

1/11/04

Revelation 1

The book of Revelations is the unveiling of Christ, presenting Him as the glorified Christ, who is the head of the church, the bride of Christ.

Christ is presented also as a lamb that has been slain and King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Rev. 5:6-7; 11:15

Jesus came the first time when the fullness of time had come, right on schedule and He will come the second time at the end of the seven years of Tribulation and Great-Tribulation, not a day sooner.

1:1-3 The Introduction and benediction.

1:1 The final revelation of God.

- 1) The content is identified as the Revelation of Jesus Christ. vs. 1a
- a) The word revelation “apokalypsis” means a laying bare or naked.
 - 1) The word appears eighteen times in the New Testament, this is the only time in the book of Revelation.
 - 2) The word “apocalupsis” is also used to describe a genre or type of literature that was prominent in

200-100 B.C., when no prophets were speaking.

- 3) It was in another persons name, pseudo-pigraphic, with symbolic, figurative language, vision an angels to give encouraging hope to Israel of God’s final triumph and return but it was very pessimistic.
- b) The unveiling of the mystery of God, regarding Jesus Christ as the glorified Christ, who is the High Priest in heaven. vs. 12-16
 - * The word is used of gospel and second coming.
- 2) The source of the revelation is God the Father, who gave it to His Son, the Son to His angel and the angel to John. vs. 1b, d
- 3) The purpose is also given to us, to show His servants things which must shortly take place. vs. 1b-c
 - a) The word servants is “doulos”, a bond slave, one who serve by choice for life.
 - b) The time is indicated to be Shortly – “en” only meaning speedily or suddenly. Rom.16:20
 - 1) The last days, began with the First Coming till the second Coming.

- 2) Surely the Lord God gives nothing unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets. Amos 3:7
- c) The method is also given by the word signified “semaino”, means to give a sign, with the idea of figurative representation, which is exactly character of the book.
- * Where are they going to happen?
Earth, 3:10

1:2 The one making known the revelation to man.

- 1) John is the one who is the author and instrument to communicate the revelation as a prophet, five times his name appears. Rev. 1:1, 3, 4, 9; 11:6; 19:10; 21:2, 10; 22:7, 8, 10, 18, 19
- a) He bore witness “maruteo” meaning to testify, to bear record truthfully and entirely.
- b) His witness regarded three things.
- 1)) To the word of God.
 - 2)) To the testimony of Jesus.
 - 3)) To all things that he saw, through visions.
- * All three referring to the content of the book of Revelation.

1:3 The blessing accompanying the revelation.

- 1) The blessing is to the one who reads, hears and keeps the things that are written.
- a) The word blessed “markarios” means happy as in the Beatitudes. Matt. 5:3-10
- b) There are six more. Rev. 14:13; 16:15’ 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14
- c) The word keeps “tereo” means to observe and guard, in other words obedience!
- * The consequences to not keeping is given. Rev. 22:18-19
- 2) The reason is given, the time is near.
- a) The word for time is “kairos” and means the proper time, fixed, be it long or short, the season. 2Pet. 3:8
- b) The word for near “aggus” means at hand to be in place and position to begin the events revealed, it is 95-96 A.D.
- 1) The same word is use at the end of the Revelation. Rev. 22:10
- * “And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.”
- 2) Daniel was told to seal up the book but not John. Dan. 8:26; 9:24; 12:4

1:4-8 The salutation and doxology.

1:4-6 The Trinity is involved in the greeting.

- 1) John addressed the greeting to the seven churches which are in Asia, modern day Turkey. vs. 4a-b
 - a) He mentions them by name. Rev. 1:11
 - b) He addressed a letter to each of them. Rev. 2-3
- 2) The greeting is grace to you and peace. vs. 4c
 - a) The word grace “charis” the source and foundation of all that every Christian receives, unmerited favor that began when they were unworthy sinners.
 - b) The result of grace is always peace “eirene” from the root to join to be tranquil. vs. 4b
 - 1)) Having made peace with God. Rom. 5:1
 - 2)) Having the availability to the peace of God for everyday living. Phil. 4:6-7
 - 3) This is the equivalent of the Hebrew “Shalom”.
 - c) Notice it is the Father referred to by the personal pronoun “Him and who”.
 - * He is the Yahweh of the Old Testament.

- d) The Father shares the same attributes of eternalness and infiniteness, “Who is an who was and who is to come”..
 - * This extensive title appears only in Revelation. Rev. 11:17; 16:5
 - 1) The One who is in the present reigning, eternal and Omnipresent.
 - 2)) The One who was in the past incarnation serving, Omniscient. Jn.1:1, 14
 - 3)) The One who is to come in the future for judgment, Omnipotent.
 - * The title is both soteriological and eschatological!
 - 4)) The title is different from “I Am that I Am”, the verb form of the becoming one, yet still conveying the eternalness of God. Ex. 3:14; Eccl.3:15
 - 5)) He is involved in history and is coming to finalize His-story, a great encouragement.
- 3) The greeting is also from the seven Spirits who are before His throne. vs. 4c
 - a) This most likely refers to the seven-fold work and office of the Holy Spirit mentioned by Isaiah. Is. 11:2
 - 1) Lord
 - 2) Wisdom
 - 3) Understanding
 - 4) Counsel

- 5) Might.
- 6) Knowledge
- 7) Fear of Lord
- b) The seven spirits are related to Jesus in the church of Sardis, the agent to speak to all seven churches and before the throne of God. Rev. 3:1; 4:5; 5:6
- c) The number seven often represents completeness, seven stars, spirits, lampstands, church, seals, trumpets, veils, angels, fifty-four times, etc.
 - 1) There are seven colors in the rainbow , seven notes on the scale, etc, eight is the number of new beginnings.
 - 2) Some see them as the seven angels but that is foreign to the context of the greeting. Rev. 8:2; 16:1
- 4) The greeting is also from the Son, Jesus Christ. vs. 5
 - a) He is the God-Man, the Messiah. vs. 5a
 - b) He is called the faithful witness in His first coming, depicting His flawless character. vs. 5b
 - 1)) The word “pistos”, means trustworthy.
 - 2)) The witness “martus”, means one who testifies and later came to mean one who gave his life for his faith.

- 3)) Jesus is “the trustworthy testifier to His redemptive work and now to the revelation about to be recorded. 1Tiim. 6:13
 - * Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Is. 55:4; Jn. 18:37; Rev. 3:14
- c) He is called the firstborn “prototokos” meaning in rank, priority and dignity, having risen from the dead. vs. 5c
 - 1) He was not the first to be raised, there was the Centurion’s daughter, the young man in funeral procession, Lazarus but He was the first to be raised in a glorified body, the first in importance and priority and exaltation. Rom. 8:29; Phil. 2:10-11; Col. 1:18
 - 2) He tasted death for every man, firstborn speaking of His rulership, according to Psalms. Heb. 2:9, 14-15; Ps. 89:26-29, 37
- d) He is called the ruler over the kings of the earth, He is the supreme ruler over mankind. vs. 5d
 - 1)) He is in control.
 - 2)) He is going to put all His enemies under His feet. Ps. 110:1
- e) He is praised for what He accomplished for lost man. vs. 5e-6

- 1)) To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. vs. 5e
* He who continuously loves us and washed “louo” us completely and loosened us from our sins and continues to do so, by the aorist tense. Jn. 1:29; 3:16; 1Pet. 2:9; 1Jn. 2:2
- 2)) He has made us kings and priests to His God and Father. vs. 6a
 - a)) Literally a kingdom of priests, by virtue of having forgiven our sins, through repentance! Ex. 19:6; 1Pet. 2:9
* In the Old Testament no king served as priest!
 - b)) A worshipping community now on earth but our ruling with Him is not now but at His coming, this is the context.
- 3)) He ascribed glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. vs. 6b-c
 - a) Glory “doxa” honor, praise or dignity belongs to Him.
 - b) Dominion “kratos” force, strength and power.
* Rev. 4:11; 5:9, 12-13; 7:10

1:7-8 The hope of every believer is included in the greeting.

- 1) The Second coming is proclaimed. vs. 7
 - a) He is coming with clouds. vs. 7b
* Clouds often convey divine presence. Ex. 13:21; 16:10; Matt. 17:5; Acts 1:9; 1Thess. 1:9, 10
 - b) Every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. vs. 7c-d
* Dan. 7:13; Zech. 12:10; Jn. 19:37; Rev. 14:14
 - c) And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. vs. 7e-f; Rev. 3:11; 22:7, 12, 20
* Not in repentance but in due to the fact that it is too late, this is now judgment! Rev. 16:9, 11, 21
- 2) The eternal nature and finiteness of the Son is like the Father’s in verse four. vs. 8
 - a) These are the very words of Jesus, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord “kurios” equivalent to the Hebrew “adonia”. vs. 8a-c
 - 1)) He is Omniscient Alpha, Omega, beginning, end. Rev. 22:15
* Only the book of Revelation refers to God as Alpha and Omega. Rev. 1:8, 11; 21:6; 22:13

- 2)) He is Omnipresent, His going forth has been from of old from everlasting to everlasting. Mic. 5:2
- b) “Who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” vs. 8d-e,
- 1)) I and the Father are one, if you have seen Me, you have seen the Father. Jn. 10:30; 14:9
- 2)) The second Coming is certain.
* Dan. 7:13-15; Matt. 24:30; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; 2:25; 3:3, 11; 22:7, 12, 20
- 3)) He is Omnipotent, the Almighty “pantakrator”, means he who holds sway over all thins, appearing nine times in Revelation but only twelve times in the entire New Testament
* The Old Testament “Lord of Host” was the Captain of the armies of heaven.

1:9-20 The vision of the glorified Christ.

1:9-11 *The voice of the vision.*

1:9 The location of the vision.

- 1) The identity once again is given, “I John”.
vs. 9a-b
* This is actually the third introduction of John. Rev. 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8

- 2) The humble perspective of John was three-fold. vs. 9c
- a) That he was a companion in tribulation like they, he was not above them but suffered as one of them.
- 1) The word tribulations “thlipsis” means a pressing together to crush and used for grapes and olives.
- 2) Jesus told the disciples that in the world they would have tribulation, which comes from Satan and the ungodly world. Jn.16:33
* This distinct from the tribulation God would bring on the whole world!
- 3) Paul confirmed souls of the new converts and exhorted them, they must enter through much tribulation into Kingdom of God. Acts 14:22
- 4) Peter says, We should not think it strange... 1Pet. 4:12
- b) That he was a companion in the kingdom like they. vs. 9c
- 1)) The kingdom was already present and active. Rev. 1:6
- 2)) The kingdom was yet to come in it’s total fulfillment. Rev. 20:4, 6; 22:5

- c) And the patience of Jesus Christ, this describes how he was going through the difficult time.
- 1) Patience “hupomone”, steadfast, consistent endurance, not simply biting the bullet but growing and maturing through to the end.
 - 2) Suffering has always purified the church, while comfort has polluted the church.
 - 3) Hippolytus said John was exiled after being boiled in oil but did not die.
- 3) The place was the Island of Patmos. vs. 9d
- a) The Island was of the Aegeon Sea or Mediterranean 25 miles off the mainland and about forty miles west-southwest of Miletus.
 - b) The island was a rocky volcanic place about ten miles long and six miles wide at the north end that was used by Rome for penal purposes, Tacitus tell us.
 - c) Eusebius mentions that John was banished there by the emperor Domitian in 95 A.D. and released eighteen months later by Nerva. (Ecclesiastical History 3.20 8-9)

- d) Domitian died in September 18, 96 A. D., therefore the Revelation was probably written in 95-96.
 - e) Irenaeus and others say John returned to Ephesus after exile.
- 4) For the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. vs. 9d
- a) The gospel message of salvation.
 - b) The only way of salvation.
- 1:10** The manner of reception of the vision.
- 1) John tells us he was in the Lord’s day.
 - a) Most interpret this to mean Sunday. vs. 10a
 - 1)) This is due to Paul using the same word for the Lord’s supper. 1Cor. 11:20
 - 2)) We know the church met in the first day of week is Sunday. 1Cor. 16:2
 - b) Others that John was taken into the future and to the very day he describes, “the Day of the Lord”, I myself have taught this interpretation. Rev. 4:2; 3:10; 13:10; 14:12; 17:3
 - c) Certainly the entire content of the book is the “day of the Lord” but the phrase may be a bit strained?
 - 2) John heard behind him a loud voice, as of a trumpet. vs. 10b-c

- a) The voice was to call attention and impress John.
- b) This is a simile, a figure of speech showing comparison introduced by the words “like’ or “as”, this is figurative language, not a literal trumpet but like a trumpet!
- c) There are many trumpets in the New Testament, they must be distinguished. Matt. 24:31; 1Cor. 15:52; 1Thess. 4:16

1:11 The voice was proclaiming to him his commission.

- 1) The One speaking was the Lord Jesus Christ, “The Alpha and Omega, the First and Last”. vs. 11a-c
- 2) The command was to write in a book what he saw in the vision and send it to the seven churches in Asia. vs. 11d-f
* This would include the entire book of Revelation, this is the first of twelve direct commands to write.
- 3) All seven are named, which a letter will be addressed to each in the following two chapters. vs. 11g-m, 4b
 - a) The seven churches are located in the area of modern day Turkey.
 - b) Again seven often is used to represent completeness, as already indicated, giving a complete condition of the

- church at that time and the entire age of grace.
- c) All seven church were to receive all seven letters, in fact the entire book.
 - 1)) Local churches.
 - 2)) Historical periods of the church age.
 - 3)) Type of church today.
 - 4)) Type of Christian today.

1:12-16 *The man in the vision.*

- 1) John saw seven separate golden lamp stands, as he turned in the direction of the voice. vs. 12
- a) The Old Testament tabernacle had the seven-branched lamp stand in the Holy place but this in not Jewish ground but Christian, seven separate lampstands. Ex. 25:3
- b) The Lord Jesus gives us the interpretation, they are the seven churches. Vs. 20d
 - 1)) They are not the light themselves but merely the light holders, for Jesus is the light of the world. Jn. 8:12
 - 2)) Only in that manner are the churches or a believer the light of the world. Matt. 5:14,
- 2) John saw One like the Son of Man in the middle of the lampstands. vs. 13

- a) One like the Son of Man exactly like Daniel saw. vs. 13a; Dan.7:13
 - b) He was clothed with a garment down to His feet, referring to the Priestly dress. Ex. 28:4, 8; 39:5, 29; vs. 13b
 - c) He was girded about the chest with a golden band, like Royalty, a king. vs. 13b
- 3) His head and hair white like wool as white as snow, indicative of purity of holiness and wisdom. vs. 14a-b
- a) This is identical to the Ancient of Days in Daniel. Dan. 7:9-10
 - b) In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col. 2:3
- 4) His eyes like were like a flame of fire, symbolic of penetrating vision, being the Prophet. vs. 14c; Dan. 10:6
- a) Nothing is hidden from Him.
 - b) The three-fold office of Jesus, High Priest, King and Prophet!
- 5) His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, indicative of firm judgment. vs. 15a-b
- a) All will see the consummation of God's wrath.
 - b) None will escape.
- 6) His voice as the sound of many waters, symbolic of His majestic power and authority. vs. 15c

- a) None one will be able to challenge His judging authority.
 - b) None will be able to thwart His enforcing authority.
- 7) He had in His right hand seven stars, which are the seven angels or messenger of the churches. vs. 16a, 20
- a) The right hand is the position of power and authority!
 - b) Stars are often symbolic of angels which are simply messengers of God. Job 38:7; Rev. 9:1; Dan. 12:3
- 8) He had coming out of His mouth a sharp two-edged sword, representing war and perfect judgment, the standard or plumb line by which He judges. vs. 16b
- a) The for sword is "rhomphaia", a long Thracian sword of destruction and judgment. Heb. 4:12; Rev. 19:15, 21
 - b) It is used for David when he cut off Goliath's head in the LXX. 1Sam. 17:45
 - c) Preview. Ps. 2; Is. 11:4; 49:2
* Judgment begins at the house of God. 1Pet. 4:17
- 9) And His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. vs. 16c
- a) He is the majestic Christ, glorified in fulfillment of the Mount of Transfiguration. Matt. 17:2

- b) He is the glorious High Priest, Prophet and King, the rock cut out but not with human hands, which Daniels prophesied to take over the world.

1:17-20 *The response and understanding of the vision*

- 1) John seeing Him, fell at His feet as dead. vs. 17a-b
- a) This vision runs through the end of chapter three.
- b) The natural response of all the men of the Bible when they came face to face with God, was an overwhelming sense of awe and godly fear, like Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, etc. Ex. 3:5; Josh. 5:14; Is. 6; Dan. 8:17; Ezk. 1:28
- 2) But Jesus laid His right hand on John and said to him, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.” vs. 17c-f
- a) To assure that He is the absolute Lord of history and Creator and that John he would not die. Is. 44:6; 48:12
- b) To comfort John, in view of the vision.
- c) To strengthen John, in view of the reality of the vision.
- * God did the same to Isaiah and Jeremiah and Daniel was sick for

some time. Is. 6; Jer. 1; Dan. 8:26-27

- 3) Jesus confirms His authority. vs. 18
- a) I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen, the living and Eternal One. vs. 18a-e
- a) His entire ministry of being Savior and Lord is centered on His atoning work through His death on the cross and resurrection out from death!
- b) And I have the keys of Hades and of Death, He is the life-giver and the life-taker. vs. 18f
- * Rev. 3:7; 9:1; 20:1; 21:25
- 1)) I will build my... Matt. 16:18
- * Hades is the place of the departed spirit, both good and wicked, in two separate compartments, equivalent to the Hebrew “Sheol” or the “grave”. Lk. 16:23
- 2)) He led captivity... Eph.4:8
- 3)) He descended to the lowest... 1Pet. 3:19-20
- * After the descension of Jesus and leading of the righteous, now only the wicked are present, waiting the White Throne Judgment. Rev. 20:13-14

- 4)) He destroyed him who had power of death. Heb. 2:14
- 5)) He spoiled principalities and powers. Col. 2:15-16
- 6)) He is the head of the church and fills all things. Eph. 1:22-23
- 4) Jesus confirms John's commission by command in a three-fold division of the book, serving as the table of content. vs. 19
 - a) Write the things which you have seen, the glorified heavenly High Priest. Vs. 19a; Rev. 1
 - b) Write the things which are, the church age of the seven churches. vs. 19b; Rev. 2-3
 - c) Write the things which will take place after this, the seven years of tribulation and great-tribulation with the second coming, the kingdom age, the resurrection, judgment and eternity. vs. 19c; Rev. 4-22
- 5) Jesus communicates the interpretation of the vision. vs. 20
 - a) He repeats the vision to assure what John saw, The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: vs. 20a-b

- * The word mystery "musterion" means something previously hidden but now made known.
- b) The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches. vs. 20c-d
 - 1)) The word angel "angeloi" appears sixty-seven times in the book and the majority of them refer to angels.
 - 2)) But to attempt to interpret that they also mean angels when the churches are addressed is a mistake, for Jesus would not be telling John to send the letters to angels but to the Pastors of the churches. Rev. 1:4a, 11; 3:1
 - 3)) The clear position of power and authority.
 - 4)) Jesus is in control of the oversight of His church.
 - 5)) Jesus is the ruling authority, present in the midst like the sun, glorified. Matt. 17:2