*This paper will be presented in a session sponsored by the SBL Digital Humanities in Biblical, Early Jewish, and Christian Studies Consultation. The theme of the session is on Digital Manuscript Studies (though the other papers, from their abstracts, deal more with digital collections and publication of manuscripts and papyri than my paper). We don’t have any time scheduled for responses or questions, but our papers will subsequently be submitted for peer review this January for publication in a 2016 issue of the* Journal of Religion, Media and Digital Culture *(JRMDC.com). I’m also hoping to repurpose much of the research here in my dissertation in terms of how John uses Scripture to bolster his claims of Rome’s pending judgment and the power and authority of God’s empire.*

*As such, I’m looking for three levels of feedback: First, concrete ways I can improve this project in the immediate future; second, avenues of inquiry that would prove fruitful in the January version of this paper; third, methodological concerns for a dissertation-level treatment of Revelation and intertexuality.*

*To facilitate your reading of this paper, you may want to follow along with the slides attached. To get material disseminated more quickly, the powerpoint will take your through the first few pages before the URL is needed.*

**INTRODUCTION:**

Good afternoon: Given the nature of my paper, I invite you to follow along on your own devices if possible. A brief word of caution: In order to make the text display across platforms and browsers, I have encoded the text quite small. Please zoom in until both the body text and the license are readable. Thank you.

[*http://tinyurl.com/ApocalypseAndEmpire*](http://tinyurl.com/ApocalypseAndEmpire)

The Book of Revelation, along with its Hebrew and Aramaic counterpart Daniel, has frequently served as the paradigmatic example of apocalyptic literature.[[1]](#footnote-2) John the Seer’s heavenly journey and vision of ciphered beasts and plagues of destruction, thinly veiled invectives against Rome, firmly places Revelation within the genre of Apocalypse. Yet despite the apocalyptic character of John’s narrative, many of the generic features common to other apocalypses are either absent or transformed in Revelation: Revelation is not a sealed book of Pseudepigrapha, and it contains very little “mediation” of apocalyptic visions. Perhaps most strikingly, Revelation alludes to the Jewish Scriptures more than any other apocalypse. Though there is no doubt that Revelation is apocalyptic, we are too often accustomed to treating Revelation as an apocalypse to the exclusion of other considerations of genre. Through two allusions to Amos and Daniel, John introduces his vision as both apocalypse and prophecy: [Click Apocalypse] “An apocalypse of Jesus Christ which God granted to him to show to his servants the things which must soon happen.… Blessed is the one who reads and those who hear the words of prophecy and keep the things which are written in it” (Rev 1:3). Revelation is a prophetic text to be read.

This paper explores how reading this ancient text through modern textual techniques highlights its features: how might digital editions enhance our reading of Revelation? In particular, I am concerned with John’s participation in the tradition of reworking previous prophetic oracles in light of present social and historical circumstances. Using Rev 17-18 and 21-22, I argue that an online edition of Revelation exposes the dynamism and depth of the book’s intertextuality. John’s reapplies prophetic antecedents to demonstrate the validity of his vision of the Empire of Rome and the Empire of God. Freed from the spatial constraints of the fixed physical page, digital editions better represent the expansive and immersive intertextuality of Revelation. John’s book of prophecy is a text digital editions are designed to display.

**Prophetic Literature and Intertextuality:**

[Slide: Prophetic Literature] As a literary corpus, prophetic literature was “intertextual” long before Revelation.[[2]](#footnote-3) Since none of the prophets left behind a handbook explaining how they would make reference to each other, modern scholars have developed heuristic categories for describing prophetic intertextuality.[[3]](#footnote-4) [Slide: Quotation] First, prophets use verbal quotation using “a pre-existing phrase, sentence, or paragraph which is taken from another source.” Here, Joel 3:16 repeats the same phrase from Amos 1:2: “The Lord roars from Zion.” [Slide: Allusion] Second, they allude to another text or texts, either through extended verbal parallels (as in Jeremiah 29 and Isaiah 65), or through the use of distinctive “catchwords.” Notice here the wordplay invoked in Isaiah 65; English translations do not reflect Isaiah’s change of *haggolah* (the exiles) and *wegiylu* (rejoice), though the secondary interplay of building houses and dwelling in them remains clear in translation. [Slide: Themes] Third, prophets redeploy thematic parallels or motifs as literary devices to evoke other texts, such as the theme of desolated cities being retaken by the wilderness or locusts as foreign invaders.

Much has been made about the criteria for detecting intertextual references:[[4]](#footnote-5) How confident should the modern reader be that an ancient author intended to cue the audience to another text? Length of verbal parallel, precise rendering of the wording, similar themes and motifs all suggest intentionality on the author’s part; allusions act as a shibboleth to sort the sophisticated reader from the naïve.[[5]](#footnote-6) Detection of intertextuality raises questions of literary dependency: who is borrowing from whom? Was Deutero-Isaiah alluding to Jeremiah or the converse? Even when quoting, prophets rarely “cited” one another explicitly.[[6]](#footnote-7) [Slide: Citation formulae]The question of directional dependency is obviously less crucial in Revelation, but we lack the markers of citation familiar to us from John’s contemporaries that aid detection; John does not cite Scripture using crisp formulae like Matthew, Paul, or the Dead Sea Covenanters .[[7]](#footnote-8)

[Slide: Text-form] Ambiguity regarding the text-form and language of the Scriptures further complicates the detection of intertextual references within Revelation. John Scriptural references resemble both the Septuagint and Masoretic Text.[[8]](#footnote-9) The improper use of case and prepositions may reflect a quotation from a Greek text-form, rather than simple barbarism, as in Revelation 1:4-5. *apo,* of course, takes the genitive, but Revelation uses nominative forms like its source-text. Elsewhere, Revelation also quotes materials found only in the tradition preserved in the Masoretic text, such as the translated quotation of Jeremiah 51:45 in 18:4b. Scholars have attempted to resolve this dilemma by proposing numerous hypotheses. If the seer were a Jewish Christian refugee from Palestine, perhaps he freely translated a Hebrew or Aramaic text into Greek. He may have possessed a Greek recension no longer extent, or a proto-targum. Or he had both a Septuagint and a Masoretic recension in front of him and used whichever suited his needs. [6:45]

These complexities are exacerbated by the references themselves. John’s allusions are frequently short, perhaps as few as two words. They are also dense, compacted and combined phrases from multiple sources. The allusions pile up heaps upon heaps, an ever-flowing torrent flooding the reader as high as a horse’s bridle.

[Slide: Moyise data] Revelation alludes to Scripture more than other contemporary Christian text. But, given the complications of intentionality, language, brevity, and density, modern commentators and editors of critical editions have detected a wide number of references to Scripture in Revelation.[[9]](#footnote-10) [Slide: Enumerated Allusions] Broadly speaking, the tendency has been to identify increasing numbers of allusions in varying degrees of certainty. [Slide – scanned images side by side] Compare here the marginalia of the Nestle and Nestle-Aland editions from 1927, 1979, and 2012, the most recent adding Second Temple Jewish texts alongside the in*tra*-textual linkages between various sections of Revelation, parallel texts within the New Testament, and references to the Jewish Scriptures.

As a means of collecting intertextual parallels, the codex has served admirably. But the codex is a reference tool. John expected his readers to read and to *hear* the allusions of his prophecy (1:3). If the goal is for the audience to “recognize, analyze, and assimilate” the intertextual reference, better tools are available in the digital age. [Slide: SBLGNT and NA28 Online]In terms of expanding that audience globally, the pdf edition of the SBL Greek New Testament and the eclectic text of the NA28 published on their respective websites are steps in the right direction,[[10]](#footnote-11) but neither leverages the flexibility offered by modern scribal techniques to display ancient scribal practices; they are still static pages with pixels replacing ink. Both are also under copyright protection: the SBL Greek New Testament prohibits diglot translations into English, and the NA28’s license is even more restrictive. The merchants of the earth offer numerous packages of proprietary software to aid the scholar, but their fees and modules for studying biblical works is not necessarily in accordance with the budgetary constraints facing individual academics’ or institutional coffers. Fully digital editions can display not just *that* John used Scripture, but they can gesture toward how the author adapted previous materials and how the sophisticated reader might interpret John’s intertextuality.

[Slide: Four case studies] As case studies for digital editions, let us examine four passages from Revelation 17:1-6; 18:1-8; 21:22-27; and 22:6-7. [<http://encodingrevelation.github.io/revelation/apocalypseandempire.html>]. The eclectic body text is taken from Eberhard Nestle’s 1904 edition of the New Testament, the closest text to the Nestle-Aland 28 that is free from copyright protection. Where bracketed, the text has been modified to reflect the NA28. The left-most column contains internal linkages within Revelation. The right-most column contains external intertextual parallels between Revelation and the Jewish Scriptures. Both columns are eclectic, compiled from references in the NA28 and scholarly commentaries.[[11]](#footnote-12) Each reference was be tagged with metadata in accordance my research questions, such as the typology of intertextual reference, prophetic book, text-form of Scripture, or editorial confidence of authorial intentionality, though theoretically any sort of data could be collated.

Within the eclectic body text, each reference is color-coded and linked to a source text. Similarly, the marginal references display the corresponding text when clicked. These source texts are also linked to their respective Septuagint and Masoretic texts. Internal links to Revelation can be loaded by clicking on their respective references. By color-coding the text, Revelation’s hyper-saturation with intertextual references is immediately visible. Even if you don’t *hear* the allusion, the specific words are marked as allusive. Here in chapter 17, each verse has at least one reference in it. There is some confirmation bias here, given the selective nature of case studies. Nevertheless, it is instructive to visually see how thoroughly John saturated his vision of the judgment of the Rome and the establishment of the New Jerusalem as an imperial city with prophetic imagery.

**Revelation 17:1-6:** <http://encodingrevelation.github.io/revelation/revelation/chapter/ap17.html>

John’s description of Babylon’s judgment combines together imagery taken across Scripture for the enemies of God. In 17:1, an angel bearing a bowl of plagues invites the seer to gaze upon the Great Whore of Babylon. The bowl of plagues recalls the exodus narrative and the conquest of Egypt, recounted both in the Psalms and in Exodus 7-12.[[12]](#footnote-13) The use of Babylon as the ciphered name for Rome has long been understood as a means of connection the Flavians’ destruction of the Second Temple with Nebuchadnezzar’s destruction of the First. The whore dwells by mighty waters, a quotation from Jeremiah 51:13 where Babylon resides on “mighty waters.” In 17:2, all the kings of the earth are said to have fornicated with the whore, an allusion to Isaiah’s polemic against Tyre in 23:17. The nations drinking from the whore’s wine alludes to Jeremiah’s prophecy against Babylon in 25 and 51. The appeal to Nahum 3:4 recalls Nineveh as the city which enriches the nations by its fornication. The depiction of the whore riding the crimson beast recalls the two beasts of Revelation 13 and of Antiochus Epiphanes in Daniel 7. In verse six we find a drinking allusion again. The metaphor of being “drunk on blood” would seem to be an allusion to the Yahweh’s sword being drunk with the blood of his enemies; Babylon is drunk on the blood of God’s saints and martyrs, perhaps an allusion to Jezebel and harkens back to John’s assimilating rival in Thyatira he denounces in chapter 2. By combining these allusions together, Egypt, Babylon, Tyre, Ninevah, the Seleucids, and Jezebel, Revelation depicts Rome as the final enemy who is the summation of all the enemies of God and his people.

Digital editions allow for more flexibility for research. Because the references have been tagged by reference type, the reader can isolate the quotations, allusions, and thematic parallels as desired. Toggling the dropdown menu in the right-most column activates only the links of the desired classification. While we can see that Revelation references Scripture using each of the three typologies discussed above, John has a preference for allusion compared to either quotation or thematic parallels. [URL: Toggle reference dropdown] this may reflect a middle ground between the more rigid quotations and less concrete thematic parallels. Allusions have a plasticity to them that increases with density without becoming narratively overbearing.

**Revelation 18:1-8** <http://encodingrevelation.github.io/revelation/revelation/chapter/ap18.html>

Turning to Revelation 18:1-8, we find two distinctive features of Revelation’s intertextuality. The first concerns the text form used by John in the quotation of 18:2 – *epesen, epesen Babulōn*. The double proclamation of Babylon’s downfall reflects a translation of the Masoretic Text of Isaiah 21:9 - *naflah, naflah bavel*, rather than the LXX of either Isaiah or Jeremiah, *peptōken* *Babulōn* and *epesen Babulōn*, respectively*.* If one posits that John used a Greek translation, whichever translation he had reflected the Masoretic text of Isaiah 21:9 but used the aorist like Jeremiah, rather than the perfect of Isaiah. Alternatively, John might have used a Hebrew text and he translated Isaiah accordingly.[[13]](#footnote-14)

The second intertextual feature is the so-called “double utilization” of a single Scriptural image for two purposes. The cup of wine, again a reference to Jeremiah, served as the cup of the Great Whore’s lustful iniquity in 17:2. In 18:3, however, the wine of the wrath returns again, though now the cup is God’s cup of wrath which causes the nations to fall. These double utilizations play upon the flexibility of metaphor and prophecy. From a semiotic perspective, the cup can signify both the crime (fornication) and the justice (God’s wrath). The two are collapsed into one image.

The flexibility of digital editions allows a text to be encoded to address the research questions of the researcher (or potential researchers). One prominent strand of intertextual scholarship on Revelation has examined Revelation’s use of a particular prophet: the use of Daniel, the use of Ezekiel, etc… [Toggle to Jeremiah] If properly coded, the text can be manipulated to display only those references to the particular work. Here, for example, we see the heavy dependency on Jeremiah, particularly chapters 50-51, for describing the judgment of Babylon.[[14]](#footnote-15) In addition to the proclamations discussed above, we see the imperative to “come out” of Babylon in 18:4, a reference found only the MT of Jeremiah. The justness of God’s judgment and the punishment meted out is anchored in references to the Jeremiah 50: God will do to Babylon that which Babylon has done to God’s people. Similarly, the destruction by fire promised in verse 8 echoes Jeremiah’s prophecy that Babylon would be destroyed by fire Jeremiah’s oracles form the iron backbone of John’s confidence that Rome will be destroyed. [Toggle to Isaiah] Revelation yokes Jeremiah’s conviction with Deutero-Isaiah’s oracles against Babylon. Like Isaiah’s luxurious city, Rome sits in royal majesty dismissing the might of the Lord. Rome is so vain she cannot image this dirge is about her. Revelation’s proclamation of judgment thus combines

Chapter 18 also allows us to address text-critical questions. By and large, the text of the Nestle 1904 matches the NA28. Since the focus here is on intertexuality, this edition was designed to address this issue. One could, however, encode the text to display variations between manuscript traditions or individual manuscripts. The daggers here display synoptically the major variants and their textual support in the side window. Since the variations in both 18:2 and 3 regard intertexuality, some discussion is merited.

18:2 develops the theme of wild animals inhabiting cities made desolate by Yahweh’s judgment. However, the third class of animals that haunt Babylon, the unclean beasts, has been either added (or subtracted) in some manuscripts. The textual support for both readings is relatively even, though a majority of the commentators have adopted the text used by the NA28 on the grounds that it better reflects the theme of beasts inhabiting the desolated city. This demonstrates, however, the dangers of anchoring an argument in thematic parallels. The combination of unclean spirits, birds, and animals does not appear in any of the supposedly parallel source texts, though one could assume that John had Isaiah 13:21-22 in mind given the combination of *daimon* and *theria* and a progression from birds to land animals.

The variation in 18:3 presents another case of intertextuality and textual variants regarding the verb associated with *ta ethne*. The Nestle 1904 has *pepokan*, to fall, while the NA28 has *peptokan*, to drink. *Pepokan* makes logical sense, following the *epesen* of 18:2—like Babylon, the nations have fallen. *Peptokan* would match the sense of drinking implied in the metaphor of the wine. This reading may be supported by allusion to Jeremiah 51:7, translating the hiphil of *shakar* with a perfect active indicative of the verb *pino*, since the Septuagint has a form of *methusko* (as in 17:2). The aural and visual similarities which may have resulted in this manuscript variation may be intentional. John may also be engaging in word play here similar to Deutero-Isaiah’s *haggolah* and *wegiylu*. This would also not be the only example of a midrashic style of exegesis in these verses. Many commentators have noted that the Septuagint of Isaiah uses *emporion*for the Hebrew *etnan*, the wages of a prostitute. The kings of the earth committed fornication – *eporneusan* – with the whore. John may have also used a form of *pino* instead of *methusko*for the aural similarities between *pepokan* and *peptokan*.[[15]](#footnote-16) Moreover, the manuscripts which use verbs of falling have dropped the “wine” from the beginning of the verse, perhaps suggesting that 18:3 was harmonized with 14:8 and 17:2. Thus Alexandrinus and Ephraemi Rescriptus preserve “the nations have fallen because of the lust of the Whore.” By presenting the individual variants synoptically, digital editions better preserve the meaningful textual variants in their literary, narrative, and in our case, intertextual context. One might could even link publically available images to the individual manuscripts.

**Revelation 21:22-27** <http://encodingrevelation.github.io/revelation/revelation/chapter/ap21.html>

Revelation’s proclaims Babylon’s demise through a recollection of the Yahweh’s judgment against the great empires. But what will replace Rome’s terrestrial empire? Like with the desolation of Rome, Revelation’s vision of restoration, culminating in holy city in Revelation 21-22, recalls Scriptural antecedents. The imagery for the renewal of creation (the New Heaven and the New Earth)[[16]](#footnote-17) and the heavenly city are largely drawn from Ezekiel 40-48 and Trito-Isaiah. The bejeweled and richly-adorned Jerusalem reverses the decadence of the Whorish Babylon and ascribes the glory and majesty due to God that Rome had usurped. The precious stones of 21:19-20 combine together the description from Exodus of the High Priest’s Breastplate, the walls of a restored Jerusalem in Isaiah 54, and the Edenic luxury of Tyre in Ezekiel 28. Against an interpretation of Revelation as an anti-imperial text, the physical materials of the heavenly city connote riches and majesty.

Jerusalem’s power is demonstrated not only in these images of wealth, but in the reapplication of imperial imagery found in Isaiah 60.[[17]](#footnote-18) In the 5th century, Trito-Isaiah envisioned a restored Jerusalem. The nations would bring tribute to Zion gold and silver instead of bronze and iron, and kings their wealth to Yahweh’s city. The image of tributary peoples streaming to the metropolis connotes Babylonian imperial propaganda, but by naming Jerusalem, rather than Babylon, the epicenter of tributary gifts, Zion becomes the Lord’s metropole.[[18]](#footnote-19)

Revelation 21:22-27 appeal to Isaiah’s prophecy by repeating and combining images for an idealized terrestrial Jerusalem and relocating it in the heavens. The nations will walk about the city in the light of the Lamb and the kings of the earth will give glory to God in the city. The culminating vision of the New Jerusalem thus fulfills the proclamation of glory, laud, and honor owed to God and the Lamb first announced in the divine throne room of Revelation 4-5 and repeated throughout the book by the eternal chorus of heavenly worshipers: “The Empire of this World is now the Empire of our God and of his Christ. And he shall reign forever and ever.”

Amid the red sea of references to Isaiah, the negative space at the end of verse 23 encourages us to pause. Like the notes not played in a Jazz riff, the distinctly Christological characteristic of restoration of Jerusalem is highlighted. The Lamb, Christ, is the light of the city of God.[[19]](#footnote-20) Though John proclaims the restoration of Jerusalem like Isaiah and Ezekiel before him, God’s victory over Babylon ultimately comes through the Lamb Who Stands As Slaughtered. Though John’s intertexuality led him to draw upon the prophets who proceeded him, he is a Christian prophet proclaiming the imminence of God’s dominion through the death on the Cross.

**Revelation 22:6-7** <http://encodingrevelation.github.io/revelation/revelation/chapter/ap22.html>

As a conclusion, let us consider Rev 22:6-7. John’s account of his vision closes by reasserting the validity and truth of his prophetic book: “These words are faithful and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to show to his servants the things which are necessary to happen.” The phrase, “the things which are necessary to happen,” an allusion to Daniel 2, is used in both Revelation’s introduction and here at the conclusion of the vision to announce the imminence and the certainty of John’s vision. John expected those who read his book to understand the prophetic underpinnings of his vision. By tying the judgment of Rome to the prophets through quotations, allusions, and thematic parallels, Revelation proclaims that like empires of Babylon, Egypt, Tyre, and Nineveh, Rome’s Empire will fall as well. The Empire of God has replaced it, and the kings and nations which Babylon once ruled over now stream to the Lord’s new imperial city.

Two thousand millennia have removed the modern reader from the ancient audience’s context. But the visual presentation afforded by digital editions allows us to see how the author intends us to hear. John asks us to read, recognizing, analyzing, and assimilating Revelation’s intertextuality and keeping the prophetic words of his book. By color-coding intertextual references, we can recognize what John has borrowed and what how he has expanded his source texts. By creating flexible and filterable references through metadata, it is easier for us to analyze Revelation’s layering of oracles of destruction and visions of restoration. By presenting intertextual documents synoptically, digital editions have make assimilating the manifold quotations, allusions, and thematic parallels immeasurably easier for the reader. That this digital edition is available freely to those who read is yet one final blessing. Thank you.

1. See, among others, John J. Collins, “Towards the Morphology of a Genre: Introduction,” *Semeia* 14 (1979): 1–20; Adela Yarbro Collins, “Introduction: Early Christian Apocalypticism,” *Semeia* 36 (1986): 1–11; David E. Aune, “The Apocalypse of John and the Problem of Genre,” *Semeia* 36 (1986): 65–96; David Hellholm, “The Problem of Apocalyptic Genre and the Apocalypse of John,” *Semeia* 36 (1986): 13–64. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Michael A. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985); James Nogalski, “Intertextuality and the Twelve,” in *Forming Prophetic Literature* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 102–24; Patricia Tull Willey, *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997); Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66* (Palo Alto, Calif: Stanford, 1998); Richard L. Schultz, *The Search for Quotation: Verbal Parallels in the Prophets* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Pr, 1999); Marvin A. Sweeney, *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. My categories here are derived from Nogalski, “Intertextuality and the Twelve.” Insufficient attention has been paid by scholars focused on intertextuality and Revelation to prophetic intertextuality, though note Bauckham’s critique of those (esp. Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza) who would divorce Revelation’s allusions from their original contexts Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 296–307. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Strictly speaking, “intertextuality” does not imply intent or direction, but rather the “linkages” between two or more texts. The point here is one of intention, rather than coincidence. Benjamin D. Sommer, “Exegesis, Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible: A Response to Lyle Eslinger,” *VT* 46 (1996): 486. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. After Kendra’s and Jeff’s seminar contributions, I’m increasingly interested in pursuing this element of the argument paper I would like to expand for both publication and dissertation. John expects his readers to understand, or want to understand, his allusions. Apocalypses also play on what Aune calls a “reveal/conceal dialectic” -- that which is revealed to the wise is necessarily concealed from the masses. (Aune, “The Apocalypse of John and the Problem of Genre,” 86–88.) Extended comments along this front are most welcome. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The most notable exceptions being Daniel’s appeal to Jeremiah in Daniel 9 (though cf. Jer 26:18-19). John J. Collins, “Prophecy and Fulfillment in the Qumran Scrolls,” *JETS* 30 (1987): 270–72. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Beale has suggested that the solecisms of Revelation may “mark” allusions, as John will often keep the case of his source text even if this leads to a grammatical error in his own text. Perhaps, but this would account for a relatively limited number of instances, maybe twenty. Gregory K. Beale, “Solecisms in the Apocalypse as Signals for the Presence of Old Testament Allusions: A Selective Analysis of Revelation 1-22,” in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 421–46. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Steve Moyise, “The Language of the Old Testament in the Apocalypse,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 76 (1999): 97–113. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. At least one scholar has taken a “weighted average” approach from previous commentators to adduce a scale of “certain,” “probable,” and “possible.” This “wisdom of the crowds” approach has benefits, as it curtails the confirmation bias of scholars hunting for allusions. But it also limits readers’ ability to decipher John’s allusions for themselves. It is a scientific way of sampling allusions, but it multiplies scholarly “group think.” Since the commentators are not operating in isolation, the data is polluted. Jon Paulien, “Criteria and Assesment of Allusions to the Old Testament in the Book of Revelation,” in *Studies in the book of Revelation* (ed by. Steve Moyise; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), 113–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. <http://sblgnt.com/download/> and <http://www.nestle-aland.com/en/read-na28-online/text/bibeltext/lesen/stelle/76/> respectively. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Henry B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John* (3rd ed.; London ; New York: Macmillan, 1909); R. H Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John* (2 vols.; ICC 44; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1920); David E. Aune, *Revelation* (3 vols.; WBC 52A-C; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997); Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1999); Craig R. Koester, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. There may also be an allusion to Lev 26:21 here, though an appeal to the Exodus narrative and Yahweh’s triumph over Pharaoh makes more thematic sense. The seven plagues of Revelation would also mirror the seven plagues of Ps 105 (LXX 104), though Revelation’s plagues do not align perfectly with the Psalmist’s. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. There could also be source-critical data which muddle the question, a hypothetical prophetic proclamation that is neither Isaiah nor Jeremiah but is otherwise unknown. For reasons of parsimony, I am hesitant to multiply hypothetical texts unnecessarily. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. NB: This will be clearer when all of 18 is encoded. Given my focus, I focused on 18:1-8 for the coding efforts and will continue with the rest of the chapters in the next two weeks. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. This is a speculative observation made after reading Jeff’s paper and may be coincidence rather than anything John intended. I’m not sure if the exegetical style of homophony or its orthographic equivalent is known in Greek as it is in Hebrew (both in Jeremaih 29//Isaiah 65 and in the *pesharim*). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Rev 21:1 may reflect (or even quote) 1 En 91:16 (NA28 incorrectly gives 1Hen 92:16), given the language of the first things “passing away.” This phrase is absent in Isaiah, though present in the Aramaic fragments at Qumran (יעברון). See J. T. Milik, ed., *Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 199, 269; George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch: Chapters 1-36, 81-108* (Fortress, 2001), 450. [CTF: At one point, this section on 21:22-27 was going to address 21:1-4 and parallel pseudepigraphic texts; the reference to 1 Enoch 91:16 is of particular interest here; the ability to see parallel passage synoptically is one advantage of digital editions I have not yet inserted into the paper; I excised this section as I was trying to focus more clearly on allusions and empire – I could put a speculative parallel to the desolating sacrilege in 17:4, though that isn’t a very strong parallel] [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Bauckham argues that Isaiah 2:2-5 lies behind John’s interpretation of Isaiah 60. περιπατήσουσιν… διὰ τοῦ φωτὸς αὐτῆς makes more sense as a translation of באור יהוה (Isa 2:5) than of לאורך והלכו (Isa 60:3). If Bauckham is correct, then John recalls the liturgical procession and the propagation of the Lord’s instruction (2:3) in addition to the subjugation of the nations by conquest. Perhaps, though Revelation 19 and 20 certainly imply the violence of God’s dominion. A sword proceeds from Christ’s mouth, not a plowshare (cf 1:16). Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy*, 306–17. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. See David Vanderhooft, *The Neo-Babylonian Empire and Babylon in the Latter Prophets* (HSM 59; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 46n164. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. 4 Ezra 7:42 may be parallel here, though I am disinclined to cite it as a parallel, as it seems like weaker evidence than the Apocalypse of Weeks parallel above, which has affinities to 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra as well.

    [CTF: A redactional argument has been made that John has added “the Lamb” (or “his messiah”) to pre-existing Jewish acclamations of praise to God (7:10; 11:15, 12:10; 15:3; 21:22, 23; 22:1, 3). Though I’d like to avoid [↑](#footnote-ref-20)