

# The End

## Descriptions of Jesus

### Introduction

Last week, I asked you to read Revelation chapter 1, and answer the question below:

**Q:** What passages (Old Testament and/or New Testament) provide similar descriptions of Jesus? (NOTE: this could be a large chunk of text, or just a similarity in phrase).

The book of Revelation, is a book full of symbols and illustrations and that includes its descriptions of individuals. Today we will look at some of the descriptions used of Jesus (and heavenly beings), where their OT connections are found, and why that's important to know.

### Revelation 1-3 – The Son of Man and the Seven Churches

The opening chapter of Revelation provides us with a series of descriptions and titles of Jesus. Most of these are either explicit Old Testament quotes, or find their foundation within the Old Testament text. Below are the various descriptions of Jesus and where they find their Old Testament home:

“...from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, (Revelation 3:14) the firstborn of the dead (Psalm 89:27), and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, (Daniel 7:13) and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. (Zechariah 12:10) Even so. Amen. I am the Alpha and the Omega,” (Revelation 21:6; 22:13) says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

(Revelation 1:5-8)

“Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, (Exodus 25:37; 2 Chronicles 4:20; Zechariah 4:2) and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, (Daniel 7:13; 8:17) clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. (Daniel 10:5) The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. (Daniel 7:9) His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, (Revelation 2:18; 19:12) refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. (Daniel 10:6; Ezekiel 43:2) In his right hand he held seven stars, (Revelation 2:1; 3:1) from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, (Isaiah 49:2; Revelation 2:12, 16; 19:15) and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.”

(Revelation 1:12-16)

“When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. (Daniel 8:17-18; 10:9-10, 15) But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, (Isaiah 41:4; 44:6; 48:12; Revelation 2:8; 22:3) and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.”

(Revelation 1:17-18)

**Q:** What do you notice about these quotation connections?

**Q:** In what ways might that be significant?

Old Testament Importance:

The book of Daniel (as well as Ezekiel and Isaiah) are exile texts and therefore come with encouragement about how the exile will ultimately resolve.

Referring back to Daniel would give the impression that the hopeful vision presented to Daniel is finding its conclusion in their time in Revelation.

## **Revelation 5 and onward – The Lamb of God**

The title of “Lamb” is given to Jesus beginning in Revelation 5 and becomes a descriptive thread throughout the rest of the book (5:1, 6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 8:1; 12:11; 13:8; 14:1, 4, 10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:17, 9; 21:9, 14, 22, 23, 27; 22:1, 3).

This is one of those terms that has significance, not just within the Old Testament, but within other writings of John (John 1:29, 36).

Throughout the Old Testament, the terminology “lamb” isn’t necessarily used of the Messiah, but it is the conversation about the importance of the sacrificial lamb that provides the theological significance for the New Testament name:

In the account of Abraham being asked to sacrifice his son Isaac, Abraham tells his son that *“God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering”* (Gen. 22:7-8). The parallels of this chapter of Genesis to the work of Jesus is beautiful, and establishes the idea of a lamb being sacrificed in the place of others.

Exodus 12 introduces us to the practice of Passover, something the Jewish people would keep by command on a yearly basis. Exodus 12:1-6 specifies the process of selection and lays out the importance of a lamb “without blemish”.

Isaiah paints a picture of a beautiful future where the “wolf shall dwell with the lamb” (Isaiah 11:6) and “graze together” (Isaiah 65:25). The second of these references takes place in discussion of the “new heavens and a new earth” (Isaiah 65:17), a section that John will draw from heavily.

Throughout Revelation, the “Lamb” is talked about as one that has been “slain” (5:6, 12; 13:8) and has spilled his blood for others (7:14; 12:11). The “Lamb” is also the one regarded as worthy of

worship (5:8, 12, 13; 7:9-10; 22:3). The “Lamb” accomplishes the will of God (6:1, 16; 7:17; 14:10; 15:3; 17:14). The “Lamb” marries His bride, the church (19:7, 9; 21:9; Eph. 5:25-32). The “Lamb” has “twelve apostles” (21:14), He is the temple (21:22), the lamp (21:23), His book is the barrier for entry (21:27), and from Him the “water of life” will flow (22:1; John 4:14).

Throughout Revelation, “the Lamb” is the slain, but still standing, conqueror of God who brings to an end sin and its consequences by redeeming His people from sin and bringing us to a new creation where only righteousness dwells (21:27; 22:3).

## Descriptions of Heavenly Beings

Descriptions in Revelation do not end with Jesus. John gives us a description of various beings, good and evil, throughout the Revelation. These also find connection into the Old Testament:

“And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”

(Revelation 4:6b-8)

This section of Revelation connects to Isaiah 6 in regard to “six wings” (Isaiah 6:2) as well as the phrase “holy, holy, holy” (Isaiah 6:3).

It also connects to descriptions (partially) found in Ezekiel 1 and 10. In Ezekiel 1, we see “four living creatures” (Ezekiel 1:5). They are said to have four faces resembling a “man”, “lion”, “ox”, and “eagle” (Ezekiel 1:10).

This connects to the references to “cherubim” in Ezekiel 10 in regard to being “full of eyes all around” (Ezekiel 10:12). The cherubim are said to each have “four faces”: one of a cherub, one of a human face, one of a lion, and one of an eagle (Ezekiel 10:14).

### Old Testament Importance

Both Isaiah and Ezekiel are prophets in exile. They are writing to explain the exile, convict the people of God, and relay the hope of God to His people.

Both writings concern prophets that are having a “vision”.

Both passages in Ezekiel deal with the glory of God being something that is movable. In other words, the glory of God is not confined to the temple of God, but is found anywhere and everywhere that God wants to be. Even in the foreign land of Babylon, God is present.

**Q:** How might the Old Testament context fit into Revelation?

## Summary

Revelation presents consistent imagery to its readers. Imagery that is first used in the Old Testament, and then carried throughout the writing of the Revelation. The use of these Old Testament exile writings should bring about a feeling of comfort that comes from the worlds patterns: God's people often find themselves at odds with ruling powers, but God always delivers from those powers. The same will be true for these Christians suffering under Roman persecution, as well as for us. Our struggle against the evils and injustice brought about by sin will ultimately be defeated by the same God who has fought for His people in the past.

## Take Home

Search for the phrase "every tribe and language and people and nation" (Revelation 5:9), or something similar throughout Revelation. Record the occurrences below

**Q:** Why might this phrase and the ones like it be significant in Revelation and/or the grand layout of the Bible?