

## The Nature of Yeshua in the Revelation Given to John

*enōpion tou thronou epi ta prosōpa autōn kai prosekunēsan 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. The Lamb here is supernatural to be sure, and is to be differentiated from all other supernatural beings or entities—precisely because of the salvation provided in the Lamb (Revelation 7:10)!

Revelation 7:16-17 says, of those standing before the throne, “Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” (NIV). Of particular significance to this is Isaiah 49:10, “They will not hunger or thirst, nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; for He who has compassion on them will lead them and will guide them to springs of water.” It is unambiguous that the Shepherd here is the LORD or YHWH (Isaiah 49:8),<sup>63</sup> but in Revelation 7:17 the Shepherd is actually Yeshua the Lamb. Here, Yeshua has taken on the Divine Identity of the LORD or YHWH. In the estimation of Keener, this is to be taken as evidence that Yeshua is God:

“Revelation 7:16-17 especially recalls Isaiah 49:10. In that passage God had already promised that in the time of Israel’s restoration, his people would no longer hunger or thirst, nor would heat or the sun beat down on them (Isa. 49:10; cf. Rev. 21:23). Further, God as the One with compassion on his people (cf. Isa. 49:10-15) would ‘guide them and lead them beside springs of water’ (Isa. 49:10; cf. Jer. 31:9). God himself also promised to wipe away the tears of his people (Isa. 25:8).

“‘The Lamb’ in 7:17 clearly fulfills a role Isaiah assigned to Yahweh; John is assuredly claiming Jesus’ deity...”<sup>64</sup>

## Revelation 17:14

### “because He is Lord of lords and King of kings”

“These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”

Within the judgment scene of Babylon in Revelation 17, it is said of the ten horns or ten kings (Revelation 17:12), that “They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings” (Revelation 17:14). The reason that Yeshua the Lamb will overcome or overpower these rulers of the Earth, is *hoti kurios kuriōn estin kai basileus basileōn* (ὅτι κύριος κυρίων ἐστὶν καὶ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων). To an interpreter such as Witherington, “The title indicates the divinity of the Lamb.”<sup>65</sup> Osborne is more specific in his assessment, “This is drawing on the Jewish and early Christian motif as Yahweh as ‘King of kings and Lord of lords,’ then applying this to the Lamb as one with God.”<sup>66</sup> And indeed, it is

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

<sup>63</sup> “Thus says the LORD, ‘In a favorable time I have answered You, and in a day of salvation I have helped You; and I will keep You and give You for a covenant of the people, to restore the land, to make *them* inherit the desolate heritages’” (Isaiah 49:8).

<sup>64</sup> Keener, *Revelation*, pp 245-246; also Fee, *Revelation*, pp 116-117.

<sup>65</sup> Witherington, *Revelation*, 224.

<sup>66</sup> Osborne, *Revelation*, 623.

correctly concluded that Yeshua the Lamb possessing the title “Lord of lords and King of kings,” is taken from descriptions of YHWH witnessed in the Tanach or Old Testament:

“For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords [*elohei ha’elohim v’adonei ha’adonim*, וַאֲדֹנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וַאֲדֹנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים], the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe” (Deuteronomy 10:17).

“Give thanks to the God of gods [*’elohei ha’elohim*, לְאֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים], for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Give thanks to the Lord of lords [*’adonei ha’adonim*, לְאֲדֹנֵי הָאֲדֹנִים], for His lovingkindness is everlasting” (Psalm 136:2-3).

“The king answered Daniel and said, ‘Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings [*elah elahim u’marei mal’kin*, וְיִמְרָא מַלְכִין וְאֵלֵה אֱלֹהִין] and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery’” (Daniel 2:47).

Similar ascriptions also appear in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha:

“But the King of kings [*ho de basileus tōn basileōn*, ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλέων] aroused the anger of Antiochus against the scoundrel; and when Lysias informed him that this man was to blame for all the trouble, he ordered them to take him to Beroea and to put him to death by the method which is the custom in that place” (2 Maccabees 13:4).

“And they said to the Lord of the potentates, ‘For he is the Lord of lords, and the God of gods, and the King of kings, and the seat of his glory (stands) throughout all the generations of the world’” (1 Enoch 9:4).<sup>67</sup>

In being called “Lord of lords and King of kings,” Yeshua the Lamb is seen being designated with a title reserved in other places for the One God of Israel. Would a supernatural, but ultimately created figure or entity, be permitted to be called by the same titles and ascriptions as the One God of Israel such as this? **No**. Yeshua can only be “Lord of lords and King of kings,” if He is genuinely God, integrated into the Divine Identity.

Furthermore, in being labeled “Lord of lords and King of kings” in Revelation 17:14, it cannot go overlooked how commentators have probed various claims of subversion from both the Ancient Near East and Greco-Roman classicism.<sup>68</sup> Other figures in history—both supernatural and terrestrial—had claimed to be the Supreme Master or Leader. Yeshua, in stark contrast, is the only One who can be truly regarded as “Lord of lords and King of kings,” making all others imposters and usurpers. Most significant would have meant what the title “Lord of lords and king of kings” meant to the original, late-First and early-Second Century recipients of the Book of Revelation. Fee emphasizes not only Yeshua’s integration into the Divine Identity here, but also how the Messiah is the true Lord and King, not the Roman Caesar:

“John’s readers are promised that **the Lamb will triumph over them** (the ten kings and the beast), and will do so **because he** alone—not Caesar—**is Lord** over all **lords and King** above all **kings**. Here emerges once again the very high Christology of this book, where Old Testament language used specifically to identify the God of Israel is now transferred to Christ.”<sup>69</sup>

<sup>67</sup> E. Isaac, “1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol 1, 42.

<sup>68</sup> Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*, 259; David Aune, *Word Biblical Commentary: Revelation*, Vol 52c (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), pp 954-955.

<sup>69</sup> Fee, *Revelation*, 240.