

Introduction

Last week was focused on setting up the introduction of the book of Revelation.

Revelation of Jesus Christ; a revealing; and we know that we will be blessed for reading and hearing the words from Jesus Christ himself (words from the right hand of God; from His Father's throne!).

We know that Jesus wrote 7 letters to 7 churches in the province of Asia Minor or modern day Turkey.

We also got a preview of the 2nd coming in v7 -- just a note on that. Verse 7 says he is coming with the clouds. This is the same word used in Hebrews 12:1 -

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, and similarly in Daniel 7:13 - "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven.

And lastly Jesus proclaimed who he was in v8 - alpha and the omega, who is, who was and who is to come.

Today we pick up our study together starting back in v9 where we jump into the fun of Revelation with John's vision that Christ gave to him!

Revelation 1:9

"I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus."

John writes right up front that (reassures the readers) that he is in the same boat as them -- in suffering, not giving up as he remains in kingdom (remains faithful to his beliefs) and that he is being patient for what's to come.

- Tribulation/Suffering
- Kingdom
- Patience

And tells us why he is imprisoned

- because of the word of God
- Testimony of Jesus

Again he stating what they have lots in common...he is getting everyone on the same page -- and to articulate that he isn't giving up and nor should they.

Revelation 1:10a

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day..."

In the Spirit (the article "the" doesn't exist in Greek language) - not just a dream or vision, but believed to be removed from the moment and transported to another place or dimension, why, so John could experience what he was told to write about.

- In Spirit - On the "day of the Lord" (at Patmos) Ch. 1:10
- In Spirit - To the throne in heaven Ch. 4:2
- In Spirit - Carried away in the wilderness Ch. 17:3
- In Spirit - Carried to a mountain Ch. 21:10

Lord's Day

- **the Day of the Lord**, not the Sabbath but the day Jesus of raised from the dead (Sunday)
- Or possibly the tribulation -- John is spiritually positioned to see **the craziness**

John shares what he hears

- Next sections talk about what John hears, saw and did (another 3)

Revelation 1:10b-11

"and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, 11saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,"and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

John heard a voice (like a trumpet) - in Rev 4:1 he hears another trumpet-like voice. Descriptive way that John is trying to explain what he is hearing -- today we might say we heard a voice over a loud speaker.

Interesting parallel here ...

- How many epistles did Paul write to churches? 7 separate letters to 7 churches
- John is writing one whole book to 7 different churches.

So this is what John hears ... to write it out all out for the 7 churches in question.

Now we read what John saw ...

Revelation 1:12–16

The first thing we read is that he saw 7 golden lampstands ... what do you imagine these lampstands look like?

- **Menorah - 7 branches**
 - The first mention of this Menorah lampstand is in the Book of Exodus, where God commanded Moses to build the tabernacle. He provided specific and precise instructions for every aspect of the tabernacle, including its furnishings. The Menorah is one such essential item.
 - God instructed Moses to place the Menorah **inside** the tabernacle, specifically in the Holy Place. This area houses four significant pieces of furniture: the **Table of Showbread, the Menorah, the Altar of Incense, and the heavy curtains** that separate the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. In the Holy of Holies, there is only one item—the Ark of the Covenant.
- **The Role of the Menorah**
 - The Holy Place has no natural light; the only illumination comes from the Menorah. This lampstand symbolizes the light of the Holy Spirit, illuminating the spiritual understanding of God's Word.
 - **The Table of Showbread**, representing the Word of God and His promises, is significant as well. It symbolizes the revelation of God through His Word. As Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life" (John 6:35), He embodies the Word of God.

The menorah was the lampstand in the temple and used to light it up for the world to see. We know that Jesus is the light of the world, but He also said that we are too.

Matthew 5:14-16 (NIV): "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden... let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven"

The church is meant to be the light in a dark world.

What John saw ... read Daniel 10:5-6

- **Lampstands:** Churches -- light to show Jesus
- **Son of Man:** Judge and King -- messianic reference for Jesus (Daniel 7:13)

7 Features of Jesus:

- **White hair/head:** Dan 7:9 hair is white as wool
- **Eyes:** - Flame of fire 1 Cor 2:13, Mal 3:2
- **Feet like brass:** - Symbol of his earthly walk - brass - judgment (Num 21)
- **Voice:** - Many waters Ez 1:24, 43:2, Dan 10:6
- **Right Hand:** - 7 Stars (in the midst of the lampstands) - yet in his hand - his protection/he is amongst
- **Sword from mouth:** Authority - the full authority of the word, why because he is the word v15 (Heb 4:12, Eph 6:17, Isa 49:2)
- **Sun-bright face:** Divine glory - His Glory v16 Matt 17

This is **flannel board Jesus, not the baby in a manger**—this is the conquering King.

Question: Would modern Christianity recognize this Christ?

John shared what he heard and saw ... and now what is the first thing he does

Revelation 1:17–18

_"When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades."

Powerful moment - He fell ...

- And remember he is the apostle that Jesus loved - John 13:23
- The apostle that leaned on Jesus - John 13:25
- The vision of the exalted Christ can only produce awe and fear
- The relationship changed between them

First and last ... How many times in the bible? 7

Jesus reminds John that he conquered

- No need to fear life -- He is the living one
- No need to fear Death -- He died and now lives
- No need to fear Eternity - He is forever and ever and He holds the keys
- And the one who holds the keys, is the one in authority
- So Nothing to Fear

This is what separates Christian from all other world religions -- only religion that worships arisen savior.

Revelation 1:19

"Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this."

Summary of the book in a verse. In 3s, past, present, and future.

Outline of Revelation:

1. **Past:** Christ revealed (Chapter 1)
2. **Present:** Church age (Chapters 2–3) -- most important to us
3. **Future:** End-time events (Ch. 4–22) -- we may be watching this from the cheap seats

Revelation is ordered, intentional, and trustworthy.

Side note: 12 times in the book John is told write this down ... maybe he was so dumb founded that he needed to be reminded.

Revelation 1:20

"The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches."

Jesus provides a straight forward interpretation of some of the first signs, code.

- We understand that the 7 lampstands are the churches; where are they??? In Chap 4 -- in heaven
- Why lampstands ... church is the bearer of the light; a light of the world
- 7 stars being the angels of the 7 churches - right hand of authority - indicating increased responsibility
 - I don't believe that the use of angels here is a spiritual being (sons of God)
 - when we read 2:1 - it says the same word - "to the angel of the church of Ephesus write..."
 - the greek word used is a-go-los -- meaning messenger
 - this word can and has been used to describe a human being, a human messenger
 - as far as I know there has never been a angel oversaw churches (granted they are all around us even in the church) but Jesus does not dictate letter to angels but to a pastor. To be clear ...
 - To be clear, we say the same word in - Matt 11:10 - describing John the Baptist as a-go-los (or messenger)
- So that is the why that I view the angels for all the churches as written.
- But whatever it means and whatever leadership it represents...that leadership is accountable to Christ in His Right Hand..the hand of authority.

Next week we start the journey on the 7 churches...