

## THE NATURE OF YESHUA IN THE REVELATION GIVEN TO JOHN

There is no ambiguity in Revelation 5:14 that Yeshua the Messiah is being worshipped, a clear sign of Divinity. Yet, worship of Yeshua the Son does not take place independent from worship of God the Father, as it is issued jointly “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (Revelation 5:13). Still, to worship Yeshua the Messiah—even in association with God the Father—would be idolatry if Yeshua the Messiah were not genuinely God and integrated into the Divine Identity. As Fee explains, “the extremely high Christology is unmistakable, in that the praise that follows is that which can be given to God alone, or else one’s praise borders on a new form of idolatry, where the one and only God is now seen as two separate deities.”<sup>58</sup> Unfortunately in much of contemporary Christianity, there are forms of what can be labeled as “Jesus-olatry,” where the Son is worshipped almost exclusively, and the Father is quantitatively left out of the picture. Worship of Yeshua the Son in Revelation 5:14 takes place in association with worship of God the Father.

### REVELATION 6:15-17

**“Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’”**

In the scene of the apocalypse, within the Book of Revelation, it is witnessed how humanity at large—and most especially kings and rulers—are seen cowering in fear at the judgment being issued against them by the God of Israel (Revelation 6:15). They are seen trying to hide in caves and among rocks, and so they cry out to the terrestrial elements, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!” (Revelation 6:16, NIV). There is a specific Isaianic background for this:

“Enter the rock and hide in the dust from the terror of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty...In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship, in order to go into the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs before the terror of the LORD and the splendor of His majesty, when He arises to make the earth tremble” (Isaiah 2:9, 20-21).

That God the Father and Yeshua the Lamb are both involved with the wrath that is being dispensed here, is clear enough from the text. What is not as clear, is what is intended by the people of the Earth exclaiming, “because the great day of Their wrath has come!” (Revelation 6:17, HCSB), *hoti ēlthen hē hēmera hē megalē tēs orgēs autōn* (ὅτι ἦλθεν ἡ ἡμέρα ἡ μεγάλη τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτῶν). It would be entirely legitimate for the people of the Earth to instead say, “for the great day of God’s wrath has come” (Revelation 6:17, NASU modified), rather than speak in the plural, “for the great day of their wrath has come” (Revelation 6:17, NASU original). In fact the Textus Receptus has, “For the great day of His wrath has come” (Revelation 6:17, NKJV), which has *tēs orgēs autou* (τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ) in the singular, rather than *tēs orgēs autōn* (τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτῶν) in the plural. Metzger explains the variants which appear in witnesses of Revelation 6:17:

“Although the reading αὐτοῦ is supported by A P 046 almost all minuscules cop<sup>sa, bo</sup> arm eth al, it appears to be the easier reading, having been introduced to avoid the ambiguity of αὐτῶν (which is strongly supported by Ⲛ C 1611 1854 2053 2344 it<sup>sig. ar</sup> vg syr<sup>ph, h</sup> al) and to carry on the reference to τῆς ὀργῆς τοῦ ἀρνίου of the preceding verse.”<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Fee, *Revelation*, 88.

<sup>59</sup> Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, pp 739-740.

The singular, “for the great day of his wrath,” could be applied to either “Him who sits on the throne” or to “the Lamb” (Revelation 6:16). Some would read the singular *autou* as regarding God the Father, but others would read the singular *autou* as regarding Yeshua the Lamb. Among those who think that the Messiah is being referred to with the textual reading *tēs orgēs autou* or “His wrath,” is Aune: “The pronoun αὐτοῦ, ‘his,’ in its present context...refers to the Lamb, indicating the Christian tendency to place Christ in a central role in the inauguration of the eschaton.”<sup>60</sup> Following the textual reading of *tēs orgēs autōn* or “their wrath,” Fee asserts, “John’s narrative indicates that...people would much prefer death from so-called acts of God rather than having to face the eternal God himself, Father and Son, in the place of judgment.”<sup>61</sup>

Whether one prefers the singular “His wrath” or plural “their wrath,” in Revelation 6:17, the presence of Yeshua the Lamb in the judgment of the wicked of Planet Earth, and His close association with God the Father, raises enough legitimate questions of whether or not a supernatural yet ultimately created being could be depicted as holding such an exalted place in the cosmos.

## REVELATION 7:9-17

“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches *were* in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’ And all the angels were standing around the throne and *around* the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, ‘Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, *be* to our God forever and ever. Amen.’ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, ‘These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?’ I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.’”

Much discussion of the Book of Revelation involves various end-time debates over the identity of the multitude witnessed in Revelation 7:9, 13-15, and how they arrived before the throne. While this is important, what is arguably more important are the declarations made before the throne, and the activity which takes place. The multitude before the throne exclaims, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!” (Revelation 7:10, RSV), which is obviously a statement about how important God the Father and Yeshua the Lamb are in the final victory that Revelation portrays. It is fairly deduced that this scene of veneration involves both humans and angels (Revelation 7:11a), and as it is narrated, *kai pesan enōpion tou thronou epi ta prosōpa autōn kai prosekynēsan tō Theō* (καὶ ἔπεσαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου ἐπὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ Θεῷ), “and fell before the throne on the faces of them and they worshiped – God” (Revelation 7:11b, Brown and Comfort).<sup>62</sup> Textually, the worship of Revelation 7:11b is specified as being directed toward God the Father (Revelation 7:12), but it is also to be recognized how there is a close association of God the Father and Yeshua the Lamb.

<sup>60</sup> David Aune, *Word Biblical Commentary: Revelation*, Vol 52b (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 421.

<sup>61</sup> Fee, *Revelation*, 102.

<sup>62</sup> Brown and Comfort, 869.