

Handout Revelation Lesson 13

Parallels in Ezekiel and Revelation Chapter 10:

Ezekiel	Revelation	Prophetic Action
Ezekiel 12:24-28	Revelation 10:7	There is no more delay; the time for waiting is over!
Ezekiel 3:1-3	Revelation 10:8-10	The eating of the little scroll sweet as honey.
Ezekiel 25-32	Revelation 10: 11	The prophecy against the nations.

Some scholars interpret the other “powerful angel coming down from heaven” in 10:1 as another angel/messenger, or as one of the seven Angels of the Presence. However, he has several divine attributes:

1. He is wrapped in a cloud just as God often appears in a cloud (i.e., Ex 13:20-22; 14:19; 19:18; Dt 4:11; Lam 3:44).
2. He has a rainbow over his head like the rainbow that surrounds God’s throne (i.e., Ez 1:26-28; Rev 4:3).
3. He stands on the sea and the land, suggesting divine authority over the earth (Rev 10:5).

Because of these divine attributes, some scholars interpret this mighty angel as Christ. The Scriptural evidence that supports this interpretation is compelling, and the key to understanding the connection lies in the description of this figure:

1. The angel/messenger is powerful.
2. A cloud surrounds him.
3. There is a rainbow over his head.
4. His face is like the sun.
5. His legs resemble pillars of fire.

The Old Testament prophet Ezekiel was told to eat a scroll (Ez Chapter 3), and Daniel received a scroll but was told not to write down what was written in it or reveal a secret that would take place in the future (Dan Chapter 12). A comparison between Daniel Chapter 12, Ezekiel Chapter 3, and Revelation Chapter 10:

1. Daniel must keep the words in the scroll/book sealed and a secret.
2. He sees a man who is unidentified except for his linen garment, and he was swearing an oath in God’s name.
3. The words in the scroll/book were to remain sealed until the time of the End.
4. Like the words in the book Daniel saw, what John heard from the seven thunders was to remain a secret.
5. The End in Daniel refers to the end of the Tamid sacrifice (perpetual sacrifice) and Temple worship.
6. Both Ezekiel and John must eat a secret scroll that will taste sweet but become bitter in their stomachs (Ez 3:1-3).

In Rev 5-6, the powerful angel swears an oath. Oath swearing is one of the three parts of covenant formation that also include a sacrifice and a sacred meal. Passages in the Old Testament where God swears an oath:

For example, see these passages where God swears an oath (bold added for emphasis):

1. Genesis 22:15-18 ~ In God’s covenant with Abraham.

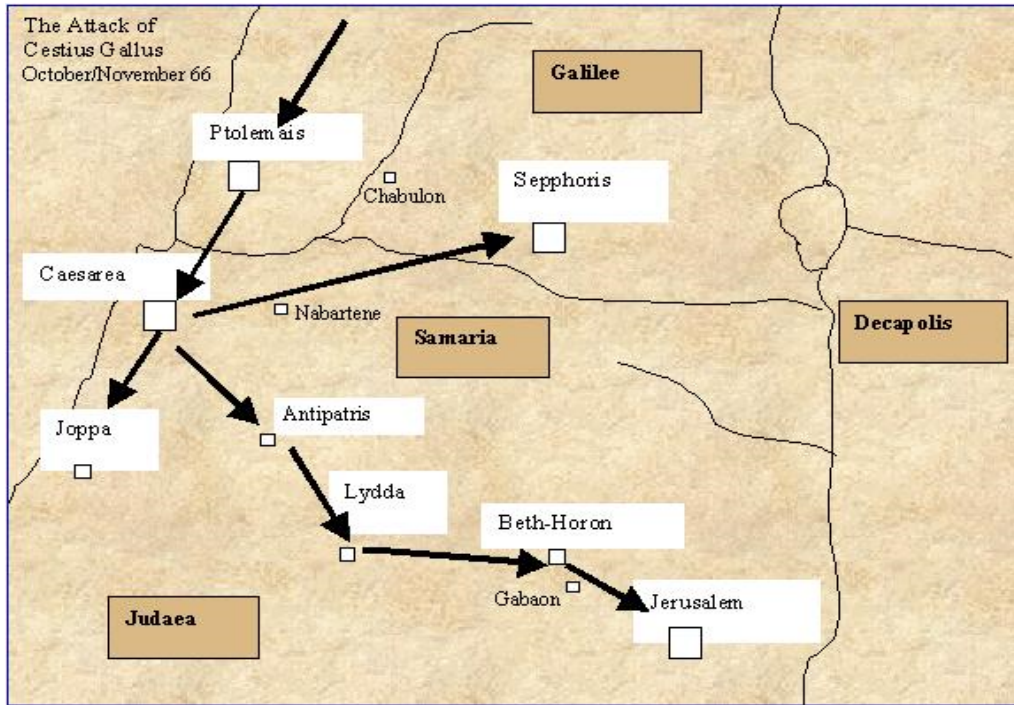
2. Numbers 32:10-11 ~ God swore an oath to bring judgment on the rebellious Exodus generation.
3. Deuteronomy 32:40 ~ ***“I shall raise my hand to heaven, and I say, as surely as I live forever, when I have whetted my flashing sword, I shall enforce justice....”*** The raising of the right hand (or both hands) to Heaven is an act of oath-swearing.
4. Hebrews 6:13-17 (referring back to Genesis 22:18) ~ *When God made the promise to Abraham, **He swore by His own self**, since there was no one greater He could swear by ...* Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, refers to the promise of God’s covenant oath when he said: *“This is the oath He swore to our father Abraham”* (Lk 1:73).
5. Daniel 12:1-13; especially 12:7 ~ (referring to “the man in linen”) *He raised his right hand and his left to heaven **and swore by him who lives forever**, “A time and two times, and half a time; and all these things will come true, once the crushing of the holy people’s power is over.”*
6. Ezekiel 16:59 ~ Yahweh speaking to Jerusalem, who deserves judgment for making light of His oath.
7. Ezekiel 17:19 ~ *So, the Lord Yahweh says this: “As I live, **I swear it: my oath** which he has disregarded, my treaty which he has broken”* (speaking of the king of Jerusalem).
8. Ezekiel 20:5 ~ referring to Numbers Chapter 14 and Deuteronomy Chapter 32: *“On the day when I chose Israel, when **I pledged by word to them**”* (= oath swearing).

In Rev 10:8-11, John performs a prophetic act (in Hebrew an `ot) by eating a scroll, like Ezekiel’s `ot in Ez 3:1-11 connected to the prophecy of Jerusalem’s destruction. Other prophetic acts by prophets include Ezekiel cutting his beard into three parts and burning it (Ez 5:1-4, 12), Jeremiah and the clay pot (Jer 18:1-12), and Jesus’ cleansing of the Jerusalem Temple three times (Jn 2:13-22; Mt 21:12-13; Mk 11:11, 15-17), and Jesus cursing the barren fig tree (Mt 21:18-19; Mk 11:12-14).

Numbers 5, Ezekiel 3, and Revelation 10 are the only Biblical passages that refer to eating words written on a scroll. The key to the interpretation of both Ezekiel and John’s scroll in Revelation Chapter 10 is probably in Numbers 5:12-13, which is the Law testing a wife accused of adultery. In the test, the wife had to drink water in which a scroll containing a ground-up list of her adulterous sins. If she were guilty, the water would turn bitter in her stomach. It was called the “ordeal by bitter (sour) water.” The connection is that Israel (Judea/Jerusalem) had been the unfaithful wife of Yahweh. She had sinned in adultery through idol worship, and now through the “ordeal of bitter water,” symbolized by the scroll, she has been found guilty, and the punishment is death. There is also oath-swearing in the “ordeal of bitter water” compared to the oath of the “ordeal of bitter waters” and the angel/messenger’s oath swearing. There is also a chiasmatic structure in the passage to emphasize the bitterness of the scroll in verse 10:

- A1: *eat it, it will turn your stomach **sour (bitter)***
- B1: *but it will taste as **sweet as honey***
- B2: *I ate it, and it tasted as **sweet as honey**;*
- A2: *but ... my stomach turned **sour (bitter)**.*

Gallus' invasion of Judea in AD 66 after crossing the Euphrates River



Vespasian's invasion of Judea in AD 67-69 that began by crossing the Euphrates River

