

THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S DAY IN REVELATION 1:10a

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This study examines the complexities involved in identifying “the Lord’s Day” referenced in Revelation 1:10, a phrase that has generated considerable scholarly debate. While traditional interpretations frequently associate it with the Emperor’s Day, Easter, or Sunday, this research argues that the term embodies a deeper theological significance for John and his first-century audience. By applying a historical-grammatical and exegetical approach, the study explores the linguistic nuance in the transformation of the noun *κυριακός* into the attributive adjective *Κυριακή*. This shift conveys ownership, reverence, and divine sovereignty.

The investigation incorporates the historical and cultural contexts of the early church, the literary genre of Revelation, and the syntactical relationship of the phrase within the verse and the wider book. The analysis demonstrates that “the Lord’s Day” was not merely a fixed calendar day but a symbolically rich expression embodying

themes of judgment, redemption, worship, rest, and eschatological anticipation. For the early Christian community, it functioned as a day of hope and assurance, reinforcing their faith amid persecution and affirming their expectation of Christ's ultimate return.

The findings indicate that John's use of *τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ* emphasizes the authority of the risen Lord and God's sovereign plan for humanity rather than designating a specific liturgical observance. In this way, the phrase stands as a theological declaration of Christ's lordship, calling believers to orient their struggles, worship, and future hope around His redemptive work and promised return.

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A thesis

presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Divinity

by

Israel Oheneba Bobieh

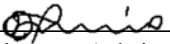
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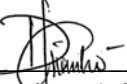
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This Thesis is dedicated to my wife, Rita Ntriwaa Asumadu, and my children, Holly-Jene, Jerisaiah, and Israella, for their remarkable support in this attainment. Lastly, to all Seventh-day Adventist members in the Mid-Central Ghana Conference, most specially Sally, Afriyie, Ebenezer, Obed, Caleb, Samuel, and all.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The phrase “the Lord’s Day” (Greek: τῆ Κυριακῆ ἡμέρα, *tē Kyriakē hēmera*) appears only once in the New Testament, in Revelation 1:10, where John writes, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day.” Though it occurs only once, this term has generated widespread exegetical and historical debate over its meaning, background, and theological significance. The historical-grammatical method provides a valuable approach for analysing this phrase, aiming to uncover the original author’s intended meaning within its linguistic, historical, and cultural context of that era. Throughout the history of interpretation, scholars have debated whether John’s use of *Kyriakē hēmera* refers to a specific day, likely Sunday, the day commemorating Christ’s resurrection, or to the Jewish Sabbath or to a day like Easter, or to the eschatological “Day of the Lord” emphasized in Old Testament prophecy and early Christian expectation. The Greek phrase itself, distinct from the Septuagint and the New Testament phrase ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ Κυρίου (“the Day of the Lord”), suggests a deliberate terminological change that could reflect evolving Christian usage and identity in the late first century.

Therefore, analysing this phrase from a historical-grammatical perspective requires careful consideration of lexical, syntactical, and contextual elements, along with the background of early Christian worship, imperial language, and theological development. By situating Revelation 1:10 within its literary and socio-religious context, this study seeks to understand how τῆ Κυριακῆ ἡμέρα functioned in John’s

vision and what it reveals about the early Christian community's self-perception. The aim is to offer a balanced interpretation that honours both linguistic evidence and the historical context shaping the phrase's meaning in the Apocalypse.

Background of the Study

Many have studied and interpreted the phrase τῆ Κυριακῆ ἡμέρᾳ (“the Lord’s day”) in Revelation 1:10. These analyses vary in their conclusions regarding which day John experienced his theophanic visions. They also explore how the “Lord’s Day” relates to early Christian identity and worship. The following are the views:

First of all, there is the traditional view that ‘the Lord’s Day’ is Sunday.

Proponents argue that the Jewish Sabbath was instituted to commemorate God’s rest after creation.¹ At the same time, the “Lord’s Day” celebrates the resurrection of Jesus and thus concludes that the Lord’s Day is our Sunday.² The Sunday view lacks in-depth biblical support and also ignores textual analysis, both of which are important to biblical interpretation. These limitations call for textual, grammatical, and historical analysis of the text in Revelation 1:10a.

The second proposition identifies the Lord’s day as the imperial “Anniversary Day” or Emperor’s Day. Supporters cite inscriptions bearing “*the Kuriakē hēmera*” on imperial treasury items, possibly linked to either the emperor’s birthday or the

¹ Robert H. Gundry, *Commentary on the New Testament: Verse-by-Verse Explanations with a Literal Translation*, vol. 2, *Romans-Revelation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2010), 1017-1018; Buist M. Fanning, *Revelation*, Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: 2020), 96; Randy Thames, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Irvine, CA: Covenant Books, 2021), 15-18.

² Gundry, *Commentary on the New Testament*, vol. 2, *Romans-Revelation*, 1017-1018.

anniversary of his coronation.³ This position, however, is unlikely to have informed John's usage, given its socio-religious connotations.

The third proposition considers the phrase as the Sabbath. The proponents observe that if John intended to refer to the first day of the week, he would likely have stated so directly, as in the Fourth Gospel (John 20:1 & 19).⁴ They further argue that Polycarp and Irenaeus, associates of John, did not mention Sunday as a day of worship in their writings.⁵ Similarly, they cite some biblical references to argue that Saturday is the "Lord's Day" in Revelation 1:10.⁶ Nevertheless, their discussions are primarily theological and rest on dogmatic positions, lacking focus on the sustaining hope and assurance desired by the persecuted first-century Christians, which a simple study of the genre of the text would have exposed.

A fourth perspective of scholars suggests the weekly 'Lord's Day' developed from annual Easter celebrations. They argue that early Christians initially worshiped on the day of the Resurrection each year, which led to its commemoration by John on Patmos when Jesus appeared to him.⁷ However, under intense persecution, John may

³ Lynn Harold Hough, "The Revelation of St. John the Divine: Exposition," *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1957), 12: 373, 553; H. Waterman, "Lord's Day," *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of The Bible (ZPEB)*, ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 3:961-972; W. Harold Mare, *New Testament Background Commentary: A New Dictionary of Words, Phrases and Situations in Bible Order* (2004), s.v. "On the Lord's Day."

⁴ Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1993), 142.

⁵ Biblios.com, "On the Lord's Day," accessed May 1, 2024, <http://biblios.cc/revelation/1-10/htp>.

⁶ Walter E. Straw, *Origin of Sunday Observance in the Christian Church* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1939), 33-35; G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary of the Greek Text*, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 210; "Lord's Day" [Rev 1:10], *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary (SDABC)*, ed. Francis D. Nichol (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1980), 7:736; Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific, 1911), 582.

⁷ D. K. Lowery, "The Lord's Day," *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1999), 648-650; Waterman, "Lord's Day," *ZPEB*, 3:961-972.

have avoided foreign celebrations. Therefore, assessing when Christians accepted Easter and when Revelation was written becomes key to evaluating this view historically. Given John's motives, it is worth questioning whether celebrating Easter was his primary concern.

Finally, a more recent perspective links 'the Lord's Day' to the Lord's Judgment Day. Proponents argue that the book of Revelation features judgment scenes that point to the final Judgment, and that the immediate context of Revelation 1:10a is eschatological. Again, John was transported in his vision to the Judgment Day.⁸ While advocates for the Judgment Day view use end-time scenes in Revelation to support their case, their discussions would benefit from further attention to the historical context of John's visions and from a more thorough exegesis. Additionally, considering John's experience after his visions could inform themes of divine authority and hope, and clarify the syntax of the phrase. Moreover, it remains uncertain whether John was already on Judgment Day before the Lord's appearance, or if that event transported him into the day.

While many scholars have explored the phrase τῆ Κυριακῆ ἡμέρᾳ ("the Lord's Day") in Revelation 1:10, their research tends to be fragmented. It relies heavily on limited theological, liturgical, or historical assumptions. These studies often overlook the importance of textual, grammatical, literary, and pastoral contexts of Revelation. Conventional interpretations emphasize Sunday worship but lack detailed linguistic analysis. Interpretations linking the phrase to imperial authority or Easter depend on later historical developments. The Sabbath perspective remains dogmatic and fails to

⁸ Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrew University Press, 2002), 94; Samuel Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath to Sunday: A Historical Investigation of the Rise of Sunday observance in early Christianity* (Rome: The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1977); Ann Coble, "Lord's Day," *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible (EDB)*, ed. David Noel Freedman (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 821.

address the pastoral needs of persecuted believers adequately. The Judgment Day interpretation emphasizes eschatological themes but offers limited syntactical and narrative insights. What is needed is a comprehensive, context-sensitive exegesis that combines Revelation's historical background, apocalyptic genre, Greek language features, and pastoral message to fully understand how the phrase functions within John's visionary experience and message of hope.

Statement of the Problem

Biblical scholars offer varied interpretations of what John meant by *τῆς Κυριακῆς ἡμέρας* ('the Lord's Day') in Revelation 1:10, creating an exegetical and historical challenge. Though the phrase appears only once in the New Testament, its theological and liturgical significance is essential. Many analyses are thorough but often lack textual support, and they present diverse views rooted mainly in historical, cultural, and theological backgrounds, with limited comprehensive exegetical analysis. Therefore, this study seeks a more critical examination of the text, especially its genre, to understand the author's intent.

Research Questions

1. How does the genre of the book influence the meaning and reveal the text's primary purpose?
2. What is the reference of the phrase "the Lord's Day"?
3. What is the meaning of the phrase "the Lord's Day"?
4. What are the implications of the transition from the adjective *κυριακός* to *Κυριακή*, and what does it have on interpreting this phrase?

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to investigate the textual meaning of the phrase “the Lord’s Day” in Revelation 1:10a within the broader context of the book of Revelation. Specifically, the study seeks to clarify the identity and significance of the day by examining the text’s literary structure and theological function. To achieve this, the research will analyze the various genre types employed in Revelation, recognizing that John’s use of a blended literary framework: apocalyptic, prophetic, and epistolary, shapes the reader’s interpretation of the phrase.

Moreover, by examining how these genres intersect, the study seeks to offer a more nuanced understanding of the term in its first-century setting and within the broader message of Revelation. Ultimately, the research intends to demonstrate that the meaning of “the Lord’s Day” extends beyond a simple calendar reference to convey a theologically rich expression of divine sovereignty, worship, judgment, and eschatological hope.

Significance of the Study

This study is essential for multiple reasons. It advances biblical scholarship by providing a detailed exegetical and historical-grammatical examination of the phrase “the Lord’s Day” in Revelation 1:10a. Unlike many existing studies, which mainly view it as a calendar date, this research emphasizes its broader theological significance, including aspects of judgment, worship, sovereignty, and eschatological hope.

Second, the study enriches the understanding of Revelation’s literary complexity. By examining how the blending of apocalyptic, prophetic, and epistolary genres shapes meaning, it provides a fresh interpretive framework that may aid both scholars and students of biblical studies in engaging the text more accurately.

Third, the findings hold theological and pastoral value for the contemporary church. Clarifying the meaning of “the Lord’s Day” offers believers a deeper appreciation of early Christian faith and practice, reinforcing the centrality of Christ’s authority and the hope of His return in Christian worship. This insight may strengthen the church’s perspective on perseverance in times of suffering and on the proper orientation of worship toward divine sovereignty.

Finally, the study contributes to ongoing scholarly debates by challenging conventional assumptions that equate “the Lord’s Day” with Sunday, Easter, or the Emperor’s Day, thereby opening new avenues for dialogue on early Christian identity and worship practices.

Methodology

This research used the historical-grammatical method as the approach to analyze τῆ Κυριακῆ ἡμέρᾱ (“the Lord’s Day”) in Revelation 1:10. This method aims to uncover the original intended meaning by considering the linguistic, historical, and cultural context of the original audience. It focuses on the objective sense of the biblical text through common grammatical and historical usage, rather than allegory.

First and foremost, the study incorporated historical context to explore the religious, cultural, linguistic, and social background of the text’s creation. Furthermore, employing a Literary and Contextual Analysis provided a detailed examination of Revelation 1:9-11, giving the immediate context for understanding τῆ Κυριακῆ ἡμέρᾱ.

Finally, the study examined the term “Lord’s Day” in the context of Correlation and Theological Reflection.

Procedure

This research paper is divided into five chapters: Chapter 1 serves as the introduction and background of the Study; Chapter 2 reviews the literature pertinent to the topic; Chapter 3 presents an exegetical analysis of the text; Chapter 4 explores Theological reflections; and Chapter 5 of the study presents a summary, a conclusion, and recommendations.

Delimitation of the Study

This study was limited in the scope of questions it answered and the methodology it employed; the research may give less or no attention to other critical lenses. Textually, it focused on a single occurrence of the phrase, so the conclusion may not completely reflect how it functions elsewhere in early Christian literature. The study potentially narrowed the interpretive option to apocalyptic, prophecy, and epistle.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study conducts an annotated literature review on the phrase “the Lord’s Day” (*en tē kyriakē hēmera*) in Revelation 1:10, one of the most debated lexical and interpretive expressions in Johannine scholarship and early Christian liturgical history. Over the centuries, scholarly interpretations have clustered around five major positions,¹ each informed by linguistic, historical, and theological considerations. These five views of the Lord’s Day include: the Eschatological Day of the Lord;² the Annual Easter Celebration;³ again, Sunday, the first day of the week;⁴ the Sabbath, the Seventh day;⁵ and lastly, Emperor’s Day.⁶ This review surveys the leading voices

¹ David E. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, Word Biblical Commentary 52a (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 3-11; Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ed., “Lord’s Day,” *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 3:158-160.

² Samuel Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath to Sunday*.

³ Waterman, “Lord’s Day,” *ZPEB*, 3:961-972; Lowery, “The Lord’s Day,” 648-650.

⁴ Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker’s Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 39-41; Gundry, *Commentary on the New Testament*, vol. 2, *Romans-Revelation*, 1017; Fanning, *Revelation*, 96; Thames, *Revelation of John*, 15-18; Robert W. Wall, *Revelation*, Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Bakers Book, 2011), 61; Matthew Henry, *Mathew Henry’s Commentary of the Whole Bible*, vol. 6, *Acts to Revelation* (McLean, VI: Macdonald, 2000), 903; F. L. Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (TODCC)* (1997), “The Lord’s Day;” A. Plummer, “Revelation,” *The Pulpit Commentary*, ed. H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1950), 22:166.

⁵ Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and Revelation* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1944), 322- 25; “Lord’s Day,” *SDABC*, 7:736; Siegfried H. Horn, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary (SDABD)*, rev. ed. (1979), s.v. “The Lord’s Day;” Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific, 1911), 582; Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific, 1898), 288; George Crowe, “The Sabbath Is the Lord’s Day [Final Edition],” Prince George Citizen, May 19, 2000, <https://app.myloft.xyz/user/login?institute=cks5merimtxhx0a273fa776ol?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/sabbath-is-lords-day/docview/361504625/se-2>.

⁶ Plummer, “Revelation,” 166; Waterman, “Lord’s Day,” *ZPEB*, 3:962-972.

within each interpretive stream, offering annotations that summarize their core arguments, analytical methods, and evidentiary bases. In doing so, it evaluates the strengths and limitations of each perspective. It identifies the issues that continue to shape ongoing academic discourse on the identity and meaning of “the Lord’s Day.”

The Sunday View

Some scholars identify “the Lord’s Day” with Sunday. For example, Clarke ascribes “the Lord’s Day” to a day of worship, from which he states that due to the triumphant resurrection of the Savior, Sabbath worship was changed to Sunday. Clarke further argues that “The Lord’s Day is the first day of the week which should be observed as the Christian Sabbath because, on it, Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Therefore, it was called the Lord’s Day and has replaced the Jewish Sabbath throughout the Christian world.”⁷ Supporting the above statement, D. K. Lowery said emphatically that “the Lord’s Day is our Sunday.”⁸ Matthew Henry cemented it in his commentary that “it is the Christian Sabbath (Our Sunday).”⁹

Furthermore, A. Plummer, an adherent, said, “The Lord’s Day beyond all reasonable doubt it means on Sunday.”¹⁰ The argument asserts that “The Lord’s Day” is the first day of the week and should be observed as the Christian Sabbath because, on this day, Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Consequently, it is referred to as the Lord’s Day and has replaced the Jewish Sabbath throughout the Christian world. Clack did not establish his claim to the concept through an investigation of its original

⁷ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the New Testament* (np: Ravenio Books, 2013), Kindle.

⁸ Lowery, “The Lord’s Day,” 648-650.

⁹ Henry, *Acts to Revelation*, 903.

¹⁰ Plummer, “Revelation,” 166.

understanding, relying instead on the assertions of early Church fathers, which align more closely with a fourth-century AD interpretation.

Additionally, D. K. Lowery states that "the Lord's Day is our Sunday," a view similar to that of Matthew Henry, who reinforced this idea in his commentary by declaring, "It is the Christian Sabbath (Our Sunday)." However, neither provides sufficient hermeneutical grounds to support such a conclusion. Plummer, who also holds similar views, stated, "The Lord's Day, beyond all reasonable doubt, refers to Sunday."¹¹ Again, there are no details on the accepted methods for text analysis.

Scholars who share this view lacked concrete support from the Bible. Instead, they were supported by church fathers like Ignatius, Tertullian, and the *Didache*,¹² as well as by many other Church Fathers' writings. Their findings raise questions, such as whether the Church Fathers' statements are sufficient to establish a day of worship of God. Contrastingly, it is a commonly known fact that only God has the authority to bring about such a change in the day (Heb 12:2). Plummer defended his statement by referring to the Levant as a group of people who call Sunday *kuriakh*.¹³ He believes that because a culture from antiquity calls the first day of the week by that name, everyone understood it as such.

In the same vein, William Barclay claims that the Jewish Sabbath was instituted to commemorate God's rest after the creation of the world. At the same time, the "Lord's Day" celebrates the resurrection of Jesus.¹⁴ He made a clear argument, but scriptural interpretation follows general principles. Likewise, Gill

¹¹ Plummer, "Revelation," 166.

¹² Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 10.

¹³ Plummer, "Revelation," 165.

¹⁴ William Barclay, *The Daily Bible Studies Series*, vol. 1, *The Revelation of John 1-5*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1965), 43.

comments that by John's time, the Jewish Sabbath was abolished,¹⁵ with no references yet. Cross, supporting Sunday as “the Lord’s Day,” says it is “John’s appellation of Sunday.”¹⁶ These scholars have claimed that John could have been there only on a Sunday, a theological dogma standard among proponents of Sunday as the Lord’s Day.

Interestingly, discussions among some scholars about the abolition of the Jewish Sabbath warrant careful examination through historical-grammatical interpretation. Historical records demonstrate that Jews have observed the Sabbath since the time of the New Testament, and the only precursor to the Christian expwas the Jewish Bible. Considering that John the Revelator was a devout Jew, it is reasonable to assume that he held considerable significance to his traditional practices, including the Sabbath. The early Christian context is essential when evaluating discussions about the Lord's Day and its relationship to John and the Sabbath.

Amidst these, Theodoret is deferent in his approach to the so-called change by taking it from the root, speaking of the Ebonites, saying, "They keep the Sabbath according to the Jewish law, and sanctify the Lord’s Day in like manner as we do."¹⁷ This statement by Theodoret means Sunday keeping started with a different motive than John’s “Lord’s Day.” Theodoret’s accession contrasts with others like Gill, who holds the idea that the Jew’s Sabbath was abolished for the Lord’s Day. He said,

¹⁵ Biblios.com, “On the Lord’s Day.”

¹⁶ Cross, *TODCC*, s.v. “The Lord’s Day.”

¹⁷ Biblios.com, “On the Lord’s Day.”

“Earlier apostolic writings referred to Sunday as the first day of the week (Acts 20:7, 1 Cor 16:2), but by the close of the 1st century it began to be called the Lord’s Day.”¹⁸

The views presented suggest that scholars advocating for the association of “Sunday” with “the Lord’s Day” have invested significant effort into their work. However, there seems to be a need for a more thorough and genuine exploration of the topic to gain a better perspective and understanding of the author's intent, using tools such as Historical-grammatical and Literary-contextual analysis to consider the words. Their commentaries on “The Lord’s Day” often reveal a deficiency in solid Biblical support, lacking inter-textual analysis and usage, and instead rely on church history and the 2nd to 4th century A. D. cultural context of the church fathers to bolster their arguments. Additionally, there appears to be a lack of clarity regarding the hermeneutical methods or approaches utilized to reach their interpretations and conclusions. These deficiencies raise questions about the validity of their assertions concerning the relationship between Sunday and the concept of the Lord's Day, such as where is the historical-grammatical and Literary-contextual analysis of the words? How did they conclude on such an essential text without recourse to the author, his context, and audience?

The Eschatological Day of the Lord View

The Second view is that “the Lord’s Day” refers to the Eschatological Day of the Lord. The proponents of this theory claim that John saw the day of God’s Judgment, or he was transported into it. For example, Bullinger made use of statements like “John was transported into the future day of the Lord’s great judgment and the return of Christ.”¹⁹ Supporters of this view mostly rely on the Bible as their

¹⁸ Biblios.com, “On the Lord’s Day.”

¹⁹ E.W. Bullinger, *The Apocalypse*, 2nd ed. (London, England: Spottiswood, 1909,) 152.

sole basis, emphasizing that Revelation depicts scenes of judgment. The references to the saved saints, the punishment of sinners, and the woes all point to the final judgment.²⁰ In addition, is this statement: “The reality of the matter is that the passage in Revelation is not referring to a specific day of the week at all. It is simply referring to a day in prophecy ... concerning the messiah’s return.”²¹

The above quotations affirm that the visions were an end-time experience. It is doubtful that John still used the phrase “the Lord’s Day” after returning to reality from the visions on Patmos Island if he wanted his readers to understand it as a day of the Lord’s Judgment. Again, John’s inability to use a more common word in the LXX and NT, like *Hemera tou Kuriov*,²² beefed up the doubt. John’s statements in the book can be considered Judgment Day visitation only after a study has proven them and also ascertained behavioral similarities with OT prophets in their transportation into the future day of the Lord’s Judgment. This calls for a historical background analysis of the conditions under which John received his visions and of the text’s exegesis, and a genre study of the text in particular and the book in general, before concluding.

Nevertheless, the probability that Jesus Christ’s statement in John 21:23 could have influenced John to consider the day of his visitation as the end of time is higher. In contrast, was he in the day before the Lord appeared to him, or did the Lord’s appearance bring him into the day? Creates room for more studies into the topic.

The Book of Revelation also gives several reasons why John could not have been transported into “the day of the Lord.” First Revelation 1:1 “The Revelation of

²⁰ Ranko Stefanovic, “‘The Lord’s Day’ of Revelation 1:10 in the Current Debate,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 49. no. 2 (2011): 261-284, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/auss/vol49/iss2/3/>.

²¹ Nazarite.com, “The Lord’s Day,” accessed November 23, 2024, <http://www.nazarite.net/lords-day.htm>.

²² Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 80.

Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." The Greek word for "shortly" literally means "in speed."²³ Which does not reflect an end but a speedy continuation. Likely, the visions were instead brought to him. For example, John, the author, conveyed his throne-room visions in Revelation 1:1, where he describes himself as a messenger, a special scribe tasked with reporting what he had seen and heard to the seven churches in Asia. Additionally, the term "quickly" in Revelation 22:12 and 20 suggests that events are intended to begin immediately and unfold in rapid succession. Many of these predictions were already underway or expected to occur quickly.

Although the book presents some thought-provoking eschatological scenes, it also makes several long-term predictions outlining events expected to occur after the initial dream. For instance, Revelation 11:2 states, "But do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months." Similarly, Revelation 13:5 notes, "And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months." The book is more grounded in the prophetic or apocalyptic genre.

The Easter Day View

Apart from the above-mentioned scholarly views, a few scholars still maintain that John meant Easter day by "the Lord's Day. Proponents of this view hold that, in the early centuries A.D., Christians met each year to worship the Lord on the day of His resurrection. "According to this view, Sunday, the weekly Christian day of worship, developed out of the annual commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus on

²³ James Strong, *Strong's Complete Word Study Concordance*, expanded ed. 2004, s.v. "Lord's day;" Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (T) (2000), s.v. "Lord's Day."

Easter day.”²⁴ John, though alone on the Island, was commemorating Easter when Jesus appeared to him on the lonely island of Patmos.²⁵ John, under persecution, may not seek to uplift a day; again, earlier Church fathers' writings, like Barn 15:2 and Enoch 33:7, referred to that high Sunday as “the eighth day.”²⁶

The conversation would have been more engaging if it had compared the dates of when Christians accepted the Easter Day celebration and when the Book of Revelation was written. John may have been in a prayerful mood, but it was doubtful it was on Easter. The assertion that the Lord’s Day is a musing of Easter Day accorded to John is not widely accepted. Since the context of revelation focuses on prophetic visions, worship, and Jesus’ Lordship, and not on ceremonies. Besides, the practice of Sunday Worship was later established in early Christianity. Some might argue that “Lord’s Day” could be related to easter, given Easter’s connection to Jesus’s resurrection. However, this cannot be substantiated, since the term “Lord’s Day” (*kyriakh Hemera*) does not directly reference Easter, and Easter is a distinct celebration developed later in Christian History. Given the context and Historical background, interpreting “Lord’s Day” as Easter Day isn’t the most common perspective.

The Emperor’s Day View

Another school of thought is that “the Lord’s Day” meant the Emperor’s Day. Scholars who hold this view argue that John saw his visions on the day set aside for worship of the ruling emperor. Papyrus discoveries in Egypt and Asia Minor have shown that the word *Kuriakos* (masculine form) denotes imperial treasury and

²⁴ Cross, *TODCC*, s.v. “The Lord’s Day.”

²⁵ Waterman, “The Lord’s Day,” *ZPEB*, 3:962-972; Lowery “The Lord’s Day,” 648-650.

²⁶ Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 11.

service.²⁷ Therefore, they suggest that the word *th Kuriakh hemera*, like the discovered *Kuriakos* inscriptions, pertained to the Emperor as such John used it to refer to a day patterned to the Emperor of Rome that is “the imperial day,” a day celebrated to commemorate the emperor’s birthday or the anniversary of his coronation.²⁸

Furthermore, they hold that by John’s time, this law was in effect, and that he was telling His readers that on that day of the Emperor, the Lord Jesus appeared to him.²⁹ But the possibility of John referring to the same emperor who is persecuting him and killing his fellow Christians, as “Lord, and willingly ascribing a holiday to such an emperor in his ‘motivational visions book for suffering the saints,’³⁰ is lowest.

Moreover, John would not support calling the emperor Lord. Discoveries have proven that both first-century AD Jews and second-century Christians refused to call the emperors ‘Lord’ and also worship him.³¹ The anger for freedom and sure faith in the second coming of the Lord in the hearts of both Jews and Christians in the 1st and 2nd centuries would surely have made it almost impossible for a Christian like John to give such an honor to an emperor of Rome.

Again, the interpretation of “Emperor’s Day is less common and not widely accepted. The “Lord’s Day” might rather be a deliberate contrast to “Emperor’s Day,” a day honoring the Roman emperor and the imperial cults, in which emperors were

²⁷ “Lord’s Day,” *SDABC*, 7:736.

²⁸ Hough, “Revelation,” 12:373, 553; Waterman, “The Lord’s Day,” *ZPEB*, 3:961-972; Osborne, *Revelation*, 39-41.

²⁹ Waterman, “The Lord’s Day,” *ZPEB*, 3:962-972; “Lord’s Day,” *SDABC*, 7:736;

³⁰ Mare, *New Testament Background Commentary*, s.v. “On the Lord’s Day.”

³¹ “Lord’s Day,” *SDABC*, 7:736-7. (The book made references to Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 357-361; Josephus *War* vii 10.1 [418-419]; and *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 8.)

revered as lords, especially during the reign of Emperor Domitian, thereby emphasizing Jesus' Lordship over earthly rulers. Again, there is limited historical evidence to support the widespread use of "Emperor's Day." The above makes it impractical to refer to the "Lord's Day" as the emperor's day of the imperial cult.

The Seventh-day Sabbath View

The last school of thought among the most prevalent views is that "the Lord's Day" is the Sabbath of the Jews. Advocates of this view support their argument with texts from both the OT (Exod 20 8-11; Isa 58:13, 14) and the NT (Mark 2:27-28). They argue that while Jesus was on earth, He referred to Himself in Mark 2:27-28 as "the Lord of the Sabbath." For them, that Sabbath day is always on the seventh day of the week (Exod 20:8-11). Elsewhere, the Bible calls it the holy day of the Lord (Isa 58:13). Thus, John saw Jesus on the seventh-day Sabbath.³² Uriah Smith thinks it is John's "sanction for the observance of Seventh-day."³³ The proponents in this view are mostly theological and dogmatic in nature which makes them apologetic in their approach to the topic.

Again, Supporters of this view further argue, "Because God does not change. (Heb 13:8) He is still Lord of the same Sabbath,"³⁴ T. G. Temple adds, "The Bible does have a day called the Lord's Day, it is the 7th day Sabbath."³⁵ A publication condemns every other day as teachings of man by arguing, "The traditional teaching

³² Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 210; see also Ranko, *The Lord's Day*, 94; "Lord's Day," *SDABC*, 7:736.

³³ Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and Revelation*, 322-25.

³⁴ The Bible Explained.com, "Meaning of The Lord's Day and Introduction to the Seven Churches," accessed May 2024, <http://www.bibleexplained.com/revelation>.

³⁵ P. G. Temple, *Understanding Daniel and the Revelation* (Altamont, TN: Harvestime Books, 2007), 170-71.

that the Lord's Day is Sunday is a false doctrine pushed by Christian churches to further their agenda ... to legitimize the keeping of Sunday as their day of worship."³⁶ The writer calls Sunday "teaching for commandments and doctrines of men" (Mark 7:7). It could be that John was commemorating the resurrection or enjoying the Sabbath blessing; either way, one of these days is essential to him.

Most importantly, the 1st-century Christian readers to whom John addressed the book of Revelation understood the term, 'the Lord's Day.' He described them as members of the seven churches which are in Asia. A historical background and textual consideration of the phrase will unravel much here. Furthermore, a statement is written in A.D. 191 about a church leader, Polycrates, who convened a council of the church elders in Asia Minor to deliberate a summons letter from Bishop Victor of Rome concerning the adoption of Easter Sunday. It concludes that the leaders unanimously rejected the idea of Sunday observance and chose to retain Passover observance on the Jewish 14th day of Nisan.³⁷ It is possible that John's initial readers, who lived long before the referenced meeting, would not have understood "the Lord's Day" to refer to Sunday in celebration of the resurrection.³⁸ The scripture portrays John as a diligent seeker of the scriptures, aiming to identify the Messiah (John 1:41-45).

A devoted man like John would not disregard his Master's commandment when he heard the Savior refer to Himself as Lord of the Sabbath, Mark 2:28. A twist could be that although John was alone, his persecutors did not allow him to worship his God on the Sabbath day. More so, the occasion of the Revelation could be

³⁶ Nazarite.com, "The Lord's Day."

³⁷ The Bible Explained.com, "Meaning of The Lord's Day and Introduction to the Seven Churches."

³⁸ Ibid.

describing the day, or the day is describing the occasion of the Lord's appearance to John.

Summary

In light of the above divergent views on John's "The Lord's Day," it is clear that these blocks of interpreters presented a vigorous defense. However, their assertions appear to be rooted in their specific belief systems, leading to theological dogmatic interpretation rather than a thorough historical-textual analysis and exegetical exploration of the phrase "on the Lord's Day." For instance, almost every writer who claimed John was on a Sabbath day comes from a particular denomination, and the same with those who subscribe to the Sunday view. Peradventure, a few others attempted to follow the interpretation and share their genuine opinions strictly, such as those who associate the Lord's Day with Eschatology, who, most frankly, are closer to the right of interpretation. Their output makes an independent review of the subject paramount

CHAPTER 3

EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS

This section explores the exegesis of the phrase “the Lord’s Day” through a detailed analysis aimed at uncovering its original meaning and understanding the theological claim that the vision occurs on “the Lord’s Day.” It demonstrates how historical and cultural context, along with the text's grammatical aspects, shape its interpretation. Additionally, a textual analysis of Revelation 1:10 is conducted to clarify the meaning of the phrase. The focus is on Greek syntax and conventions, with consideration of Christians’ understanding in the first century. The study is limited to the immediate pericope of Revelation 1:9-10 and its broader literary context within the Apocalypse. The following have been critically considered: historical and cultural context, textual context, and grammatical and syntactic analysis.

Historical Contextualization of the Book of Revelation

This section of the study aimed to unearth knowledge and practices surrounding the writer and his immediate audience, thereby illuminating the early-Christian *Sitz-im-Leben*. And how the Historical Contextualization of the study can help us to understand the meaning of the phrase “the Lord’s Day” in Revelation 1:10.

Authorship of the Book of Revelation

Revelation 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8 identify the author as John. The phrase ‘brother and fellow partaker in the affliction’ indicates he is familiar with the Churches. Unlike

Paul, who calls himself the Apostle to emphasize his authority, this author does not reference an official or leadership role in the church. Instead, he acts as a prophet,¹ recording what he sees. Since these visions originate from God, his words are faithful and true (Rev 1:11, 19).

Scholars have long debated the identity of the author of the book named John. Possible candidates include John of Patmos, John the Divine, John the Apostle, or John the Theologian. Differences in style, vocabulary, and grammar between the Gospel of John and Revelation have led some to propose distinct authors. The author's Greek style, noted for its rough syntax, solecisms, and strong semitic influence, suggests a Palestinian Jewish Christian background whose native language was not Greek.² Despite these linguistic features, early Christian tradition (including the testimony of the Church Fathers) associates the work with John the Apostle, exiled on the island of Patmos during Emperor Domitian's reign. This study adopts that view, affirming John, the son of Zebedee, as the author. His firsthand discipleship under Jesus and the first-century Jewish-Christian context shape both his theology and symbolism.³

Understanding the author's identity is essential to interpreting "The Lord's Day" (Rev 1:10). As a Jewish-Christian prophet writing to persecuted believers, John frames his vision of the Lord's Day not merely as temporal worship but as a theological revelation of divine sovereignty and eschatological hope. His background

¹ Osborne, *Revelation*, 39-40.

² R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh, Scotland: Morrison and Gibb, 1979), 1:22-23; Edward W. Goodrick and John R. Kohlenberger 111, *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance*, 1999, s.v. "Lord's Day;" Martin Rist, "The Revelation of St. John the Divine: Introduction and Exegesis," *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1957), 12:345-613.

³ Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, 1:22-23.

and the audience's shared cultural and religious setting enable him to communicate in familiar apocalyptic imagery and Old Testament echoes, reinforcing the theme of faithfulness amid suffering.

Date

Determining the date when John wrote Revelation is essential for a historical-grammatical analysis. Without a specific date, it is impossible to accurately interpret the original meaning of the words for the author and his audience. Knowing the date helps contextualize the social and grammatical environment in which the text was produced.

First, from James Orr, the general editor of the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Eusebius, in summing up the tradition of the Church, assigns John's exile to Patmos and, consequently, the composition of the Apocalypse, to the latter part of Domitian's reign (81-96 AD).⁴ Irenaeus (circa 180 AD) states about the book, "For it was seen, not a long time ago, but almost in our generation, at the end of the reign of Domitian" (*Adv. Haer.*, v. 30, 3).⁵ David Aune's work on Revelation also supports the same dating 81-96 AD⁶. Church history records that John was a timeworn man when he wrote Revelation; Andrews' Bible commentary on Revelation even supports the era of Emperor Domitian.

Consequently, this study subscribes to the above widely accepted 81-96 AD as the date of the Book of Revelation. This date, the 1st-century AD Christians, who

⁴ Angel Manuel Rodriguez, ed., "Revelation," in *Andrews Bible Commentary: Light, Depth and Truth (ABC)*, Int. ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2024), 1932-1940.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 80.

were still upholding the traditions, lifestyle, and teachings of Jesus Christ and the other apostles.

Audience

The importance of the original readers of the book of Revelation to this study cannot be overemphasized. Ranko underlines the above statement by quoting Douglas Ezell, “the more we can discover about the first reader, the ones to whom the letter was originally addressed, the better we can understand the reason for and the significance of that message.”⁷

Internal evidence in Revelation 2-3, indicates that it was initially a letter for the seven Christian churches in the Roman province of Asia. Revelation 1:4, 11, which are Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.⁸ An instruction Jesus gave John in particular was to write to these churches, addressing their strengths and weaknesses and encouraging them in their faith, which, in essence, extends to all Christians.

Occasion

New Testament writers wrote either in response to internal or external problems or to address issues affecting the churches. The book of Revelation was written to encourage the Christians in those seven Churches to address both external and internal reasons.⁹

To start with, the external reasons include the following: the seven churches in Asia Minor faced pagan opposition and frequent accusations for their refusal to

⁷ Ranko, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 5; Douglas Ezell, *Revelation on Revelation: New Sounds from Old Symbols* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1977), 51.

⁸ “Although the book was originally sent to the Churches in Asia Minor, Revelation was not written only for them but also for all Christians throughout History” (Rodriguez, “Revelation,” 1932).

⁹ Rodriguez, “Revelation,” 1932.

participate in social activities. First-century Christians excluded themselves from social celebrations they considered pagan. As a result, they were accused of atheism for not participating in the worship of emperors and pagan gods.¹⁰ At a time when loyalty to the emperor brought peace, these Christians chose to show their loyalty to Jesus Christ, which brought serious consequences and paved the way for the events described in this book of Revelation (Rev 2:9-10 & 13). The book was written to encourage the disciples to endure Rome's persecution¹¹ until God brought judgment on the Empire (Rev 15:2; 17:14).

Another external reason that occasioned the Revelation is the suffering of its addressees due to conflict with the Jews. The Jews saw Christianity as an offshoot of their religion, a separation that was hastened by the destruction of Jerusalem.¹² The faithful Christians were banished from the synagogues, and an eight-benediction was said against them by the Jewish authorities.¹³ The external antagonisms and hostilities Christians faced motivated the writer to send inspiration in the form of Revelation.¹⁴

¹⁰ Rodriguez, "Revelation," 1935; Ranko, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 6.

¹¹ Roger E. Dickson, *Dickson's Teacher's Bible* (Hutchinson, KS: African International Mission, 2011), 1730-1731; see also Ranko, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 6.

¹² James D. G. Dunn, *The Parting of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity*, 2nd ed. (London: SCM Press, 2006), 325-326; *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Early Christianity and Judaism," accessed October 2025, <http://www.britannica.com>.

¹³ "Because of their loyalty to Jesus, many members were ostracized and lost their jobs, some suffered imprisonment, and some even martyrdom" (Rodriguez, "Revelation," 1936).

¹⁴ Ranko, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 6.

Jewish and Greco-Roman Perspectives on Sacred Time

Understanding the meaning of “the Lord’s Day” is a study of the sacred time in John's life, a period in the first century during which he was in the spirit. As expressed earlier, John and most Christians of his time were Jews. Therefore, A juxtaposed understanding of the Jewish and Greco-Roman perspectives is significant to this study. At the same time, the Jews were monotheistic and had the Sabbath as a day of rest, observed from Friday evening to Saturday evening, commemorating God's rest after creation. The Greco-Romans were polytheistic and had nothing like Sabbath rest.

Although both Jewish and Greco-Roman traditions highlight cyclical time, featuring annual festivals and holidays like the Jewish Passover, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot, alongside Greco-Roman agricultural cycles and mythological celebrations, each tradition had its distinct emphasis and orientation.¹⁵ Furthermore, Jewish tradition also recognizes linear time, focusing on historical events such as the Exodus and the Messiah's arrival. Greco-Roman sacred time was marked by festivals, games, and rituals honouring various gods and goddesses, such as the Olympic Games.¹⁶

Both traditions observe their Sacred times through rituals, sacrifices, prayers, and offerings dedicated to either a monotheistic God or a pantheon of gods. Jewish secret times focused on Torah observance, whereas Greco-Roman secret times emphasized mythological and astrological practices. It is important to recognize that these traditions influenced one another, mainly as early Christianity spread across the

¹⁵ James H. Charlesworth, *The Jewish Roots of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 142-145.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

Greco-Roman world, as exemplified by the observance of Sunday. Despite these influences, their practices and interpretations of sacred times remained quite distinct.

The study suggests that, even though he was outside the comfort of his Jewish jurisdiction, John's sacred moments were guided by the Torah and other scriptural themes. John was in a day that was sacred to him because it belonged to his God. A day that is worth the holy moment and could be familiar to the Jews or their most expected day.

Finally, considering the historical context, the study concludes that, given the occasion, the audience, his sacred practices, and the common understanding of the term used, John was in the spirit of “the Lord’s Day.” This could not have referred to Sunday, Esther, or the Emperor’s day, nor did it allude to a symbolic event in the past or future. Instead, it signified a sacred time for worship and anticipation of deliverance, embedded in Judgment or the eschaton.

Christian Worship Practices and the Possible Development of Sunday Observance

Since the audience of Revelation was faithful first-century Christians, interpreting “the Lord’s Day” in Revelation 1:10 requires a contextual understanding of their worship practices and the development of new services such as Sunday worship. However, it is worth noting that the history of Sunday worship is long and complex, shaped by political, religious, and cultural influences.

It is interesting to note that, in the 1st Century AD, Christian worship practices were deeply rooted in Jewish traditions. Early Christians, mostly Jewish converts, attended synagogue services, observed the Sabbath, and participated in Temple rituals

Acts 2:46, 3:1).¹⁷ Judaism essentially influenced Christianity; therefore, a first-generation Christian like John would definitely align with his tradition while hoping for the returning Lord.

Nevertheless, sooner or later, the first-century Christians began to introduce services like Synaxis, a Christian gathering similar to a synagogue service in which scripture was read and teachings were shared, alongside the Eucharist. The Eucharist was often held on Sundays, including the breaking of bread and a celebration of Christ's last supper. Sunday evenings were set for the Agape Meal. The Agape Meal was a fellowship meal spiced with Hymnal and Psalms, including prayer.¹⁸ As these special celebrations became regular and popular, they gradually replaced Jewish Sabbath services among Christians around the fourth century AD.

The development of Sunday observance in the early Christian Church was a gradual process influenced by various factors, including the resurrection of Christ (John 20:1; Acts 20:7). The Edict of Milan, issued by Emperor Constantine in 313 AD, finally formalized Sunday observance. Many scholars agree that it was during the 4th century AD that Sunday worship began to assume an official role within the Christian Church, which initially met in informal locations such as homes of believers (1 Cor 16:19). It is noteworthy that, John and his immediate audience were unaware of Sunday worship at that time of writing in the first century (81-96 AD), as stated in this study.

¹⁷ Camilla Klein, *The Surprising History of Sunday Worship: When Did Christians Start Going to Church on Sunday* (Colorado Springs, CO: Christian Educators Academy, 2024), 30-50.

¹⁸ Ibid., 40; See also Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 83.

Imperial Language *Kyrios* “Lord”

This section of the study examines the imperial term *Kyrios* as it corresponds to the Septuagint translation of YAHWEH, which introduced the term ‘Lord.’ *Kyrios* refers to the one who owns a person or thing, over whom they have the authority to possess or dispose. It was a respectful title of honor, used by servants to greet their master during the Greco-Roman era.¹⁹

In the Roman Empire, “*Kyrios*” was used as a state title for the emperor, signifying his sovereign authority over the entire empire and his divine status. The emperor demanded worship and recognition as “Lord” (*Kyrios*),²⁰ which created tension with early Christians, who reserved that title for Jesus. This conflict, as noted earlier, forms one of the bases for the persecution of Christians.

In Christianity, “*Kyrios*” is used to refer to Jesus Christ, affirming his divinity, lordship, and Messiahship. This Christian title is rooted in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible (the Septuagint), where “*Kyrios*” translates the divine name *Yahweh*, affirming its antiquity.²¹ It was a central tenet of Christianity to confess “Jesus is Lord” (Rom 10:9), and it distinguished believers from non-believers.²² When applied to Jesus, it asserts his supreme lordship over all creation, emphasizing his divine nature and role as Savior.²³

¹⁹ Frederick W. Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* based on Walter Bauer's *Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur* and on previous English editions by W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker (DBAG), 3rd ed. (2000), s.v. “κύριος;” Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 89-92.

²⁰ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, vol. 1, *Introduction & Domains* (LN), 2nd ed. (1987), s.v. “*Kyrios*.”

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² John N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (London: Continuum, 2000), 124-127; Malina, *The New Testament World*, 89-92.

²³ *Ibid.*

The complexities of the Judeo-Christian term "*Kyrios*" for both God and Jesus, as well as its use in the Roman Empire's courtroom to refer to an emperor, highlight its significance.²⁴ Early Christian usage shows how deeply this term influenced theological development. "*Kyrios*" was a Judeo-Christian term long before Rome's rise, as demonstrated by its use in the Septuagint (LXX) and its clear distinction from contemporary cultural and political meanings.²⁵

Literary Contextual Analysis of the Genre of the Book

Understanding the genre of revelation is crucial for interpreting the Lord's Day. The larger genre classification of the Book of Revelation is a mixture of Apocalyptic Literature, Prophecy, and Letter.²⁶ Understanding these genre types together conveys a message of hope, judgment, and Redemption. The genre contributes to understanding the Lord's Day in several ways: Apocalypse employs symbolic vision and Cosmic Language, both of which require careful interpretation. Furthermore, in the Prophecy and Eschatological context, the Book's focus is on end-time events, and God's ultimate triumph informs the understanding of the Lord's Day.

Moreover, the book highlights Christ's sovereignty and Lordship; the Christological emphasis is central to the concept of the Lord's Day. A good understanding of the blend of genres helps readers interpret the book's meaning and significance, including its symbolism, prophetic messages, and practical guidance, in its narrow sense.

²⁴ Buttondown.com, "The Story of God's Name pt 2- Kyrios in the New Testament," accessed October 1, 2025, https://buttondown.com/josh_frost/archive/the-story-of-gods-name-pt-2-kyrios-in-the-new/.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 210; Dickson, *Dickson's Teacher's Bible*, 1730-1731.

The genre of the book of Revelation helps interpreters better understand the Lord's Day as a day of worship, revelation, and anticipation of Christ's return. In addition, such an understanding highlights the connection between the Lord's Day and other biblical themes, such as the Day of the Lord. Ultimately, a genre-aware approach helps prevent misinterpretation and offers a more nuanced understanding of the Lord's Day in Revelation.²⁷

Genre Classification of the Book of Revelation

The book of Revelation is classified as apocalyptic literature, Prophetic (eschatological), and letters. It is considered Apocalyptic literature because vivid symbolism, angelic revelations, and a focus on the end times characterize its writing style, content, and themes. The apocalyptic messages aim to offer hope and comfort to those afflicted or persecuted, often by revealing God's ultimate plan for redemption and justice.²⁸

Revelation shares features that are closely associated with the books of Daniel, 1 Enoch, and 2 Esdras.²⁹ In this genre, it is common to find writers writing with the audience in mind of those they seek to console. Therefore, care must be taken when interpreting the text in Revelation; it cannot be rightly interpreted without concentrating on the background, culture, and contextual analysis of the addressee.³⁰

²⁷ Dunn, *The Parting of the Ways*.

²⁸ Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997); Robert L. Thomas "The Glacial-Like Flow of Months in Revelation 9:7-10," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 53, no 2 (2010): 281-300; Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 210.

²⁹ Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*.

³⁰ *Ibid.*; Ranko, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 6.

Since the addresses are the focus of the writer, their understanding of the terms must take precedence in any interpretation attempt.

This apocalyptic framework transforms “the Lord’s Day” into a vision of eschatological sovereignty: the day when God’s justice triumphs over evil and the faithful are vindicated. The persecuted believers were encouraged to view their present trials as temporary and to worship the Lord, who already holds victory. In this way, the genre itself is filled with symbols, cosmic imagery, and prophetic assurance, also serving a pastoral purpose, reaffirming that the Lord of the “Lord’s Day” reigns over history, empires, and eternity.

Additionally, the book is also regarded as a prophecy.³¹ Revelation refers to itself as a prophecy (Rev 1:3; 22:7, 10, 18-19), emphasizing spiritual and moral reform in the church. The prophecies in the book involve communicating God’s message, often with a call to repentance or spiritual reform (Rev 18:4, 14:9-11; 2-3). In Revelation, prophecy encourages readers to remain faithful in the face of challenges (Rev 2:9-10).³² The letters to the seven Churches (chapters 2 and 3) and the warning about judgment are examples of the prophetic genre of the Revelation.

The prophetic genre extrapolates the reality of Christ’s lordship into their present context of suffering, assuring them that the risen Christ remains active, ruling, and victorious. The prophetic genre thus transforms “the Lord’s Day” (Rev 1:10) from a mere chronological reference into a theological encounter a moment where divine sovereignty breaks into human history.

³¹ Ranko, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 5-6; Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 5; Osborne, *Revelation*, 39-41; and Dickson, *Dickson’s Teacher’s Bible*, 1730-1731.

³² Dickson, *Dickson’s Teacher’s Bible*, 1730-1731.

Moreover, Revelation is also classified as a circular letter³³ to the seven churches (Rev 1:4-6). The Epistolary structure of the book addresses specific issues and concerns in the churches of Asia Minor. The epistolary format allows John to offer guidance, encouragement, and hope to the early Christian communities. The opening address (Rev 1:4-6) and the concluding benediction (Rev 22:21) frame the book as a letter.

Consequently, recognizing the book's apocalyptic, prophetic, and epistolary genres can help readers and interpreters better understand the context and purpose of Revelation 1:10a. The Lord's Day is a day of worship, a day of revelation, and an anticipation of Christ's return.³⁴ Besides, the interpreter is exposed to the connection between the Lord's Day and other biblical themes, such as the Day of the Lord. Moreover, these genres, when appreciated, facilitate symbolic interpretation, as seen in the use of vivid symbolism in prophetic literature. It is therefore expedient for interpreters to ensure that the historical and cultural context of recipients resonates well with the writer's intent.

The blend of genres, especially in Revelation, creates interpretive complexity, requiring readers to consider multiple perspectives and approaches to a text. The blended genre also results in diverse interpretations. Different readers may interpret the text's symbolism, prophecies, and messages in varying ways.³⁵ The study appreciates the complexity and diverse perspectives and approaches Revelation 1:10 has received.

³³ Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 210.

³⁴ Osborne, *Revelation*, 39-41.

³⁵ Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*.

A Larger Theological Reflection and Correlation

The Lord's Day in Revelation 1:10 also offers theological insight on the Day of the Lord (Eschatological hope), a time of judgment and God's ultimate triumph. John and his audience anticipated the lord's redemption from the persecuting empire; the eschaton was a refreshing hope for Christians because they expected the return of Christ and the preservation of the believers.

Again, it carries Christological significance; the title "Lord" (*Kyrios*) emphasizes Jesus' divinity and lordship, reinforcing the theme of Jesus' sovereignty over time and people, including John himself, who humbles himself under the authority of the Spirit on the Lord's Day. The context of worship on the Lord's Day underscores the importance of honoring and adoring Jesus as Lord and not some living or dead emperor.

Grammatical and Syntactical Analysis

This section of the study on syntax aims to understand the set of rules that govern how words form phrases, clauses, and sentences to create meaningful written texts. It seeks to reveal these rules by analyzing how speakers organize elements, how these arrangements influence meaning, and the fundamental principles behind them. The section will consider the key words "the Lord's" and "Day," their occurrences in both Old and New Testaments, and their usage in the New Testament.

Table 1 explains the different grammatical classifications of the phrase that is used in this section of the study.

Table 1. Grammatical Classification of Each Term in the Phrase

Greek token	Part of Speech	Case	Function in the Clause
τῆ	Definite article	Davite Feminine-Singular	Marks the adjective κυριακη
κυριακη	Adjectival noun	Feminine Dative singular	Possess the noun
ἡμέρᾱ	Common Noun	Feminine-Singular-Dative	Agree with κυριακη;

The Word Revelation 1:10: “κυριακος” ‘ἡ’ in and Its Uses in the Scriptures

The first word to consider in this section is “Lord’s,” which is a translation from a Greek-inflected word *κυριακη* (*Kuriakh*) pronounced as {Koo-ree-ak-ee}. Its root word is *κυριακος* (*Kyriakos*). *Κυριακη* is an adjective in the dative singular feminine. An adjective generally describes a noun. The word appeared twice in the Bible,³⁶ yet its etymological form is *Κυριος*,³⁷ this noun was used several times in the New Testament. *Kyrios* has been translated as 'Supremacy,' 'God,' and 'Master.' For example, in Matthew 4:7, Jesus said unto him, “it is written again, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”

Additionally, the word is closely linked to the Hebrew terms ‘*ahdon*’ or ‘*Ahdonay*’, meaning “Lord” or “master.” These terms, originating from the Old Testament, are used for both divine and earthly figures.³⁸ They are reserved titles for YHWH that highlight His majesty, appearing about 334 times for ‘*ahdon*’ and 439

³⁶ Louw and Nida, LN, s.v. “Kyrios;” Strong, *Strong’s Complete Word Study Concordance*, s.v. “Κυριος.”

³⁷ Danker, DBAG, s.v. “κύριος.”

³⁸ George Ricker Berry, *A Dictionary of the New Testament Greek Synonyms: With Indexes to Bauer’s Greek-English Lexicon and Brown’s Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (1979), s.v. “Kyrios.”

times for ‘*Ahdonay*’, totaling 773 references in the Old Testament. This Hebrew notion of the divine enhances our understanding of John’s background as a Hebrew and his use of the word in its Greek context. He uses them to exert the Lord’s divine authority over any noun.

Kyriakos is a biblical and ecclesiastical term translated as “of the Lord’s,” or “belonging to the Lord.”³⁹ This means the word can be an adjectival noun, thus combining both adjective and noun properties. Therefore, *κυριακος, η, ν* stands for the “Lord’s” and its usage in the text Revelation 1:10 can be translated as ‘relating to the Lord.’⁴⁰ The word was used in 1 Corinthians 11:20 to mean “The Lord’s Supper.”⁴¹ In another instance, the word was used in its verb form *κυριευω*, which is translated to ‘be lord or master, rule, lord it (over), control,’⁴² especially people with subject powers and authority (cf. Rom 6:9, 14; 1 Tim 6:15).

Furthermore, the lexicons and concordances such as Louw and Nida, Danker, Thayer, and Strong define *κυριος* ‘owner,’ or ‘master.’⁴³ Examples in Matthew 20:8; 24:48; and Luke 12:46 are used especially for someone who has complete control over something,⁴⁴ in this case, a day. The word is a respectful designation for an owner or authority; it is used to address persons of varying social or political rank, often equivalent to modern terms such as “honorable” or “Sir.” Thus, the Lord describes someone who has invested powers to rule and control, manage, or

³⁹ Berry, B, s.v. “Kyrios.”

⁴⁰ Thayer, T, s.v. “κύριος.”

⁴¹ Ibid.; Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 83.

⁴² Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (LS) (1996), s.v. “κύριος;” Thayer, T, s.v. “κύριος;” Strong, *Strong’s Complete Word Study Concordance*, s.v. “κύριος.”

⁴³ Louw and Nida, LN, s.v. “Kyrios;” Danker, DBAG, s.v. “κύριος;” Thayer, T, s.v. “κύριος;” Strong, *Strong’s Complete Word Study Concordance*, s.v. “κύριος.”

⁴⁴ Horn, *SDABD*, s.v. “The Lord’s Day.”

supervise⁴⁵ Matthew 27:63; Revelation 7:14; Peter used it in his book, “my master” (1 Pet 3:6).

Despite the above, the term is used as a ‘designation of God’ (34). In specific contexts, such as in Matthew 5:33; Luke 1:11, 32; 2:15, it also refers to the Roman emperor (35). The word was occasionally used to denote Jesus Christ, highlighting his authority, as seen in John 20:18, 20, 28; Revelation 22:20 (36). Additionally, κυριακη was employed to mean a ‘divine messenger,’ for example, in Acts 10:4. The New Testament usage generally contradicts the Roman imperial usage: while the Bible authors used it as a title for God and Jesus, their contemporaries in the Roman Empire applied it to their earthly rulers.

The study of the word *Κυριακος*, *ν*, *η*, as used differently in the NT can be summarized as follows: the word is an adjective; it is not a stand-alone; the prefix or the suffix determines its meaning. However, *κηριακη Ημερα*, Revelation 1:10 is singled out as the only time it was used in the New Testament. The other verses cited above betray how John might have been influenced to use them. First and foremost, to designate the power and authority of his Lord Jesus, to rule and to have. Secondly, the Lord’s singular right to select any day as his own, though all other things belong to him. The use of the word *Κυριακη* in other verses helps show the original understanding of the word and its grammatical usage within the first century A.D. to express Ownership and Lordship.

ημερα (Hemera) and Its Uses

The book of Revelation 1:10 also makes use of the word “Day,” which is a translation from the Greek word *ημερα* (*Hemera*) pronounced in this manner {hay-

⁴⁵ Horn, *SDABD*, s.v. “The Lord’s Day.”

mer'-ah}. The word Ημερα is a Noun in the Dative Singular Feminine, often meaning 'day.' It takes the same gender as its etymology, ωρα (*hora*). ωρα is a feminine noun and can mean 'hour,' 'time,' 'season,' 'daytime,' or 'high time,' the time between sunrise and sunset. It appears over 389 times and is found in all the New Testament books except 2 and 3 John.⁴⁶

Again, James Strong translates the word as a specific definite time or season.' ημερα is a derivative of the feminine noun, ημια, which means to sit or tame. It is literally the period between one night and the next, or the 24-hour interval during which the planet completes a full rotation on its axis. Figuratively, it can represent a period, age, or judgment day.⁴⁷ Similar to the Old Testament "Yom," which also means "day." Yom appears 847 times in the Old Testament and primarily conveys a judgment or end-time focus.

Furthermore, the term ημερα used here is a derivative word, where its proper understanding is derived from the prefix or suffix it holds. Specifically, without the prefix Κυριακη, the word lacks meaning. Thus, τη Κυριακη Ημερα two words rely on each other for contextual meaning. The prefix Κυριακη gives a sense of possession to its suffix ημερα, allowing it to convey the whole meaning. Additionally, in the context of the book of Revelation, the term ημερα is figuratively associated with significant days, such as Judgment Day, worship, and the second coming.

⁴⁶ W. Trilling, "Hemera," *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament (EDNT)*, ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 2:119-21.

⁴⁷ Louw and Nida, LN, s.v. "hmera;" Liddell and Scott, LS, s.v. "Hmera"

Spirit (πνεῦμα, Pneuma)

Besides, there are other lexical words, such as Spirit (πνεῦμα, pneuma)

It appeared in the dative case: ἐν πνεύματι (en pneumati) meaning "in the Spirit." It indicates a state or sphere of influence, with a locative sense, John is "in" a spiritual condition. Theologically, it suggests being empowered or guided by the Holy Spirit.

Loud Voice (φωνή μεγάλη)

The lexicons Loud and Voice (phōnē megalē) are adjective-nouns working as a pair: in a nominative case. Their Hebraic expressions emphasize intensity and quality. Signals the importance of what's being said. Similar usage in Revelation: 5:2, 6:10, 7:2.

Trumpet (σάλπιγγος, Salpingos)

The word "trumpet" appears in a Genitive comparison: ὡς σάλπιγγος (hōs salpingos) meaning "like a trumpet." These words are used to show similarity, not equivalence, indicating a likeness to human items. There are several Old Testament contexts influencing John's use of the trumpet. For instance, it has been used in Theophanies, such as in (Exod. 19:16, Ezek 1:24). In some passages in Isaiah, it signifies gathering God's people (Isa 27:13). Finally, it has been used to warn or signal judgment (Joel 2:1, Zeph 1:16).

Semitic Understanding of ἡμέρα (Day) as Compared to the Western Understanding

Trilling highlights the differences in the first-century A.D. uses of the term between the Western and Eastern worlds, particularly in Asia Minor.⁴⁸ According to him, the daytime, for Western users, is a "civil day, or the space of twenty-four hours,

⁴⁸ Trilling, "Hemera," *EDNT*, 2:119-121.

thus including the night.”⁴⁹ Nevertheless, in Asia Minor, any part of a day is counted as “a whole day.” For example, the Bible is filled with expressions like “three days and three nights;” ‘of the last day of this present age,’ again, “a day appointed for a special purpose,’ the day Christ will return from heaven, raise the dead, hold the final judgment, and perfect his Kingdom. If any part of the day counts much to John, then it is probably that John’s emphasis is not on the day, but as a Semite, it is what happens in the day.

Again, the variety of usages *ημερα* is based on the OT, which is specifically connected to the Semitic perception of time.⁵⁰ *Ημερα* Generally emphasizes a particular day set aside for specific purposes or marked off, as a feast day or a Sabbath.⁵¹ Trilling considered “the Lord’s Day” (*κυριακη ημερα*) as the day of Yahweh experienced in a visionary way.⁵² He further asserts that one specific significant use of *ημερα* it is the future eschatological day of the end when used in a semantic sense.⁵³ He further stated that. “The center of gravity in the NT use of *Ημερα* is about the eschatological day of the end, the day of judgment and redemption. This usage is derived from the OT and Jewish tradition of ‘the day of Yahweh’... the idea of Judgment stands in the foreground and stands explicit in the formulation of the word.”⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Trilling, “Hemera,” *EDNT*, 2:119-121.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*; Ranko for example sees Judgment setting in the day.

⁵² Trilling, “Hemera,” *EDNT*, 2:119-121.

⁵³ *Ibid.*; similar to the views of *Andrews Bible Commentary*.

⁵⁴ Trilling, “Hemera,” *EDNT*, 2:119-121; (See also Ranko, “*The Lord’s Day*,” 94; and Danker, *DBAG*, s.v. “*hmera*.”)

John was an Easterner and a Semitic writer. He could have been at any time of day, whether after he had performed his daily duties, when he was free the whole day, or in the evening. To him, what matters is ‘the day,’ the time period within the 24 hours of that particular day is not of importance, and like others, NT writers use *ημερα* with the mindset of hope and Judgment.

Finally, the adjective *κύριος* (‘Lord, Master’) emphasizes divine authority rather than mere ownership, a nuance reinforced by its use with *ημερα* (‘day’) to form the phrase *η ημερα του κυριος* ‘the day belonging to the Lord.’ This possessive genitive points to an eschatological “day of the Lord” motif (cf. Joel 2:31) rather than a simple calendar reference.⁵⁵

Table 2 further details the Lexical-Semantic Analysis and highlights the differences in how terms were used in the first century A.D.

Table 2. Lexical-Semantic Analysis

Word	Gloss	Semantic Domain (Liddell-Scott)	Key passages for comparison
<i>Κύριος</i>	“Lord, Master”	1 Cor 8:6; John 20:28	Emphasizes divine authority
<i>hmera</i>	“day”	Temporal (Acts 20:7) vs Eschatological (2pet 3:8)	The collocation “Lord’s Day” may echo “Day of the Lord” Joel 2:31

Syntactic Parsing and Genitive Construction

This section of the study examines how a careful analysis of the grammar in and around the phrase “the Lord’s Day” (*τη κυριακη Ημερα*) helps to shape its structure and meaning. Nevertheless, Backley, Edward W. Goodrick and John R.

⁵⁵ Danker, DBAG, s.v. “κύριος;” Danker, DBAG, s.v. “hmera.”

Kohlenberger underscore that the grammar of John, the servant of Jesus, as depicted in the book of Revelation, is abysmal; he makes mistakes a schoolboy in Greek would not make⁵⁶. Notwithstanding, grammar studies cannot be overemphasized. Here is how the surrounding context of Revelation 1:9-11, the phrase *τη κυριακη ἡμέρα*, helps reveal in several essential respects.

First, verses 9 and 10 state that John “was in the Spirit” (*ἐγενόμην ἐν τῇ πνεύματι*) and that he “heard a loud voice” (*φωνὴν μεγάλην*). In these verses, John describes where and when he was, and his condition before being inspired to write. The participial phrase *ἐγενόμην ἐν ... πνεύματι* establishes a visionary and temporal context: the subsequent events are not ordinary history but a prophetic vision. When verse 10 adds , the preposition “ἐν” paired with the dative *ἡμέρα*, it serves as a temporal marker, placing the vision within that already-established “Spirit-filled” moment. In essence, the syntax links the “Lord’s Day” to a specific revelatory experience rather than to a fixed calendar date.

The second point involves the unusual Greek construction of article-noun-article-noun (*τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ*), which resembles the Semitic phrase “day of the Lord” commonly seen in the LXX (e.g., Joel 2:31 LXX: *ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου*). By using this construction, John indicates that the phrase is a shorthand for the eschatological “Day of the Lord,” reinforced by apocalyptic imagery such as the “great voice” and the “seven golden lampstands.” The definite article with *κυρίου* points explicitly to a particular day: the well-known “Lord’s Day” that prophetic tradition already expects.

⁵⁶ Goodrick and Kohlenberger 111, s.v. “Lord’s Day.”

Finally, verse 11 instructs John to “write what you see” (γράψον ὃν ἃ βλέπεις). The imperative follows the temporal clause, indicating that the vision's content is tied to the time of its reception. The “Lord’s Day” serves as a theological foundation, giving authority to the message: since the revelation occurs on the eschatological day of the Lord, its words are divinely authorized.

The “τη” in the phrase is a definite article of dative feminine singular form of the nominative ‘ο’.⁵⁷ The feminine substantive in –η makes κυριακη an attributive adjective.⁵⁸ As an attributive dative or adjective, it introduces the apostrophe s (‘s) “Lord’s” to the sentence to make it possessive or descriptive in English.

The Greek preposition “εν,” which means “on/in,” that is attached to the phrase “the Lord’s Day,” makes it a propositional phrase functioning as a temporal adjunct. The key phrase ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ is a dative prepositional phrase: ἐν (en) + dative = “in,” “on,” or “during While the articles “τη” with κυριακη signals a definite ‘Lord’s Day,’ imply a known eschatological referent.⁵⁹

Wallace explains that the Greek article does far more than mark definiteness unlike the English “the”;⁶⁰ the article marks something as unique or one of a kind referent: the “Lord” par excellence i.e., Christ Himself; Fits strongly here “the Lord’s Day” as a singular sacred day; the article also points to something well known to the audience; “the Lord’s Day” as a singular sacred day; early Christians already recognized a specific “Lord’s Day” in worship practice.

⁵⁷ Danker, DBAG, s.v. “κύριος;” Danker, DBAG, s.v. “hmera;” Strong, *Strong’s Complete Word Study Concordance*, s.v. “κύριος.”

⁵⁸ Louw and Nida, LN, s.v. “Kyrios.”

⁵⁹ Liddell and Scott, LS, s.v. “κύριος;” Steve Moyise, *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 45-46.

⁶⁰ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 209-212.

The word κυριακη, as has been stated earlier, becomes an “adjective normal dative feminine singular with no degree form.”⁶¹ By this form, it becomes a descriptive word that describes the word or words that will follow it, especially nouns and pronouns, as in our case, creating understanding around the word ημερα. To that effect, it can be ascertained that the Lord (Κυριακη) is describing the day (Ημερα).⁶² The attributive adjective introduced here to give meaning to “the day” will partly unveil John’s throne room encounter day. Again, κυριακη as has been used, in the dative of possession case (the day belonging to the Lord) rather than a dative of source (“the day from the Lord”), like in 1 Corinthians 5:5 “ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου.”

It is noteworthy that if κυριακη describes and possesses the day, then this particular day John received his visions is only essential or is emphasized due to its attachment to the Lord (belonging to the Lord or of the lord). It could further mean that the dependent day is separated from all other days of the week because a Superior Master controls or owns it, has created the distinction, and has made it a known day.⁶³

The grammatical analysis so far suggests that the author's focus is on highlighting a known day the Lord has made special for judgment. The syntax indicates that this phrase should be understood qualitatively rather than in a strictly chronological order.⁶⁴ The Bible contains texts showing that the Lord asserted

⁶¹ Costas Stergiou, *In the Beginning Was the Word* (Corfu, Greece: Costas Stergiou, 2003-2010), the Word Software 3.0, accessed May 2024, <https://www.theword.net/>; see also Bible works version 7 (Revelation 1:10) and Goodrick and Kohlenberger III, s. v. “Lord’s Day.”

⁶² *The Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* explains *th kyriakh Hemera*, the day devoted to the Lord, Sacred to the memory of Christ’s resurrection.

⁶³ Trilling, “Hemera,” *EDNT*, 2:119-121.

⁶⁴ Moyise, *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation*, 45-46; Danker, *DBAG*, s.v. “κύριος;” Louw and Nida, *LN*, s.v. “Kyrios.”

ownership of a day in the past (Exod 31:13; Isa 58:13). Additionally, Jesus identified Himself as the Lord of a particular day, the Sabbath (Mark 2:28).

Grammatical Classification of Each Term and How the Term Functions within Revelation 1:10 and Related Passages

This section provides a compact grammatical sketch of the key words in Revelation 1:10 (Ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ) and how terms behave in a few related New Testament passages.

Table 3 illustrates how these terms function in their part of speech and within the clause.

Table 3. Sketch of Key Words in Revelation 1:10a

Greek token	Part of Speech	Case	Function in the Clause
Ἐν	Preposition		Introduces a prepositional phrase of time
τῇ	Definite article	Feminine- Dative Singular	Marks the adjective kuriakh
kuriakh	Adjectival noun	Feminine Dative singular	Possess the noun
ἡμέρᾳ	Common Noun	Feminine- Singular-Dative	Agree with kuriakh;

Initially, the key words act as a temporal marker; the phrase “the Lord’s Day” locates John’s vision at a specific, divinely designated time. The dative case of the key words indicates when the vision takes place, rather than where. The preposition “en” will take a dative for time and location, as in ἡμέρα.

Once more, the terms serve as a theological qualifier by linking ἡμέρα with *κυριακή*, and John references the Old Testament 'Day of the Lord' motif, such as Joel 2:31 in the LXX: *ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου*. The structure is qualitative rather than

chronological, indicating that it is the eschatological day of judgment and vindication.⁶⁵

Finally, they provide a link to Christology because Revelation begins with “the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1); the “Lord” referenced is clearly Christ. The dative also emphasizes a Christ-centric perspective: the day belongs to “the Lord” in the sense that it signifies Christ’s sovereign rule.

Table 4 examines the parallel usage of the terms across related NT passages to provide a broader understanding of how these terms are used in the NT.

Table 4. The Parallel Usage of the Terms in Related New Testament Passages

Passage	Greek Phrase	Grammatical notes	Thematic parallel
1 Cor 5:5	ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου	ἡμέρα nominative, κυρίου genitive of possession	“The day of the Lord” as a future judgment day
1 Thess 5:2	ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου	Same genitive construction	Emphasizes suddenness of the Lord’s Day
2 Pet 3:10	ἡ ἡμέρα κυρίου	κυρίου genitive, no article before κυρίου	Highlights the day’s belonging to the Lord
Acts 20:7	τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων	Dative of time, but no “Lord” qualifier	Simple calendar reference (first day of the week)
1 Cor 11:20	th tri th hmera	The Lord’s Supper on the third day	

⁶⁵ Danker, DBAG, s.v. “Lord.”

In each of these, the genitive (or genitive-like) construction signals possession, whereas Revelation 1:10 uses a dative forced by the preposition “ἐν.” The shift does not alter the core meaning, which is that the day that belongs to the Lord, but it does embed the phrase more tightly into the surrounding syntax, reinforcing its role as a temporal theological marker.

A Brief Comparison of How the Terms Are Used in the Septuagint (LXX) and in Non-Biblical Greek Literature of the First-Century CE World

Firstly, in the Septuagint (LXX), κύριος is the standard translation for the Hebrew terms 'Adonai' and 'YHWH', always signifying God's sovereign authority. For instance, Ps 110:1 LXX states, “ὁ κύριος εἶπεν τῷ κυρίῳ μου.” Additionally, ἡμέρα often carries an eschatological meaning when paired with κύριος, as seen in Joel 2:31 LXX: “ἔσται γὰρ ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου μεγάλη καὶ ἐπιφανής.” The phrase “day of the Lord” is a technical term for divine judgment. The exact expression 'ἡμέρα κυρίου' appears 13 times in the LXX, always implying future judgment, such as in Isa 13:6 and Jer 46:10. This underscores a strong prophetic basis in the text that Revelation references.

Secondly, examining the use in 1st-century CE extrabiblical Greek literature, Philo's name appears first; he uses κύριος to refer to divine rulership, as in De Opificio Mundi 1.5, but he never pairs it with ἡμέρα in a technical way. Josephus also uses ἡμέρα for regular calendar days, such as in his Jewish Antiquities 1.1.1, and occasionally mentions “the day of the Lord” when quoting Hebrew Scriptures, such as in Antiquities 10.8.4 when citing Jer 46:10. He does not develop a distinct theological term.

Similar examples are found in Greek papyri, such as P. Oxy. 1101, where *ἡμέρα* strictly means a 24-hour period. There is no evidence of the term “Lord’s Day” as a liturgical title before the second century CE. In Revelation 1:10, the background of the Septuagint (LXX) lends *ἡμέρα κυρίου* a clear eschatological significance, implying that John’s “Lord’s Day” references that prophetic motif rather than a weekly worship day. The lack of a specific “Lord’s Day” term in contemporary non-biblical sources suggests that John is not using a common calendar phrase but rather creating a theological shorthand based on Jewish apocalyptic language.

Broader Context of the Text

Revelation 1:10's phrase *en tē kyriakh hēmerā* (“on the Lord’s Day”) mainly serves as a theological marker. The word *kyrios* highlights Christ’s sovereign authority,⁶⁶ while *hēmera* implies an eschatological meaning⁶⁷ reminiscent of the Old Testament’s ‘Day of the Lord’ (Joel 2:31). The possessive genitive indicates a day belonging to the Lord, not a specific calendar date. Similar expressions, such as *hēmera tou kyriou* in 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 2 Peter 3:10, and 2 Timothy 1:12, refer to the final judgment. These passages are consistently future-focused and judgment-oriented, reinforcing the eschatological reading in Revelation 1:10. Conversely, phrases like ‘first day of the week’ (*mia tōn sabbatōn*) in Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:2 are straightforward calendar references without theological meaning. This distinction suggests that John is not emphasizing a liturgical Sunday but is pointing to the prophetic “Day of the Lord,” highlighting its eschatological importance.

⁶⁶ Danker, DBAG, s.v. ‘κύριος.’

⁶⁷ Ibid., s.v. ‘ἡμέρα.’

This section of the lexical data shows that when *kyrios* modifies or describes *hēmera* in the New Testament, the expression consistently signals an eschatological, judgment-focused day, not a weekly worship day.

The Theological Weight of the Passage

Divine authority, the double-article construction τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ (dative after ἐν) mirrors the LXX's "day of the Lord" formula, turning a temporal phrase into a title of Christ's sovereign rule. The dative of respect (κυριακῇ) places the day under the Lord's authority, while the preceding "I was in the Spirit" (ἐγενόμην ἐν τῷ πνεύματι) positions the vision as a divine-initiated event, not a human observation.

Worship: the use of prepositional "ἐν" in the phrase τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ follows the prophetic call to "write what you see" (γράψον...), linking the act of recording revelation to a worship-oriented "Lord's Day." The use of the definite article with κυριακῇ makes the day a known, liturgical focal point, echoing the worship language of the seven-lampstand vision (Rev 1:12-13) where Christ stands "in the midst of the lampstands," a picture of communal worship.

Christ-centric focus: Because *κύριος* is the title of the exalted Christ (1:5-6), the dative *κυριακῇ* functions as a dative of possession, emphasizing that the day belongs to the One who "was, is, and is to come." This grammatical possession reinforces the theme that all worship and authority converge on Christ.

Summary

The chapter considered the exegesis of the phrase "the Lord's Day." The study attributes authorship to John the disciple, who wrote during the reign of Emperor Domitian (AD 91-96). Revelation is an Apocalyptic-Prophetic-Letter written to strengthen the faith of the First-Century Christians in the seven churches of Asia

Minor, who dealt with external challenges and internal strife while yearning for a redeemer.

Additionally, the chapter explored the book's multifaceted genre, identifying its components: apocalyptic elements characterized by symbolism and cosmic language. Aim to offer hope and comfort to those afflicted or persecuted, often by revealing God's ultimate plan for redemption and justice. Prophecy that includes predictions and calls for worship; Encourages readers to remain faithful despite challenges (Rev 2:9-10) and Circular Letters exemplified by the correspondence to the Seven Churches (Rev 1:4-6) and the concluding benediction (Rev 22:21). The epistolary format allowed John to offer guidance, encouragement, and hope to the early Christian communities. Understanding these genre types is crucial for interpreting the text and uncovering its original intent.

The chapter also studied the grammatical context of the term "the Lord's Day." It reveals that "Κυριακή" serves as an attributive adjective, emphasizing the significance of the day due to its connection to the Lord's ownership. The word "ἡμέρα," meaning day, indicates a period within 24 hours, from one sunset to the next, yet according to Trilling, a day could be referring to any part of 24 hours in the context of an Asia Minor writer. Thus, John's experience of the Lord on that day is what imbues it with importance. Grammatically, "ἡμέρα" relies on the attributive adjective that qualifies it.

In Revelation 1:10, the phrase "the Lord's Day" is best understood as a theological rather than a chronological marker. Textual analysis supports the reading κύριος ἡμέρα, a *lectio difficilior* that foregrounds a possessive genitive ("the day belonging to the Lord"). Lexical analysis shows that κύριος conveys divine authority and ἡμέρα carries an eschatological nuance, echoing the Old Testament

“Day of the Lord” motif (Joel 2:31). Syntactically, the article with κυρίακῃ marks a definite, known eschatological referent, while the genitive construction emphasizes possession. Within the apocalyptic genre, this temporal phrase functions as a theological shorthand for the inaugurated reign of Christ, positioning the seer and the reader within the already-but-not-yet reality of the Parousia. The result is a Christ-centered eschatological vision that calls the community to live as if already standing on the Lord’s Day.

CHAPTER 4

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION AND CORRELATION

This section explores the correlation and theological reflection concerning the phrase and John. John was "in the Spirit" on a particular day, which was special because it was the Lord's. Scriptural references like Isaiah 58:13 and Mark 2:28, related to the Lord's ownership or sovereignty over the Sabbath day, should be prioritized. Consequently, viewing Sunday as the primary "the Lord's Day" could lead to "a potential misinterpretation."¹ Scripture consistently describes Sunday as the first day (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2), and church fathers refer to it as the "eighth day." It is not the day that God chose and blessed as a day of rest to commemorate His creative work.

Moreover, it was a day of worship; a day to celebrate the Lordship of Jesus and the faith of the community of believers. John in Revelation 1:9-10 was having a communion with God (in Spirit: worshiping) on the Island of Patmos. Even though, according to Trilling, it could be any part of a day, this study asserts that John's visions occurred on a day, during the days when Christians suffered persecution. Additionally, this day was a day for worship. Even though the Christians were suffering persecution for their worship, there was recognition for the Jews and their

¹ Graig Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2014), 730.

religion, which included a day of prayer and worship.² Paul, for example, used his religion and nationality interchangeably to exercise some rights as and when needed (Acts 21:39; 22:3). John here is probably doing the same to enjoy the Jewish privilege of worship while being persecuted under the Roman Empire. Worship was a cornerstone of his faith.

The Lord's Day in Revelation 1:10 also offers theological insight on the Day of the Lord (Eschatological hope), a time of judgment and God's ultimate triumph. John and his audience anticipated the lord's redemption from the persecuting empire; the eschaton was a refreshing hope for Christians because they expected the return of Christ and the preservation of the believers.

Again, it carries Christological significance; the title "Lord" (*Kyrios*) emphasizes Jesus' divinity and lordship, reinforcing the theme of Jesus' sovereignty over time and people, including John himself, who humbles himself under the authority of the Spirit on the Lord's Day. The context of worship on the Lord's Day underscores the importance of honoring and adoring Jesus as Lord and not some living or dead emperor.

Furthermore, it was not on Sunday, though some of the church fathers began to call Sunday "the Lord's Day." This designation highlights only the significance of Jesus' resurrection, which is celebrated on that day. This shift in terminology reflects the early church's efforts to differentiate Christian worship from Jewish Sabbath practices and to establish a new tradition centered on the resurrection.³ By the fourth

² "The right to be exempted from polis religious ritual and permission 'to follow their ancestral laws, customs, and religion'" ("History of the Jews in Roman Empire," Wikipedia, accessed August 5, 2025, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_the_Roman_Empire#cite_note-18); Joseph Jacobs and Schulim Ochser, *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Rome: Early Settlement in Rome," accessed October 1, 2025, <https://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14482-trastevere>.

³ Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 83.

century, the term became widely accepted among Christians, emphasizing Sunday as a day of joy and worship; notwithstanding, the earliest known reference to Sunday as the Lord's Day appears in the pseudepigraphic book "The Gospel of Peter," written around A.D. 175,⁴ after Peter and John had died. John was unaware of the interpretive changes. Moreover, the phrase 'the Lord's Day' identified in the letters of Ignatius, Pliny, and others was not particularly inclusive; therefore, Craig Keener considered their statements not to be an apparent reference to Sunday worship.⁵ The dates and events recorded by the first century prove that John could not have referenced Sunday or any Christian-established day.

Additionally, these letters, including that of Ignatius, were written in the later part of the Second Century A. D.⁶ According to Myers, "It was not until the fourth century that the Sabbath commandment was applied to Sunday by Christians."⁷ Aune, underscores that "the earliest occurrence in the Papyri of the term κυριακή (used absolutely) for Sunday is found in a fourth-century document citing 'Poxy 3407, 15-16.'"⁸ Again, if Ignatius wrote after John's death and it took several years before the Sabbath commandment was applied to Sunday, then John considered only the Jewish Seventh-day Sabbath while writing. Even that will mean, the readers John directly addressed the book of Revelation will not have understood the term, 'the Lord's Day,' to mean Sunday, "We cannot insist from the authority of Scripture that the day must

⁴ "Some second-century Christian interpreters transferred the Image of the Lord's Day to an eight-day of the week" (Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 730).

⁵ Graig Keener, *Revelation*, The NIV Application Commentary Series, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 2000), 48.

⁶ Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 6.

⁷ Allen C. Myers, ed., *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (1987), s.v. "Lord's Day."

⁸ Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 8.

be Sunday”⁹ but Saturday Sabbath which according to the *Andrews Bible Commentary* is embedded with a “sense of eschatology or the day of the Lord.”¹⁰ in this sense the Seventh-day Sabbath comes to mind as, a day that ends the week and ultimately time.

For instance, a statement written in A.D. 191, that church leader Polycrates convened a council of the church leaders of Asia Minor to discuss a summons from Bishop Victor of Rome to adopt Easter Sunday. They unanimously refused the idea, choosing to retain their observance of the Passover on the Jewish date of Nisan 14.¹¹ The statement suggests that John's first readers in the First Century A.D. could not have recognized "the Lord's Day" as Sunday or Easter in honor of the resurrection, if even Second Century A.D. Church leaders could not fathom it. Moreover, within the New Testament itself, there is no evidence that the Sabbath was “changed” from Saturday to Sunday. The custom of Sunday as a Christian “Sabbath” became widespread only in the later period, probably after A.D. 321.¹² Craig S. Keener buttresses his assertion by quoting Henry Chadwick, who considered Constantine as the initiator of the change.¹³

It also carries a theological significance for Christian living. The verse prompts Christians to focus on worship and self-reflection on the Lord's Day, to

⁹ Keener, *Revelation*, 48.

¹⁰ Rodriguez, “Revelation,” 1926.

¹¹ *The Bible Explained.com*, “Meaning of The Lord's Day and Introduction to the Seven Churches,” accessed May 2024, <http://www.bibleexplained.com/revelation>.

¹² Keener, *Revelation*, 87.

¹³ “An inscription found near Zagreb records that Constantine changed the old custom of working for seven days and holding a market day every eighth directing farmers to hold their market day each Sunday. This is the earliest evidence for the process by which Sunday became not merely the day on which Christians met for worship but also to a day to rest” [Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (New York: Penguin, 1967), 128, quoted in Keener, *Revelation*, 87].

acknowledge Jesus' Lordship in all situations, and to cultivate spiritual consciousness and receptiveness to God's revelation.

John, as a disciple and Jew, was conversant with teachings and statements on Sabbath observance. For example, Matthew 24:20 highlights the importance of observing the Sabbath, and Isaiah 58:13-14 emphasizes honouring it by refraining from pursuing personal pleasures and calling it a delight, promising divine blessings in return. Additionally, Mark 2:27-28 states that 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath,' and that 'the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.' These passages could have resonated with John, prompting him to approach the Sabbath with caution and show proper respect to his Lord and this significant day.

The Bible recognizes the seventh day of the week as the Lord's Sabbath. God blessed and sanctified the seventh day (Gen 2:3); He declared it to be the memorial of His act of Creation (Exod 20:8-11). He specifically called it "My Holy day" (Isa 58:13 NKJV); and Jesus claimed to be "Lord also of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28). Thus, when the phrase Lord's Day is interpreted correctly with shreds of evidence before and contemporary with John's time, it appears that there is only one day to which it can refer, and that is the Seventh-day Sabbath.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This section summarizes the exegetical analysis of the phrase “the Lord’s Day” in Revelation 1:10. The study aimed to clarify the day’s identity by exploring its historical context, literary genre, and the usage of related terms in the First Century A.D., including their different meanings and syntax. This methodology was systematically applied to facilitate understanding. The analysis also examined the grammatical structure of “The Lord’s Day” and its connection to the verse and the entire book.

A review of several scholarly opinions was conducted to understand the foundations of their analyses and conclusions. Ultimately, the study's findings indicated that most commentators relied heavily on the Church fathers’ context rather than the text and the original recipients of John’s book. A few other writers who sought a deeper meaning in the text found that associating Sunday, Easter Day, and Emperor’s Day with it is undemonstrative and problematic. Therefore, John did not refer to Emperor’s Day or Easter Ceremony, and was also not concerned with Sunday.

Similarly, the study contends that the Lord’s Day should not be confused with an Emperor's Day, Easter, or just Sunday. Instead, it is a day imbued with themes of judgment, eschatology, rest, worship, and hope for the Savior's return. Analyzing the genre and the historical-grammatical context shows that “the Lord’s Day” highlights

the Lord's authority and God's redemptive plans for humanity, rather than merely referring to a specific day. The phrase's importance extends beyond simple weekly reference.

The study suggests that “the Lord’s Day in Revelation 1:10a has a dual meaning, reflecting both the eschatological day of the Lord and the Seventh-day Sabbath understood by scholars. It demonstrates that κύριος indicates divine authority and ἡμέρα carries an eschatological nuance, reminiscent of the Old Testament “Day of the Lord” motif (Joel 2:31). Furthermore, with κυρίῳ, it points to a specific eschatological reference, namely, a well-known day among John and his followers, the Sabbath day of the Lord. Therefore, the phrase’s significance goes beyond a mere chronological day to embody a deeper theological meaning.

Conclusion

The study examined the challenges of determining the precise day on which John experienced his visions. It explored often overlooked aspects to determine the specific day that John and his First-Century A.D. audience regarded as significant for the Lord's sovereignty. In Revelation 1:10 on the Lord’s Day (Ἐν τῇ *kuriakh* ἡμέρᾳ)

The questions were:

1. How does the genre of the book influence the meaning and reveal the text’s primary purpose?
2. What is the reference of the phrase "the Lord’s Day"?
3. What is the meaning of the phrase "the Lord’s Day"?
4. What are the implications of the transition from the adjective κυριακός to Κυριακή, and what does it have on interpreting this phrase?

The preceding analysis in chapter three shows that the phrase τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ (Rev 1:10) is far more than a chronological note; it is a densely packed

theological claim whose meaning is shaped by the book's apocalyptic genre, its lexical-semantic choices, and its early-Christian Sitz-im-Leben, thus the Historical and cultural context in which the text was written, including the social, political, and religious circumstances of John and his original audience.

Firstly, the book's genre reveals the text's primary purpose: the "Lord's Day" (τῆ κυριακῆ ἡμέρα). As an apocalyptic work, Revelation aims to unveil the cosmic sovereignty of Christ and assure persecuted believers of eventual vindication. The term "Lord's Day" serves as a thematic and temporal pivot, connecting the vision with the prophetic "Day of the Lord" motif (e.g., Joel 2:31; Isa 13:6). As a prophetic book, Revelation encourages faithfulness and steadfastness to Jesus. This genre shifts "the Lord's Day" (Rev 1:10) from a mere chronological marker into a theological moment in which divine sovereignty enters human history. By placing the revelation on this eschatological day, John indicates that the events are not only past or future but also the start of the end-time judgment portrayed throughout the book. The genre study concludes that (τῆ κυριακῆ ἡμέρα), the "Lord's Day" as used by John, extends beyond a weekly worship day, highlighting themes of hope, Worship, judgment, and Jesus' sovereignty.

Secondly, Reference to the phrase "the Lord's Day" (τῆ κυριακῆ ἡμέρα). The phrase points to the eschatological day of divine judgment that belongs to Christ, the "Lord", using Wallace's phrase par excellence. It is not a reference to a weekly Sunday worship service; that identification emerges only in later patristic usage (e.g., Didache 14.1) and is not the sense intended by John. The study concludes that John's use of the Lord's Day does not justify changing the worship day to Sunday. Therefore, the idea that Sunday replaces the Sabbath is not supported by this text. It also refutes any connection between the Lord's Day and Easter or other imperial or

Christian celebrations. Consequently, it suggests that John and his original audience did not mean to imply a shift in worship practices to Sunday.

Thirdly, the Meaning of the phrase. Grammatically, the use of the article “τή” and its influence on “*Kurios*” in the construction of “the Lord's Day” marks the day as both definite and uniquely tied to the Lord. The dative-like sense of τῆ κυριακῆ ἡμέρα conveys possession: “the day that belongs to the Lord.” The key phrase ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ is a dative prepositional phrase: ἐν (*en*) + dative = “in,” “on,” or “during,” while the articles “*th*” with *kuriakh* signal a definite ‘Lord’s Day’, they imply a known eschatological referent. Semantically, the collocation evokes the Old Testament “Day of the Lord” (ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου), a technical term for final judgment, and therefore conveys both temporal adjunct (the appointed time) and qualitative (the character of that time) dimensions. This revisits a Jewish concept of the Sabbath day, which is seen as a moment when the promise of the ultimate future, the Day of the Lord or the new Creation, briefly appears in the present. Thus, on Saturday, the last day of the week, both Jews and Christians anticipate and celebrate the coming of the Lord and His kingdom. It is also widely recognized that the final Day of Judgment will happen on one of the weekly days. The Lord’s Day, deeply rooted in eschatology, coincides with a day of worship familiar to Jews, the Sabbath. Given that the eschatological significance is embedded in the Sabbath itself and that John references the Lord’s Day in an eschatological context, it can be understood that the Lord’s Day, although referenced by John, aligns with the Sabbath.

Finally, in John’s writing, the noun “*Kurios*” is transformed into the attributive adjectives “κυριακός” and “κυριακή,” which express respect and ownership. John used these terms to affirm Jesus' supreme lordship over all creation, underscoring His divine nature, authority, and role as Savior. The attributive adjective

provides context for the suffix “day,” yielding the meaning “the Lord’s Day,” a “Day belonging to the Lord.” Therefore, the noun transition makes “Κυριακή” possessive and descriptive of the noun “Day,” thereby indicating that the day belongs to the Lord. The day possessed by the Lord Jesus and He alone describes its value. The Bible contains texts showing that the Lord asserted ownership of a day in the past (Exod 31:13; Isa 58:13). Additionally, Jesus identified Himself as the Lord of a particular day, the Sabbath (Mark 2:28). Coupling these with the social-religious circumstances of the author and the original audience, one would without doubt see it as the Sabbath day of the Jews.

This shift from adjective to a fixed noun signals a developing liturgical tradition that re-identifies the eschatological “Day of the Lord” with the weekly gathering on Sabbath (Acts 13:42-44, Heb 4:9). For the interpretation of Revelation 1:10, it means that John’s original audience heard an echo of the prophetic “Day of the Lord.” The transition does not alter the passage’s primary theological thrust: Christ’s sovereign rule on the final day. Still, it opens a secondary, reception-historical layer that the early church used to shape its worship practices.

In totality, Revelation 1:10a, the phrase “the Lord’s Day” is best understood as a theological rather than a chronological marker. Textual analysis supports the reading κύριος ἡμέρα, which foregrounds a possessive dative “the day pertaining to” or belonging to the Lord”. Lexical analysis shows that κύριος conveys divine authority and ἡμέρα carries an eschatological nuance, echoing the Old Testament “Day of the Lord” motif (Joel 2:31). Syntactically, the article with *κυριακή* marks a definite, known eschatological referent such as the Sabbath, while the dative construction emphasizes possession. Within the apocalyptic genre, this temporal phrase functions as a theological shorthand for the inaugurated reign of Christ,

positioning the seer and the reader within the already-but-not-yet reality of the *parousia*. The result is a Christ-centered eschatological vision that calls the community to live in hope as if already standing on the Lord's Day.

Recommendations

Given the range of scholarly interpretations surrounding τῇ Κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ in Revelation 1:10, future research should employ a more comprehensive methodological approach that combines lexical, historical, liturgical, and socio-religious analyses. Although much work has been done to place this phrase within eschatological, Sabbath, and early Christian worship contexts, a clear consensus remains out of reach due to the fragmentation of current studies. Scholars are encouraged to examine the phrase within the broader canonical and Second Temple Jewish frameworks of prophetic vision reception, focusing on how apocalyptic literature utilizes temporal markers to frame divine encounters. Furthermore, comparing early patristic usage with Greco-Roman imperial cult terminology could reveal whether “the Lord's Day” mainly serves as a liturgical term, a theological affirmation of Christ's sovereignty, or an eschatological symbol. An interdisciplinary investigation that links Johannine theology, early Christian identity development, and the evolution of Christian worship practices may help bridge existing gaps and create a more cohesive understanding of the day John received his visionary calling.

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