:500-01.

[164]Ibid., 504-505.

[165]The Apocalypse of Abraham is known today only in an Old Slavonic translation which was made from the Greek, although the original language was most likely Hebrew or Aramaic. For data on the above and a description of the text see R. Rubinkiewicz, Ibid., 1:681-88.

[166]Ibid., 683.

[167]With the angel Metatron the tradition of a mediating, divine-like angelic figure seems to have reached its highest degree within Jewish angelology. See pp. 55-7, chap. 3 (see also P. Alexander, Ibid., 1:243-44).

[168]F. I. Anderson, Ibid., 1:94-97; Alexander, Ibid., 1:225-29.

[169]The appearance was so glorious that Isaiah could not attempt to describe it.

[170]See pp. 58-59, chap. 3.

[171]The number of angels that could be considered are quite numerous, depending on how wide one defines mediating, commissioning angels. But none stand out as the ones mentioned - or they are too late in date for consideration. And when other angels could be considered, no descriptions are given that could be of help in analyzing the angel of Rev 10. Examples of such angels are: the mediating angel of Moses in Jub. 1:27-29; 2:1; the role of Michael in the Apocalypse of Sedrach; the angel of Light or the Prince of Light in some of the Qumran literature (e.g., 1QS 3:30). For information on the above angels and others see Jean Daniélou, "Trinité et angélologie," 161-62.

[172]See pp. 57-58, chap. 3.

[173]This will be further considered in chap. 6.

CHAPTER V

THE ANGEL OF REVELATION 10

HIS POSTURE AND ROLE

In Rev 10:2-7 the posture or stance of the angel is described. This is followed by the investiture of John in vv. 8-11. Rev 10 is thus made up of three distinct parts: the appearance of the angel (v. 1); the posture of the angel (vv. 2-7); and the investiture of John by the angel (vv. 8-11). Feuillet divides Rev 10 also into three parts or episodes, but with slight variations: the appearance of the angel (vv. 1-2); the seven thunders and the oath of the angel (vv. 3-7); and the investiture of John (vv. 8-11).[1] But the division suggested by the present study is adopted here because it keeps the focus on the angel and not on the thunders and oath.[2]

The Colossal Size of the Angel

The role of the angel as the mediating commissioner is introduced and circumscribed by the description of the posture and stance that he takes. The overall impression given by his posture is one of command and attention, especially his colossal size as indicated by the placement of his legs (Rev

10:2). He dominates the earth as he stands astride it, and he commands attention with a voice that is like the roar of a lion (v. 3).

In Jewish and Christian imaginative thought the appearance of gigantic heavenly figures is not unknown.[3] However, in the entire panorama of Hebrew Scriptures of the OT and also of the NT there is presented no heavenly or supernatural figure of a colossal size.[4] The only figure in biblical myth who is ever referred to in terms that could indicate colossal dimensions is God. But even these references are only metaphorical, for no gigantic description of God is ever given.[5] It seems evident then that descriptions of heavenly figures of enormous dimension are rather late in origin, the first century of the Christian era.[6] Depending how late in the first century A.D. one dates it and the earliest writings describing heavenly figures in gigantic terms, Revelation may well be the first writing in the Jewish/Christian tradition that presents and depicts a heavenly figure in colossal terms.[7] Whether in fact this is true or not, there apparently was no tradition or source that John drew upon in picturing the angel in his huge, tower-like appearance. Whether John can be credited with the origin of such a tradition, or whether this tradition of presenting angelic figures in gigantic size found its origin in several authors of the late first century, among whom was John, the idea began to appear at this time and continued in both traditions.[8]

One such angel, because of its approximate date of 100 A.D., is of interest in relationship to the angel of Rev 10, that of the angel of Elkesai.

According to Hippolytus (c. 170-236) a certain Elkesai received a scroll or book from an angel. The angel was of gigantic proportions - his height was ninety-six miles.[9] The scroll contained a new revelation which Elkesai was to proclaim.[10] Despite differences, it appears that the source of Elkesai's vision could have been John's angel in Rev 10. If it was not, then independently of each other two authors of about the same time (80-100 A.D.) created similar pictures of gigantic angels in commissioning roles for which they had no apparent traditional background or source.[11]

Another angel that may be considered is Sandalfon. In rabbinic theology this angel first appears in the Babylonian Talmud (Hag. 13b). There he is described in such a large size that he was higher than his fellow angelic colleagues by a distance of a five hundred year journey. When Sandalfon stood on the earth, his head reached into the heavenly realm of the living creatures of four faces described in Ezek 1. As he stands in this gigantic posture, Sandalfon wreathes crowns, that is, he offers up the prayers of the righteous to God.[12] Though the Babylonian Talmud in its present form dates from around A.D. 600, it contains rabbinic traditions that began to be gathered from around A.D. 100.[13] Whether the tradition concerning Sandalfon was current at the time of the composition of Revelation, we have no way of knowing. Nevertheless, the tradition does help us to understand that John was not alone in imagining angels of gigantic size.

However the tradition began of describing angels in enormous size and proportions, it is apparent that it was done in order to gain attention for the angel's mission.[14] In particular an angel of gigantic size was pictured when the angel's role was that of commissioning a prophet to proclaim a message, a new revelation, as evidenced by the angel of Rev 10 and the angel of Elkesai.[15] The size of the angel attracts attention to the role he plays in commissioning a prophet and to the message that he is to proclaim.

The Posture of the Angel

The Scroll

Four things comprise the picture of the posture of the angel of Rev 10: the opened scroll in his hand (v. 2a); the placement of his feet or legs (v. 2b); his lion-like roar when he speaks (v. 3a); and the angel's oath (vv. 5-7). The scroll in the hand of the angel is an opened scroll. The Greek word for scroll here in v. 2 is βιβλαρίδιον, which literally means a small scroll, book or document.[16] In contrast to the word Βιβλίον (Rev 5:1), Βιβλαρίδιον would indicate a smaller scroll or book. Because the scroll of seven seals in Rev 5:1 is called a Βιβλίον while the opened scroll of 10:2 is called a βιβλαρίδιον, the contents of the opened smaller scroll are understood to be less than that of the seven-sealed, larger scroll. A possible problem with this interpretation is the fact that in Rev 10:8 the opened scroll is called a Βιβλίον. This might indicate that Βιβλαρίδιον and Βιβλίον are used synonymously in Rev 10. However, scholarly consensus is probably correct in making a distinction between the size

of the scope of the contents of the seven-sealed scroll in Rev 5:1 and the opened, smaller scroll in Rev 10:2.[17]

What the contents are, however, is another matter, for here there is no interpretative consensus. It is agreed that the contents of the opened scroll in Rev 10:2 are not just repetitious of the contents of the seven-sealed scroll in 5:1.[18] One interpretation suggests that the contents of the opened scroll is much less than that of the seven-sealed scroll, emphasizing its smallness. In this case the contents of the opened scroll might be Rev 11:1-3, compared to Rev 6-9 of the seven-sealed scroll.[19] Another interpretation which does not stress the smallness of the one scroll believes the contents are represented by chapters 12 through 22 - that of the seven-sealed scroll would be 1:9-11:19.[20]

Other interpretations suggest that the opened scroll of the angel takes certain revelations out of the seven-sealed scroll and extends them by giving more detail,[21] or that the contents of the small opened scroll, while more pointed or focused more narrowly than that of the larger seven-sealed scroll, is, nevertheless, wider in its scope and audience than that of the seven-sealed scroll.[22] Whatever the exact contents of the scrolls, the symbolism of the opened scroll in the angel's hand is clear. The message originates with God and not with the angel, for the scroll is in the angel's hand and it is open.[23]

The source for the imagery of a scroll as a symbolic message given by a heavenly figure to a prophet is most likely Ezekiel (2:8-10; 3:1-4).[24] Symbolical imagery of a scroll appears elsewhere in the Hebrew Scriptures of the

OT,[25] but the instance in Ezekiel is the only time when this symbolical use is employed in the commissioning of a prophet. In the inaugural vision (chaps. 1-3) Ezekiel is given the command to speak God's words to the people (2:3-7). And then he sees a hand stretched out to him with an unrolled scroll on both sides of which a message is written (2:2-10).[26]

The metaphorical use of a scroll to symbolize a message would seem to be a natural outgrowth of prophets preserving their inspired messages on scrolls. A scroll would preserve the message and thus assure the reader of the exactness of the message as the prophet received it. For example, Jeremiah is instructed by God to write on a scroll the message given to him, which message was then read to the people from the scroll (Jer 36:2-8).

Not only would a scroll preserve the prophet's message, it would also indicate that its message was certain and definite, that is, unchangeable. When a message or legal transaction was codified and legalized, it was written on a scroll.[27]

The scrolls of Ezekiel and of John's angel indicate both the preservation and the authenticity of their messages. The scroll indicates not so much the method of inspiration as it does the certainty and divine legality of the message.[28] In Ezekiel the scroll contained words of lament, mourning and woe (Ezek 2:10). The contents of the scroll of the angel of Rev 10 are not described. But if one relates the contents of the angel's scroll to Rev 11-22, then these chapters would be the contents of the opened scroll in his hand. Howev-

er, as in the case of the entire prophecy of Ezekiel, there would be with the words of suffering also words of hope and deliverance.[29]

The Angel's Feet

With the scroll in hand the angel plants his right foot on the sea and his left on the land. It is from this description of the placement of his feet that the gigantic size of the angel is derived. His size is not actually mentioned but is left up to the imagination of the reader.[30] The size of the angel, as described above, indicates that he dominates and overshadows all before him. His stance commands attention, and the placing of his feet on the sea and land suggests that all things are subject to him and that the message of the scroll is universal in scope.[31]

"Sea and land" is "an OT formula for the totality of terrestrial things."[32] This descriptive formula for the totality of the created world is seen also in the NT (Rev 5:13; Phil 2:10). While this formula is most frequently used with regard to God as the creator of all things (Rev 5:13; cf. Exod 20:11), here in Rev 10:2 the formula of sea and land is to be seen in relationship to the dominance of the angel. It also suggests that the angel's mission and the message of his mission are universal (Rev 10:11; 11:3-6; cf. Dan 3:1-6). Already there is present in the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT the idea that the whole of earthly life is subject not only to God as the creator (Ps 146:5-10), but also to whom he has selected (Ps 8:4-6). And the symbolical imagery

denoting such terrestrial ascendant universality are the placement of the feet (Ps 8:6).[33]

This imagery is also carried over into the NT (Rev 12:1; 1 Cor 15:25-27; Eph 1:22), and it is demonstrated especially when the feet are placed on the subject (Mark 6:48-51; Matt 14:25-33; see also Job 9:8).

The placement of the feet by the angel does not mean that the sea and land are subject to him by right of creation and lordship (ownership),[34] for the angel when he has placed his feet makes an oath to him who is the creator and Lord (Rev 10:5-6). In addition, it should also be noted that only the sea and land are under his feet, not the heavens. Rather, as the one who is sent from heaven (from God), all terrestrial life will be subject to him while he carries out his given mission.[35]

It is significant to note that in Rev 13 the same order of the sea first and the land second is pictured in the placement of the feet of the angel. The two beasts of Rev 13 are conjured up by Satan the dragon in his war against the woman who has given birth to the child (Rev 12:13-18; 13:1-2, 11-12).[36] The first beast comes from the sea (Rev 13:1) and the second from the earth (13:11). So, too, the angel of Rev 10 places first his right foot on the sea and then his left on the earth. The right foot is placed on the sea from which the greater of the two beasts comes and his left on the land from which the more subservient beast comes (Rev 13:11-15).[37]

Of all the instances in Revelation where the sea and land are mentioned in the same context, only in Rev 10 and 13 is the sea mentioned first. In the remaining instances the land is mentioned first and then the sea (Rev 7:1; 12:12; 16:1-3).[38] This could well be a literary device by which the author indicates by juxtaposition and apposition that what is subjugated to the angel and his mission are the two beasts and their warfare against the woman.[39] In Rev 15:2-4 the people of God are depicted in mortal conflict with the beast and his image, together with its number (Cf. Rev 13:1, 11, 14, 17-18.[40] Though in conflict, they anticipate victory and thus sing in celebration (Rev 15:3-4; cf. Rev 14:9-12). The placement of the angel's feet seems then to be a telltale sign of this future victory.

A further possible indicator of the dominance of the angel over the beasts may be seen in Rev 10:7 when compared to Rev 11:15-19 and 15:1-8. In Rev 10:7 the completion of the mystery of God as promised to his people is related to the voice of the seventh-trumpet angel. In Rev 11:15-19 the event of the kingdom of God is described at the sound of the trumpet of the seventh angel. The kingdom of God and his Christ has now come about (Rev 11:15). A great celebration then ensues (11:16-18), and the temple of God in heaven is opened (11:19). In Rev 15:5-8 the temple of God, identified as the temple of the tabernacle of witness, will not be open for entrance until the seven plagues of God announced by the angels with the seven bowls of God's wrath have been completed. But when the seventh bowl of God's wrath has been poured

out by the seventh angel, then God's temple in heaven will be open because all things will have been finished (Rev 15:8; 16:17).[41] The opening of God's temple at the completion of all things seems to be a definition of the completion of the mystery of God mentioned in Rev 10:7. The celebration at the event of the kingdom of God in Rev 11:15-18 would then find its correlation in the hymn of victory over the beast in the fulfillment of God's wrath as announced by the seven angels of the bowls (Rev 15:1-8).[42] If this is a valid interpretation, then the placement of the angel's feet suggests that the mission of the angel will prevail over the beasts and their opposition.

The Voice of the Angel

When the angel has taken his position, he cries out with a great voice like that of a lion when it roars (Rev 10:3). "Most things in the Apocalypse are on a great scale," and the voice of the angel is no exception.[43] Some twenty times in Revelation a voice is identified as a great voice (φωνῇ μεγάλῃ). Both heavenly figures (Rev 1:10; 5:2) and human beings (Rev 6:10; 7:9-10) cry out with such a voice.[44] But in the case of the human beings so described, they are saints in heaven. There is no instance of a human voice on earth described as great. This identification is reserved only for voices that are in the heavenly realm or that originate from heaven. In the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT the description of a great voice, while not occurring often, is used indiscriminately of both earthly (Gen 39:14) and heavenly (1 Sam 7:10) voices.[45]

While the description of the angel's voice as great is not unique in Revelation, the further description, "as a lion roars," is. Only one figure throughout Revelation roars like a lion when he speaks, and that is the angel of Rev 10, and he does it only once (v. 3). Jesus Christ as the conquering lamb is described as a lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev 5:5-6),[46] and as the Son of Man he speaks with a great voice (Rev 1:10). But it is never said that his voice is like the roar of a lion.[47] However, the beast from the sea in Rev 13 is said to have a mouth like the mouth of a lion (v. 2). One could surmise that whenever the beast spoke, it spoke like a lion's roar, but it is never said that it did. Only the angel who with his right foot stands on the sea, from whence comes the beast, roars like a lion. This could be another literary indication to suggest that though the beast is terrifying,[48] it nevertheless is subjugated by the angel. For he alone so roars as he stands over sea and land from whence figuratively opposition comes (see Isa 5:29; 31:4) - a roar of defiance and victory (Rev 10:7; 14:8-13).

In the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT the lion is frequently used in reference to God. It pictures and symbolizes his majestic power (Job 10:16); the fear that he instills when on the hunt or when he roars (Hos 5:14; Amos 3:8); and the victory of his conquest as he stands over his prey (Isa 31:4; Jer 25:30-38). The lion is also used to symbolize human characteristics and mighty men of renown.[49] But interestingly it is never used to portray an angel or symbolize any characteristic or attribute of an angelic figure. With regard to God, the

lion's roar is especially used to evoke strikingly the awesome and fearful power of God's word when spoken. Not only is Yahweh likened to a roaring lion when he speaks (Hos 11:10), but when he speaks as a roaring lion, everyone becomes afraid (Amos 3:8; 5:19). When God speaks in judgment, it is like a roaring lion which has left its lair in anger (Jer 25:30, 38). And when God roars like a lion, even the earth and heavens shake and tremble (Joel 3:16).

Throughout all of biblical literature the only heavenly figures whose voices are ever likened to the roar of a lion are God and the angel of Rev 10.[50] It is no wonder then that the voice of the angel is understood to be that of deity.[51] The metaphor or simile of the lion's roar emphasizes the strength of the angel's voice, its volume and depth, that gain attention.[52] It is a voice that overpowers and from which there can be no escape. All creation will hear and tremble, but especially all peoples (Rev 10:11). However, the voice itself is not the message,[53] for that is contained in the scroll in the angel's hand. Rather, the voice itself draws attention to the mission of the angel, that of commissioning John to proclaim the message of the scroll (Rev 10:11). The voice thus attends the message of the scroll to signify its royal, divine power and authority, and that as the word of God it will accomplish God's rule and judgment, that is, his mystery (Rev 10:6-7; 11:15; 16:17; see Isa 55:10-11).

The Seven Thunders

As if to add to the weight of the divine power and authority indicated by the roar-like voice of the angel, John adds the thought that when the angel cried out, the seven thunders spoke their own voices (Rev 10:3b). The impression is given that the seven thunders with their voices attend and accompany the lion-like voice of the angel - to emphasize the attention to be given to the angel and his mission. For when John was about to write what the thunders were saying, he was commanded not to do so (10:4). His attention is to remain on the angel and the message, symbolized by the scroll, that he will receive from the angel (10:5-11).

But what are these seven thunders? The definite article (αἱ ἑπτὰ βρονταί) suggests that they are a known entity;[54] however, the only place where they are mentioned is in Rev 10.[55] No satisfactory explanation for the presence of the article has gained acceptance, nor has any referent of the seven thunders.[56] The concept of seven thunders, while not appearing elsewhere in Revelation or in the NT, may have originated from the seven-fold voice of God described in Ps 29:3-9.[57] While the number seven itself is not mentioned, seven times the voice of the Lord is specified and described. In connection with the first voice thunder is mentioned. The voice of the Lord over the waters is likened to the way Yahweh thunders over the waters (v. 3).[58] Elsewhere in the OT the roar of Yahweh's voice is likened to thunder (Amos 1:2; Joel 3:16), though not in a seven-fold sense.[59] And when his roar-like

voice is likened to thunder, it is done to instill fear, especially of his judgment.[60]

There is also one reference in the NT where the voice of God is associated with thunder, John 12:28-29. This reference describes the voice of God from heaven and how some people thought it was thunder, or the voice of an angel.[61] God spoke, however, in order to glorify the Son, Jesus for the purpose of pointing to the coming judgment of the world (John 12:30-31).[62]

Whatever the source of the seven thunders, it seems apparent that John in Revelation is following the tradition of associating God's voice with thunder in order to enhance the awesome stature of the angel, in particular his lion-like voice (see Exod 19:16; 20:18-19; Heb 12:18-21). The angel speaks with the authority and majesty of God as if God himself were speaking. The situation is similar to what happened at Sinai. According to Jewish tradition,[63] God spoke the Law in seven voices, each voice in turn split into ten, thus making seventy (Sabb. 88b), so as to demonstrate that the Law was for all nations and that the Law would be complete and all sufficient.[64] This is also true of the word of God that the angel speaks and conveys to John (Rev 10:7, 11).[65] While the traditional background of thunder suggests a message of judgment and fear, the message of the angel to John would also include mercy (Rev 10:9-10).[66]

At the sound of the voices of the seven thunders John is moved to write but is forbidden to do so by a voice from heaven (Rev 10:4). Evidently the

voices of the thunders were intelligible to John,[67] nevertheless, he is not to disclose their contents, for he is "to seal" what their voices were saying.[68] We have a similar occurrence in Dan 12:4 (see also v. 9) where the prophet is told to "conceal and seal" the words of his prophecy until some future time.[69] The reason for the prohibition to Daniel is that for the moment he is not to disclose the revelation. No such answer is given to John who is never to reveal the contents of the voices of the thunders to anyone.[70] What the contents were and why they were not to be written and revealed is futile to speculate.[71] That John thought they might contain further revelation can be surmised from the fact that he was about to write (ἤμελλον γράφειν) when he was forbidden.[72] John had received in his inaugural commissioning the command to write what things he saw (Rev 1:19), and in his epilogue he receives instruction to make certain that nothing is omitted from his prophecy (Rev 22:19). So his desire and action to write down what the thunders were saying is understandable. However, the purpose of the seven thunders was not to give a further revelation but to place in bold relief the lion-like voice of the angel and his mission of mediating the message of God. They act as God's imprimatur of the angel's voice.

The Oath of the Angel

As if that were not enough, the angel himself swears by the living God and creator that all things will be accomplished in the days of the voice of the seventh-trumpet angel (Rev 10:5-7). The oath of the angel is connected with

the statement that when the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, "time shall no longer be (v. 6), and the mystery of God shall be completed (v. 7)."[73] The overall intent of the oath is to dramatize the certainty and truthfulness of the contents of the scroll, the message that John is to proclaim (vv. 10-11).[74] The angel's mission of commissioning John to proclaim the message, as well as its contents, are related to the completion of the mystery of God. Whatever one's interpretation of "time shall no longer be,"[75] and "mystery,"[76] the oath calls God as a witness to the certainty of what they entail with regard to the contents of the scroll.

In the biblical tradition God himself is sometimes portrayed as swearing, usually by lifting up his hand (right hand) to heaven (Deut 32:40; Exod 6:8; Isa 62:8; Ezek 20:15, 23).[77] The action of raising one's hand or hands heavenward was often synonymous with swearing (e.g., Gen 14:22; Num 24:30). The raising of hands heavenward by human beings or angels indicated that they were swearing by someone greater than themselves, usually described as the one who lives forever (Dan 12:7), or as the Lord God, the creator of all life (Gen 14:22). But in the case of God, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, the raising of the hand indicated that he swore by himself (Gen 22:15-16; Heb 6:13, 18) - in Deut 32:40 God swears by himself because he is the one who lives forever.[78]

The immediate source for the description of the swearing of the angel of Rev 10 appears to have been Dan 12:7, where the angelic figure of the man

clothed in linen, as he addresses Daniel, swears by the one who lives forever. He accompanies his oath by lifting both his right and left hands. The message he gives to Daniel, together with the oath, also had to do with the completion of all things within a stated time. Despite the descriptive differences between the two angelic figures of Daniel and Revelation,[79] the two scenes have a similar message, namely, that there will be no delay in the accomplishment of the events revealed by the angels and the confirmation of the same by their oaths.[80]

The Role of the Angel - The Investiture of the Prophet

Again John hears a voice from heaven (Rev 10:8), and upon hearing the voice John is introduced to the role of the angel, the investiture of himself as a prophet of the word of God to all peoples (Rev 10:11; cf. 1:1-3). At first the voice forbids John to write down what the seven thunders were saying (v. 4). Rather, John is to proclaim what is written on the scroll in the angel's hand. So the same voice speaks a second time and tells John to take the scroll from the hand of the angel (v. 8). The gigantic size of the angel is referred to again by the repetition of the placement of his legs on the sea and the land (v. 8b; see vv. 2 & 5). John thus is reminded that as he takes the scroll from the angel, he is to be involved in a mission that is world wide. This involvement is heightened when he is told by the angel to take the scroll and to eat it.[81]

The Eating of the Scroll

There is only one other instance in the biblical tradition where a prophet at his investiture is told to eat a scroll that is given to him, namely, Ezekiel.[82] In Ezek 2:7-3:6 the prophet is instructed to speak the words of God which are given to him in the form of a scroll to be eaten. An unidentified hand within the heavenly appearance of God's glory (1:25-28) gives the scroll to the prophet (2:9).[83] In Revelation the hand that gives the scroll to John is that of the commissioning angel. However, in both instances it is God who is the source (Ezek 2:4; Rev 10:8a). The scroll of Ezekiel is sweet as honey (2:3) while that of John is both bitter and sweet, but also like honey (Rev 10:9-10). This difference may not be as great as it at first seems. The scroll of Ezekiel is written on both sides with laments, mourning and woes (2:10). Even though at first the word sweetens the prophet's mouth, the burden of the message is lament and judgment (Ezek 2:3-7). While bitterness is not mentioned with the eating of the scroll, it is later when by the spirit he begins his mission (Ezek 3:14-15). In John's case the bitterness along with the sweetness is experienced in the eating.[84] But even here the sweetness is mentioned first, sweet in the mouth, but later when digested, it becomes bitter in John's stomach (Rev 10:10). The reception of the message was sweet, but as John actually proclaimed it, he as Ezekiel may have experienced the bitterness of his task (see Rev 9:12; 11:14).[85]

The cause of the bitterness for both Ezekiel and John is easily determined because of the stated woes. But what of the sweetness? Jeremiah confesses that the mere reception of God's word is a joy and delight, no matter what its content was (Jer 15:16-17).[86] In addition, the psalmist proclaims that because the law of God revives the soul and his ordinances bring joy to the heart, they are more precious than gold and sweeter than honey (Ps 19:7-10). Thus the sweetness could represent the joy of the task of being God's spokesman as well as the joy that results from the wisdom and knowledge that the word gives.[87] The bitterness that follows results then from the opposite effects that the message of woe causes.[88] With this interpretation the sweetness represents the joy of the task and of the knowledge that belongs to the prophet, while the bitterness results from the message that he proclaims, which bitterness is experienced by both the prophet and his hearers.

A second possible interpretation is that of the diverse nature and character of the contents of the prophet's message. The message itself is both sweet and bitter (bitter-sweet) because of its contents.[89] The contents disclose both judgment and mercy, and as a result both the prophet and his hearers experience sorrow and joy. This diverse nature of the contents is certainly true of both Ezekiel and John.[90] Because of the woes in both instances (Ezek 2:9-10; Rev 9:12; 10:9; 11:14), the bitterness of the message is quite clear, for both the prophet and his audience. But it is not so clear that the sweetness results from the mercy side of the message. It may be that sweetness here represents

only the joyful experience of the prophet at the initial reception of his mission and does not address itself to the joy of the hearers - though of course they would in turn have such joy if this was the result from the message.

Whatever interpretation one accepts, it seems clear that the prophet at his commissioning initially experiences joy as he receives the message he is to proclaim. But as he digests the message and some of its long-term effects, he experiences bitterness from the woes proclaimed. The emphasis is on the prophet. As he carries out his mission, he will experience both joy and sorrow. He knows from the outset that his mission will be one that is both judgment and mercy, and that as a result he will experience both joy and sorrow.

The Command to Prophesy

The entire vision of the commission angel, as well as its third part, the investiture of John, is concluded with the command that it was necessary for John to prophesy again to peoples, nations, tongues and many kings (Rev 10:11). The command is introduced by the plural, "they say" (λέγουσιν). The plural is difficult to understand.[91] Most likely it is "an indefinite plural."[92] It could refer to the voice from heaven (Rev 10:4, 8), or to the voice of the angel himself - as in v. 9. A third possible source could be that of the entire heavenly court, in particular that of the angelic host as pictured in Rev 4:8-11; 5:8-9.[93] However, the source of the voice is not obvious and therefore not pertinent.[94]

The command is given that John must prophesy again, which suggests a previous prophecy. But John has received no earlier command to prophesy, rather he is instructed to write what he saw and witnessed (Rev 1:2, 11). Nonetheless, what he is to write is called a prophecy (Rev 1:3), so that it can be said that he has already prophesied in what he has recorded.[95] Depending on where one divides Revelation, at chapter 11 or 12,[96] the first part would be that which John prophesied previously. The second revelatory part, chapters 11 or 12 to 22, would be what he is now to prophesy. The audience of the first part of John's prophecy are the seven churches (Rev 1:11). The audience, however, of the second part is to be all nations and tongues, as well as their rulers (Rev 10:11). Consequently, each part has its own audience.[97]

The first investiture of John was for the purpose of the seven churches (Rev 1:9-20). The object of his second investiture is that of all nations (Rev 10:11). His prophetic mission to all nations recalls that of Jeremiah (1:10; 46-51) and of Ezekiel (25-32). Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied to Israel and then to the nations. So John in Revelation first prophesies to the seven churches and then to all the nations. The audience to which John is now commissioned to prophesy is universal and inclusive. It is described as "peoples, nations, tongues, and kings (Rev 10:11)." This particular description occurs seven times in Revelation, but with one difference. In Rev 10:11 John has "kings" in place of "clans."[98] Possibly here John has substituted "kings"

for "clans" because later in Rev 17:9-12 kings are mentioned and singled out for the prominent role they play.[99]

In Revelation this universal audience depicted in its fourfold enumeration is the object of God's redemptive activity (Rev 5:9), but they are also subjected to the oppression of the beast from the sea (Rev 13:7). This fourfold enumeration also designates the great crowd which has been translated and now stands before the heavenly throne (Rev 7:9-17), and those on earth who are subjugated by the harlot (Rev 17:15). A use of this enumeration that is akin to that of Rev 10:11 is the reference of Rev 14:6 which pictures an angel flying in heaven. The angel has a message which is to be proclaimed on earth.[100] And finally in Rev 11:9 this enumeration is used to describe all those who view the bodies of the two martyred witnesses of God as they lay in the street. From these seven occurrences of this fourfold description it is clear that the author wishes to designate with this phrase the whole of the human race. John is commissioned by the angel to prophesy to all humanity.

The δεῖ ("it is necessary") of Rev 10:11 not only emphasizes the obligation and importance of the proclamation of the message to all nations,[101] it also may point to the urgency of doing it - as if to say, "It must be done now." This understanding is suggested by the fact that this same word is connected with ἐν τάχει ("quickly, without delay") at both the beginning of Revelation (1:1) and at the end (22:6). In both instances it states with regard to the message of Revelation "what things are necessary to come about quickly."[102]

Whatever is to be revealed and what has been revealed must come about quickly.[103] It is within this broader context that the word is given to John. He must prophesy because of the near termination of time when everything will be accomplished. For not only will the events happen quickly (Rev 1:1; 22:6), but also Jesus Christ who dominates the events will come quickly (Rev 22:7, 12, 20; cf. 1:1; 22:6) in order that the reign of God and his Christ might begin (Rev 11:14-15).[104]

The δεῖ may also indicate that it is God's will that the contents of the message of the scroll be carried out. That δεῖ may carry this sense can be discerned from Rev 20:3 where it is said that after the thousand years it is "necessary" that the dragon be released for a short time. Here the δεῖ points out that "Satan must in the ordering of God be released" as a part of the culmination of all things (cf. Rev 11:5; 17:10).[105] This usage of δεῖ as an indicator of God's will is not infrequent in the NT. It is typical of Luke. For example, in Luke 24:26-27 it says that according to Moses and the prophets it was "necessary" for Christ to suffer and to enter into his glory (cf. Mark 8:31; 9:11).[106] Consequently, the fact that the voice from heaven tells John to take the scroll from the angel and to proclaim its contents to all nations (Rev 10:8, 11) demonstrates it is God's will that this be done. The δεῖ in verse eleven indicates not only the obligation of this commission, but also that it is what God desires and wills.[107]

Summary and Conclusion

In chapter three (p. 45) three elements were listed which make up the investiture of Rev 10: the commissioning angel; the attending divine phenomena; and the investiture of the prophet. It was stated further that a tradition of such commissioning angels existed which John may well have known and used (see chap. 3, pp. 125-30). That the angel of Rev 10 is a commissioning angel within this tradition can now be proposed as a certainty. Of course, the three elements of investiture are also within that tradition.

However, while John knew this tradition and used it as a model, nevertheless, he was quite free in his adaptation. John's angel is a creation of his own artistic imagination, for he was not dominated by his sources. Nowhere in this commissioning tradition does an angel appear portrayed like that of Rev 10. The gigantic proportions, the cloud and rainbow are unique. Even where items of his appearance can be traced within the tradition, as the sun-like face and the pillar-like legs of fire, John gives them new and different dimensions. On the other hand, in the scroll as a metaphorical image John comes very close to duplicating his source - even here he connects the bitterness directly with the scroll which is different from his source.

Perhaps the most unique feature of John's angel is that he represents not only God but also Jesus Christ. From the angel's appearance it is evident that he is acting under the authority of God as he stands in for Christ.[108] The cloud suggests that the angel is enveloped by the majestic authority of God,

and the rainbow-like halo demonstrates the covenant of God's mercy. The sun-like face points to both the radiant glory of God and Jesus Christ. In Rev 1:16 Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, with his sun-lit face radiates the glory of God and can be compared to the Shekinah in the OT by which God signified his presence among his people.[109] In Rev 10 the angel now represents the radiant glory of both God and Jesus Christ as he stands in for Christ.

The angel who represents God and stands in for Jesus Christ commissions John to prophesy to all nations. His fiery-like stance as he straddles the earth presents an awesome and dominating appearance, indicative of the importance and universal scope of his mission. His lion-like voice, attended by the voices of the seven thunders, commands attention for his godly role as he acts in the place of Christ and commissions John.

NOTES

[1]Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 414-29.

[2]Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:260) while not giving a division of the chapter does agree that v. 1 contains the description of the angel.

[3]The appearance of heavenly figures of gigantic size can be seen in some of the apocalypses and gospels. Compare the two huge angels of 2 Enoch whose faces were like the shining sun (1:4-5); and the two young men (angels?) at Jesus' tomb whose heads reached into heaven in the Gospel of Peter (9:35-36) - Christ himself was even taller, for his head surpassed the heavens (10:39-40). Akin to the above is the eagle of Ezra's vision (4 Ezra 11:1) whose wings spread over the whole earth.

[4]The only figure of a gigantic dimension is that of the image or statue of Nebuchadnezzar in Dan 3:1. Possibly the angel of the Lord before Balaam's donkey (Num 22:22-27) and the angel of the Lord who slew Sennacherib's army (2 Kgs 19:35-36; Isa 37:36-37; 2 Chr 32:21) could have in one's imagination been thought of as large, but no such description or hint of this is given. In rabbinic theology Adam before the fall was thought to be of gigantic size. Adam was said to have reached from one end of the world to the other. But when Adam sinned, God laid his hand on him and diminished him (Sanh. 38b).

[5]For example, in Hab 3:6 it is said that when God stands up, he shakes the earth, or in Ps 18:9 Yahweh is said to spread apart the heavens (see also Zech 14:3-4). But even these references are rare. It seems that the biblical authors did not describe God or angelic heavenly figures in colossal and gigantic terms. Even when referring to God in colossal-like and awesome terms, it is in reference to his holiness or power (e.g., Ps 68:32-35). One could of course imagine that the heavenly vision of God and his glory together with angels could be thought of in terms of the colossal. But again no such descriptions or descriptive adjectives are used (e.g., Isa 6:1-8; Ezek 1:25-28). The earliest descriptions of angels of gigantic size evidently are those of 2 Enoch and the Book of Elkesai (see n. 9 below).

[6]Works that contain such are 2 Enoch and 4 Ezra, which are dated near the end of the first century (Charlesworth, Old Testament Psuedepigrapha, 1:94-97, 520); the Book of Elkesai, dated around A.D. 100 (see n. 9 below); and the Gospel of Peter, dated in the middle of the second century (Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha, 1:180.

[7]See n. 6 above. Revelation is also dated near the end of the first century (Swete, Apocalypse, xcix-cvi and Mounce, Revelation, 31-36).

[8]For references see Ford, Revelation, 158; and Friedlander, Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer.

[9]For a description and references see chap. 3, pp. 58-59 and nn. 54 and 55.

[10]The message from the angel contained in the scroll was the proclamation of a new forgiveness of sins. The message also proclaimed a second baptism which conferred the assurance of the seven-fold witness of heaven, water, the holy spirits, the angels of prayer, olive oil, salt, and the earth (Hippolytus, Philosophumena, ix.13; ix.15).

[11]However, there could have been a Jewish source, now lost, independent of John's Revelation. In rabbinic thought of a later period the stature of angels became enormous (Ford, Revelation, 158). For example, see in text concerning the angel Sandalfon (p. 143).

[12]For further information on this angel see EncJud 14:827-28. For example, he is likened to Metatron and appears to be above him.

[13]Frederick W. Danker, Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study (St. Louis: Concordia, 1970), 208-209; The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, ed. George Arthur Butterick (1962), 4:513-15.

[14]Allo (L'Apocalypse, 130) says that the colossal size of the angel corresponds to the greatness of the angel's mission (see also Swete, Apocalypse, 127 and Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 415). In the case of Sandalfon the size may point to the fact that he was the intercessor of the prayers of God's people. Because his posture reached from the earth to God in heaven, he could thus offer prayers to God which originated on earth.

[15]The two huge angels of 2 Enoch (1:4-5) take Enoch to heaven where he was shown visions of the various stages of heaven.

[16]Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:260) emphasizes the smallness of the book and says that "in Classical Greek it means a very small book."

[17]On this discussion see Collins, Combat Myth, 21-32. Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:260) maintains that because βιβλαρίδιον is used in Rev 10:2, its contents "should naturally embrace very much less" than the contents of the seven-sealed scroll. Swete (Apocalypse, 126-27) agrees when he says that the "little open scroll contained but a fragment of the great purpose which was in the Hand of God" (see also Ford, Revelation, 158; Allo, L'Apocalypse, 139 and Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 416. It should be noted that in both Rev 10:2 and 10:8 variant readings show the uncertainty of the scribes as to what were the true readings, whether in both instances it was βιβλαρίδιον or βιβλίον. Textual scholars today believe, however, that the manuscript evidence supports the reading βιβλαρίδιον in 10:2 and βιβλίον in 10:8 - also in Rev 10:9 and 10:10 the better reading is βιβλαρίδιον (see Hoskier, Concerning the Text, 266-78 and Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament [London and New York: United Bible Societies, 1971], 745-46). A side note: we are interpreting both the βιβλαρίδιον and βιβλίον as scrolls (book-rolls) and not as codices, for most scholars take them as such (see Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:137; Swete, Apocalypse, 75; Ford, Revelation, 84; Bousset, Offenbarung, 254 and Allo, L'Apocalkpse, 75).

[18]Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 278) does, however, believe that the contents of both scrolls are identical. See pp. 20-22 and nn. 85, 86 of chap. 2.

[19]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:260.

[20]Collins, Combat Myth, 25-32.

[21]Allo, L'Apocalypse, 139 (see also Swete, Apocalypse, 126-27).

[22]Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 415-17. Feuillet believes that the contents of the angel's scroll are smaller than the contents of the seven-sealed scroll in the same way that the NT is smaller than the OT - he uses this example because he believes that Rev 1-9 (the contents of the seven-sealed scroll) are directed to the Jewish people, the Israelites of the OT, while Rev 10-22 (the contents of the angel's scroll) are directed to the Christians. There is an overlapping, namely chapters 10 and 11, because the contents of the smaller, opened scroll come out of the contents of the larger, sealed scroll. Also, the smaller scroll interprets the larger, that is, the message of Jesus begins in the OT and also interprets it.

[23]While it is not stated that God gave the scroll to the angel, elsewhere in Revelation the contents of a scroll that is to be revealed come from God or from Jesus Christ. In Rev 1:11 the contents of the scroll that John is to send to the seven churches come from God and Jesus Christ through an angel (Rev 1:1-4, 11). The seven-sealed scroll which Jesus Christ is to open and reveal comes from God (Rev 5:1, 5).

[24]Swete, Apocalypse, 127; Mounce, Revelation, 208. Ford (Revelation, 164-66), on the other hand, believes that the ritual usage of the scroll in Num 5:12-21 is "perhaps the key to the interpretation of both Ezekiel's scroll and the one in Rev 10."

[25]See Zech 5:1-4 and Isa 29:11. In Jub. at the conclusion of the description of God's appearance to Jacob in a night vision, an angel descends from heaven with seven tablets which contained revelations of all that would happen to Jacob and his sons (32:21-22).

[26]Cooke, (Ezekiel, 35), because of the scroll, believes that Ezekiel's manner of receiving inspiration was indirect, while in contrast Jeremiah's was direct - God spoke directly to Jeremiah by putting his words into his mouth through the touch of his hand and not by way of a scroll (Jer 1:9).

[27]In both Jewish and Roman civil law scrolls were used as legal documents in wills and as proof of ownership (see Jer 32:10-14); John M. Court, Myth and History in the Book of Revelation [London: SPCK, 1979], 55-56).

[28]See n. 26 above.

[29]See Ezek 16:60-63; 18:30-32; 20:40-44; 40-48; Rev 11:11-13; 14:1-5; 19:1-21; 21:1-22:5. For a discussion on this problem with regard to Ezekiel see Cooke, Ezekiel, 35.

[30]Swete (Apocalypse, 127) therefore mentions for the first time the size of the angel in connection with his comment on the placement of his feet. Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:258-62) on the other hand does not refer to the size of the angel. Ford (Revelation, 158) refers to the "enormous" size of the angel after having commented on the "feet like pillars of fire."

[31]Mounce, Revelation, 208; Ford (Revelation, 162). Swete (Apocalypse, 178) says that the placement of the angel's feet also indicates the universal scope of his mission (cf. Rev 14:6).

[32]Ford, Revelation, 162. See also Swete, Apocalypse, 127. Usually together with the sea and land, the heavens are also mentioned (e.g., Exod 20:4, 11; Pss 69:34; 146:6).

[33]Whatever is placed under the feet is under the dominion of the person. See pp. 110-11 of chap. 4 and nn. 145 and 146.

[34]In the case of God it does indicate ownership by right of creation (Job 9:8-9).

[35]This is indicated by verse seven. The mission of the angel will be dominant up to the completion of the mystery of God as signaled by the angel with the seventh trumpet (Rev 11:15-19).

[36]Swete (Apocalypse, 161) says, "The picture of the Dragon halting on the seashore to call up his terrible ally is one of the highest interest, and forms a real feature in the revelation. . . ." Ford (Revelation, 210) asks, "Did the dragon deliberately summon the monsters to assist him in fighting against the woman and her offspring?" For a discussion on the two beasts, in particular their literary sources, see Ford, Revelation, 217-30 and D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), 123-25.

[37]The right as opposed to the left, whether foot, hand, side, etc., in both secular and religious cultures always indicated the stronger, the more blessed, the more righteous (Walter Grundmann, Theological Dictionary of NT, 2:123-25).

[38]In three additional instances where land and sea are mentioned together with heaven, heaven is mentioned first, then the land and the sea (Rev 5:13; 10:6; 14:7).

[39]By juxtaposition alone one would literarily expect a reference to the beast from the abyss which makes war with the witnesses (Rev 11:7), but instead the author appositionally seems to refer to the two beasts of Rev 13. However, the beast from the abyss (Rev 11:7; see also 17:8) and the beast from the sea (Rev 13:1) may be one and the same, for in ancient myth the terms abyss and sea are often used for the same chaotic source (see Swete, Apocalypse, 161 and Caird, Commentary on Revelation, 161). This is reflected in the LXX where the sea is often used in parallelism with abyss (Isa 51:10; Job 28:14; Ps 32:7). For the identification of the beast of the abyss and the beast from the sea and the mythical background of the two terms see Collins, Combat Myth, 165-66 & 170-72. Collins states, for example, "In other words, to thērion to anabainon ek tēs abyssou (11:7) and ek tēs thalassēs thērion anabainon (13:1) are equivalent for all intents and purposes in a mythic context." If this identification is accepted, then the warfare conducted by the beast from the abyss against the two witnesses is the same warfare conducted by the beast from the sea - aided also by the beast from the land (Rev 13:11-12), both are then appositional parallels.

[40]On the identification of the beast of Rev 15:2 see Swete, Apocalypse, 194; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 2:28.

[41]The word for "finished" in Rev 16:17 is γέγονεν. In Rev 21:5-6 in the midst of the description of the new heaven and earth and the new Jerusalem (Rev 21:1-4, 9-27) God on his heavenly throne says that he makes all things new and that all things are finished or have come to pass (γέγοναν).

[42]Isbon T. Beckwith (The Apocalypse of John [New York: Macmillan, 1919; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], 669) says that the seventh trumpet (Rev 11:15-19) "ushers in the movements which are to follow to the end" as depicted in Rev 15 and 16 and as anticipated in Rev 10:7.

[43]Swete, Apocalypse, 127.

[44]The remainder of the twenty occurrences are used only of heavenly figures, with the one exception, that of a bird of prey which cries out the three woes with a great voice (Rev 8:13). Of the heavenly figures, a great voice comes from angels (Rev 16:17), from the presence of God (his heavenly sanctuary, 16:1, his throne, 21:3, or from heaven, 11:12), and from the Son of Man, Jesus Christ (1:10). God himself is never described as speaking with a great voice. Rather, it is always an angel or an unidentified voice from the heavenly presence of God.

[45]For example, God is said to thunder with a great voice (1 Sam 7:10), and Potiphar's wife cries out with a great voice (Gen 39:14).

[46]The lion is mentioned in the Bible more than any other animal. It was the symbol of kingship, majesty, strength and courage (Prov 22:13; 26:13; 30:30; 1 Kgs 10:19-20). The epithet, "the lion from the tribe of Judah," is most likely based on Gen 49:9, a passage which Judaism oftentimes applied to the Messiah, especially later Judaism (Ford, Revelation, 85-86).

[47]Besides the references to angels and the lamb, the designation, lion, is attributed to the first winged creature at the throne of God which was like a lion (Rev 4:7); the locust-like creatures from the abyss whose teeth were like those of a lion (Rev 9:8); the horses of the host gathered at the Euphrates whose heads were like the heads of lions (Rev 9:17); and the beast from the sea whose mouth was like the mouth of a lion (Rev 13:2). In Gos. Pet. a great voice came from heaven at the resurrection of Jesus (9:35-36; 10:41), but the speaker of the voice is not identified.

[48]In the literary creation of the beast from the sea the author, John, combines features from the first three beasts of Dan 7:2-6. In Dan 7 there are four beasts, but no description is given of the fourth save that it had large iron teeth and was powerful and terrifying (v. 7). Like John's beast from the sea, all four beasts in Daniel came from the sea (7:3). Ford (Revelation, 220)

suggests that in combining features from the beasts of Daniel, the author of Revelation is reinterpreting Daniel and "offers a quasi-midrash" on Dan 7.

[49]The symbol of the lion is also used to picture a king's anger which is like a lion's roar (Prov 19:12; 20:2); a wicked man who rules over the poor (Prov 28:15; see also Sir 13:19). In addition, Israel is likened to a lion (Num 23:24; Ezek 19:1), as well as Judah (Gen 49:9); Gad (Deut 33:20); Dan (a lion's whelp, Deut 33:22); Pharaoh and Egypt (Ezek 32:2) and Judas Maccabaeus (1 Macc 3:4).

[50]In 4 Ezra the Messiah is described as a roaring lion (11:37; 12:31). The date of 4 Ezra is put between A.D. 100 and 120 by most scholars. The Christian additions are dated during the third century. For a discussion on the date see Charlesworth, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, 1:520. From the netherworld the devil is also described as a roaring lion seeking its prey (1 Pet 5:8).

[51]Ford, Revelation, 162.

[52]Swete, Apocalypse, 127.

[53]Whether the voice was inarticulate as Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:261) suggests, perhaps cannot be determined. But the likelihood that it may have been articulate is suggested by v. 6 where it is stated that the angel swore an oath that was intelligible to John.

[54]Swete, Apocalypse, 127. Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:261) says, "Since the article is present here, the idea is clearly a familiar or current one."

[55]Several manuscripts, chief among which is Codex Sinaitucus (א), omit the article. A few others omit the "seven" (e.g., Papyrus 47). But the textual evidence for including both is strong. For all the evidence see Hoskier, Text of Apocalypse, 168 and Ford, Revelation, 159.

[56]Swete, Apocalypse, 127. For a review of the various interpretations of the seven thunders see Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:261-62 and Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 418.

[57]See Spitta, Offenbarung, 346-40 and Ford, Revelation, 163. But see also Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:261) who does not think Ps 29 is in the background.

[58]The Psalm states that the voice of the Lord over the waters is powerful, majestic, breaks the cedars of Lebanon, strikes like lightning, shakes the

desert, and twists the oaks. Overall the Psalm describes the royal and divine power and authority of the word of the Lord by means of the seven-fold voice of God and the imagery of thunder connected with it.

[59]The voice of Yahweh is also likened to a thunderstorm with flashes of lightning and hail and thunder claps and bolts - together with a cloudburst of rain (Isa 30:30). In this case the total effect of the thunderstorm is to portray and emphasize the majestic voice of God.

[60]In rabbinic theology the seven-fold thunderous voice of God was associated with the giving of the Law at Sinai (Ford, Revelation, 159, 163; Spitta, Offenbarung, 346-47;. Ginzberg, Legends of the Jews, 3:97; 4:39 and Theodor H. Gaster, "Psalm 29," Jewish Quarterly Review 37 [1946-47]: 55-56). Also according to rabbinic theology, after the people of Israel returned from the exile in Babylon, there would be no earthquakes, storms and thunders because God would bless the land (Hul. 86a). The absence of thunder indicated God's favor.

[61]In this reference to John the voice of God, thunder and the voice of the angel are interrelated, almost as if they were cognates or congenerics. In rabbinical literature the בַּת קוֹל "the daughter of a voice," was associated with the voice of God. According to the Tosaphist on Sanh. 11a the בַּת קוֹל was not itself the sound of the voice of God, "but another sound went out of this sound (God's voice), as when a man strikes a blow with violence and one hears a second noise which goes out from it (the blow) in the distance. One would hear such a sound; therefore it is called 'Daughter of sound'" (Leon Morris, The Gospel according to John [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971], 596, n. 80). According to this definition the בַּת קוֹל was like the echo of the sound, the sound or echo of the voice of God. In the reference in John 12:28-29 the thunder could possibly be likened to the בַּת קוֹל. However, to be such it would have to be thought of as the offspring or echo of the sound of God's voice and word (Brooke Foss Westcott, The Gospel According to John [1908; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989], 2:126-27). For a more complete discussion on the Bat Kol see Encyclopedia Judaica, 4:324-25; Alexander Guttmann, "The Significance of Miracles for Talmudic Judaism," Hebrew Union College Annual 20 (1947): 363-406. The possibility that an angel could be connected with the Bat Kol is evidenced from Sota 33a where it is said that the Bat Kol was taken at times to be the voice of an angel.

[62]Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 417-28.

[63]See n. 60 above.

[64]The number seven was used as a common Semitic phenomenon in the OT to suggest a complete whole or a complete time (as the seven days of creation). While the number seven is not used in the OT with regard to the voice and revelation of God, when it is so used in later Judaism it was natural to interpret such a seven-fold voice as a complete and final word at that given moment. John seems to be following this later tradition within Judaism. On the number seven, its cultic and religious background, see Karl H. Rengstorf, Theological Dictionary of NT, 2:627-35.

[65]See n. 60 above. There is also a tradition that God spoke the Law to Moses through the agency of angels (Acts 7:38, 53; Gal 3:19; Heb 2:2).

[66]"Every revelation of God's purposes . . . 'is bitter-sweet,' disclosing judgment as well as mercy" (Swete, Apocalypse, 131). This is also true of the contents of Revelation in which judgment is interspersed with mercy and redemption (e.g., 11:1-13).

[67]Their voices were not some special speech of heaven or of angels (Bousset, Offenbarung, 308).

[68]According to Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:262) the action of sealing (σφραγίζειν) is equivalent to, "Do not write (μὴ γράψῃς)." In Rev 22:10 just the opposite command is given to John, where Μὴ σφραγίσῃς means γράψῃς.

[69]Swete (Apocalypse, 128) observes that this phrase is from Dan 12:4, "but application of the metaphor to unwritten utterances is a bold innovation." While Daniel is not to publish what had already been written down, John is told not to write down what he was hearing - let alone to publish. Daniel is told, κάλυψον τὰ προστάγματα καὶ σφράγισαι τὸ βιβλίον (LXX) - Theodotion has, ἔμφραξον τοὺς λόγους. . . . See Dan 8:26 and Isa 8:16 for comparable prohibitions to publish that which had been already written down.

[70]According to Swete (Ibid.) "the position of αὐτὰ is emphatic, cf. xi.2 μὴ αὐτὴν μετρήσῃς." Never are their voices to be revealed to anyone (see also Ford, Revelation, 159).

[71]Speculation has evolved into various interpretations. One such is that the seven thunders contain another heptat of revelations similar to the seven seals, the seven trumpets and the seven bowls, but for some unknown reason John did not extend Revelation by a further such heptad. Another interpretation is that the seven thunders spoke voices that were not lawful for earthly man to hear and understand, similar to 2 Cor 12:4, and so John was forbidden to make the attempt (see Swete, Apocalypse, 128; Allo, L'Apocalypse, 140;

Bousset, Offenbarung, 308-09; Spitta, Offenbarung, 347 and Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:261-62).

[72]Whether one receives the ὅτε or the ὅσα as the preferred reading could alter the interpretation of the verse. The manuscript evidence is fairly evenly divided (Papyrus 47 and Codex Sinaiticus support the ὅσα while Codices Alexandrinus and Ephraemi Rescriptus support the ὅτε, among the major witnesses). The reading of ὅσα would suggest that the thunders had actually said something, while the reading of ὅτε would perhaps only say that they were beginning to say something. However one interprets the voices of the thunders, ὅσα puts the emphasis on the substance of what they said, and in contrast the ὅτε on the time element.

[73]Swete (Apocalypse, 129) believes that the object and contents of the oath were the words concerning the time, words that were spoken by the angel.

[74]In ancient and modern times the essential purpose of an oath is to affirm or confirm. The basic meaning of ὀμνύω is "to grasp firmly" in the sense of grasping firmly a sacred object, with the idea of linking assurance with a sacred material. In antiquity swearing or the taking of an oath was usually done by the gods in order to call upon them as witnesses for confirmation of the truthfulness of the one swearing. For the above and for references see Johannes Schneider, Theological Dictionary of NT, 5:176-85.

[75]The most common interpretation is that "time shall no longer be," in the sense of, "There will be no more delay" (Swete, Apocalypse, 129; Ford, Revelation, 160; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:263 and Bousset, Offenbarung, 310). A similar expression is found in Hab 2:3, where it is said that a revelation awaits its appointed time as it speaks of the end, and that it will not prove false for "it will certainly come and will not delay." The statement of time in Rev 10:6 may be an allusion to Dan 12:7 which foretells a "completion of all things." This foretelling of the "completion" is preceded by an oath when the angelic figure dressed in linen lifts his hands to heaven and swears by the one who lives forever. With regard to the angel of Rev 10 and his mission, the time element may indicate that there will be no delay in the completion of his mission.

[76]There is no consensus of the interpretation of "the mystery of God." Bousset (Offenbarung, 310-11) believes that it refers to the defeat and casting out of Satan from heaven by Michael as described in Rev 12:7-8 (see also Allo, L'Apocalypse, 141-42). Swete (Apocalypse, 130) suggests that it probably refers to "the whole purpose of God in the evolution of human history." Vischer (cited by Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:265) believes it is the birth of the Messiah. Charles (Ibid., 265-66) concurs with Swete. This whole purpose of God is revealed to his servants, the prophets

and therefore is not really a secret. God's purpose is both sorrowful and joyful - as portrayed in Rev 11-20. And this purpose of God which runs through all of human history is to be consummated without delay at the sounding of the trumpet of the seventh angel (Rev 10:7). The word itself designates the eschatological design and plan of God over all of humanity and the course of world history (Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 419).

[77]The right hand is mentioned in Isa 62:8. In the other references just God's hand is spoken of. On the various symbolical uses of the right hand to express God's power and favor, etc. see Walter Grundmann, Theological Dictionary of NT, 2:37-40.

[78]In Gen 22:15-16 it is the angel of the Lord, identified as Yahweh, who speaks the oath and swears by himself.

[79]While both the angel of Dan 12:7 and the angel of Rev 10:5-7 swear with regard to completion of events within a stated time, this does not mean that they had reference to the same time or to the same events (see Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:263). While the model for John's action of the angel's oath can be seen to be that of Daniel's angelic figure, John, nevertheless, uses his source within his own creative literary intent. John's angel lifts only his right hand to heaven, not both. The angel of Rev 10 swears by him who lives forever and who is also the creator of all life, while Daniel's angel swears only by the one who lives forever - no mention of creation is made (see Charles, Ibid., 1:263, 265-66; Bousset, Offenbarung, 309-12).

[80]Of course the amount of correspondence led to the conclusion that Daniel 12:7 was John's principal source (see Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 420, n. 2).

[81]Swete (Apocalypse, 130) says, "The angel does not give the book but invites the Seer to take it, and thus to show at once his fitness for the task before him, and his readiness to undertake it."

[82]Jeremiah (15:16) states that the words of God came to him and he ate them. But no metaphorical eating of a scroll is described.

[83]Probably it was a hand of one of the four winged creatures described in Ezek 1:4-21, for they had the hands of a man (1:8). Also in Ezek 10:7 one of the cherubim by means of his hand gives fire to the angelic figure dressed in linen.

[84]In Jer 15:16-17 the prophet confesses that when he ate the words of God, they were a "joy and a delight." But then he says that only indignation followed, or as Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:267) puts it, "Thou hast

given me nought but wrath to announce." John's experience agrees with both that of Ezekiel and Jeremiah in that the scroll first tastes sweet in the mouth, but later when digested, it is bitter in the stomach, that is, bitter experiences and results follow as he proclaimed the laments and the judgment, illustrated, for example, by the suffering of the two witnesses (Rev 11:7-10).

[85]The fifth, sixth and seventh angels of the trumpets are each equated with the three woes that are announced and described in Rev 9:1-21 and in 11:1-14. These three woes surround the vision of the commissioning angel of Rev 10. Interesting to note that when the angel gives John the scroll, he speaks of the bitterness of the stomach first, and then of the sweetness in the mouth (v. 9). But when John actually eats the scroll, he notes first the sweetness of the mouth, and then after digesting it, the bitterness of the stomach.

[86]See n. 84 above. This experience of joy, however, was not always necessarily the case. Fear and dread could just as well have been the initial experience (see Isa 6:5; Jonah 1:1-3).

[87]Swete (Apocalypse, 131) aptly describes this joy when he says, "The beauty of the revelation, the joy of insight and foresight which it afforded, the promise it held of greater joys to come, are well expressed by this metaphor."

[88]According to Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:268) this interpretation of the sweetness and bitterness is supported by most expositors.

[89]For citations see Henry M. Morris, The Record of Revelation (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House; San Diego: Creation-Life, 3d repr. ed., 1985), 185-86 and Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:268.

[90]For examples, see Ezek 2:3-7; 3:14-15; Rev 11:1-13.

[91]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:269.

[92]Caird, Commentary on Revelation, 217. See also Allo, L'Apocalypse, 142. Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:269) says that such an idiom is sometimes found in Hebrew and frequently in Biblical Aramaic (see Dan 4:22, 23, 29; 5:20, 21; 7:12, 26 and Ezra 6:5).

[93]In Rev 16:15 there is a similar indefinite statement in connection with the plural βλέπωσιν. The subject is again not stated, but the context suggests the heavenly court as a possibility. In apocalyptic thought the heavenly court can itself play a role (see Dan 7:26; Zech 3:3-5).

[94]Swete, Apocalypse, 131.

[95]L. Morris, Revelation, 143.

[96]See p. 145 and nn. 19 & 20.

[97]Feuillet ("Le chapitre X," 415-17) believes the first revelatory part is addressed to the Jews, the chosen people, and the second to the whole of humanity. See also Allo, L'Apocalypse, 142-43.

[98]This particular classification appears in Rev 5:9; 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6 and 17:15. In six of the seven occurrences the same four words appear in the singular or the plural, nation (ἔθνος), clan (φυλή), people (λαός) and tongue (γλῶσσα) - not always, however, in the same order. The single exception is Rev 10:11 where the word king (βασιλεύς) has taken the place of clan. Though the above classification is the most numerous, it is not the only one that John uses. For example, in Rev 6:15 the enumeration of "kings of the earth, officials, military leaders, the wealthy, influential people, slaves and free men" appears. However, this particular classification seems to portray the economic and social status of society, while the four-fold enumeration above portrays the ethnic and natural makeup of the human race (see Swete, Apocalypse, 94).

[99]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:269.

[100]There are parallels between the two angels of Rev 10:1 and 14:6. Both are introduced as "another angel," and cry out with a loud voice (10:3; 14:7). Both have a message to be proclaimed to all peoples. And in both instances the message is related to the coming judgment (10:6-7; 14:7). The character of both the messages of Rev 10:7 and 14:6-7 are defined by "the impending end of the world and of the final judgment, which, while it is a message of good tidings to the faithful, constitutes for all nations a last summons to repentance" (Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 2:12). Feuillet ("Le chapitre X," 425) believes that the small scroll of Rev 10:2 and the eternal gospel of 14:6 are one and the same. Because of this identification, he then concludes that the angels of Rev 10:1 and 14:6 are the same angel. Whether the two messages are identical or not, they both have to do with the same events preceding the judgment of God at the end (see Bousset, Offenbarung, 383-84). But that the two angels are the same is most unlikely, for they have nothing in common with regard to their appearances.

[101]See Walter Grundmann, Theological Dictionary of NT, 2:21-25.

[102]See Swete, Apocalypse, 2; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:6 and Bousset, Offenbarung, 182 for how the ἐν τάχει influences the entire message of Revelation.

[103]While the substantive, τάχος, appears only twice (Rev 1:1; 22:6), the adverb, ταχύ, appears six times. But since the construction, ἐν τάχει, in Rev

1:1 and 22:6 serves as an adverb, this concept, "quickly," occurs eight times. Not only are the events revealed to John to come about quickly (Rev 1:1; 22:6), also Christ says that he is coming quickly (2:16; 3:11; 22:7, 12, 20). In the remaining occurrence of the word (Rev 11:14), the third woe, described in Rev 11:15-19, is to come about quickly. This third woe, which is introduced by the seventh trumpet angel, describes the inauguration of the kingdom of God and his Christ (Allo, L'Apocalypse, 168-9; Bousset, Offenbarung, 331).

[104]As Swete (Apocalypse, 141) says, whenever the ἔρχεσθαι τάχυ appears, "it seems always to refer, more or less directly, to the Parousia or to events leading up to it.

[105]Beckwith, Apocalypse, 739. Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:6) says in connection with Rev 1:1 that "the δεῖ denotes not the merely hasty consummation of things, but the absolutely sure fulfillment of the divine purpose." This "fulfillment of the divine purpose" he also sees in the δεῖ of Rev 20:3 (Ibid., 2:143).

[106]Another example is Acts 26:9. Here the δεῖ suggests that "Paul was doing what he believed to be the will of God" (O'Toole, Acts 26, 47).

[107]Swete (Apocalypse, 131-32) says that the δεῖ "recalls the commission given to the prophets of Israel," especially to Jeremiah (1:10) and Ezekiel (4:7). Mounce (Revelation, 217) says that δεῖ points to "a sense of divine compulsion in the charge given to John."

[108]While other angels in the tradition are described with regard to their appearance (e.g., the angel Eremiel of Apocalypse of Zephaniah, 6:11-17; and the angelic figures of 2 Enoch, 1:4-5), they represent only God.

[109]In Heb 1:3 Jesus Christ is described as the radiance or brightness of the glory of God. In 2 Cor 4:6 the light of God's glory is said to be seen in the face of Jesus Christ (see also John 1:14). In commenting on Heb 1:3 Philip E. Hughes (A Commentary on the Epistle of Hebrews [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977], 42) says, "This is nothing less than the essential glory of god himself, corresponding to the shekinah glory which in the Old Testament signified the very presence of God in the midst of his people." The word, shekinah (שְׁכִינָה, "dwelling," from שָׁכַן, "to dwell") does not appear in the OT. It is used in the Targums and rabbinic writings as a circumlocution for the OT idea of the presence of nearness of God to his people (Interpreter's Bible Dictionary, 4:317-19).

CHAPTER VI

THE ANGEL OF REVELATION 10

THE ANGEL OF JESUS CHRIST

In this chapter we will examine the uniqueness of the angel of Rev 10. In particular, his relationship with Jesus Christ will be determined to demonstrate the distinctive position that the angel fulfills in Revelation. Other angelic appearances will also be examined to discover if the angel of Rev 10 appears elsewhere. And finally, we will address the question of an angel Christology in Revelation.

Revelation displays a pantheon of angels acting in various mediating roles between God and man.[1] Within the various roles the most prevalent is that of mediating the word and revelation of God, a role in which several angels are involved.[2] Of these the angel of Rev 10 emerges as the most eminent and unique.[3] No other angel in Revelation is so singled out as this angel in his description and role. No other heavenly figure is so emblazoned with heraldic bearing and emblems or insignia as this angel, except Jesus Christ.

At the very beginning of Revelation we are told that the message of the book came to John through an angel, "The revelation of Jesus Christ which

God gave to him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John (Rev 1:1)." Despite the fact that several angels are used in varying capacities of mediation, a singular angel is spoken of in the prologue as a mediator (1:1). Again a singular angel is mentioned in the epilogue of Revelation (22:6-21).[4] In Rev 22:6 it is stated that God sent his angel to show to his people the contents of Revelation. And again in Rev 22:16 there is a similar statement, but this time it says that Jesus Christ sent his angel to witness to the churches the contents of the book. At both the beginning and end of Revelation a single angel is spoken of as a mediator of the message.

It is the proposition of this present study that the angel of Rev 10 is this angel mentioned in both the prologue and epilogue.[5] As such, he is the angel of Jesus Christ through whom the message is communicated to John. In addition, he serves as an angelic icon of the revelatory role of Jesus Christ in Revelation.

The Eminent Role of the Angel

Within the angelology of Revelation the angel of Rev 10 is unique with regard to both his position and appearance. In Rev 1:9-20 John is commissioned by Jesus Christ to communicate with the seven churches (v. 11). But in Rev 10 he is commissioned by an angel to be a prophet to the world. No other angel in Revelation plays such a leading role as this, the commissioning of John in his prophetic office to the world.

In the epilogue (Rev 22:6) the Lord God of the prophets sent his angel to reveal to his people what must happen quickly, that is, the contents of Revelation. Here there appears to be a connection between the prophetic office which is under the authority of God and the mediation of that office to humankind through an angel, the angel of God.[6] In Rev 10 an angel mediates that prophetic office in the investiture of John. While one can point to angels who are involved with John in a prophetic way, as is the angel of Rev 19:9-10,[7] they do not exhibit prophetic authority. Only the angel of Rev 10 commissions and commands John to proclaim prophetically the message of God to all nations.[8] Other angels, for example, the angel of Rev 19:9-10, instruct John to write or speak concerning a particular vision within the message of God, but never do they convey the message itself to John as does the angel of Rev 10. And only the angel of Rev 10 and his prophetic role pertain to the message that is to be delivered to the whole human race.

To enhance the position of the angel of Rev 10 as the commissioning mediator of the prophetic message, John depicts the angel with the marks or insignia of the authority and of the glory of God and Jesus Christ. No other angel is so pictured. In fact, John describes no other angel with regard to his presence or appearance.[9] They are important only in so far as they assist or attend John while he views the visions. Their personalities are of no account, and what matters is that John fastens his attention on the vision and message. It is the message that is important, not the presence of the angels who assist in

the interpretation of the message. And twice (Rev 19:10; 22:8) when John is impressed with the presence of the angel, possibly at the expense of the message, he is rebuked for so doing. In each case the angel tells John that he, the angel, is only a servant of the message and of the witnesses who proclaim it. But this is not so with the angel of Rev 10. He is not the servant of the message nor of those who are to proclaim it. He is above the message, for it is by his investiture that John is to proclaim it (Rev 10:8-11). He is not an attending angel within a vision; he is the vision through which John receives the message and the command and authority to proclaim it. Every part of his appearance, each mark of his heraldic authority, proclaims that he is the representative of God and Jesus Christ. He is the only angel so singled out by his lordly appearance. Is the angel of Rev 10 the angel of the prologue (Rev 1:1) and of the epilogue (Rev 22:6, 16) by which God and Christ mediate the revelation to John? There is only one other figure in Revelation who it could be, and that is Jesus Christ as he appears as the Son of Man.

The Angel of Revelation 10 and Jesus Christ

As was rehearsed in chapters four and five, the majestic appearance of the angel of Rev 10 suggests a comparison with Jesus Christ. Both the angel and Jesus, as the Son of Man, commission John to communicate a prophetic message (Rev 1:9-16; 10:10-11). Both are arrayed with insignia which indicate a heavenly and godly glory and authority.[10] However, both their

appearance and presence are dissimilar enough to suggest that the angel is not Jesus Christ. For example, while the angel has a rainbow-like halo on his head (Rev 10:1), the Son of Man's head and hair are white like snow and wool (Rev 1:14). The whiteness of the head mirrors the white hair of the Ancient of Days in the heavenly vision of Dan 7:9.[11] It indicates eternal agelessness of the Son of Man,[12] and that Jesus Christ as the Son of Man is to be venerated.[13] This token of deity the angel of Rev 10 does not bear. Instead, the angel bears a rainbow-like halo, a token of God's covenant under which the angel carries out his mission.[14] Thus the Son of Man is shown to have a standing before God that the angel does not have, for Jesus as the Son of Man shares with God the divine attribute of being eternal.[15] The angel on the other hand comes from heaven as a messenger under the heraldic badge of the halo, which suggests not a divine characteristic but rather a divine mission.

The insignia of the Son of Man also point to the fact that he is Lord of the church in the imagery of the seven lamps and stars (Rev 1:13, 16, 20),[16] and that he speaks to the church directly (Rev 2:1-3:21) as indicated by the sword of his mouth (Rev 1:16).[17] And when he does use a scroll to reveal the revelation of God to the church (Rev 5:1-5; 6:1-12; 8:1), he does so as the titleholder and master of the scroll and its message (Rev 5:6-10). The angel does not speak to the church. Rather, he mediates the scroll and its message by passing it on to John (Rev 10:2) in accord with the command from heaven (10:8). The angel does not even open the scroll as does the victorious lamb

(Rev 5:9-10; 6:1), for it is already open in his hand as he gives it to John (Rev 10:2). The message and the scroll do not belong to the angel, for he is only their deliverer. The message quite clearly comes from God as indicated by the seven thunders and the voice from heaven which accompany the angel (Rev 10:3-4,8).[18]

The Son of Man, Jesus Christ, stands before John as the conqueror of death and as the prince of life. He holds in his hand the key of death and the grave, and he identifies himself as the Living One (Rev 1:18).[19] With this title Jesus identifies himself with the God of Israel.[20] As God is the source of life, Jesus as the Living One from the dead, as the conqueror of death and the grave, is the prince of life who restores life with God (Rev 1:18; cf. John 5:26-20). In contrast the angel swears by the one who lives forever and who is the creator of all life (Rev 10:6), indicating that he is under the authority of the living God and not related to him as is Jesus.

While the two majestic heavenly figures of the Son of Man and the angel of Rev 10 are presented as commissioning figures of dominical dimension and dominant character, it is apparent that one excels the other. Though both commission John, the prophetic message that is given to John to write and proclaim belongs to Jesus Christ and not to the angel. The revelation is given to Jesus Christ by God to give to God's people. As stated in the prologue (Rev 1:1), the angel that Jesus uses is just a messenger, no more. The message does not belong to the angel. He is used to deliver the message to John,

but the origin of the message is not with the angel. Rather, it is with God and Jesus Christ. Jesus is the revelating mediator of the message. In addition, he is the object of much of the content of the revelatory message (Rev 1:1).[21] For while Revelation presents an angelology, the book is not about angels. Rather, it concerns itself with the reign of Jesus Christ (Rev 19:11-16; 22:20) and the victory of God's people over the forces of evil within that reign (Rev 7:9-17; 14:1-5). The angels, among whom is the angel of Rev 10, serve God and his people within this victorious reign of Christ (Rev 5:8-14; 7:1-8).

John's reaction as he stands before each figure also indicates the superiority of the Son of Man. Before Jesus, as the Son of Man, John is unable to stand. He falls to the ground as if dead (Rev 1:17). This is a typical expression of human reaction in the presence of deity (Isa 6:5; Ezek 1:28; Dan 8:17-18; 10:9-11; 1 Enoch 14:14, 24),[22] and it is reminiscent of the transfiguration (Matt 17:6). John is able to stand only after Jesus places his hand on him (Rev 1:17).[23] Before the angel no such godly fear is expressed. John does only what he is told to do by the voice from heaven. He approaches the angel and takes the scroll from him (Rev 10:8-9).

The Angel of Revelation 10 an Angel of Jesus Christ

Why does Jesus Christ use an angel to mediate the revelation to John as stated in the prologue (Rev 1:1) and epilogue (22:16)? At the beginning of Revelation (1:9-20) Jesus Christ as the Son of Man confronts John and com-

missions him. In Rev 1-7 Jesus Christ in his exalted status as the Son of Man mediates the message. Even when he uses angels as intermediaries, in particular the angels of the seven churches,[24] it is quite clear that Jesus is the mediator of the message for he tells John the message that is to be given to the angels of the churches. From Rev 8 through 20 Jesus does not appear again as a mediator of the message - he appears only once again as mediator and that is in the epilogue (Rev 22:16). From Rev 8 onwards angels are the mediators and heralds of the message. Not only does Jesus not appear as a mediator of the message, when John is recommissioned, it is an angel who does the commissioning. Thus, while Jesus commissions John and mediates the message that he is to write in the first part of Revelation, angels do the commissioning and mediating in the second part. Jesus has disappeared and the angel of Rev 10 has taken his place as the commissioner and other angels his place as mediators of the visions.

We suggest that the angel of Rev 10 is used by the author to serve or fulfill two functions. Firstly, the angel is a picture or model of the role that Jesus Christ as the exalted Son of Man plays in Revelation as the revelator and messenger of God and as such enhances Christ's glory as the co-regent of God. Secondly, he serves in his own right as the messenger of God, as he delivers the prophetic message, in order to impress upon John the importance of proclaiming the message to everyone, which importance is illustrated by the posture and gigantic size of the angel. He thus models the revelatory role of

Christ as his icon, and as he does so is a pictorial reminder that all people must hear the message of God. Why the author of Revelation uses an angel in addition to Jesus becomes clear we believe when we look at these two functions.

The angel of Rev 10 does not appear in his own right or on his own authority. Rather, he comes to John under the authority of God and in the stead or in lieu of Jesus Christ. He is one sent, a messenger under the command of heaven, and he comes in the place of Christ who is the prime messenger of Revelation (1:1; 22:6, 16).[25] When commanded to do so by the voice from heaven, he gives the scroll to John to eat and commissions him to proclaim to all peoples the message. In his first commissioning John was commanded to give the message to the seven churches,[26] and Jesus Christ commissions him. Now he is commissioned by the angel and the voice from heaven to give a message of God to the world. As announced in the prologue (Rev 1:1-2) "there are three definite stages in the transmission of this Apocalypse from its source to its publication."[27] First, God gave it to Jesus Christ to make it known to his people. Next, Jesus sent it through his angel to John. And lastly, John bore witness to it and sent it to God's servants. Three heavenly personages are involved in this transmission: God, Jesus Christ, and his angel. That the angel could be known as the angel of both God and Jesus Christ is suggested by a comparison of the prologue (1:1-2, in particular) with the epilogue (22:6-21) in which the angel is designated as both God's angel (v.

6) and Christ's (v. 16).[28] While not necessarily excluding the possibility of other angels being used as mediating angels, certainly the angel of Rev 10 fits the designation of the angel of God and of Jesus. For he is the one angel Christ employs to commission John, and he is the only angel described with heraldic emblems as a heavenly messenger of both God and Christ. He serves as a role model of Jesus Christ in his capacity of revelator and Logos of God.[29] Although Jesus Christ is pictured in Revelation in several roles or functions, as the Son of Man and Lord of death and life (1:12-20), as the victorious lamb (5:6-10), and as the heavenly warrior and judge (19:11-21), the angel of Rev 10 serves only as the picture of his role of revelator. For through the angel Jesus Christ demonstrates his role of being the messenger through whom God not only speaks with his servants but also to the world.[30]

The angel is first portrayed with the cloud and rainbow to indicate that his mission is under the authority of God. Secondly, the angel is pictured with the sun-lit face because in his mission he likewise portrays the commissioning role of Christ. In addition, the angel's gigantic stance which dominates and engulfs the earth, together with his oath and the accompanying heavenly phenomena (the lion-like voice, the seven thunders and the voice from heaven),[31] all direct attention to the importance of the mission of proclaiming the message. Thus the angel also stands for the fact that the revelation of the exalted Christ will be proclaimed and will be heard by all (Rev 1:1; 10:1-4, 8, 11; 19:11-16; 22:16-21).

When Jesus commissioned John to write to the seven churches, though dressed in glorious apparel, as was the angel, he stands alone unaccompanied by any heavenly, divine phenomena. Christ as the exalted Son of Man speaks in his own authority and glory. Not so the angel. He speaks and commissions under the authority and glory of God and in the stead of Christ. Nevertheless, he is instrumental, by his presence and in the visual action of the scroll, in the commissioning of John.[32] Though the voice from heaven gives direction, the angel is the actor who plays out the role of commissioning John. Not only does he hold and give the scroll to John, he also, and not the voice from heaven, tells John the effect that the eating of it will have upon him. Though in the stead of another, the angel's role of mediation is real and important because the angel is communicating a message of God that must be proclaimed to all nations (Rev 10:11). Just as the angel is the heavenly messenger of God and Christ that bridges heaven and earth, so now John is to be the human messenger that bridges the spoken word of God and the receptive word in the ear of man. The dominating and lordly presence of the angel indicates this importance of the message of God being heard by the human race. His awesome presence astride the earth (Rev 10:1) suggests that the ministry of proclaiming the message will hold sway so that people can hear, a fact that is graphically portrayed in Rev 11 with regard to the two witnesses. No one is able to stop the two witnesses from prophesying until their witness is complete (11:5-7). Nor can anyone oppose the angel, and so the ministry of the mes-

sage will not be stopped. [33] Thus, while the angel in his stance and appearance is a picture and icon of the commissioning role of Jesus Christ, the angel also portrays the imperative that the message must be proclaimed by John and will be heard by all.

These two functions of the angel of Rev 10, that of a model of Christ's revelatory, commissioning role and that of the portrayal of the imperative of proclaiming the message to all, suggest why the author of Revelation used thus an angel. Firstly, the angel of Rev 10 teaches an object lesson: just as God is unapproachable because of his awesome power and glory, so also is Jesus Christ in his exalted state as the Son of Man. In the OT God generally approached and spoke to his people only through messengers, whether of heavenly or human origin. He did not speak directly with them because of his awesome majesty.[34] When Jesus Christ first approached John in his dreadful and brilliant glory to commission him, John fell as dead before him because he could not receive such a presence (Rev 1:17). And so when John is further commissioned, it is through a heavenly messenger before whom he could stand and from whom he could receive the message of Christ. John does not fall before the angel, for he can receive and converse with this heavenly figure.[35] Jesus can be received now in his heavenly glory only through an angel. In this fashion the author's employment of an angel enhances the status of Jesus Christ as the co-regent of God. Not only do angels praise and worship Jesus (Rev 5:9-14),[36] an angel also serves as his communicator (Rev 22:16). Jesus

Christ has his angel as God has his (Rev 22:6). The angel of Rev 10 is pictured so as to indicate that he is the angel of God and Jesus Christ.

Secondly, as the angel of Rev 10 commissions John in the place of the exalted Christ, he impresses upon John the importance of proclaiming the message to all peoples. This the angel does by his posture and bearing. An angel of ordinary size would have been sufficient to act as a mediating messenger of Christ and God (cf. Gen 32:22-30; Judg 13:2-22). But in appearing in a gigantic size astride the earth, the angel imprints on John's mind the universal importance of the message that he is to proclaim. This impression is confirmed by his great voice and his action of swearing by God. Thus the angel, as he commissions John in the stead of Christ, both models the revelatory role of Christ, and as he actually participates with Christ in the commission of John, exhibits the importance of the proclamation of God's universal message.

The Angel of Revelation 10 Elsewhere in Revelation

Does the angel of Rev 10 appear elsewhere in Revelation? While the angel of Rev 10 is the most impressive of the angels, he is not the only angel of an impressive status. In particular there are three other angelic appearances which on comparison seem to be the same as the angel of Rev 10: the angel who comes from heaven with great authority and lights up the earth with his glory as he announces the overthrow of Babylon (Rev 18:1-2); the mighty angel of the millstone who demonstrates and seals the overthrow of Babylon

(Rev 18:21-24); and the angel who stands in the sun and invites the birds of prey to the great banquet of God (Rev 19:17-18).[37] If these three angelic appearances are further appearances of the angel of Rev 10, then we have in Revelation four pictorial appearances of the same mighty angel. And according to our proposal then, that of identifying the angel of Rev 10 with the angel of God and Jesus Christ mentioned in the prologue (Rev 1:1) and in the epilogue (Rev 22:6, 16),[38] this singular angel of God and Jesus Christ appears in pictorial form four times in Revelation (10:1-11; 18:1-2, 21-24; 19:17-18). Let us consider and compare these four appearances to determine whether they are appearances of the same angel.

In Rev 18:1-2 an angel comes from heaven with "great authority (ἐξουσίαν μεγάλην)." The angel lights up the earth with his glory and with a "great voice (ἐν ἰσχυρᾷ φωνῇ)" announces the fall of Babylon.[39] While one cannot determine for certain whether the angel was gigantic in stature, the fact that his glory lit up the earth could indicate that he was. At least his appearance was such that it could light up the earth.[40] This may be a reference to Ezek 43:2 where it is said that the earth was lit up by the glory of God. If so, then "the brightness of God's glory is here" in Rev 18:1 "attributed to an angel."[41]

In Revelation "glory (δόξα)" is an attribute or characteristic only of God and the lamb (e.g., 4:11; 5:12-14), except in 18:1 where this "angel has this special characteristic in common with God and the Lamb."[42] In Rev 21:23 the glory of God lights up the heavenly Jerusalem and the lamb is its

light. The glory of the angel of Rev 18:1 lights up the earth. The angel thus has a relationship with God and Christ that is reminiscent of the relationship between the angel of Rev 10 and God and Christ - the angel's sun-lit face (v. 1).[43] Both angels come from the presence of God, and as they carry out their roles they are "empowered with great authority" and reflect "the radiance and glory of God."[44]

In the same chapter (Rev 18) in which the fall of Babylon is announced by the angel whose glory lights up the earth (vv. 1-3), another angel depicts Babylon's announced fall and destruction by taking hold of a large millstone and casting it into the sea (vv. 21-24).[45] The imagery of the millstone is likely derived from Jer 51:60-64 where similarly, after the prophet had read from a scroll the destruction that would come upon Babylon, the casting of the scroll tied to a stone into the Euphrates symbolized the demise of Babylon.[46] What is of interest to us is that the angel in Rev 18:21 is identified as "one mighty angel (εἷς ἄγγελος ἰσχυρός)" and is intimately associated with the angel whose glory lighted up the earth in the judgment of Babylon. The one angel announces Babylon's judgment (Rev 18:1-3) and the other depicts it by casting the millstone into the sea (18:21). The fact that the angel is called "mighty" suggests an identification with the angel of Rev 10, and because of his association with the judgment of Babylon, suggests also an identification with the angel of Rev 18:1.

The εἷς before the ἄγγελος ἰσχυρός, the angel of the millstone (Rev 18:21), indicates not only a single angel but may also mean "one and the same,"[47] that is, the same single angel who announced Babylon's judgment (Rev 18:1-3). Moreover, the word ἰσχυρός is used with both of these angels, in the first instance with the angel's voice (18:2) and in the second with the angel's being (18:21). These two angelic appearances thus seem to be the same angel, for they both have a role in the judgment of Babylon and they both are described as "mighty." The same angel then with a "mighty" voice announces the judgment of Babylon and as a "mighty" angel casts a millstone into the sea to illustrate the doom of Babylon - both the "mighty" voice and strength of the angel are emphasized.

The "mighty" angel who appears in Rev 18, as the herald (vv. 1-2) and pictorial executioner (v. 21) of Babylon's judgment, seems to be the same angel as that of Rev 10. For both the angel of Rev 10 and Rev 18 are identified as "mighty" angels. Both act on behalf of God and Jesus Christ as mediating heralds. And both angels are described in terms of brightness, reflecting the radiance and glory of God and Christ.

The other angel that appears to be the same as the angel of Rev 10 is the angel of Rev 19:17-18. This angel is described as standing in the sun and one who cries out with a great (μεγάλη) voice to the birds of the heavens in order to invite them to the great (μέγα) banquet of God. The birds are to feed on the fallen hosts that fought against the people of God (Rev 19:18-21). The

source for this scene was most likely Ezekiel's oracle against Gog (39:17-20).[48] However, our interest lies in the angel himself.

The angel of Rev 19 who invites the birds of prey to the banquet of God stands in the sun as he issues his invitation. What the author of Revelation had in mind or what his source might have been in positioning the angel in the sun cannot be determined. Possibly he did so in order to indicate that it was from "a position of splendor appropriate to a herald of victory" that the angel issues his message to the birds.[49] Whatever the author had in mind in thus positioning the angel, it seems clear that again he uses the sun to indicate that the angel is acting within the glory and majesty of God and Jesus Christ, as also is the case of the angels of Rev 10 and 18. There are thus three angels in Revelation that are associated with the sun or its brightness: the angel of Rev 10 whose face is like the sun (v. 1); the angel of Rev 18 whose glory lights up the earth (vv. 1-2); and the angel of God's banquet who stands in the sun (Rev 19:17).

The angel of God's banquet in Rev 19:17 is introduced by the word "one" (ἕνα) as was the angel of the millstone in Rev 18:21. Again, does the "one" indicate a single indefinite angel, or does it suggest "one and the same" angel similar to the εἷς in Rev 18:21?[50] In neither case can it be said with certainty why John uses the numeral one to introduce the angel. He uses the numeral one in both a partitive sense (e.g., Rev 4:8; 13:3) and adjectival sense (e.g., Rev 9:13; 17:12). Only twice does he use the numeral one as an adjec-

tive with angels (Rev 18:21 and 19:17). In the remaining two instances with regard to angels the "one" is used partitively with the genitive (Rev 17:1; 21:9). When used adjectivally does the "one" indicate "a single and only one" angel, or as an indefinite article in the sense of "a certain" angel? Or does John use it as an emphatic adjective in the sense of "one and the same" in order to identify the angel? Perhaps all that can be said is that in his use of "one" as an adjective the author means to say that he is not quite sure of the identity of the two angels, but thinks he may have seen them before.

In summary, there are three other angelic appearances which because of their similarities seem to be descriptions of the same angel that appears in Rev 10: the angel who announces the judgment of Babylon (Rev 18:1); the angel of millstone (Rev 18:21); and the angel of the banquet of God (Rev 19:17). The angel who announces the judgment of Babylon (Rev 18:1-3) seems to be a second appearance of the angel of Rev 10 because of his glory that lights up the earth. The angel of the banquet of God (Rev 19:17-18) also seems to be another appearance of the angel of Rev 10 because of his connection with the sun. And lastly, if the angel of the millstone (Rev 18:21-24) is the same angel who announces Babylon's judgment (18:1-3), then he also could be another appearance of the angel of Rev 10.

In addition to similarities in appearances of the above angels, the roles that each plays also have certain similarities. Each has a role that is connected with the exalted lordship of Christ. The angel of Rev 10 commissions John in

the stead of Jesus Christ (vv. 8-10). The angel of Rev 18:1-3 and of 18:21-24 introduces the judgment that Jesus Christ executes (Rev 19:11). Likewise, the angel of Rev 19:17-21 plays a role in Christ's judgment as he cries out an invitation to the victory banquet of God.[51]

Whether it can ever be determined definitively that these four angelic appearances are all of the same angel, the unique words and symbols used to picture them suggest it as a real possibility - words and symbols that are not used for other angels in Revelation.[52] A factor that supports this conclusion is that the angel of Rev 10 combines in his appearance what the other three angels have only in part. For example, three of the four angels share the word ἰσχυρός (10:1; 18:1-2; 18:21).[53] In addition, three share the imagery of the sun or its brightness (10:1; 18:1-2; 19:17); and two address an audience beyond the immediate recipient of the angelic visions (10:1; 19:17).

Not only does the angel of Rev 10 combine and have all the descriptive words used in part for the other three angels, he also has some that none of them have, the cloud and rainbow, for example (10:1). And of course the role of commissioning the author of Revelation is shared by no other angel (10:8-11).

If these four angelic appearances all refer to the same angel, then it is quite apparent from the descriptions used that the angelic appearance of Rev 10 is the dominant and primary picture of this mighty angel. That is, of the four

pictures in Revelation of this mighty angel who stands in for Jesus Christ, the one in Rev 10 is the first and all inclusive one.

An Angel Christology

R. H. Charles in his commentary on Revelation states that Jesus Christ "is never designated as an angel in the Apoc. . . ." He makes this statement to counter the idea by Wellhausen that the angel of Rev 10 was "Christ or God Himself."[54] While Charles is correct in denying the identification of the angel with Christ, he overstates his case when he says that Jesus Christ "is never designated as an angel in the Apoc. . . ." It is correct to say that Jesus Christ does not take on the appearance of an angel, but he does take on the function of an angel.[55] For he is the messenger or revelator of Revelation. In Rev 1:1 it is stated that God gave the revelation to Jesus Christ and he in turn was to give it to God's people. Jesus is the revealer, the communicator of the message of Revelation, and as such functions as the messenger of God, as the mediator of God's message to his people. This role of Jesus Christ in Revelation as the messenger of God through whom the prophecy is given to John is illustrated by the angel of Rev 10.

This association between Jesus Christ and the angel of Rev 10 is stated we believe in both the prologue (Rev 1:1-3) and epilogue (22:6-21). The comparative similarities between the prologue and epilogue have been noted and detailed.[56] Our concern here is only with those parts of the prologue and epilogue which refer to the angel and his part in the mediation of the message

of Revelation. In the prologue it states that God gave the prophecy to Jesus Christ. He in turn gave it to John through his angel (Rev 1:1). In the epilogue we are told that God gave the prophecy to his people through his angel (22:6), and that an angel, designated as Christ's angel, did so when Jesus Christ sent him (22:16). In the prologue the chain of mediation is God, Jesus Christ and the angel. In the epilogue the chain is God and his angel, and then Jesus Christ and his angel. As stated above (pp. 182-84), it is the contention of this study that the angel of Rev 10 is the angel of both the prologue and epilogue. He is thus the angel of both God and Christ.[57]

It is possible that we are dealing with two mediating angels, one who is the angel of Jesus Christ (Rev 1:1; 22:16) and one who is the angel of God (22:6). We have a hint, however, in both the prologue and epilogue that this is not the case. In the prologue (Rev 1:1) the message that Jesus gives to John through his angel is described with the words "to show to his slaves what things are necessary to come about quickly." the exact same words are used in the epilogue (22:6).[58] The schema of mediation in the prologue is God, Jesus Christ, Christ's angel. In the epilogue the schema of mediating the exact same message is God and his angel (22:6), but to this schema Jesus Christ and his angel should be added (22:16).

In the epilogue God and Jesus Christ are parallel and God's angel and the angel of Christ are parallel (22:6, 16). While this could suggest that as God and Christ are two beings, so also the angel of God and the angel of

Christ are two separate beings. But the fact that in the prologue only the angel of Christ is mentioned suggests that only one angel is involved in mediating the same message from God and Jesus Christ. What is parallel in the epilogue then are the two roles that the same angel plays. We are thus to understand the epilogue as saying, "God sent his angel to show to his servants what things are necessary to come about quickly (22:6). . . , and this was done when Jesus Christ sent his angel to testify of these things to the churches (22:16)." The schema of the epilogue then agrees with that of the prologue: God, Jesus Christ, and the angel. The angel of the prologue, the angel of Christ, is also the angel of the epilogue, there designated as the angel of both God and Christ.

This is made demonstratively clear by the angel of Rev 10. John depicts the angel with insignia to indicate that he is an angel of both God and Christ. The cloud and rainbow point to a relationship with God, while the sun-lit face points to a relationship with Christ. He is an angel of God acting under his authority and within his glory as he stands in for Jesus Christ to mediate the message to John.

In the epilogue this angel of God is sent by Jesus Christ to witness or attest to the message as it is given to the churches (22:16). In Rev 10:5-6 this same angel swears by God before he gives the scroll to John. Whether this swearing is an affirmation of the soon to be completed time in which the prophecy is fulfilled or an affirmation of the truthfulness of the prophecy itself,[59] it witnesses to the message that John is to proclaim (Rev 10:5-7, 11).

Thus the angel of God that Jesus employs to convey the message to John and the churches does two things. He actually passes on the message from Jesus, and from God (Rev 1:1; 22:6), to John and the churches, and as he does so he witnesses or attests to the message (Rev 10:5-6; 22:16).

In both the prologue and epilogue this mediating angel is claimed by Jesus Christ as his angel (1:1; 22:16).[60] God also makes the same claim, but only in the epilogue (22:6). While the angel of Rev 10 is not directly declared to be the angel of God and Christ, by his appointments and insignia it is clear that he is such. No other angel in Revelation fits the role of the mediating angel of the message so artfully and completely as does the angel of Rev 10. He is God's angel, under his authority as the creator (Rev 10:6) and within his glory (10:1, 3-4). But now as he acts as the commissioner of John in the stead of Christ, and thus mediates the message that Jesus had received from God, he is the angel of Jesus Christ. It is as if God put his angel at the disposal of Jesus.

We propose then that the angel of Rev 10 is an illustration of the mediating role of Jesus Christ, and as such an icon of Christ. The angel depicts Christ in his exalted glory as the vice-regent of God as he mediates the message of God to his people on earth. The cloud and rainbow of the angel remind us that Jesus as the mediator of the revelation is under the authority and covenantal grace of God. The sun-lit face of the angel, a reflection of the face of the Son of Man (Rev 1:16), points to Jesus Christ as the medium and

dispenser of the life-giving revelation of God. The fiery-like legs of the angel and his lion-like voice, attended by the seven thunders, image the majestic stance of the exalted Christ as he stands ready to deliver the message of God (Rev 1:15).

The angel illustrates the exalted Christ in his revelatory role in such a manner to indicate that he is not an equal but a servant (cf. Rev 19:10; 22:8). While the angel bears the insignia of the godly, he does so in a diminished or lesser way. His face is like the sun, not as the sun in all its strength (Rev 1:16). He bears no sign of equality with God as does Jesus as the Son of Man - the white head and hair (Rev 1:14; cf. Dan 7:9). John who is also a servant (Rev 1:1; 22:8-9) can thus receive this heavenly presence and the message he comes to deliver.

Nevertheless, though an icon of Jesus Christ, John is to receive the angel as if he were Christ, for his appearance is accompanied by heavenly phenomena, remindful of the glorious presence. The message then that John receives, though given by an angel, is from Christ himself.

The angel does not illustrate Christ's exalted position as Lord of the church (Rev 1:12-13, 20), or as the conquering warrior and judge (Rev 1:18; 19:12-13), for the angel wears no victor's crown. But he does image the role of the exalted Christ as the messenger of God to his people on earth. To that extent the angel of Rev 10 illustrates an angel Christology for he is an icon of Christ as the exalted spokesman of God.[61]

NOTES

[1]In its angelology Revelation is akin to late Judaism where increasingly angels play such mediating roles. Beckwith (Apocalypse, 445), for example, states that the author of Revelation adopted the highly developed angelology of late Judaism "which assumed special angels not only for persons but also for inanimate things" as it broadened out the mediating role of angels. In Revelation they introduce scenes (5:2; 8:1-5) and attend John through the visions as interpreters (17:1, 7, 15). They also carry out actions within scenes (7:2; 8:3; 12:7-9; 20:1-3), and they are active participants in the heavenly worship of god (4:6-11; 5:11-12). And as in Judaism they are associated with earthly elements (7:1; 14:18; 16:5; cf. 1 Enoch 66:2).

[2]Of the 67 times that the word "angel" appears in the Book of Revelation, 41 instances have to do with mediating the message of God. Prominent are the angels of the seven trumpets and seven bowls (Rev 8:6-12; 9:1-21; 11:14-19; 15:1-16:21).

[3]The emergence of a single angel of elevated status is also akin to the developed angelology of late Judaism. See chap. 3, pp. 54-63.

[4]It has been suggested that both the prologue of Revelation (1:1-8) and the epilogue (22:6-21) were the last portions of the book to have been written, and that each influenced the other in content and form (Beckwith, Apocalypse, 771-2). With regard to the mediating angel mentioned in both, Beckwith (ibid., 771) states, "In both alike the revelation is authenticated in the most solemn manner: it comes from God himself (22:6; 1:1), and from Jesus (22:16; 1:1), through angelic agency (22:6, 16; 1:1)."

[5]Commentators vary in interpretation with regard to this angel of 1:1 and 22:6, 16. The angel has been interpreted as a literary device which suggests that in any form of revelation from God, whether stated or not, it is understood that God always communicates with humankind through the mediation of angels (Beckwith, ibid., 773). Others identify the angel with the angel who has guided John through the various visions, in particular from Rev 17:1 onward (Mounce, Revelation, 394; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 2:218; Bousset, Offenbarung, 456). Others make no identification of the angel

(Swete, Apocalypse, 302-03, 309). And still others, as B. Weiss, have suggested that it might have been John himself (Allo, L'Apocalypse, 360). But Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 278) is correct when he says that John's "paramount angel of Rev 10 is exactly the same mediating angel of 1:1," though he does not demonstrate this insight. Nor does Mazzaferri refer to the angel of Rev 22:6, 16 as the same angel.

[6]The connection between the prophetic office and the mediation of angels in Rev 22:6 is aptly suggested by Beckwith (Apocalypse), 772-3) when he says, "God who controls the inspiration of the prophets has inspired his angel and the Apocalyptist to show his servants what must shortly come to pass."

[7]In Rev 19:9-10 the speaker is not identified as an angel, but he most likely is the angel of 17:1 who now again appears to John (see Swete, Apocalypse, 247; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 2:218).

[8]The word προφητεύω appears only twice in Revelation (10:11; 11:3). The first instance is in connection with the commissioning angel; the second with the two witnesses on earth who at the end of their witness are taken up into heaven to God (11:11-12). The word προφήτης appears eight times in Revelation, always in reference to human prophets (e.g., 22:6). The word προφητεία appears seven times, five of which refer to the contents of Revelation (1:3; 22:7, 10, 18, 19), once in reference to the ministry of the two earthly witnesses (11:6), and once it refers to the witness of Jesus (19:10). Revelation is the only book in the NT which is called a prophecy.

[9]The only exceptions are the four winged creatures at the throne of God in heaven (Rev 4:6-8). But these have no relationship to John as regards the message of the book, and they are not called angels or messengers. As to their classification in the angelic-spirit world and in the hierarchy of the heavenly court see Ford, Revelation, 75-80; and Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:118-123.

[10]The similarities are striking. Both have fire in their appearance, the Son of Man's eyes (Rev 1:14); the angel's legs (Rev 10:1). Both have substantial legs, the Son of Man's are like burnished-fired bronze (1:15); the angel's like pillars of fire (10:1). And both have faces with the brilliance of the sun (Rev 1:16; 10:1).

[11]According to Swete (Apocalypse, 16) the "transfer of this feature to the Son of Man is the more striking since Enoch (xlvi.i, ed. Charles, p. 127) adheres strictly to Daniel's account." John in Revelation frequently assigns to the glorified Christ attributes and titles that belong to God (e.g., 1:18; 2:8;

5:12; 22:13). See also Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:28; Mounce, Revelation, 78-9; Bousset, Offenbarung, 194.

[12]Church fathers (e.g., Andreas of Caesarea, d. 614) interpreted the white hair in this manner (Swete, Apocalypse, 16). Oecumenius (bishop of Tricca in Thessaly, 6 cent.) in his commentary on Revelation (see Hoskier, Commentary on Oecumenius, 41) says that the white hair points to the fact that while Christ is new in appearance on earth, at the same time he is by divine grace eternal.

[13]Montgomery, Daniel, 298; Hengstenberg, Revelation, 126.

[14]See pp. 95-100, chap. 4.

[15]Ford, Revelation, 384-5; Swete, Apocalypse, 16. Mounce (Revelation, 78) believes that the whiteness conveys rather the idea of wisdom and dignity worthy of honor. Caird (Commentary on Revelation, 26) believes that the white hair together with the flaming eyes and sun-like face picture Jesus Christ "clothed in all the attributes of God."

[16]Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:30) states that because the Son of Man holds the seven stars in his hand, they are "subject to him, and wholly in his power."

[17]The imagery of the sword is taken from the OT (e.g., Isa 11:4; 49:2; Ps 149:6; see also Wis 18:15-16; and Sir 21:3) and is used as a symbol of a word or message that comes from the mouth of God or of man. Such imagery is also found in the NT (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12). Whether one confines this to a symbol of judicial authority (Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:30) or to any word of authority (Swete, Apocalypse, 18), punitive or otherwise (Ford, Revelation, 383), it implies direct communication.

[18]See chap. 5, pp. 153-55, 157.

[19]Ford (Revelation, 385) declares, "That the celestial personage is the resurrected Christ is clear from the word he speaks. . . . He identifies himself as the 'Living One'. . . as the Prince or author of life."

[20]The "Living One" is a divine title of God in the OT (e.g., Josh 3:10; Ps 42:2; Hos 1:10) which is based on the fact that God alone, in contrast to other gods or human beings, lives forever (Deut 32:39-40; Dan 12:7; cf. Rev 4:9-10; 10:6).

[21]The genitival relationship of the revelation and Jesus Christ in Rev 1:1 is not certain. Whether the genitive of Jesus Christ is subjective (Swete, Apocalypse, 1-2; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:6; Bousset, Offen-

barung, 181; Mounce, Revelation, 64) or objective (Ford, Revelation, 373) does not determine if Christ is the object of the revelation. For in the prologue itself the contents of the revelation are said to be "those things that would happen quickly (1:1)." If one holds to this expression as the contents of Revelation (see also 22:6), one must realize that the event in Revelation that is described as happening quickly is the coming of Jesus Christ (2:16; 3:11; 22:7, 12, 20). Of the eight times that τάχος and ταχύ occur in Revelation, six are in reference to the coming of Christ.

[22]Bousset (Offenbarung, 181) calls it a stereotyped expression of apocalyptic. John fell possibly because of the sun-like face of Jesus. See chap. 4, p. 110.

[23]Swete (Apocalypse, 19) comments, "The Hand which sustains Nature and the Churches at the same time quickens and raises individual lives."

[24]It is best to take the angels of the churches as angels and not as human messengers or pastors. Swete (Apocalypse, 22) summarizes the evidence when he says that the angels of the churches "are 'angels' in the sense which the word bears elsewhere throughout the book." In support of this interpretation is the fact that an angel of the church is mentioned in the ascension of Isaiah (3:15). Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:34) says, "If used at all in Apocalyptic, ἄγγελος can only represent a superhuman being."

[25]The alternative is that he is under the authority and command of God but independent of Jesus Christ. This would, however, run counter to the Christology of Revelation which presents Jesus Christ as the prime revelator of the contents of the book (1:1; 22:16).

[26]On the matter of the seven churches and the possibility of the message through them reaching a greater whole or greater audience see Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:8-9, 24-5; Mounce Revelation, 76-7; and Swete, Apocalypse, 4, 309. There is some question as to what exactly was the message that John was to give to the seven churches. Is what John was to send limited to the seven letters in Rev 2 and 3, or does it include more? The fact that the seven churches are addressed as the recipients in Rev 1:4 and 1:11 seems to indicate that the entire prophecy of the book was meant. This is confirmed in the conclusion, for the epilogue (22:16) states that the entire message of Revelation was witnessed by the angel of Jesus Christ to the churches. See Swete, Apocalypse, 14, 309; Beckwith, Apocalypse, 777; Mounce, Revelation, 76.

[27]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:5.

[28]While two different angels could be involved, more likely the same angel is meant. That the angel is described as both God's and Christ's angel is not incompatible, for both God and Christ are viewed as the source of the revelation (see Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 2:218; Bousset, Offenbarung, 456, 459). God would still be seen as the prime source. Revelation thus presents two sources, with God as the prime source. Similarly, there are two mediators, with Christ as the prime revelator. In keeping with the literary unity of Revelation, it would be rather difficult to envision God's angel (22:6) as another angel from Christ's (1:1; 22:16), unless one were to consider God's angel to be a reference to Jesus Christ.

[29]While Jesus is called only once the Logos of God (Rev 19:13), the idea and thought that he is the chief spokesman for God is implied throughout the book (Swete, Apocalypse, 252). For example, Jesus is called the faithful witness of God (Rev 1:5; 3:14), and everything he has witnessed through his angel to John is true and trustworthy (Rev 22:6-7, 16, 17).

[30]Swete. (ibid., 309) says with regard to the angel of Christ in Rev 22:16 that through the angel Jesus Christ attests the truthfulness of what the angel had said by affirming that he had sent him and that the testimony of the angel was Christ's own testimony, as if he had spoken it himself. This can also be said of the angel of Rev 10, for through the angel Jesus Christ commissions John to speak the message.

[31]The voice from heaven could be that of God or of Jesus Christ. In favor of Christ is the fact that in Rev 1:11, 19 Jesus tells John to write (Beckwith, Apocalypse, 581; Mounce, Revelation, 209; Bousset, Offenbarung, 309). However, frequently a voice speaks from heaven without any clear indication as to whose voice it is. Sometimes it appears to be God's (Rev 1:8; 6:6) or that of an angelic figure (Rev 6:7; 12:10). But often it is difficult to know the actual source of the heavenly voice (e.g., Rev 9:13; 11:12, 15; 14:13). Whatever the immediate source of the voice, it is always spoken under God's authority and command.

[32]The angel plays a more prominent role in the commissioning of John than the heavenly figure in the case of Ezek 1:28-3:4. In both instances God's voice speaks and gives direction with regard to the eating of the scroll, but in the case of John's commissioning the angel plays a more impressive role than the heavenly hand does in Ezekiel.

[33]As Swete (Apocalypse, 135) says, "To kill God's witness is impossible, so long as their witness is unfilled; those who attempt it bring destruction upon themselves." On the matter of identification of the two witnesses and what they represent see Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:280-84; Mounce, Revelation, 223; Bousset, Offenbarung, 317-19.

[34]When the attempt was made by God to speak directly to the Israelites at Sinai, the attempt failed because of the fear and dread that God's majestic appearance evoked (Exod 19:16-22; 20:18-21; Deut 5:22-27; Heb 12:18-21).

[35]When John fell before Jesus as the exalted Son of Man, it was not a voluntary act of worship. He fell because he had no human strength to sustain him in view of such a glorious, godly presence (see Dan 8:17; 10:15-18). For John to have remained standing would have been both foolhardy and blasphemous (Mounce, Revelation, 80). In contrast, when John fell before the angels (Rev 19:10; 22:8), it was a voluntary act of worship or obedience (Swete, Apocalypse, 248).

[36]The hymn of praise that the angelic host offers to the lamb is even more expansive than that which was offered to God, for to the "glory, honor, and power (Rev 4:11)" are added "riches, wisdom, strength, and blessing (5:12)." The hymn concludes in 5:14 with both God and the lamb receiving the same doxology of praise. Of this concluding verse Swete (Apocalypse, 84) says, "the throne belongs to God and to the Lamb conjointly." This thought agrees with Rev 3:21 where it is said that Jesus as the exalted Son of Man sits with the Father on his throne (see also Rev 22:1).

[37]The "mighty angel" of Rev 5:2 is not considered as another appearance of the angel of Rev 10 because of the arguments stated in chap. 4 (pp. 80-82). Though Mounce (Revelation, 207) thinks "it is quite possible" that the angel of Rev 5:2 is "the one who appears" in Rev 10, a comparison of the two angels rules otherwise. In particular, the fact that the word ἄλλος is used to introduce the angel of Rev 10 makes it unlikely that the two angels are the same.

[38]See pp. 182-84.

[39]While Rome was to John the "contemporary representation of Babylon," the imperial city of the Caesars "does not, of course, exhaust St. John's conception of Babylon." Other future ages could witness the rise and fall of evil mistresses "of the world not less magnificent and depraved" (Swete, Apocalypse, 226; see also Mounce, Revelation, 323-24 and Beckwith, Apocalypse, 712-14).

[40]Beasley-Murray (Revelation, 264) says that the "description of this angel is unusually impressive."

[41]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 2:95. Swete (Apocalypse, 226) says that the angel has so "recently . . . come from the Presence that in passing he flings a broad belt of light across the dark earth."

[42]Ford, Revelation, 300.

[43]See chap. 4, pp. 106-11.

[44]Mounce, Revelation, 322.

[45]Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 2:107) says that the stone was not actually a millstone but "what the Seer saw in the vision recalled the idea of such a stone."

[46]See Charles, ibid.; Caird, Commentary on Revelation, 231.

[47]Greek-English Lexicon of NT, 230. Swete (Apocalypse, 238) says that the εἷς "approaches the force of an indefinite article, but has not yet quite lost its proper meaning. . . ."

[48]See Mounce Revelation, 348; Caird, Commentary on Revelation, 247.

[49]Mounce, Revelation, 348; Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 2:138.

[50]see p. 195 above and n. 47.

[51]If the angel of the seven-sealed scroll were to be included, his role of introducing the victorious lamb (Rev 5:2) could then be mentioned.

[52]The exception would be the angel of the seven-sealed scroll if he is not considered as another appearance of the angel of Rev 10.

[53]Again, the angel of the seven-sealed scroll (Rev 5:2) would be listed here if he were to be identified with the angel of Rev 10. However, if he were to be so identified, this is the only identifying word or description that he shares with the angel of Rev 10 - it is the only description given to the angel of Rev 5:2.

[54]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 1:259.

[55]Mounce (Revelation, 65) says in reference to Rev 1:1, "As mediator of the revelation, Christ performs the function of an angel in the general sense of a messenger."

[56]See Beckwith, Apocalypse, 771-2. He believes that the prologue was "probably the last part of the book to be written," and "was pretty certainly influenced by the Conclusion in matter and form."

[57]Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 278) says John's "careful design becomes apparent if it be recognized that his paramount angel of 10 is exactly the same mediating angel of 1:1 . . . ." In addition, he says that Rev 22:6 in "virtually replicating" Rev 1:1, equates the singular angel of John's prologue (1:1) and epilogue (22:6). However, Mazzaferri does not demonstrate why he believes that the angel of Rev 10 is the angel of Rev 1:1 and 22:6. Nor does he equate the angel of Rev 22:16 with that of 1:1 and 22:6, and in turn with the angel of Rev 10.

[58]The words, δεῖξαι τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει, are exactly the same in 1:1 and 22:6.

[59]Charles, Commentary on Revelation, 2:219; Caird, Commentary on Revelation, 127-30; Mounce, Revelation, 210-13.

[60]Mounce (Revelation, 394) states, "The angel. . . is now authenticated by Jesus himself. It is to the angel of Christ that the revelation has been delegated."

[61]The fact that John does not directly state that the angel is an image or illustration of Christ in his revelatory role should not surprise us. For John does not always say what a symbol or visionary figure represents or for whom or what the figure is a stand-in (or substitute). For example, in Rev 4 he does not state that the lamb (v. 6) is Jesus Christ, but it is clear from the description that the lamb represents or stands in for him (see vv. 5-6, 9-10).

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The present study was undertaken because of a lack of any comprehensive and detailed analysis of Rev 10 in research that is available today on Revelation. Apart from comments in commentaries and in occasional articles and books dealing with other or kindred subjects,[1] no in-depth studies on Rev 10 have appeared. The one exception is an article by André Feuillet which appeared in 1959. But even this important article did not furnish a detailed interpretation of Rev 10, mainly because of its brevity.[2] However, Feuillet's article did emphasize the importance of Rev 10 with regard to work being done on Revelation. His article also demonstrated the need for a more lengthy and comprehensive analysis of Rev 10. The present dissertation is an endeavor to fill this need.

Previous research on Rev 10 dealt with the sources and literary make-up and unity of the chapter.[3] While Spitta and Boismard supported the source theory as the answer for the literary composition of Rev 10,[4] Feuillet, Collins and Mazzaferri recognized the chapter as the creation of the author and therefore was a literary unit.[5] However, the problem of the angel of Rev 10 has not been treated. That is, while previous research has for the most part

concentrated on the literary composition of the chapter and its possible importance in the composition of the whole of Revelation, it did not concern itself with problems that the angel of Rev 10 posed. For example, what is the exact relationship between the angel and God and Christ? Why did the author of Revelation use an angel to commission or recommission John? And why does the angel appear in heraldic tokens and stand astride the earth to carry out his commissioning role? These important questions previous research has either not addressed or conclusively answered.

The present study addressed the problems posed by the angel of Rev 10 in the following areas of concern: first, a tradition of angelic figures of unique status in a commissioning role; second, the appearance of the angel of Rev 10; third, the role of the angel; and fourth, the purpose of the employment of the angel.

Was there a tradition of angels of unique status which could have influenced the author of Revelation in the creation of the angel of Rev 10? While previous research has indicated that such might be the case,[6] this has not been conclusively demonstrated as a possibility. In our review of the pertinent literature, we discovered that there was a tradition of long standing in which the author of Revelation stands in his creation and employment of an angel of unique status. Our analysis of this tradition demonstrates that the author used or referred to models within the tradition as a guide in the creation of the angel of Rev 10.

We found one factor within this area of concern, which no previous research or study has suggested. Namely, that while the mediating angels in the tradition were used to represent God, the author of Revelation uses his angel of Rev 10 to represent both God and Christ. We believe that this fact is an important consideration in connection with the question as to why the author of Revelation used an angel to commission John.

A second area of concern through which we addressed the problems of the angel of Rev 10 is his appearance (see chap. 4). Previous research has dealt with this concern more than it has with the concern of tradition. But what has not been done is a detailed analysis of the description of the angel's person, his godly emblems and regalia. This we have endeavored to do and as a result make the following points - points which are new contributions to the study of the angel's appearance. Previous studies of the insignia of the angel, the cloud, the rainbow, the sun-lit face and the pillar-like legs of fire, have pointed to likely literary sources in an effort to determine who the angel is. However, no consensus concerning the identity of the angel has resulted.[7] We believe that our research and analysis now offers a firm conclusion, namely, that the angel of Rev 10 is not Jesus Christ. While this conclusion is not new,[8] we believe that our study demonstrates and confirms this conclusion. For example, when we examined the sun-lit face of the angel and compared it to the sun-like face of Jesus Christ (Rev 1:16), we found that the faces of both were not identical. Christ's face is brilliant like the sun, but the face of the

angel is a reflection of the sun. This difference, while seemingly insignificant, we believe is an important indicator that the angel is not Christ. In addition, the appearance of the angel, in particular his sun-lit fact, does not so overwhelm John that he is unable to stand before him, as is not the case with Jesus Christ in Rev 1 (vv. 16-17). Neither of these two facts have previously been mentioned in the evaluation of the angel's appearance. Yet they are important in considering the identity of the angel.

Another example in the evaluation of the regalia of the angel that no previous research has brought to light is the author's use of ἶρις. All previous studies of the halo-like rainbow above the head of the angel has focused on the theological significance of the rainbow as suggested by Gen 9 and/or Ezek 1, together with that of Rev 4:3.[9] This we also did and as a result came to the conclusion that both Gen 9 and Ezek 1 do help in determining the author's employment of the rainbow in Rev 10. However, in our search to discover why John used ἶρις to designate the rainbow (see chap. 4, pp. 100-103), we discovered a feasible answer which no previous research suggested or entertained. We believe that John used the word in order to bring into the token of the rainbow a thought suggested by a mythical tradition. This mythical tradition of ἶρις John fused with the theological thoughts of the rainbow present in his religious tradition. He thus used the rainbow to refer not only to the covenantal mercy of God (Gen 9) and his heavenly glory (Ezek 1), but also to

the idea suggested by the mythological background of Ἶρις, that the angel is a particular messenger of God.

Our research and analysis then not only concludes that the angel of Rev 10 is not Jesus Christ, it also suggests who the angel is, a suggestion and conclusion that no previous study has offered and demonstrated.[10] The angel of Rev 10 is the angel mentioned in both the prologue (Rev 1:1) and epilogue (Rev 22:6, 16) through whom God and Christ communicate the message of Revelation to John. He is an angel of God at the disposal of Jesus Christ for the purpose of communicating to John the message which Christ receives from God. We thus have in Rev 10 not a theophany but an angel-theophanic appearance. While an angel-theophany may indicate a divine-like appearance where it is difficult to determine whether the figure is God or an angelic figure (see chap. 3, pp. 42-4), this is not the case in Rev 10. For it is evident that the angel of Rev 10 is not God or Christ. Rather, the angel is portrayed with divine-like emblems and his appearance is accompanied by heavenly phenomena to demonstrate that he is an angel acting under the authority of God and in the service of Christ. This proposal as enunciated in this paragraph is we believe a new and important result of our study of Rev 10.

A third area of concern and study with regard to the angel is the role that he fulfills as pictured in Rev 10 (see chap. 5). This role previous research has interpreted to be that of a mediating commissioner who on behalf of God and Christ invests John with his prophetic call (Rev 10:8-11).[11] This same

conclusion our more extensive research affirms, and we believe for the first time conclusively demonstrates. However, our conclusion is more specific. As the angel acts in his commissioning role on behalf of God and Christ, he does so under the authority of God and in the stead of Christ. This distinction of how the angel acts with regard to God and Christ is a new and, we believe, important contribution of our study.

The gigantic size of the angel as indicated by his stance has not received adequate attention in previous studies.[12] Because of the possible importance of the angel's size in connection with his role and mission, we thought it needed further study. We discovered that the angel of Rev 10 is not alone in being described with colossal-size proportions. Such angels appear in a tradition with which the author of Revelation may have been acquainted (see chap. 5, pp. 141-44). However, we could not determine when such a tradition began, though it appears to have been around the time of the writing of Revelation. But our research, which for the first time establishes a possible link between John's angel and those of gigantic size in the tradition, suggests the possibility that the angel of Rev 10 may have a part in the origin of the tradition of angels of gigantic size.

We believe that the angel of Rev 10 was presented as gigantic in size to indicate the importance of the angel's mission. His colossal size as he stands astride the earth points to the importance of recognizing that the range of the message the angel gives to John is world-wide, everyone must hear the mes-

sage (Rev 10:2, 5, 11). This conclusion supports what has been suggested previously by others.[13] What is new in our conclusion is that the possible link, mentioned above, between John's angel and those of colossal size in the tradition also commends this conclusion.

Our fourth and last area of concern was the purpose of the author's use of an angel as a mediating commissioner (chap. 6, pp. 180-92). This concern has not been dealt with in previous studies adequate to its importance.[14] We believe that the author of Revelation created and employed the angel of Rev 10 as a mediating commissioner for a two-fold purpose: to enhance the exalted status of the glorified Christ; and to serve as a pictorial illustration of the mediating role that the exalted Christ fulfills in Revelation. This two-fold proposal is entirely new and has not been touched upon in previous research.

The angel of Rev 10 role is used by the author to indicate that Jesus Christ in his exalted position as the prime revelator and co-regent with God (Rev 1:12-17; 4:4-5; 14; 22:1-3)[15] is to be received through angels. As God employs the mediation of angels so that human beings can receive his word and revelation, so does Jesus Christ in his state of heavenly glory. The angel is arrayed with divine-like emblems to demonstrate to John that though an angel, he is, nevertheless, to receive him as if he were Jesus Christ.

The angel of Rev 10 thus serves as an illustration of the exalted Christ in his role as <u>the</u> prime revelator of God. He acts as an angelic icon of

Christ's mediating role in Revelation, which role he fulfills in his exalted position as the Son of Man (Rev 1:1-3, 12-20; 22:16).

In summary, as a result of our analysis of the angel of Rev 10, we offer this new proposal. The angel of Rev 10 is an angel of God placed at the disposal of Jesus Christ. He acts under the authority of God as he in the stead of Christ commissions John. He is an angel of God sent from heaven to be the mediating angel through whom Christ gives the prophetic message to John. As such, the angel is an icon of the glorified Christ in his role of the heavenly messenger of God to his people on earth.

In connection with this proposal we offer for consideration the following notion. The angel of Rev 10, as an icon of Christ's role of the Logos of God (Rev 19:11-13; cf. 1:1-3, 12-20; 22:6, 16), illustrates an angel Christology.

NOTES

[1]For example, Boismard, "'L'Apocalypse'," and Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation.

[2]The article is entitled "Le chapitre X de l'Apocalypse son apport dans la solution du probleme eschatologique" and was published in Sacra Pagina (see chap. 1, p. 1, n. 3 and chap. 2, pp. 26-27 of our present study). Feuillet's article is an important study, but it is only a beginning and was never meant to be definitive.

[3]See chap. 2, pp. 23-8 for a review.

[4]Spitta, Offenbarung des Johannes, 103-9; Boismard, "'L'Apocalypse'," 507-41.

[5]Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 423-29; Collins, Combat Myth, 20-21; Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 292-93.

[6]For example, Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 420-21; Ford, Revelation, 138.

[7]See chap. 1, pp. 7-13.

[8]See e.g., Swete, Apocalypse, 126 and Mounce, Revelation, 138.

[9]See Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 414-15; Swete, Apocalypse, 126; Ford, Revelation, 162.

[10]Mounce (Revelation, 394) and Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 278) give thoughts that could lead to such a conclusion, but they do not express it fully nor do they demonstrate it.

[11]See e.g., Ford, Revelation, 162-63 and Caird, Commentary on Revelation, 125-26. Swete (Apocalypse, 126) and Charles (Commentary on Revelation, 1:258-59) express no opinion in this regard.

[12]See Swete, Apocalypse, 127; Ford, Revelation, 158 and Mounce, Revelation, 208.

[13]Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 415 and Swete, Apocalypse, 127.

[14]For example, Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 276-78) recognizes the importance of the angel of Rev 10, but he does not analyze or demonstrate this importance - nor does he critique the angel's appearance.

[15]The description "the throne of God and the lamb" (Rev 22:1, 3) is, as Swete (Apocalypse, 198) says, "a startling expression." Elsewhere the lamb is "in the midst of the throne" (Rev 5:6; 7:17), and "the one sitting on the throne (God)" is distinguished from Christ (Rev 5:13; 6:16; 7:10). But in Rev 22:1-3 the exalted Christ as the lamb shares the throne with God.

APPENDIX

In recent time studies on the literary structure of Revelation have appeared.[1] No final conclusion has gained general acceptance, despite the fact that several have been offered. A by-product of this present study of the angel of Rev 10 is the realization of the importance of this chapter in the overall literary structure of the book. Though Mazzaferri in his work on Revelation recognizes this importance,[2] yet a detailed analysis of the entire literary structure that takes into account the role of Rev 10 needs to be done. Collins has shown the importance of Rev 12 in such an analysis. She believes that Rev 4-5 and 12 are the two foci which determine the structure of Revelation.[3] It would seem, however, that while Rev 4-5 and 12 are important in determining the interpretation of the message of Revelation, Rev 1 and 10 are more important in determining the literary structure of the book, in which structure then the content of the message is presented.

The importance of Rev 10 derives from the fact that while Rev 1-7 is under the mediation of Jesus Christ, Rev 8-22 is under the mediating control of angels. Do these two parts form the literary structure of Revelation: that mediated by Christ (Rev 1-7) and that mediated by the angels (Rev 8-22)?[4] In Rev 1 Jesus Christ commissions John and imparts the message that he is to

deliver to the churches (Rev 2-7). In Rev 10 the angel commissions John with a message to the world which usually is interpreted to run from Rev 12 onward.[5] But since at Rev 8 angels have already taken over from Christ the mediation of the message and continue to do so up to Rev 22, the message to the world may begin at Rev 8 and not at 12. If this should be the case, then the commissioning role of the angel of Rev 10 coincides with the message delivered by the angels (Rev 8-22) - in the same way that Christ's commissioning role in Rev 1 coincides with Rev 1-7. Then, the two parts of the literary structure of Revelation would be chaps. 1-7 and 8-22, each with its corresponding commissioning figure, Christ and the angel of Rev 10.

If the above is true, why does the commissioning angel not appear in Rev 8 at the beginning of that part of the message mediated by angels - as Christ appears in Rev 1 at the beginning of the first part which he mediates? A possible answer is that the prime mediator of the whole message (of both parts) is Jesus Christ, even though angels take over as mediators of the second part. This primacy is indicated by the fact that the seventh seal, which is opened by Christ (Rev 8:1-5), introduces the seven-trumpet angels and thus ushers in the second part of the message. This suggests that the second part (Rev 8-22) is under the overall mediating control of Christ even though angels visibly mediate this part.

Commentators for the most part are silent about the connection between the seventh seal and the introduction of the seven-trumpet angels. When a

connection is made between the seventh seal and what follows in Rev 8:1-5, the silence referred to in 8:1b is usually mentioned and elaborated on, and when the seven-trumpet angels are discussed (8:2), it is done in separation from the seventh seal and the silence in 8:1.[6] But surely the "silence" of Rev 8:1b is not the only element introduced by the opening of the seventh seal. Immediately following the mention of the "silence" is the reference to the seven-trumpet angels in 8:2. Rev 8:1-2 says, "And when he (Christ) opened the seventh seal, there came about a silence in heaven for about a half hour, and I saw the seven angels who stand before God and there were given to them seven trumpets." The opening of the seventh seal introduces, by means of the mediation of the seven-trumpet angels, the sequence of visions beginning with Rev 8:6.[7] The silence accompanying the opening of the seventh seal is a temporary pause or suspension of the visionary revelation[8] which marks the cessation of Christ's mediation and introduces that of the angels.

To dramatize the fact that the second part of Revelation (chaps. 8-22) is under the mediating control of Christ, though given by angels, the author of Revelation introduces the angel of Rev 10 between the sixth and seventh trumpet-angels (Rev 9:13-21 and 11:15-19, respectively). This angel acts out the mediating role of Christ at this place in the literary structure to remind the reader that, though angels are mediating the second part, it is still under the overall mediating role of Christ. John puts the angel of Rev 10 between the sixth and seventh trumpet-angels, as an interlude, to correspond symmetrically

to the interlude of Rev 7 between the sixth and seventh seals (Rev 6:12-17 and 8:1-5).[9]

However all this is finally sorted out in a detailed analysis of the literary structure of Revelation, it seems to the present writer that Rev 10 and its angel will play a prominent, if not a leading, role.

NOTES

[1]E.g., Collins, Combat Myth, 5-55; Brütsch, La Clarté de l'Apocalypse, 168-76; Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 330-78; and Feuillet, "Le chapitre X," 420-28.

[2]Genre of Revelation, 264-317.

[3]Combat Myth, 26-32; 40-4.

[4]Whether these two parts are repetitive, that is, the first part to the churches presents the same message given by the angels to the world but in different terms, or whether the two parts are two different messages is yet to be conclusively determined. If the two parts are the same, then the two scrolls of Rev 5 and 10 are the same scroll - as advocated by Mazzaferri (Genre of Revelation, 278), though he does not determine where the division between the two parts is to be made.

[5]Feuillet ("Le chapitre X," 428), for example, believes the two parts are Rev 4-11 and 12-22 (see also Collins, Combat Myth, 26).

[6]E.g., Mounce, Revelation, 178-9.

[7]See Beckwith, Apocalypse, 269; and Barnhouse, Revelation, 155.

[8]Caird, Commentary on Revelation, 106; Swete, Apocalypse, 106-07. For a possible theological significance of the silence and its rabbinical background see Ford, Revelation, 130, 135.

[9]See Swete, Apocalypse, 126; Mounce, Revelation, 205; Beckwith, Apocalypse, 573; Mazzaferri, Genre of Revelation, 293-4.

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