

Comparison: Ezekiel's Vision by the River in Babylon and the Imagery in Revelation

No copyright materials are used in this text

The summary and interpretation of the specific chapter and verses
are from the Bible, they are religious text
that is in the public domain.

Free to Copy and Distribute: Spread the Word!

(Peter Lok) 駱沅祺

lokpeter@outlook.com

Biblecomplete.com

Comparison: Ezekiel's Vision by the River in Babylon and the Imagery in Revelation

Ezekiel chapter 1 describes the prophet Ezekiel, while in exile by the Chebar River in Babylon, seeing a vision when the heavens opened and he beheld visions of God. This is the vision of God's glorious throne-chariot (Merkabah), emphasizing God's sovereignty, omnipresence, and presence with His people even in exile. The Book of Revelation, on the other hand, records multiple heavenly visions seen by the apostle John on the island of Patmos, focusing primarily on end-times judgment, redemption, and the new heaven and new earth. Both books feature strong apocalyptic literature styles, filled with symbolic imagery. Many scholars note that Revelation draws heavily from Ezekiel, with clear parallels, though differences reflect the progression and fulfillment from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

Main Similarities

Both visions center on God's throne, surrounded by elements of glory, living creatures, and rainbows, symbolizing God's holiness, power, and faithfulness.

Element	Ezekiel (primarily ch. 1, 10)	Revelation (primarily ch. 4-5, 21-22)	Similarities and Symbolic Meaning
God's Throne	A throne like sapphire, with a figure like a man above it, radiating fire	A throne shining like jasper and carnelian, surrounded by a	Emphasizes God's glory and transcendence; the rainbow

Element	Ezekiel (primarily ch. 1, 10)	Revelation (primarily ch. 4-5, 21-22)	Similarities and Symbolic Meaning
	and brilliance (Ezek 1:26-28).	rainbow like emerald (Rev 4:2-3).	symbolizes God's covenant (Gen 9:13).
Four Living Creatures	Four living creatures, each with four faces (man, lion, ox, eagle), four wings, and full of eyes; accompanied by wheels also full of eyes (Ezek 1:5-21; 10:9-14).	Four living creatures, each with a single face (lion, ox, man, eagle), six wings, and full of eyes (Rev 4:6-8).	Represent the pinnacle of creation (wisdom, strength, service, swiftness); continually praising "Holy, holy, holy." Ezekiel's emphasize mobility (God's omnipresence).
Lightning, Fire, and Sounds	Lightning flashes from the fire, thunder like the sound of great waters (Ezek 1:4, 13-14, 24).	Lightning, thunder, and voices issue from the throne (Rev 4:5).	Symbolize God's power and judgment.
Eating the Scroll	God gives Ezekiel a scroll to eat—sweet as honey in the mouth but bitter in the stomach (Ezek 2:8–3:3).	John eats a little scroll—sweet in the mouth but bitter in the stomach (Rev 10:8-11).	Symbolizes the joy and sorrow of receiving God's word (prophesying judgment).
River of Life and Trees	A river of life flows from under the temple, with trees on its banks whose leaves heal and fruit provide food (Ezek 47:1-12).	A river of the water of life flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, with the tree of life on its banks whose leaves heal the nations (Rev 22:1-2).	Symbolizes God's abundant life, healing, and eternal provision.
Measuring the New Temple/City	An angel measures the new temple with a rod (Ezek 40-42).	An angel measures the new Jerusalem (Rev 21:15-17).	Symbolizes God's eternal, holy dwelling place.

These parallels show how Revelation borrows and expands Ezekiel's imagery, reinforcing God's consistent plan from judgment and promise in the Old Testament to fulfillment in Christ in the New Testament.

Main Differences

- **Context and Focus:** Ezekiel's riverside vision occurs during the Babylonian exile, emphasizing that God has left the Jerusalem temple but remains with His people (the throne is mobile), intended to comfort the exiles and call them to repentance. Revelation's visions are broader, focusing on the great tribulation, the Lamb's victory, and the new creation—emphasizing the completion of redemption.
- **Details of Living Creatures:** In Ezekiel, the four creatures are integrated (each with four faces and wings), stressing wheels and mobility (God's sovereignty everywhere). In Revelation, they are four distinct creatures (with six wings), emphasizing continual worship.
- **Final Vision:** Ezekiel's restoration still includes a temple, sacrifices, and land division (Ezek 40-48), within an Old Testament framework. Revelation's new Jerusalem has no temple (because God and the Lamb are the temple), no sin or death, and is eternally perfect (Rev 21-22).
- **Christological Element:** Ezekiel has no explicit slain Lamb/Messiah; Revelation centers on the Lamb (Christ) who reigns, was sacrificed, and triumphs.

In summary, Ezekiel's throne-chariot vision by the Babylonian river establishes the imagery of God's glory, proving that God is not confined to the temple and manifests His sovereignty even by a river in exile. Revelation expands and fulfills this vision, linking God's throne to the Lamb's redemption and pointing to eternal restoration and healing. The two books complement each other, showing God's plan from Old Testament judgment and promise to its realization in Christ in the New Testament.