

THE NATURE OF YESHUA IN THE REVELATION GIVEN TO JOHN

Those who hold to a high Christology of Yeshua being the eternal, uncreated Son of God who is God, are internally divided as to whether or not Yeshua the Son is eternally subordinated to the Father, or only subordinated to the Father in His human Incarnation. Revelation has much more to communicate about the relationship of the Father and Son.

REVELATION 3:7-13

“And to the angel of the [assembly] in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: ‘I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will cause *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and *make them* know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that *hour* which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the [assemblies].”

Significant promises are made to those of the assembly at Philadelphia by Yeshua the Messiah (Revelation 3:7-11).³⁸ Resultant of the faithfulness that the Philadelphian Believers have demonstrated, Yeshua promises them significant rewards:

“The one who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the Temple of My God, and he will never leave it. And on him I will write the name of My God and the name of the city of My God—the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God—and My own new Name” (Revelation 3:12, TLV).

Revelation 3:12 employs the possessive pronoun “My” a total of four times, in reference to the relationship that Yeshua the Son has to God the Father:

- *tō naō tou Theou mou* (τῷ ναῷ τοῦ θεοῦ μου); “the temple of My God”
- *to onoma tou Theou mou* (τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ μου); “the name of My God”
- *to onoma tēs poleōs tou Theou mou* (τὸ ὄνομα τῆς πόλεως τοῦ θεοῦ μου); “the name of the city of My God”
- *tēs kainēs Ierousalēm hē katabainousa ek tou ouranou apo tou Theou mou* (τῆς καινῆς Ἱερουσαλήμ ἡ καταβαίνουσα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ μου); “the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God”

Why do we see the possessive pronoun “My” used four times? There is not a huge amount of discussion, if any at all, in most commentaries of the Book of Revelation on this. Yet, this issue can and does arise from those who hold to a low Christology of Yeshua being a created entity. Osborne is among the few who has said something about the presence of the possessive pronoun “My” in Revelation 3:12:

“The added τοῦ θεοῦ μου (*tou theou mou*, of my God) is significant. It is found four times in this verse alone. Elsewhere Jesus calls his Father ‘my God’ (cf. 2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; Heb. 1:2-9; 1 Pet. 1:3, which mention ‘the God of our Lord Jesus Christ’) in the cry of dereliction (Mark 14:34 par. Matt. 27:46), at his resurrection (John 20:17), and in the letter to Sardis (Rev. 3:2). As in 3:2

³⁸ The issue of the “synagogue of Satan” is addressed, in various parts of the author’s book *Israel in Future Prophecy*; the issue of “the hour of testing” is addressed in the author’s publication *The Dangers of Pre-Tribulationism*.

(and 1:6, 'his God') the oneness between Christ and the Father is emphasized (as also in 'my father,' 2:27; 3:5, 21; or 'his father,' 1:6; 14:1)."³⁹

There is hardly enough information in Revelation 3:12 and its employment of "My God," to make a decisive declaration that Yeshua the Messiah cannot be integrated into the Divine Identity. There is enough information in Revelation 3:12 and its employment of "My God," as opposed to "our God," to recognize that Yeshua the Son and God the Father have a special relationship that no one else has. Further investigation of this relationship, and its various components and dynamics, is required. Revelation 3:12 requires it as much, as Yeshua speaks of "My new name" (*to onoma tou to kainon*, τὸ ὄνομά μου τὸ καινόν). While a mystery to many people, Yeshua's new name should be rightly associated with His return, the defeat of Israel's enemies, and the establishment of His reign (cf. Revelation 19:11-21).

REVELATION 3:14-22

"To the angel of the [assembly] in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and *that* the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the [assembly]."

The message delivered by Yeshua the Messiah to the assembly at Laodicea, is commonly appropriated in a great deal of contemporary teaching and preaching to apply to the lukewarmness, and compromised state, of much of today's Christianity (Revelation 3:15-20). Within the immediate introduction of Yeshua the Messiah to the Laodicean assembly, are significant titles ascribed: "The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God's creation" (Revelation 3:14, NRSV). Of these titles, the one which immediately jumps out as bearing the most significance for evaluating the nature of Yeshua is *hē archē tēs ktiseōs tou Theou* (ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ), rendered by the NIV as "the ruler of God's creation." The term *archē* (ἀρχή) can notably mean both "the first cause, the beginning," and "an authority figure who initiates activity or process, ruler, authority" (BDAG).⁴⁰

There have been a number of important thoughts interjected on what *archē* is to mean in regard to Revelation 3:14, and what is being communicated about the nature of Yeshua. Given how Paul's letter to the Colossians was intended to be read in Laodicea (Colossians 4:16), connections have logically been made between the hymn of Colossians 1:15-20 (addressed previously) and what the Apostle John records here. Previously, it has been declared that Yeshua is "the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:15-16). Commentators are often witnessed as making further connections with John 1:3, "All things came into being

³⁹ Osborne, *Revelation*, 197.

⁴⁰ BDAG, 138.