

Revelation 1 Commentary

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Dr Tony Garland

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Revelation 1:1

Up to this point, we have spent considerable time discussing background information in order to better prepare the reader for the verse-by-verse exposition to follow. Having read the background material, the reader should now be equipped to understand the principles behind the method of our exposition and the liabilities we believe attend competing views. Moving forward, we will place greater emphasis upon exposition than refuting alternate views, although we will continue to make mention of them at key places in the text.¹ See the [Introduction](#) for a discussion of various background topics related to the book of Revelation.

The Revelation

The first word of this book, [ποκάλυψις](#) [Apokalypsis], should be kept in mind by the reader throughout the book. For it is God's intention to *reveal* rather than *conceal*:

In the New Testament, *apokalypsis* always has the majestic sense of God's unveiling of himself to his creatures, an unveiling that we call by its Latin name *revelation*. . . . It depicts the progressive and immediate unveiling of the otherwise unknown and unknowable God to his church throughout the ages.²

The clearness and lucidity (perspicuity) of the Scriptures is their consistent theme (Dt. 29:29; Pr. 13:13; Isa. 5:24; Isa. 45:19; Mat. 11:25; Mat. 24:15; Luke 10:21, 26; 24:25; 2Ti. 3:16; 2Pe. 1:19). Yet if Scripture is meant to be understood, why do we have such a difficult time understanding it, and especially this book? Our problem is not so much the difficulty of understanding, but our own idolatry and rebellion. We are unwilling to *study* to know God and to *submit* in obedience to that which may be known. We are more interested in other pursuits than in seeking God through His revealed words of life (John 6:63, 68). As is often the case where Scripture is concerned, our inability to understand is more a reflection of our lack of zeal than the difficulty which attends the interpretation of God's Word. When the average person in our country spends multiple hours in front of a television set *daily*, but "just can't find the time" to read God's Word, the issue is not one of time management, but *idolatry*. When we come to this last book of Scripture, our lack of preparation is evidenced all the more because what God intends as *revelation*, we see as *mystery*. Yet Paul holds that revelation is the antithesis of mystery (Rom. 16:25). This book is not intended to be a veiled document full of mysterious symbols, but an unveiling and clarification of things which have heretofore not been revealed by God.³ In order to grasp the meaning of this *revelation*, we need a foundation in the rest of Scriptures, and especially the Old Testament. (See [The Importance of the Old Testament](#).)

There are several reasons why we believe that this book is not intended to be enigmatic

First, we believe that a chief purpose of God was the creation of language to communicate with man. If this is so, then the intellect of man and the clarity of language must be sufficient for this task:

If God is the originator of language and if the chief purpose of originating it was to convey His message to humanity, then it must follow that He, being all-wise and all-loving, originated sufficient language to convey all that was in His heart to tell mankind. Furthermore, it must also follow that He would use language and expect people to understand it in its literal, normal, and plain sense.⁴

Second, we have the pattern established by the rest of Scripture. "It is unthinkable to believe that God would speak with precision and clarity from Genesis to Jude, and then when it comes to the end abandon all precision and clarity."⁵ It is not God's intention to train us how to read and understand 65 books of the Bible and then "throw us a curve" in the 66th book by expecting that we adopt an entirely different approach. (See the discussion regarding [The Art and Science of Interpretation](#).) So it is our duty here to make sense of this book, based upon what [related passages](#) reveal concerning its central [themes](#), while reading the text in the same way as the rest of Scripture.

of Jesus Christ

The central question surrounding this phrase is whether Jesus Christ is the *source* of the revelation (subjective genitive) or being *described* by the revelation (objective genitive). Elsewhere, a very similar Greek phrase [ποκαλύψεως ἡσο Χριστο](#) [apokalypseōs lēsou Christou] is used by Paul: "For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught *it*, but *it came* through the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12).⁶ It would seem that in Galatians the genitive [ἡσο Χριστο](#) [lēsou Christou] is subjective rather than objective, for Paul is discussing the *source* of his revelatory knowledge. It did not come through man, nor was it taught, but it *came* through the revelation of Jesus. Jesus was the source of Paul's revelation, not man. In favor of the objective genitive (Jesus as the object being revealed), is the oft-expressed longing of the [NT](#) writers for His appearing (1Cor. 1:7; 2Th. 1:7; 1Pe. 1:7). In these passages, the appearing of Jesus is referred to as the "revelation of Jesus Christ." Apart from the glimpses provided within this book and elsewhere in the NT, the true character and glory of Christ is yet hidden. When He appears, His glory will no longer be veiled and all men everywhere will understand that He is God.⁷ If "context is king" in interpretation, then the next phrase would indicate we are to take this as the subjective genitive: "which God gave Him to show His servants."⁸ The emphasis here is on Jesus Christ as the *source* of the revelation being given to John. Wallace suggests the possibility that this is a *plenary genitive* indicating the revelation is both *from* Christ and *about* Christ.⁹ However, as Thomas has observed, such an understanding violates the basic interpretive principle that the original author had *only one* intended meaning.¹⁰ The context favors the subjective genitive (the revelation is *from* Jesus Christ), but we should be aware that throughout Scripture, Jesus is involved with revelation in at least three ways:

1. He is the *source* of revelation (Gal. 1:12; 1Pe. 1:11; Rev. 1:1⁺).
2. He is the *object* of revelation (Luke 24:44; 1Cor. 1:7; 2Th. 1:7; 1Pe. 1:7; Rev. 1:11-18⁺; 5:6-10⁺; 19:11-16⁺). "Many fail to see the centrality of Jesus Christ in this volume. . . . [Some] become preoccupied with the identification of events and persons other than our Lord. Many seem to be more interested in the Antichrist than in Jesus Christ."¹¹
3. His *incarnation* is the revelation of God to man (Isa. 9:1-2; John 1:14, 18; 12:45; 14:8-9; Col. 1:15; 2:9; Heb. 1:2; 1Jn. 1:2).

Paul makes plain that the revelation he received was not the result of teaching he received from men. In other words, *biblical revelation is not by human insight or instruction*. It is the unveiling of that which was previously unknown and would forever remain unknown if God had not graciously granted us His self-disclosure. This is why the natural world can never be classified as the 67th

book of the Bible, for the “revelation” it provides is not biblical revelation. It is subject to the finding out of man and the manner in which it is discerned is subject to the flawed interpretations and theories of fallen men. This alone tells us why Genesis takes precedence over the speculative investigation of prehistory by modern science. Scriptural revelation, the direct revelation of God, has no equal. It is for these very reasons that biblical revelation is *always initiated by God* and never by man. It was the Lord who opened Hagar’s eyes so that she saw water nearby (Gen. 21:19). It was the Lord who revealed the Angel of the Lord blocking Balaam’s way (Num. 22:31). The Lord opened the eyes of Elisha’s servant so that he might see the angelic host (2K. 6:17). Moses would have remained a man unknown to history if the Lord had not made His ways known to him (Ps. 103:7). Peter’s declaration of Jesus as “the Christ” would not have occurred without the direct revelation of the Father (Mat. 16:17). The disciples on the road to Emmaus would not have understood Christ in the Scriptures apart from the initiative of God (Luke 24:45). This too is the foundation of prophecy—the revealing of that which is yet future and which no man could ever plumb (Isa. 48:5-8). Hence, it is the unique signature of God alone. This revelation of God is a key ministry of the Holy Spirit Whom Jesus said would “take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you” (John 16:14). Biblical revelation is not confined to the head, but spans the 18 inches of wilderness from the head to the heart. It results not in a cold apprehension of *facts*, but in a response of *faith* which births the soul into newness of life. It was the Lord Who opened Lydia’s heart “to heed the things spoken by Paul” (Acts 16:14) resulting in the first believer in Thyatira, destined to become the site of a thriving Church addressed directly by our Lord in this book (Rev. 2:18⁺). The mind of the unbeliever remains without revelation, blinded to the things of God. The veil over his mind is unresponsive to the efforts of man (John 1:13), but is “taken away in Christ” (2Cor. 3:14). No one can know the Father except those to whom “the Son wills to reveal *Him*” (Luke 10:22). Here we come away with a foundational theme of Scripture: man is *wholly dependent* upon God. Without God, man has no hope. It is only by God’s gracious revelation that light enters into our depraved darkness. John could write none of the Revelation if it were not for God’s initiative totally apart from John. This fact alone renders many of the discussions concerning [“John’s motive for writing”](#) null and void.

which God gave Him

Some have taken this as an indication that Jesus did not know the content of the Revelation which was provided by the Father. When Jesus came in the incarnation, He “made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men” (Php. 2:7). Between His birth of the virgin Mary and His ascension to the Father, Jesus exhibited traits of His humanity. As a child, He *grew in stature and wisdom* (Luke 2:40, 52). He *learned* by the things that He suffered (Heb. 5:8), and when speaking to His disciples concerning His Second Coming, He admitted of limitations to His earthly knowledge: “But of that Day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, **nor the Son**, but only the Father.” [emphasis added] (Mark 13:32). Yet these characteristics of His humanity were recorded prior to His ascension and glorification (John 16:14; 17:5). It seems unlikely that Jesus, the very Source of “the Spirit of Christ” who “testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that would follow” (1Pe. 1:11) and the Agent of what is revealed to John (Rev. 1:10⁺), would lack the information related in this book. It seems best to understand the revelation as a gift from the Father which recognizes the role distinctions within the Trinity (John 5:20; 1Cor. 15:28). The members of the Trinity are co-equal, yet occupy *different roles* within the plan and purposes of God. Here, the Father gives revelation to the Son. To the unfamiliar reader, this might seem to imply an inferior position of Jesus in relation to the Father. Not so. Within the Trinity there is a beautiful harmony of perfect cooperation to affect God’s purpose. The submission of the Son to the Father is that of a perfect *voluntary* servanthood (Isa. 49:6; 50:10; 52:13; 53:11; Mat. 12:18; John 5:19). It is by this motivation that Jesus delivers His kingdom to God the Father (1Cor. 15:24-28). It was the love of Jesus both for mankind and to fulfill the will of the Father which caused him to make “Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men” (Php. 2:7). This is to be the model of those who follow Him. We submit not because it is required, but out of obedience to His Word and a desire to follow His example.¹²

to show His servants

The Revelation is not just for John, nor just for the [Seven Churches of Asia](#), but [for all saints of all ages](#). “Here, then, in the Prologue are five links in the chain of authorship: God, Christ, his angel, his servant John, and those servants to whom John addressed his book [the seven churches and the saints of all ages].”¹³ The revelation is to be shown to His *servants* (literally, ‘slaves’). These are they who hear His voice (John 10:3, 16, 27; Acts 22:14; Heb. 3:7, 15; 4:7) and respond in faith. Those who lack faith in the Son are unable to comprehend what is shown here:

This is why unbelievers find the book of Revelation incomprehensible; it was not intended for them. It was given by the Father to the Son to show to those who willingly serve Him. Those who refuse to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord cannot expect to comprehend this book. “A natural man,” explains Paul, “does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised” (1Cor. 2:14).¹⁴

For more on the spiritual conditions necessary for an understanding of this book and the Scriptures in general, see [Hiding or Revealing?](#)

must

The things which God has prophesied are *guaranteed* to transpire (Dan. 2:29, 45; Mat. 24:6; 26:54; Mark 13:7; Luke 21:9) for “Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). The things which transpire here are not without Scriptural foundation and this is the very reason they *must* take place. See [Related Passages and Themes](#).

shortly take place

Shortly is [ἔν τάχει](#) [en tachei]. Considerable discussion attends the meaning of this phrase. Three alternatives are before us:

1. The phrase requires all of the events set forth in the book to have transpired within the lifetimes of John’s initial readers (the [preterist interpretation](#)).
2. The phrase denotes events which may be in the distant future, but which transpire in rapid sequence once they begin.
3. The phrase denotes closeness in time, but from God’s perspective.

The phrase [ἔν τάχει](#) [en tachei] (“shortly”) occurs in the following NT passages:

- “he will avenge them *speedily*” (Luke 18:8) God will avenge His elect who cry out day and night though *he bears long* with them.
- “Arise *quickly*” (Acts 12:7)
- “going there *shortly*” (Acts 25:4)
- “get out of Jerusalem *quickly*” (Acts 22:18)
- “And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet *shortly*” (Rom. 16:20)
- “I hope to come to you *shortly*” (1Ti. 3:14)
- “things which must *shortly* take place” (Rev. 22:6+) (after which Jesus says “I am coming quickly” [ῥᾶναι τάχῃ](#) [erchomai tachy])

Of these uses, the majority favor an understanding of “closeness in time.” However, three of the passages utilize this phrase to describing events which are delayed for long time periods (Luke 18:8; Rom. 16:20; Rev. 22:6+). Even moderate [preterists](#), who hold to a future bodily Second Coming of Christ, take the last passage as denoting a time period lasting at least 2,000 years:

Gentry cites Revelation 22:7-9+ as a reference to the yet future second coming. This creates a contradiction within Gentry’s brand of preterism. Since Revelation 22:6+ refers to the whole book of Revelation, it would be impossible to take tachos as a reference to A.D. 70 (as Gentry does) and at the same time hold that Revelation 22:7-9+ teaches the second coming.¹⁵

As Mills observes, it is impossible to restrict the sense of *en tachei* to the lifetime of John’s readers.¹⁶

The Greek noun translated ‘shortly’ is used only twice in Revelation, once in Rev. 1:1+ and again in 22:6+, thus effectively bracketing the whole book. **The prophecies bracketed by these ‘shortlys’ include letters addressed to churches that existed two millennia ago (chapters 2-3), clear descriptions of Christ’s physical return to this earth (Rev. 1:7+; 19:19-27 [sic]), and a prediction of His reign on earth for one thousand years (Rev. 20:4+).** Both uses of this word, then, must be understood as **having the same sense and yet embrace, at the absolute minimum, a period of nearly three millennia.** Therefore, only two interpretations present themselves: either, when the events start occurring they will proceed rapidly, or that the whole sweep of history is seen from a divine perspective in which one thousand years is as but a day (2Pe. 3:8). [emphasis added]¹⁷

The use of this same verb within the [LXX](#) also provides evidence for a long delay in fulfillment:

It is significant to note that the Septuagint uses tachos in passages which even by the most conservative estimations could not have fulfillments within hundreds or even thousands of years. For example, Isaiah 13:22 . . . was written around 700 B.C. and foretold the destruction of Babylon, which occurred at the earliest in 539 B.C. Similarly, Isaiah 5:26 speaks of the manner, not the time frame, by which the Assyrian invasion of Israel “will come with speed *swiftly*.”¹⁸

Since *en tachei* can span long periods of time, the question then becomes one of whether it denotes the *manner* in which events will transpire (rapidly) or the *certainty and imminency* attending the events?

It may be that the stress [in Rev. 22:20+] is on the certainty of the coming or on the immediacy of the coming. But one’s view does not hinge on the futuristic present, but on the adverb [τάχῃ](#) [tachy]. The force of the sentence may then mean, “Whenever I come, I will come *quickly*,” in which case the stress is on the *certainty* of the coming (cf. Matt 28:8). Or, it may mean, “I am on my way and I intend to be there very *soon*.”¹⁹

Some understand the primary meaning of *en tachei* in this passage as denoting the *manner* in which the events transpire:

tachy does not mean soon but swiftly. It indicates rapidity of action, as is well seen in its accurate use in the medical compound tachycardia (tachy and kardia = the heart), which does not mean that the heart will beat soon, but that it is beating rapidly. Of course, the swift action may take place at the very same time, as in Mat. 28:7-8 . . .—G. H. Lang, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Selected Studies* (Miami Springs, FL: Conley & Schoettle Publishing Co., 1945, 1985), 387-88.²⁰

Not only is there a preponderance of lexical support for understanding the *tachos* family as including the notion of “quickly” or “suddenly,” there is also the further support that all the occurrences in Revelation are adverbs of manner. These terms are not descriptive of *when* the events will occur and our Lord will come, but rather, descriptive of the *manner* in which they will take place when they occur.²¹

Both futurists and nonfuturists . . . agree that the idea of *tachos* here has to do with *swiftness* of execution when the prophetic events begin to take place. . . . Both certainty and rapidity of action are involved here. Whatever seeming delay there is, action is certain and it will be swift.²²

Although this meaning is possible, it does not seem to be the best understanding of the meaning here because, “To say that the relief will come ‘suddenly’ offers no encouragement, but to say that it will come ‘soon’ does.”²³ It seems more likely that *en tachei* emphasizes the certainty and *imminency* of the events.²⁴

The presence of *en tachei* in Rev. 1:1⁺ shows that for the first time the events predicted by Daniel and foreseen by Christ stood in readiness to be fulfilled. Therefore, John could speak of them as imminent, but earlier prophets could not.²⁵

Either ‘*tachus*’ means that when the events occur they will be rapid, or the whole sweep of history is seen from a divine perspective where one thousand years is as but a day (2Pe. 3:8). The latter must be preferred as the former leaves unresolved the tension that part of Revelation relates to churches that existed two millennia ago. This understanding readily accepts as completely honest and trustworthy the doctrine of the imminent return of Christ; expressed in human terms, then, ‘*tachus*’ denotes imminence and not immediacy. The irony of this situation is that those scholars who take ‘*tachus*’ literally end up allegorizing the text, and those scholars who take the text literally end up seeking an unusual meaning for this word! The only satisfactory position I can see is therefore to regard ‘*tachus*’ as being used in a technical sense—a sense understood as being within the whole biblical framework of the doctrine of the imminent return of Christ.²⁶

See *Imminency*.

signified it

σημαίνειν [Esēmanen]. The same root word is used in John 12:33, σημαίνων [sēmainōn], where Jesus describes His death on the cross by indicating He will be lifted up from the earth in the same way as Moses lifted up the serpent on a pole. Elsewhere, Agabus *indicated* by the Spirit that there was to be a worldwide famine (Acts 11:28). The appearance of this term does not justify a departure from the Golden Rule of Interpretation when *interpreting symbols* as some hold. It merely indicates a way of communicating which includes symbol or analogy. Although symbols occur, they reside within a textual framework which is subject to normative interpretation with due recognition of the meaning conveyed by the symbols. “This symbolism...in no way gives license for a departure from the normal grammatical-historical system of hermeneutics. To clarify this point Govett proposes that *esēmanen* be translated ‘represent.’ The revelation given to John, symbolic though it be, is to be interpreted just as one would interpret the rest of the Bible.”²⁷ “This term evidently meant a kind of communication that is neither plain statement nor an attempt at concealment. It is figurative, symbolic, or imaginative, and is intended to convey truth by picture rather than by definition.”²⁸ The revelation has already been signified from the perspective of the reader: “John’s use of the aorist *emartyresen*, then, is best explained by his adoption of the perspective of his readers in regard to his composition of this book. When they received it, his testimony as recorded in its pages would be a thing of the past.”²⁹ See *Interpreting Symbols*.

angel

An angelic host shows John the Revelation. One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues (Rev. 21:9⁺). This angel was specifically sent to show John the things which must shortly take place (Rev. 22:6, 16⁺). Here, as elsewhere in Scripture, an angel serves as the intermediary by which revelation is given to man:

Angels were used for the revelation of the Law of Moses (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2). They were active in the presenting of the prophetic truth to Daniel (Dan. 7:16-27; 8:16-26; 9:20-27; 10:1-12:13) and to Zechariah (Zec. 1:9; 2:3; 4:1, 5; 5:5; 6:4, 5). Angels were used to announce the birth of John to Zacharias (Luke 1:11-20) and the birth of Jesus to Mary (Luke 1:26-38) and to Joseph (Mat. 1:20-21).³⁰

Some suggest that the angel actively contributed to the train of visionary events which passed before John:

The office of the angel, as I take it, was, to form the connection between John's senses or imagination and the things which he was to describe, making to pass in review before him what was only afterwards to take place in fact. How this was done, I cannot say: but as the devil could take Jesus to a high mountain and show him at one view "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," I am sure that it falls sufficiently within the sphere of angelic natures thus to picture things to man; and that when commissioned of the Lord for the purpose, no good angel is wanting in ability to be the instrument in making John see whatever visions he describes in this book.³¹

This seems unlikely given that John was said to be "in the Spirit" (Rev. 1:10⁺)—the Holy Spirit is elsewhere the agent by which such visionary events are presented. The phrase "And I saw. . ." occurs no less than forty times.³² This indicates John's primary role as a scribe rather than an author.

3.1.2 - Revelation 1:2

bore witness

An epistolary aorist, referring to the perspective of the readers of this book once it had been completed.³³

who bore witness to the word of God

The phrase *word of God* is a signature of the Apostle John and occurs in John 1:1; 1Jn. 1:1; 2:14; 5:7 ^{TR}; Rev. 1:2⁺; 19:13⁺. This is strong evidence that John the Apostle is indeed the [author](#) of this work, as tradition holds. There are many parallels between **Jesus** and God's revealed **word**:

Among the parallels between Jesus and Scripture are 1) their eternality; 2) their production by the Holy Spirit; 3) a divine message embodied in earthly form; 4) the accommodation of man's limited intellect; 5) perfect—without sin; 6) having unique divine authority; 7) rejected by man; 8) victorious over foes; 9) revealed by faith; 10) bearing witness one to another; 11) the sole means of revelation of the Father; 12) called the Word of God.³⁴

In the same way that Jesus was fully human and yet without error (divine), the written word of God was given through human vessels who were superintended by the Holy Spirit so that the result is [inerrant](#).

testimony of Jesus Christ

There are two ways which the *testimony of Jesus Christ* may be understood:

- **Jesus is the Subject** - The testimony was *provided by* Jesus. He is its *source* (subjective genitive). Both here and in Rev. 19:10⁺, the grammatical evidence points toward taking this as the subjective genitive (the testimony born by Jesus Christ—which God gave Him).³⁵
- **Jesus is the Object** - The testimony is *about* Jesus (objective genitive). He is the One *revealed* by the testimony. John was banished to Patmos "for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9⁺). This almost certainly refers to persecution resulting from his testimony *about* Jesus. When the fifth seal is opened, John sees martyrs "who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held" (Rev. 6:9⁺). When the two witnesses finish their testimony, the beast ascends from the bottomless pit and overcomes them (Rev. 11:7⁺). The saints who overcome Satan do so by the (spoken) word of their testimony (Rev. 12:11⁺). The enraged dragon goes forth to make war against those who "have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17⁺). At the start of the Millennial Kingdom, John sees "the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus ([μάρτυριον Ἰησοῦ](#) [martyrian Iēsou], testimony of Jesus)" (Rev. 20:4⁺). In these situations, Scripture records persecution as the *result* of holding the testimony. This cannot refer to merely *receiving* a testimony from Jesus. It must refer to *giving* that testimony forth in the face of opposition. This objective sense would also be in accord with what John records concerning the role of John the Baptist (John 1:7). Many other passages indicate that Jesus is the primary object of prophetic revelation: the "volume of the book" is written of Him (Ps. 40:7; Luke 18:31; 24:27, 44; John 5:39, 46; Acts 8:35; 10:43; Heb. 10:7).

A survey of various passages concerning the testimony of Jesus Christ indicates that Jesus is *both* the subject and the object of testimony. Prophetic motivation is *from Jesus*: "the Spirit of Christ . . . testified" (1Pe. 1:11). It is also *about Jesus*: "indicating . . . beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow" (1Pe. 1:11). The relationship of the saints to the testimony of Jesus concerns both aspects: (1) we receive the testimony provided by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ; (2) we are charged with delivering the testimony concerning Jesus to others. The ministry of the saints can be found entirely within the phrase: *Knowing Him*

to make Him known. If either part of this “ministry equation” is neglected, our testimony suffers.³⁶

3.1.3 - Revelation 1:3

Blessed is he

Luther's comments underscore the need for a consistently literal interpretation of this book: “Even if it were a blessed thing to believe what is contained in it, no man knows what that is.”³⁷ For if different [interpretive views](#) render wholly different meanings, then what blessing *could* be derived and how could the prophecy be kept? How can one keep what one is not sure one has in the first place? One reason for such blessing is undoubtedly to be found in the close ties between this book and all the rest of Scripture: “The reason is easy to understand. Since so much of this book is based on the Old Testament, a proper study of it will require a study of the Old Testament, resulting in a more comprehensive knowledge of the Bible.”³⁸ This is one of seven unique blessings found in Revelation for:

1. He who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy (Rev. 1:3⁺).
2. The dead who die in the Lord during part of the Tribulation (Rev. 14:13⁺).
3. He who watches and keeps his garments (Rev. 16:15⁺).
4. Those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9⁺).
5. He who has part in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:6⁺).
6. He who keeps the words of this prophecy (Rev. 22:7⁺).
7. Those who do His commandments (Rev. 22:14⁺).

See commentary on [Revelation 1:1](#) regarding the perspicuity of Scripture.

he who reads and those who hear

The phrase denotes a single reader who reads the letter out loud in the midst of a congregation of listeners. At the time the book was written, writing materials were expensive and scarce. Nor was there an inexpensive means for producing copies of a written document—tedious copying by hand being the means of replication. Generally, a Christian assembly might only have access to a single copy of a document so written works were often read so that their contents might be accessible to the wider assembly.³⁹

the words

The message of God is not conveyed by some existential and personal encounter. Rather, it is conveyed by *words*. God has specifically chosen normative language as the mode for communicating what He wants us to know and keep. This is the basis for the Golden Rule of Interpretation discussed in the [introduction](#). Scripture makes plain that the Word of God is a detailed message conveyed by individual *words*, not mere concepts (Jos. 8:35; Jer. 26:2; Mat. 5:18; Luke 16:17; John 5:46; John 17:8; Acts 24:14; Rom. 3:2; Rom. 16:26; 1Cor. 14:37; Rev. 22:7⁺, 18-19⁺). Jesus Himself said that not one jot or one tittle will “pass from the law till all be fulfilled” (Mat. 5:18). A “jot” refers to the smallest Hebrew character: י, *yod*. A “tittle” is the fraction of a pen stroke which distinguishes similar Hebrew characters, for example the tiny overhang in the upper right which distinguishes a dalet (ד) from a resh (ר). This tiny pen stroke distinguishes words which appear almost identical, but with meanings as different as “to stand” ([תָּמַךְ](#) [’āmāq]) and “to speak” ([אָמַר](#) [’āmar]). It has become fashionable to promote the idea that Scripture conveys information primarily at the level of *concepts* rather than *words*. But one must appreciate that the building blocks for expressing thoughts are individual words. And without the precision of individual words, both in their meaning and preservation, the thoughts and intent of the original author *cannot be reliably determined*. This, in part, explains the emphasis of Scripture on the very words themselves as evidenced by the reliance of Jesus on grammatical subtleties in His arguments employing the Scriptures (Mat. 22:31, 42-45; John 10:35; Gal. 3:16). The importance of the individual words of Scripture is also illustrated by the sober warning which attends those who would add or remove *words* from this prophecy given to John. This is the heart of the issue as to which translation is best suited for study. It is our view, and that of others knowledgeable on the subject, that the *best* translation is one which follows a policy of *formal equivalence* where the very meaning of the individual words is preserved as closely as possible. While it is an undeniable fact that all translations involve interpretation by the translators, some translations involve *more interpretation* than others. It is these translations, which employ thought-for-thought *dynamic equivalence*, which are to be avoided:

There is an Italian proverb which says, “Translators are traitors” (*Traduttore, traditore*; “Translators, traitors”), and it's true. All translation loses meaning. All translators are traitors to the actual meaning. There is no such thing as a noninterpretive translation. . . . Are you going to translate words [formal equivalence] and be interpretive, or are you going to translate meaning [dynamic equivalence] and be **more interpretive?** [emphasis added]⁴⁰

The concept is this: as a disciple of Jesus Christ, we want the minimum distance between the [inspired inerrant](#) text and our own

understanding. A word-for-word (formal equivalence) translation tends to minimize the interpretive layer which separates us from the original. A thought-for-thought translation (dynamic equivalence) steps in to interpret things for us. What is particularly damaging about the latter is that ambiguity in the text—involving issues that we as students of the Word need to wrestle with and recognize involves ambiguity—is masked by the interpretive decisions of the thought-for-thought translators. In effect, they are performing both translation *and* interpretation. It is the latter which we seek to minimize:

Translators have to ask themselves, “What am I going to do with ambiguity?” If the Greek or Hebrew isn’t clear, when it can mean several different things, what am I going to do? The KJV, NASB, RSV, and ESV generally answer that question, “Leave it alone. If we can reproduce in English the same ambiguity that is present in the Greek, then we will leave it ambiguous. We will not make up the reader’s mind.” On the other hand, the NIV will not leave any ambiguity. They make up the reader’s mind whenever they feel it is necessary, and the NLT goes to even greater lengths than the NIV.⁴¹

One helpful rule of thumb on this matter is as follows: *the only reliable translations for detailed study are those which include italicized words*. These translations use *formal equivalence* as evidenced by the italicized words which signify phrases and conjunctions added by the translators for clarity of reading, but for which no corresponding words exist in the original language text. This also helps the careful student to know when he is standing on solid ground (words not in italics) or thin ice (italicized phrases).⁴² Now it is certainly true that every believer is a “translation” of God’s Word and not necessarily a word-for-word representation. God uses our testimony, even though imperfect, to witness of Christ and the Bible to others around us. This is as it should be. We need not always carry a Bible with us and read from it with precision for people to hear and respond in faith. Yet, when it comes to studying God’s Word where we have a choice of which *written text* to study and how close we adhere to the original, this is another matter entirely. We should always opt to stay as close to the Words of the Master as possible. This is illustrated by the popular game where people sit in adjacent positions and a story is told by the person on one end of the row of chairs. Each person in line whispers the story to the next person in line. When the story reaches the opposite end of the line, it is retold to all. It is amazing to observe how the story has changed little-by-little as it goes along until significant differences have occurred between its source and its destination. The student of God’s Word ought to be concerned about how many chairs separate him from the Words of the Master. Some of those chairs might be unavoidable—perhaps the student is unable to learn the original languages of the Bible so he must depend upon a translation into his own tongue. Yet why choose to sit two or three chairs *further* away from the Master by using a paraphrase which allows His Word to be distorted and misunderstood?⁴³

this prophecy

This book is not merely an allegory or devotional treatise extolling the eventual victory of good over evil. The events described within this book are *bona fide* prophecy and include the prediction of actual historical events. See [Can't God Prophecy?](#)

and keep those things which are written

Keep is the present active participle [τηρω](#) [vτεω](#) [tērountes], “while holding fast.” The saints are told to “be continually hanging on to” the things which John writes. This requires focus and energy and implies the need for watchfulness in order to avoid having them taken away. One aspect of keeping *those things which are written* involves a proper interpretation of their meaning. For it is possible to keep the words (Rev. 22:7⁺), but with their incorrect meaning. The result is that the things written herein are not properly kept for they are not properly understood. One example of such corruption of the **things written** would be [amillennialism](#) which holds that there is no future earthly kingdom of a thousand years (Rev. 20:4-6⁺), but that the kingdom period has already begun. Keeping the words in such a way as to denude them of their meaning is no preservation at all. Another aspect of keeping *those things which are written* is the preservation of both the content and proper interpretation of the text and *passing it on to each successive generation*. Jesus’ haunting words come to mind: “Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8b). This is where an understanding of church history can be a great boon to the saints of any age in that they come to appreciate their position within the stream of biblical history and doctrine which flows from Genesis to the Second Coming of Christ. Without such understanding, it is unlikely that we will *keep those things which are written* in the way God intended. The *things which are written* include both prophetic revelation concerning events in history, but also important exhortations concerning the *application* of the message within this book. The Psalm writer admonishes the saints to keep God’s precepts (Ps. 119:4). James tells us to be doers of the Word and not just hearers only (Jas. 1:22). We are told to watch and keep our garments, lest we “walk naked and they see *our* shame” (Rev. 16:15⁺). Christianity is not a passive intellectual exercise, but an *active application and promulgation* of the message of God (Mat. 24:42-44; 25:13). We would do well to remember the response of Jesus to the woman who blessed His mother Mary:

And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that bore You, and *the* breasts which nursed You!” But He said, “More than that, blessed *are* those who hear the word of God and keep it!” (Luke 11:27-28)

the time is near

The Greek phrase is [καὶρ ος γγύς](#) [kairos engys]. *Kairos* is a key eschatological term indicating a coming time of crisis associated with the last times.⁴⁴

The word used in Revelation 1:3+ . . . is *kairos*. It does not speak of an era or time span, but signifies “the right time,” “the right moment,” “the opportune time.” It is used in Galatians 4:4 wherein the Bible states, “But when the fulness of the time [*kairos*] was come, God sent forth His son. . .” Christ came at just the right moment. The time was “ripe” for the coming of God’s Son.⁴⁵

[*Engus*] can refer to any event predicted by the prophets, as when Mark indicates that “the time [*kairos*] is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand [*engus*]” (Mark 1:15). Something was “at hand” that has to do with *kairos* time. It was the Kingdom hope and aspiration of every Old Testament Jew who knew the writings of the Hebrew prophets.⁴⁶

This word for “time” differs from *chronos* which generally refers to what we would call chronological time:

[Καὶρὸς](#) [Kairos] (“time”) frequently has a technical sense in the NT, referring to the end times when the earthly kingdom of Israel will be instituted (cf. Acts 1:7; 3:20; 1Th. 5:1). The events of this book are thus identified with the last of the critical epoch-making periods foreordained of God. From the perspective of prophetic anticipation this period is declared to be [γγύς](#) [engys] (“near”).⁴⁷

Time does not translate *chronos*, which refers to time on a clock or calendar, but *kairos*, which refers to seasons, epochs, or eras. The next great era of God’s redemptive history is near.⁴⁸

James makes an almost identical statement using the same Greek verb concerning the coming of the Lord for believers (not in judgment): “Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand ([γγίκεν](#) [ēngiken])” (Jas. 5:7-8). The meaning in James is that “of approaching in time . . . [and concerns] the Lord’s return.”⁴⁹ Peter uses the same term: “the end of all things is at hand” (1Pe. 4:7). As with the previous statement concerning things *which must shortly take place* (Rev. 1:1+), this perspective of time is that of God and concerns the last times when prophetic predictions would come to pass. “Some interval, however, is presupposed between the vision and its fulfillment, otherwise it would be futile to write the visions down, and to arrange for their circulation throughout the churches. A certain career is anticipated for the book of Revelation.”⁵⁰ [Preterist interpreters](#) generally argue that this phrase must denote fulfillment in the lifetime of John’s readers. Yet they are not consistent on this point when the phrase occurs elsewhere:

This creates a contradiction within [moderate] preterism. Since Rev. 22:6+ is a statement referring to the whole book of Revelation, it would be impossible to take tachos as a reference to A.D. 70 . . . and at the same time hold that Rev. 20:7-9+ teaches the Second Coming. [Moderate preterists] must either adopt a view similar to futurism, or shift to the extreme preterist view that understands the entire book of Revelation as past history, thus eliminating any future Second Coming and resurrection.⁵¹

A better way to understand the text, as in [verse 1](#), is denoting the [imminency](#) of the events John records. See [Imminency](#).

3.1.4 - Revelation 1:4

John

This simple statement identifying the writer as “John” is evidence for the traditional view of [John the Apostle as author](#). For what other John would designate himself simply as “John” when “John *the Apostle*” was the most prominent “John” amongst the Asian churches during this period? If it had been another “John,” he would have clarified so. John was ideally suited to write to these churches because he had been living in Asia Minor and ministering among the churches since approximately A.D. 66.⁵²

seven churches which are in Asia

See [Seven Churches of Asia](#) The names of the [seven churches](#) are listed in Revelation 1:11+. Although the text to follow addresses each church in turn, the book of Revelation is addressed to all seven churches for all seven churches are to benefit from its contents and to learn from those things which are said concerning the other churches (Rev. 2:7+, 11+, 17+, 29+; 3:6+, 13+, 22+). See [Seven: Perfection, Completeness](#).

from Him who is and who was and who is to come

This is a reference to God the Father as can be seen by the Son being mentioned in the following verse “and from Jesus Christ” (Rev. 1:5+). This unusual grammatical construction is comprised of a present participle ([ὢς](#) [ho ōn], *he who is*), an imperfect verb ([ἦν](#) [ho ēn], *he was*) and another present participle ([ἐρχόμενος](#) [ho erchomenos], *he who is coming*). A more literal rendering might

be, “the *One who is* and the *He was* and the *coming One*”. Several unusual aspects of this grammatical construction have been noted:

Another rare grammatical phenomenon of this title is the finite verb *en* doing duty for a participle (Simcox). It is modified by a definite article and is parallel with participles in the first and third members of the expression. The reason for this peculiarity lies in a limitation of the verb [εἰμι](#) [eimi] (“I am”), which has no participial form to express continuing action in past time. The writer wanted to describe the Father’s being by including His eternal and continuing existence prior to the present moment. The imperfect indicative was the only linguistic device for doing so.^{[53](#)}

Regarding “who is” (nominative) following the preposition “from,” Wallace observes:

This is the first and worst grammatical solecism in Revelation, but many more are to follow. There are two broad options for how to deal with it: Either the author unintentionally erred or he intentionally violated standard syntax. If unintentional, it could be due to a heavily Semitized Greek, or merely represent the level of linguistic skill that a minimally educated man might achieve (as in the vulgar papyri). Either of these is doubtful here because (1) such a flagrant misunderstanding of the rudiments of Greek would almost surely mean that the author simply could not compose in Greek, yet the Apocalypse itself argues against this; (2) nowhere else does the Seer use a nominative immediately after a preposition (in fact, he uses [πό](#) [apo] 32 times with a genitive immediately following). If intentional, the question of what the author intends. Few scholars would disagree with Charles’ assessment [R.H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*]: “The Seer has deliberately violated the rules of grammar in order to preserve the divine name inviolate from the change which it would necessarily have undergone if declined. Hence the divine name is here in the nominative.” It would be like one American saying to another, “Do you believe in ‘We the People?’ ” If the question had been, “Do you believe in us the people?” the allusion to the Preamble to the Constitution would have been lost.^{[54](#)}

The phrase is to be regarded as an indeclinable proper name^{[55](#)} meant to be familiar to readers of the Greek Old Testament who read of the name which God revealed to Moses at the burning bush, [ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ](#) [Egō eimi ho ōn], “I AM WHO I AM” (Ex. 3:14, [LXX](#)). Although the phrase denotes God’s eternity, it also emphasizes one of the themes of this book: His soon coming. “Such a means of referring to the future also heightens the focus upon the imminence of His coming: He who is already on His way may arrive at any moment.”^{[56](#)}

It is difficult to understand how so many should assume without further question that [ῥχόμενος](#) [ho erchomenos] [the coming one] here is == [σόμενος](#) [ho esomenos] [the one who shall be], and that thus we have the eternity of God expressed here so far as it can be expressed, in forms of time: “He who was, and is, *and shall be*.” But how [ῥχόμενος](#) [ho erchomenos] should ever have this significance is hard to perceive. . . . What is the key-note to this whole Book? Surely it is, “I come quickly. The world seems to have all things its own way, to kill my servants; but I come quickly.” With this announcement the Book begins, Rev. 1:7⁺; with this it ends, Rev. 22:7⁺, 12⁺, 20⁺ and this is a constantly recurring note through it all, Rev. 2:5⁺, 16⁺; 3:11⁺; 6:17⁺; 11:18⁺; 14:7⁺; 16:15⁺; 18:20⁺.^{[57](#)}

seven spirits

Isaiah provides a list of qualities of the Spirit which shall rest upon the Messiah who shall come from the stem of Jesse (David’s father): “The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD” (Isa. 11:2).^{[58](#)} In the fourth chapter, John calls our attention to “Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the **seven Spirits of God**” [emphasis added] (Rev. 4:5⁺). These Spirits are also said to be “seven eyes, which are the Seven Spirits of God sent out unto all the earth” (Rev. 5:6⁺). The omniscience of the Holy Spirit is in view and His worldwide ministry, also mentioned by Zechariah (Zec. 4:6-10). One of His worldwide ministries is convicting “of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:8). He provides the breath of life to all the world’s creatures (Gen. 2:7; Job 34:14-15). He strives with all men to restrain sin (Gen. 6:3; 20:6; 2Th. 2:6-7). Here, the Spirits are specifically said to be Spirits of God making the connection to Isaiah 11:2 more plausible and denoting seven different aspects of the Holy Spirit Who was poured out on the Anointed One (the *Mashiach* or *Christos*). That these spirits are not angels^{[59](#)} is seen from their elevation on a par with the other two members of the Trinity: “The seven Spirits might conceivably refer to a group of angelic beings. But coming between references to the Father and the Son it is more probable that this is an unusual way of designating the Holy Spirit.”^{[60](#)} The number of spirits matches the number of lampstands and would seem to represent the activity of Christ through the Holy Spirit in and to the seven churches (Zec. 4:6). The epistle to each church closes with the admonition, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev. 2:7⁺, 11⁺, 17⁺, 29⁺; 3:6⁺, 13⁺, 22⁺).^{[61](#)} See [Seven: Perfection, Completeness](#).

3.1.5 - Revelation 1:5

and from Jesus Christ

Within this simple greeting can be found a neglected doctrine of paramount importance: the Trinity. The greeting is from each member of the Trinity: from *Him who is and who was and who is to come* (the Father), from *the seven Spirits who are before His throne* (the Holy Spirit), and from *Jesus Christ* (the Son). Before we have even begun to plumb the depths of the amazing statements made concerning Christ in the verses to follow, *His divinity* is already in plain view before us.

the faithful witness

Among the unique titles of Jesus, He is “called Faithful and True” (Rev. 19:11⁺). Here, we see His character as God, Who cannot lie (Num. 23:19; Rom. 3:4; Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:18). Where God is involved, other witnesses are unnecessary, for God bears truthful and reliable witness of Himself (John 8:14). The *witness* of Christ was *faithful* in that He finished the work which the Father had given Him (John 17:4), manifesting the Father’s name to His disciples (John 17:6) and resisting the temptation to circumvent the cross (Luke 22:42-44). In His incarnation, Jesus provided a witness of God to man (Isa. 9:1-2; John 1:14, 18; 12:45; 14:8-9; Col. 1:15; 2:9; Heb. 1:2; 1Jn. 1:2).

firstborn from the dead

He is the firstborn from the dead “that in all things He may have the preeminence” (Col. 1:18). He thus establishes the pattern for all His brethren who will also rise from the dead (Rom. 8:29). The term “firstborn” ([πρωτότοκος](#) [prōtotokos]), emphasizes not His *generation*, but His *position* (Ps. 89:27) [the [LXX](#) uses the same Greek term (Psalm 88:28 in the LXX)].⁶²

The Greek term [πρωτότοκο](#) [prōtotoko] could refer either to first in order of time, such as a first born child, or it could refer to one who is preeminent in rank. M. J. Harris, *Colossians and Philemon* (EGGNT), 43, expresses the meaning of the word well: “The ‘firstborn’ was either the eldest child in a family or a person of preeminent rank. The use of this term to describe the Davidic king in Ps. 88:28 LXX (=Ps 89:27 EVV), ‘I will also appoint him my firstborn ([πρωτότοκο](#) [prōtotoko]), the most exalted of the kings of the earth,’ indicates that it can denote supremacy in rank as well as priority in time. But whether the proto- element in the word denotes time, rank, or both, the significance of the -tokos element as indicating birth or origin (from [τίκτω](#) [tikō] give birth to) has been virtually lost except in reference to literal birth.” In Col. 1:15 the emphasis is on the priority of Jesus’ rank as over and above creation (cf. Col. 1:16 and the ‘for’ clause referring to Jesus as Creator).⁶³

A connection with Psalm 2 is seen in that Christ is here *firstborn from the dead* (“begotten,” Ps. 2:7 cf. Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; Rom. 1:4) and *ruler over the kings of the earth* (Ps. 2:8). It was at His resurrection that His divine Sonship was made manifest and attested by the Father (Acts 13:33; Rom. 1:4).⁶⁴ Although not the first to be raised from the dead, Christ is the first to be resurrected to obtain a glorified body never to die again (1Cor. 15:35-44). “There were resurrections before His in the Old Testament (1K. 17:17-23; 2K. 4:32-36; 13:20-21), and He Himself raised others during His earthly ministry (Mat. 9:23-25; Luke 7:11-15; John 11:30-44).”⁶⁵ Yet all of these who were resurrected prior to Christ continued to age and eventually died again.⁶⁶

Christ is indeed “*the first begotten of the dead*” notwithstanding that such raisings from the grave as that of the widow’s son, and Jairus’s daughter, and Lazarus, and his who revived at the touch of Elisha’s bones (2K. 13:21), went before. There was for them no repeal of the sentence of death, but a respite only; not to say that even during their period of respite they carried about with them a body of death. Christ first so rose from the dead, that he left death forever behind Him, did not, and could not, die any more (Rom. 6:9); in this respect was “the first-fruits of them that slept” (1Cor. 15:20, 23), the Prince of life (Acts 3:15).⁶⁷

The resurrection of Christ is unique because He is the first instance of that transformation which the resurrection effects. It is more than a resuscitation of mortal flesh, such as took place in the cases of Jairus’ daughter or of Lazarus, for they underwent no essential change of the body. . . . they were restored to their friends; but there is not a hint that they were made physically immortal, or that death did not overtake them at some later date.⁶⁸

ruler over the kings of the earth

The rule of Jesus over the kings of the earth is by divine right, not by the willing acceptance of the kings themselves (Ps. 2; Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45; 7:11-14, 24-27). For the world will [reject the reign of God](#). The [arrival of God’s kingdom on earth](#) is a major theme of this prophecy given through John and culminates in the destruction of the armies of the kings of the earth at the Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 19:11-21⁺). While it is true that Jesus is the ruler over all men *today*, most do not realize this to be the case. A time is coming when the knowledge of the Lord will extend over the face of the entire earth and there will no longer be difference of opinion regarding Who is in control (Isa. 2:3; 11:9; Mic. 4:2; Zec. 14:8-11).

who loved us

“Loved,” ([ἀγαπᾷ](#) [Agapōnti]) is a present participle, He *is loving* (present tense) us. The love of God for us is demonstrated in many ways, but chiefly, in the way in which He gave His Son on our behalf: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten

Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). The “so” in this oft-quoted verse is not only speaking of the *degree* of God’s love, but the *way in which it was manifested*—by the giving of His Son.⁶⁹ This is made clear by the context of the passage, and especially the preceding verses: “And **as** Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, **even so** must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” [emphasis added] (John 3:14-15). In his epistle, John also explained the giving of Jesus on the cross as a *demonstration* of God’s love. “In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins” (1Jn. 4:9-10). This love of God is not restricted to the Father giving the Son, but includes *the Son giving Himself* (Eph. 5:2). Our love of God is not natural, but in reaction to His first having loved us (1Jn. 4:19). The degree of God’s love for us is fathomless. Yet God desires our finite minds to attempt to comprehend it as best we are able. The depth of His love is demonstrated by an ongoing study of what is said concerning the relationship between the Father and the Son (John 1:1; 17:5, 25) and the agonizing cost to God in order to redeem us (Mat. 27:46; Mark 15:34). This cost is all the more amazing when our condition as enemies of God is considered (Rom. 5:6-10). Our inability to worship God correlates with our ignorance of His Word. For it is by His Word that we come to an ever deeper understanding of the intimacy between the Father and the Son and the painful rent in that fabric necessary to secure our undeserved redemption. Emotional worship experiences in and of themselves can never substitute for a response based upon a Scriptural understanding of His love for us, as limited as it may ultimately be.

washed us

NU has “freed” ([λύσαντι](#) [lysanti]) whereas **MT** has “washed” ([λούσαντι](#) [lousanti]) - a difference of a single Greek letter. Scripture describes both as being true of the believer who has been set free (Mat. 20:28; Gal. 3:13; 4:5; 1Ti. 2:6; Heb. 9:12; 1Pe 1:18; Rev. 5:9⁺; 14:3-4⁺) and washed, a picture of spiritual cleansing (Ps. 51:4; Isa. 1:16-18; Eze. 36:25; Acts 22:16; Eph. 5:26; Tit. 2:14; 3:5; Heb. 1:3; 9:14; 2Pe. 1:9). The imagery of the immediate passage, *in His own blood*, argues for the latter as does internal evidence elsewhere in the book (Rev. 7:14⁺). Whereas *loved us* is in the present tense, *washed us* is in the aorist tense. The provision for our redemption, His death on the cross which washes away all our sin both past and future, is accomplished and its full merits are applied in full the *moment* we believe. Yet He *continually* loves us.

in His own blood

A bloodless gospel is an ineffectual gospel. For it is by the spilling of blood that God has chosen to atone for sin (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22).⁷⁰ Why did God choose blood for this purpose? Ultimately, we may never know, for the “secret things belong to the LORD our God” (Dt. 29:29). Scripture reveals that the use of blood for atonement is related to its life-giving qualities (Gen. 9:4). The “life of the flesh is in the blood” (Lev. 17:11). “Life” in this verse is Hebrew [נֶפֶשׁ](#) [nepeš], the same term which is translated “soul” where Scripture records the once-for-all atonement made by Isaiah’s Suffering Servant: “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put *Him* to grief. When You make His **soul** an offering for sin” [emphasis added] (Isa. 53:10). By His blood atonement, Jesus was prophesied to “sprinkle many nations” (Isa. 52:15), thus fulfilling the many **OT** types pointing to Him. It was by blood sacrifice that the first man and woman were covered in response to their sin (Gen. 3:21). It was by blood sacrifice that the first men were to approach God (Gen. 4:4). It was by a blood sacrifice that God established His covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15:9-21). It was by blood placed on the door posts and lintel that the Jews were “covered” from the destroyer Who passed over Egypt taking the firstborn of each family (Ex. 12:23). It was by the sprinkling of blood that the Mosaic Law was ratified between God and the Israelites (Ex. 24:8). Ever since the bloodless offering of Cain (Gen. 4:3-5), man has attempted to approach God by some other means than that which God Himself has established. These would try to circumvent the single path which God requires: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’ ” (John 14:6) This necessity of blood offering is offensive to man, and we believe intentionally so. For it is a messy business and continual reminder of man’s lack of righteousness (Rom. 3:23) and his desperate need of the “righteousness of God,” a righteousness which is *freely given* rather than *earned* (Rom. 3:21-26; 2Cor. 5:21; Php. 3:9). Yet many prefer to continue in the way of religion rather than relationship, offering up their own puny works in a vain attempt to justify themselves before a perfect and Holy God (Rom. 10:3). Religion preserves our pride, whereas relationship requires us to cast it aside. See [Hide and Seek](#).

3.1.6 - Revelation 1:6

made us kings and priests

In both **NU** and **MT**, the Greek has *appointed us a kingdom* (singular), *priests to God*. A similar difference occurs in Revelation 5:10⁺. The singular form (a kingdom) would be in keeping with the original calling of Israel to be “a kingdom of priests” (Ex. 19:6). Some have noted the Jewish audience of Peter’s epistle and rightly understood 1Peter 2:9 as being a reminder to his readers of the original calling of the Jews (Ex. 19:6). Yet in this book the concept is unmistakably broadened to include all those who trust in Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, from among every “tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev. 5:10⁺). Our priesthood is made possible by our “great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God” (Heb. 4:14), therefore we have complete and

full access to the Father. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:16). Whether we are to be "kings and priests" or "a kingdom [of] priests," it is clear that believers will corule with Christ during His coming earthly reign (Rev. 20:4-6⁺). This future reign will not come to pass until after [Antichrist](#) has his time on the world stage and a judgment is made in favor of the saints (Dan. 7:18, 25-27).⁷¹ Both now and in the future, our function is primarily *priestly*. That is, we are to minister *to God*. Here we run into an extremely important distinction which has not been adequately appreciated among many who lead God's people. Our primary responsibility is to minister *to God* and not *to men*. Our focus is to be *God-ward* rather than *man-ward*. We are to "offer up spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ" (1Pe. 2:5). As we take care to minister to God, He will minister to men through us. The focus of our ministry is the New Covenant (2Cor. 3:6), not the Law of Moses, and is characterized by a series of contrasts and seeming contradictions (2Cor. 6:4-10). Our lives should evidence a consistency of living whether with the people of God or with unbelievers: "God intends the eventual abolition of all distinctions between holy and profane, sanctified and common (Zec. 14:20-21)."⁷² In one sense, there has been and will only ever be a single "kingdom of God." This is His universal dominion over His entire creation. Yet, in another sense, God has chosen to use men as mediators of His rule during periods of history.⁷³ The progression of the kingdom of God is revealed in stages:

The progression of the "kingdom of God" is gradually revealed. What is this kingdom in principle if it is not the sphere where God reigns? In the Scriptures we can trace for it seven distinct steps: 1. Paradise . . . (Gen. 1:31) 2. The theocracy of Israel . . . 3. The kingdom announced by the prophets . . . (1Sa. 7:8; Isa. 11:1-16) 4. The kingdom offered and rejected in the gospels . . . (Mat. 4:17; Luke 17:21; Luke 10:9-11) 5. The kingdom hidden in the heart . . . (John 3:3-5; Col. 1:13) 6. The thousand year reign . . . (Rev. 20:1-10⁺) 7. The eternal kingdom in heaven . . . (2Ti. 4:18; 2Pe. 1:10-11).⁷⁴

Our rule is not contingent upon our status in the world, but upon our position in Christ:

Let men despise and contemn religion as they may, there is empire connecting with lowly discipleship, royalty with penitence, and prayers, and sublime priesthood with piety. Fishermen and taxgatherers, by listening to Jesus, presently find themselves in apostolic thrones, and ministering as priests and rulers of a dispensation, wide as the world, and lasting as time. Moses, by his faith, rises from Jethro's sheepfold to be the prince of Israel; and Daniel, from the den of condemnation and death, to the honour and authority of empire; and Luther, from his cell, to dictate to kings and rule the ages. There is not a believer, however obscure or humble, who may not rejoice in princely blood, who does not already wield a power which the potencies of hell cannot withstand, and who is not on the way to possess eternal priesthood and dominion.⁷⁵

to Him be glory and dominion

The nearest antecedent is the Son to which glory and dominion are given, literally *into the ages of the ages* ([εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνες τῶν αἰῶνων](#) [eis tous aiōnas tōn aiōnōn]). Yet elsewhere it is said that God will not share His glory with another (Isa. 48:11). Clearly, Jesus is God!

3.1.7 - Revelation 1:7

He is coming

The [OT](#) Scriptures predicted a "coming one" (Dt. 18:15-18; Ps. 2; 22; 118:26; Isa. 9:6; 48:16; 53; 61:1; Jer. 23:5-8; Dan. 9:25; Mic. 5:2; Zec. 2:8-11; 6:12-15; etc.). This was the expectation of those among whom Jesus ministered (John 1:21; 1:45; 6:14; 7:40). John the Baptist knew of these predictions and sent his disciples to Jesus inquiring, " 'Are You the **Coming One** ([ῥηόμενος](#) [erchomenos]), or do we look for another?' " [emphasis added] (Mat. 11:3; Luke 7:19). Peter and Stephen explained it was Jesus who fulfilled these predictions (Acts 3:22; 7:37). Yet this Coming One represented a Scriptural enigma. At times, He was said to be victorious king who would reign forever (Num. 24:17; Isa. 9:6-7). But He was also forsaken, despised, rejected, and crushed (Ps. 22; Isa. 53). How could these seeming contradictions be reconciled? Some chose to apply these passages to two different individuals, a "suffering Messiah" (Messiah ben-Joseph) and a "victorious Messiah" (Messiah ben-David).⁷⁶ Others held that the fulfillments were mutually exclusive and which would [eventuate](#) depending upon the obedience of Israel.⁷⁷ The key which unlocks this mystery is the resurrection of Messiah (Ps. 16:10; Isa. 53:10). He would come once, die for the sins of the world, be resurrected back to life, and come a second time in judgment. His First Coming, death, and resurrection are now past. All that remains is His reappearance as described to John here and elsewhere in the [NT](#). "It has been estimated that one out of every twenty-five verses in the New Testament refers to the Second Coming."⁷⁸

Jesus came the first time in humiliation; He will return in exaltation. He came the first time to be killed; He will return to kill His enemies. He came the first time to serve; He will return to be served. He came the first time as the suffering servant; He will return as the conquering king. The challenge the book of Revelation makes to every person is to be ready for His return.⁷⁹

He *is coming* (present tense) and every eye *will see* Him (future tense). The grammar places the event on the edge between the

present and the future—the *futuristic present*. It is ‘about to occur.’ It is [imminent](#):

The verb form [ῥηεται](#) [erchetai] is an example of the futuristic use of the present tense, the future connotation being provided by the word’s meaning. The idea is that Christ is already on His way, i.e., He is in the process of coming and hence *will* arrive. This use of the present tense enhances emphasis on the imminence of that coming (cf. [ῥηομαι](#) [erchomai], John 14:3).⁸⁰

This same verb is used directly or indirectly eleven more times in this book in reference to the return of Christ (cf. Rev. [1:4,8+; 2:5+, 16+; 3:11+; 4:8+; 16:15+; 22:7+, 12+, 20+](#) [twice]), seven coming from the lips of Christ Himself (Rev. [2:5+, 16+; 3:11+; 16:15+; 22:7+, 12+, 20+](#)). The current verse obviously is the theme verse for the whole book.⁸¹

See [Imminency](#).

with clouds

Clouds are often associated with the glory of the Lord. Clouds were often one aspect of the visible manifestation of the Lord’s presence (Ex. 16:10; 19:9, 16; 24:15-16; 34:5; 40:34; Dt. 5:22). Clouds indicated His presence over the mercy seat where He dwelt between the cherubim (Lev. 16:2). During Solomon’s prayer dedicating the [Temple](#), he recognized God’s habitation as the dark cloud (2Chr. 6:1). In response, the glory of the Lord filled the Temple (2Chr. 7:1), no doubt including a manifestation of clouds. The psalmist understood dark clouds to be God’s canopy (Ps. 18:11; Ps. 97:2). The manifestation of God by clouds indicates His localized presence on the earth, among men:

the Shechinah Glory is the visible manifestation of the presence of God. It is the majestic presence or manifestation of God in which He descends to dwell among men. Whenever the invisible God becomes visible, and whenever the omnipresence of God is localized, this is the Shechinah Glory. The usual title found in Scriptures for the Shechinah Glory is the glory of Jehovah, or the glory of the Lord. The Hebrew form is Kabod Adonai, which means “the glory of Jehovah” and describes what the Shechinah Glory is. The Greek title, Doxa Kurion, is translated as “the glory of the Lord.” [Doxa](#) means “brightness,” “brilliance,” or “splendor,” and it depicts how the Shechinah Glory appears. Other titles give it the sense of “dwelling,” which portrays what the Shechinah Glory does. The Hebrew word Shechinah, from the root shachan, means “to dwell.” The Greek word skeinei (ED: SEE [skenoō](#)), which is similar in sound as the Hebrew Shechinah (Greek has no “sh” sound), means “to tabernacle” . . . In the Old Testament, most of these visible manifestations took the form of light, fire, or cloud, or a combination of these. A new form appears in the New Testament: the Incarnate Word.⁸²

The visible manifestation of God indicating the place where he *dwelt* has been called the “Shekinah” glory from the Hebrew verb [שָׁכַן](#) [šāḵan] meaning “dwell, live among, inhabit, abide, stay, remain, camp, i.e., to live or reside in a place, usually for a relatively long amount of time (Gen. 9:27).”⁸³ See [The Abiding Presence of God](#).

The cloud is probably not to be interpreted as a vapor cloud or as a storm cloud, but as a cloud of glory betokening the presence of God. . . . The “cloud,” then, may be the cloud of the Shekinah, which led the children of Israel out of Egypt and through the desert, and which overshadowed the Tabernacle and the Temple (Ex. 13:21-22; 40:34; Num. 9:15-16; 2Chr. 7:2-3).⁸⁴

When Jesus revealed His glory to Peter, James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration, the voice of the Father spoke from within a bright cloud saying, “This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!” (Mat. 17:5). Jesus explained His appearance with the clouds to be the sign of His coming (Mat. 24:30) and His mention of “coming on the clouds of heaven” (Mat. 26:64) was understood by the high priest as a blasphemous claim (Mat. 26:64-65). He tore his garments in response, a clear indication of his understanding of what Jesus was claiming (Dan. 7:13). John’s mention here of Jesus coming *with clouds* is an allusion from the book of Daniel which records the presentation of the Son to the Father: “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, *One* like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.” (Dan. 7:13). This presentation of the Son is to receive His kingdom (Dan. 7:14) and does not take place until all of His enemies are made His footstool (Ps. 110:1). This includes His future enemy, Daniel’s “little horn” (Dan. 7:8, 20-21). At present, He is seated at the right hand of the Father awaiting that day. The Son *began* the period of sitting at the right hand and waiting for His enemies to be made His footstool at His ascension (Acts 2:32-35; Heb. 10:11-13). His earthly kingdom did not come at the time of His ascension, but occurs when He rises from His seat beside the Father and descends to take up His Davidic throne on earth (Mat. 25:31; Luke 1:32-33).⁸⁵ At other times, the Lord is said to ride “on a swift cloud” (Isa. 19:1). It is such a passage which provides the basis for the [preterist](#) interpretation which holds that this verse is describing a “cloud coming” in judgment upon anation. Such a judgment in the OT was not attended by a literally visible manifestation of God. Yet here, we are explicitly told that *every eye* will see Him. Not just the “clouds of judgment,” but *Him*! This return of Jesus will be with clouds, bodily, and visible as the angels informed His disciples at the time of His ascension (Acts 1:9-11). His return is the subject of the latter portion of Revelation 19+. If this were a “judgment coming” of Christ in A.D. 70 upon the Jews of Jerusalem as the preterists claim, what relevance would that have to the [seven churches](#) of Asia who were hundreds of miles away and virtually unaffected by the event?⁸⁶ As our discussion regarding the [Date](#) the

Revelation was written shows, the best evidence supports a late date near the end of Domitian's reign when John had the vision (A.D. 95-96). That being the case, the "coming" described here cannot refer to the "cloud coming in judgment" to destroy Jerusalem in A.D. 70 as the [Preterist Interpretation](#) holds.

every eye will see Him

This phrase would seem to be almost intentionally aimed at undercutting the claims of various cults and aberrations of Christianity which have taught non-visible fulfillments of the coming of Jesus in history past. His future coming will be visible to *every eye*. This simple fact destroys the claims of preterism that this "cloud coming" occurred spiritually in 70 A.D. with the destruction of Jerusalem and the ending of the Jewish state.⁸⁷ While mild preterism is not a cult, it shares this aberrant teaching that the coming of Jesus here is not a visible coming. "The crucifiers would see Him coming in judgment—that is, they would *understand* that His coming would mean wrath on the land."⁸⁸ Notice the preterist sleight of hand. The verse states that every eye will *see Him*, whereas DeMar states that it is an *understanding* of His *judgment* that is being described. These are not the same thing. DeMar realizes the difference and attempts to overcome this liability: "Equating 'seeing' with 'understanding' is not Scripture twisting. It is a common biblical metaphor."⁸⁹ Yet there are fundamental differences between this passage and those DeMar offers in support of the preterist view. Here, the passage states that *every eye* will see. If the preterist interpretation is correct and the "seeing" is an "understanding of judgment," then why didn't the *entire nation* of Israel "understand" and turn to Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem? Apparently, the vast majority of Jews had no idea of the correlation between the destruction of Jerusalem and the "coming of Jesus" which the preterists maintain and which John states *every eye* would see. "Seeing" is describing literal visibility by every eye, not an abstract "understanding" by a few Jews.

even they

A subgroup from among *every eye*, establishing the global nature of the manifestation of Christ. Both Jews *and* Gentiles are responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus (Acts 4:27-28). It was *Jewish mouths* (Mark 15:13; Luke 23:21; John 19:6, 14-16) together with *Gentile hands* (John 19:23) which crucified Jesus. Ultimately, it was the sin of all mankind which sent Jesus to the cross (Rom. 4:25). Yet this passage refers to the Jews who have a particular responsibility (Acts 3:12-15) because Jesus is their promised national Messiah (Rom. 9:4-5). The Jewish generation which witnessed the crucifixion of Messiah made the fearful mistake of pronouncing a curse upon themselves and their children: "And all the people answered and said, 'His blood [be] on us and on our children.'" (Mat. 27:25). So it is Jews who will specially mourn when they realize their grave error and the historical destruction it has wrought. As Lightner observes: "You don't put kings on crosses, you put them on thrones!"

even they who pierced Him

"Pierced" is [ἐξεκέντησαν](#) [exekentēsan]. John uses this identical Greek word in John 19:37 when quoting Zechariah 12:10. These are the only two places in the entire NT where this particular verb appears—another piece of evidence that the Apostle John was the writer of both books.⁹⁰ The one who is coming is the one who they pierced—Jesus Christ. Yet Zechariah (Zec. 12:10) tells us that it is *God* who they pierced (Hebrew [דָּקְרָוּ](#) [dāqārū] - "drive through, pierce, stab, run through, i.e., make physical impact with a sharp implement"⁹¹). "The weapon associated with [Hebrew] daqar is usually the sword, though a spear is the instrument in Num. 25:8."⁹² Not only were spikes driven through Jesus' hands and feet, but He was pierced with a spear (John 19:34). Comparing Zechariah 12:10 with this verse, we see once again that Jesus is identified as God! Isaiah prophesied that He would be "wounded" ("pierced," NASB), Hebrew [לָלַח](#) [hālāl].⁹³ "John is the only one of the Evangelists who records the piercing of Christ's side. This allusion identifies him as the author of the Apocalypse."⁹⁴ Some hold that "every eye" describes all Israel whereas "even they that pierced" describes a subgroup from among the Jews who are more directly responsible for the crucifixion. But Zechariah defines those who pierced Him using terms which are synonymous with all Israel:

And I will pour **on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem** the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. Zec. 12:10 [emphasis added]

Here, Zechariah identifies "they who pierced" (Revelation 1:7⁺) as being all Israel—not a subset specifically held responsible for the crucifixion of Messiah from among a larger group of Jews.

The recipients of the spiritual blessing [identical with those who mourn] will be (1) "the house of David," through whom the promise of the Messianic-Davidic Kingdom was made (2S. 7:8-16), and through whom it will be realized (Luke 1:31-33); and (2) "the inhabitants of Jerusalem"—the whole saved remnant of Israel, by metonymy, the capital representing the whole nation (cf. 1K. 20:34, where "Samaria," the capital, represents the nation).⁹⁵

The fact that only the inhabitants of Jerusalem are named, and not those of Judah also, is explained correctly by the commentators from the custom of regarding the capital as the representative of the whole nation. And it follows . . . from this, that in v. 8 also the

expression “inhabitants of Jerusalem” is simply an individualizing epithet for the whole of the covenant nation. But just as in v. 8 the house of David is mentioned emphatically along with these was the princely family and representative of the ruling class, so is it also in v. 10, for the purpose of expressing the thought that the same salvation is to be enjoyed by the whole nation, in all its ranks, from the first to the last.⁹⁶

Also, if “they who pierced” is to be understood as a subgroup from among the Jewish nation, how does one establish the precise boundary between all the Jews living at the time of Christ versus those who contributed to His crucifixion? And what does contributing to His crucifixion entail? Direct persuasion, such as manifested by the Jewish religious leaders? Does incitement by the crowd count? What about Jews who were not present at Jerusalem at the crucifixion, but opposed Jesus’ ministry? And how does such a distinction between some Jews and not others square with the generational curse pronounced by and upon the Jews in general (Mat. 27:25)?

all the tribes

In many places, *tribes* (φυλαί [phylai]) specifically denotes the Jewish tribes (e.g., Mat. 19:28; Luke 2:36; 22:30; Acts 13:21; Rom. 11:1; Heb. 7:13; Php. 3:5; Jas. 1:1; Rev. 5:5⁺; 7:4-9⁺; 21:12⁺). Elsewhere, especially when appearing in the phrase *all the tribes*, it has a more global meaning (e.g., Mat. 24:30; Rev. 1:7⁺) over against *the twelve [Jewish] tribes* (Mat. 19:28; Luke 22:30; Acts 26:7; Jas. 1:1; Rev. 21:12⁺). Φυλαί [Phylai] is differentiated from *nation* (ἔθνος [ethnos]), *people* (λαός [laos]), and *tongue* (γλῶσσα [glōssa]) in Rev. 7:9⁺; 11:9⁺; 13:7⁺.

of the earth

The closely-related phrase “all the families of the earth” appears in several places in the OT (Gen. 12:3; 28:14; Amos 3:2; Zec. 14:17). In all of these contexts, the phrase clearly refers to the global community (not just the tribes of Israel).⁹⁷ It is through Abraham’s seed that “all the families of the earth” (Gen. 12:3; 28:14) will be blessed.⁹⁸ God says to Israel, “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.” (Amos 3:2) Whichever “of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King” (Zec. 14:17) during the Millennium will not receive rain. These families include “the family of Egypt” (Zec. 14:18). In each of these OT passages, the *Septuagint* renders the phrase using the same Greek term (φυλαί [phylai]) found here.⁹⁹¹⁰⁰ There is a close connection between this passage and Zechariah 12. Preterists make the same mistake in both passages of trying to limit the scope to Israel and Jerusalem. But the Zechariah passage is clearly describing a time “when all nations of the earth are gathered against [Jerusalem]” (Zec. 12:3). And the outcome of the battle is entirely different than the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: “In that Day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem. . . I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.” (Zec. 12:8-9). But nothing of the kind happened in A.D. 70. In the preterist “fulfillment” of these related passages, a *single* nation (Rome), unopposed by God, attacked Jerusalem completely destroying both the city and the Temple, resulting in the death of over 1 million Jews.¹⁰¹

[preterists conclude] that “earth” means the land of Israel, as in Zec. 12:12 and that the “tribes” in Rev. 1:7⁺ must be the literal Israelite tribes, who are being judged in 70 A.D. in fulfillment of the Zechariah 12 prophecy. But there are difficulties with this perspective. First, Zechariah 12 does not prophesy Israel’s judgment but Israel’s redemption. Furthermore, the Zechariah citation is combined with Dan. 7:13, which also refers to the eschatological deliverance, not judgment of Israel.¹⁰²

The global context is also evident because John has just said that Jesus is “the ruler over the **kings** of the earth” [emphasis added] (Rev. 1:5⁺). The plural *kings* indicates a wider area than just the land of Israel argued by preterists. There were not multiple kings over the Jews at the time of John’s vision.

The weightiest consideration of all appears to be the worldwide scope of the book. “Those who dwell on the earth” (Rev. 3:10⁺; Rev. 6:10⁺; Rev. 8:13⁺; Rev. 11:10⁺ [twice]; Rev. 13:8⁺, Rev. 13:12⁺, Rev. 13:14⁺ [twice]; Rev. 17:2⁺, Rev. 17:8⁺) are the objects of the wrath that is pictured in its pages, and evidence points to the multi-ethnic nature of this group. The scope of the judgments of the book is also worldwide, not localized (e.g., Rev. 14:6⁺; Rev. 15:4⁺). Besides this, the people on whom these judgments fall do not respond by repenting.¹⁰³

Further evidence against the preterist attempt to interpret Revelation as concerning the A.D. 70 judgment of Israel is found in a comparison of Ezekiel 3 with Revelation 10⁺. Both prophets, Ezekiel and John, are given books to eat. Both books are sweet to the taste, but bitter once digested. Both books contain prophecy. However, one *significant difference* occurs between what Ezekiel and John ingest: Ezekiel eats a message intended for *Israel* but John eats a message for *all nations*. Ezekiel is told to prophesy to the “house of Israel, not to many people of unfamiliar speech” (Ezek 3:6) whereas John “must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings” (Rev. 10:11⁺). The message of John is **about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings**. What more could God say to make its global extent clearer? See commentary on *Revelation 10:11*.¹⁰⁴

mourn

The word [κόψονται](#) [kopsontai] refers to the act of beating one's breast as an act of mourning.¹⁰⁵ Jesus refers to this event when all the tribes of the earth will mourn ([κόψονται](#) [kopsontai], Mat. 24:30). There it is said to be in response to "The sign of the Son of Man" which will "appear in heaven." This sign appears in *heaven*—visible worldwide and cannot be restricted to the region of Israel as preterists maintain. The Jews will mourn because of the awful realization of the truth of the crucifixion of their own Messiah and the subsequent record of history triggered by this most colossal mistake of all history:

Israel must, indeed, be dumb if one asks them today: Tell me, pray: How can it be that the Eternal sent the fathers out of their land into captivity in Babylon for only seventy years, on account of all the abominations and idolatry by which they for centuries defiled the Holy Land:—and now Israel has been dispersed among all peoples for over eighteen hundred years, and Jerusalem, the city of the great King, is trodden down by the nations until this day? What, then, is the great and terrible blood-guiltiness which perpetually prevents you from dwelling in peace in the land of your fathers?—But Israel is not willing to know! And yet it is precisely its sin against its Messiah that is indeed the root of Israel's misery.¹⁰⁶

The Gentiles too will mourn as they realize the truth of Christianity which they have steadfastly rejected, and the inescapable fact of their impending judgment. John records the astonishing hardness of heart of the "[earth dwellers](#)" at the time of the end. Even in the face of overwhelming evidence of God's existence, sovereignty, and power, they will not repent (Rev. 16:9⁺, Rev 16:11⁺, Rev 16:21⁺). It is our belief that this is one reason Paul says, "now *is* the day of salvation" (2Cor. 6:2). For every day, every hour, every minute that a person continues to reject the knowledge of God makes it more likely they will *never turn* to accept the free offer of salvation.¹⁰⁷

Brethren, I do not wonder that worldlings and half-Christians have no love of this doctrine, or that they hate to hear about Christ's speedy coming. It is the death knell of their gaieties and pleasures—the turning of their confidence to consternation—the conversion of their songs to shrieks of horror and despair. There is a day coming, when "the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of man shall be made low;" [Isa. 2:11, 17]¹⁰⁸

3.1.8 - Revelation 1:8

I am

A trademark of the book of John which records the self-identification of Jesus using this phrase. Jesus said unless you believe "I am" (John 8:24), you will die in your sins. He said that before Abraham "I am" (John 8:58), an intentional reference to the self-existent One of Exodus (Ex. 3:6, 14) for which the Jews attempted to stone Him.¹⁰⁹ It was before the power of this declaration of deity that those who came to arrest Jesus fell back: "Now when he said to them "I am," they drew back and fell to the ground" (John 18:6).

the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End

This complete title is applied both to the Father (Rev. 21:6⁺) and to the Son (Rev. 22:13⁺). The phrase is also applied to the Son in two parts (Rev. 1:11⁺; 2:8⁺). It is clear that the title can apply to both Father and Son and is therefore yet another clear indication of the deity of the Son. The use of a very similar phrase by Isaiah underscores the uniqueness of God: "Besides Me *there is* no God" (Isa. 44:6). Alpha, being the first letter of the Greek alphabet (as our "A") stands for the "beginning." Omega, being the last letter of the Greek alphabet (as our "Z") stands for the "end." Because God existed from before all time and will exist beyond all time, there is no room for another God (Isa. 43:10). Throughout the Father's preexistence, the Son was with Him (John 1:1-3; 8:54; Col. 1:17).

the Lord

Designating someone as "Lord," especially in John's day, could have serious implications. It was a title which Christians did not use lightly: " 'Lord' (kyrios) means that the bearer was worthy of divine recognition and honor. The apostolic writers and early believers were well aware of this meaning. Polycarp, for example, died as a martyr rather than call Caesarkyrios."¹¹⁰

who is and who was and who is to come

See commentary on [Revelation 1:4](#). Some see grammatical evidence identifying the speaker here as the Father.¹¹¹ Yet the switch to the Father here after the Son has just been the subject (Rev. 1:7⁺) and prior to similar statements by the Son (Rev. 1:11⁺, Rev 1:17⁺) seems too abrupt.¹¹² Elsewhere we discuss the role of the [Antichrist](#), empowered by Satan, as the [Master Imitator](#). Pink notes the correlation between this phrase describing God's self-existence and the phrase applied to Antichrist: "Christ is referred to as Him 'which was, and is, and is to come' (Rev. 4:8⁺); the Antichrist is referred to as him that 'was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit' (Rev. 17:8⁺)."¹¹³

the Almighty

[παντοκράτωρ](#) [Ho pantokratōr] (“the Almighty”) is derived from [πάντων κρατῶν](#) [ho pantōn kratōn] (“the one who holds all”) and is rendered in the [LXX](#) for [יְיָ](#) [šadday] in the book of Job and [תַּיָּאֲדָי](#) [ṣəḇā’ōt] (“hosts”) elsewhere.^{[114](#)} It is a reference to God’s sovereignty and might, His command of powerful force.

3.1.9 - Revelation 1:9

I, John

John also refers to himself this way in Rev. 21:2^{[+](#)} and Rev 22:8^{[+](#)}, perhaps indicating an awareness of his unworthiness and inadequacy in serving as the chosen vessel for such great revelation (Rev. 22:8^{[+](#)}). The only other writer to refer to himself in such a way was Daniel (Dan. 7:28; 9:2; 10:2).

brother

Like Peter before him (1Pe. 5:1), John emphasizes his equality with other believers. The leadership hierarchy which now characterizes many church bodies of our day was unknown to John.^{[115](#)} He saw himself as a fellow believer and servant of Christ (Rev. 1:1^{[+](#)}).

At the time of the vision, he was the only remaining apostle, and perhaps the only survivor of those with whom Christ had personally conversed. He was therefore the most interesting and exalted Christian then living upon the earth—a most reverend and venerable man. But he was as humble and meek as he was high in place.^{[116](#)}

tribulation. . . kingdom. . . patience

Although the earthly kingdom is yet future, those who believe in Jesus have *already* been “conveyed . . . into the kingdom of the Son” (Col. 1:13). The same triplet occurs in Acts 14:22. *Patience* is better rendered “perseverance” ([τρομονή](#) [hypomonē]). It is through patience that the believer bears fruit (Luke 8:15). By patience those who are in the midst of tribulation are able to possess their souls (Luke 21:16-19; Rev. 13:10^{[+](#)}; Rev 14:9-12^{[+](#)}). It is the *perspective* and *position* of the believer which enables him to stand through trials and situations which otherwise would be insurmountable. When cancer strikes or an unexpected automobile accident leaves a loved one paralyzed, our eternal perspective based upon the truth of the Scriptures is the remedy for utter hopelessness. When all else fails and our resources are depleted, we can and must stand upon God’s Word, being convinced of our unshakable position in Christ and the perspective that this life is not all there is. It is but a “shadow” and a “vapor” by which we are prepared for eternity to come.

island called Patmos

A small Greek island off the coast of modern-day Turkey.

Patmos near Asia Minor

The island is one of a group of about fifty islands called the Dodecanese. Patmos is located between two other islands named Icaria and Leros. Patmos, shaped like a crescent with its horns facing eastward, was a safe place for vessels to anchor during storms and was therefore important to navigators. It was the last stopping place when traveling from Rome to Ephesus and the first stopping place on a return trip to Rome. Being a rocky and barren place, it was chosen as a penal settlement by the Romans, as were other islands in the group. Early Christian tradition says John was sent here during Domitian’s reign over Rome (A.D. 81-96) and was forced to work in the mines. Another tradition adds that when Domitian died, John was permitted to return to Ephesus.^{[117](#)}

The Island of Patmos

^{[118](#)}

Less than a year ago I passed that island. It is a mere mass of barren rocks, dark in colour and cheerless in form. It lies out in the open sea, near the coast of Western Asia Minor. It has neither trees nor rivers, nor any land for cultivation, except some little nooks between the ledges of rocks. There is still a dingy grotto remaining, in which the aged Apostle is said to have lived, and in which he

is said to have had this vision. A chapel covers it, hung with lamps kept burning by the monks.¹¹⁹

The Church of the Apocalypse

[120](#)

It is a frequent pattern within Scripture that great revelation was often given to those close to God *while in captivity outside Israel and while Jerusalem lay in ruins*. We think of Ezekiel, Daniel, and now John. Often, the greatest revelation from God occurs when least expected and in the most unusual places (e.g., Paul in Arabia, Gal. 1:15-17.)

for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ

Some have suggested the John sought out Patmos on a mission to preach the gospel to its inhabitants. But this seems highly doubtful since many more people lived in the mainland population centers in Asia and we have no record of John initiating any such trip. It is much more likely, as tradition records, that John was banished to Patmos contrary to his own desires. "According to Victorinus, John though aged, was forced to labor in the mines located at Patmos."¹²¹ Tacitus refers to the use of such small islands for political banishment (*Annals* 3.68; 4.30; 15.71). Eusebius mentions that John was banished to the island by the emperor Domitian in A.D. 95 and released eighteen months later by Nerva (*Ecclesiastical History* 3.20. 8-9).¹²²

It has been sometimes asked, *When* was that prophecy and promise fulfilled concerning John, that he should drink of his Lord's cup, and be baptized with his Lord's baptism (Mat. 20:22)? . . . Origin, however, no doubt gave the right answer long ago. . . . Now—in this his banishment to Patmos; not thereby denying that there must have been a life-long [φλψις](#) [phlipsis] for such a one as the Apostle John, but only affirming that the words found their most emphatic and crowning fulfillment now.¹²³

Restricted to a small spot on earth, he is permitted to penetrate the wide realms of heaven and its secrets. Thus John drank of Christ's cup, and was baptized with His baptism (Mat. 20:22).¹²⁴

Under Domitian, history records the banishment of Christians who were considered "atheists" because they refused to pay homage to Caesar or to Roman gods:

Dio Cassius records that Domitian executed the aristocrat Flavius Clemens and banished his wife Flavia Domitilla because of "atheism" ([θεομία](#) [atheotēs]). . . . Dio's full statement views "atheism" as "a charge on which many others who drifted into Jewish ways were condemned." A similar but later statement affirms that Domitian's persecution was explicitly two-pronged, being directed against "*maiestas* [treason]" or against "adopting the Jewish mode of life." . . . With particular reference to Flavia Domitilla, inscriptions and Christian tradition affirm that she professed Christianity, which would have made her a prime candidate for a charge of "atheism" by those believing in the deity of the emperor.¹²⁵

Opposition is to be the expectation for those who truly carry the uncompromising message of the cross. The testimony of Jesus which John was banished for is most naturally understood to be opposition that which he testified *about* Jesus (objective genitive). "The nominal Christian and the formalist the world cannot hate, for they are of it, and it will love its own; but the Johns and Pauls must go into banishment, or give their necks to the state block."¹²⁶ When we are accepted by the world, it is time for serious self-examination. See commentary on [Revelation 1:2](#).

3.1.10 - Revelation 1:10

in the Spirit

All prophetic revelation has its origin in the Holy Spirit (2Pe. 1:20-21) and never from man (Gal. 1:12-16; 2:2). Mysteries, things which are *unknown and unknowable by man*, are revealed only by the Spirit (Eph. 3:3). Often, spiritual revelation by the Holy Spirit involves a transporting of the prophet, physically or in a vision, to a different location where information is revealed (Eze. 8:3; 11:24; 37:1; Dan. 8:2; 2Cor. 12:2; Rev. 4:2+; Rev 17:3+; Rev 21:10+). Here, John mentions he was *in the Spirit* indicating that what he is about to describe involves supernatural revelation by means of a vision. This statement puts an end to all speculation as to the [motives and initiative](#) of John himself in writing the book of Revelation. For John didn't *write* the book, he *recorded* it! Revelation from the Spirit is found both in the [OT](#) and [NT](#).¹²⁷ Being 'in the Spirit' in the sense John describes is not something initiated by man. It is a sovereign action initiated by God in order to impart divine instruction. As Ezekiel describes it: "the hand of the Lord was upon him" (Eze. 1:3). Luke describes the similar experience of Peter (Acts 10:10) and Paul (Acts 22:17) as an "ecstasy" ([κοιταίς](#) [ekstasis]):

A throwing of the mind out of its normal state, alienation of mind, whether such as makes a lunatic or that of a man who by some sudden emotion is transported as it were out of himself, so that in this rapt condition, although he is awake, his mind is drawn off

from all surrounding objects and wholly fixed on things divine that he sees nothing but the forms and images lying within, and thinks that he perceives with his bodily eyes and ears realities shown him by God.¹²⁸

Peter, Paul, and John were *passive recipients* of that which God initiated. In this sense, the experience is diametrically opposed to the ecstatic frenzies associated with cultish prophets (1K. 18:28) and some modern movements wherein the person *actively participates* in bringing about an altered state of consciousness.

the Lord's Day

There are several views concerning the meaning of this passage. One view holds that it refers to Sunday, the first day of the week. The phrase uses the same adjective ("Lord's") as does Paul when describing the Lord's Supper: "Therefore when you come together in one place, is it not to eat the Lord's Supper ([κυριακὸν ὃ ἐπὶ πινον](#) [kyriakon deipnon])" (1Cor. 11:20)?

Deissmann has proven (Bible Studies, p. 217f; Light, etc., p. 357ff) from inscriptions and papyri that the word (Grk: kuriakos, Strongs: G2960) was in common use for the sense "imperial" as imperial finance and imperial treasury and from papyri and ostraca that (Grk: heemera, Strongs: G2250) (Grk: Sebastee, Strongs: G4575) (Augustus Day) was the first day of each month, Emperor's Day on which money payments were made (cf. 1Cor. 16:1f). It was easy, therefore, for the Christians to take this term, already in use, and apply it to the first day of the week in honor of the Lord Jesus Christ's resurrection on that day (Didache 14, Ignatius Magn. 9).¹²⁹

Others note that Sunday, which came to be the day of Christian worship, is nowhere else referred to using this phrase, but is described instead as "the first day of the week" (Mat. 28:1; Mark 16:2, 9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; 1Cor. 16:2). It also appears that John's use of the phrase predates its use among Christians to designate the day of Christ's resurrection.¹³⁰ Another view is that the phrase does not describe the first day of the week, but denotes the eschatological "[Day of the Lord](#)":¹³¹

However, such an interpretation is open to the objection that (1) such a meaning has no relevance to the context; (2) the term is never so applied in Scripture, where the day of Christian worship is uniformly called the "first day of the week"; (3) such an interpretation does not agree with the Patristic understanding of the verse; (4) the interpretation is a reading back into the text of a term subsequently applied to Sunday. The term "Lord's day" is better understood as John's way of expressing the common Hebrew term "day of the Lord," in a manner in Greek which places the emphasis upon "Lord's" (by placing it in an initial position) in the same manner as the Hebrew expression places emphasis upon "Lord" (by placing it in the final position) in "day of the Lord." Supposing the expression refers to Sunday cannot account for the presence of the Greek article "the" used in the expression. When the article is lacking, there are several possible explanations to account for the fact, but when an interpretation cannot account for the presence of the Greek article, the interpretation stands self-condemned (J. B. Smith, Comm. on Revelation, Appendix 5, p. 320). The expression "on the Lord's day" would better be translated "in the Lord's day," as a reference to this specific prophetic time period. The Greek preposition *en* is more usually rendered "in," only once in Revelation is it translated "on," in the expression "on the earth," Rev. 5:13⁺. Everywhere else where *en* is followed by the word "day" it is rendered "in" (Rev. 2:13⁺. Rev 9:6⁺. Rev 10:7⁺. Rev 11:6⁺. Rev 18:8⁺). Understanding this term to refer to the "day of the Lord" emphasizes that the events which transpire in the third division of the book ("things which shall be hereafter") are events which take place during the "day of the Lord," a future time which begins at the Great Tribulation and concludes with the judgment of the Great White Throne at the end of the Millennium, and specifically ties in the prophecies of this book with the rest of Scripture relating to this coming day.¹³²

The key that unlocks the door to the understanding of this book is, we believe, that it relates to **The Day of the Lord**, and not to any tradition which limits the reception of this Vision to a particular day of the week; and that day Sunday. . . . Thus did Abraham also see Christ's Day. He saw it, and rejoiced, and was glad. It must have been "in Spirit," whatever meaning we may put upon the expression. There was no other way of his seeing Christ's Day; and that is the way in which it says John saw "the Lord's Day." . . . The majority of people, being accustomed from their infancy to hear the first day of the week called the Lord's Day, conclude in their own minds that day is thus called in Rev. 1:9⁺ because that was the name of it. But the contrary is the fact: the day is so called by us because of this verse. In the New Testament this day is *always* called "the first day of the week." (See Mat. 28:1; Mark 16:2, 9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; 1Cor. 16:2). Is it not strange that in this one place a different expression is thought to refer to the same day? And yet, so sure are the commentators that it means Sunday, . . . There is no evidence of any kind that "the first day of the week" was ever called "the Lord's Day" before the Apocalypse was written. That it should be so called afterwards is easily understood, and there can be little doubt that the practice arose from the misinterpretation of these words in Rev. 1:9⁺.¹³³

A difficulty with this view is the difference in wording when compared with the phrase "Day of the Lord" found elsewhere in the NT: "Some feel that John was transported into the future day of the Lord, the prophetic day of God's great judgment and the return of Christ . . . The major objection to this is that John does not use the common expression for the eschatological 'day of the Lord' (hēmera kyriou)."¹³⁴ "The Greek phrase translated the Lord's day ([τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ](#) [tē kyriakē hēmera]) is different from the one translated 'the Day of the Lord' ([τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου](#) [tē hēmera tou kyriou], or [ἡμέρα κυρίου](#) [hēmera kyriou]; cf. 1Cor. 5:5; 1Th.

5:2; 2Th. 2:2; 2Pe. 3:10) and appears only here in the New Testament.”¹³⁵ Proponents of the eschatological view attempt to explain this difference as one of the Hebraism’s in Revelation.¹³⁶ A third view is that John is describing neither a day of the week nor the “Day of the Lord,” but is referring to his condition in the Spirit:

It does not refer to a specific day of the week, such as the Sabbath (Saturday) or Sunday. Rather, it was a day in which John was enraptured by prophetic and divine ecstasy and received divine revelation. It was a day in which he fell under the control of the Holy Spirit and was given prophetic inspiration. Thus, for him, it was a “lordy day.”¹³⁷

as of a trumpet

Much of what John sees or hears is new, different, or unearthly and therefore difficult to describe precisely. John frequently employs **simile** in which two different, but similar things are compared. Later, this same voice will beckon John to heaven saying, “**come up here**” (Rev. 4:1+). Elsewhere in Scripture, **trumpets attend events of great importance**. A **trumpet** announced the manifestation of God’s presence upon Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:16; 20:18). The year of jubilee when all debts were forgiven was heralded by the blast of a **trumpet** (Lev. 25:9). The sounding of **trumpets** attended the downfall of Jericho (Jos. 6:4-20). A **trumpet** will attend God’s overthrow of the kingdoms of the earth (Ps. 45:7) and warns that the Day of the Lord is at hand (Joel 2:1). A **trumpet** signals the gathering of the Church at the [Rapture](#) (1Cor. 15:52+; 1Th. 4:16+) and of the elect prior to the [Millennial Kingdom](#) (Mt. 24:31). **Trumpets** also attend significant events in this book (Rev. 8:2+, Rev 8:6+, Rev 8:13+; Rev 9:14+). Here, we do not have a **trumpet**, but a voice *as of a trumpet*, signifying its power and the attention it commands.

3.1.11 - Revelation 1:11

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last

God is said to be “everlasting” (Gen. 21:33). He “inhabits eternity” (Isa. 57:15) and is without beginning and without end: “from everlasting to everlasting” (Ps. 90:2). This appellation is especially reminiscent of that given by Isaiah: “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I *am* the First and I *am* the Last; besides Me *there is* no God’ ” (Isa. 44:6). Whoever said Jesus never claimed to be God need look no further. For the next verse leaves absolutely no doubt that it is the *Son* Who is applying to Himself titles which are reserved exclusively for *God* (Isa. 41:4; 48:12; Rev. 21:6+; Rev 22:13+)! This is consistent with the [OT](#) where the promised Son is referred to as “Everlasting Father” (Isa. 9:6). God is the unique “uncaused first cause,” “Before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me” (Isa. 43:10). He is self-existent and outside of the limitations of time. This is why *He alone* can predict the future:

Tell and bring forth *your case*; yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? *Who* has told it from that time? *Have* not I, the LORD? And *there is* no other God besides Me, a just God and a Savior; *there is* none besides Me. (Isa. 45:21)

God’s existence outside of time is a unique identifying feature of His character which God challenges any other to try and duplicate:

Let them bring forth and show us what will happen; let them show the former things, what they *were*, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare to us things to come. (Isa. 41:22)

This is but one of many reasons why we choose to trust the text of Genesis over after-the-fact and error-prone interpretation of distant history by modern science. See commentary on [Revelation 1:8](#).

write what you see

Literally, “what you *are seeing* [you] *write!*” The verb “see” ([Βλέπεις](#) [Blepeis]) is in the present tense. John’s contribution will be as a moment-by-moment observer, recording the events and scenes which are brought before him while in the Spirit. This, no doubt, accounts in part for the [lack of grammatical polish](#) which has been observed in the Greek text. This is not a carefully crafted literary document containing sophisticated themes originating in John’s own mind. John is continually reminded to “write” as he experiences the various scenes of the Revelation (Rev. 1:11+, Rev 1:19+, Rev 2:1+, Rev 2:8+, Rev 2:12+, Rev 2:18+, Rev 3:1+, Rev 3:7+, Rev 3:12+, Rev 3:14+; Rev 10:4+; Rev 14:13+; Rev 19:9+; Rev 21:5+). This would seem to support the view that John is making a moment-by-moment record of the scenes which he is being shown. As with other writers of Scripture, the Holy Spirit is superintending the process, but it seems unlikely that John is given the time or luxury of carefully analyzing and crafting that which he records.

to the seven churches

Tradition holds that John left Jerusalem in the late sixties of the first century, prior to the destruction of Jerusalem by Rome. He went to Asia where he became the recognized leader of the Asian churches, following in the footsteps of Paul’s earlier missionary work

which directly or indirectly founded many of the churches mentioned here.

The epistolary form of address immediately distinguishes this book from all other Jewish apocalyptic works . . . None of the pseudepigraphical works contains such epistolary addresses. John writes to actual, historical churches, addressing them in the same way the NT epistles are addressed.¹³⁸

(See [The Genre of the book of Revelation](#) for more on the literary [genre](#) of apocalyptic.) The [seven churches](#) are listed in the same order as their respective letters appear in Revelation 2+ and 3+. It has been suggested that their order indicates the natural route messengers would take to deliver copies of the letter to the seven churches.¹³⁹ See [Seven Churches of Asia](#)

which are in Asia

This is neither Asia nor even Asia Minor, but what we would today know as the region of western Turkey.

In the New Testament, as generally in the language of men when the New Testament was written, Asia meant not what it now means for us, and had once meant for the Greeks, one namely of the three great continents of the old world. . . , nor yet even that region which geographers about the fourth century of our era began to call “Asia Minor;” but a strip of the western seaboard containing hardly a third portion of this . . . its limits being nearly identical with those of the kingdom which Attalus the Third bequeathed to the Roman people. Take “Asia” in this sense, and there will be little or no exaggeration in the words of the Ephesian silversmith, that “almost throughout all Asia” Paul had turned away much people from the service of idols (Acts 19:26; cf. ver. 10); word which must seem to exceed even the limits of an angry hyperbole to those not acquainted with this restricted use of the term.¹⁴⁰

The “Asia” of which the Scriptures speak is not the great continent of Asia, or even of Asia Minor, but only the western part of Asia Minor, directly south of the Black Sea. The whole of it does not include a larger territory than the single state of Pennsylvania.¹⁴¹

3.1.12 - Revelation 1:12

I turned to see

John is about to enter into the experience of many other prophets who were given a revelation of the glory of the Lord, usually near the beginning of their prophetic ministry. We think of Moses (Ex. 33:22-23; 34:5-6), Ezekiel (Eze. 1), Isaiah (Isa. 6), Daniel (Dan. 10:5-6), and Paul (Acts 9:3; 22:6). John had been given a previous taste of God’s glory on the Mount of Transfiguration with Peter and James (Mat. 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:29).¹⁴²

St. John Beholding the Seven Candelabra

¹⁴³

seven golden lampstands

The symbolism of these lampstands is explained: “the seven lampstands which you saw are the [seven churches](#)” (Rev. 1:20+). The churches *bear* light, but are not the *source* of light (Mat. 5:14-16; John 1:4-5, 7-9; 5:32-35; Eph. 5:11-13; Php. 2:15).

The “*seven candlesticks*” . . . are intended to send us back, to the seven-branched candlestick, or candelabrum, which bears ever the same name of [λύχνια](#) [lychnia] in the Septuagint (Ex. 25:31 cf. Heb. 9:2); the six arms of which with the central shaft . . . made up the mystical seven, each with its several lamp ([λύχνος](#) [lychnos], Zec. 4:2).¹⁴⁴

See [Interpreting Symbols](#). See [symbolic meaning of seven](#).

3.1.13 - Revelation 1:13

in the midst

The Levites, who performed the priestly duty of the [OT](#), camped around the glory of the Lord which resided in the [Tabernacle](#) (Num. 1:50; 1Chr. 9:27). The glory of the Lord was in the “midst” of the Levitical priests. The lampstands, which represent the churches (Rev. 1:20+), made up of believers who are priests unto God (Rev. 1:6+), also have the glory of the Lord in their midst (Mat. 18:20).¹⁴⁵ Unlike other religions of the world, the Christian is not serving a famous *mortal* man whose body is now long moldering in the grave. Christ’s corpse is unavailable because He is risen and active among His Church as the body of Christ continues to minister on the earth in His absence. Unlike the glory of God in the OT which departed from the people of God due to their sin (1S.

16:14; Ps. 51:11; Eze. 8:6; 9:3; 10:4, 18-19; 11:22-23; Hos. 5:14), each [NT](#) believer is indwelt and *permanently sealed* with the Holy Spirit (John 6:27; 14:16; 2Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30).¹⁴⁶ He is in the midst of His Church, and will remain there “for the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30).

the seven lampstands

In the OT, the Menorah was made of a single central shaft to which six (or eight) branches were joined, the entire assembly being a single affair. Here, we have seven individual lamps, representing the seven typical (and historical) churches which represent the witness of Christ through the church. The central shaft joining these seven lamps and providing the oil for their continued illumination is Christ Himself (John 15:5). Some have seen in the separate lampstands a reference to the dispersion of the Jews.¹⁴⁷

Son of Man

In a remarkable passage in the OT “a likeness with the appearance of a man” (Eze. 1:26) is seen high above the throne. His form is clothed in brilliant radiance which Ezekiel describes as “the likeness of the glory of the LORD” (Eze. 1:27). This is the One Who was seen by Stephen just prior to his death (Acts 7:56). Consistent with the description found in [Revelation 1:7](#), this is the One who is presented to the Ancient of Days in the book of Daniel (Dan. 7:13) and who is to receive “dominion and glory, and a kingdom” (Dan. 7:14). Jesus applied this term to Himself in the gospels (Dan. 7:13; Mat. 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27). Jesus is both the “Son of God” and “Son of Man.” These two titles hint at the mystery of the incarnation, where all the fullness of God dwelt in human form (Col. 2:9). Jesus, as the “Son of God,” is divine and without sin. As the “Son of Man,” he was begotten of Mary in the line from David, Abraham, and Adam (Mat. 1:1, 6; Luke 3:31, 34, 38; Rev. 12:1-5⁺). His divinity and virgin birth provide the necessary perfection by which His death could atone for the sins of the world (Isa. 53:9; John 8:46; 14:30; 2Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 9:14; 1Pe. 1:19; 2:22; 1Jn. 3:5). Although He is truly a man (Php. 2:7; Heb. 2:17), He is unique from all other men in His sinless perfection (Rom. 8:3). As the “Son of Man,” His humanity provides for His role as the judge (John 5:27) and kinsman-redeemer (*Goel*, 1Ti. 2:5)¹⁴⁸ of mankind (Rev. 5:4-5⁺); to taste of death (Heb. 2:14); and to restore the dominion lost by the first man Adam.¹⁴⁹ One like the *Son of Man* appears again in Rev. 14:14⁺ where He reaps a harvest from the earth.

garment down to the feet

Apparently a reference to His priestly garments. “The *long* robe is every where in the East the garment of dignity and honour (Gen. 37:3; Mark 13:38 [*sic*]; Luke 15:22)—the association of dignity with it probably resting originally on the absence of the necessity of labor.”¹⁵⁰

girded about the chest

The high priest wore a priestly “sash” around his priestly garment at the height of the breast (Ex. 28:4; 28:39; 39:29; Lev. 8:7; 16:4). But this sash was not made of gold (see below). A garment reaching to the feet was impractical for those who were laborers and came to denote a position of status. The seven angels of Rev. 15:6⁺ are similarly girded.

The ordinary girding for one actively engaged was *at the loins* (1K. 2:5; 18:46; Jer. 13:2 cf. Luke 12:35; Eph. 6:14; 1Pe. 1:13); but Josephus expressly tells us that the Levitical priests were girt higher up, about the breast . . . favouring, as this higher cincture did, a calmer, more majestic movement.¹⁵¹

Christ has an unchangeable priesthood because He continues forever (Heb. 7:14). “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” (Heb. 7:25).

with a golden band

How similar John’s vision is to that of Daniel by the Tigris (Dan. 10:5-6). Daniel saw “a man . . . whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz” (Dan. 10:6). His visitor had eyes like torches of fire and feet like burnished bronze and spoke with a voice like the voice of a multitude. Yet it seems that Daniel’s visitor could not have been the Son of Man which John sees here, for how could the prince of Persia (an angelic being influencing the kingdom of Persia) have ever withstood the Lord of Glory (Dan. 10:13)? And when did God ever require help (Dan. 10:13)?¹⁵²

3.1.14 - Revelation 1:14

like wool, as white as snow

In Daniel’s vision, it is the Ancient of Days (the Father) who’s “hair of His head was like pure wool” (Dan. 7:9). Here it is that of the Son of Man. John is being shown the glory of the Son, which He had with the Father “before the World was” (John 17:5).

It is evident that His ultimate glory was veiled in order to make possible a ministry to His disciples in scenes on earth. After His

ascension into heaven, Christ never appeared again apart from His glory. In Acts 7:56, Stephen saw Christ standing at the righthand of the Father in the midst of the glory of God. In the appearance of Christ to Paul recorded in Acts 9:3-6, the glory of Christ was such that Paul was blinded. A similar experience befell the Apostle John in Revelation 1:12-20⁺ where John fell at the feet of Christ as one dead when he beheld the glory of Christ in His resurrection.¹⁵³

Wool and *snow* also speak of His sinless purity (Isa. 1:18). A hypothetical question which might be asked (on a par with the question whether Adam and Eve had belly buttons) is whether Jesus would have had gray hair if he had not been crucified but lived? Since death is the wages of sin and Jesus knew no sin, we can infer the answer would be “no.” The hair white as wool is not a description of age or wisdom, but the incendiary brightness of His glory:

The white hairs of old age are at once the sign and the consequence of the decay of natural strength, in other words, of death commencing; . . . Being then this, how can the white hairs, the hoary head which is the sign of weakness, decay, and the approach of death, be ascribed to Him who, as He is *from* everlasting, so also is He *to* everlasting? . . . How then shall we explain this hair “*white like wool*”? It is a part of the transfiguration in light of the glorified person of the Redeemer; a transfiguration so complete that it reaches to the extremities, to the very hairs of the head.¹⁵⁴

eyes like a flame of fire

His eyes are singled out as being like *a flame of fire*. This evokes the image of a gaze which instantly pierces the deepest darkness to lay bare all sin. It is a reference to His omniscience, omnipresence, and judgment. There is no evil activity of men which Jesus does not see (Job 28:24; Ps. 90:8; 94:9; 139:23; Pr. 15:3). There is no den of iniquity so dark that Jesus is not there (Job 34:22; Ps. 139:7; Jer. 23:24; Amos 9:2). There is no work of man which will go unjudged by His piercing gaze (1Cor. 3:15; 2Cor. 5:10; Heb. 4:13). Truly, God *is* an all-consuming fire (Num. 11:1; Dt. 5:25; 9:3; 2K. 1:10; Ps. 50:3; 78:63; Isa. 33:14; Luke 9:54; Heb. 12:29; Rev. 11:5⁺). When speaking to the church at Thyatira, after mentioning His “eyes like a flame of fire” (Rev. 2:18⁺), Jesus continues, “I know your works” (Rev. 2:19⁺). He says to the same church, “all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works” (Rev. 2:23⁺). His piercing eyes are an identifying description in Rev. 19:12⁺. It is impossible to escape His gaze! “And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account” (Heb. 4:13).

3.1.15 - Revelation 1:15

His feet

It would appear that His feet were unshod:

They were no doubt bare; as were the feet of the Levitical priesthood ministering in the sanctuary. We are nowhere indeed expressly told of these that they ministered barefoot, but every thing leads us to this conclusion. Thus while all the other parts of the priestly investiture are described with the greatest minuteness, and Moses accurately instructed how they should be made, there is no mention of any covering for the feet. Then again the analogy of such passages as Ex. 3:5; Jos. 5:15, and the fact that the *moral* idea of the shoe is that of defense against the *defilements* of the earth, of which defilements there could be none in the Holy Place, all this irresistibly points to the same conclusions.¹⁵⁵

fine brass, refined in a furnace

The etymology of [χαλκολίβανος](#) [chalkolibanos] [*fine brass*] being uncertain, it may be intended to describe the resulting hardness of brass after the refining process, this being an allusion to the treading or trampling down of those who are unbelieving or unfaithful (Ps. 58:10; 68:23; Isa. 63:3; Rev. 2:18-29⁺; Rev 19:15⁺). It is in reality an unknown metal.¹⁵⁶

Bochart sees in [χαλκολίβανος](#) [chalkolibanos] [*fine brass*], a hybrid formation, the combination of a Greek word and a Hebrew, [χαλκός](#) [chalkos], and [לבן](#) [libbēn] = “albare,” to make white; brass which in the furnace has attained what we call “*white head*.” . . . If this be correct, the [χαλκολίβανος](#) [chalkolibanos] will not be “*fine brass*” or the “*shining*,” but the “*glowing brass*.” This conclusion is very much strengthened by the following phrase, “*as if they burned in a furnace*,”¹⁵⁷

It has often been suggested that our term was familiar to the important local guild of bronze-workers [in Thyatira, Rev. 2:18⁺] . . . I suggest then that an alloy of copper with metallic zinc was made in Thyatira, the zinc being obtained by distillation. This was a finer and purer brass than the rough and variable coinage-alloy. . . . The product, I suggest, was known there as [χαλκολίβανος](#) [chalkolibanos], which I conjecture to be a ‘copulative compound’, literally rendered ‘copper-zinc’, [λίβανος](#) [libanos] being an unrecorded word, perhaps peculiar to the trade, for a metal obtained by distillation, and so derived from the verb [λείβω](#) [leibō].¹⁵⁸

Refined is [πεπυρωμένης](#) [pepyrōmenēs]: “Make red hot, cause to glow, heat thoroughly . . . By such heating precious metals are

tested and refined (Job 22:25; Ps. 11:7; 65:10; Pr. 10:20).¹⁵⁹

voice as the sound of many waters

The phrase *sound of many waters* is used to describe the sound of a multitude (Isa. 17:12-13; Rev. 19:6⁺) or noise like the tumult of an army (Eze. 1:24). Here, as in other passages, it is the sound attributed to a *single* voice. Daniel heard such a voice in his vision by the Tigris (Dan. 10:6). Ezekiel also heard a similar voice in his vision of the glory of the Lord returning to the east gate of the [Millennial Temple](#) (Eze. 43:2). In Ezekiel and in Revelation 1:15⁺ and 14:2⁺, it appears to be the voice of God Himself. For reasons mentioned in [Revelation 1:13](#), the voice Daniel heard was most likely that of a mighty angel.¹⁶⁰

3.1.16 - Revelation 1:16

in His right hand seven stars

These *stars* are the seven angels of the churches as explained in [Revelation 1:20](#). The picture of the stars being within His right hand (the side of favor) is of great comfort to believers for what Christ grasps in His hand cannot be snatched away (John 10:28-29). The angels and the churches they are associated with need not fear any but God Himself.

Christ, we feel sure, could not have placed Himself in the relation which He does to them, as holding in his hand the seven stars, walking among the seven golden candlesticks, these stars being the Angels of the Churches, and the candlesticks the Churches themselves, unless they ideally represented and set forth, in some way or other, the universal Church, militant here upon earth.¹⁶¹

See the discussion of the identity of the angels at [Revelation 1:20](#). See [Seven: Perfection, Completeness](#).

out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword

A heavy broadsword:

It [[ομφαλα](#) [hromphaia], *sword*] is properly the long and heavy broadsword . . . , which the Thracians and other barbarous nations used; and as such to be distinguished from the [μάχαира](#) [machaira], the sacrificial knife, or short stabbing sword; . . . The word occurring six times in the Apocalypse, only occurs once besides in the New Testament (Luke 2:35).¹⁶²

Some have obtained fanciful interpretations regarding the *two-edged* sword, such as representing both “the old and the new law.”¹⁶³ The sword goes *out of His mouth* in agreement with all the creative acts of God which were *spoken forth* by the Word of God (Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26; 2Pe. 3:5). It is for this reason that Jesus is the *Word* ([λόγος](#) [logos]). The speaking forth of God’s will can bring creation *or destruction*. Isaiah informs us that the mouth of the Messiah is “like a sharp sword” (Isa. 49:2) and with His lips He will “slay the wicked” (Isa. 11:4). The Word spoken through the prophets is a weapon in the hand of God (Hos. 6:5). It is the *only offensive weapon* of the Christian (Eph. 6:17). Its power as a sword is seen in its ability to pierce “even to the division of soul and spirit” and discern “the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). The Word of God has *already* slain His enemies because it sets forth their impending doom in words “which cannot be broken” (John 10:35). That which is prophecy today, will be accomplished history tomorrow. It is in this sense that Jesus slays His enemies with the sword of His mouth (2Th. 2:8; Rev. 2:12⁺, Rev 2:16⁺; Rev 19:15⁺). The sword signifies His judicial power which will be in accordance with His Word (Mat. 25:31-32; John 5:22; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom. 2:16; 14:10; 2Cor. 5:10; 2Ti. 4:1; 1Pe. 4:5; Rev. 20:12⁺).

like the sun

This is now the second time that John has been privileged to see the Savior’s glory shining from His face like the sun (Mat. 17:2).. At the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter, James, and John were given a preview of “the Son of Man coming in His kingdom” (Mat. 16:28). This glorious vision which John beholds is some small indication of what the entire world will behold at the Second Coming of Christ.

I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and *before* Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep *this* commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing, which He will manifest in His own time, *He who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, **dwelling in unapproachable light**, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom *be* honor and everlasting power. Amen. (1Ti. 6:13-16) [emphasis added]

See [Interpreting Symbols](#).

3.1.17 - Revelation 1:17

fell at His feet as dead

This is the unrehearsed response of all who have been privileged to see the glory of the Lord (Isa. 6:4; Eze. 1:28; 3:23; 43:3; 44:4; Dan. 8:17; 10:8, 16-17; Mat. 17:6; Acts 9:4). It is as much in recognition of the power and might of God as in a realization of their utter unworthiness (Jdg. 6:22; 13:22; Isa. 6:5, 7). "The beloved disciple, who had handled the Word of life, lain in his Lord's bosom in the days of his flesh, can as little as any other endure the revelation of his majesty."¹⁶⁴

laid His right hand on me

Daniel experienced a similar loss of all strength at the imposing presence of his visitor by the river Tigris (Dan. 10:8). He too was told not to be afraid and was touched in a similar act of restoration (Dan. 10:10). When Ezekiel was overcome by the glory of the Lord (Eze. 1:28), the Holy Spirit restored him to his feet (Eze. 2:1-2). Although years had passed, perhaps this brought to mind John's previous experience on the Mount of Transfiguration where John had his first glimpse of the glory of Jesus and was similarly restored (Mat. 17:6-7).

do not be afraid

The unavoidable response of those who saw even a glimpse of His glory is that of fear. Yet how cavalier we are today in our attitude toward the Maker of a myriad of galaxies! We, who dare not even touch a 60-watt light bulb without wearing protective gloves, often treat Him as our "Genie on call."¹⁶⁵ We haven't the slightest notion or appreciation of His holiness, even daring to think that worship is about pleasing us—expressing our dislike if the music is not to our taste or we are unable to drink coffee during the "worship service." How much we are in need of a glimpse of His glory that we might have a Scriptural fear of the Lord!¹⁶⁶ A lack of fear for God is the characteristic of His *enemies* (Ps. 36:1; Jer. 2:19; 5:24; Rom. 3:18) and "fear" is one of His titles (Gen. 31:42, 53). Yet the fear that His children are to have is not the cowering response of a creature fearing retribution. It is the healthy, reverent, fear one would have toward a human father of perfect discipline and unconditional love, if one were to exist. Coupled with the recognition of power and great might is a deep comfort in the realization that God is also our Protector. As Paul observed, "If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us" (Rom. 8:31)? When we look into the face of the Judge of the Universe, it is our Savior's face we will see!

I am the First and the Last

See commentary on [Revelation 1:11](#).

3.1.18 - Revelation 1:18

I am He who lives

John calls Him [ζῶν](#) [ho zōn], "the living one" (present, active participle). "Life" is an essential attribute of God Who is consistently described as "the living one" over and against other idols and gods who are lifeless.¹⁶⁷

and was dead

Here is the fatal text for those, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, who maintain that Jesus Christ is not fully God. *For when did God die* except for Jesus on the cross? In this verse is a contradiction so profound that it would be the height of nonsense if it were not also the manifestation of the genius of God: that God Himself would take on the form of a man, to come in the flesh, to be oppressed by men, and nailed to a tree! The infinite and omnipotent *Creator* bound Himself in time and space and stooping to be abused by His finite and puny *creatures* (Mat. 26:67-68; Luke 22:64). "I the source of all life stooped even to taste of death"¹⁶⁸ (Heb. 2:9). Yet such is the depth of God's love for us that He endured such shame!

The Maker of the universe

As man to man was made a curse;

The claims of law which He had made

Unto the uttermost He paid.

His holy fingers made the bough

That grew the thorns that pierced His brow;

The nails that pierced His hands were mined

In secret places He designed.

He made the forest whence there sprung

The tree on which His body hung;

He died upon a cross of wood,

Yet made the hill on which it stood.

The throne on which He now appears
Was His from everlasting years -
But a new crown adorns His brow,
And every knee to Him shall bow.

—F. W. Pitt, *Maker of the Universe*

How unnatural eternal life seems to us from our current perspective. Yet this was God's design prior to the entrance of sin:

Christ sets Himself forth here as the overcomer of death natural; which it must always be remembered is rather death *unnatural*; for man was made for immortality (Gen. 2:17), and death is the denial and reversal of the true law of his creation (Rom. 5:12).¹⁶⁹

The work of Jesus makes possible the wonderful promise set forth later in this book which describes the condition of those who place their trust in Him: "There shall be no death" (Rev. 21:4⁺). Jesus reiterates this fact to encourage the persecuted church at Smyrna (Rev. 2:8⁺). When confronted with members of any non-Christian religion, here is the central issue at stake: *Is Jesus God or is He not?* Only orthodox Christianity will assert His full divinity. It is fruitless to engage in lengthy interaction with all such cults who deny His divinity because every other issue pales into insignificance compared to this central issue. This particular verse is of great benefit for it removes all "wiggle room" from those who would try to deny that Jesus Christ is the One here described as "the First and the Last" Who is "alive forevermore" for the same was also "dead!" Until the cult member can answer you, "When did God die?" there is little point in further discussion.

This purpose of revealing the deity of Christ is thus seen to permeate the whole book, and **no unbiased reader of Revelation can reach any conclusion other than that Christ is God**, with the full endorsement and approval of the Father. He has received His throne from the hand of God, unlike Satan who tried to usurp the office. Jesus Christ's powers and attributes are all those of deity. **Any doubt of His deity must be laid to rest** [emphasis added]¹⁷⁰

behold, I am alive forevermore

Literally, [Καὶ ζῶ, καὶ ἐγενόμην νεκρὸς καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶ ἐμὲ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων](#) [Kai ho zōn, kai egenomēn nekros kai idou zōn eimi eis tous aiōnas tōn aiōnōn], "I am the living one and I was dead and behold living I am into the ages of the ages."¹⁷¹ The Son has eternal life and has been given authority over all flesh by the Father. For this reason, Jesus is able to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him (John 17:2). This is the basis for His amazing statement to Thomas. "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.' " (John 14:6). Jesus is "the life." *He alone*, among men, has immortality (1Ti. 6:16) and offers it to those who come to Him. The eternal life which Jesus offers is not some future promise, but is granted the instant a person believes on Him: "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?' " (John 11:25-26). During His earthly ministry, Jesus demonstrated that He was "the life," in numerous ways. The Law of Moses stated that lepers were unclean (Lev. 13:44-45). They were to be separated from others and to cry 'unclean! unclean!' in order to warn others of their presence. To touch a leper or any of his clothing made one unclean and also carried the very real risk of infection. It was unthinkable to touch a leper! Yet when lepers approached Jesus for healing, Jesus did the unthinkable, He *touched them!* But instead of Jesus getting leprosy, the lepers got "Jesus-sy"—they were instantly healed (Mat. 8:3; Mark 1:41; Luke 5:13)! Because Jesus is "the life," it is impossible that He could be defiled. Instead, His life-giving power went out to others in the performance of healing miracles and the restoration of the dead to life (Mark 5:41-42; Luke 7:14-15; Luke 8:54-55; John 11:43-44). The primary demonstration that Jesus is "the life" is found in His resurrection from the dead. "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days **I will raise it up**' " [emphasis added] (John 2:19); "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that **I may take it again**" [emphasis added] (John 10:17). Not only would Jesus rise from the dead, but *He Himself* would be the agent of His resurrection!¹⁷²

Then [ζῶ](#) [ho zōn] expresses not so much that he, the Speaker, "lived," as that He was "the Living One," the Life (John 1:4; 14:6), [αὐτοζωή](#) [hautozōē], having life in Himself, and the fountain and source of life to others. . . . To Him belongs *absolute being* ([ὡς εἶναι](#) [ontōs einai]), as contrasted with the *relative* being of the creature, with the life which be no life, seeing that it inevitably falls under the dominion of corruption and death, so soon as it is separated from him, the source from which it was derived¹⁷³

Christ says, "*behold*," emphasizing that His demonstration of life beyond the grave is of paramount importance, for Christ's resurrection bears witness that those who trust in Him will likewise rise from the dead (John 14:19; Rom. 6:8-9). If it were not for the fact of the resurrection—without the "Living One"—Christianity would be meaningless (1Cor. 15:12-17).

keys of Hades and of Death

With rare exception, all who enter this life face the certainty of physical death. In some passages, death and Hades are personified

as enemies of the living (Hos. 13:14; Rev. 6:8⁺), for it is by death that people enter Hades.¹⁷⁴ The reference to *keys* points to many passages in which the entrance to death and Hades is described as being controlled by *gates* (Job 38:17; Ps. 9:13; 107:18; Isa. 38:10; Mat. 16:18). Those who are held therein, are described as “prisoners” (Isa. 24:22; 1Pe. 3:19). As in real life, keys in Scripture denote the power to lock and unlock, to open and shut (Isa. 22:22; Mat. 16:19; Rev. 3:7⁺; Rev. 9:1⁺; Rev 20:1-3⁺).¹⁷⁵ The *keys of Hades and of Death* unlock the gates of Hades and death so that those who would previously have been held securely by death and Hades are now set free to eternal life. Whereas death holds the bodies of men, Hades holds their souls.¹⁷⁶ Jesus’ offer of eternal life to those who accept Him overcomes the power of Hades and death (1Cor. 15:55). In this sense, death and Hades were “raided” by Jesus Who liberated man who was destined to this fate by the curse (Gen. 3:19). Jesus is the “firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1Cor. 15:20) and in His resurrection demonstrated dominion over death. It is *because* Jesus is the “living One” that He has the *keys of Hades and Death*. His resurrection “turned the key” in the gates of Hades and death liberating us to eternal life. Our liberation grants us freedom from the bondage of the fear of death (Heb. 2:15).

What millions have gone down beneath [the power of death], and are now held by it! Every acre of the earth is full of them, and the bottom of every sea. I have seen their grim skeletons on mountain summits, eight thousand two hundred feet above the level of the sea; and I have walked upon their ashes more than a thousand feet below that level. And from far deeper depths to still more elevated heights, on all the slopes and hillsides, and in all the fields and valleys of the earth, death’s victims lie in fetters of darkness, silence and dust. Even on the life-powers of the Son of God were these manacles made fast. But by him they were also opened: for he hath the keys of death.¹⁷⁷

3.1.19 - Revelation 1:19

the things which you have seen

This phrase introduces the key verse for interpreting the main sections of the book. *The things which you have seen* includes those things revealed to John prior to addressing the [seven churches](#) (Revelation 1⁺).¹⁷⁸

the things which are

The things that attend John’s present time, which are set forth in the letters to the [seven churches](#) found in Revelation 2⁺ and 3⁺.¹⁷⁹

the things which will take place after this

The things yet future to John’s time, constituting most of the remainder of the book, from Revelation 4⁺ onward: “Where is the dividing line in Revelation between a symbolic view of the present and a symbolic view of the future? . . . The answer seems to be contained in Rev. 4:1⁺, where the voice of a trumpet summoned the seer to heaven to see ‘the things which must come to pass hereafter.’”¹⁸⁰ The conjunction [καί](#) [kai] can be translated by “and,” “even,” or “both.” The question arises as to whether there are three divisions or only two?

Does Christ give John a chronological outline as a key to the visions in the book? Many think he does. If so, are there three divisions: “seen,” “now,” and “later”? Or are there two: “seen,” i.e., “now” and “later”? In the latter case, where does the chronological break take place in the book?¹⁸¹

The passage may be rendered: “Write the things which thou sawest, both the things which are and the things which shall be hereafter.” Such a rendering is grammatically possible, though it is not favored by the majority of expositors. If correct, it means that Revelation relates only to the present and to the future, not to the past at all.¹⁸²

The threefold division seems most natural and has been favored by most interpreters:

The advantage of this outline is that it deals in a natural way with the material rather than seizing on incidentals as some expositors have done or avoiding any outline at all, as is true of other expositors. It is not too much to claim that this outline is the only one which allows the book to speak for itself without artificial manipulation and which lays guidelines of sufficient importance so that expositors who follow this approach have been able to establish a system of interpretation of the book of Revelation, namely, the futurist school.¹⁸³

See the [Structural Outline](#) given in our discussion of the [Literary Structure](#) of the book.

after this

Literally, [μετ τα τα](#) [meta tauta], “after these [things],” plural.

3.1.20 - Revelation 1:20

mystery

As is frequently the case within Scripture, the answers to our questions are “in the back of the book” (in this case, the back of the *chapter*). Jesus explains the mystery of the seven stars and seven golden lampstands.^{[184](#)}

A “mystery” in the constant language of Scripture is something which man is capable of knowing, but only when it has been revealed to him by God (Mat. 18:11; Rom. 11:25; Eph. 6:19; 1Cor. 13:2), and not through any searching of his own.^{[185](#)}

Many of the fanciful interpretations offered for this book can be reigned in by the simple process of carefully observing what the book offers in the way of explaining the meaning of symbols: “This verse points up the fact that, when symbols are used in the book of Revelation, they are explained internally, not subject to imaginative suggestions by allegorizing expositors.”^{[186](#)}

seven stars

Due to their brightness and location in heaven, angels are often represented as stars (Job 38:7; Isa. 14:13; Rev. 9:1⁺). See [Seven: Perfection, Completeness](#). There are *seven* stars, not *twelve*. The number of stars is an important aspect for differentiating this group of stars from another group of stars mentioned elsewhere (Gen. 37:9; Rev. 12:1⁺). These are said to be the churches of Asia Minor. The twelve stars of Revelation 12:1⁺ represent the twelve tribes of Israel, *not the church*.

angels of the churches

Here we enter upon perhaps the most difficult interpretive question in this chapter: the identity of these angels? Each of the primary views is attended with some difficulty:

The Identity of the Angels

Identity	For	Against
Heavenly guardian angels of the churches	The term “angel” describes heavenly beings elsewhere in the book of Revelation. ^{187}	The angels are charged, <i>as individuals</i> , with various sins. Elect angels do not sin. ^{188} The complexity of communication: why would the revelation be given from God to Jesus to a heavenly angel to John (a man) to another heavenly angel (the star) and then to the church? ^{189} Why would elect angels, known for their steadfast service and power, be said to be protected in the right hand of the Son of Man? The awards for the overcomer correspond to those promised to redeemed <i>humans</i> . Angels do not partake of the tree of life (Rev. 2:7 ⁺), cannot be imprisoned by men or killed (Rev. 2:10-11 ⁺), are not written in the Book of Life (Rev. 3:5 ⁺), nor will they reign over the nations (Rev. 2:26-27 ⁺ ; Rv 3:21 ⁺). If the angel is a heavenly guardian angel, then almost all that is said of him must be strictly representative of the people within the church he guards.
Human messengers from the churches ^{190}	The term “angels” is occasionally used of human messengers. ^{191} Human messengers may have been sent to Patmos for the purpose of meeting with John and carrying a copy of the letter back to each church. ^{192} There are fewer problems attending this view. “The view that takes the <i>angeloi</i> as men who are representatives of the churches, but are without a unique leadership function appears to be the most probable choice, largely because objections to it are easier to answer than objections to the other . . . views.” ^{193}	Human messengers are never called “stars” (but see Gen. 37:9 cf. Rev. 12:1 ⁺ ; Dan. 12:3). ^{194} Why would secondary human messengers be held personally responsible as individuals for the sins of the church? ^{195}

A Human leader of the church in each city (elder or bishop) ¹⁹⁶	The angels are individually responsible for the spiritual welfare of the churches and are protected in the right hand of the Son of Man. ¹⁹⁷	There is no precedent within Scripture or church history for referring to church leaders as “angels.” ¹⁹⁸ Even apostles with great authority, such as Peter and John, refer to themselves merely as “elder” (1Pe. 5:1; 2Jn. 1:1; 3Jn. 1:1). ¹⁹⁹ NT church leadership consists of a plurality of elders. ²⁰⁰ The individual leader could not be personally responsible for the character of the entire church. ²⁰¹ Cities such as Ephesus probably had multiple house churches. ²⁰²
Personifications of the churches ²⁰³	The close identification between each “angel” and the character of the church. Christ speaks to the churches both in the singular and plural.	Lack of scriptural evidence for the personification of congregations of believers. “Stars” or “angels” are not used this way anywhere else. In assigning sin to a personification, ambiguity remains as to who is truly responsible. This view would make the stars and lampstands virtually identical. ²⁰⁴

In most cases, the grammar of the letters to each church implicates each *individual angel*. This is reflected by the preponderance of verb forms in the second-person *singular*. Yet the things which are said to the angel include aspects which could only be true of the wider church membership. In some cases, the grammar itself reflects a broader application. For example, in the letter to the angel of the church of Smyrna, seven of the Greek words indicate the angel is an individual (second-person *singular*, *you*). Yet three words indicate the larger church membership (second-person *plural*, *you all*).

To the angel [singular] . . . I know your [singular] works . . . but you [singular] are rich . . . You [singular] do not fear . . . those things which you [singular] are about to suffer . . . the devil is about to throw some of you [plural] into prison . . . that you [plural] may be tested, and you [plural] will have tribulation . . . You [singular] be faithful . . . and I will give you [singular] the crown of life. (Rev. 2:8-10[±])

Since a number of individuals are to be thrown into prison to be tested, the promise of the crown of life cannot be strictly for the individual angel, but surely must apply to all those who remain faithful. We should take care not to make too much of the grammatical distinctions between the single angel and the plural congregation. When all these factors are considered, it would appear that the best solution is one that takes the “angels” as human messengers or leaders of the churches while recognizing that much of what Christ says to the angel as an *individual* is also meant for the *entire church*.²⁰⁵ In our commentary on the individual letters to the [seven churches](#), we will interpret the comments directed to each *singular* angel as being descriptive of the entire congregation.

Notes

¹As teachers, our primary calling is to make the Scriptures known. “The best defense is a strong offense.”

²Richard Chenevix Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989), 371.

³To be sure, many aspects of this revelation are set forth elsewhere in Scripture, but not in the completeness or sequence shown John.

⁴Charles C. Ryrie, Borrow [Dispensationalism](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995), 81.

⁵John MacArthur, [Revelation 1-11 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1999), Rev. 1:1.

⁶In Galatians, *apocalypse* appears in the genitive whereas in Revelation 1:1[±] it is in the nominative.

⁷“Some accept the words as if they were meant to express the revealment of the Revelation. This I take to be a mistake . . . It is not the Apocalypse which is the subject of the disclosure. This book is not the Apocalypse of the Apocalypse, but THE APOCALYPSE OF JESUS CHRIST. . . . If ‘The Revelation of Jesus Christ’ meant nothing more than certain communications made known by Christ, I can see no significance or propriety in affixing this title to this book, rather than to any other books of holy Scripture. Are they not all alike the revelation of Jesus Christ, in this sense? Does not Peter say of the inspired writers in general, that they were moved by the Spirit of Christ which was in them? Why then single out this particular book as ‘The Revelation of Jesus Christ,’ when it is no more the gift of Jesus than any other inspired book?”—J. A. Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1966), 16. “These opening words in the book present two major ideas about Christ. First, this book is an unveiling *by* or from Him, that is, a revelation of the future that God gave Him to give to us through His servant. Second, the book is an unveiling *concerning* Jesus Christ, an unveiling in which God makes known to us the future and Christ’s role in it. The second of these seems more prominent. Though this book certainly is a revelation *by* Jesus Christ, it is foremost a revelation or

unveiling of Him.”—Harold D. Foos, [“Christology in the Book of Revelation,”](#) in Mal Couch, ed., [A Bible Handbook to Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 104.

⁸So [Henry Barclay Swete, [The Apocalypse of St. John](#) (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998, 1906)], [M. R. Vincent, [Vincent’s Word Studies](#) (Escondido, CA: Ephesians Four Group, 2002)], and [A. T. Robertson, [Robertson’s Word Pictures in Six Volumes](#) (Escondido, CA: Ephesians Four Group, 2003)].

⁹“Is the revelation that which *comes from* Christ or is it *about* Christ? In Rev. 22:16⁺ Jesus tells John that his angel was the one proclaiming the message of the book to John. Thus, the book is certainly a revelation *from* Christ (hence, we may have a subjective genitive in Rev. 1:1⁺). But the revelation is supremely and ultimately *about* Christ. Thus, the genitive in Rev. 1:1⁺ may also be an objective genitive. The question is whether the author intended both in Rev. 1:1⁺. Since this is the title of his book—intended to describe the whole of the work—it may well be a plenary genitive.”—Daniel B. Wallace, borrow [Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software, 1999, 2002), 120.

¹⁰“Wallace has fallen into the same pit as have so many others by his neglect of the basics of hermeneutics. One of his glaring errors violates the principle of single meaning. In his consideration of a category he calls the ‘Plenary Genitive,’ he labors the point that a particular passage’s construction may be at the same time both objective genitive and subjective genitive. . . . Wallace consciously rejects the wisdom of past authorities . . . His volume could have been helpful, but this feature makes it extremely dangerous.”—Robert L. Thomas, Borrow [Evangelical Hermeneutics](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2002), 158.

¹¹Foos, [Christology in the Book of Revelation](#), 105.

¹²This equality among the persons of the Trinity while fulfilling different roles well-illustrates the principle of *equality of value, but difference in role* so essential to the biblical family unit. The man and the women are absolutely equal in value before God, yet occupy different roles if the harmony and synergy God intended is to come to fruition in the family unit. The man is to be the leader (1Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-24; Col. 3:18) while demonstrating sacrificial love toward his wife (Eph. 5:25; Col. 3:19). This delicate balance within the family unit requires selflessness. It is selfishness which factors large in divorce.

¹³Alan F. Johnson, [Revelation: The Expositor’s Bible Commentary](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1966), 21.

¹⁴MacArthur, [Revelation 1-11 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#), Rev. 1:1.

¹⁵Thomas Ice, [“Preterist ‘Time Texts.’](#) in Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, eds., [The End Times Controversy](#) (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2003), 105.

¹⁶An exception to this statement can be made in the case of full preterism which holds that the entire book of Revelation has already been fulfilled. But this is outside of orthodox Christianity.

¹⁷Monty S. Mills, [Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John](#) (Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries, 1987), s.v. “Introduction.”

¹⁸Ice, [Preterist “Time Texts”](#), 105.

¹⁹Wallace, borrow [Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament](#), 536.

²⁰[The Conservative Theological Journal](#), vol. 4 no. 13 (Fort Worth, TX: Tyndale Theological Seminary, December 2000), 304-305.

²¹Ice, [Preterist “Time Texts”](#), 104.

²²Mal Couch, [“The War Over Words.”](#) in Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, eds., Borrow [The End Times Controversy](#) (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2003), 295.

²³Robert L. Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1992), 55.

²⁴“‘Soonness’ means imminency in eschatological terms.”—Johnson, [Revelation: The Expositor’s Bible Commentary](#), 21.

²⁵Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 56.

²⁶Mills, [Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John](#) Rev. 1:1.

²⁷Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 56.

²⁸Merrill C. Tenney, Borrow [Interpreting Revelation](#) (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1957), 186.

²⁹Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 59.

³⁰Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), rev ed (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 2003), 12.

³¹Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#), 20.

³²Tenney, [Interpreting Revelation](#), 34.

³³Robertson, [Robertson's Word Pictures in Six Volumes](#).

³⁴Rene Pache, [The Inspiration & Authority of Scripture](#) (Salem, WI: Sheffield Publishing Company, 1969), 35-40.

³⁵[Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 58-59], [Robertson, [Robertson's Word Pictures in Six Volumes](#)].

³⁶Most often, we are too eager to make Him known without truly knowing Him (Luke 10:38-42). When we do this, we misrepresent our Lord and present a caricature of God to a skeptical world.

³⁷Alva J. McClain, [The Greatness Of The Kingdom](#) (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1959), 6.

³⁸Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), 13.

³⁹Contrast this with our own day which enjoys unprecedented ability to duplicate and distribute materials worldwide, but where Christian teaching and worship music suffers at the hands of restrictive [copyrights](#) (Mat. 10:8).

⁴⁰William D. Mounce, [Greek for the Rest of Us](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 30.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²As a case in point, suppose we are studying the Scriptural teaching on Israel? We use a concordance or computer search to find all the occurrences of the word "Israel" in the NT. Using the NIV translation, we find Ephesians 3:6 among the verses listed: "This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs **together with Israel**, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus." Yet in the Greek below this verse, the word "Israel" ([Ἰσραὴλ](#) [Israēl]) never appears! This may seem like a fine point to some, especially since in this particular verse the idea captured by the NIV would seem correct. But over the long haul it is problematic to rely on a dynamic equivalency translation for study—you simply do not know when you are looking at a detail which is not there in the original. We suppose such translations may be suitable for devotional study—that is, if you don't mind having flawed devotions.

⁴³"The Message" is one such paraphrase which distorts God's Word to such a degree that it undermines the very *Message* after which it was titled! How close must we come to violating Revelation 22:18-19⁺ before we realize we are doing a *disservice* to God's Word?

⁴⁴"One of the chief eschatological terms. [καὶρός](#) [ho kairos] *the time of crisis, the last times*"—Frederick William Danker and Walter Bauer, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 394.

⁴⁵Larry Spargimino, "[How Preterists Misuse History to Advance their View of Prophecy](#)," in Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, eds., [The End Times Controversy](#) (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2003), 142-143.

⁴⁶Ibid., 143.

⁴⁷Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 61.

⁴⁸MacArthur, [Revelation 1-11 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#), s.v. "Time does not translate."

⁴⁹Danker, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#)

⁵⁰Nicoll.

⁵¹Kenneth L. Gentry and Thomas Ice, [The Great Tribulation: Past or Future?](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1999), 112.

⁵²Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 130.

⁵³Ibid., 65.

⁵⁴Wallace, [*Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*](#), 62-63.

⁵⁵Swete, [*The Apocalypse of St. John*](#), 5.

⁵⁶Thomas, [*Revelation 1-7*](#), 66.

⁵⁷Richard Chenevix Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#) (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1861), 6-7.

⁵⁸There is some uncertainty as to whether Isaiah lists seven Spirits, or only six (in this case “Spirit of the LORD” being seen as a summary of the six which follow). It seems likely, given the use of seven throughout Scripture, that Isaiah lists these attributes to indicate the *fullness* of the Holy Spirit.

⁵⁹“Some writers say these verses are speaking of the seven angels who are before the throne of God (Rev. 8:2).”—Russell L. Penney, [“Pneumatology in the Book of Revelation.”](#) in Mal Couch, ed., [*A Bible Handbook to Revelation*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 115. “Other interpreters understand the designation as a reference to the seven archangels of Jewish tradition. In 1 Enoch 20:1-8 they are listed as Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Saraquael, Gabriel, and Remiel (cf. Tobit 12:15; Esd. 4:1; Dan. 10:13).”—Robert H. Mounce, [*The Book of Revelation*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), 69.

⁶⁰Robert P. Lightner, [“Theology Proper in the Book of Revelation.”](#) in Mal Couch, ed., [*A Bible Handbook to Revelation*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 92.

⁶¹Johnson, [*Revelation: The Expositor's Bible Commentary*](#), 24.

⁶²“The verb [\[ΤΙΚΤΩ\]](#) [tiktoō], Strong's: G5088] which is one of the components of [\[ΠΡΩΤΟΤΟΚΟΣ\]](#) [prōtotokos], Strong's: G4416) ‘first-begotten or born,’ is everywhere in the New Testament used in the sense of ‘to bear or to bring forth,’ and has nowhere the meaning ‘beget,’ unless James 1:15 be an exception.”—Vincent, [*Vincent's Word Studies*](#), s.v. “The verb [.”

⁶³ [*New Electronic Translation : NET Bible*](#), electronic edition (Dallas, TX: Biblical Studies Press, 1998), Col. 1:15.

⁶⁴“I should rather put this passage in connection with Ps. 2:7, ‘Thou art my son; this day have I begotten Thee.’ It will doubtless be remembered that St. Paul (Acts 13:33; cf. Heb. 1:5) claims the fulfillment of these words not in the eternal generation before all time of the Son; still less in his human conception in the Blessed Virgin’s womb; but rather in his resurrection from the dead; ‘declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead’ (Rom. 1:4).”—Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#), 12.

⁶⁵MacArthur, [*Revelation 1-11 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*](#), Rev. 1:5.

⁶⁶“He was not the first who rose from the dead, but the first who so rose that death was thenceforth impossible for Him (Rom. 6:9).”—Vincent, [*Vincent's Word Studies*](#), Rev. 1:5. Those who were raptured, such as Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2K. 2:11), did not taste of death.

⁶⁷Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#), 11.

⁶⁸Tenney, [*Interpreting Revelation*](#), 118.

⁶⁹“The Greek adverb [\[οὕτως\]](#) [houtōs] can refer (1) to the degree to which God loved the world, that is, to such an extent or so much that he gave his own Son . . . or (2) simply to the manner in which God loved the world, i.e., by sending his own son . . . Though the term more frequently refers to the manner in which something is done, . . . the following clause . . . plus the indicative (which stresses actual, but [usually] unexpected result) emphasizes the greatness of the gift God has given. With this in mind, then, it is likely (3) that John is emphasizing both the degree to which God loved the world as well as the manner in which He chose to express that love. This is in keeping with John’s style of using double entendre or double meaning. Thus, the focus of the Greek construction here is on the nature of God’s love, addressing its mode, intensity, and extent.”—[*New Electronic Translation : NET Bible*](#), John 3:16.

⁷⁰The following verses may be studied for further insight into the atoning characteristics of Christ’s blood: Gen. 9:4; Ex. 12:23; 24:8; Lev. 17:11; Isa. 52:15; Zec. 9:11; Mat. 26:28; 27:4; Luke 22:20; John 19:30; Acts 20:28; Rom. 5:9; 1Cor. 10:16; Eph. 1:7; 2:13; Col. 1:14, 20; 2:14-15; Heb. 9:12, 14, 22; 10:19, 29; 11:28; 12:24; 13:12, 20; 1Pe. 1:18-19; 1Jn. 1:7; 5:8; Rev. 1:5⁺; 5:9⁺; 7:14⁺; 12:11⁺.

⁷¹Israel will have a unique place as “priests of the Lord” (Isa. 61:5-6) during the Millennial Kingdom.

⁷²Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#), Rev. 1:6.

⁷³For more on this topic, see [McClain, [*The Greatness Of The Kingdom*](#)] and [George H. N. Peters, [*The Theocratic Kingdom*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1978, 1884)].

⁷⁴Pache, [*The Inspiration & Authority of Scripture*](#), 106.

⁷⁵Seiss, [*The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation*](#), 29.

⁷⁶"The first messiah, 'Messiah son of Joseph,' who suffered in Egypt would come to suffer and die to fulfill the servant passages [Isa. 49:1-26; 53]. The second messiah, 'Messiah son of David,' would then come and raise the first Messiah back to life. He would then establish His Kingdom to rule and to reign."—Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, [*Messianic Christology*](#) (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1998), 57.

⁷⁷"As described in Talmud (Sanhedrin 98a): 'Rabbi Joseph the son of Levi objects that it is written in one place "Behold one like the son of man comes with the clouds of heaven," but in another place it is written "lowly and riding upon an ass." The solution is, if they be righteous he shall come with the clouds of heaven, but if they not be righteous he shall come lowly riding upon an ass.' "—Ibid., 66.

⁷⁸MacArthur, [*Revelation 1-11 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*](#), Rev. 1:7.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Robertson, [*Robertson's Word Pictures in Six Volumes*](#), s.v. "The verb form ."

⁸¹Thomas, [*Revelation 1-7*](#), 76.

⁸²Fruchtenbaum, [*The Footsteps of Messiah*](#), 500.

⁸³James Swanson, [*Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Hebrew \(Old Testament\)*](#), electronic ed (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997), Rev. 1:7.

⁸⁴Tenney, [*Interpreting Revelation*](#), 121.

⁸⁵See Revelation 3:11⁺ which clarifies the distinction between the throne of the Father versus the throne of the Son.

⁸⁶Even preterists admit that some cloud coming passages relate to the Second Coming. "Preterists such as Gentry do see some passages that have 'cloud language' as referring to the Second Coming (Acts 1:9-11; 1Th. 4:13-17)"—Thomas Ice, [*Hermeneutics and Bible Prophecy*](#), in Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, eds., [*The End Times Controversy*](#) (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2003), 79. "Another hermeneutical shortcoming of preterism relates to the limiting of the promised coming of Christ in Rev. 1:7⁺ to Judea [the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD]. What does a localized judgment hundreds of miles away have to do with the seven churches of Asia? John uses two long chapters in addressing those churches regarding the implications of the coming of Christ for them. For instance, the promise to shield the Philadelphian church from judgment (Rev. 3:10-11⁺) is meaningless if that judgment occurs far beyond the borders of that city."—Thomas, [*Revelation 1-7*](#), 225.

⁸⁷An awkward reality for preterists is the reestablishment of the Jewish state in the Promised Land. If it were to have been finally destroyed in A.D. 70 by the wrath of God as preterists maintain, evidently God did an incomplete job.

⁸⁸Gary DeMar, [*Last Days Madness*](#) (Atlanta, GA: American Vision, 1994), 162.

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰"The choice of [*κκεντέω*](#) [ekkenteō] to render the Hebrew [*דָּקַר*](#) [dāqar] of Zec. 12:10 in John 19:37 and Rev. 1:7⁺ adds strength to the case that the two books had the same author. Both uses differ from the LXX's obviously erroneous choice of [*κατορχέω*](#) [katorcheō] to render the same Hebrew word."—Thomas, [*Revelation 1-7*](#), 82.

⁹¹Swanson, [*Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Hebrew \(Old Testament\)*](#), Rev. 1:7.

⁹²Robert Laird Harris, Gleason Leonard Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke, [*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1999, c1980), s.v. "449a."

⁹³"In the messianic passage Isa. 53:5, 'wounded' (KJV margin tormented'; jb 'pierced through') follows the divine smiting (Isa. 53:4). The Poel form used . . . is similar to that in Isa. 51:9; cf. 'pierced by the sword' (Pual, Eze. 32:26). The quotation in John 19:12 ('they

shall look on him whom they have pierced') is from Zec. 12:10 but this Isa. 53:5 uses another verb ([דָּקַר](#) [dāqar]) 'pierced through fatally' (usually in retribution). In Jer. 51:4 and Lam. 4:9 [דָּקַר](#) [dāqar] is used as a synonym of [הָלַל](#) [hālal]."—Ibid., #660.

⁹⁴A. R. Fausset, "[The Revelation of St. John the Divine](#)," in Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, [A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments](#) (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997, 1877), Rev. 1:7.

⁹⁵Merrill F. Unger, [Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament](#) (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2002), 2040.

⁹⁶Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, [Commentary on the Old Testament](#) (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 10:609.

⁹⁷"The problem with interpreting Revelation 1:7[±] to refer to the land of Israel is that all the other uses of the exact phrase 'all the tribes of the earth' in the original language always has a universal nuance (Gen. 12:3; 28:14; Ps. 72:17; Zec. 14:17)."—Ice, [Preterist "Time Texts"](#), 99.

⁹⁸The distinction between Abraham's *seed* and *all the families of the earth* makes plain that the families are a superset beyond the physical seed. Where Gen. 12:3 is cited in Acts 3:25, the word for "families" is [πατρία](#) [patriai].

⁹⁹" 'all the tribes of the earth' refers to all nations in every one of its Septuagint occurrences ([πασαῖς φυλαῖς](#) [pasai hai phylai tēs gēs], Gen. 12:3; 28:14; Ps. 71:17; Zec. 14:17)."—Gregory K. Beale, [The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 26.

¹⁰⁰Preterists respond to this evidence from the Septuagint by noting that where the Septuagint renders "tribes" as [φυλαί](#) [phylai], the underlying Hebrew is [מִשְׁפָּחָה](#) [mišpəḥā] - a different Hebrew word from the more frequently encountered word for "tribe" which describes Israel: [שִׁבְט](#) [šēḇet]. They claim that by rendering both [שִׁבְט](#) [šēḇet] and [מִשְׁפָּחָה](#) [mišpəḥā] as "tribes," the Septuagint loses the precision of the underlying Hebrew text. We agree, but what does it have to do with the evidence before us? The observation that the Septuagint renders both shebet and [מִשְׁפָּחָה](#) [mišpəḥā] by [φυλαί](#) [phylai] ("tribes") provides further evidence against the preterist contention that [φυλαί](#) [phylai] is a technical term which always denotes Israelite tribes. This response of the preterists is simply a smoke screen, which when considered carefully, actually supports the opposite conclusion.

The fact is that the Septuagint, translated by Hebrew rabbinical scholars familiar with the use of Greek in times much nearer to the NT than our own, renders two different Hebrew words-denoting both Jewish tribes and non-Jewish tribes or families-as [φυλαί](#) [phylai]. This leads us to conclude that [φυλαί](#) [phylai] is not a technical term denoting only Jewish tribes. It can have different meanings which are dependent upon the context. This is also obvious from the numerous qualifiers which appear in conjunction with [φυλαί](#) [phylai]: "tribes of the earth," "the twelve tribes," "every tribe," etc. Why would these additional qualifiers be necessary if [φυλαί](#) [phylai] always referred to Israelite tribes as preterists claim?

¹⁰¹ [Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), 638]. If one seeks evidence for how far astray interpretation can go where the meaning of a passage is *entirely reversed* from its intended meaning, one can do no better than the [preterist interpretation](#) of Zechariah 12 through 14.

¹⁰²Beale, [The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text](#), 26.

¹⁰³Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 79.

¹⁰⁴See [Tony Garland, "[Revelation 1:7 - Past or Future?](#)" (n.p. 2004) in [The Conservative Theological Journal](#), vol. 9 no. 27 (Fort Worth, TX: Tyndale Theological Seminary, August 2005)]

¹⁰⁵Danker, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#)

¹⁰⁶Erich Sauer, [The Dawn of World Redemption](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951, c1964), 118-119.

¹⁰⁷Having personally sat with those in their dying days who continue to reject God's free and gracious offer of salvation when they have nothing to lose and everything to gain, we have gained a genuine appreciation regarding the fearful consequences of the continual rejection of the gospel offer.

¹⁰⁸Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#), 81.

¹⁰⁹It was the Angel of the Lord who met Moses in the burning bush (Ex. 3:2) and who made claims that no ordinary angel dare make (Ex. 3:14). Indeed, it was no ordinary Angel, but the preincarnate Messiah (John 1:14, 18).

¹¹⁰Foos, [Christology in the Book of Revelation](#), 107.

¹¹¹Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 11.

¹¹²John F. Walvoord, [The Revelation of Jesus Christ](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1966), 40.

¹¹³Arthur Walkington Pink, [The Antichrist](#) (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1999, 1923), s.v. "Comparisons between Christ and the Antichrist."

¹¹⁴Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 81.

¹¹⁵See the discussion of the [Nicolaitans](#) for the view that they may have contributed to the development of church hierarchy where none was intended beyond that of elders, deacons, and the flock.

¹¹⁶Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#), 35.

¹¹⁷Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 87.

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¹¹⁹Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#), 86.

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¹²¹Walvoord, [The Revelation of Jesus Christ](#), 41.

¹²²Johnson, [Revelation: The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#), 28.

¹²³Trench, [Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia](#), 19.

¹²⁴Fausset, [The Revelation of St. John the Divine](#), Rev. 1:9.

¹²⁵Beale, [The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text](#), 6-7,9.

¹²⁶Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#), 86.

¹²⁷Gen. 26:2, 24; 46:2; Num. 12:6; 1S. 3:15; 1K. 22:19; Job 33:15; Isa. 1:1; 6:1; Eze. 1:3; 8:3; 11:24; Dan. 2:19; 7:2; 8:1, 16; 9:21; 10:1; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; 9:10-12; 10:3, 11; 11:5; 16:9-10; 18:9; 22:18; 23:11; 26:19; Rev. 1:10⁺; 4:2⁺; 9:17⁺.

¹²⁸James Strong, [The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible](#) (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1996), G1611.

¹²⁹Robertson, [Robertson's Word Pictures in Six Volumes](#), Rev. 1:10.

¹³⁰"Some have assumed from this passage that [μῆρα κυριακή](#) [hēmera kyriakē] was a designation of Sunday already familiar among Christians. This however, seems a mistake. The name had probably its origin here."—Trench, [Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia](#), 23.

¹³¹"Sunday belongs indeed to the Lord, but the Scriptures nowhere call it 'the Lord's day.' None of the Christian writings, for 100 years after Christ, ever call it 'the Lord's day.' . . . I can see no essential difference between [Κυριακή μῆρα](#) [hē Kyriakē hēmera]—the Lord's day,— and [μῆρα Κυρίου](#) [hē hēmera Kyriou]—the day of the Lord. They are simply the two forms for signifying the same relations of the same things. . . . And when we come to consider the actual contents of this book, we find them harmonizing exactly with this understanding of its title. It takes as its chief and unmistakable themes what other portions of the Scriptures assign to the great day of the Lord."—Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#), 18.

¹³²Jerome Smith, [The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992), s.v. "Not Sunday."

¹³³E. W. Bullinger, [Commentary On Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1984, 1935), xvi-xvii, 9.

¹³⁴Johnson, [Revelation: The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#), 29.

¹³⁵MacArthur, [Revelation 1-11 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#), Rev. 1:10.

¹³⁶“Objection has been taken to the interpretation of ‘the Lord’s Day’ here, because we have (in Rev. 1:9⁺) the adjective ‘Lord’s’ instead of the noun (*in regimen*), ‘of the Lord,’ as in the Hebrew. But *what else could it be called in Hebrew?* Such objectors do not seem to be aware of the fact that there is no adjective for ‘Lord’s’ in Hebrew; and therefore the *only way of expressing* ‘the Lord’s Day’ is by using the two nouns, ‘the day of the Lord’—which means equally ‘the Lord’s Day’ (Jehovah’s day).”—Bullinger, [*Commentary On Revelation*](#), 11-12.

¹³⁷Fruchtenbaum, [*The Footsteps of Messiah*](#), 16.

¹³⁸Johnson, [*Revelation: The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*](#), 23.

¹³⁹Swete, [*The Apocalypse of St. John*](#), 14.

¹⁴⁰Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#), 4.

¹⁴¹Seiss, [*The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation*](#), 56.

¹⁴²Interestingly, John is the only gospel writer who does not record his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration except if John 1:14 be taken as a reference to it.

¹⁴³Albrecht Durer (1471 - 1528). Image courtesy of the [Connecticut College Wetmore Print Collection](#).

¹⁴⁴Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#), 23.

¹⁴⁵The context of Mat. 18:20 infers that Jesus will be present in any gathering of believers to grant both authority and guidance concerning matters of church discipline.

¹⁴⁶The intended permanence of sealing may be seen in the following examples: (1) the tomb (Mat. 27:66); (2) Jesus’ testimony (John 3:33); (3) Jesus sealed by the Father (John 6:27); (4) witnessed during the Tribulation (Rev. 7:3⁺); (5) what the seven thunders uttered (Rev. 10:4⁺); (6) Satan during the Millennium (Rev. 20:3⁺).

¹⁴⁷“Here, the scattered condition of the nation [of Israel] is just as distinctly indicated by the fact that the seven lamps are no longer united in one lamp-stand. The nation is no longer in the Land, for Jerusalem is not now the centre; but the people are ‘scattered’ in separate communities in various cities in Gentile lands. So that just as the *one* lamp-stand represents Israel in its unity, the *seven* lamp-stands represent Israel in its dispersion; and tells us that Jehovah is about to make Jerusalem again the centre of His dealings with the earth.”—Bullinger, [*Commentary On Revelation*](#), 72.

¹⁴⁸*Goel* is a Hebrew term describing the person who is next of kin and his respective duties: to buy back what his poor brother has sold and cannot himself regain (Lev. 25:25-26); to avenge any wrong done to a next of kin, particularly murder (Num. 35:19-27); to purchase land belonging to one deceased who was next of kin and to marry his widow and to raise up children for the deceased (Ru. 2:20; 4:14). Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer of the book of Ruth (Ru. 4) is a type of Christ as our kinsman-redeemer.

¹⁴⁹It is instructive to study the following parallels between Adam and Christ: **1)** Adam was created in God’s image, Christ is the manifestation of God in the flesh; **2)** Adam’s disobedience brought condemnation leading to death, Christ’s obedience brought justification leading to life; **3)** Those who are ‘in Adam’ die, those who are ‘in Christ’ have eternal life (1Cor. 15:22); **4)** Adam is the ‘son of God’ (Luke 3:38) as is Christ (both were directly created by God); **5)** All men are ‘born once’ in Adam, believers are ‘born again’ in Christ; **6)** The first Adam became a living being (Gen. 2:7), the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit (1Cor. 15:45); **7)** Adam is from the earth—made of dust (Gen. 2:7), Christ is from heaven; **8)** Adam lost dominion, Christ regained it. **9)** A tree bore Adam’s downfall, a tree bore Christ’s victory. **10)** Adam’s body was animated by the breath of God (Gen. 2:7), the body of Christ is animated by the breath of God (1Cor. 12:13).

¹⁵⁰Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#), 31.

¹⁵¹*Ibid.*, 32.

¹⁵²Some interpreters separate Daniel 10 into two separate passages, the first part (Daniel 10:1-9) being a vision of Christ and the second part (Daniel 10:10-21) involving an angelic being who required assistance (Dan. 10:13, 21). We believe several factors favor understanding the same heavenly being as being in view throughout the chapter.

¹⁵³John F. Walvoord, [*Jesus Christ Our Lord*](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Institute, 1969), 204-205.

¹⁵⁴Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#), 33.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., 35.

¹⁵⁶Robertson, [*Robertson's Word Pictures in Six Volumes*](#).

¹⁵⁷Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#) 37.

¹⁵⁸Colin J. Hemer, [*The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 111-112, 116.

¹⁵⁹Danker, [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](#) 731.

¹⁶⁰This return of the glory of the Lord to the Millennial Temple ends the most recent departure of God from His Temple which occurred when Jesus departed to the Mount of Olives (Mat. 23:37-39). It is for this reason that His "house" in Jerusalem has been desolate for these long ages. See The Abiding Presence of God.

¹⁶¹Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#) 27.

¹⁶²Ibid., 40.

¹⁶³Augustine in [Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#)].

¹⁶⁴Ibid., 45.

¹⁶⁵The term *Genie* is derived from the Arabic word for demon: *Jin*.

¹⁶⁶The fear of God is a major theme of Scripture: Gen. 31:42, 53; Ex. 1:17; 15:11; 20:20; Jos. 4:24; 1K. 18:3; 2Chr. 19:7, 9; Job 9:34; 23:15-16; 25:1; 28:28; Ps. 5:7; 89:7; 111:10; 115:13; 119:38, 120; 128:4; 145:19; Pr. 2:5; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 14:26; 15:16, 33; 16:6; 19:23; 22:4; 23:17; 24:21; 31:30; Ecc. 5:7; 8:12; 12:13; Isa. 8:13; 11:3; 33:5; 50:10; 57:11; 59:19; Jer. 5:22-24; Hab. 3:16; Luke 12:5; Acts 9:31; 10:2, 35; 2Cor. 5:13; 1Pe. 3:15; Rev. 19:5+.

¹⁶⁷Ex. 3:6; Dt. 5:26; Jos. 3:10; 1S. 17:26, 36; 2K. 19:4, 16; Ps. 42:2; 84:2; Isa. 37:4, 17; Jer. 10:10; 23:36; Dan. 6:20, 26; Hos. 1:10; Mat. 16:16; 22:32; 26:63; John 6:69; Acts 14:15; Rom. 9:26; 2Cor. 3:3; 6:16; 1Ti. 3:15; 4:10; 6:17; Heb. 3:12; 9:14; 10:31; 12:22; Rev. 7:2+.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., 47.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., 48.

¹⁷⁰Mills, [*Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John*](#) Rev. 1:17.

¹⁷¹"And the living, and I became dead, and behold, I am living for evermore"—Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#), 47.

¹⁷²The resurrection is attributed to all three members of the Trinity. To Jesus: John 2:19; 10:17. To the Father: Acts 4:10; 10:41; Rom. 4:24; 6:4; 8:11. To the Holy Spirit: 1Pe. 3:18.

¹⁷³Ibid., 42.

¹⁷⁴The word death probably refers to the location of the body, whereas Hades refers to the location of the immaterial part of man—his soul. *Israel My Glory*, July/August 2001, 22. The former describes the *state* of the dead whereas the latter describes the *location* of the dead. [Thomas, [*Revelation 1-7*](#), 112] "Hades is the unseen world where all who die reside. It includes both Paradise (Luke 23:43) and Gehenna (Luke 12:5)—Abraham's bosom and the state of torment and anguish (Luke 16:22-28)."—Robert L. Thomas, [*Revelation 8-22*](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995), 433.

¹⁷⁵"The Rabbinical proverb said: 'There are four keys lodged in God's hand, which He committeth neither to angel nor to seraph: the key of the rain, the key of food, the key of the tombs, and the key of a barren woman.' "—Vincent, [*Vincent's Word Studies*](#), Rev. 1:18.

¹⁷⁶Seiss, [*The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation*](#), 48.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., 47.

¹⁷⁸“I favor understanding ‘the things which you have seen’ as linked to Rev. 1:2⁺, and thus to be the authority to write John’s Gospel . . . , though others see this as indicating chapter 1⁺. . . . Allowing my understanding of ‘the things which you have seen,’ then, the first chapter becomes very much part of chapters 2⁺-3⁺.”—Mills, [Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John](#) Rev. 1:19.

¹⁷⁹Some see this phrase as being descriptive of the things John saw in the previous phrase: “Write therefore what things thou sawest *and what they are*, . . . even what things are about to happen hereafter.”—Bullinger, [Commentary On Revelation](#), 159.

¹⁸⁰Tenney, [Interpreting Revelation](#), 39.

¹⁸¹Johnson, [Revelation: The Expositor’s Bible Commentary](#), 33.

¹⁸²Tenney, [Interpreting Revelation](#), 39.

¹⁸³Walvoord, [The Revelation of Jesus Christ](#), 48.

¹⁸⁴To study the use of “mystery” in the NT, see Mark 4:11; Rom. 11:25; 16:25; 1Cor. 2:7; 13:2; 15:51; Eph. 1:9; 3:3-4, 9; 5:32; 6:19; Col. 1:26; 2:2; 4:3; 2Th. 2:7; 1Ti. 3:9, 16; Rev. 1:20⁺; 10:7⁺; 17:7⁺.

¹⁸⁵Trench, [Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia](#) 51.

¹⁸⁶Henry Morris, [The Revelation Record](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1983), 45.

¹⁸⁷Variations of the word *angel* occur 72 times in this book, and unless the references to these angels of the churches be excepted, all mentions are of divine beings. Angels are ministering spirits actively involved in other aspects of God’s plan. “True churches of the Lord have individual angels assigned for their guidance and watch-care. This fact is hardly surprising in view of the innumerable company of angels (Hebrews 12:22) and their assigned function as ministering spirits of those who are heirs of salvation (Hebrews 1:14). Individual believers have angels assigned to them (Matthew 18:10; Acts 12:15). Angels are present in the assemblies during their services (1 Corinthians 11:10) and are intensely interested in their progress (1 Corinthians 4:9; Ephesians 3:10; 1 Timothy 3:16; 5:21; Hebrews 13:2; 1 Peter 1:12).”—Ibid.

¹⁸⁸“How could *holy* Angels be charged with such delinquencies as are laid to the charge of some of the Angels here (Rev. 2:4⁺; 3:1⁺, 15⁺)?”—Trench, [Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia](#) 52.

¹⁸⁹“The complexity of the communication process is one thing that raises problems with it. It presumes that Christ is sending a message to heavenly beings through John, an earthly agent, so that it may reach earthly churches through angelic representatives. . . . An even more decisive consideration against the view of guardian angels lies in the sinful conduct of which these angels are accused. Most of the rebukes of [Revelation] chapters 2-3 are second person singular, messages that look first at the individual messengers and presumably through them to the churches they represent.”—Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 117.

¹⁹⁰“This rare and difficult reference should be understood to refer to the heavenly messengers who have been entrusted by Christ with responsibility over the churches and yet who are so closely identified with them that the letters are addressed at the same time to these ‘messengers’ and to the congregation (cf. the plural form in Rev. 2:10⁺, 13⁺, 23-24⁺).”—Johnson, [Revelation: The Expositor’s Bible Commentary](#), 34.

¹⁹¹[ἄγγελος](#) [Angelos] is occasionally used of human *messengers*. Examples include John the Baptist (Mat. 11:10; Mark 1:2), the messengers sent to Jesus by John the Baptist (Luke 7:24), the spies hidden by Rahab (Jas. 2:25) and possibly the leaders of the seven churches, if these are to be understood as human leaders (Rev. 2:1⁺, 8⁺, 12⁺, 18⁺; 3:1⁺, 7⁺, 14⁺). “In the Septuagint [γγελος](#) [angelos] is used in rare instances of a human messenger of God (Mal. 2:7; 3:1; cf. 1:1, where the LXX so renders the name or title ‘Malachi’ itself). In the New Testament it twice denotes simply an emissary (Luke 9:52; Jas. 2:25). Elsewhere it is always used of a supernatural being. The idea of an angel as the guardian of the nation is found in Dan. 12:1, as guardian of the individual in . . . Mat. 18:10; Acts 12:15.”—Hemer, [The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting](#) 32.

¹⁹²“Some think these men journeyed to Patmos to receive the finished book of Revelation from the hands of John, and that they returned to their respective cities and shared the message.”—Mal Couch, [“Ecclesiology in the Book of Revelation.”](#) in Mal Couch, ed., [A Bible Handbook to Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 128.

¹⁹³Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 118.

¹⁹⁴“[The idea that the angel is a human messenger] is at first sight attractive, for ‘messenger’ is the primary meaning of [γγελος](#)

[angelos], and the book may indeed have been distributed through messengers delegated by each church to tour its district. But . . . usage favours 'angels' and the emissary could not be made representative of the community. Nor could he be readily symbolized by the 'stars' of Rev. 1:20⁺."—Hemer, [The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting](#) 33.

¹⁹⁵"But in answering a letter by a messenger, men write *by* him, they do not usually write *to* him; nor is it easy to see where is the correspondency [*sic*] between such messengers, subordinate officials of the Churches, and stars; or what the '*mystery*' of the relation between them then would be; or how the Lord should set forth as an eminent prerogative of his, that He held the seven stars, that is, the seven messengers, in his right hand (Rev. 2:1⁺)."—Trench, [Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia](#), 56-57.

¹⁹⁶"The Angel in each Church is one; but surely none can suppose for an instant that there was only one presbyter, or other minister serving in holy things, for the whole flourishing Church of Ephesus, or of Smyrna; and that we are in this way to account for the single Angel of the several Churches. . . . What can he be but a bishop?"—Ibid., 53-54.

¹⁹⁷"The spiritual significance is that these angels are messengers who are responsible for the spiritual welfare of these seven churches and are in the right hand of the Son of Man, indicating possession, protection, and sovereign control. As the churches were to emit light as a lampstand, the leaders of the churches were to project light as stars."—Walvoord, [The Revelation of Jesus Christ](#), 45.

¹⁹⁸"In early noncanonical Christian literature no historical person connected with the church is ever called an *angelos*."—Johnson, [Revelation: The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#), 34. "Who shall authorize us to understand the word 'angels' as having any connection with the Church of God? No one ever heard (until quite recent times) of such a title being given to any church officer either in Scripture, in history, or in tradition."—Bullinger, [Commentary On Revelation](#), 161.

¹⁹⁹"If 'angel' means 'pastor' here, it is used with this meaning here and nowhere else. If the Lord Jesus meant the pastors of the churches, why did He not say 'pastors?' Or why did He not say 'elders,' a term which is used in the New Testament as essentially synonymous with 'pastors,' and which is later used twelve times in Revelation?"—Morris, [The Revelation Record](#), 45.

²⁰⁰Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2-4; 20:17, 28; 21:18; Php. 1:1; 1Th. 5:12; Tit. 1:5; Heb. 13:17; Jas. 5:14; 1Pe. 5:1-5.

²⁰¹"The individual could scarcely be held responsible for the character of the church, and there is no unambiguous evidence for the idea of episcopal authority in the churches of the Revelation, though it looms large in Ignatius twenty years later."—Hemer, [The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting](#), 33.

²⁰²"In a city the size of Ephesus, by this time, there must have been a large number of house-churches meeting separately from one another."—Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 128.

²⁰³"Personifications of the prevailing spirit."—Mounce, [The Book of Revelation](#), 86.

²⁰⁴"This gives the required sense, but raises problems in the usage of symbolism. The 'stars' and the 'lampstands' of Rev. 1:20⁺ are made virtually the same thing. Some writers justify this conception by regarding the 'angel' as the heavenly counterpart of the earthly church."—Hemer, [The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting](#), 33.

²⁰⁵Bullinger suggests an alternate view on the basis that these congregations may have exhibited customs carried over from the Judaism of the synagogue: "The Bible student is at once confronted with an overwhelming difficulty. He has read the Epistles which are addressed to the churches by the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul; and, on turning to the Epistles in Rev. 2⁺ and 3⁺, he is at once conscious of a striking change. He finds himself suddenly removed from the ground of *grace* to the ground of *works*. He meets with church-officers of whom he has never before heard; and with expressions with which he is wholly unfamiliar: and he is bewildered. . . . we do meet with the word Angel in connection with the *Synagogue* . . . [the] 'Angel of the Assembly,' who was the mouthpiece of the congregation. His duty it was to offer up public prayer to God for the whole congregation. Hence his title; because, as the messenger of the assembly, he spoke to God for them. When we have these facts in our hands, why arbitrarily *invent* the notion that 'angel' is equivalent to Bishop, when there is not a particle of historical evidence for it?"—Bullinger, [Commentary On Revelation](#), 63, 66.

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contact@SpiritAndTruth.org

SUPPLEMENTAL COMMENTARY

REVELATION 1 COMMENTARY

Bruce Hurt MD

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PREVIOUS

NEXT

Apostle John on Isle of Patmos

REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
THE BIG PICTURE

REVELATION 10-22
EVENTS OF THE END TIMES

HISTORICAL SETTING OF REVELATION

Click charts to enlarge
Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
[Another Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

NOTE - These comments on **Revelation 1** are separate and distinct from the main Revelation Commentary by Tony Garland.

Revelation is not a book of confusion, but of clarity and order and unity. Note how John, like a great teacher (inspired by the Spirit), uses the rabbinical technique of repetition to make sure we do not ["miss the forest for the trees"](#) (so to speak).

PARALLELS BETWEEN REVELATION 1 AND REVELATION 22	
REVELATION 1	REVELATION 22
Rev 1:1 The things which must soon take place	Rev 22:6 The things which must soon take place

Rev 1:1 Who bore witness...to all he saw	Rev 22:8 I John am the one who heard and saw
Rev 1:1 To show His bond-servants	Rev 22:6 To show His bond-servants
Rev 1:3 For the time is near	Rev 22:10 For the time is near
Rev 1:3 Blessed...those...who heed	Rev 22:7 Blessed is he who heeds the words Rev 22:9 of those who heed the words
Rev 1:8 I Am the Alpha and the Omega The First and the Last	Rev 22:13 I Am the Alpha and the Omega The First and the Last
Rev 1:3 Blessed are those who hear (implies we understand)	Rev 22:10 Do not seal up the words of the prophecy
Rev 1:3 The words of this prophecy	Rev 22:7 The prophecy of this book Rev 22:10 The words of the prophecy of this book Rev 22:18 The words of the prophecy of this book Rev 22:19 The words of the book of this prophecy
And all God's children shout "Amen and Amen. Come quickly Lord Jesus (Rev 22:20)!"	

Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John,

BGT Revelation 1:1 ποκ λυψις ησο Χριστο ν δωκεν ατ θες δε ξαι το ς δο λοις α το δε γεν σθαι ν τ χει, κα σ μανεν ποστε λας δι το γγ λου α το τ δο λ α το ω νν ,

KJV Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

NET Revelation 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must happen very soon. He made it clear by sending his angel to his servant John,

NLT Revelation 1:1 This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John,

ESV Revelation 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John,

NIV Revelation 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John,

ASV Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John;

CSB Revelation 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ that God gave Him to show His slaves what must quickly take place. He sent it and signified it through His angel to His slave John,

NKJ Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants-- things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

NRS Revelation 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place; he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John,

YLT Revelation 1:1 A revelation of Jesus Christ, that God gave to him, to shew to his servants what things it behoveth to come to pass quickly; and he did signify it, having sent through his messenger to his servant John,

- **Revelation:** Da 2:28,29 Am 3:7 Ro 16:25 Ga 1:12 Eph 3:3
- **which God:** Joh 3:32 8:26 12:49

- **to show:** Rev 22:6 Ps 25:14 Joh 15:15
- **must:** Rev 1:3,19 4:1 22:10, 2Pe 3:8
- **and he:** Rev 22:6,16 Da 8:16 9:21,23
- **John:** Rev 1:4,9 21:2
- Interpretative Views of Revelation
- [Video I did on how to begin to study the Revelation](#) - this 80' discussion uses a power point and focuses primarily on skills of observation. It is not a professional video but was given to a group of men who were just beginning the study of the Revelation.

Related Passages:

Matthew 25:13 (MUST SOON COME TO PASS) "Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

GOD
V
JESUS
V
ANGEL
V
JOHN
V
BONDSERVANTS

GOD TAKES THE LID OFF THE FINAL CHAPTER OF PLANET EARTH

The Revelation of Jesus Christ - Note first that the title is not "The Revelations (plural)," nor is the title "The Revelation of John." The title of the last book of the Bible, the **Revelation of Jesus Christ**. The title speaks volumes telling this is the **revelation**, uncovering (exposing to view by removing the covering), unveiling or disclosure of Jesus Christ, especially of the truths about Him and His victory over all God's enemies. The book of **Revelation** contains truths that have been concealed, but have now been revealed and made fully known. As an aside, note that although the Revelation nowhere **directly** quotes the Old Testament, 278 of its 404 verses (almost 70%) allude to Old Testament prophetic truths. Thus the Revelation in fact amplifies what was only initially suggested in the Old Testament. Isn't it ironic that a book that God says is an unveiling is one of the books most cloaked in confusion and mystery as the result of the manifold interpretations! To many people the revelation is not a revealing but a riddle!

Scholars debate whether the **revelation** is *from* Jesus Christ (subjective genitive) or is *about* Jesus Christ (objective genitive - Jesus is the "object" of the Revelation), but taking the entire book in context, it is clear this is revelation both from Jesus and about Jesus. Jesus passes on the truth from His Father that He "wins" the victory and He reclaims and restores planet earth.

[Guzik](#) - If we catch everything else, but miss Jesus in the book, we miss the Book of Revelation. How we *need* a revelation of Jesus!

Spurgeon - "The great fault of many professors is that Christ is to them a character upon paper; certainly more than a myth, but yet a person of the dim past, an historical personage who lived many years ago, and did most admirable deeds, by the which we are saved, but who is far from being a living, present, bright reality."

Notice that the Greek word for **Revelation**, [apokalupsis](#), is the [antithesis](#) of [apocrypha](#) which is from the Greek word [apokrupto](#) meaning hide away and so in Latin "*apocrypha scripta*" means "hidden writings." The **Revelation of Jesus Christ**, far from being "*hidden words*" are in fact "*revealed words*!"

Revelation (602)([apokalupsis](#) from [apo](#) = from + [kalupto](#) = cover, conceal, English = apocalypse) literally means "cover from" and so the idea is to remove that which conceals something, exposing to open view that which was heretofore not visible, known or disclosed. It means to make manifest or reveal a thing previously secret or unknown. It describes removing a veil (thus an unveiling) or covering thus exposing to open view what was concealed. In all its uses, **revelation** refers to something or someone, once hidden, becoming visible and now made fully known.

Rienecker says "The word is often used to describe a type of Jewish literature of the first century B.C., which arose under persecution. It used many symbols and was published under the name of an important OT

person."

In secular Greek, **apokalupsis** was used to describe "uncovering" as of one's head or to describe the "disclosing" of hidden springs.

It is 2020 as I write and the global pandemic with COVID19 which feels like an apocalypse and makes one think about some of the horrible plagues coming in the Revelation. As bad as it is now with Coronavirus, this is nothing compared to the the Seal, Trumpet and Bowl Judgments uncovered in the !

Lehman Strauss on [apokalupsis](#) - The word is used once only in the Gospel records (Luke 2:32+) where it is translated "lighten," referring to one of the purposes of the Incarnation, namely, to draw away the veil of darkness covering the Gentiles as prophesied in Isaiah 25:7. The same word appears frequently in the Epistles and is translated "manifestation" (Romans 8:19), "coming" (1 Corinthians 1:7), "revealed" (2 Thessalonians 1:7), "appearing" (1 Peter 1:7), "revelation" (1 Peter 1:13). This book is therefore all about the manifestation, the coming, the appearing of Jesus Christ. He shall come in like manner as He was seen going up into Heaven (Luke 24:50-52 cf. Acts 1:10-11). At His next "appearing" on the earth, "every eye shall see Him" (Revelation 1:7). It will be His glorious apocalypse. (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

Apokalupsis - 18x/18v - revealed(1), revealing(1), revelation(14), revelations(2). Lk. 2:32 = Revelation of Jesus first coming; Rom. 2:5; Rom. 8:19 = revelation of the glorified saints; Rom. 16:25 = revelation of the mystery; 1 Co. 1:7 = "the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ," (Second Coming); 1Co 14:6 = "unless I speak to you either by way of revelation"; 1Co 14:26 = "each one has...a revelation"; 2Co 12:1 = "I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord"; 2Co 12:7 = "the surpassing greatness of the revelations,"; Gal 1:12 and Gal 2:2 = Paul's personal revelation of Jesus Christ ; Eph. 1:17 = prayer for spiritual insight; Eph. 3:3 = by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, 2Th 1:7 = when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire; 1Pe 1:7 = "at the revelation of Jesus Christ"; 1Pe 1:13 = "the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."; 1Pe 4:13 = "at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation"; Rev. 1:1

This book is not intended to be a veiled document full of mysterious symbols,
but an unveiling and clarification of things which have heretofore not been revealed by God.

-- [Tony Garland](#)

It is sad to read comments by respected evangelical authors like **Kistemaker** who says that "*The Book of Revelation appears not to accomplish what its title promises, confusing its readers by all the images, figures, and numbers they encounter.*" ([NT Commentary](#)) I strongly disagree with this well known scholar for if Kistemaker is correct, the title of the book is not accurate. God is not a God of confusion but of order (1Co 14:33+). Even from a logical standpoint it would make little sense that in His final Word to man, God would not bring "**order**" out of the **chaos** of this sinful world. Indeed by definition the inspired word (not a title given by men) clearly states that this book is an unveiling of Jesus Christ. God accomplishes what He intends in the Revelation for as His servant Joshua (Joshua 23:14+) said centuries earlier "not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed" and this statement is true in regard to "the Revelation of Jesus Christ".

John MacArthur also strongly refutes Kistemaker's conclusion that "**the Revelation**" does not accomplish what its writer promises writing that "The late British prime minister Winston Churchill once described the former Soviet Union as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." many Christians view the book of Revelation in much the same way. Bewildered by its mystifying symbolism and striking imagery, many believers (including some pastors, who never preach through Revelation) avoid serious study of the book. Even John Calvin, the greatest commentator of the Reformation, who wrote commentaries on the other books, did not attempt to write a commentary on Revelation." MacArthur goes on to explain that "Far from being the mysterious, incomprehensible book many imagine it to be, Revelation's purpose is to reveal truth, not to obscure it. That fact is evident in its title, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:1), primarily in His second coming glory. Apokalupsis ("Revelation") could be translated "an uncovering," "an unveiling," or "a disclosure."... In each case, apokalupsis describes something (or someone) that was formerly hidden, but now becomes visible. Revelation unveils truths about Jesus Christ, and makes clear features of prophetic truth only hinted at in the Old Testament and other New Testament books. This clarity is often obscured by a rejection of the principles of literal interpretation in favor of an allegorical or spiritualizing hermeneutical method (Ed note: click here for comments on Revelation commentaries). Such approaches attempt to place Revelation's account in the past and present rather than the future. But once the plain meaning of the text is denied, an interpreter is left to his own imagination, and the truths of this book are lost in a maze of human inventions void of authenticity."... Many people are confused by the book of Revelation, viewing it as a mysterious, bizarre, indecipherable mystery. **But nothing could be further from the truth.** Far from hiding the truth, the book of Revelation reveals it. This is the last chapter in

God's story of redemption. It tells how it all ends. As the account of the Creation in the beginning was not vague or obscure, but clear, so God has given a detailed and lucid record of the ending. **It is unthinkable to believe that God would speak with precision and clarity from Genesis to Jude, and then when it comes to the end abandon all precision and clarity.** Yet, many theologians today think Revelation is not the precise record of the end in spite of what it says. They also are convinced that its mysteries are so vague that the end is left in confusion. As we shall see in this commentary, this is a serious error that strips the saga of redemption of its climax as given by God." (See [Revelation 1-22 MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) - this work is highly recommended for it's lucid, literal, balanced interpretation)

W. A. Criswell, long-time pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas, gave the following explanation as to why Christ must yet be revealed in glory:

The first time our Lord came into this world, He came in the veil of our flesh. His deity was covered over with His manhood. His Godhead was hidden by His humanity. Just once in a while did His deity shine through, as on the Mount of Transfiguration, or as in His miraculous works. But most of the time the glory, the majesty, the deity, the wonder and the marvel of the Son of God, the second person of the Holy Trinity, were veiled. These attributes were covered over in flesh, in our humanity. He was born in a stable. He grew up in poverty. He knew what it was to hunger and to thirst. He was buffeted and beaten and bruised. He was crucified and raised up as a felon before the scoffing gaze of the whole earth. The last time that this world saw Jesus was when it saw Him hanging in shame, misery and anguish upon the cross. He later appeared to a few of His believing disciples, but the last time that this unbelieving world ever saw Jesus was when it saw Him die as a malefactor, as a criminal, crucified on a Roman cross. That was a part of the plan of God, a part of the immeasurable, illimitable grace and love of our Lord. "By His stripes we are healed."

But then is that all the world is ever to see of our Saviour—dying in shame on a cross? No! It is also a part of the plan of God that some day this unbelieving, this blaspheming, this godless world shall see the Son of God in His full character, in glory, in majesty, in the full-orbed wonder and marvel of His Godhead. Then all men shall look upon Him as He really is. They shall see Him holding in His hands the title-deed to the Universe, holding in His hands the authority of all creation in the universe above us, in the universe around us, and in the universe beneath us; holding this world and its destiny in His pierced and loving hands. (Borrow [Expository Sermons on Revelation](#) [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969], 1:16–17) (Quoted by John MacArthur)

Tony Garland adds that a major source of difficulty in understanding the Revelation "is the variety of interpretations resulting from those who undertake to study the book and explain it to others. "It is doubtless true that no other book, whether in sacred or profane literature, has received in whole or in part so many different interpretations." (Beckwith) Many of these interpretations are more enigmatic than the book itself. "The literary genius **G.K. Chesterson** once quipped, 'Though St. John the Evangelist saw many strange monsters in his vision, he saw no creatures so wild as one of his own commentators.' " (Randall Price) This variety of interpretive results has been damaging to the cause of Christ and was certainly not His intention when He first gave it to His servant John.

THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK "TO SHOW"

Which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants - The verb **show** means God desires to make this truth clear by bringing it to light. His ultimate recipient (see pattern below) are those men and women who are His bond-servants. So one reason some do not understand the Revelation is because they are not His bond-servants. They are not born again. They lack the indwelling Spirit of Truth to illuminate the Word of Truth. As Garland says "who hear His voice (John 10:3, 16, 27; Acts 22:14; Heb. 3:7, 15; Heb 4:7) and respond in faith. Those who lack faith in the Son are unable to comprehend what is shown here (the he quotes MacArthur). "This is why unbelievers find the book of Revelation incomprehensible; it was not intended for them. It was given by the Father to the Son to show to those who willingly serve Him. Those who refuse to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord cannot expect to comprehend this book. "A natural man," explains Paul, "does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised" (1Cor. 2:14⁺).

In John's Gospel, Jesus Himself gives us a clear clue about how we can know and understand the Revelation...

If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority. (Jn 7:17ESV+)

Henry Morris - Thus the first prerequisite to ascertaining God's leading in some matter, or the truth about some doctrinal question, is a genuine willingness to believe the truth and to follow God's will before they are made known, even if the answer goes against one's preference. (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

THOUGHT - If you are not willing to obey the truth you know, you are not likely to know the truth of the Revelation.

Lehman Strauss says "If the Revelation is a closed book to the majority of God's children, it is quite possible that for this very reason it is so. Eight times in the book we find the admonition, "He that hath an ear, let him hear" (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; Rev 3:6, 13, 22; Rev 13:9). It takes the *circumcised* ear of a willing bondservant of Jesus Christ to hear with the understanding the truths set forth in this book (see Exodus 21:1-6 cf. Jeremiah 5:21; 6:10). It was never God's intention to hold back the meaning of the Revelation, but rather to show, to exhibit, to make known its meaning. All who willingly submit to Christ will have little difficulty with this book. (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

THOUGHT - "**Let Him hear**" is a command repeated 8 times in this book (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; Rev 3:6, 13, 22; Rev 13:9) and all (except Rev 13:9) are from the lips of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of the Hosts! "**Let Him hear**" is an [aorist imperative](#) which describes a call for urgent attention! The idea is like the Nike commercial "Just Do It!" Further this command from our Commander calls for His bondservants [to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) the command! It follows that if we are to grasp the incredible truths of this book, we must be filled with the Spirit of Christ, keeping short accounts when we sin, lest we quench or grieve the Holy Spirit. The Spirit inspired His bondservant John to write these words and now the Spirit enables Jesus' bondservants to HEAR the words and to HEED the words and to receive the blessing He promises in Revelation 1:3+! Do you want to receive a blessing? Come to this book as David says when he asks "Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place (REVELATION IS LIKE A "HOLY PLACE")? **He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood And has not sworn deceitfully. He shall receive a blessing from the LORD** and righteousness from the God of his salvation.." (Ps 24:3-5+)

The pattern of the Revelation

1. Begins with God
2. Gave it to Jesus Christ
3. Jesus communicated to His angel
4. Jesus' angel communicated it to His bond-servant John
5. John wrote it down for God's bond-servants.

Show (1166)([deiknuo](#)) means to show and has the sense of (1) to draw attention to, to point out, to show, to make known, to exhibit something (by visual, auditory, gestural, or linguistic means - John certainly uses visual means!!!) so that it can be apprehended by the senses, to cause to see (Mt 4:8, Lk 4:5, Mt 8:4) or (2) to show so as to prove something is true or to make clear by evidence or reasoning. Show in the sense of demonstrate or prove as in Jas 3:13. To explain the meaning or significance of something by demonstration. This word is characteristic of John when he means to communicate a divine revelation by means of visions. Note the concentration of **deiknuo** in the most "graphic" NT book, the Revelation, or the revealing = **Rev. 1:1; Rev. 4:1; Rev. 17:1; Rev. 21:9; Rev. 21:10; Rev. 22:1; Rev. 22:6; Rev. 22:8.**

THOUGHT - How interesting that in the "revealing" we repeatedly encounter the verb to **show**, and specifically to show what God's plan is for the consummation of this age. Note that it is the **bondservants** who will be shown these heretofore previously unrevealed truths! Little wonder that many do not understand (and/or are frightened by the book of the Revelation, for they are not His bondservants, but in fact are "earth dwellers"!). Note especially that 5 of the 33 "**showings**" are related to heaven! God wants us to see this preview of coming attractions, so that we might be motivated to live accordingly. Mark it down that what you are looking for will determine how you live, for this world or the next. (See related discussion on Vertical Vision)

Bondservant (Slave, servant) (1401)([doulos](#) from [deo](#) = to bind) describes an individual bound to another in servitude and conveys the idea of the slave's close, binding ties with his master, belonging to him, obligated to and desiring to do his will and in a permanent relation of servitude. In sum, the will of the **doulos** is consumed, even [subsumed](#) in the will of the Master. A bondservant is one who is surrendered wholly to the Master's will and thus devoted to Him, to the disregard of his own interests. Believers in Jesus Christ are not their own, but had been bought with a price, redeemed with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. (1Co 6:19, 20+, 1Pe 1:18,19+). As such, we are now and forever the Personal property of

Jesus Christ, His own possession. (Titus 2:14+). No man can serve two masters (Mt 6:24+). Believers once were slaves of [Sin](#) (viewed as an entity, a "master" or a "king") by birth in Adam's likeness (Ro 5:12+), but now are in an unbreakable covenant with Christ, having become slaves of Christ by the new birth (Jn 3:3-7). Bond-servants have no will of their own, no business of their own, no time of their own and to dedicated to their Master, Christ; dependent upon His Spirit to obey His will.

He had no rights

No right to a soft bed, and a well-laid table.

No right to a home of His own, a place where His own pleasure might be sought.

No right to choose pleasant, congenial companions, those who could understand Him and sympathize with Him.

No right to shrink away from filth and sin, to pull His garments closer around Him and turn aside to walk in cleaner paths.

No right to be understood and appreciated; no, not by those upon whom He had poured out a double portion of His love.

No right even never to be forsaken by His Father, the One who meant more than all to Him.

His only right was silently to endure shame, spitting, blows; to take His place as a sinner at the dock; to bear my sins in anguish on the cross.

He had no rights. And I?

A right to the "comforts" of life? No, but a right to the love of God for my pillow.

A right to physical safety? No, but a right to the security of being in His will.

A right to love and sympathy from those around me? No, but a right to the friendship of the One who understands me better than I do myself.

A right to be a leader among men? No, but the right to be led by the One to whom I have given my all, led as is a little child, with its hand in the hand of its father.

A right to a home, and dear ones? No, not necessarily, but a right to dwell in the heart of God.

A right to myself? No, but oh, I have a right to Christ.

All that He takes I will give.

Ill that He gives I will take.

He, my only right!

He, the one right before which all other rights fade into nothingness.

I have full right to Him.

Oh, may He have full right to me!

(Mabel Williamson - [Have We No Rights?](#))

REVELATION: THE "DIVINE TACHOMETER"

A **tachometer** is an instrument for measuring speed, revolutions per minute (RPM) displayed on a dial. Tachometer comes from Greek [tachos](#) for "speed") and [métron](#) for "measure". In short, a **tachometer** measures velocity, how fast a car is going. When the motor is off the tachometer is not moving. But once the motor is turned on the tachometer moves. By the same token, when the events of Revelation begin to take place, they will move speedily. The "divine tachometer" will be spinning fast. When the first Seal on the scroll is broken by Jesus, the events in the Revelation of Jesus Christ begin to move quickly and irrevocably toward the consummation of this present age in which we now live.

The purpose of true prophecy is not to satisfy our curiosity about the future
but to stir up our hearts to do the will of God.

-- Warren Wiersbe

The things which must ([dei](#)) soon ([tachos](#)) take place - What are **the things**? This refers to the prophetic passages, especially Revelation 6-19 and then Revelation 21-22. Notice the verb **must** which means the events in Revelation are not *maybe* but *must*, not *optional* but *integral* to the consummation of God's redemptive plan for the ages. God said that certain things must take place, so if God said it that settles it, whether we understand these things or not! "*The things which transpire here are not without Scriptural foundation and this is the very reason they must take place.*" (Tony Garland)

[Guzik](#) - **Soon** and *near* are relative terms, and this is God's timetable, not man's. Yet for 2000 years, history has been *on the*

brink of the consummation of all things, running parallel to the edge, *not* running towards a distant brink.

John Walvoord says **soon** means "'quickly or suddenly coming to pass,' indicating rapidity of execution after the beginning takes place. The idea is not that the event may occur soon, but that when it does, it will be sudden."

Must (necessary, ought) (1163)(**dei** from **deō** = to bind or tie objects together, put in prison and also root of **doulos**, bond-servant) refers to what is not optional but needful (binding) out of intrinsic necessity or inevitability. **Dei** refers to inward constraint which is why it is often translated '**must**'. **Dei** describes that which is under the necessity of happening or which must necessarily take place, and as stated above, conveys a sense of inevitability. To express the sense of necessity **dei** is translated "one ought", "one should", "one has to" or "one must". In English dictionaries **must** means to be obliged and expresses both physical and moral necessity or insistence. **Must** speaks of something that should not be overlooked or missed. In the Scriptures prophecies are often described as that which must happen indicating they are guaranteed to transpire. For example Jesus declares "You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things **must** take place, but that is not yet the end." (Mt 24:6+, cf Mt 16:21, Acts 1:16 - "had to be fulfilled"; 2 Cor 5:10+; 2 Pe 3:11+).

Soon (quickly)(5034)(**tachos**) with speed, haste, swiftness; adverbially as in Lk 18:8+ ("*en tachei*") means without delay, at once, speedily. **Tachos** is used in the first and last chapter of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, here in the first verse of the first chapter (Rev 1:1+) and then in the last chapter, John recording "And he said to me, 'These words are faithful and true'; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel **to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place**" (Rev 22:6+) The idea of **tachos** is better understood as meaning swiftly. In other words, when God acts it will be swift. So once God begins to act (in the presence context of 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 bowls) He will move fast and accomplish His purposes in a relatively short time.

Lehman Strauss says "When the things in this book come to pass, they will 'speedily happen.' God has borne along with men patiently, and while some ridicule the prophecies of this book, they fail to see that God is longsuffering (2 Peter 3:9+). But the end will come, and when it does it will be marked by suddenness and swiftness. The events will come to pass speedily. Thus the purpose of the Revelation is to show beforehand those things that will speedily happen." (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

Do you believe that Jesus is coming today?"

If they replied in the negative, he would say,

"Then you had better be ready, for He is coming at an hour when you think not!"

-- Robert Murray McCheyne

And He sent ([apostello](#)) **and communicated** ([semaino](#) - NET - "made it clear," CSB - "signified" ESV - "made it known") **it by His angel** ([aggelos/angelos](#)) **to His bond-servant** ([doulos](#)) **John** - He refers to Jesus Who provides "an explanation for something that is **enigmatic**." (BDAG) That is a good description of the Revelation which explains something that is **enigmatic** (perplexing, ambiguous, inexplicable) to the unbelieving world and sadly still enigmatic to many believers because of the plethora of proposed interpretations! Remember that Scripture (even figurative language) has only one literal meaning, although it can have multiple applications.

Communicated is translated "signified" by the old KJV (and the modern CSB) and that is an excellent rendering because the main word in "signified" is SIGN, which is apropos for the Revelation is like signs or signposts God's Spirit has given us to clearly mark the road to the final days of the world as we know it today. God does not want His children caught off guard or in the dark, but sadly so many are because they fail to study this final chapter in the story of divine redemption!

THOUGHT - Have you studied the Revelation? If not may I suggest you find someone leading the [Precept course on the Revelation](#) and zoom in if you cannot do it in person. It is a 47 week study and I will promise you (money back guarantee) that you will know more about prophecy at the end of the study than you ever dreamed possible!

Communicated (made clear)(4591)([semaino](#) from **sema** = a mark or sign) has a basic meaning of intentionally producing an impression and thus signaling or signifying something, to make known, to report, to communicate (Acts 25:27 = "indicate the charges", Rev 1:1 = served to communicate and give a prophecy). John uses [semaino](#) three times in describing how Jesus would die (Jn 12:33, 18:32) and how Peter would die (John 21:19). In the context of making known before something happens, it means to prophetically foretell (Jn 12:33 - Jesus predicting His death). In the Lxx of Nu 10:9 the idea is to give a public sign or signal. In the Lxx uses in Ezekiel the idea was to sound an alarm, blow a trumpet (Ezek 33:3, 33:6, cf Jer 4:5).

THOUGHT - Now think about the words used even in opening verse - **revelation, show, communicated**. What do these say about the God's heart regarding this last book of the Bible? Do they not reiterate that the desire of God is that we know the truths in this great book. God knows that if we know these truths, they will impact the way we live, seeking to redeem the short time left (Eph 5:16+), diligently striving to "to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world," (Php 2:15+) so that we might obey Jesus' command to "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven." (Mt 5:16+)

Angel (messenger)(32) [aggelos/angelos](#) [*gg* in Greek is pronounced *ng*] possibly from **ago** = to bring) literally means a messenger (one who bears a message - Lk 1:11, 2:9, etc or does an errand). Most of the NT uses refer to heavenly angels (messengers) who are supernatural, transcendent beings with power to carry out various tasks. All uses of **aggelos** that refer to angels are masculine gender (the feminine form of *aggelos* does not occur.) **Vine** writes that **aggelos** refer to "an order of created beings, superior to man, Heb 2:7; Ps. 8:5, belonging to Heaven, Mt. 24:36; Mark 12:25, and to God, Luke 12:8, and engaged in His service, Ps. 103:20. **Angels** are spirits, Heb. 1:14, i.e., they have not material bodies as men have; they are either human in form, or can assume the human form when necessary, cp. Luke 24:4, with Lk 24:23, Acts 10:3 with Acts 10:30." The great news about angels is that they are "ministering spirits" (Heb 1:14), where the word "ministering" is [leitourgikos](#) which in Classic Greek referred especially to those who performed public duties or works of public use (public servants). The angels are literally "spirits for serving!"

Aggelos is a major keyword in the Revelation (74x in 71v out of a total of 172v in the NT - 43% in the Revelation) - Rev. 1:1; Rev 1:20; Rev. 2:1; Rev. 2:8; Rev. 2:12; Rev. 2:18; Rev. 3:1; Rev. 3:5; Rev. 3:7; Rev. 3:14; Rev. 5:2; Rev. 5:11; Rev. 7:1; Rev. 7:2; Rev. 7:11; Rev. 8:2; Rev. 8:3; Rev. 8:4; Rev. 8:5; Rev. 8:6; Rev. 8:8; Rev. 8:10; Rev. 8:12; Rev. 8:13; Rev. 9:1; Rev. 9:11; Rev. 9:13; Rev. 9:14; Rev. 9:15; Rev. 10:1; Rev. 10:5; Rev. 10:7; Rev. 10:8; Rev. 10:9; Rev. 10:10; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 12:7; Rev. 12:9; Rev. 14:6; Rev. 14:8; Rev. 14:9; Rev. 14:10; Rev. 14:15; Rev. 14:17; Rev. 14:18; Rev. 14:19; Rev. 15:1; Rev. 15:6; Rev. 15:7; Rev. 15:8; Rev. 16:1; Rev. 16:5; Rev. 17:1; Rev. 17:7; Rev. 18:1; Rev. 18:21; Rev. 19:17; Rev. 20:1; Rev. 21:9; Rev. 21:12; Rev. 21:17; Rev. 22:6; Rev. 22:8; Rev. 22:16

Lehman Strauss on John - There is no question that the John mentioned in the Revelation is the son of Zebedee and Salome and the brother of James (Mark 1:19-20; Mk 15:40). His occupation was that of a fisherman (Matthew 4:21+). He heard John the Baptist preach and became a follower of Jesus Christ (John 1:35, 40+). He was one of the three whom Jesus took with Him on several special occasions (Matthew 17:1; Mt 26:37; Mark 5:37). John also was one of the two sent by Christ to prepare the Passover (Luke 22:8). He is referred to as "that disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23; 20:2; Jn 21:7, 20), and is mentioned three times in the Acts (Acts 3:1; Acts 4:13; Acts 8:14). He wrote five books of the New Testament, and only he uses Christ's title of "the Word" ([Logos](#)). (See John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1; 5:7; Revelation 19:13). (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

Who wrote the book of the Revelation? Peter writes that "no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." (2 Pet 1:21+) Revelation was written by a man moved by the Spirit, a man who identifies himself as John....

I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. (Revelation 1:9+)

I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. (Revelation 22:8+)

WHY STUDY PROPHECY?

I hear many people, especially younger pastors say "I don't think we need to spend much time studying Bible prophecy. It's too controversial. It's too difficult. There are so many interpretations, so how can you know who is correct? And after all, prophecy is not very practical for our day to day Christian life." What is the result of this type of thinking? Simply put, those who espouse this opinion of eschatology do not teach or preach much on Bible prophecy. And when they do preach on it, they are often forced to rely on other people's interpretations. The question must be ask -- how can they be sure the "expert's" interpretation is accurate? How can they be sure it is not an interpretation based on a particular system of theological interpretation (whether it be reformed, dispensational, etc)? Admittedly Bible prophecy is a difficult subject, but I have been assiduously studying it (with the same zeal and attention to detail that I did when I analyzed tissues and made

countless life and death diagnoses) for over 35 years, focusing on a literal approach with primary emphasis on [observation](#) before [interpretation](#). While there are many prophetic passages that remain somewhat enigmatic even after 35 years of study, God's basic plan for the ages is clear, including His wonderful plan for the literal nation of Israel. So while we cannot understand every detail of Biblical prophecy, God has made the main things the plain things.

Joseph Seiss - Some tell us that what is yet future ought not to be examined into till after it has come to pass. I can hardly realize that this is seriously meant." ([The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#) by a Lutheran pastor published in three volumes from 1870 to 1884 and it is generally excellent).

Dr Adrian Rogers answers the question "[What Profit is Prophecy?](#)"

I am always amazed by people who say we shouldn't study prophecy. Some fear we will go off into fanaticism. Others think prophecy is simply "pie in the sky by and by." Still others feel prophecy is unrelated to reality. But one-fourth of the Bible is given over to prophecy! Did the Holy Spirit make a mistake? Of course not! There is an incredible, wonderful blessing in the study of prophecy. Here are six benefits of prophecy:

(1) Prophecy Will Lead You to Praise

Revelation 1:3 says, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." In a world that seems to be filled with random acts of violence and terrorism, we need to see that God has a plan and the God of that plan is worthy to be praised.

If you know prophecy, you can sit back and say, "I've already looked in the back of the book for the answers. The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ."

(2) Prophecy Will Help You Make Sense Out of Suffering

If you get all of your theology from your circumstances, you'll be hopelessly confused. Romans 8:18 says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us."

Through prophecy, we understand that God is not finished yet. The tragedies of this earth will be turned into the triumphs of heaven.

(3) Prophecy Will Lead You to Rejoice in God's Justice

Paul wrote, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (1 Corinthians 4:5).

If you are a student of prophecy, you understand that things don't end here on earth with man's judgment. God will have the last word in the judgment halls of eternity.

Prophecy allows us to understand the mystery of history, make sense of our suffering, and rejoice in God's justice as prophetic events unfold.

(4) Prophecy Will Cause You to Pray

Prophecy leads to intercession. The last prayer in the Bible is Revelation 22:20: "even so, come, Lord Jesus." Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). When God prophesies that something is going to happen, somehow we see those events unfold as His children pray. I cannot explain how God's ultimate sovereignty works with our prayers, but I know it does from the pages of His Word.

(5) Prophecy Will Lead You to Purity

1 John 3:2-3+ says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." That is prophecy! If you really believe that Jesus Christ is coming again, you are going to live a clean life. We ought never to take our eyes off the fact that Jesus is coming.

(6) Prophecy Will Lead You to Proclamation

Revelation 19:10c says, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." All prophecy is a witness to the truth that Jesus is coming back — that people need to be ready for His return.

What are you doing to warn people to flee from the wrath to come? Paul knew that there was an everlasting

hell (see 2 Corinthians 5:10-11). It's not enough for us to sit around and try to discover the divine mysteries of prophecy. We need to bring people to Jesus Christ!

The real test of whether you believe Bible prophecy is if you have your feet on the sidewalk of soul-winning instead of your head in the clouds of prophecy. If you believe Jesus is coming back, you will have a burning passion to bring people to Him.

Jesus came as an evangelist. And He's called you to do the same. Will you pray,

"Lord, lay some soul upon my heart and win that soul through me"?

Is there profit in prophecy? Praise the Lord, there is! What a wonderful thing to know that we are soon going to meet the King of kings and Lord of lords.

QUESTION - [How can I understand the Book of Revelation?](#) - [WATCH ACCOMPANYING VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - The key to Bible interpretation, especially for the book of Revelation, is to have a consistent hermeneutic. [Hermeneutics](#) is the study of the principles of interpretation. In other words, it is the way you interpret Scripture.

A normal hermeneutic or normal interpretation of Scripture means that unless the verse or passage clearly indicates the author was using figurative language, it should be understood in its normal sense.

(ED COMMENT: MY VARIATION ON THE PRECEDING STATEMENT IS "IF THE PLAIN SENSE MAKES GOOD SENSE IN CONTEXT, THEN SEEK TO MAKE NO OTHER SENSE OUT OF IT OR IT IS POTENTIALLY NONSENSE!"

We are not to look for other meanings if the natural meaning of the sentence makes sense. Also, we are not to spiritualize Scripture by assigning meanings to words or phrases when it is clear the author, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, meant it to be understood as it is written.

One example is Revelation 20. Many will assign various meanings to references to a thousand-year period. Yet, the language does not imply in any way that the references to the thousand years should be taken to mean anything other than a literal period of one thousand years.

A simple outline for the book of Revelation is found in Revelation 1:19. In the first chapter, the risen and exalted Christ is speaking to John. Christ tells John to "write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later." The things John had already seen are recorded in chapter 1. The "things which are" (that were present in John's day) are recorded in chapters 2–3 (the letters to the churches). The "things that will take place" (future things) are recorded in chapters 4–22.

Generally speaking, chapters 4–18 of Revelation deal with God's judgments on the people of the earth. These judgments are not for the church (1 Thessalonians 5:2, 9). Before the judgments begin, the church will have been removed from the earth in an event called the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52). Chapters 4–18 describe a time of "Jacob's trouble"—trouble for Israel (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:12, 12:1). It is also a time when God will judge unbelievers for their rebellion against Him.

Chapter 19 describes Christ's return with the church, the bride of Christ. He defeats the beast and the false prophet and casts them into the lake of fire. In Chapter 20, Christ has Satan bound and cast in the Abyss. Then Christ sets up His kingdom on earth that will last 1,000 years. At the end of the 1,000 years, Satan is released and he leads a rebellion against God. He is quickly defeated and also cast into the lake of fire. Then the final judgment occurs, the judgment for all unbelievers, when they too are cast into the lake of fire.

Chapters 21 and 22 describe what is referred to as the eternal state. In these chapters God tells us what eternity with Him will be like. The book of Revelation is understandable. God would not have given it to us if its meaning were entirely a mystery. The key to understanding the book of Revelation is to interpret it as literally as possible—it says what it means and means what it says. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Related Resources:

- [Why is apocalyptic literature so strange? Gotquestions.org](#)
- See youtube video I made on how to study the Revelation -- [INTRODUCTION TO STUDY OF THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST](#)

QUESTION - [Can the return of Christ truly be said to be imminent?](#)

ANSWER - The word *imminent* means “likely to happen at any moment; impending.” When we speak of the imminence of Christ’s return, we mean that He could come back at any moment. There is nothing more in biblical prophecy that needs to happen before Jesus comes again. The imminence of Christ’s return is generally taught among evangelicals, with some disagreement according to one’s view of [dispensationalism](#) and whether one holds a pre-, mid-, or post-tribulational view of the rapture.

Jesus spoke of His return repeatedly during His ministry, which naturally prompted questions from His disciples. One of their questions was, “When will these things happen?” (Mark 13:4). Jesus responded, “Of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come” (verses 32-33). It is important to remember in any discussion of [eschatology](#) that God does not intend for us to fully understand the timing of His plans.

However, the Bible says that Jesus’ return is near, and we are to wait eagerly for it (Romans 8:19-25; 1 Corinthians 1:7; Philippians 4:5; Jude 21). James encourages us to “be patient and stand firm, because the Lord’s coming is near” (James 5:8). Revelation 1:3 and 22:10 also say that “the time is near.”

Jesus taught His disciples to watch for His return. “You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him” (Luke 12:40). The command to “be ready” implies imminence. Throughout the New Testament, the church is told to be ready (Philippians 3:20; Titus 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:6). If the disciples and the early church were to expect the coming of the Lord at any time, how much more should we be waiting in keen expectation?

At this point, it is good to distinguish between the second coming of Christ, proper, and the [rapture](#) of the church. The second coming of Christ, when He defeats His enemies and sets up His kingdom, will not occur until after certain other end-times events take place, including the tribulation (Matthew 24:15-30; Revelation chapters 6–18). Therefore, the second coming is not imminent. However, according to the [pre-tribulational view](#), the rapture will take place before the tribulation. The rapture could occur at any moment (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54) and can rightly be called “imminent.”

Our salvation is “ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5). Jesus could return for His own at any moment, and that event will set in motion the series of events detailed in Revelation 6-18. Like the five wise virgins in Jesus’ [parable](#) (Matthew 25:1-13), we must be ready. “Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour” (Matthew 25:13). [GotQuestions.org](#)

Related Resources:

- [What is the concept of a secret rapture? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the difference between the Rapture and the Second Coming? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the rapture of the church? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are the strengths and weaknesses of the pretribulational view of the rapture \(pretribulationism\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How can I be ready to be caught up in the rapture? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How can I be sure I won't be left behind in the rapture? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are the strengths and weaknesses of the posttribulational view of the rapture \(posttribulationism\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [When is the Rapture going to occur in relation to the Tribulation? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Will there be a second chance for salvation after the rapture? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are the strengths and weaknesses of the midtribulational view of the rapture \(midtribulationism\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Will there be a partial rapture? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Will babies and young children be taken in the Rapture? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Will Christians see the Antichrist, or will the rapture occur before then? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What will happen to my pets after the rapture? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean that Jesus will return like a thief in the night? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Revelation 1:2 who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.

BGT Revelation 1:2 ς μαρτ ρησεν τ ν λ γον το θεο κα τ ν μαρτυρ αν ησο Χριστο σα ε δεν.

KJV Revelation 1:2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

NET Revelation 1:2 who then testified to everything that he saw concerning the word of God and the testimony about Jesus Christ.

NLT Revelation 1:2 who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the

testimony of Jesus Christ.

ESV Revelation 1:2 who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.

NIV Revelation 1:2 who testifies to everything he saw--that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

ASV Revelation 1:2 who bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw.

CSB Revelation 1:2 who testified to God's word and to the testimony about Jesus Christ, in all he saw.

NKJ Revelation 1:2 who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.

NRS Revelation 1:2 who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.

YLT Revelation 1:2 who did testify the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, as many things also as he did see.

- bare: Rev 1:9 6:9 12:11,17 Joh 1:32 12:17 19:35 21:24 1Co 1:6 2:1 1Jn 5:7-11 3Jn 1:12
- and of all: Rev 1:19 Joh 3:11 Ac 4:20 22:15 26:16 1Jn 1:1 4:14

THE FIRSTHAND WITNESS TESTIFIES TO THE TRUTH

Who (John) testified ([martureo](#)) to the word of God - John testifies that this was His testimony not something he had heard from someone else. Revelation is a "first person account," from an eyewitness who is faithfully telling us **all he saw**.

Testified (witnessed, gain approval) ([3140](#)) [martureo](#) from [martus](#) = witness = one who has information or knowledge of something and can bring to light or confirm something. English = **martyr** in its most basic sense refers to a legal witness. Thus the verb **martureo** means to be a witness, to testify, to give evidence, to give testimony, to bear record, to affirm that one has seen or heard or experienced something. The words testified related to fact, not opinion, as in a courtroom setting. **Webster's 1828** says that to **testify** means "To make a solemn declaration, verbal or written, to establish some fact; to give testimony for the purpose of communicating to others a knowledge of something not known to them." John's testimony is certainly "solemn!"

Martureo is a used more often by John than by any other writer. - Jn. 1:7; Jn. 1:8; Jn. 1:15; Jn. 1:32; Jn. 1:34; Jn. 2:25; Jn. 3:11; Jn. 3:26; Jn. 3:28; Jn. 3:32; Jn. 4:39; Jn. 4:44; Jn. 5:31; Jn. 5:32; Jn. 5:33; Jn. 5:36; Jn. 5:37; Jn. 5:39; Jn. 7:7; Jn. 8:13; Jn. 8:14; Jn. 8:18; Jn. 10:25; Jn. 12:17; Jn. 13:21; Jn. 15:26; Jn. 15:27; Jn. 18:23; Jn. 18:37; Jn. 19:35; Jn. 21:24; 1 Jn. 1:2; 1 Jn. 4:14; 1 Jn. 5:6; 1 Jn. 5:7; 1 Jn. 5:9; 1 Jn. 5:10; 3 Jn. 1:3; 3 Jn. 1:6; 3 Jn. 1:12; Rev. 1:2; Rev. 22:16; Rev. 22:18; Rev. 22:20

And to the testimony ([marturia/martyria](#)) of Jesus Christ - CSB, NET = "testimony **about** Jesus Christ," As with the preceding phrase ("*Revelation of/from Jesus Christ*") the **testimony** can be taken as **from** Him (subjective genitive = He is the "subject") or the testimony **about** Him (objective genitive = He is the "object") ([See note above](#))

MacArthur "John bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ. Those phrases appear together again in Rev 1:9 (cf. Rev 12:17), and are used synonymously, since "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev 19:10). The word of God expressed in the book of Revelation is the testimony about the coming glory of Jesus Christ given to His church (cf. Rev 22:16) and recorded by His faithful witness, John." (See [Revelation Commentary](#))

Even to all that he saw - **Saw** is a keyword in the Revelation! So at the outset we learn that the Revelation is a very "visual" book. The word **all** tells us John kept nothing hidden from us of what he was privileged to see.

Saw in Revelation - 50x in 47v (NAS95) - Rev. 1:2; Rev. 1:12; Rev. 1:13; Rev. 1:17; Rev. 1:20; Rev. 4:4; Rev. 5:1; Rev. 5:2; Rev. 5:6; Rev. 6:1; Rev. 6:9; Rev. 7:1; Rev. 7:2; Rev. 8:2; Rev. 9:1; Rev. 9:17; Rev. 10:1; Rev. 10:5; Rev. 12:13; Rev. 13:1; Rev. 13:2; Rev. 13:3; Rev. 13:11; Rev. 14:6; Rev. 15:1; Rev. 15:2; Rev. 16:13; Rev. 17:3; Rev. 17:6; Rev. 17:8; Rev. 17:12; Rev. 17:15; Rev. 17:16; Rev. 17:18; Rev. 18:1; Rev. 18:18; Rev. 19:11; Rev. 19:17; Rev. 19:19; Rev. 20:1; Rev. 20:4; Rev. 20:11; Rev. 20:12; Rev. 21:1; Rev. 21:2; Rev. 21:22;

John MacArthur writes that "The Gospels are also about Jesus Christ, but present Him in His first coming in humiliation; the book of Revelation presents Him in His second coming in exaltation. Every vision and description of Him in Revelation is one of majesty, power, and glory." (See [Revelation Commentary](#))

Illustration of the Importance of Being a Witness - WHEN the Titanic went under, three messages had been sent that said to watch out for the icebergs. Because everything looked all right, the folks taking the message never passed it on. They never sent the warning out to people who needed to hear and, as a result, over fifteen hundred people lost their lives. The folks who knew kept quiet. Another tragedy of the Titanic was that the lifeboats, designed to carry people away from the sinking ship, were only half full. People who had made it to safety in the lifeboats didn't want to turn around and go pick up people who were dying. They didn't want to take the risk of panicking people flipping over their boat. So the people who were saved and safe kept on going. Fifteen hundred people didn't have to die, but they did. The folks who were saved didn't want to go back because it was risky. Sharing the Gospel has risks—the risk of rejection, the risk of being made fun of, the risk of being called “holier than thou,” the risk of being called “Reverend,” the risk of being avoided, the risk of being asked questions you don't know the answer to. Yes, there are risks, but when someone is dying, offering them the gift of salvation is worth the risk. (See [Tony Evans' Book of Illustrations](#))

Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

BGT Revelation 1:3 Μακ ριος ν αγιν σκων κα ο κο οντες το ς λ γους τ ς προφητε ας κα τηρο ντες τ ν α τ γεγραμμ να, γ ρ καιρ ς γγ ς.

KJV Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

NET Revelation 1:3 Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy aloud, and blessed are those who hear and obey the things written in it, because the time is near!

NLT Revelation 1:3 God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near.

ESV Revelation 1:3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

NIV Revelation 1:3 Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

GNT Revelation 1:3 μακ ριος ν αγιν σκων κα ο κο οντες το ς λ γους τ ς προφητε ας κα τηρο ντες τ ν α τ γεγραμμ να, γ ρ καιρ ς γγ ς.

KJV Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

ASV Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand.

CSB Revelation 1:3 The one who reads this is blessed, and those who hear the words of this prophecy and keep what is written in it are blessed, because the time is near!

NKJ Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

NRS Revelation 1:3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it; for the time is near.

YLT Revelation 1:3 Happy (NOT THE BEST WORD AS IT SUGGESTS ONE'S STATE DEPENDS ON WHAT "HAPPENS"!) is he who is reading, and those hearing, the words of the prophecy, and keeping the things written in it -- for the time is nigh!

- **Blessed:** Rev 22:7 Pr 8:34 Da 12:12-13 Lu 11:28
- **for:** Rev 22:6,10,12,20 Ro 13:11 Jas 5:8,9 1Pe 4:7 2Pe 3:8

Related Passages:

Proverbs 8:34 "Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at my doorposts.

Luke 11:28+ But He said, "On the contrary, **blessed** are those who **hear** the word of God **AND observe** it."
(**OBEDIENCE IS THE SECRET OF BLESSING!**)

THE CONDITIONS FOR THE PROMISED BLESSING

Blessed ([makarios](#)) is he who reads ([anaginosko](#)) - Sadly respected theologians like Martin Luther have written discouraging comments such as "*Even if it were a blessed thing to believe what is contained in it, no man knows what that is*" Beloved, Luther directly questions the veracity of the Word of God which clearly and unequivocally promises a blessing to readers, hearers and doers! And far from "frightening" as so many say, the **Revelation of Jesus Christ** will bless you **IF** you read it. But you must read with an open mind and a willingness to be taught by the Spirit of truth (Jn 14:17, 15:26, and especially Jn 16:13). You will not understand every detail John records (no one else does either), but you will understand enough to experience the promised blessing. However, the promise of blessing is predicated on the next two phrases. As an aside before you read a host of commentaries on the Revelation, spend time reading the words of the Revelation, asking the Spirit of truth Who inspired John to illuminate the truth of this book to your heart and mind and soul. Note that **reads**, **hear** and **heed** are all in the present tense calling for these actions to be our lifestyle. The Revelation should never be "[one and done](#)," but should be read again and again! And why not? Is it not encouraging to read that Jesus wins? When trials and afflictions assail us this book gives us the sure hope (not "hope so") that Jesus will be triumphant over all evil and evildoers, a truth which should energize us and enable us to keep on keeping on! (cf 1Co 15:58+) When was the last time you read the Revelation? Read it and be encouraged and be filled with hope for your present and your future!

[Guzik](#) - For example, the Anglican Church virtually omits Revelation in its regular schedule of readings for both public worship and private devotions. This is a typical attitude towards the Book of Revelation. Many people believe that only fanatics want to dig deep into this book, but really, it is a book for anyone who wants to be **blessed**. Fortunately, John didn't say that we had to *understand* everything in the Book of Revelation to be **blessed**.

THOUGHT - The Revelation of Jesus Christ will give your vertical vision which will transform your horizontal living!

Blessed ([3107](#)) [makarios](#) from root **makar**, but others say from **mak** = large or lengthy) means to be happy, but not in the usual sense of happiness based on positive circumstances. From the Biblical perspective **Makarios** describes the person who is free from daily cares and worries because his every breath and circumstance is in the hands of His Maker Who gives him such an assurance (such a "blessing"). **Makarios** was used to describe the kind of happiness that comes from receiving divine favor.

Makarios is used seven times in the Revelation - **Seven Beatitudes in the Revelation:**

1. Revelation 1:3 **Blessed** is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.
2. Revelation 14:13+ And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, **Blessed** are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!" "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."
3. Revelation 16:15+ ("Behold, I am coming like a thief. **Blessed** is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.")
4. Revelation 19:9+ Then he said to me, "Write, **Blessed** are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are true words of God."
5. Revelation 20:6+ **Blessed** and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.
6. Revelation 22:7+ "And behold, I am coming quickly. **Blessed** is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book."
7. Revelation 22:14+ **Blessed** are those who wash their robes, so that (term of purpose) they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.

And those who hear ([akouo](#)) **the words of the prophecy** ([propheteia](#)) - **Prophecy** in this context primarily means "fore telling"

(rather than "forth" telling which it also does!) primarily events yet to come to pass (exception is Rev 2-3 addressed churches in John's day). In other words, John's incredible words are not just to be [in one ear and out the other](#). It is one thing to hear with one's ears, but quite another to hear with one's heart and/or to believe what is heard! Imagine John "broadcasting" on the FM Band - our hearts need to be tuned to receive his FM signal, so to speak. The implication is that you are to believe what you read (even if you cannot fully understand it because if God says it that should settle it whether we fully understand it or not!). James says it this way "putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness (CONFESS YOUR SINS), in humility receive ([dechomai](#) = PUT THE WELCOME MAT OUT FOR) the word implanted, which is able (HAS THE SUPERNATURAL POWER) to save (NOT JUST JUSTIFICATION BUT PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION) your souls (James 1:21+)

Prophecy (4394) ([propheteia](#) from **pró** = before or forth + **phemí** = to tell, to speak) has the literal meaning of speaking forth, with no connotation of prediction or other supernatural or mystical significance. **Propheteia** can refer to either spoken or written words. **Vine** writes that "Though much of OT prophecy was purely predictive, see Micah 5:2, e.g., and compare John 11:51, prophecy is not necessarily, nor even primarily, foretelling. Prophecy is the declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means, Mt 26:68, it is the forth-telling of the will of God, whether with reference to the past, the present, or the future, see Ge 20:7; Dt. 18:18; Rev 10:11; Rev 11:3."

Propheteia is used 19 times in the NT with seven uses in the Revelation

1. Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the **prophecy**, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.
2. Revelation 11:6 These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their **prophesying**; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.
3. Revelation 19:10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he *said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of **prophecy**."
4. Revelation 22:7 "And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the **prophecy** of this book."
5. Revelation 22:10 And he *said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the **prophecy** of this book, for the time is near.
6. Revelation 22:18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the **prophecy** of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book;
7. Revelation 22:19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this **prophecy**, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

And heed ([tereo](#)) **the things which are written in it**- All three verbs **reads...hear...heed** are the present tense which speaks of "direction," not "perfection" but even *direction* is only possible as the Spirit energizes us (Our part/God's part - see Php 2:12+ = our part, Php 2:13NLT+ = God's part). To quote James "prove ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves." (James 1:22+) To **heed** means to be a **doer** of what you have heard.

[Guzik](#) - The Book of Revelation gives us much more than information for prophetic speculation. It gives us **things to keep**. If we understand the Book of Revelation, it will *change the way we live*.

Tony Garland writes that "When the average person in our country spends multiple hours in front of a television set daily, but "just can't find the time" to read God's Word, the issue is not one of time management, but idolatry."

The statement by Jesus bears repeating - "On the contrary (contrasting Lk 11:27), blessed ([makarios](#)) are those who **hear** the word of God and **observe** ([phulasso](#) - keep, guard, defend, protect) it." (Luke 11:28+)

Heed (observe) (5083) ([tereo](#) from **teros** - a guard or warden) means to keep an eye on, to keep something in view, to hold firmly, to attend carefully, or to watch over it (watchful care - Jesus' prayer to His Father for His disciples - Jn 17:11). **Tereo** speaks of watching over, of taking care of, of guarding something which is in one's possession keeping it from loss or injury. It means to watch as one would some precious thing. The idea is to observe attentively, to heed, to keep watch over and to retain in custody.

[Tereo](#) is a key verb in the book of the Revelation.

Tereo with the idea of **obey** - Mt 19:17, Mt 23:3 (tereo = observe), Mt 28:20, Jn 8:51, 52 (one who keeps Jesus' Word = a believer = one who will never see the second death in hell), Jn 9:16 (keep = observe the

Sabbath), Jn 14:15 (description of a genuine disciple - love is not just with one's lips but is validated by one's life lived in loving obedience to God), Jn 14:21, 23, 24 (NOTE - no love = no obedience = not a believer - Note Jesus is not talking about legalistic [self-effort] obedience but **Spirit enabled** obedience which is the only obedience that pleases the Father!), Jn 15:10 (used twice - note keeping commandments is one of way to abide in Jesus), Jn 15:20 (used twice), Jn 17:6 (the 11 disciples), Acts 15:5, 1Ti 6:14, James 2:10, 1Jn 2:3, 4, 5, 3:22, 1Jn 3:24, 1Jn 5:2, 3, Rev 1:3 (heed), Rev 2:26, 3:3, 3:8, 3:10, 12:17, 14:12, Rev 22:7 (heeds), Rev 22:9.

The verb **Tereo** (rendered *heed, keeps, keep, kept*) is a keyword in the Revelation **reiterating the importance of obedience in the last days** (we are IN the last days beloved! Heb 1:2+, 2Ti 3:1+) and even alluding to the fact that it will cost to keep/heed the Word of Truth!

1. Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and **heed** the things which are written in it; for the time is near.
2. Revelation 2:26 'He who overcomes, and he who **keeps** My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS;
3. Revelation 3:3 'So remember what you have received and heard; and **keep** it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.
4. Revelation 3:8 'I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have **kept** My word, and have not denied My name.
5. Revelation 3:10 'Because you have **kept** the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.
6. Revelation 12:17 So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who **keep** the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.
7. Revelation 14:12 Here is the perseverance of the saints who **keep** the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.
8. Revelation 16:15 ("Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and **keeps** his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.")
9. Revelation 22:7 "And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who **heeds** the words of the prophecy of this book."
10. Revelation 22:9 But he *said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who **heed** the words of this book. Worship God."

Written (1125)(**grapho** from root **graph-** = primarily means to scratch on or engrave as on an ornament, reports, letters, etc; **English** = graph, graphic, etc) means to engrave or inscribe with a pen or stylus characters or letters on a surface which can be wood, wax, metal, leather, stone, parchment, dirt (John), paper, etc. **Written** is in the **perfect tense** signifying it was **written** in the past and stands written, that is, with ongoing, permanent authority (cf Mt 24:35).

Uses of **grapho** in the Revelation

1. Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are **written** in it; for the time is near.
2. Revelation 1:11 saying, "**Write** in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."
3. Revelation 1:19 "Therefore **write** the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things.
4. Revelation 2:1 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus **write**: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:
5. Revelation 2:8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna **write**: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this:
6. Revelation 2:12 ("And to the angel of the church in Pergamum **write**: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this:
7. Revelation 2:17 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name **written** on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'
8. Revelation 2:18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira **write**: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:

9. Revelation 3:1 "To the angel of the church in Sardis **write**: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.
10. Revelation 3:7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia **write**: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this:
11. Revelation 3:12 'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will **write** on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
12. Revelation 3:14 "To the angel of the church in Laodicea **write**: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:
13. Revelation 5:1 I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book **written** inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals.
14. Revelation 10:4 When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not **write** them."
15. Revelation 13:8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been **written** from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.
16. Revelation 14:1 Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father **written** on their foreheads.
17. Revelation 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, **Write**, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!' "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."
18. Revelation 17:5 and on her forehead a name was **written**, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."
19. Revelation 17:8 "The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been **written** in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.
20. Revelation 19:9 Then he *said to me, **Write**, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he *said to me, "These are true words of God."
21. Revelation 19:12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name **written** on Him which no one knows except Himself.
22. Revelation 19:16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name **written**, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."
23. Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were **written** in the books, according to their deeds.
24. Revelation 20:15 And if anyone's name was not found **written** in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.
25. Revelation 21:5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He *said, **Write**, for these words are faithful and true."
26. Revelation 21:27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are **written** in the Lamb's book of life.
27. Revelation 22:18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are **written** in this book;
28. Revelation 22:19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are **written** in this book.

Strauss - No book in the Bible has an introduction and a conclusion quite like this one. It commences with a promised blessing (Rev 1:3) and closes with a promised blessing (Rev 22:7+). Altogether there are seven beatitudes, the word "blessed" appearing seven times. It is the same word used by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-11). The beatitudes of the Revelation provide seven texts for an interesting study:

- The Blessed Challenge (Rev 1:3)
- The Blessed Comfort (Rev 14:13)
- The Blessed Cautiousness (Rev 16:15)
- The Blessed Calling (Rev 19:9)
- The Blessed Conquest (Rev 20:6)

- The Blessed Cherishing (Rev 22:7)
- The Blessed Conformity (Rev 22:14)

In the text before us there are three requisites necessary to receiving the promised blessing. First, "Blessed is he that readeth." The reader here is no doubt the lector, the one whose duty it was to read publicly in the synagogue or church (Luke 4:16-20; Acts 13:14, 27; 15:21; 2 Corinthians 3:15). Paul might have had this in mind when he said to Timothy, "Give attendance to reading" (1 Timothy 4:13). In the early days of the Church before the invention of the printing press, a limited number of handwritten copies necessitated a public reader to go from church to church. There is no doubt in my mind, however, that the promised blessing is to all who take up this book and read it with regularity and reverence.

Secondly, the blessing is promised to those that "hear the words of this prophecy." It is, as we have already stated, the open (or circumcised) ear that is required. This admonition is of such tremendous import, it appears at the very commencement, and again at the close of the Book (Rev 22:18).

Thirdly, the blessing is promised to all who "keep those things which are written therein." F. W. Grant said, "This 'keeping' is observing them in such a way that our practical conduct shall be governed by them." To keep is to give heed to, as of keeping our Lord's commandments (John 14:15; 15:10; 17:6; 1 John 2:3-5; 3:22-24; Revelation 2:26; 3:8, 10; 12:17; 14:12; 22:7, 9). (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

For (gar) - Term of explanation. John explains that there is some urgency in reading, hearing and heeding this message. It is not a message you want to discard to read at a later time. Read it today. Heed it today. Your today and your tomorrow will be blessed forever and ever.

THOUGHT - In simple terms **for** is a [term of explanation](#) and its occurrence should always prompt one to pause and ponder the text and context, always asking at least one [5W/H](#) question "*What is the text explaining?*" which will force you to examine the preceding passages, which in turn will hone or refine your skill of [observation](#) and help you establish the [context](#), which will lead to a more accurate [Interpretation](#), which is essential for valid [Application](#) of the text.

While not every "for" in the Bible is a [term of explanation](#), most are and since there are over 7500 uses of **for** (NAS), you will have ample opportunity to observe and interrogate the text. Two clues that the **for** is a term of explanation - (1) It is at the beginning of the sentence or clause or (2) you can substitute the word "because" and it makes good sense. As you practice this discipline of pausing to ponder, you are establishing the [context](#) (which leads to more accurate [interpretation](#) and thus more apropos [application](#)) and you are in effect engaging in the blessed activity of [Biblical Meditation](#) (See Ps 1:2+, Ps 1:3+ and Joshua 1:8+ for the blessed benefits of [meditation](#) = I like to call it a "mini-meditation"). This discipline will also implant the Word more firmly in your heart. In other words, it will help you memorize the text.

The time ([kairos](#)) **is near** ([eggus](#)) - Time phrases should always prompt questions "What time is it?" In context, this **time** refers to the **time** of the end of this present evil age (Gal 1:4+), and this time will come to an abrupt end with the triumphant return of Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:11-16+). Remember that His return is always imminent, and so the **time** is always "**near**." The only other use of **eggus** in Revelation is Revelation 22:10+ "And he *said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for (term of explanation) the time ([kairos](#)) is **near**."

THOUGHT - If you believe in the Rapture (this writer does), the return of Jesus to Rapture His church could occur at any moment. Are you ready to meet Him? Do you know Him as your Savior/Redeemer/Friend or do you know Him only as Judge (cf Jn 5:22, 27, 30+; Rev 20:11+)? There is no middle ground -- you are either for Him or against Him and this truth will become crystal clear (every eye will see Him - Rev 1:7+, cf Php 2:10-11+) when He returns, but then it will be too late. If you know Jesus only as **Judge**, then today could be your day of salvation, because today is the acceptable time (2 Cor 6:2+) and you dare not put off receiving Him as your Savior, Redeemer and Friend, the Who will rescue you from the wrath to come (1 Th 1:10+).

Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow.

You are just a vapor that appears for a little while |

and then vanishes away.

-- James 4:14+

Most of the world (including sadly many in the professing church) will continue to scoff at John's words that the **time is near**, even as Peter prophesied they would, for they would ask...

"Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from

the beginning of creation (WHICH OF COURSE IS NOT TRUE BECAUSE GOD SENT A GLOBAL FLOOD WHICH MANY DENY)." (2 Peter 3:4+)

John MacArthur - the Bible repeatedly affirms that Jesus will return. That truth appears in **more than five hundred verses throughout the Bible**. It has been estimated that **one out of every twenty-five verses in the New Testament** refers to the Second Coming. Jesus repeatedly spoke of His return (e.g., Matt. 16:27; 24-25; 26:64; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26) and warned believers to be ready for it (e.g., Matt. 24:42, 44; 25:13; Luke 12:40; 21:34-36). The return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth is thus a central theme in Scripture.

Paul wrote almost 2000 years ago warning the saints at Rome regarding the shortness of time

Do this, knowing the **time** (**kairos**) that it is **already the hour** for you to awaken from sleep (DEAR SAINT ARE YOU SPIRITUALLY ASLEEP? THEN READ ON FOR MOTIVATION!); for **now** salvation is **nearer** to us than **when** we believed (AKA "GLORIFICATION" - SEE [Three Tenses of Salvation](#)). 12 The **night is almost gone** (cf 1Th 5:5-7+), and **the day is near**. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. 14 But **put on** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) for the flesh in regard to its lusts. (Ro 13:11-14+)



Greek Statue "Kairos"
(See REDEEM THE TIME)

Time (season, opportunity, epoch) (2540)(**kairos**) refers not to clock time as we normally think of it (that is the Greek chronos), but refers to a season of time, a given period of time. Think of fruit on a tree. The tree only bears fruit in a certain season. The "fruit" in this context is the appearance of our Savior in His "season." And John says the "fruit tree" is ripening (so to speak) and will soon bear fruit! For some this will be a day of great joy but for most of mankind (sadly - cf Mt 7:13,14+) it will be a time of dread and gloom for all who have rejected God's free gift of salvation by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9+). When this tree bears fruit so to speak, it will be **too late** to believe in Jesus! Dear honest skeptic, don't procrastinate, for your eternal destiny hangs in the balance and you are being kept back from the flames of eternal torment by nothing but a "spider's web" of grace! (Read [Jonathan Edward's sermon "Sinners In the Hands of an Angry God"](#)) And when the web of God's "kindness and forbearance and patience" (Ro 2:4+) "breaks," it will be too late! (cf 2Co 6:2+, Heb 3:7-8+, Heb 4:1,2+)

Kairos in the Revelation:

1. Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the **time** is near.
2. Revelation 11:18+ "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the **time** came ("THE FRUIT WAS RIPE TO BE HARVESTED") for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."
3. Revelation 12:12+ "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short **time**." (IN CONTEXT - 3.5 YEARS - THE GREAT TRIBULATION - 1260 DAYS - 42 MONTHS - TIME, TIMES AND HALF A TIME).
4. Revelation 12:14+ But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she *was nourished for a **time** and **times** and half a **time**, from the presence of the serpent. (IN CONTEXT - 3.5 YEARS - THE GREAT TRIBULATION - 1260 DAYS - 42

MONTHS - TIME, TIMES AND HALF A TIME).

5. Revelation 22:10+ And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the **time** is near.

Near (1451) **eggus** is an adverb which means near (or close) and can describe a **physical** position relatively close to another position (Lk 19:11 or also a **temporal** position of one point of time relatively close to another point of time (Mt 26:18 - referring to His Crucifixion). Joel uses **eggus** 3x to describe the Day of the LORD as near (Joel 1:15, 2:1, 3:14, cp Ezek 30:3). Matthew and Mark describe Jesus' imminent return as "at the doors" (Mt. 24:33; Mk 13:29) which means it is near. The Passover is described as near (Jn 2:13, 6:4, 11:55) Ro 10:18 describes the Lord as **near** or close at hand, meaning ready to help (quoting Dt. 30:14). **Thayer** defines **eggus** as "**near**," adding that it speaks of "things imminent and soon to come to pass."

Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

BGT Revelation 1:4 ω ννης τα ς πτ κκλησ αις τα ς ν τ σ · χ ρις μ ν κα ε ρ νη π ν κα ν κα ρ χ μενο ς κα π τ ν πτ πνευμ των ν πιον το θρ νου α το

KJV Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

NET Revelation 1:4 From John, to the seven churches that are in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from "he who is," and who was, and who is still to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,

NLT Revelation 1:4 This letter is from John to the seven churches in the province of Asia. Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit before his throne;

ESV Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,

NIV Revelation 1:4 John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne,

GNT Revelation 1:4 ω ννης τα ς πτ κκλησ αις τα ς ν τ σ · χ ρις μ ν κα ε ρ νη π ν κα ν κα ρ χ μενο ς κα π τ ν πτ πνευμ των ν πιον το θρ νου α το

KJV Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

ASV Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits that are before his throne;

CSB Revelation 1:4 John: To the seven churches in Asia. Grace and peace to you from the One who is, who was, and who is coming; from the seven spirits before His throne;

NKJ Revelation 1:4 John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

NRS Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,

YLT Revelation 1:4 John to the seven assemblies that are in Asia: Grace to you, and peace, from Him who is, and who was, and who is coming, and from the Seven Spirits that are before His throne,

- **John:** Rev 1:1
- **to the:** Rev 1:11,20 2:1,8,12,18 3:1,7,14 Ac 19:10 1Pe 1:1
- **Grace:** Ro 1:7 1Co 1:3 2Co 1:2 1Pe 1:2
- **him:** Rev 1:8 Ex 3:14 Ps 90:2 102:25-27 Isa 41:4 57:15 Mic 5:2 Joh 1:1 Heb 1:10-13 13:8 Jas 1:17
- **from the:** Rev 3:1, 4:5, 5:6 Zec 3:9, 4:10, 6:5 1Co 12:4-13

Related Passages:

Revelation 1:8 "I am (ego eimi) the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, **'Who is and Who was and Who is to come, the Almighty.'**

JOHN TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES
Source: ConformingToJesus.com

THE RECIPIENTS OF THIS LETTER

John to the seven (hepta) churches (ekklesia) that are in Asia - John's initial audience is clearly stated and refers to seven literal churches and not the way it is stated - all 7 churches receive the entire "letter" of Revelation. We've heard the expression "reading someone's mail!" In this case God wants all 7 churches to read each others mail! **Asia** refers to the western half of modern day Turkey (see light green area in modern day Turkey in map above), and not the "Far East" which we refer to as "Asia" today. **Churches** refers to the physical churches that were present in each of these cities. This **seven** is the first of 54 uses of "**seven**" in the book of the Revelation. (See [Seven: Perfection, Completeness](#))

THOUGHT - Why might Revelation have more uses of the number 7 than all the other NT books combined (which it does)? Just pondering this plethora of "sevens" in the last book of the Bible which would seem to undergird the truth that this book is the completion of God's great plan of redemption which began in Genesis. **Henry Morris** writes "The reason for its pervasive use in Revelation is undoubtedly to emphasize that this book completes God's written revelation to man." (Borrow [Defender's Study Bible](#)) Revelation is like God's loud "AMEN" to His grand story of redemption of mankind and the heavens and the earth.

Grace (charis) to you and peace (eirene) - The message begins with **grace and peace** and will end with **grace** (Rev 22:21+), and reminds us that we are always in need of grace, from the beginning to the very end of our Christian life! **Grace** is the supernatural atmosphere in which a Christian "lives and breathes." Stated another way supernatural grace is absolutely necessary for a believer to live a supernatural life. We were saved by grace (Eph 2:8-9+), must now live by grace (1Co 15:10+) and one day will be glorified by grace (1Pe 1:13+, Ro 5:2+). Grace truly is amazing! Notice the order of the text which is important - first **grace**, then **peace**. We cannot experience God's **peace** until we have experienced God's **grace**.

MacDonald - **Grace** means the undeserved favor of God and **the strength that is needed in the Christian life day by day**. **Peace** is the resulting calm that enables the believer to face persecution, sorrow, and even death itself. Grace and peace are said to come from the Trinity.

From Him Who is and Who was and Who is to come (literally - "Him Who is, and Who was, and Who is coming"), **and from the seven (hepta) Spirits (pneuma) who are before His throne (throne)** - The Source of **grace and peace** is ("from") the God of all grace (1Pe 5:10) and from the Holy Spirit, Who is the "Spirit of grace" (Heb 10:29, cf Spirit and peace = Ro 8:6, Ro 14:17, Ro 15:13, Gal 5:22). But to Whom does this "**Him**" refer, the Father or the Son? Letting context rule the interpretation would be the Father, as the Son is mentioned separately in Rev 1:5 ("and **from** Jesus Christ"). Notice the three uses of "from," so what John is saying is this book is from all Three members of the Trinity and similarly the source of grace and peace is the Father, the Spirit and the Son. It is notable that **Him Who is and who was and who is to come** refers here to the Father and in Rev 1:8 the same description refers to the Son, which should not surprise or disturb us because Jesus Himself said "I and the Father are one." (Jn 10:30). **Seven Spirits** is clearly figurative language, as there is only one Holy Spirit. Here the **Seven** would refer to the perfection or completeness of the Holy Spirit.

Why does this description say it is the Father **'Who is to come'** for we know it is the Son in the same description in Rev 1:8? The answer surely reflects the oneness of the Father and the Son. Yes it is the Son Who returns, but as Jesus said "I and the Father are one." (Jn 10:30). This is a mystery we cannot fully comprehend now.

Swindoll on Him Who is and Who was and Who is to come - We see this same description in the song of the four living creatures in 4:8. As an allusion to the divine name "I AM" in Exodus 3:14, it indicates God's complete transcendence over all history—past, present, and future. God is just as much in control of our unknown future and unnerving present as He is of our unpleasant past. (Insights on Revelation)

Seven Spirits as noted is clearly figurative but even someone who is generally quite literal, [Dr Henry Morris \(p 1428 Defender's Study Bible\)](#) seems to let his imagination roam writing "This sevenfold nature of the Spirit presumably speaks of His ministry in the whole world." Be a Berean (Acts 17:11+) and ask if there is anything in the context that would lead to that interpretation? Please write me if you find something to support this interpretation.

Some commentaries say the 7 spirits are "little s" spirits or angels. Remembering that context is the key to accurate interpretation,

what truth makes that very unlikely? The context (always "king" in interpretation) says that the Seven Spirits are a source for grace and peace, something angels do not do. Note carefully the three successive uses of "from" - **from Him** (the Father)...**from the seven Spirits** ("sevenfold Spirit" - NLT)...**from Jesus Christ** (Rev 1:5). Something is from the Father and the Son, which makes the middle designation as "seven angels" incongruous to say the least. And where in Scripture do we see that specific statement that grace and peace (or each by itself) is "from" angels? Angels are ministers and messengers but they are not the source.

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire
And lighten with celestial fire;
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.

MacArthur says "There are two possible meanings: (1) a reference to Isaiah's prophecy concerning the 7-fold ministry of the Holy Spirit (Isa 11:2); or (2) more likely, it is a reference to the lampstand with 7 lamps (a menorah) in Zechariah—also a description of the Holy Spirit (Zech 4:5; 5:6; Zec 4:1-10 - ED: See esp Zech 4:10NLT). In either case, **7 is the number of completeness, so John is identifying the fullness of the Holy Spirit.**" (Borrow [MacArthur Study Bible - page 1992](#)) (ED COMMENT - His last comment seems the most reasonable and defensible from the Scriptures).

Several commentaries feel that the passage in Isaiah 11 explains the "seven" in seven Spirits. Here is the passage they refer to followed by some comments...

Isaiah 11:2+ The **Spirit of the LORD** will rest on Him (MESSIAH), The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

Comment: The Spirit of the LORD is clearly the Holy Spirit. Then Isaiah seems to list 6 characteristics of the Holy Spirit. For some reason many writers see this as a "**seven fold ministry**" of the Holy Spirit. It can only be **seven fold** if you count His designation "**Spirit of the LORD.**" The only reason I draw your attention to this is because it is commonly used to support the assumption that the **Seven Spirits** here in Rev 1:4 parallel Isaiah's description. Perhaps I am nit-picking, but I do not see a seven-fold ministry. I suppose if one thought about a menorah (which has 7 branches) and called the Spirit the central branch, this interpretation might be a consideration. I say all this only to caution you not to be too quick to accept interpretations of even well known commentators without **first doing your own careful observations.** **Avoid the temptation to go to the commentaries before you have pondered the passage yourself!**

Robert Thomas agrees writing "Another idea is to trace the title to Isa 11:2 where a supposedly sevenfold designation of the Spirit is found (Lenski; Walvoord; Morris; Caird). This notion is inadequate, however, because Isa. 11:2 points out **only six**, not seven, energies of the Spirit (Alford; Beckwith). (See [Revelation Exegetical Commentary](#))

Seven (2033)(hepta [see also note below from gotquestions and [another note](#)]) is the indeclinable number 7 (a [cardinal number](#)) denotes sufficiency. In Jewish usage **hepta** often designated a round or complete number. **W E Vine** notes hepa- is found in "English words beginning with "hept," and corresponds to the Hebrew sheba' (which is akin to saba', signifying "to be full, abundant"), sometimes used as an expression of fullness, e.g., Ruth 4:15: it generally expresses completeness," See Tony Garland's comments on [Seven: Perfection, Completeness](#).

Here are the uses of 7 in the Revelation- churches (Rev 1:4), Spirits (Rev 1:4), candlesticks or lamp stands (Rev 1:12), stars (Rev 1:16), lamps of fire (Rev 4:5), seals (Rev 5:1), horns (Rev 5:6), eyes (Rev 5:6), angels (Rev 8:2), trumpets (Rev 8:2), thunders (Rev 10:3), heads (on the red dragon, Rev 12:3; on the beast out of the sea, Rev 13:1; and on the scarlet colored beast, Rev 17:3), crowns on the red dragon (Rev 12:3), plagues (Rev 15:1), vials (Rev 15:7), mountains (Rev 17:9), and kings (Rev 17:10).

Gilbrant - In the New Testament as indeed throughout all Scripture, perhaps stemming from the 7 days of creation, the numeral "seven" often suggests completeness, totality, perfection, fullness. For example the idea of completeness is also seen in Christ's prescription for forgiveness, "seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:22). Used as a substantive with the definite article, hepta designates a fixed group. The seven church officials (Acts 6:3) became known as "the seven" (Acts 21:8), much like the designation "the twelve" (Acts 6:2). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

Zodhiates says he meaning of **hepta** "is from the Hebrew word meaning sufficiency or fullness. It was on the seventh day that the Lord completed or finished all His work of creation, or made it sufficient for the purposes for which it was designed (Ge. 2:2). The seventh day was also sanctified, or set apart, from the beginning as a religious Sabbath, or rest, to remind believers of that rest which God then entered into and of that sufficiency

or fullness of joy which is in His presence forevermore (Ps. 16:11). Hence the very early and general division of time into weeks or periods of seven days, and the sacredness of the seventh day, not only among believers before the giving of the law, but also among the heathen for which they give the very same reason as Moses does (Gen. 2:2); namely, that on it all things were ended or completed (cf. Gen. 7:4, 10; 8:10, 12; 29:27; Ex. 16:22, 31; Heb. 4:1-11). Seven, therefore, was both among believers and nonbelievers the **number of sufficiency or completion**. Note also the seventy weeks of the prophecy of Daniel (Da. 9:20-27) of which the last week, the seventieth week, represented the Great Tribulation which would come on earth (Rev. 6-19), indicating the *sufficiency* of God's dispensation of grace. See Acts 6:3; Rev. 1:4, 12, 16; 2:1 (cf. Gen. 21:28; Ex. 37:23; Lev. 4:6, 17). (Borrow [The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

Hepta - 88x/63v - Matt. 12:45; Matt. 15:34; Matt. 15:36; Matt. 15:37; Matt. 16:10; Matt. 18:22; Matt. 22:25; Matt. 22:26; Matt. 22:28; Mk. 8:5; Mk. 8:6; Mk. 8:8; Mk. 8:20; Mk. 12:20; Mk. 12:22; Mk. 12:23; Mk. 16:9; Lk. 2:36; Lk. 8:2; Lk. 11:26; Lk. 20:29; Lk. 20:31; Lk. 20:33; Acts 6:3; Acts 13:19; Acts 19:14; Acts 20:6; Acts 21:4; Acts 21:8; Acts 21:27; Acts 28:14; Heb. 11:30; Rev. 1:4; Rev. 1:11; Rev. 1:12; Rev. 1:16; Rev. 1:20; Rev. 2:1; Rev. 3:1; Rev. 4:5; Rev. 5:1; Rev. 5:5; Rev. 5:6; Rev. 6:1; Rev. 8:2; Rev. 8:6; Rev. 10:3; Rev. 10:4; Rev. 11:13; Rev. 12:3; Rev. 13:1; Rev. 15:1; Rev. 15:6; Rev. 15:7; Rev. 15:8; Rev. 16:1; Rev. 17:1; Rev. 17:3; Rev. 17:7; Rev. 17:9; Rev. 17:10; Rev. 17:11; Rev. 21:9

Hepta in the Septuagint - Gen. 4:15; Gen. 4:24; Gen. 5:7; Gen. 5:25; Gen. 7:2; Gen. 7:3; Gen. 7:4; Gen. 7:10; Gen. 8:10; Gen. 8:12; Gen. 11:21; Gen. 21:28; Gen. 21:29; Gen. 21:30; Gen. 23:1; Gen. 25:17; Gen. 29:18; Gen. 29:20; Gen. 29:27; Gen. 29:30; Gen. 31:23; Gen. 37:2; Gen. 41:2; Gen. 41:3; Gen. 41:4; Gen. 41:5; Gen. 41:6; Gen. 41:7; Gen. 41:18; Gen. 41:19; Gen. 41:20; Gen. 41:22; Gen. 41:23; Gen. 41:24; Gen. 41:26; Gen. 41:27; Gen. 41:29; Gen. 41:30; Gen. 41:34; Gen. 41:35; Gen. 41:36; Gen. 41:47; Gen. 41:48; Gen. 41:50; Gen. 41:53; Gen. 41:54; Gen. 46:25; Gen. 47:28; Gen. 50:10; Exod. 2:16; Exod. 6:16; Exod. 7:25; Exod. 12:15; Exod. 12:19; Exod. 13:7; Exod. 23:15; Exod. 25:37; Exod. 29:30; Exod. 29:35; Exod. 29:37; Exod. 34:18; Exod. 37:23; Lev. 8:33; Lev. 8:35; Lev. 12:2; Lev. 12:5; Lev. 13:4; Lev. 13:5; Lev. 13:21; Lev. 13:26; Lev. 13:31; Lev. 13:33; Lev. 13:50; Lev. 13:54; Lev. 14:8; Lev. 14:38; Lev. 15:13; Lev. 15:19; Lev. 15:24; Lev. 15:28; Lev. 22:27; Lev. 23:6; Lev. 23:8; Lev. 23:15; Lev. 23:18; Lev. 23:34; Lev. 23:36; Lev. 23:39; Lev. 23:40; Lev. 23:42; Lev. 25:8; Lev. 26:21; Num. 1:31; Num. 2:8; Num. 2:31; Num. 8:2; Num. 12:14; Num. 12:15; Num. 13:22; Num. 19:11; Num. 19:14; Num. 19:16; Num. 23:1; Num. 23:4; Num. 23:14; Num. 23:29; Num. 28:11; Num. 28:17; Num. 28:19; Num. 28:21; Num. 28:24; Num. 28:27; Num. 28:29; Num. 29:2; Num. 29:4; Num. 29:8; Num. 29:10; Num. 29:12; Num. 29:32; Num. 29:36; Num. 31:19; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 15:1; Deut. 16:3; Deut. 16:4; Deut. 16:9; Deut. 16:13; Deut. 16:15; Deut. 28:7; Deut. 28:25; Deut. 31:10; Jos. 6:8; Jos. 6:13; Jos. 15:62; Jos. 18:2; Jos. 18:5; Jos. 18:6; Jos. 18:9; Jdg. 6:1; Jdg. 8:14; Jdg. 12:9; Jdg. 14:10; Jdg. 14:12; Jdg. 14:17; Jdg. 16:7; Jdg. 16:8; Jdg. 16:13; Jdg. 16:14; Jdg. 16:19; Ruth 4:15; 1 Sam. 2:5; 1 Sam. 6:1; 1 Sam. 10:8; 1 Sam. 11:3; 1 Sam. 13:8; 1 Sam. 16:10; 1 Sam. 31:13; 2 Sam. 2:11; 2 Sam. 5:5; 2 Sam. 6:13; 2 Sam. 8:4; 2 Sam. 21:6; 2 Sam. 21:9; 2 Sam. 23:39; 1 Ki. 2:11; 1 Ki. 2:35; 1 Ki. 6:6; 1 Ki. 8:65; 1 Ki. 14:21; 1 Ki. 16:15; 1 Ki. 19:18; 1 Ki. 20:29; 1 Ki. 20:30; 2 Ki. 3:9; 2 Ki. 8:1; 2 Ki. 8:2; 2 Ki. 8:3; 2 Ki. 11:21; 1 Chr. 3:4; 1 Chr. 3:24; 1 Chr. 5:13; 1 Chr. 7:5; 1 Chr. 9:25; 1 Chr. 10:12; 1 Chr. 12:25; 1 Chr. 12:34; 1 Chr. 15:26; 1 Chr. 18:4; 1 Chr. 18:18; 1 Chr. 29:27; 2 Chr. 7:8; 2 Chr. 7:9; 2 Chr. 13:9; 2 Chr. 24:1; 2 Chr. 29:21; 2 Chr. 30:21; 2 Chr. 30:22; 2 Chr. 30:23; 2 Chr. 35:17; Ezr. 2:38; Ezr. 2:39; Ezr. 2:65; Ezr. 6:22; Ezr. 7:14; Ezr. 8:35; Neh. 7:18; Neh. 7:19; Neh. 7:41; Neh. 7:42; Neh. 7:67; Neh. 7:72; Neh. 8:18; Est. 1:1; Est. 1:10; Est. 2:9; Est. 2:18; Est. 3:12; Est. 3:13; Est. 8:9; Est. 8:12; Job 1:2; Job 2:13; Job 42:8; Job 42:13; Prov. 9:1; Prov. 26:25; Eccl. 11:2; Isa. 4:1; Isa. 11:15; Jer. 15:9; Jer. 32:9; Jer. 52:25; Ezek. 3:15; Ezek. 3:16; Ezek. 39:9; Ezek. 40:6; Ezek. 40:22; Ezek. 40:26; Ezek. 41:3; Ezek. 43:25; Ezek. 43:26; Ezek. 44:26; Ezek. 45:21; Ezek. 45:23; Ezek. 45:25; Dan. 4:16; Dan. 4:32; Dan. 4:33; Dan. 4:34; Dan. 6:1; Dan. 6:3; Dan. 9:25; Dan. 9:26; Mic. 5:5; Zech. 3:9; Zech. 4:2; Zech. 4:10;

Churches (1577) **ekklesia** from **ek** = out + **klesis** = a calling, verb = **kaleo** = to call) literally means called out (but see note by Louw-Nida below) and as commonly used in the Greco-Roman vernacular referred to citizens who were *called out* from their homes to be publicly assembled or gathered to discuss or carry out affairs of state. **Wuest** writes that "The word **assembly** is a good one-word translation of **ekklesia**." **Church** - English word - derived from Middle English **chirche**, from Old English **cirice**, ultimately from Late Greek **kyriakon** (**doma** - house) = a temple of God, from Greek neuter of **kyriakos** = of the Lord or pertaining to the Lord from **kyrios** lord, master. **Friberg** - (1) in a general sense, as a gathering of citizens assembly, meeting (Acts 19:32); (2) as the assembled people of Israel congregation (Heb 2:12); (3) as the assembled Christian community church, congregation, meeting (Ro 16:5); (4) as the totality of Christians living in one place church (Acts 8:1); (5) as the universal body of believers church (Eph 1:22) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

Ekklesia in Revelation - Rev. 1:4; Rev. 1:11; Rev. 1:20; Rev. 2:1; Rev. 2:7; Rev. 2:8; Rev. 2:11; Rev. 2:12; Rev. 2:17; Rev. 2:18; Rev. 2:23; Rev. 2:29; Rev. 3:1; Rev. 3:6; Rev. 3:7; Rev. 3:13; Rev. 3:14; Rev. 3:22; Rev. 22:16

Related Resources from Gotquestions.org

- [Questions about the Church](#) (e.g., [What is the church?](#))
- [What was the first / original church? Is the original / first church the true church?](#)

Grace (favor) (5485) **charis** from from **chairo** = to rejoice. English = charity. Beggars need "charity" even as sinners need *grace*, for we are all spiritual paupers outside of Christ, but "*God gives where he finds empty hands*" - Augustine [cp Mt 5:3+] is a word which defies a simple definition but at its core conveys the sense of undeserved or unmerited favor, and more specific aspects of **charis** depend on the **context** in which it is used. For example, grace is necessary for believers to be spiritually strengthened, Paul commanding Timothy "**be strong** (**present imperative** see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) **in the grace** that is in Christ Jesus." (2Ti 2:1+). The word **grace** is one of the greatest word in the Scriptures, even greater even than "love," because **grace** is (God's) love in action, and therefore includes it. It is hardly too much to say that God has in no word uttered Himself and all that was in His heart more distinctly than in this word grace (charis)! **Spurgeon** says "the grace of God both restrains and constrains us; it makes us free to holiness (**ED: AND ENABLES US TO PURSUE HOLINESS**), and delivers us from the law of sin and death by "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus." (Ro 8:2)"

Adrian Rogers says the best definition of grace that he has ever heard is that God's grace is "both the **desire** and the **ability** to do the will of God." It is striking that almost the same words occur in Php 2:13NLT± "**For** ([term of explanation](#) - explains how it is possible to Work out our salvation - Php 2:12±) God is working in you, giving you the **DESIRE** and the **POWER** to do what pleases Him." When you have a godly desire, that desire is from God, because no good thing can come out of our old vile heart! And only God the Spirit in us can give the supernatural power necessary to accomplish that godly desire! So we could paraphrase Php 2:13, in simple words, by saying that God's Spirit is continually giving us the grace (desire and power) to do what pleases Him! This practical definition of grace ought to free many of us who are "trying to clean ourselves up!" It can't be done! We need His grace to give us the desire to "clean up" and the power to "clean up!" Are you resisting His grace? You can either receive it or resist it! The first way leaves us filled, while the second way leaves us empty, dry, and spiritually barren. O beloved, tell God you desperately need and want Him to pour out His grace on the situation you find yourself entwined. Do you have a root of bitterness? Then confess it (even that act is a reflection of His grace) and cry out for His grace to give you the desire and the ability to eradicate that deadly root and its caustic fruit. And keep crying out until He removes the root, for it is in His will that no child of His should ever have a root of bitterness! And when He removes it, celebrate with a praise and worship service!

Peace (1515) **eirene** from verb **eiro** = to join or bind together that which has been separated) literally pictures the binding or joining together again of that which had been separated or divided and thus setting at one again, a meaning conveyed by the common expression of one "having it all together". It follows that peace is the opposite of division or dissension. **Peace** as a state of concord and harmony is the opposite of war. **Peace** was used as a greeting or farewell corresponding to the Hebrew word shalom - "peace to you". **Eirene** can convey the sense of an inner rest, well being and harmony. The ultimate peace is the state of reconciliation with God, that results from placing one's faith in the Gospel of peace (Eph 6:15+). In eschatology, peace is an essential characteristic of the Messianic kingdom (Acts 10:36). Eirene is a component of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22+).

Spirits (4151) **pneuma** from **pneo** = to breath) means wind (air moving like a breeze, etc Jn 3:8, Lxx of Ge 8:1), breath (of God's mouth to destroy - 2Th 2:8), of breath necessary for life (Rev 11:11, cf Lxx of Ge 6:17, 7:15, 22, creative breath in Ps 33:6), disposition, spiritual state, an angelic or demonic spirit. . - Note this is only a summary of the vast amount of material available on Pneuma. **Pneuma** in NT - 380x in 345 verses and in the **NAS** is translated breath(3), Spirit (239), spirit(103), spirits(32), spiritual(1), wind(1), winds(1). Summary:

1. a movement of air (a gentle blast 1a) of the wind, hence the wind itself 1b) breath of nostrils or mouth
2. the spirit, i.e. the vital principal by which the body is animated 2a) the rational spirit, the power by which the human being feels, thinks, decides 2b) the soul
3. a spirit, i.e. a simple essence, devoid of all or at least all grosser matter, and possessed of the power of knowing, desiring, deciding, and acting 3a) a life giving spirit 3b) a human soul that has left the body 3c) a spirit higher than man but lower than God, i.e. an angel 3c1) used of demons, or evil spirits, who were conceived as inhabiting the bodies of men 3c2) the spiritual nature of Christ, higher than the highest angels and equal to God, the divine nature of Christ
4. of God 4a) God's power and agency distinguishable in thought from his essence in itself considered 4a1) manifest in the course of affairs 4a2) by its influence upon the souls productive in the theocratic body (the church) of all the higher spiritual gifts and blessings 4a3) the third person of the trinity, the God the Holy Spirit
5. the disposition or influence which fills and governs the soul of any one 5a) the efficient source of any power, affection, emotion, desire, etc.

The 17 mentions of Spirit referring to the Holy Spirit in the Revelation -

Rev 1:4 (SEVEN SPIRITS) John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from **the seven Spirits** who are before His throne,

Rev 3:1 (SEVEN SPIRITS) "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has **the seven Spirits of God** and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

Rev 4:5 (SEVEN SPIRITS) Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are **the seven Spirits of God**;

Rev 5:6 (SEVEN SPIRITS) And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are **the seven Spirits of God**, sent out into all the earth.

Rev 1:10 I was **in the Spirit** on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet,

Rev 2:7 'He who has an ear, let him hear **what the Spirit says** to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'

Rev 2:11 'He who has an ear, let him hear **what the Spirit says** to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'

Rev 2:17 'He who has an ear, let him hear **what the Spirit says** to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

Rev 2:29 'He who has an ear, let him hear **what the Spirit says** to the churches.'

Rev 3:6 'He who has an ear, let him hear **what the Spirit says** to the churches.'

Rev 3:13 'He who has an ear, let him hear **what the Spirit says** to the churches.'

Rev 3:22 'He who has an ear, let him hear **what the Spirit says** to the churches.'"

Rev 4:2 Immediately I was **in the Spirit**; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne.

Rev 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," **says the Spirit**, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

Rev 17:3 And he carried me away **in the Spirit** into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away **in the Spirit** to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev 22:17 **The Spirit and the bride say**, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.

Related Resources from Gotquestions.org:

- [The Identity of the Holy Spirit](#)
- [The Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#)
- [The Work of the Holy Spirit](#)
- [All the questions about the Holy Spirit](#)

Throne (2362)(**thronos**) (See [Throne of God below](#)) describes a seat of authority as with the throne of God (Heb. 4:16, "the throne of grace," Heb 8:1; Heb 12:2; Rev 1:4; Rev 3:21; Rev. 4:2; Rev. 5:1 Rev. 20:12; Lxx - Ps 47:8, Ps 103:19), the throne of Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:8; Rev. 3:21; Rev. 22:3; in the Millennium = Mt 19:28), by metonymy (or figuratively) used for angelic powers (Col. 1:16), of the apostles (Mt 19:28, Lk 22:30), elders in heaven (Rev 4:4), of the throne of David (Lk 1:32, Acts 2:30), of the throne of Satan (Rev 2:13), of the throne of the beast, the antichrist (Rev 13:2, Rev 16:10).

Gilbrant - Thronos originally denoted a chair with a footstool and later a chair with a high back and arms. Initially thronos held no special symbolic value; however, gradually it came to symbolize "authority." In time it became the "seat of honor" reserved for the master of a household. As a special gesture of respect and honor, certain guests were invited to sit upon the thronos of a household.

Septuagint Usage - The oriental throne as a symbol of ruling authority was adopted by Israel during the kingdom period. Six steps and a footstool of gold led up to Solomon's throne (2 Chronicles 9:18). It was said that its majesty was without equal in any of the neighboring kingdoms. The throne symbolized power as well as justice; thus, it was simultaneously the seat of a ruler and a judge. Ezekiel saw in his vision that the temple houses God's throne (Ezekiel 43:7). This is an extension of the thought that the mercy seat was God's throne on earth (Ex 25:22; Leviticus 16:2; Numbers 7:89). Otherwise the throne of God symbolizes His rule (Psalm 93:2). His throne is established in heaven (Psalms 11:4; 103:19). Isaiah, in his vision in the temple, saw the Lord sitting on a high throne surrounded by the heavenly seraphim (Isaiah 6:1ff.). Righteousness and justice are the foundations of His throne (Psalm 89:15), and it stands firmly for all eternity (Psalm 45:6).

Thronos occurs over 55 times in the New Testament; of these more than 40 appear in the Book of Revelation. The word most generally refers to the "throne" of God or the "throne" of Christ. Jesus declared that the Son of Man would sit on the right hand of power (Matthew 26:64), an allusion to His sharing in the authority of God. He received the throne of His father David, said Luke (1:32); He has established himself on the throne of His Heavenly Father (Revelation 3:21; cf. Psalm 110:1f.; Hebrews 8:1). Those

who are conquerors like Him will be granted a place beside Him on His throne (Revelation 3:21; cf. the phrase “reign with him,” 2 Timothy 2:12; cf. also Matthew 19:28; Revelation 4:4). In another sense thronos signifies the angelic powers (Colossians 1:16) or the “throne” (i.e., authority) of the dragon which will be handed over to the beast (Antichrist; cf. Revelation 13:2). But the reign of evil will be short. In the final great scene of the Book of Revelation there is a glimpse of the throne of God, the Lamb, and the river of life which flows from there (Revelation 22:1-3). This testifies that God will ultimately gather everything in heaven and on the earth under His dominion.

Thronos - 61x in 51v - throne(53), thrones(8) - Matt. 5:34; Matt. 19:28; Matt. 23:22; Matt. 25:31; Lk. 1:32; Lk. 1:52; Lk. 22:30; Acts 2:30; Acts 7:49; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:8; Heb. 4:16; Heb. 8:1; Heb. 12:2; Rev. 1:4; Rev. 2:13; Rev. 3:21; Rev. 4:2; Rev. 4:3; Rev. 4:4; Rev. 4:5; Rev. 4:6; Rev. 4:9; Rev. 4:10; Rev. 5:1; Rev. 5:6; Rev. 5:7; Rev. 5:11; Rev. 5:13; Rev. 6:16; Rev. 7:9; Rev. 7:10; Rev. 7:11; Rev. 7:15; Rev. 7:17; Rev. 8:3; Rev. 11:16; Rev. 12:5; Rev. 13:2; Rev. 14:3; Rev. 16:10; Rev. 16:17; Rev. 19:4; Rev. 19:5; Rev. 20:4; Rev. 20:11; Rev. 20:12; Rev. 21:3; Rev. 21:5; Rev. 22:1; Rev. 22:3

Thronos in the Septuagint - Gen. 41:40; Exod. 11:5; Exod. 12:29; Jdg. 3:20; 1 Sam. 2:8; 2 Sam. 3:10; 2 Sam. 7:13; 2 Sam. 7:16; 2 Sam. 14:9; 1 Ki. 1:13; 1 Ki. 1:17; 1 Ki. 1:20; 1 Ki. 1:24; 1 Ki. 1:27; 1 Ki. 1:30; 1 Ki. 1:35; 1 Ki. 1:37; 1 Ki. 1:46; 1 Ki. 1:47; 1 Ki. 1:48; 1 Ki. 2:4; 1 Ki. 2:12; 1 Ki. 2:19; 1 Ki. 2:24; 1 Ki. 2:33; 1 Ki. 2:45; 1 Ki. 3:6; 1 Ki. 5:5; 1 Ki. 7:7; 1 Ki. 8:20; 1 Ki. 8:25; 1 Ki. 9:5; 1 Ki. 10:9; 1 Ki. 10:18; 1 Ki. 10:19; 1 Ki. 16:11; 1 Ki. 22:10; 1 Ki. 22:19; 2 Ki. 10:3; 2 Ki. 10:30; 2 Ki. 11:19; 2 Ki. 13:13; 2 Ki. 15:12; 2 Ki. 25:28; 1 Chr. 17:12; 1 Chr. 17:14; 1 Chr. 22:10; 1 Chr. 28:5; 1 Chr. 29:23; 2 Chr. 6:10; 2 Chr. 6:16; 2 Chr. 7:18; 2 Chr. 9:8; 2 Chr. 9:17; 2 Chr. 9:18; 2 Chr. 18:9; 2 Chr. 18:18; 2 Chr. 23:20; Est. 5:1; Est. 8:12; Job 12:18; Job 26:9; Job 36:7; Ps. 9:4; Ps. 9:7; Ps. 11:4; Ps. 45:6; Ps. 47:8; Ps. 89:4; Ps. 89:14; Ps. 89:29; Ps. 89:36; Ps. 89:44; Ps. 93:2; Ps. 94:20; Ps. 97:2; Ps. 103:19; Ps. 122:5; Ps. 132:11; Ps. 132:12; Prov. 8:27; Prov. 11:16; Prov. 12:23; Prov. 16:12; Prov. 20:8; Prov. 20:28; Prov. 25:5; Prov. 29:14; Isa. 6:1; Isa. 9:7; Isa. 14:9; Isa. 14:13; Isa. 16:5; Isa. 22:23; Isa. 66:1; Jer. 1:15; Jer. 3:17; Jer. 13:13; Jer. 14:21; Jer. 17:12; Jer. 17:25; Jer. 22:2; Jer. 22:4; Jer. 22:30; Jer. 36:30; Jer. 43:10; Jer. 49:38; Jer. 52:32; Lam. 5:19; Ezek. 1:26; Ezek. 10:1; Ezek. 26:16; Ezek. 43:7; Dan. 4:1; Dan. 4:4; Dan. 4:26; Dan. 4:27; Dan. 7:9; Jon. 3:6; Hag. 2:22; Zech. 6:13

QUESTION - [What is the biblical significance of the number seven/7? WATCH THE ASSOCIATED VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - Throughout the Bible, God often gives symbolic significance to mundane items or concepts. For example, in Genesis 9:12–16, God makes the rainbow the sign of His promise to Noah (and, by extension, to all mankind) that He will not flood the whole earth again. God uses bread as a representation of His presence with His people (Numbers 4:7); of the gift of eternal life (John 6:35); and of the broken body of Christ, sacrificed for our sins (Matthew 26:26). The rainbow and the bread are obvious symbols in Scripture. Less obvious meanings seem to be attached to some [numbers in the Bible](#), especially the number 7, which at times provides a special emphasis in the text.

The first use of the number 7 in the Bible relates to the creation week in Genesis 1. God spends six days creating the heavens and the earth, and then rests on the seventh day. This is our template for the seven-day week, observed around the world to this day. The seventh day was to be “set apart” for Israel; the Sabbath was a holy day of rest (Deuteronomy 5:12).

Thus, right at the start of the Bible, the number 7 is identified with something being “finished” or “complete.” From then on, that association continues, as 7 is often found in contexts involving completeness or divine perfection. So we see the command for animals to be at least seven days old before being used for sacrifice (Exodus 22:30), the command for leprous Naaman to bathe in the Jordan River seven times to effect complete cleansing (2 Kings 5:10), and the command for Joshua to march around Jericho for seven days (and on the seventh day to make seven circuits) and for seven priests to blow seven trumpets outside the city walls (Joshua 6:3–4). In these instances, 7 signifies a completion of some kind: a divine mandate is fulfilled.

Interestingly, man was created on the sixth day of creation. In some passages of the Bible, the number 6 is associated with mankind. In Revelation “the [number of the beast](#)” is called “the number of a man.” That number is 666 (Revelation 13:18). If God’s number is 7, then man’s is 6. Six always falls short of seven, just like “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Man is not God, just as 6 is not 7.

Series of seven things crop up often in the Bible. For example, we find seven pairs of each clean animal on the ark (Genesis 7:2); seven stems on the tabernacle’s lampstand (Exodus 25:37); seven qualities of the Messiah in Isaiah 11:2; seven signs in John’s Gospel; seven things the Lord hates in Proverbs 6:16; seven parables in Matthew 13; and [seven woes](#) in Matthew 23.

Multiples of 7 also figure into the biblical narrative: the “[seventy weeks](#)” prophecy in Daniel 9:24 concerns 490 years (7 times 7 times 10). Jeremiah 29:10 predicted the [Babylonian Captivity](#) would last for seventy years (7 times 10). According to Leviticus 25:8, the [Year of Jubilee](#) was to begin after the passing of every forty-ninth year (7 times 7).

Sometimes, the symbolism of 7 is a great comfort to us: Jesus is the seven-fold “I AM” in the Gospel of John. Other times, it challenges us: Jesus told Peter to forgive a wrongdoer “seventy times seven” times (Matthew 18:22, NKJV). And then there are passages in which the number 7 is associated with God’s judgment: the seven bowls of the Great Tribulation, for example (Revelation 16:1), or God’s warning to Israel in Leviticus 26:18.

Speaking of the [book of Revelation](#), the number 7 is used there more than fifty times in a variety of contexts: there are seven letters to seven churches in Asia and seven spirits before God’s throne (Revelation 1:4), seven golden lampstands (Revelation 1:12), seven

stars in Christ's right hand (Revelation 1:16), seven seals of God's judgment (Revelation 5:1), seven angels with seven trumpets (Revelation 8:2), etc. In all likelihood, the number 7 again represents completeness or totality: the seven churches represent the completeness of the body of Christ, the seven seals on the scroll represent the fullness of God's punishment of a sinful earth, and so on. And, of course, the book of Revelation itself, with all its 7s, is the capstone of God's Word to man. With the book of Revelation, the Word was complete (Revelation 22:18).

In all, the number 7 is used in the Bible more than seven hundred times. If we also include the words related to *seven* (terms like *sevenfold* or *seventy* or *seven hundred*), the count is higher. Of course, not every instance of the number 7 in the Bible carries a deeper significance. Sometimes, a 7 is just a 7, and we must be cautious about attaching symbolic meanings to any text, especially when Scripture is not explicit about such meanings. However, there are times when it *seems* that God is communicating the idea of divine completeness, perfection, and wholeness by means of the number 7. GotQuestions.org

SEVEN from [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#) (online)- Of the numbers that carry symbolic meaning in biblical usage, seven is the most important. It is used to signify completeness or totality. Underlying all such use of the number seven lies the seven-day week, which, according to Genesis 1:1–2:3 and Exodus 20:11, belongs to the God-given structure of creation. God completed his own work of creation in seven days (Gen 2:2), and seven days constitute a complete cycle of time.

The symbolism of completeness occurs in a wide variety of uses of the number seven. For example, sprinkling the blood of a sacrifice seven times (Lev 16:14, 19) indicates complete purification. The seven “eyes of the LORD, which range through the whole earth” (Zech 4:10 NRSV), indicate the completeness of God's sight of everything in his creation. When the prophet John sees the Lamb, an image of Christ, “having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth” (Rev 5:6 NRSV; cf. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5), the seven spirits are the fullness of the divine Spirit (see HOLY SPIRIT), going out into the world as the Spirit of Christ with complete power (“seven horns”) and complete knowledge and insight (“seven eyes”). The seven heads of the dragon (Rev 12:3) and the beast (Rev 13:1; 17:3, 9–11) represent the totality of Satanic opposition to God and the complete sequence of rulers opposed to God's rule. In Hebrews 1:5–14 a series of seven OT quotations provide a complete demonstration of the point at issue.

Since seven is the number of completeness, a specific series of seven can function as representative of the whole. The seven “signs” in the Gospel of John, the first two of which are numbered (Jn 2:11; 4:54) to encourage the reader to continue to count up to seven (five other events are called “signs”: Jn 6:2; 6:14, 26; 9:16; 12:18; 2:18–19), are representative of the “many other signs” Jesus did (Jn 20:30). The seven parables in Matthew 13, the seven churches in Revelation 2–3, the seven characteristics of wisdom in James 3:17 and the seven disciples in John 21:2 are in each case representative of all.

The model provided by the week of six days and a sabbath means that in a series of seven the seventh is sometimes different from the other six and climactic. The seventh of the seven signs in the Gospel of John is the death and resurrection of Jesus (Jn 2:18–19; cf. Jn 20:30), a climax toward which the other six signs, which are miracles of Jesus, point. In the series of seven seal-openings (Rev 6:1–8:1) and the series of seven trumpet-blasts (Rev 8:2–11:19), the seventh in each case is a climax set apart from the preceding six. Enoch's special importance is indicated by calling him “seventh” in descent from Adam (Jude 14).

Sometimes the number seventy functions like seven. Seventy years are the full human life span (Ps 90:10; Is 23:15). The table of the nations in Genesis 10 lists seventy nations, representing all the nations of the world, and the seventy disciples sent out by Jesus (Lk 10:1) may be symbolically connected with this idea.

If seven represents completeness, seventy-seven represents unrestricted and unsurpassable fullness. Thus, compared with Cain's sevenfold vengeance, Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold (Gen 4:24), whereas, conversely, Jesus commands forgiveness not just seven times but seventy-seven times (Mt 18:21–22). In Luke's genealogy of Jesus he is the seventy-seventh generation of human history (Lk 3:23–38).

Sets of seven are by no means always on the literary surface but need to be detected. The book of Revelation contains seven beatitudes scattered through it (Rev 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14). The Gospel of John contains two sets of “I am” sayings of Jesus. One set is of absolute “I am” sayings, in which the simple “I am” is a declaration of divine identity (Jn 4:26; 6:20; 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8). The other is of “I am” sayings with predicates (e.g., “I am the bread of life,” Jn 6:35; 8:12; 10:7, 9; 10:11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5). Together they indicate the fullness of Jesus' divine identity and of his saving significance.

See also SABBATH; SEVENTY.

QUESTION - [What is the throne of God? Does God literally have a throne?](#)

ANSWER - There are several references to the throne of God in the Bible. Jesus calls heaven “God's throne” in Matthew 5:34, recalling God's statement in Isaiah 66:1, “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.” Other references to God's throne are

found in 2 Chronicles 18:18; Psalm 11:4; Hebrews 8:1; 12:2; Revelation 1:4; 3:21; 4:2; and many other verses.

A throne is a special seat reserved for a monarch. When the Bible speaks of God's "throne," the emphasis is on God's [transcendence](#), dignity, and sovereign rule. The fact that His throne is in heaven further underscores the transcendent nature of God's existence.

The throne of God need not be thought of as a literal throne. God the Father is incorporeal (John 4:24). Not having a physical body, God does not literally "sit." References to a divine throne are akin to biblical allusions to God's "hand" or "mouth" or "eyes"—they are anthropomorphisms, descriptions of God couched in human terms out of deference to our limited knowledge. God has to describe Himself in ways we can understand.

Isaiah sees the Lord "high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple" (Isaiah 6:1). At that time, the prophet was having an inspired vision. God's throne (and His robe) are not to be taken as literal, physical objects. Rather, God was communicating to Isaiah the magnificence, splendor, and exaltation of His Being. Other descriptions of the throne of God are found in other prophetic visions, e.g., in those of Ezekiel and John.

God's throne is a place of power and authority. In 2 Chronicles 18:18, the prophet Micaiah relates his vision of God's throne room, in which spirit beings stand in attendance. Compare this to Job 1:6, where God demands answers from the angelic beings summoned there.

God's throne is a place of majesty and honor. The Bible says that, when Jesus ascended to heaven, He "sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). There is no higher place than heaven. God is the King of heaven, and Jesus holds the place of honor at [God's right hand](#).

God's throne is a place of perfect justice. "He has prepared His throne for judgment" (Psalm 9:7; cf. 89:14). The final judgment, described in Revelation 20, is held before "a [great white throne](#)" (verse 11).

God's throne is a place of sovereignty and holiness. "God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne" (Psalm 47:8; cf. 103:19). He does whatever He pleases, and all He does is good.

God's throne is a place of praise. John's vision of heaven includes a scene in which a "new song" is sung in praise to the One who occupies the throne (Revelation 14:3). Around the throne, the praise of God is surely "glorious" (Psalm 66:2).

God's throne is a place of purity. Only the redeemed, those who have been granted the righteousness of Christ, will have the right to stand before His throne (Revelation 14:5).

God's throne is a place of eternal life. God is the Source of life. In heaven, John sees "the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Revelation 22:1).

God's throne is a place of grace. Not only does the throne of God represent judgment for the unbeliever, but it also represents mercy and grace for His children. "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). Inside the Jewish temple was the [Ark of the Covenant](#), which was a "copy of the true" (Hebrews 9:24), and it had a "mercy seat" where God's presence would appear (Leviticus 16:2ESV).

One day, all creation will bow to the majesty of God's throne (Philippians 2:9–11). The regal beings surrounding the throne of God will "lay their crowns before the throne and say: 'You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power'" (Revelation 4:10–11). [GotQuestions.org](#)

THRONE from [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#) (online) - The image of a throne is one of the most glorious and evocative in the entire Bible. It denotes authority, power, majesty and splendor. In the vast majority of cases, the Bible's references to thrones are positive, referring to the benevolent power and splendor attendant upon the human throne or—to an infinitely greater degree—the divine throne. The throne imagery conveys one of the most fundamental biblical motifs, that of God's reign as King (see KING, KINGSHIP). Many scholars have seen the kingdom of God as the one central, unifying motif in the Bible, and the imagery of the throne is fundamental to that motif. The term occurs about 135 times in the OT and about 61 times in the NT.

Physical Thrones. In a small number of cases, references to thrones are to the actual physical seat on which a king sat. Several of these have to do with Solomon's throne (1 Kings 2:19; 10:18, 18; 2 Chron 9:17, 18); one reference is to a throne that Solomon had brought out for his mother, placed next to his own (1 Kings 2:19). Solomon's throne was very impressive, inlaid with ivory and overlaid with fine gold; six steps led up to it, and its back had a rounded top. A lion—a universal symbol in the ancient Near East of royal power and authority—stood beside each armrest.

Numerous ancient reliefs show kings seated on their thrones (see ANEP), sometimes flanked by lions, as Solomon was (e.g., ANEP, nos. 332, 458). Solomon's throne was housed in the great Hall of Justice, which was paneled with cedar from floor to ceiling. Other scriptural references to physical thrones include Joash's (2 Chron 23:20), Ahasuerus's (Esther 5:1), the Ninevite king's (Jon 3:6) and Herod's (Acts 12:21).

Symbols of Authority and Majesty. More commonly, biblical imagery of a throne is evocative of authority, power, majesty or splendor.

Human thrones. Biblical references to human thrones most commonly refer to the kingly authority and power inherent in them. Thus reference to a king's throne or to his sitting on the throne signifies power and authority to rule. Such references include the thrones of the Egyptian pharaoh (Gen 41:40; Ex 11:5; 12:29); Israelite or Judahite kings such as Elah (1 Kings 16:11), Ahab (2 Kings 10:3), Jehu (10:30), Joash (11:19) or Jeroboam (11:19); the Babylonian kings Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 43:10) and Belshazzar (Dan 5:20); and the Persian Ahasuerus (Esther 1:2). Human thrones are to be places of righteousness and justice (e.g., Prov 16:12; 20:8; 25:5; 29:14).

The Davidic throne. The most common reference to human thrones, however, is to the throne of David (about 30 percent of all references to thrones). This has its basis in the great promise of what has come to be known as the Davidic covenant, in which God promised David that his descendants would rule in perpetuity on the throne in Israel. This promise was first given to David by Nathan the prophet (2 Sam 7) and is referred to many times after that: in 1-2 Kings and 1-2 Chronicles, the book of Psalms (see especially Ps 89; 132), Isaiah and Jeremiah (see Is 9:7; 16:5; Jer 13; 13; 17:5; 22:4, 30; 29:16; 33:17; 21; 36:30) and the NT (Lk 1:32; Acts 2:30). This promise came to its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus, the son of David par excellence (Mt 1:1; Lk 1:32).

God's throne. By far the most common biblical reference to a throne, however, is to God's throne (close to 60 percent). God's kingship is affirmed many times in Scripture, and his throne is a visible proof of his sovereign rule. The Lord presides from his throne, surrounded variously by all the host of heaven (1 Kings 22:19; 2 Chron 18:18), a rainbow like emeralds (Rev 4:3), twenty-four other thrones (Rev 4:4), a crystal-clear sea of glass (Rev 4:6) and countless numbers of angels (Rev 5:11). His is a holy throne (Ps 47:8), glorious in its appearance (Is 63:15; Jer 14:21; 17:12; Mt 19:28; 25:31) and eternal in its duration (Ps 9:7; 45:6; 93:2; Lam 5:19; Ezek 43:7; Heb 1:8; Rev 1:8; 5:13).

It is a spectacular throne, variously described as flaming with fire (Dan 7:9), glittering with sapphires (Ezek 1:26; 10:1), flashing and crashing with lightning and thunder (Rev 4:5), dazzlingly white (Rev 20:11), from which flows a river of living water (Rev 22:1).

Some thrones in Scripture are set up in opposition to God, such as the corrupt throne in Psalm 94:20, the royal thrones of Babylon (Is 14:13; cf. Is 47:1) and Tyre (Ezek 28:2), and even Satan's throne (Rev 2:13; 16:10). Yet these thrones represent no power or appeal when compared to the power and splendor of God's throne.

References to God's throne are found most often in the book of Revelation, appropriately enough, since this book describes God's final victory over Satan and the forces of evil. The royal motifs found throughout Scripture find their climax at the end of history in this image—laden book in the Bible.

See also AUTHORITY, DIVINE AND ANGELIC; KING, KINGSHIP; ROYAL COURT; SEAT.

Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood--

GNT Revelation 1:5 καὶ πρὸς Χριστὸν, μάρτυρα, πιστὸν, πρωτότοκον τῶν νεκρῶν καὶ ῥαγῶν τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς. Τὸ γὰρ ἐπὶ μὲς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐλευθέρωσεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ,

KJV Revelation 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and **washed us** from our sins in his own blood,

NET Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ— the faithful witness, the firstborn from among the dead, the ruler over the kings of the earth. To the one who loves us and has set us free from our sins at the cost of his own blood

NLT Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world. All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us.

ESV Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings

on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood

NIV Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,

ASV Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood;

CSB Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has set us free from our sins by His blood,

NKJ Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

NRS Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood,

YLT Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born out of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth; to him who did love us, and did bathe us from our sins in his blood,

- **who is:** Rev 3:14 Ps 89:36,37 Isa 55:4 Joh 3:11,32 8:14-16 18:37 1Ti 6:13 1Jn 5:7-10
- **the firstborn:** Ac 26:23 1Co 15:20-23 Col 1:18
- **and the ruler:** Rev 11:15 Rev 17:14 Rev 19:16 Ps 72:11 89:27 Pr 8:15,16 Da 2:2 7:14 Mt 28:18 Eph 1:20-22 1Ti 6:15
- **him:** De 7:8 23:5 Joh 13:1,34 15:9 Ro 8:37 Ga 2:20 Eph 2:4 5:2,25-27 1Jn 4:10
- **released:** Rev 7:14 Zec 13:1 Joh 13:8-10 Ac 20:28 1Co 6:11 Heb 9:14 1Pe 1:18-19 1Jn 1:7

Related Passages:

Revelation 3:14+ "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, **the faithful and true Witness**, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:

Colossians 1:18+ He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead**, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

Romans 8:29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the **firstborn among many brethren**;

1 Corinthians 15:20-23+ But now **Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep**. 21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: **Christ the first fruits**, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

Revelation 11:15+ Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become **the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ**; and **He will reign forever and ever**."

Revelation 17:14+ "These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because **He is Lord of lords and King of kings**, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."

Romans 5:8 But God **demonstrates** (PRESENT TENSE - CONTINUALLY "LOVES" AS IN REV 1:5) His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Revelation 19:16+ And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, **'KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS'**."

Acts 20:28 (PAUL TO ELDERS AT EPHESUS) "**Be on guard** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which **He purchased with His own blood**

1 Peter 1:18-19+ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but **with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ**.

1 John 1:7+ but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the **blood of Jesus His Son cleanses** (present tense - continually) us from all sin.

Revelation 7:14+ I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of

the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and **made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

LOVE CAME DOWN AND SET US FREE

and from Jesus Christ, the faithful ([pistos](#)) witness ([martus](#) = English "martyr"), the firstborn ([prototokos](#)) of the dead, and the ruler ([archon](#)) of the kings ([basileus](#)) of the earth - Note the three truths have a specific order to them - (1) **faithful witness** (The faithful "Martyr" who died for us), (2) **firstborn** (first not in time but in preeminence of all who have been or will be resurrected from the dead) and (3) **ruler** (coming King of kings coming soon). He came to die for us to bear the guilt of our sins (1Pe 2:24). He rose from the dead as the first fruits to pave the way for our resurrection (1Co 15:20, Col 1:18). He will return to rule and we will reign with Him (Rev 5:10). **Faithful witness** means we can trust whatever Jesus says as the whole truth and nothing but the truth! In a world unraveling at the seams (circa 2023), truth is at a premium, so a good return on your investment ("ROI") is to invest more time in God's Word than you do in the world's word!

Firstborn is an allusion to Psalm 89:27 "I also shall make him My **firstborn** (Lxx = [prototokos](#)), The highest of the kings of the earth." In Colossians 1:18+ Jesus is again called "the firstborn from the dead." Others will be raised from the dead, but Jesus Christ is the firstfruits (1 Cor. 15:23).

Walvoord on firstborn - As the "**Firstborn**," He is the first to be resurrected with an everlasting body, which is a token of other selective resurrections including those of saints who die in the Church Age (Phil. 3:11), the Tribulation martyrs (Rev. 20:5–6), and the wicked dead of all ages (Rev 20:12–13). (See [Bible Knowledge Commentary - Page 929](#))

Henry Morris agrees with the above comments writing - "These titles, respectively, testify to His sinless suffering unto death, His victorious resurrection from the grave, and His imminent triumphant return. The word "**witness**" (Greek [martus](#)) is the source of our word "martyr." Jesus Christ, like many other "witnesses" to God's truth before and since, was **faithful** unto death, a martyr. He, unlike other martyrs, however, had power to lay down His life and power to take it again (John 10:18), and thus became the **firstborn** from the dead (see also Acts 13:33; Colossians 1:18). Although most kings and other great men of the earth continually try to rebel against Him (Psalm 2:1-3), He is "prince" (**ruler** - Greek [archon](#) "chief," "first") and must soon be acknowledged "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Revelation 19:16)." (Borrow [The Revelation Record - page 36](#))

We see somewhat of a parallel in Phil 2:8-11+ Paul writing of Jesus...

Being found in appearance as a man (FAITHFUL WITNESS), He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (FIRSTBORN OF THE DEAD). 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him (RULER OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH), and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father

And the Ruler ([archon](#)) of the kings ([basileus](#)) of the earth - At His Second Coming Jesus will be "**KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**" (Revelation 19:16+)

THOUGHT - His rule of the earth is future but for believers His kingdom is now, in our heart. This begs the question "Is He King of your (my) heart?" Is there something you are withholding from Him, something that keeps your for wholehearted loyalty and allegiance? Confess it. Release it for you can, since you have been released from the power of sinful desires. And then [worship the King](#) in spirit and in truth.

Jesus is **the Ruler of the kings of the earth** - He is King of Heaven—Daniel 4:37, He is King of the Jews—Matthew 2:2, He is King of Israel—John 1:49; He is King of the Ages—1 Timothy 1:17; He is King of Glory—Psalm 24:7; He is King of Kings—Revelation 19:6

To Him Who loves ([agapao](#) in present tense) us and released ([luo](#)) us from our sins ([hamartia](#)) by His blood - Note His love precedes from and undoubtedly motivates our release from **sins** (cf Jn 3:16+). The **KJV** ([Textus Receptus](#) manuscript) = "Unto him that loved (aorist - past tense) us, and **washed us** from our sins in his own blood."

Notice 2 differences from the modern translations -

(1) **The NAS, ESV, NIV, CSB, NLT** more accurately render [agapao](#) "**loves**" for the Nestle-Aland manuscripts (deemed more accurate by manuscript experts) have [agapao](#) in the present tense - so He **continually loves us** which is even better than He "loved" us (past tense) (in my opinion). Christ is the One who keeps on loving us! This is the only NT instance where His love is so

described. (**THOUGHT** - Do you feel unlovable? Then meditate on this verse!) (Ponder the words of this beautiful song that speaks of His love that released by His blood - [To the Cross I Cling!](#))

(2) **KJV** has "**washed**" ([louo](#) is the verb in the [Textus Receptus](#) manuscript - [What Can Wash Away My Sins? Nothing But the Blood of Jesus.](#)) whereas the modern manuscripts have [luo](#) which means **released**. **Released** is aorist tense which describes Christ's release as "one and done" as we might say today. One is reminded of Jesus' great cry from the Cross - "It is finished." ([tetelestai](#)) in Jn 19:30. He paid the price in full (with His precious blood - 1Pe 1:18-19), making the release possible, our release becoming a reality the moment we received Him as our Savior and Redeemer! Combining the Greek tenses of **loves** and **released**, we can say that Christ **released** us once for all time, but He **loves** us always! Hallelujah, what a Savior! [Amazing Love How Can it be?](#)

MacDonald - First of all, he speaks of the Savior as the One **who loved us** (*loves us*, margin) **and washed us from our sins in His own blood**. Note the tenses of the verbs: *loves*, a present, continuous action; **washed**, a past, completed work. Note too the order: He *loves us*, and indeed **loved us** long before He **washed us**. And note the price He paid: **His own blood**. Honest self-evaluation forces us to confess that the cost was too high. We did not deserve to be washed at such an exorbitant price..

J. A. Seiss said: "We are apt to think of the great love of God as past; as having spent its greatest force, and reached its highest culmination, when He gave His only begotten Son to humiliation and death in our behalf. But in this we are mistaken. That love is a present love, and is as full force at this moment as when it delivered up Jesus to the horrors which overwhelmed Him on the cross." ([Revelation 1:4-8](#))

Lehman Strauss on **loves us** - Paul prayed that we might be able to comprehend that love in its four dimensions (Ephesians 3:17–19+).

(PAUL PRAYS) that He (GOD THE FATHER) would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, **being rooted and grounded in love**, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the **breadth and length and height and depth**, 19 and **to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge**, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. **NLT OF VERSE 19** - May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it.)

By (en - in) **His blood** - He paid the price of redemption to release us from captivity to Sin (1Pe 1:18-19). Paul writes "the law (principle) of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus **has set you free** from the law (principle) of sin and of death." (Ro 8:2) John emphasizes the blood of Christ (the Lamb) again in Rev 5:9 (purchased) and Rev 12:11 (enabled us to overcome).

He paid a debt He did not owe
because
We had a debt we could not pay!

[O HOW HE LOVES YOU AND ME](#)

Oh, how He loves you and me,
Oh, how He loves you and me.
He gave His life, what more could He give;
Oh, how He loves you, Oh, how He loves me,
Oh, how He loves you and me.

Jesus to Calv'ry did go,
His love for mankind to show.
What He did there brought hope from despair.
Oh, how He loves you, Oh, how He loves me,
Oh how He loves you and me.

ILLUSTRATION - Like the man who took pride in how his beautiful [white highland terrier](#) was. One day when after a fresh blanket of snow saw a dog running in front of his home & thought, "who's drab-looking dog is that?" then realized it was his well groomed terrier! Great example of our sin when finally compared to the proper background!

Faithful (believer, believers) ([4103](#)) [pistos](#) from [peitho](#) = to persuade - induce one by words to believe, have confidence) is something or someone who is worthy of faith or keeps promises and is applied to God, humans, His Word, etc Pistos means dependable (worthy of reliance or trust), trustworthy, steadfast, unswerving. **Webster** says that "**Faithful**" means firm in adherence to whatever one owes allegiance and implies unswerving adherence to a person or thing or to the oath or promise by which a tie

was contracted. **Vincent** summarizes of the meaning of **pistos** (1), of one who shows Himself faithful in the discharge of a duty or the administration of a trust (Mt 24:45). Hence, trustworthy (2Ti 2:2). Of things that can be relied upon (2Ti 2:11). (2), Confiding; trusting; a believer (Gal 3:9; Acts 16:1; 2Cor 6:15; 1Ti 5:16)" (Word Studies in the New Testament) In Gal 3:9 refers to "Abraham, the **believer**" the faithful one. (1) **ACTIVE MEANING = trusting or believing** This is the less frequent usage. 2) **PASSIVE MEANING = trustworthy or faithful**. Here the basic idea is that of trustworthiness. In this sense **pistos** describes God, Christ, servants, His Word as faithful, reliable, worthy of belief or trust, in short, dependable.

Pistos in the Revelation - Rev. 1:5; Rev. 2:10 = "Be **faithful** until death,"; Rev. 2:13 = "Antipas, My witness, My **faithful** one, who was killed"; Rev. 3:14 = "The Amen, the **faithful** and true Witness"; Rev. 17:14 = believers = "the called and chosen and **faithful**." ; Rev. 19:11 Jesus is "called **Faithful** and True"; Rev. 21:5 = "these words are **faithful** and true." Rev. 22:6 = "These words are **faithful** and true"

Witness (3144) **martus/martys** basically describes one who remembers something and testifies concerning what they remember. Notice that **martus** has a two fold meaning of (1) describing one who has seen and/or experienced something or someone and (2) one who testifies to what he or she saw. The testimony could be in a legal setting (Mk 14:63; Acts 6:13; 7:58; Heb. 10:28) or in the general sense of recounting firsthand knowledge (Lk 11:48; 1Ti. 6:12; Heb 12:1; 1Pe 5:1). A **martus** is one who attests to a fact or event, one who gives evidence (testifies in a court to the truth of a fact or event), one who has seen or has personal knowledge of something or someone, especially as an "eye witness" (eg, the apostles in Acts having and relating their personal knowledge of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances). A witness is one who furnishes evidence or proof, confirming the truth by verbal testimony. A witness gives testimony in a court trial (Mt 26:65, Mk 14:63, false = Acts 6:13). Scripture repeatedly refers to the Old Testament "formula" of witnesses to some event using the phrase "two or three witnesses" (Mt 18:16, 2Cor 13:1, 1Ti 5:19, Heb 10:28) The witnesses of Hebrews 11 are those whose lives speak of the reality of their faith in God (Heb 12:1).

First-born (firstborn) (4416) **prototokos** from **protos** = first, foremost, in place order or time; rank dignity + **titko** = beget, to bear, bring forth) can mean **first-born chronologically** (Lk 2:7), but refers primarily to position, rank, priority of position and emphasizes quality or kind, not time with the idea of "preeminence". **Prototokos** indicates a place of prominence and privilege. **Prototokos** as noted above is used of Jesus in Col 1:18, Ro 8:29, He 1:6, and Re 1:5 but these uses are in somewhat different contexts so be careful not to be confused. **Vine** helps untangle these uses by pointing out that in Col 1:18⁺ and Re 1:5⁺ "**firstborn**" refers to His resurrection, in Romans 8:29⁺ to His position in relationship to the Church, in He 1:6⁺, to His Second Advent when the word "again" is place in the right place (the Authorized Version gives a wrong translation, making the "again" seem to introduce a quotation, instead of signifying the second time when God will bring His Son into the world). In both Greek and Jewish culture, the **first-born** was the son who had the right of inheritance. He was **not** necessarily the first one born chronologically. Although Esau was born first chronologically, it was Jacob who declared the "**first-born**" in regard to the blessing from Isaac (Jacob speaking to Esau said "First swear to me"; so he swore to him, and sold his **birthright** (Septuagint translates Hebrew with Greek word **prototokos**) to Jacob." [Gen 25:33]). Similarly, Jesus is the One with the right to the inheritance of all creation (cf. He 1:2⁺; Re 5:1-7). Used 8x in NT - Lk. 2:7; Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15; Col. 1:18; Heb. 1:6; Heb. 11:28; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 1:5

Ruler (magistrate, official) (758) **archon** from present participle of **archo** = to rule) describes one who has eminence in a ruling capacity, referring to earthly figures (Mt 20:25) such as rulers (Acts 4:26), Moses (Acts 7:27, 35), of Christ as the ruler of the kings of the earth (Rev 1:5). **Archon** refers to one who has administrative authority (Ro 13:3; Titus 1:9), including Jewish leaders (Acts 23:5 = reference to the high priest, Lk 8:41 = "an official of the synagogue;" Mt 9:18, 23 = ruler over a synagogue), members of the Sanhedrin (Lk 18:18, 23:13, 35, 24:20), of Gentile officials (Acts 16:19). **Archon** refers to the devil as **ruler over the demons** in Mt 9:34; 12:24; Mk 3:22; Lk 11:15 and Eph 2:2 "the **PRINCE** (archon) of the power of the air." In classical Greek **archōn** functions primarily as a term for a civil official (e.g., a city magistrate), but it could denote a leader or commander in general (Liddell-Scott).

Kings (935) **basileus** occurs throughout Greek literature, including the Septuagint (e.g., Genesis 14:1; Exodus 1:8; Judges 3:8; et al.), with the same meaning, i.e., "a king." It is used 118 times in the New Testament. It refers to secular rulers such as kings and emperors: Herod (Matthew 2:1), David (Matthew 1:6), Agrippa (Acts 25:13), Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:1), and kings in general (1 Timothy 2:2). Basileus refers to divine rulers: God (Matthew 5:35); Christ, as King in general (Luke 23:2), as King of kings (1 Timothy 6:15), as King of the Jews (Matthew 2:2), as King of Israel (Matthew 27:42), and as King of saints (Revelation 15:3). Among the church fathers, Christ was also referred to as King of all creation, and King of the Church; and the Holy Spirit was referred to as King. Among the secular writers basileus was used to refer to pagan deities such as Zeus. Basileus also is used in the New Testament to refer to the saints who will rule and reign with Christ (Revelation 5:10), and to evil powers such as Abaddon (Revelation 9:11; cf. Abaddōn [3]).

Loves (25) **agapao** (see more in depth discussion) means to love unconditionally and sacrificially as God Himself loves sinful men (John 3:16), the way He loves the Son (John 3:35, 15:9, 17:23, 24). Note that **agapao** is a verb and by its verbal nature calls for action. This quality of love is not an emotion but is an action initiated by a volitional choice. **Agapao** in Rev. 1:5; Rev. 3:9; Rev. 12:11; Rev. 20:9.

Released (loosed, destroyed, untied, unbound, broke) (3089) **luo** means to loose, release, dissolve. This word means to set free what is bound and possibly here pictures the world being set free from the corruption that exists because of sin (Ro 8:21+). The elements shall be loosened and broken up into their component parts, like a building being torn down. The physical structure of the present world will disintegrate. This picture is the very opposite of the consistency claimed by the mockers in (2Pe 3:5+). **Luo** is the root of the word **lutron**, a ransom (payment which sets free). **Luo** is used 6x in the Revelation - Rev. 1:5; Rev. 5:2; Rev. 9:14; Rev. 9:15; Rev. 20:3; Rev. 20:7.

Summary of luo: Literally to untie something (colt = Mt 21:2, Mk 1:7+, Lk 3:16+, Lk 13:16+, Jn 1:27+ = sandal thong, man [Lazarus] wrapped in bandages = Jn 11:44 = "Unbind him, and let him go."), break the seals of a scroll (Re 5:2 - secular use described "broken seals of a will", or "of the opening of a document" or "a letter"), release from prison (Ac 22:30+ cp release of angels and/or the devil = Re 9:14,15+, Rev 20:3, 7+).

Figuratively: to destroy (temple [Jesus' body - so referring to death in this case by crucifixion], Jn 2:19), to break a "rule" (Sabbath, Jn 5:18, 7:23), to annul (commandment, Mt 5:19+, Scripture, Jn 10:35), set free from a bond (by Satan = Lk 13:16+), cause something to cease (put an end to, death Ac 2:24+, How? By the resurrection), breaking up a group of people meeting (Ac 13:43+), break up some object (ship's stern, Ac 27:41+), release from marriage (1Co 7:27), break down a spiritual barrier (Ep 2:14+), to destroy (the heavens and earth, 2Pe 3:10, 11, 12+), destroy the works of the devil (1 Jn 3:8+ -Apostolic fathers write "consequently all magic and every kind of spell were **dissolved [luo]**" and "his destructiveness **comes to an end**"), release from bondage to our sins (Re 1:5+).

Sins (266) **hamartia** (see more in depth discussion) conveys the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow (in Homer some hundred times of a warrior hurling his spear but missing his foe). Later **hamartia** came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. **Hamartia** in the Bible signifies a departure from God's holy, perfect standard of what is right in word or deed (righteous). It pictures the idea of missing His appointed goal (His will) which results in a deviation from what is pleasing to Him. In short, sin is conceived as a missing the true end and scope of our lives, which is the Triune God Himself. As **Martin Luther** put it "*Sin is essentially a departure from God.*"

Hamartia in Gospel of John - Jn. 1:29; Jn. 8:21; Jn. 8:24; Jn. 8:34; Jn. 8:46; Jn. 9:34; Jn. 9:41; Jn. 15:22; Jn. 15:24; Jn. 16:8; Jn. 16:9; Jn. 19:11; Jn. 20:23

ILLUSTRATION - Revelation 1:5 had a big impact on the [life of Missionary John Geddie](#) (See [John Geddie: Messenger of the Love of Christ in Eastern Melanesia](#)). In 1848, he left for the South Seas toward the New Hebrides islands. As his ship glided across the ocean waves, he meditated on Revelation 1:5 "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

He wrote in his journal these words, "My best enjoyments in time, and my prospects beyond the grave, center in the cross, which is the emblem of His redeeming love."

John settled on the island of **Aneityum** which was infested with cannibals that considered human flesh very tasty. Parents would routinely kill and eat their own children. The island was under Satanic power as violence, theft, murder, and warfare were very commonplace. Geddie wrote, "If ever we win these benighted islanders, we must draw them with cords of love. I know of no power that is adequate except the power of the living Christ who loved us and washed us from our sins by His own blood."

John frequently preached from Revelation 1:5 — The love of Christ was his main weapon in combating the evil of this island and the focus of his attention. His journal on February 9, 1849, states: "In the darkness, degradation, and misery that surrounds me, I look forward in faith to the time when some of these poor islanders will unite in the triumphant song of ransomed souls, '**Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood**.' " John lived to see this happen.

Geddie died just before Christmas, 1872. In his island church, a tablet was installed which read:

"In memory of John Geddie....Missionary from Nova Scotia to Aneityum for twenty-four years. When he landed in 1848, there were no Christians here, and when he left in 1872, there were no heathen."

Herbert Lockyer - (Borrow [All the divine names and titles in the Bible](#)) - **Faithful Witness** (Revelation 1:5; 3:14)

First of all, let us try to understand what a true witness is. The Bible has much to say about false witnesses, those who are not truthful. They lie in the evidence they give. But a faithful witness is one who furnishes evidence or proof from having known or actually seen something. In the Greek, the word witness is "martyr"—one that gives testimony to the truth at the expense of life. It has been pointed out that the word witness, in its noun or verb form, is found not less than 72 times in the writings ascribed to John.

It is his characteristic word. In His salutation (Revelation 1:5) to the seven churches in Asia, John has a triad of names covering the past, present, and prospective ministry of our Lord;

- "The Faithful Witness"—past, public ministry.
- "The First begotten of the Dead"—present, alive for evermore.
- "The Prince of the Kings of the Earth"—future, millennial reign.

The first title is the one presently concerning us, and is one embracing the whole of our Lord's life from the cradle to the cross. Such a comprehensive title is in marked contrast to all preceding witness for God. The path of human testimony is strewn with wreck and ruin. He alone passed through earth in His solitary and rugged path of unswerving devotedness to God, without break or flaw in all His holy separateness to God." In declaring His credentials He could say, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth" (John 18:37).

There are at least three things which go to the making of a faithful witness, and such are evident in the life, and ministry of our Lord.

1. Experience

An effective witness is one who has a personal realization of the truth he seeks to testify to. Christ is the only One who has seen and known God, and with such a qualification He must be listened to as He speaks about His Father (Luke 10:22; John 1:18). Like Him, we are only true witnesses as we speak the things which we have seen and heard (Acts 4:20).

2. Certainty

If there is anything of a doubtful character about a witness, the people will not pay much heed to his testimony. Life and lips must ring true. Christ always declared the truth with authority and certainty, because He was The Truth. Behind the witness of His lips was the faithfulness of life (John 8:40-46; 1 Corinthians 14:7-9). He said of His own, "Ye are My witnesses," and like Him we should be able to proclaim the truth with assurance and confidence because of obedience to the truth (Ephesians 1:13; 2 Timothy 1:12). See 1 Kings 17:24.

3. Boldness

A testimony has greater effectiveness when it is proclaimed with courage. Light must not be hid under a bushel. We are told that the people marvelled at, the boldness of Peter and John as they witnessed to the reality of Christ's resurrection (Acts 4:13). The Master never shrank from telling the truth. He had come from heaven to announce. Even in the face of the greatest danger and opposition, He never failed to declare the whole counsel of God (John 6:66; 8:59). May ours be the spirit, not of fear, but of power to present the testimony of the Lord (2 Timothy 1:7, 8)! May we never fail to declare by word and deed, the truth received from God (Proverbs 14:25)! Think of the reward if we emulate the example of Him who is The Faithful Witness" (Matthew 10:32)!

Faithful in all, Lord Jesus,
To Him Who called Thee;
And Thou wilt deign to bless us,
In granting constancy.

Herbert Lockyer - (Borrow [All the divine names and titles in the Bible](#)) - First Begotten of the Dead (Revelation 1:5; Colossians 1:18)

By this further designation of Christ we are not to understand that He was the first to rise from the grave. There were resurrections in the Old Testament, and He Himself while here among men raised Lazarus and two young people from the dead. As He died upon the cross, many graves were opened, and "the saints which slept arose," to herald the resurrection of Him, whose veil of flesh had been rent in twain, resulting in their return to earth (Matthew 27:52). In what sense, then, was He the "Firstborn of the dead," or out from among the dead? In his Magna Carta of the Resurrection, Paul refers to Christ as "the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:20-23), and He is both Firstborn and Firstfruits of the blessed dead. If there is any distinction between these two descriptions—Firstborn is the title signifying that He is first in rank of all the saints who will rise from the dead, for this title suggests supremacy, preeminent dignity, and not one of time or of chronological sequence (Psalm 89:27). He became the Prince of Life.

Firstfruits intimates that He is first in time of the coming harvest of those who sleep in Him, and who, at the return of Christ in the air, will undergo a change equivalent to the raising of the dead (Philippians 3:21; 1 John 3:2). As the Firstfruits, Christ is the pledge of the resurrection of the dead in Him.

As the Federal Head of a new race, namely, the redeemed of all ages known as His Body, His Church, who are to be raised from the dead and caught up to meet Him at His return, it was essential for Him to rise again and ascend on high as the Captain or

Leader of their salvation. He is the Firstborn out from the dead, who died in Him (Colossians 1:18). Thus Paul outlines the order of the resurrection of the Head and the Body—

"Every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; Afterward they that are Christ's at His coming" (1 Corinthians 15:23).

In what he calls the "Hymn of the Resurrection and Exaltation" Arthur Way has this most expressive translation of the passage dealing with the Resurrection of Christ and His Church—"Messiah has been raised from the dead! and (since one resurrection disproves the impossibility)

He is the first sheaf of a great Harvest,
Of all who have 'been hushed to death's sleep...'

Yet must each come in his befitting rank—Messiah the firstfruits,
Then, in the Day of His Coming,
Messiah's Own,
Then shall be the end."

Nowhere To Hide

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. —Revelation 1:5

Today's Scripture: Genesis 3:6-13,22-24

I smelled something burning, so I hurried to the kitchen. Nothing was on the stove or in the oven. I followed my nose through the house. From room to room I went, eventually ending up downstairs. My nose led me to my office and then to my desk. I peeked beneath it and there, peering back at me with big eyes pleading for help, was Maggie, our dog, our very "fragrant" dog. What smelled like something burning when I was upstairs, now had the distinct odor of skunk. Maggie had gone to the farthest corner of our house to escape the foul smell, but she couldn't get away from herself.

Maggie's dilemma brought to mind the many times I have tried to run away from unpleasant circumstances only to discover that the problem was not the situation I was in but me. Since Adam and Eve hid after sinning (Gen. 3:8), we've all followed their example. We run away from situations thinking we can escape the unpleasantness—only to discover that the unpleasantness is us.

The only way to escape ourselves is to stop hiding, acknowledge our waywardness, and let Jesus wash us clean (Rev. 1:5). I am grateful that when we do sin, Jesus is willing to give us a brand-new start. By: Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

From the wondrous cross on Calvary
Flows the stream that still avails,
Cleansing hearts and bringing victory
Through that love which never fails.
—Elliott

Sin's contamination requires the Savior's cleansing.

Debt Eraser

[Jesus Christ] loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood. Revelation 1:5

Today's Scripture & Insight: Revelation 1:4–7

Stunned is just one word that describes the response of the crowd at the 2019 graduation ceremony at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. The commencement speaker announced that he and his family would be donating millions of dollars to erase the student debt of the entire graduating class. One student—with \$100,000 in loans—was among the overwhelmed graduates who expressed their joys with tears and shouts.

Most of us have experienced indebtedness in some form—having to pay for homes, vehicles, education, medical expenses, or other things. But we've also known the amazing relief of a bill being stamped "PAID"!

After declaring Jesus as "the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth," John worshipfully acknowledged His debt-erasing work: "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood" (Revelation 1:5). This statement is simple but its meaning is profound. Better than the surprise announcement the Morehouse graduating class heard is the good news that the death of Jesus (the shedding of His blood on the cross) frees us from the penalty that our sinful attitudes,

desires, and deeds deserve. Because that debt has been satisfied, those who believe in Jesus are forgiven and become a part of God's kingdom family (v. 6). This good news is the best news of all! By: Arthur Jackson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

If you haven't received forgiveness through faith in Christ, what's keeping you from accepting His free gift? When was the last time you worshiped and thanked God for the forgiveness and new life He's provided?

Jesus, thank You for Your death that erased my debt; I'm eternally grateful!

Revelation 1:6 and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father--to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Amplified And formed us into a kingdom (a royal race), priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and the power and the majesty and the dominion throughout the ages and forever and ever. Amen (so be it).

Mace who hath made us kings and priests to his God and father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

NET Revelation 1:6 and has appointed us as a kingdom, as priests serving his God and Father— to him be the glory and the power for ever and ever! Amen.

NLT Revelation 1:6 He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

ESV Revelation 1:6 and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

NIV Revelation 1:6 and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father--to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

GNT Revelation 1:6 καὶ ποίησεν ἡμᾶς βασιλεῖς, ἐρεῖς τῆς θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ, ὅτι αὐτῷ τὸ κράτος ἐστὶν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνες [τῶν αἰώνων]· ὁ μὲν.

KJV Revelation 1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

ASV Revelation 1:6 and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

CSB Revelation 1:6 and made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father-- the glory and dominion are His forever and ever. Amen.

NKJ Revelation 1:6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

NRS Revelation 1:6 and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

YLT Revelation 1:6 and did make us kings and priests to his God and Father, to him is the glory and the power to the ages of the ages! Amen.

- **made:** Rev 5:10 Rev 20:6 Ex 19:6 Isa 61:6 Ro 12:1 1Pe 2:5-9
- **to Him:** Rev 4:11 Rev 5:12-14 Ps 72:18,19 Da 4:34 Mt 6:13 Joh 5:23 Php 2:11 1Ti 6:16 Heb 13:21 1Pe 4:11 5:11 2Pe 3:18 Jude 1:25

Related Passages:

Revelation 5:10 "You have **made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God**, and they will reign upon the earth."

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be **priests of God** and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

2 Timothy 2:12 If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us;

Exodus 19:6 and **you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation'** These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."

1 Peter 2:5-9 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," 8 and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed. 9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

JOHN RESPONSE: A DOXOLOGY "CAN I HEAR AN 'AMEN'?"

And He has made us (past tense) *to be* a kingdom ([basileia](#)), priests ([hiereus](#)) to His God and Father - Who is **He**? In context clearly this is Jesus Who has **made** or appointed us to these high positions. **Made** in the past tense signifies that we are even now a **kingdom** and **priests** and will be so forever and ever. **KJV** has "And hath made us kings." In other passages in Revelation believers are described as those who will rule and reign with Christ (Rev 3:21+, Rev 5:10+, Rev 20:6+). Thomas says kingdom "is a collective designation for all believers in Christ."

Henry Morris - Having been cleansed of sin's guilt and power (Rev 1:), we are no longer bond slaves of sin (Romans 6:20-22). But to the One who loved us, that is only the beginning. **Those who were slaves became kings and priests**, (or "a kingdom of priests") **seated with Him in heavenly places** (Ephesians 2:6) and serving as a holy priesthood, offering up spiritual sacrifices to God (1 Peter 2:5). In the coming kingdom, He promises that we shall actually "reign with him" (Revelation 20:6; 2 Timothy 2:12). But though we shall reign with Him, we are still His servants (Revelation 22:3) and it will be our joy to acknowledge His glory and dominion forever. (Borrow [The Revelation Record - page 36](#))

MacDonald - His love did not stop at washing us, though it could have done so. He made us a kingdom (NKJV margin) **and priests to His God and Father**. As holy **priests**, we offer spiritual sacrifices to God: our persons, our possessions, our praise, and our service. As royal **priests**, we tell forth the excellencies of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. If we meditate on such love, we can only conclude that He is worthy of all the **glory**, honor, worship, and praise that we can heap on Him. And He is worthy of **dominion** over our lives, the church, the world, and the entire universe. **Amen**.

Upon hearing what Christ's blood "made us" it prompted John to express a benediction of worship and praise and a hearty "Amen."

To Him be the glory ([doxa](#)) **and the dominion** ([kratos](#)) **forever** ([aion](#)) **and ever**. **Amen** ([amen](#)) - John is so taken by the great things Christ has accomplished for us that all he can do is have a praise and worship service! When *kratos* is used of God it speaks of His sovereignty, power, might, dominion (cf 1Ti 6:16+).

Guzik says Amen "isn't a wish that it *may* be so, but it is an affirmation that, through God, it *will* be so. Jesus *will be praised*."

THOUGHT - Would it be that we too would imitate John's response to the great truths revealed in Rev 1:5-6 (He loves us, He released us from slavery, He made us kings and priests forever). May the Spirit of truth quickly recall these great truths to our heart and mind, so that when are tempted to rebel against our King and bow to sin's temptation, we will instead bow to our King in praise and worship. And then sin can exert no dominion when Christ's is the King of our heart!

The specific phrase Forever and ever - 12x in Revelation (out of 43 times in entire Bible) Rev. 1:6; Rev. 4:9; Rev. 4:10; Rev. 5:13; Rev. 7:12; Rev. 10:6; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 14:11; Rev. 15:7; Rev. 19:3; Rev. 20:10; Rev. 22:5

Spurgeon on glory and dominion - "Some of you are very like a mouse behind the [wainscot](#). You are in the Lord's house, but you are not known as one of the family: sometimes you give a little squeak in your hiding-place, and sometimes come out at night, as the mouse does, to pick up a crumb or two, without being seen. Is this worthy of yourself? Is it worthy of your Lord and Master?"..."Again, if we truly say, 'To him be glory and dominion,' then *we must give him dominion over ourselves*. Each man is a little empire of three kingdoms – body, soul, and spirit – and it should be a united kingdom. Make Christ king of it all. Do not allow any branch of those three kingdoms to set up for itself a distinct rule; put them all under the sway of your one King."

refer to the territory or people over whom a king rules. **Swindoll** says **basileia** means "'kingdom," "government," "royal power" This term denotes the dominion of a lawful king, which the Greeks saw as something derived from Zeus. In the Old Testament, Israel was originally a **theocracy**, a nation whose king was God. Therefore, Israel was the kingdom of God. Even when a human sat on the throne of Israel, he derived his power from God. The Gospels depict the earth as the dominion of Satan or evil, a usurper to the rightful throne of God. Jesus came to reestablish divine rule (i.e., the kingdom of God). ([Insights on Luke](#)) There are 3 basic meanings - (1) The power exercised by a king, the act of ruling - kingship, royal rule, reign (2) Basileia can sometimes refer to the land, the realm or the territory over which a king rules. (3) Basileia can refer to the spiritual rule of God in the hearts of people now (Ro 14.17) and ultimately to be fulfilled in the Messianic reign of Christ on earth reign, kingdom (Lk 1.33).

Basileia in Revelation - Rev. 1:6; Rev. 1:9; Rev. 5:10; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 12:10; Rev. 16:10; Rev. 17:12; Rev. 17:17; Rev. 17:18

Priests (2409) **hiereus** from **hieros** = sacred, holy, consecrated to God, used as a noun to mean a sacred place or temple, cp Mark 11:11; cp English derivative "hierarchy" = leadership) is a sacred or consecrated person who serves deity. **Priests** in the NT refer primarily to the ceremonial officials of Jesus' day, that group of men who offered Temple sacrifices and carried out the other sacred rites associated with the Jewish Temple and Jewish people (cp Heb 8:4) . Most of the uses of **hiereus** refer to Jewish priests, but Acts 14:13 refers to a priest of the pagan cult of Zeus (patron little g god of the city of Lystra). Jesus is our Great High Priest, which describes His primary ministry in our behalf today (Heb 7:1, 3, 11, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, 23), one aspect of that ministry being His continual intercession for us (Heb 7:25, Ro 8:34). **Hiereus** describes the specific position and not necessarily a priest's character (e.g., see Lk 10:31 where a priest was a "bad Samaritan" so to speak). In Revelation **hiereus** describes believers who will rule and reign as **priests** with Christ the **Great Priest** (Jesus - Heb 10:21 = See [Christ as Priest](#), Rev 1:6, Rev 5:10, Rev 20:6). Even though the **hiereus** described religious men, it did not signify necessarily that they were saved (cp Acts 6:7).

Hiereus - 30v - Matt. 8:4; Matt. 12:4; Matt. 12:5; Mk. 1:44; Mk. 2:26; Lk. 1:5; Lk. 5:14; Lk. 6:4; Lk. 10:31; Lk. 17:14; Jn. 1:19; Acts 4:1; Acts 6:7; Acts 14:13; Heb. 5:6; Heb. 7:1; Heb. 7:3; Heb. 7:11; Heb. 7:14; Heb. 7:15; Heb. 7:17; Heb. 7:21; Heb. 7:23; Heb. 8:4; Heb. 9:6; Heb. 10:11; Heb. 10:21; Rev. 1:6; Rev. 5:10; Rev. 20:6

Dominion (2904) **kratos** means strength or might, especially manifested power, the power to rule or control or **dominion** (power to rule, supreme authority, sovereignty, the right to govern or rule or determine). **Krátos** denotes the presence and significance of force or strength rather than its exercise. It is the ability to exhibit or express resident strength. Most of the NT uses (10/12) are in references to God Almighty, and make the point that ultimate dominion belongs to God Alone. Regarding the derivation of **krátos**, **Vine** writes that this word means "force, strength, might, more especially manifested power, is derived from a root **kra**—, to perfect, to complete: "creator" is probably connected. It also signifies dominion, and is so rendered frequently in doxologies." (Vine's Expository dictionary of Old and New Testament words)

Kratos - 12v - dominion(6), might(1), mightily(1), mighty deeds(1), power(1), strength(2). Lk. 1:51; Acts 19:20; Eph. 1:19; Eph. 6:10; Col. 1:11; 1Ti 6:16; Heb. 2:14; 1Pe. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:11; Jude 1:25; Rev. 1:6; Rev. 5:13

1 Timothy 6:16 Who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal **dominion** ([kratos](#))! Amen.

1 Peter 4:11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and **dominion** ([kratos](#)) forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 5:11 To Him be **dominion** ([kratos](#)) forever and ever. Amen

Jude 1:25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, **dominion** ([kratos](#)) and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Revelation 5:13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and **dominion** ([kratos](#)) forever and ever."

Forever...ever (165) **aion** generally means an extended period of time and has various meanings depending on the context. Age, referring to an age or time in contrast to *kósmos*, referring to people or space. Denotes duration or continuance of time, but with great variety. **Aion** generally expresses an extended span of time, but it additionally assumes a specific meaning according to its various contexts. **Friberg** on **aion** - era, time, age; (1) as a segment of contemporary time lifetime, era, present age (Lk 16.8); (2) of time gone by past, earliest times (Lk 1.70); (3) of prolonged and unlimited time = eternity (1Ti 1.17); (4) of time to come = eternity, age to come (Lk 20.35); idiomatically *eis ton aiona* literally into the age, i.e. forever, eternally (Jn 6.51); *eis tous aionas ton aionas* literally into the ages of the ages, i.e. forever and ever, forevermore (Heb 1.8); (5) plural, as a spatial concept, of the creation

as having a beginning and moving forward through long but limited time universe, world (Heb 1:2; 9:26; 11:3) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

Aion is a keyword in the Revelation - 13x - Rev. 1:6; Rev. 1:18; Rev. 4:9; Rev. 4:10; Rev. 5:13; Rev. 7:12; Rev. 10:6; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 14:11; Rev. 15:7; Rev. 19:3; Rev. 20:10; Rev. 22:5

Amen (281) **amen** [OT = **Amen** (0543) **amen**] is a transliteration from the Hebrew word **amen** which in turn is from the Hebrew verb **aman** = to be firm, to believe, this word conveying the idea of certainty) **Amen** is transliterated into Latin and English and many other languages, so that it is practically a universal word. In fact **amen** has been called the best-known word in human speech. To say "**Amen**" confirms a statement by someone else. It indicates the solemn affirmation of the divine will and purpose in about one-third of the nearly 150 occurrences of the term. The remaining uses of the term convey the sense of "**truly**" acknowledging that which is valid and binding. **Amen** is often at the end of a sentence to confirm the preceding words and invokes their fulfillment. Only the Lord Jesus uses **amen** at beginning of a sentence. His "Amen" guarantees the truth of His saying and affirms His authority. John's Gospel has 25 uses of "**amen**" and every use is a double **amen**. None of the other 3 Gospels use a "double amen." It is also notable that in the four Gospels, **amen** is used only by our Lord Jesus Christ, almost always "to introduce new revelations of the mind of God." (Vine) Every use of "**amen**" or "**truly**" by Jesus serves to affirm what follows and by extension to cause us to pay close attention to the teaching. The Pauline uses of **amen** occur primarily at the close of his prayers or doxologies, and as such serve to confirm them as "it is firm" (or "so let it be"). Finally, Jesus is named the "Amen" (Rev 3:14+), the supreme authority and affirmation.

Amen in the Revelation - Rev. 1:6; Rev. 1:7; Rev. 3:14+; Rev. 5:14; Rev. 7:12; Rev. 19:4; Rev. 22:20

Revelation 1:7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

NET Revelation 1:7 (Look! He is returning with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the tribes on the earth will mourn because of him. This will certainly come to pass! Amen.)

NLT Revelation 1:7 Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see him-- even those who pierced him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for him. Yes! Amen!

ESV Revelation 1:7 Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

NIV Revelation 1:7 Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

GNT Revelation 1:7 ὁ ρηεται μετ τ ν νεφελ ν, κα ψεται α τ ν π ς φθαλμ ς κα ο τινες α τ ν ξεκ ντησαν, κα κ ψονται π α τ ν π σαι α φυλα τ ς γ ς. να , μ ν.

KJV Revelation 1:7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

ASV Revelation 1:7 Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen.

CSB Revelation 1:7 Look! He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, including those who pierced Him. And all the families of the earth will mourn over Him. This is certain. Amen.

NKJ Revelation 1:7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

NRS Revelation 1:7 Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen.

YLT Revelation 1:7 Lo, he doth come with the clouds, and see him shall every eye, even those who did pierce him, and wail because of him shall all the tribes of the land. Yes! Amen!

- **He is coming:** Rev 14:14-16 Ps 97:2 Isa 19:1 Da 7:13 Na 1:3 Mt 24:30 26:64 Mk 13:26 14:62 Lu 21:27 Ac 1:9-11 1Th 4:17, more passages - Dt 18:15-18; Ps 2:22; Ps 118:26; Isa. 9:6; Isa 48:16; Isa 53:1-12; Isa 61:1; Jer 23:5-8; Da 9:25; Mic 5:2; Zec 2:8-11; Zech 6:12-15; etc
- **and every:** Rev 22:4 Nu 24:17 Job 19:26-27 33:26 1Th 1:10 1Jn 3:2 Jude 1:14

- **and they:** Ps 22:16 Zec 12:10 Joh 19:34,37 Heb 6:6 Heb 10:29
- **and all:** Rev 6:15-17 Rev 18:15-19 Mt 24:30 Lu 23:28-30
- **Even So:** Rev 18:20 Rev 19:1-3 22:20 Jdg 5:31 Ps 68:1

Related Passages:

Psalm 22:16+ For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; **They pierced my hands and my feet.**

John 19:34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. 35 And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. 36 For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, "NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN." 37 And again another Scripture says, "**THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED.**" (see Zech 12:10+).

1 Thessalonians 1:10+ and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, Who rescues us from the wrath to come.

1 John 3:2+ Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because **we will see Him just as He is.**

Matthew 26:64 Jesus *said to him, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."

Acts 1:9-11+ And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. 11 They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."



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[Brian Bell](#) suggests that Revelation 1:7 and Revelation 1:8 "announce the main theme of the book!"

BEHOLD ([idou](#)), **HE IS COMING** ([erchomai](#)) **WITH THE CLOUDS** ([nephele](#)) - **Behold** is a word utilized by the Spirit to excite wonder and to gain our full attention and is a command in the [aorist imperative](#) meaning to "look now," "do not delay." Like we might say today "You are going to want to check this out!" One would think given the following context, He would not even need to say "**Behold**," because the sight that will unfold will be one of the greatest sights ever described in the Scripture. What is that event? To what does **HE IS COMING** refer? Without question this refers to the **Coming** of Jesus Christ in all of His glory, the return of the King. (See value of vertical vision) He has come (past tense) in humility (in the flesh - incarnation - Php 2:2-11, Mk 10:45, Jn 13:15, 12), but He will "**soon**" (Rev 1:1 - "soon take place", Rev 22:20 - "Yes I am coming quickly [soon]!") return in glory and majesty to conquer all His foes. When Christ ascended "a cloud received Him out" the sight of His 11 disciples (Acts 1:9) and He will return in the **clouds** (Mt. 24:30; Mt 26:64; Mk 13:26; Mk 14:62; Luke 21:27). One writer says **with the clouds** is "Not simply that He has a surrounding of clouds, but that He compels all the clouds into His retinue." See the picture above with believers (you and me) following the King of kings. In a figurative sense Jesus is coming with the clouds and the clouds (us) are coming with Him for Hebrews 12:1+ refers to the faithful as a "**great a cloud** of witnesses." John's description are paralleled with the description in Daniel

"I kept looking in the night visions, And **behold**, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was **coming**, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:13-14+)

[KJV Bible Commentary](#) - The Second Coming of Christ to earth in fulfillment of Old Testament prediction (cf. Dan 7:13) will be seen by all kindreds of the earth at the time, Israel and the nations. The time is that spoken of in Zechariah 12:10.

[Brian Bell](#) - Every eye will see Him – in contrast to his 1st coming at His birth & in contrast to the Rapture. [Public vs. Secret] Invisible coming - When He comes to “catch away” He comes as a “Thief”. Visible coming - witnessed by the whole world. [The climax of the Tribulation period!] Eye - Eyes have two purposes: [1] To See [2] To Weep. “The eye that looks to the pierced One is the eye which weeps for Him!”

Note **coming** ([erchomai](#)) is in the present tense which is a way of saying He is already on His way (so-called futuristic present in which a future action is stated as already coming to pass indicating vividness and confident assertion)! Note also that one Name given by the Jews to the Messiah was “**Coming One**” (or Expected One), John the Baptist while in prison sent word to Christ asking “Are You the **Coming** ([erchomai](#) in present tense) **One** or shall we look for someone else?” (Mt 11:2-3+). It is ironic that most of Israel missed the Coming One the first coming, but they will not miss the Coming One at His Second Coming, for **every eye will see Him!**

And every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him- How many will **see Him**? While **every** generally means all without exception, this refers to all who are alive at His victorious return. This will be a global event, divinely simulcast to every eye whether in a city or in a remote jungle village! **Those who pierced Him** refers to the Jews (although the Romans actually carried out the piercing) who are alive at that time and are described in Zechariah 12:10+.

“I will pour out on the house of David (ISRAEL IN THE END TIME) and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that (TERM OF PURPOSE) **they will look on Me whom they have pierced**; and **they will mourn for Him**, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

Pierced is **ekkenteo** meaning to pierce or stab (deeply) with a lance or sword and thus, kill. The only other use is the parallel prophecy in John 19:37.

And again another Scripture says, “**THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED.**”

In His Olivet Discourse Jesus describes His return...

“So if they say to you, ‘Behold, He is in the wilderness,’ do not go out, or, **Behold**, He is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe them. 27 “For **just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.** (Matthew 24:26-27+)

“And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then **all the tribes of the earth will mourn**, and **they will see** the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. (Matthew 24:30+)

John Walvoord on every eye - There is no indication that the world as a whole will see Christ at the time of the rapture of the church. At His coming to establish His kingdom, however, all will see Him (**ED: OF THOSE ALIVE ON EARTH THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS! NO PLACE TO HIDE FROM HIS GLORY!**). Especially mentioned is the fact that they who **pierced Him** will behold His coming. This creates a problem in that those who crucified Christ are now dead. The difficulty is solved by reference to Zechariah 12:10+ where Jehovah declares, “*And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*” Not only Israel as a nation shall behold Him, but also “*all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.*” This expression is almost identical to that found in Matthew 24:30+, where it states, “*Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn* ([kopto](#)).” ([Revelation 1: Introduction: The Things Which Thou Hast Seen](#) online)

And all the tribes of the earth will mourn ([kopto](#)) **over Him** - Note the adjectives every and all! This is a supernatural global event visible 360 degrees around the world at the same time. **ESV** = “will wail” - what a frightening sound this will be, because those who are wailing will finally realize that their eternal fate is sealed, their doom is sure, for Christ is real and is returning as Judge (cf 2Ti 4:1+). As noted above in Jesus’ prophecy in Matthew 24:30+.

The return of Christ will either be a comfort of a catastrophe!
What will it be for you dear reader?

Mattoon on mourn (wail) - The world will wail because of Him. The word “**wail**” is “[kopto](#)” which means “to cut.” This word became linked with the pagan practice of cutting one’s self when in extreme grief or despair. The prophets of Baal did this in 1Ki 18:28. The world will be in despair when Christ returns to judge the lost for their sins (cf Jn 5:22, 27+). ([Treasures from Revelation](#))

MacDonald - all the tribes of the earth will be plunged into mourning **because** He comes to judge His enemies and set up His kingdom. Believers do not mourn His Coming; they say, "**Even so, Amen.**"

So it is to be (**nai**) - This is certain! Even so! So shall it be! Yes! It is the Greek statement of confirmation and approval. John adds this to emphasize the certainty of what he had just written. Note that combining **nai** and **amen** forms an expression of vigorous approval!

Amen (**amen**) - Let it be so! Amen is used in affirmation of other words and is an acknowledgment of that which is valid. In the synagogue it is the response of the community to the prayers uttered by the leader.

ILLUSTRATION - **John Phillips** - One of the most stirring pages in English history tells of the conquests and crusades of **Richard I, the Lionhearted**. While Richard was away trouncing Saladin, his kingdom fell on bad times. His sly and graceless brother, John, usurped all the prerogatives of the king and misruled the realm. The people of England suffered, longing for the return of the king, and praying that it might be soon. Then one day Richard came. He landed in England and marched straight for his throne. Around that glittering coming, many tales are told, woven into the legends of England. (One of them is the story of Robin Hood.) John's castles tumbled like ninepins. Great Richard laid claim to his throne, and none dared stand in his path. The people shouted their delight. They rang peal after peal on the bells. The Lion was back! Long live the king! One day a King greater than Richard will lay claim to a realm greater than England. Those who have abused the earth in His absence, seized His domains, and mismanaged His world will all be swept aside. ([Exploring Revelation](#) - BORROW)

Mourn (wail) (**2875**) **kopto** means literally (in the active voice) to cut off (as when Messiah entered Jerusalem to begin His final week on earth = Mt 21:8 = "cutting branches from the trees," Mk 11:8 = "leafy branches which they had cut from the fields"; this same sense in Lxx = Nu 13:24; Jdg 9:48). The more common usage is figurative = In the middle voice (as here in Revelation 1:7) **kopto** means to beat one's body with the hands (especially one's breast) as a strong expression of grief or remorse, an act of mourning or lamentation (Mt 24:30, Mt 11:17, Lk 23:27; Lxx - 1Ki 13:28, 2Ki 1:12, 11:26, Zech 7:5, Ge 23:2, 1Ki 25:1).

Kopto is used 2x in the Revelation - Matt. 11:17; Matt. 21:8; Matt. 24:30; Mk. 11:8; Lk. 8:52; Lk. 23:27; Rev. 1:7; Rev. 18:9 = "And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and **lament** (**kopto**) over her (**BABYLON FALLEN**) when they see the smoke of her burning,"

Clouds (**3507**) **nephele** is a diminutive of **nephos** and thus refers to a small cloud. (Luke 12:54 [cf. 1 Ki 18:44). **Nephos** is repeatedly associated with appearances of God -- God the Father spoke from a cloud (Mt 17:5, Mark 9:7, Lk 9:35), the Son departed in a cloud (Acts 1:9) and will return in a cloud (Mt 24:30, 26:64, Mk 13:26, 14:62, Lk 21:27, Rev 1:7, cf. Rev 14:14-16+), the Son was transfigured in a cloud (Lk 9:34-35), saints will meet the Son in the clouds (1 Th 4:17). The cloud in Hebrew thought is commonly associated w. the divine presence (Ex 13:21; 16:10; Mt. 17:5; Acts 1:9)

Nephele is used 6x in the Revelation out of 21v - Matt. 17:5; Matt. 24:30; Matt. 26:64; Mk. 9:7; Mk. 13:26; Mk. 14:62; Lk. 9:34; Lk. 9:35; Lk. 12:54; Lk. 21:27; Acts 1:9; 1 Co. 10:1; 1 Co. 10:2; 1 Thess. 4:17; Jude 1:12; Rev. 1:7; Rev. 10:1; Rev. 11:12; Rev. 14:14; Rev. 14:15; Rev. 14:16

QUESTION - [What does it mean that every eye will see Him when Jesus returns \(Revelation 1:7\)?](#)

ANSWER - Scripture promises that Christ will return to earth, yet the various passages predicting that event seem to indicate two separate returns. Revelation 1:7 describes a return in which every eye will see Him. First Thessalonians 4 describes a return in which not everyone will see Christ.

As John introduces the book of Revelation, he alludes to Zechariah 12:10 and asserts that Jesus Christ is coming with the clouds and that "every eye will see Him" (Revelation 1:7). Roughly five centuries earlier, Daniel recorded a similar scene in which he observes that a Son of Man will be coming with the clouds of heaven (Daniel 7:13) to begin an eternal kingdom over the earth (Daniel 7:14). Paul describes the Lord descending from heaven with a shout, the dead in Christ rising from the dead, and then those who are in Christ and still alive being caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

John, Daniel, and Paul all mention clouds associated with the coming of the Lord, but, despite the similar terminology, there are differences in the prophecies. Daniel says that Jesus will immediately begin His kingdom upon His return. In the coming that Paul prophesies, Jesus doesn't actually come to the earth; rather, those who are caught up to Him remain in heaven with Him (1 Thessalonians 4:13), after which Paul describes the [day of the Lord](#) taking place (1 Thessalonians 5:2ff). This does not seem to be the coming of Jesus when every eye will see Him; instead, this is more like what Jesus said in John 14:2, when He said He would go to prepare a place for His followers, come again, and receive them to Himself so that where He is they would be also.

In John 14:2, Jesus describes His going from earth to heaven (going to prepare a place), then coming from heaven but not all the way to earth (receiving them to Himself), then remaining in heaven (where He is they would be also) for a time. Similarly, Paul describes the event of saints joining Jesus in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–17 and in 1 Corinthians 15:51–52. In the latter passage, Paul describes believers changing and being with Christ in the “twinkling of an eye”—a sudden event that is perhaps so quick as to be visually imperceptible. This does not seem to describe something that every eye will see—something so vivid and broad that everyone on earth will witness at the same time.

In Revelation 19:11–14, John describes Jesus coming to earth with armies of saints and then reigning on earth with them (Revelation 20:4). As those saints are already physically with Christ, the event that brings them together has already happened. The chronology indicates that the event Jesus and Paul describe involving the “catching up” of believers to Jesus will have already happened before the return of Christ in Revelation 19—also referred to in Revelation 1:7—Jesus’ coming in the clouds. The first of these two events is often referred to as the [rapture](#), because of the Latin word for “caught up” (**ED**: “RAPTURO”) (in 1 Thessalonians 4:17). The second of these events is typically referenced simply as Jesus’ [Second Coming](#), because it is the second time recorded that He actually comes to the earth (unlike the rapture, in which He only comes in the clouds to meet His believers in the air).

At the rapture, only believers will see Jesus. At the second coming, every eye will see Him—the whole world will behold Him. It is this second event to which John refers in Revelation 1:7. [GotQuestions.org](#)

QUESTION - [What does it mean that Jesus will come in the clouds \(Revelation 1:7\)?](#)

ANSWER - Revelation 1:7 says, “‘Look, he is coming with the clouds,’ and ‘every eye will see him, even those who pierced him’; and all peoples on earth ‘will mourn because of him.’ So shall it be! Amen.” This verse brings together two other passages: Matthew 26:64, in which Jesus tells the Sanhedrin they will see the Son “coming on the clouds of heaven”; and Zechariah 12:10, which says that Jerusalem’s inhabitants will mourn when they see “the one they have pierced.”

Some have tried to allegorize Revelation 1:7 by assigning various figurative meanings to the “clouds.” But there is no need to look for hidden meanings here, for the passage means just what it says, as do the two passages it quotes. There is nothing more to make of the statement that “He comes with the clouds.” It simply means that Jesus will appear to all people as He comes to earth out of the heavens.

After Jesus gave His disciples the Great Commission, “he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight” (Acts 1:9). As the disciples stood there, gazing after the Lord, two angels appeared and told them, “This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven” (verse 11). A cloud is mentioned at His ascension, and the clouds are mentioned at His return. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Behold (2400) ([idou](#)) is the second person singular aorist middle imperative of eidon which means to see, perceive, look at. In the NT [idou](#) is used as a demonstrative particle that draws attention to what follows. [Idou](#) in the [middle voice](#) means “you yourself look, see, perceive!” The [aorist imperative](#) is a command emphasizing “Do it now! Don’t delay!”

Spurgeon reminds us that “**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation.” I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect “Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!”

Idou in the Revelation - 25x - a keyword - Rev. 1:7; Rev. 1:18; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 2:22; Rev. 3:8; Rev. 3:9; Rev. 3:20; Rev. 4:1; Rev. 4:2; Rev. 5:5; Rev. 6:2; Rev. 6:5; Rev. 6:8; Rev. 7:9; Rev. 9:12; Rev. 11:14; Rev. 12:3; Rev. 14:1; Rev. 14:14; Rev. 16:15; Rev. 19:11; Rev. 21:3; Rev. 21:5; Rev. 22:7; Rev. 22:12 = “**Behold**, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.”

So it is to be (3483) ([nai](#)) is a primary particle of strong affirmation rendered yes (indeed), certainly. **Friberg** on [nai](#) - expressing affirmation; (1) as denoting assent or agreement yes (Mt 9:28); (2) as affirming the statements of others certainly, that’s so, quite so (MT 15:27); (3) as emphasizing one’s own previous answer to a rhetorical question yes, indeed (MT 11:9); (4) as an emphatic repetition of one’s own statement yes indeed, I tell you, even so (MT 11:26); (5) n. n. used in strong affirmation instead of an oath formula certainly yes, yes and amen (MT 5:37; JA 5:12) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

Nai - 34x/30v - indeed(1), so(1), yes(32). Matt. 5:37; Matt. 9:28; Matt. 11:9; Matt. 11:26; Matt. 13:51; Matt. 15:27; Matt. 17:25; Matt. 21:16; Mk. 7:28; Lk. 7:26; Lk. 10:21; Lk. 11:51; Lk. 12:5; Jn. 11:27; Jn. 21:15; Jn. 21:16; Acts 5:8; Acts 22:27; Rom. 3:29; 2 Co. 1:17; 2 Co. 1:18; 2 Co. 1:19; 2 Co. 1:20; Phil. 4:3; Phlm. 1:20;

Jas. 5:12; Rev. 1:7; Rev. 14:13; Rev. 16:7; Rev. 22:20.

Nai - 5x in the Septuagint - Ge 17:19 = "No" which is Hebrew abal = verily, of a truth; Ge 42:21 = "truly"; Jdg. 1:31; Job 19:4 = "even"; Isa. 48:7 = "behold"

Revelation 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" **Yes (nai)**, says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

Revelation 16:7 And I heard the altar saying, **Yes (nai)**, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."

Revelation 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, **Yes (nai)**, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

NET Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God— the one who is, and who was, and who is still to come— the All-Powerful!

NLT Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega-- the beginning and the end," says the Lord God. "I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come-- the Almighty One."

ESV Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

NIV Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

GNT Revelation 1:8 γ ε μι τ λ φ α κ α τ , λ γ ει κ ρ ι ο ς θ ε ς , ν κ α ν κ α ρ χ μ ε ν ο ς , π α ν τ ο κ ρ τ ω ρ .

KJV Revelation 1:8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

ASV Revelation 1:8 I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

CSB Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "the One who is, who was, and who is coming, the Almighty."

NKJ Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

NRS Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

YLT Revelation 1:8 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, beginning and end, saith the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is coming -- the Almighty.'

- **Alpha**: Rev 1:11,17 Rev 2:8 Rev 21:6 Rev 22:13 Isa 41:4 Isa 43:10 Isa 44:6 Isa 48:12
- **which is**: Rev 1:4
- **the Almighty**: Rev 4:8 11:17 16:14 19:15 21:22 Ge 17:1 28:3 35:11 43:14 48:3 Ge 49:25 Ex 6:3 Nu 24:4 Isa 9:6 2Co 6:18

Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 33:27+ "The eternal God is a dwelling place, And underneath are the everlasting arms; And He drove out the enemy from before you, And said, 'Destroy!'

Romans 16:26+ but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;

Isaiah 41:4 "Who has performed and accomplished it, Calling forth the generations from the beginning? **1, the LORD, am the first, and with the last. I am He.**"

Isaiah 44:6 "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: **'I am the first and I am the last,** And there is no God besides Me.

Isaiah 48:12 "Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; **I am He, I am the first, I am also the last.**

JESUS CHRIST: EVERYTHING FROM "A TO Z"

In the previous passage John says Jesus is coming and now he records Jesus' first declaration, revealing through His Names Who He is.

One might paraphrase this passage "I am the A and I am the Z, the first and the last, the one who is—I exist now! Who was—I have always existed! And who is to come—I will always exist!"

I am (ego eimi) the Alpha and the Omega (Wikipedia), says the Lord (kurios) God - I emphatic, "I and no other!" John now records the first words of Jesus. Jesus depicts Himself (THREE TIMES - SEE BELOW) with the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, as we might say in English He is the **"A to Z."** The word "alphabet" comes from the first two letters of the Greek alphabet...alpha, beta. **A to Z** means from the very beginning to the very end; covering or regarding the entire possible range or scope. It is interesting that this title is put at the very beginning and end of Revelation...

Revelation 21:6+ Then He said to me, "It is done. **I am the Alpha and the Omega,** the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.

Revelation 22:13+ **"I am the Alpha and the Omega,** the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

Jesus as the **Alpha** and **Omega** reminds me of the exhortation to fix "our eyes on Jesus, the **Author** (Pioneer, Founder, Source, Originator) and **Perfecter** (Finisher, Consummation) of faith." (Heb 12:2+)

Guzik - Some wonder if it is God the Father or God the Son speaking here). We suspect it is the Son, Jesus Christ, and we believe this for many reasons. First, since it is Jesus' Revelation, it seems appropriate that He introduced it. Second, the titles Alpha and Omega and the Beginning and the End are titles claimed by Jesus (Revelation 22:13). Third, though the title who is and who was and who is to come is used of God the Father in Revelation 1:4, it is also true of God the Son, and seems to be directed to Jesus in Revelation 11:17 and 16:5.

R L Thomas - The specific identity of the speaker of these words is not immediately clear. Is the spokesman God the Father or God the Son? Persuasive evidence has been advanced in favor of the latter identification. γὼ εἰμι (Egō eimi, "I am"), the words with which the verse begins, is a frequent self-designation appropriated by Jesus in the NT, especially in the gospel of John (e.g., John 8:58) (Caird). Τ ἄφα καὶ τ ὦ (to Alpha kai to Ō, "the Alpha and the Omega") is a self-description by Jesus in Rev. 22:13. It more probably carries the same force in this verse.⁶⁶ Jesus Christ has been the central figure in vv. 1–7. A switch to God the Father in v. 8 is improbable because it is so abrupt (Walvoord). The case is further strengthened by a comparison of this verse with Rev. 1:17–18, where similar titles are without question applied to Christ (Smith). Lastly, because erchetai in v. 7 clearly refers to Christ's coming, the same must be the case with ἐρχόμενος (ho erchomenos, "the coming one") in v. 8. **The evidence in favor of seeing Christ as the speaker is impressive.** (See [Revelation Exegetical Commentary](#)) (Bolding added)

I am constitutes the first of the seven great "I am's" of Revelation, Jesus' comprehensive claim to His self-existing deity. The **"I Am"** statements that give attributes of Jesus in Revelation - Rev. 1:8; Rev. 1:17; (Rev 1:18) Rev. 2:23; Rev. 21:6; Rev 22:13 Rev. 22:16

Henry Morris - The phrase **"the Alpha and the Omega"** is seen to express not only eternity, but infinitude, the boundless life embracing all while transcending all. A parallel construction was used in Hebrew: the **aleph and the tau**, meaning "from the beginning to the end" (Borrow [The Revelation Record](#))

Walvoord - In concluding the salutation in verse 8, Christ is quoted as declaring Himself to be the Alpha and the Omega, ([Revelation 1](#))

Lehman Strauss - He is the eternal "I AM," a verb indicating being but not becoming. He is before all things, the One who created all things (Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16); who controls all things (Hebrews 13), and who will consummate all things (Ephesians 1:10). Everything finds its commencement, course, and consummation in Him. All that letters and language were intended to be, the expression of truth, He is. (Borrow [The Book of Revelation page 28](#))

MacDonald - He spans time and eternity, and exhausts the vocabulary of excellence. He is the source and goal of creation, and it is He who began and will end the divine program in the world. He **is** and **was** and **is to come**, eternal in His being and **the Almighty** in

power.

Elmer Towns on the “**Alpha and Omega**.” - This is the Greek expression of a Hebrew idiom that implies **completeness**. The Jews took the first and last letters of their alphabet to emphasize and express the **entirety of a thing**. Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet; omega is the last. A similar English expression is “**everything from A to Z**.” In a sense, this title includes all of the more than 700 names and titles of Jesus (see Appendix where the names and titles of Jesus are listed alphabetically). ([The Names of Jesus](#) - Over 700 names of Jesus to help you Really know the Lord loves you.)

Ray Stedman - In no other book of the Bible do we have this wonderful [imprimatur](#) of God. God has signed this book with His own name, and has identified Himself for us. When we read this book we are reading a copy autographed by the author!

Charles Swindoll on the “**Alpha and Omega**” - God as the One who has both creation and re-creation in His hands. It would be a terrible misunderstanding, however, if we were to assume God cares nothing about what comes between the “A” and “Z.” This is why He reminds us that not only is He the God of the past and the future, but of the present as well. As “**Almighty**” God, the Lord exercises control over all time. (See [Insights on Revelation](#))

Henry Morris - “**Alpha and Omega!**” He Who is the Word, from the first letter to the last letter of all of language itself, comprises all there is, to know and be. In Him “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3). (Borrow [The Revelation Record - page 38](#))

Who is and Who was and Who is to come- NET has “the One Who is, and Who was, and Who is still to come.” This description speaks of present, past and future. I speaks of our Lord’s transcendent, eternal nature. He spans time and dwells in the endless, fathomless depths of eternity. In effect it covers all of time. Jesus is saying He always was and will always be. He is ageless. He is claiming the divine attribute of eternity (See Spurgeon on [Eternal](#)). It is surprising that the designation “**Eternal God**” occurs only twice in the Bible - Deut 33:27 and Romans 16:26+. That this description is identical to the Father in Rev 1:4 should not disturb us for it simply affirms the unity of the Father and the Son. It is like the Messianic passage in Isaiah 9:6 which calls Jesus the “Eternal Father.”

Micah 5:2+ alludes to Messiah’s eternality writing ““But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel (MESSIAH ENTERS “TIME”). **His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity** (MESSIAH IS TIMELESS).”

John 1:1 alludes to His eternality writing “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Elmer Towns notes **that** “There could be no more specific statement of the deity and eternality of Christ. This title of Christ parallels Moses’ great affirmation of faith, “From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90:2+). Jesus is eternally contemporary, the “I am” of all times. The writer of the Hebrews speaks of “**Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever**” (Hebrews 13:8+).([The Names of Jesus](#))

Moses wrote:

Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, **Even from everlasting ([olam](#)) to everlasting, You are God**. (Ps 90:2+) (See His Attribute - [Eternal](#); See His great Name - [El Olam - The Everlasting God](#) - Sing His Name back to Him - [Everlasting God](#))

Spurgeon - God was, when nothing else was. He was God when the earth was not a world but a chaos, when mountains were not upheaved, and the generation of the heavens and the earth had not commenced. In this Eternal One there is a safe abode for the successive generations of men. If God himself were of yesterday, he would not be a suitable refuge for mortal men; if he could change and cease to be God he would be but an uncertain dwelling place for his people. The eternal existence of God is here mentioned to set forth, by contrast, the brevity of human life.

John Calvin - The everlastingness of which Moses speaks is to be referred not only to the essence of God, but also to his providence, by which he governs the world. He intends not merely that he is, but that he is God.

Martin Luther - Such a God (he says) have we, such a God do we worship, to such a God do we pray, at whose command all created things sprang into being. Why then should we fear if this God favours us? Why should we tremble at the anger of the whole world? If He is our dwelling place, shall we not be safe though the heavens should go to wrack? For we have a Lord greater than all the world. We have a Lord so mighty that at his word all things sprang into being. And yet we are so fainthearted that if the anger of a single prince or king, nay, even of a single neighbour, is to be borne, we tremble and droop in spirit. Yet in

comparison with this King, all things beside in the whole world are but as the lightest dust which a slight breath moves from its place, and suffers not to be still. In this way this description of God is consolatory, and trembling spirits ought to look to this consolation in their temptations and dangers.

PANTOKRATOR ~ EL SHADDAI "ALL POWER"

The Almighty ([pantokrator](#)) - **NET** renders Jesus as "the All-Powerful." **NLT** has "the Almighty One." This Name of Jesus is His "[militant](#)" Name, the Name which assures His victory over ALL anti-God forces! In other words, this Name speaks of Jesus' final victory over the enemies of God as John describes in Rev 19:15+ "From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the winepress of the fierce wrath of God, the **Almighty** ([pantokrator](#))." The Septuagint translates the Name **EL Shaddai - God Almighty** ([El Shaddai](#) written and sung by Michael Card) with [pantokrator](#). **Shaddai** means the "All Sufficient" One, and is identified by John as the Lord Jesus Christ, Who Alone is sufficient to carry out the fulfillment of God's great plan of redemption!

THOUGHT - Jesus is sufficient or enough for our every need beloved! Sing it out to the great Alpha and Omega (then live it out)...

[Christ is ENOUGH for me.](#)

Christ is ENOUGH for me."

Everything I need is in You.

Everything I need!

In light of the fact that 9/10 NT uses of **Pantokrator** are in **The Revelation**, clearly **Pantokrator** is the characteristic title for God in the book which records the consummation of God's victory over sin and the evil one Satan and His awesome control over all the universe and all history. In this final chapter of God's plan of the ages, God brings to consummation His initial covenant promises made and affirmed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as He revealed Himself to them as **El Shaddai** some 4000+ years earlier in the book of beginnings, Genesis (see Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:9; 48:3; Ex 6:3). Although, **EL Shaddai - God Almighty** is not translated (in the [Septuagint](#)) with **Pantokrator** in these 6 uses in Genesis or in Exodus 6:3+, it is nevertheless notable that the Name **EL Shaddai** by which God first revealed Himself to the patriarchs is related to the same Name, **Pantokrator**, by which He brings to final fulfillment the covenant promises made to the patriarchs! God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. The Names **El Shaddai** and **Pantokrator** undergird the assurance every believer should have that He is able to fulfill every one of His promises, so that "**not one word of all the good words which Jehovah spoke has failed**" (Joshua 23:14)

THOUGHT - Have you experienced the sufficiency of Jesus Christ as your [pantokrator](#), the Almighty God, Who is also your Covenant Defender? Whatever attacks, afflictions, trials, etc you are experiencing beloved, Jesus is sufficient. Jesus is enough! Run to Him (by faith, by trusting His Word, by prayer in the Spirit) and take shelter in the Strong Tower of this great Name of Jesus and He will be your "safe place" (Person) (Pr 18:10+).

My times are in Thy hand:

I'll always trust in Thee;

And, after death, at Thy right hand

I shall for ever be.

Tony Garland adds that "The **Almighty**" [*ho pantokrator*] is derived from *ho panton kraton* which means the One Who holds all. (Re 1:8)

Guzik adds that the **Almighty** is the Greek **pantokrator** "which literally means "the one who has his hand on everything." It speaks of the great sovereign control of Jesus over everything – past, present, and future. This great word **Almighty** is used ten times in the New Testament, and nine of the ten times are in the Book of Revelation. This book has a striking emphasis on God's sovereignty, the understanding that He has His hand on *everything*."

Elmer Towns suggests (and I tend to agree - see my note below) that in using the Name **Almighty** or **Pantokrator** "Possibly John was thinking in the context of [EL Shaddai](#), an Old Testament title of God usually translated "**God Almighty**."

THOUGHT - Are you trusting the Almighty God, the Alpha and the Omega, with ALL of your problems, cares and concerns from "[A to Z](#)"? Or are you only entrusting selected problems to Him? "Cast (ALL) your burden upon the LORD, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken." (Psalm 55:22+).

Ego eimi - Jesus Himself used **ego eimi** to express His eternal self-existence (without beginning, without end) in Jn 8:58 = "Truly,

truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, **I am**." He was saying He was Yahweh (I Am the One Who Is). Jesus is clearly claiming that He is God! The Jehovah's Witness New World Translation (2013) translates Jn 8:58 incorrectly as "I have been" which Greek scholars say is absolutely incorrect! Compare other "**I Am**" statements by Jesus = Jn 4:26, 8:24, 28, 13:19, 18:5, 6 ["they drew back and fell to the ground!" = His Name "I Am" literally knocked an entire band of from 300-600 soldiers backward abruptly and hard onto the ground! His Name is indeed powerful!], Jn 18:8. see similar use in Ex 3:14 above). In Ge 17:1 God addresses Abram declaring "I am (**ego eimi**) God" (cp similar uses in Ge 26:24, 31:13, 46:3, Ex 3:6, 7:5, 8:18, 14:4, 18, 20:2, 29:46, etc). Note that there are about 174 uses of "**ego eimi**" in the Septuagint and 48 uses in the NT, but not all uses refer to God (e.g., Mt 14:27). There are 24 uses of **ego eimi** in John's Gospel and most do refer to the Messiah. E.g., in the first occurrence, Jesus tells the Samaritan woman "**I Am**" (**ego eimi**) (Jn 4:26) when she made a reference to the Messiah (Jn 4:25). In fact **ego eimi** introduces His great "I am" statements in John = "I am"...**"the Bread of life"** (Jn 6:35, 41, 48, 51), **"the Light of the world,"** (Jn 8:12), **"the Door"** (Jn 10:7, 9), **"the Good Shepherd"** (Jn 10:11, 14), **"the Resurrection and the Life,"** (Jn 11:25), **"the Way and the Truth and the Life"** (Jn 14:6); **"the true Vine"** (Jn 15:1, 5). At Paul's conversion on the Damascus Road Jesus told him **"I am (ego eimi) Jesus** Whom you are persecuting." (Acts 9:5). In the final use of **ego eimi** in Scripture Jesus affirms **"I am** the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." (Rev 22:16)

Lord (master, owner) ([2962](#) [kurios](#) from **kuros** = might or power, related to **kuroo** = to give authority) primarily means the possessor, owner, master, the supreme one, one who is sovereign (e.g., Roman emperors - Acts 25:26+) and possesses absolute authority, absolute ownership rights and uncontested power. **Kurios** is used of the one to whom a person or thing belonged, over which he has the power of deciding, the one who is the master or disposer of a thing (Mk 7:28) **Kurios** has a variety of meanings/uses in the NT and therefore one must carefully examine the context in order to discern which sense is intended by the NT author. For example, some passages use **kurios** only as a common form of polite address with no religious/spiritual meaning. The reader should also be aware that in view of the fact that **kurios** is used over 9000 times in the [Septuagint \(LXX\)](#) and over 700 times in the NT, this discussion of **kurios** at best only "skims the surface" of this prodigious, precious word. W E Vine's summary below gives you a sense of variety of nuances of **kurios**.

Garland - Designating someone as "**Lord**," especially in John's day, could have serious implications. It was a title which Christians did not use lightly: " 'Lord' (kyrios) means that the bearer was worthy of divine recognition and honor. The apostolic writers and early believers were well aware of this meaning. Polycarp, for example, died as a martyr rather than call Caesar kyrios.

W E Vine summarizes Kurios - Noun Masculine — **kurios** — koo'-ree-os) properly an adjective, signifying "having power" (**kuros**) or "authority," is used as a noun, variously translated in the NT, "'Lord,' 'master,' 'Master,' 'owner,' 'Sir,' a title of wide significance, occurring in each book of the NT save Titus and the Epistles of John. It is used

- (a) of an owner, as in Luke 19:33 , cp. Matthew 20:8 ; Acts 16:16 ; Galatians 4:1 ; or of one who has the disposal of anything, as the Sabbath, Matthew 12:8 ;
- (b) of a master, i.e., one to whom service is due on any ground, Matthew 6:24 ; 24:50 ; Ephesians 6:5 ;
- (c) of an Emperor or King, Acts 25:26 ; Revelation 17:14 ;
- (d) of idols, ironically, 1 Corinthians 8:5 , cp. Isaiah 26:13 ;
- (e) as a title of respect addressed to a father, Matthew 21:30 , a husband, 1 Peter 3:6 , a master, Matthew 13:27 ; Luke 13:8 , a ruler, Matthew 27:63 , an angel, Acts 10:4 ; Revelation 7:14 ;
- (f) as a title of courtesy addressed to a stranger, John 12:21 ; 20:15 ; Acts 16:30 ; from the outset of His ministry this was a common form of address to the Lord Jesus, alike by the people, Matthew 8:2 ; John 4:11 , and by His disciples, Matthew 8:25 ; Luke 5:8 ; John 6:68 ;
- (g) **kurios** is the Septuagint and NT representative of Hebrew Jehovah ('Lord' in Eng. versions), see Matthew 4:7 ; James 5:11 , e.g., of adon, Lord, Matthew 22:44 , and of Adonay, Lord, Matthew 1:22 ; it also occurs for Elohim, God, 1 Peter 1:25 .([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

Friberg summarizes **kurios** as "strictly, a substantive of the adjective **kurios** (strong, authoritative); hence, one having legal power lord, master; (1) in a non-religious sense (ED: BUT THESE MEANINGS ARE CERTAINLY APPLICABLE TO BELIEVERS); (a) one controlling his own property owner, lord, master (Mk 12.9); (b) one having authority over persons lord, master (Lk 12.43); (2) as a form of address showing respect sir, lord (Jn 4.11); (3) in religious usage, as a designation and personal title for God (Mt 1.20) and Jesus Christ (Jn 20.18) (the) Lord; translation of the Hebrew adonai, which in the public reading of Scripture replaced the tetragrammaton YHWH." (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

Almighty ([3841](#)) ([pantokrator](#) from **pás** = all + **kratos** = strength or might, especially manifested power, the power to rule or control) is literally the ruler over all or the One Who controls all things and Who has power over everything. The One in total control!

Pantokrator thus describes God's sovereign, omnipotent, irresistible power. Note that **Vine** gives the derivation of **pantokrator** as from *pas* = all + *krateo* = to hold or to have strength. **Krateo** means to hold or cling to is derived from [kratos](#) and gives the picture of being in the grip of Him in Whose hand are all things. God is the Almighty One, the One Who has His hand in everything and on everything! If believers are in the hands of a God like that (and they are), nothing can pluck them away. The word was used in secular literature to describe the attributes of the gods and is probably used in Revelation 1 in contrast to the Roman emperor's self-designation as **autokrator**, a designation that appears on numerous Roman milestones along the Roman roads of Asia Minor.

Pantokrator - 10v - 2 Co. 6:18; Rev. 1:8; Rev. 4:8; Rev. 11:17; Rev. 15:3; Rev. 16:7; Rev. 16:14; Rev. 19:6; Rev. 19:15; Rev. 21:22

In light of the fact that 9/10 NT uses of **Pantokrator** are in **The Revelation**, clearly **Pantokrator** is the characteristic title for God in the book which records the consummation of God's victory over sin and the evil one Satan and His awesome control over all the universe and all history. In this final chapter of God's plan of the ages, God brings to consummation His initial covenant promises made and affirmed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as He revealed Himself to them as **El Shaddai** some 4000+ years earlier in the book of beginnings, Genesis (see Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:9; 48:3; Ex 6:3). Although, [EL Shaddai - God Almighty](#) is not translated (in the [Septuagint](#)) with **Pantokrator** in these 6 uses in Genesis or in Exodus 6:3+, it is nevertheless notable that the Name [EL Shaddai](#) by which God first revealed Himself to the patriarchs is related to the same Name, **Pantokrator**, by which He brings to final fulfillment the covenant promises made to the patriarchs! God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. The Names **El Shaddai** and **Pantokrator** undergird the assurance every believer should have that He is able to fulfill every one of His promises, so that **"not one word of all the good words which Jehovah spoke has failed"** (Joshua 23:14+)

Lawrence Richards adds that **"Pantokrator** signifies the unmatched greatness of God, who has power over all humankind and every competing authority (Ep 1:19-21+). Occurrences of this word predominate (9 of the 10 uses) in Revelation. **There they pick up the OT theme of God's final, decisive intervention in history, when He acts to destroy this world's kingdoms and to establish His own** (EDITORIAL NOTE: Thus fulfilling His covenant promises to the the patriarchs and the Nation of Israel, which is **not** the church but the actual nation that will be composed of 100% believing Jews at the return of the Messiah, when as Paul states "all Israel will be saved" - Ro 11:26+). As the Almighty, God makes promises to people and commits his own power to see these promises carried out. This God is ever-present, hovering over history and free to act within it, even though his authority may be unacknowledged by those who do his will. Ultimately, he will undertake a great, final intervention. Then every competing power will be visibly crushed, and God's hidden authority will be overwhelmingly visible. When this happens, the irresistible power that makes God almighty will be known and acknowledged by all (cf. Php 2:9-11+; Rev 19:6+). (Borrow [Expository Dictionary of Bible Words](#)) (Bolding added)

Pantokrator is found 10x/10v all referring to God Almighty - 2Co 6:18; Rev 1:8; Rev 4:8; Rev 11:17; Rev 15:3; Rev 16:7; Rev 16:14; Rev 19:6; Rev 19:15; Rev 21:22

Pantokrator - over 170x in the Septuagint most often translate the triumphant, militant Name [Jehovah Sabaoth](#), [LORD of hosts \(of armies\)](#) - 2 Sam. 5:10; 2 Sam. 7:8; 2 Sam. 7:25; 2 Sam. 7:27; 1 Ki. 19:10; 1 Ki. 19:14; 1 Chr. 11:9; 1 Chr. 17:7; 1 Chr. 17:24; 1 Chr. 29:12; Job 5:17; Job 8:5; Job 11:7; Job 15:25; Job 22:17; Job 22:25; Job 23:16; Job 27:2; Job 27:11; Job 27:13; Job 32:8; Job 33:4; Job 34:10; Job 34:12; Job 35:13; Job 37:22; Jer. 3:19; Jer. 5:14; Jer. 15:16; Jer. 23:16; Jer. 25:27; Jer. 31:35; Jer. 32:14; Jer. 32:18; Jer. 33:11; Jer. 44:7; Jer. 49:18; Jer. 50:34; Jer. 51:5; Jer. 51:57; Hos. 12:5; Amos 3:13; Amos 4:13; Amos 5:8; Amos 5:14; Amos 5:15; Amos 5:16; Amos 5:27; Amos 9:5; Amos 9:6; Amos 9:15; Mic. 4:4; Nah. 2:13; Nah. 3:5; Hab. 2:13; Zeph. 2:10; Hag. 1:2; Hag. 1:5; Hag. 1:7; Hag. 1:9; Hag. 1:14; Hag. 2:4; Hag. 2:6; Hag. 2:7; Hag. 2:8; Hag. 2:9; Hag. 2:11; Hag. 2:23; Zech. 1:3; Zech. 1:4; Zech. 1:6; Zech. 1:12; Zech. 1:13; Zech. 1:14; Zech. 1:16; Zech. 1:17; Zech. 2:8; Zech. 2:9; Zech. 2:11; Zech. 3:7; Zech. 3:9; Zech. 3:10; Zech. 4:6; Zech. 4:9; Zech. 5:4; Zech. 6:12; Zech. 6:15; Zech. 7:3; Zech. 7:9; Zech. 7:12; Zech. 7:13; Zech. 8:1; Zech. 8:2; Zech. 8:3; Zech. 8:4; Zech. 8:6; Zech. 8:7; Zech. 8:9; Zech. 8:11; Zech. 8:14; Zech. 8:17; Zech. 8:18; Zech. 8:19; Zech. 8:20; Zech. 8:21; Zech. 8:22; Zech. 8:23; Zech. 9:14; Zech. 9:15; Zech. 10:3; Zech. 10:4; Zech. 11:4; Zech. 12:4; Zech. 12:5; Zech. 13:7; Zech. 14:16; Zech. 14:17; Zech. 14:20; Zech. 14:21; Mal. 1:4; Mal. 1:6; Mal. 1:8; Mal. 1:9; Mal. 1:10; Mal. 1:11; Mal. 1:13; Mal. 1:14; Mal. 2:2; Mal. 2:4; Mal. 2:7; Mal. 2:8; Mal. 2:12; Mal. 2:16; Mal. 3:1; Mal. 3:5; Mal. 3:7; Mal. 3:10; Mal. 3:11; Mal. 3:12; Mal. 3:14; Mal. 3:17; Mal. 4:1; Mal. 4:3

Triumphant "I Ams" in the Book of Revelation

- "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending" (Revelation 1:8).
 - "Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last" (Revelation 1:11).
 - "The First and the Last" (Revelation 1:17).
 - "He that Liveth and was Dead; ... and am Alive Forevermore" (Revelation 1:18).
 - "Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End" (Revelation 21:6).
 - "Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last" (Revelation 22:13).
 - "The Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star" (Revelation 22:16). (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))
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The Almighty by Charles Roll - The strength of Christ's might and the majesty of His stability transcend all other and all else in the ability and authority, for His is omnipotent. At this point we are to consider Christ as the competent, independent, self-sufficient One in His almightiness. The grand title which appears forty-eight times in the Old Testament is here applied to our Redeemer. The

magnificence of the name in its depth of meaning and degree of might, defies the capacity of our reasoning powers. Superficially we comprehend its import, but actually we do not. The almighty is supremely real, dispassionately true and faultlessly just; yet withal infinitely tender and graciously kind, as revealed in the Book of Job, where the title occurs thirty-one times.

His almightiness is expressed alike in the material, physical, spiritual and judicial realms. This feature may also be applied to His sublimity of thought, stability of mind, sovereignty of will, sufficiency of wisdom, security of power, suitability of grace and serenity of peace, in all of which He is the Almighty. When we pause to ponder His enormous energy, His prodigious power, His stupendous strength and marvelous might, these ponderous qualities of ableness, with their tremendous potential, cause us to tremble at the thought of meeting such forces in exercise; but when we turn and learn of the blended qualities of goodness demonstrated in the character of divine activity, we behold the gracious care, generous pity, gorgeous gifts and glorious love which are lavished so freely, and our fears depart for we view His heart. This is exactly what Job longed for when, discouraged and downcast, he concluded God had decided to despise the work of His hands (Job 10:3), hands which he knew to be characterized by wisdom and strength (Job 12:9-13). Job was definitely corrected in his mistaken ideas by Elihu who declared, "Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: He is mighty in strength and wisdom" (Job 36:5).

All things emanate from His creative wisdom and are maintained by His sustaining strength. Round about us many demonstrations illustrate the magnanimity of God as expressed by Elihu. For instance, the sun is too majestic to despise a worm, the ocean is too gigantic to disdain a sprat, the rain is too prolific to disregard a leaf, and "behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any." He is "mighty in battle" (Psalm 24:8). "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me" (Psalm 40:17).

Herbert Lockyer - (Borrow [All the divine names and titles in the Bible](#)) - Alpha and Omega (Revelation 1:8; Revelation 22:13)

Among the numerous and impressive divine titles in Revelation, none is as arrestive as this one the divine Speaker announces of Himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending"; "I am Alpha and Omega the beginning and the end, the first and the last." All authority is Christ's to announce His own titles and glories. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, just as A and Z are the first and last in the English one.

As Alpha, our Lord is the Source, the Beginning of all revealed truth, of all promise given, and of all testimony committed to men. This title can intimate His relationship to Creation. He is the Spring from which the River of Grace flows. Is He our Alpha? Do we begin every phase of life with Him? "All my springs are in Thee."

As Omega, He is also our End, with His glory as our goal. "Man's chief end is to glorify Him, and to enjoy Him forever." Everything in life finds its answer in Him who is "the first and the last."

God's perfect Alphabet art Thou,
Of truth, the kernel and the crown;
Eternal Word to whom we bow,
The Lord of glory and renown,
The First and Last, oh wondrous sight!
The First and Last of love and light.

The Alpha and Omega true,
Inclusive this of all between,
Sum total of the Old and New,
Of things invisible and seen.
The First and Last, oh precious thought,
The First and Last who sought and taught.

—C. R. Rolls.

All our testing as we sojourn here below is between Him as our Alpha and Omega. To Him as the end all gravitate. On our hands the threads are broken; in His hands they have never been rent. In the midst of failed and failing circumstances, and the Church ecclesiastically, a ruin amidst the wrecked testimony of the ages, God's voice is heard above the din and strife. The beginning of all testimony is in God, and the end, too, centers in Him. In Him as the Omega is finished what as the Alpha He began."

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that the warriors of old prevailed because their faith was in Him who was the Author and Perfecter of such faith. To them He was A and Z, and all in between—the Center and Circumference of all things, with past, present, and future all under His control. How the strain goes out of living when we rest in the joy of all Christ is in Himself! Whether we think of creation, revelation, redemption, history, or personal experience, Christ is "the beginning and the end." None is before Him; none is to follow. How expressive are the lines of T. W. H. Myers—

Yes, through life, death, through sorrow and through sinning,
He shall suffice me, for, He hath sufficed:
Christ is the end, for Christ is the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

Can we truthfully confess that He is everything from A to Z in our lives? When it comes to our desires, plans, ambitions, is He the First and the Last? Is every phase of life inspired by His Spirit and marked by His glory? "In the beginning God." What tranquillity is ours, and how life is made radiant with His favor when Christ is all and in all to our hearts! To have Him answer to the whole alphabet of life is to spell out the language of Heaven.

I am the First and I the Last,
Time centres all in Me;
Th' Almighty God, Who was, and is,
And evermore shall be.

Herbert Lockyer - (Borrow [All the divine names and titles in the Bible](#)) -Almighty (Revelation 1:8; 15:3)

Apart from Paul's solitary use of this term (2 Corinthians 6:18), it is peculiar to the last book of the Bible in the New Testament. It occurs some 8 times in Revelation, indicating that the almightiness of Deity has been a rock of strength to afflicted saints in all ages. The Almighty is not simply the witness of omnipotent power, as Walter Scott observes, but signifies Almighty in "sustaining resources," and is found in the Apocalypse associated with the adverse circumstances of God's people as they made demands on such a strong Name. Almighty is a title full of hope, strength, and consolation. After his marvelous introduction, John closes with a marvelous description of the eternity of Christ as the One "which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty' (Revelation 18). And He has never failed as the One almighty in sustaining His redeemed children, yet equally almighty in judgment on those who blatantly reject His claims. It is because of His almightiness that He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we could possibly ask or think. May grace be ours ever to rest in Him who is Lord of all power and might!

Oh, tell of His might,
Oh, sing of His grace!

F B Meyer - THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST Rev. 1:8, 17, 2:8, 22:13.

"I am Alpha and Omega.'----Rev. 1:8, 17, 2:8, 22:13.

IT is hardly necessary to explain that these are the first and the last letters in the Greek alphabet. Obviously they represent all the intervening letters, which they enclose as in a golden clasp. On those letters was built the entire literature of that wonderful people. Plato, Socrates, Sophocles, Thucydides, and Aristotle built up their reasoning, teachings, systems, and histories on the letters contained between Alpha and Omega. This metaphor, as the references indicate, is in frequent use throughout the Apocalypse.

The majestic announcement at the opening of the book (Rev 1:8) refers to the Eternal God. His nature underlies the whole created universe, all races of being, the entire work of redemption, the destiny of His children, the ultimate victory of righteousness, order, and peace; all that has been, is, or shall be is conditioned by His existence. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to discover a more comprehensive formulary for Him who was, and is, and is to come, than this, "Of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever and ever." We can almost hear the unceasing chant of the four living creatures, which are before the throne, who rest not day and night, saying, both when God's purposes are evident and when they are veiled, " Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Let us worship before the immutable and eternal Lord God Almighty, joining in that ceaseless chant. He is the First and the Last, and beside Him there is no other!

In our thinking we must distinguish between that side of His ineffable nature, which has revealed itself in the universe, in the creation of Man, and in Jesus Christ, and that side of His nature which transcends our thought, infinite, eternal, self-existent. In the one He has revealed Himself so far as the naked spirit of man can endure the almost insufferable light. In the other is that which no man hath seen or can see, that which we can only describe by negatives, that before which angels veil their faces with their wings. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him."

What audacity it is to rush into His presence, without the due preparation and reverence of the heart. Even Moses was bidden to unloose his sandals when the bush burned with fire. But does it not stand to reason that, as we cannot know this great Being by the intellect, so we must give time to our fellowship with Him? We must wait before Him till the glare and noise of this clamorous world cease to monopolize our sense, and we are acclimatized to the conditions of His manifested presence. Dr. Lyman Abbot has said truly that the profoundest truths of spiritual experience are those which are not intellectually ascertained, but spiritually discerned.

They are not taught to us, but revealed (ED: WHILE I AGREE, IT IS CRITICAL THAT THIS SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT BE WORD CENTERED, TAUGHT BY THE SPIRIT). They defy definition, they transcend expression. So it must be in our fellowship with God. He is our Father. He loves us infinitely, but He is the Blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen or can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Such is the abyss of the Godhead for which we have no fathoming-line! We have, as Job puts it, only a whisper of Him in His works, and in Jesus a manifestation of only so much as can be translated into human speech.

In the other quotations named above, the Lord Jesus appropriates to Himself these august words, though He was meek and lowly, and emptied Himself. When the fainting disciple whom He loved fell at His feet as one dead; when the Church at Smyrna needed encouragement to remain faithful unto death; when spirits athirst for God, in this life or the next, cry out for the living water; when the way has to be opened through the gates of the city to the Tree of Life, He quotes, in part or as a whole, these majestic words, "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

The very pressing question of this hour is to ascertain whether each of us is making enough of personal contact with Christ. We hear about Him, read of Him, talk about Him, but how far do we really know Him? Might He not say rather sadly to some of us, as to Philip: "Have I been so long a time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?" On the other hand, Paul said: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord that I may know him!"

QUESTION - [What does it mean that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega?](#)

ANSWER - Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the "Alpha and Omega" in Revelation 1:8; 21:6; and Rev 22:13. Alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Among the Jewish rabbis, it was common to use the first and the last letters of the Hebrew alphabet to denote **the whole of anything**, from beginning to end. Jesus as the beginning and end of all things is a reference to no one but the true God. This statement of eternity could apply only to God. It is seen especially in Revelation 22:13, where Jesus proclaims that He is **"the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End"**.

One of the meanings of Jesus being the **"Alpha and Omega"** is that He was at the beginning of all things and will be at the close. It is equivalent to saying He always existed and always will exist. It was Christ, as second Person of the Trinity, who brought about the creation: "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made" (John 1:3), and His Second Coming will be the beginning of the end of creation as we know it (2 Peter 3:10). As God incarnate, He has no beginning, nor will He have any end with respect to time, being from everlasting to everlasting.

A second meaning of Jesus as the **"Alpha and Omega"** is that the phrase identifies Him as the God of the Old Testament. Isaiah ascribes this aspect of Jesus' nature as part of the triune God in several places. "I, the Lord, am the first, and with the last I am He" (Isa 41:4). "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God" (Isaiah 44:6). "I am he; I am the first, I also am the last" (Isaiah 48:12). These are clear indications of the eternal nature of the Godhead.

Christ, as the Alpha and Omega, is the first and last in so many ways. He is the "author and finisher" of our faith (Hebrews 12:2), signifying that He begins it and carries it through to completion. He is the totality, the sum and substance of the Scriptures, both of the Law and of the Gospel (John 1:1, 14). He is the fulfilling end of the Law (Matthew 5:17), and He is the beginning subject matter of the gospel of grace through faith, not of works (Ephesians 2:8-9). He is found in the first verse of Genesis and in the last verse of Revelation. He is the first and last, the all in all of salvation, from the justification before God to the final sanctification of His people.

Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, the first and last, the beginning and the end. Only God incarnate could make such a statement. Only Jesus Christ is God incarnate. GotQuestions.org

Alpha and Omega (Revelation 1:8; 22:13) - Herbert Lockyer - Borrow [All the divine names and titles in the Bible : a unique classification of all scriptural designations of the three persons of the Trinity](#)

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—C. R. Rolls.

All our testing as we sojourn here below is between Him as our Alpha and Omega. To Him as the end all gravitate. On our hands the threads are broken; in His hands they have never been rent In the midst of failed and failing circumstances, and the Church ecclesiastically, a ruin amidst the wrecked testimony of the ages, God's voice is heard above the din and strife. The beginning of all testimony is in God, and the end, too, centers in Him. In Him as the Omega is finished what as the Alpha He began."

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that the warriors of old prevailed because their faith was in Him who was the Author and Perfecter of such faith. To them He was A and Z, and all in between—the Center and Circumference of all things, with past, present, and future all under His control. How the strain goes out of living when we rest in the joy of all Christ is in Himself! Whether we think of creation, revelation, redemption, history, or personal experience, Christ is "the beginning and the end." None is before Him; none is to follow. How expressive are the lines of T. W. H. Myers—

Yes, through life, death, through sorrow and through sinning,
He shall suffice me, for, He hath sufficed:
Christ is the end, for Christ is the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

Can we truthfully confess that He is everything from A to Z in our lives? When it comes to our desires, plans, ambitions, is He the First and the Last? Is every phase of life inspired by His Spirit and marked by His glory? "In the beginning God." What tranquillity is ours, and how life is made radiant with His favor when Christ is all and in all to our hearts! To have Him answer to the whole alphabet of life is to spell out the language of Heaven.

I am the First and I the Last,
Time centres all in Me;
Th' Almighty God, Who was, and is,
And evermore shall be.

Alpha And Omega

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord. — Revelation 1:8

Today's Scripture: Revelation 22:6-13

The meaning of the words Alpha and Omega —terms that refer to the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet—is fairly easy to understand. Like A and Z, they simply mean "the beginning" and "the end."

In life, we understand these concepts. Things begin . . . things end. Jobs start . . . jobs stop. Decades come . . . decades go. Birth . . . death.

But there is something special and unique about the words **Alpha and Omega** as they appear in Revelation (Rev 1:8; Rev 21:6; Rev 22:13). Jesus Christ used those terms to describe Himself—terms that refer to His deity.

When used in Scripture, the words have an almost unfathomable meaning. Jesus, the **Alpha**, had no beginning. He existed before time, before the creation of the universe (John 1:1). As the first cause of all that exists (Jn 1:2-3), Jesus cannot be limited by the word **Alpha**. And as the **Omega**, He is not the "end" as we know it. He will continue to exist into the everlasting, never-ending future.

It's mind-boggling and awe-inspiring—this view of our Lord. He's the one "Who is and Who was and Who is to come" (Revelation

1:8). He's the **Alpha and the Omega, the Almighty God**. Not only that, He's our Savior (Titus 2:13). As such, He deserves our praise, our lives, our all! By: Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Alpha, Omega—our God we proclaim,
Eternal, unchanging, always the same;
He's the beginning and He is the end,
He is our Savior, our Lord, and our Friend.
—Fitzhugh

For time and for eternity, Jesus is all we need.

The Timeless Name

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. — Revelation 1:8

Today's Scripture: Revelation 1:8-18

Whether the company is Twentieth Century Fox in Hollywood or Twentieth Century Data in Dallas, time has caught up with these companies and they're a century behind. Should they change their names? Consultant Frank Delano says, "You can't do business in the 21st century with a 20th-century name. You need a name that is really universal with no limitations."

Through the ages, Christians have known and worshiped a Savior who is not bound by time. His name? In Revelation 1:8, Jesus Christ identified Himself by saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, . . . who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." He called Himself, "the First and the Last" (Rev 1:11,17). And in Rev 1:18, "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore."

Do clocks and calendars leave you exhausted? Jesus Christ is the Master of time. Has death brought the pain of separation? Jesus Christ is Lord of eternity. Are you facing unwanted changes? Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Have failures filled you with despair? Jesus Christ is risen, the Victor over death and the grave!

It's true. In every century His name is universal, without limitation. Jesus Christ is the timeless name. By: David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Jesus Christ—a wonderful name,
Eternal, unchanging, always the same;
He's the beginning and He's the end,
He's my Savior, my Lord, and my Friend.
—Fitzhugh

Jesus is the Lord of time and eternity.

Revelation 1:9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

NET Revelation 1:9 I, John, your brother and the one who shares with you in the persecution, kingdom, and endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony about Jesus.

NLT Revelation 1:9 I, John, am your brother and your partner in suffering and in God's Kingdom and in the patient endurance to which Jesus calls us. I was exiled to the island of Patmos for preaching the word of God and for my testimony about Jesus.

ESV Revelation 1:9 I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

NIV 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.

GNT Revelation 1:9 γ ω ννης, δελφς μ ν κα συγκοινωνς ν τ θλ ψει κα βασιλε κα πομον ν ησο ,

γεν μην ν τ ν σ τ καλουμ ν Π τ μ δι τ ν λ γον το θεο κα τ ν μαρτυρ αν η σο .

KJV Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

ASV Revelation 1:9 I John, your brother and partaker with you in tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

CSB Revelation 1:9 I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation, kingdom, and endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of God's word and the testimony about Jesus.

NKJ Revelation 1:9 I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

NRS Revelation 1:9 I, John, your brother who share with you in Jesus the persecution and the kingdom and the patient endurance, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

YLT Revelation 1:9 I, John, who also am your brother, and fellow-partner in the tribulation, and in the reign and endurance, of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, because of the word of God, and because of the testimony of Jesus Christ;

- **John:** Rev 1:4
- **fellow partaker:** Rev 2:9,10 7:14 Joh 16:33 Ac 14:21-22 Ro 8:17 1Co 4:9-13 Php 1:7 4:14 2Ti 1:8 2:3-12
- **in the tribulation:** Rev 3:10 13:10 14:12 Ro 2:7,8 5:3,4 8:25 2Th 1:4,5 3:5 Heb 10:36 Jas 5:7,8
- **the word of God:** Rev 1:2 6:9 11:7 12:11,17 19:10

John on Patmos

JOHN IDENTIFIES WITH HIS READERS

I, John, your brother ([adelphos](#)) and fellow partaker ([sugkoinos](#)) in the tribulation ([thlipsis](#)) and kingdom ([basileia](#)) and perseverance ([hupomone](#)) which are in Jesus ([lesous](#)), was on the island called Patmos because (term of explanation) of the word ([logos](#)) of God and the testimony (marturia) of Jesus ([lesous](#))

I, John - John for the third time (Rev 1:1,4) identifies himself. The use of the first person singular pronoun (I) identifies John as the human author and is repeated in Rev 22:8+ (cf other use of "I" in Rev 21:2+). Compare Daniel's use of the first person (Da 4:13, Da 7:2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16, 19, 21, 28, et al) This combination of the first person pronoun and the name is not restricted to prophetic writings because Paul uses it five times (2Co 10:1; Gal. 5:2; Eph. 3:1; Col. 1:23; Philem. 19). We also see this pattern once by Jesus in Rev 22:16.

MacArthur suggests why John added "I" - John was astounded that, despite his utter unworthiness, he had the inestimable privilege of receiving this monumental vision."

These same words are found in Rev 22:8+ "I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things."

Lehman Strauss writes that "Notice, it is not "The Revelation of St. John the Divine." There is no authority for this designation. Moreover, John refers to himself as "*your brother, and companion in tribulation*" (Revelation 1:9). He was a saint in the sense that all true Christians are saints, but he would be the last person to refer to himself as "divine." He was the chosen instrument to be the human penman of the book, but he was not divine." (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

Robertson points out that there is "One article with [adelphos](#) and sunkoinōnos unifying the picture. The absence of apostolos here does not show that he is not an apostle, but merely his self-effacement, as in the Fourth Gospel, and still more his oneness with his readers.

Your brother ([adelphos](#)) - Note that he does not start out with John the apostle, but immediately identifies with his readers. John was a member of the inner circle of the twelve disciples, the one specially beloved by Jesus, an apostle who authored the powerful Gospel by his name and three epistles. And yet here we see a mark of his great humility, not giving us any of his "credentials" but identifying himself as brother to the believers in the 7 churches which will receive his letter. The suffering of brothers in Christ is a unique relationship.

And fellow partaker (sugkoinonos) - Companion is one who associates with another, in this case participating with the other believers. John goes on to describe three aspects of participation with the believers who read this letter. John is identifying himself with the believers to whom he is writing. He is not writing as if on a pedestal or as one with an elevated status but as a sharer in their sufferings. Paul uses the same word (sugkoinonos) in his letter to the Philippians

For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are **partakers** (sugkoinonos) of grace with me. (Phil. 1:7+)

Grant Osborne comments that "It was common in epistles to use the more official title "apostle" (as Paul does), but John has always avoided such, using no title in 1 John and "elder" in 2 and 3 John. Here he obviously wishes to demonstrate commonality and shared experience. Such language was frequently utilized by Jesus (e.g., Mark 10:29–30) and the early church (note the "household" imagery throughout the Pastorals) for the church as a family unit, as "brothers and sisters" of one another." (See [Revelation](#))

John's description recalls Paul's words

But God has so composed the body (OF CHRIST) giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, 25 so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. 26 And **if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it**; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it (1 Cor 12:24-27+)

In (en) - This preposition **in** includes all three following descriptions (tribulation, kingdom, perseverance). Osborne quotes Thomas (1992: 84–85) who "points out how the grammatical combination κοινωvο v also occurs in Mt. 23:30 and Gal. 6:6 and is a key element of NT teaching on discipleship (1 Th. 1:6; 2 Cor. 1:7; Phil. 3:10; 1 Pet. 2:21; 4:13; 5:1). It connotes the idea of "sharing in" the life of Christ and of Christian leaders who provide us with examples." It follows that all three descriptions are related to one another, and so "the suffering in "persecution" and "endurance" occurs as part of the believers' share in God's "kingdom." (Osborne)

Robertson - So there is only one article (tēi) with thlipsei (tribulation), basileiāi (kingdom), hupomonēi (perseverance), ideas running all through the book. Both the **tribulation** and the **kingdom** were present realities and called for **perseverance** [hupomonē] being "*the spiritual alchemy*" according to Charles for those in the kingdom (see Luke 8:15; James 5:7).

MacDonald adds that John "here links **tribulation**, perseverance (**patience**), and the **kingdom**. Paul similarly linked them in Acts 14:22 when he exhorted the saints to "continue in the faith,... saying, 'We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.'"

The tribulation ([thlipsis](#)) - He is not referring to the "[Great Tribulation](#)" (which is the last 3.5 years of [Daniel's Seventieth Week](#) = the entire 7 year period) at the end of this present evil age, but is describing the afflictions which are promised to the person who has received Christ as Savior and Lord (Acts 14:22, Php 1:29). As Paul wrote to Timothy "Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus **will be persecuted**." (2 Ti 3:12+). At this time in the first century AD, [the Roman Caesars claimed divinity and were honored by the pagans as "Lord."](#) This is something Christians could never acquiesce to and as a result they were often subjected to affliction. At the time of this writing the [Roman emperor was Domitian](#) (81-96 AD) who considered Christianity a threat to his Empire and this resulted in tribulation for believers. John was on the Island of Patmos because he had been exiled by the Roman Empire. The same word for **tribulation** is used twice in Jesus' description of the church at Smyrna (Rev 2:9,10+) to describe the persecution the believers suffered because of their belief in Christ. Jesus had warned His disciples (and us) "These things (Jn 14-16) I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation (THIS IS HIS PROMISE), but take courage (THIS IS HIS ENCOURAGEMENT); I have overcome the world (THIS IS VICTORY - cf 1 Jn 5:4-5+)."

Persecutions in the Early Church
Source: [Insights on Revelation - Swindoll](#)

Brian Bell on **tribulation** - There was already persecution taking place (95 AD) [Nero \(click description\)](#) started it in 64 AD (**ED**: SEE CHART ABOVE). Son after Peter and Paul were killed. Rome was beginning to exalt the emperor as a semi-divine being. he Christian faith was already illegal. It was the emperor [Domitian \(click description\)](#) who banished John there as a punishment for his "seditious/rebellious" preaching in Ephesus (where he pastored), and as a quarantine to inhibit the further spread of the gospel.

Charles Swindoll (see [Insights on Revelation](#)) on **DOMITIAN'S PERSECUTION IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE** - Throughout the history of the church, Christianity has suffered various degrees of persecution. Historians identify two major worldwide, official attacks on the church by the Roman Empire: the first by Emperor Decius in the AD 250s, the second about fifty years later under Diocletian. This latter, brutal

persecution ended with the Edict of Milan of 313, in which Emperor Constantine put an end to official Roman persecution of Christianity. The following chart indicates major and minor persecutions in the early church, with a general indication of their intensity.

Local persecutions, however, both preceded and followed those major upheavals. In fact, in the years immediately following the resurrection and ascension of Christ, the church suffered opposition and persecution by both local synagogue leaders as well as Gentile authorities. In the late 60s, Nero persecuted the church in Rome, executing Peter and Paul as well as many other Christians. Thirty years later, a persecution arose under Domitian, in which a primary target was one of the last known surviving apostles, John.

Tradition has it that Roman authorities attempted to boil him in oil, but he was miraculously preserved, which baffled and frightened the superstitious officials. John was then exiled to Patmos because of his testimony of Jesus Christ. Domitian, afraid of the kingdom of God and wanting to rid the world of any threats to his own power, sought out the known descendants of King David. He called in two grandsons of Jesus' brother Jude for questioning regarding the nature of Christ's kingdom and whether they were heirs to the throne. To Domitian's surprise, however, these Jewish Christian relatives of Jesus explained that the kingdom they believed in and proclaimed was not earthly but heavenly, and it was to be established at the end of the world. Additionally, the two had little monetary worth. After showing the emperor their empty pockets, he released them from custody. John soon returned from exile and directed the churches of Asia until his death after the crowning of Emperor Trajan in AD 98. (See an early account in [Eusebius of Caesarea, Ecclesiastical History 3.17–20](#) - scroll down the page for 3:17.)

[Wikipedia article - Persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire](#) (refer to chart above) - [Christians](#) were **persecuted**, sporadically and usually locally, throughout the [Roman Empire](#), beginning in the 1st century AD and ending in the 4th century. Originally a [polytheistic](#) empire in the traditions of [Roman paganism](#) and the [Hellenistic religion](#), as Christianity [spread through the empire](#), it came into ideological conflict with the [imperial cult of ancient Rome](#). Pagan practices such as making [sacrifices](#) to the deified emperors or other gods were abhorrent to Christians as their beliefs prohibited [idolatry](#). The state and other members of civic society punished Christians for treason, various rumored crimes, illegal assembly, and for introducing an alien cult that led to Roman [apostasy](#).^[1] The first, localized [Neronian persecution](#) occurred under Emperor [Nero](#) (r. 54–68) in Rome.

(According to some historians, Jews and Christians were heavily persecuted toward the end of [Domitian's](#) reign (89-96).^[82] The [Book of Revelation](#), which mentions at least one instance of martyrdom (Rev 2:13; cf. Rev 6:9), is thought by many scholars to have been written during Domitian's reign)

A more general persecution occurred during the reign of [Marcus Aurelius](#) (r. 161–180).^[2] After a lull, persecution resumed under Emperors [Decius](#) (r. 249–251) and [Trebonianus Gallus](#) (r. 251–253). The [Decian persecution](#) was particularly extensive. The persecution of Emperor [Valerian](#) (r. 253–260) ceased with his notable capture by the [Sasanian Empire's](#) [Shapur I](#) (r. 240–270) at the [Battle of Edessa](#) during the [Roman–Persian Wars](#). His successor, [Gallienus](#) (r. 253–268), halted the persecutions.

The [Augustus Diocletian](#) (r. 283–305) began the [Diocletianic persecution](#), the final general persecution of Christians, which continued to be enforced in parts of the empire until the [Augustus Galerius](#) (r. 310–313) issued the [Edict of Serdica](#) and the [Augustus Maximinus Daia](#) (r. 310–313) died. After [Constantine the Great](#) (r. 306–337) defeated his rival [Maxentius](#) (r. 306–312) at the [Battle of the Milvian Bridge](#) in October 312, he and his co-emperor, [Licinius](#), issued the [Edict of Milan](#) (313), which permitted all religions, including Christianity, to be tolerated.

And kingdom ([basileia](#)) - Here **kingdom** refers the Kingdom of God (and of His Son Who is King of that Kingdom - cf Rev 19:16), and which stood in direct opposition to the pagan Kingdom of Rome which was under the dominion of the prince of the power of the air, Satan (Eph 2:2+). Paul describes our new **kingdom** status as believers writing that God "has rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the **kingdom** of His beloved Son, in Whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (Col 1:13-14+).

And perseverance ([hupomone](#)) - As discussed above this description is intimately related to the first two descriptions, **tribulation** and **kingdom**, because it describes patiently enduring affliction and suffering (**tribulation**) which is the lot of all who have been delivered from "from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God (**Kingdom**)." (Acts 26:18+). Notice that this is not believers simply having an attitude of "*grin and bear*" the suffering, but is in fact a gift from God "Who gives perseverance ([hupomone](#)) and encouragement." (Ro 15:5+, read also Col 1:11+ where [hupomone](#) or steadfastness is the result of divine

strengthening). As **Richison** says this Greek word "carries the ideas of tenacity. God gives those who walk by faith a bulldog-like tenacity of soul." And where does this "tenacity," this **perseverance** come from in context? The last phrase says it is **in** (locative of sphere) **Jesus** ([lesous](#)). **Jesus** is the ultimate Source through His Spirit's provision of supernatural power to persevere under afflictions that come on us because we bear His Name (see also 1 Th 1:3+ = "steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ", 2 Th 3:5 = "steadfastness of Christ").

Luke links these ideas together in Acts 14:21-22+ writing "After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith (AKA **PERSEVERANCE**), and saying, "Through many **tribulations** we must enter the **kingdom** of God."

which are in Jesus - In Jesus, because we are IN covenant with Him, He is our Provider and our Protector and ultimately our Prize! Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus! (Ro 8:39+) "All this is possible only "in Jesus" (en lēsou), a phrase on a par with Paul's common en Christōi (in Christ), repeated in Rev 14:13. Cf. Rev 3:20 and 2 Th 3:5."

Island of Patmos
Click to Enlarge

Was on the island called Patmos ([Patmos - Wikipedia](#)) - A small crescent shaped little Island of Greece (in-between Athens & Turkey). A rocky island 10 miles long and 6 miles wide, in the Aegean Sea. [pop. 2600 in 1995] Rome had a penal camp there where the prisoners labored in the mines, mining marble. More literally "I came to be." "**Patmos** is a rocky sparsely settled island some ten miles long and half that wide, one of the Sporades group in the Aegean Sea, south of Miletus." (Robertson)

Because - Term of explanation. What is John explaining? In context he is explaining why he is on Patmos and it was not for a vacation to get a suntan. John gives us two reasons for his presence on Patmos.

Of the word of God and the testimony ([marturia/martyria](#)) **of Jesus** - Two reasons are given for John's exile on Patmos (1) the Word of God which he undoubtedly was proclaiming which countered the word of Caesar. Richison adds "John came under persecution for taking a stand on the Word of God. He was faithful to the Word. He did not compromise it." (2) Second, the testimony of Jesus which refers to John's testimony about Jesus (which is obviously related to the Word of God). The **NLT** paraphrases it "I was exiled to the island of Patmos for preaching the word of God and for my testimony about Jesus." (Rev 1:9NLT)

THOUGHT - Have you ever been figuratively speaking on the "isle of Patmos" to speaking the Word of God (especially the Gospel) or giving your testimony to unbelievers (John was there because he had addressed unbelievers). Do we understand what it means to count the cost to follow our glorious Lord? Has it ever cost you?

As John wrote this verse, he must have remembered the words of Jesus he had recorded in his gospel...

"Remember ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' **If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you;** if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. (John 15:20).

Comment - JOHN REMEMBERED!

This reminds me of Paul's words to Timothy

Therefore (IN VIEW OF WHAT TIMOTHY HAD BEEN GRANTED - 2 Ti 1:7+) do not be ashamed of **the testimony** ([marturion/martyrion](#)) **of our Lord** or of me His prisoner, but **join with me in suffering** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) for the gospel (HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?) according to the **power** ([dunamis](#) - SUPERNATURAL POWER OF THE INDWELLING ENERGIZING SPIRIT) of God, (2 Timothy 1:8+) (Compare the ability to persevere **IN JESUS** as described above).

God turned his bondage into a blessing

Strauss comments that John "himself was sent in chains as a prisoner to the small and dreary island called Patmos, about twenty-five miles off the coast of Asia Minor, in the Aegean Sea. It was while he was there that God turned his **bondage** into a **blessing**. **The Patmos of persecution became to John the open door for service. The chains of pagan Rome bound his body but they could not bind his soul. Shut off from the rest of the world, he entered into a** (DEPTH OR DEGREE OF) **communion with his Lord he had never known before.**" (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

Brother ([80](#))([adelphos](#) from **a** = denotes unity + **delphus** = a womb) literally means brother referring to a physical brother or figuratively as in the present context referring to a brother in the spiritual sense, born by the same Spirit into the family of God.

Fellow partaker (4791) (**sugkoinonos** from **sun/syn** = with + **koinonos** = partaker, sharer) is one who takes part in something along with another. A fellow participant. A partner. "Everywhere the word group (**koinonos**) appears it connotes the idea of community togetherness and mutual participation in the family of God and Christ. Such "fellowship" is first with God and then with one another." (Osborne) Four uses in NT - Rom. 11:17; 1 Co. 9:23 = "I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a **fellow partaker** of it."; Phil. 1:7; Rev. 1:9

Tribulation (2347) (**thlipsis** from **thlibo** = to crush, press together, squash, hem in, compress, squeeze in turn derived from **thláo** = to break) originally expressed sheer, physical pressure on a man. Thlipsis is a strong term which does not refer to minor inconveniences, but to real hardships. Medically **thlipsis** was used of the pulse (pressure). It is a pressing together as of grapes. It conveys the idea of being squeezed or placed under pressure or crushed beneath a weight. When, according to the ancient law of England, those who willfully refused to plead guilty, had heavy weights placed on their breasts, and were pressed and crushed to death, this was literally **thlipsis**. The iron cage was **stenochoria** (see below). Figuratively **thlipsis** pictures one being "crushed" by intense pressure, difficult circumstances, suffering or trouble pressing upon them from without. Thus persecution, affliction, distress, opposition or tribulation, all press hard on one's soul. **Thlipsis** does not refer to mild discomfort but to great difficulty. In Scripture the **thlipsis** is most often used of outward difficulties, but it is also used of emotional stress and sorrows which "weighs down" a man's spirit like the sorrows and burden his heart.

The English word "**tribulation**" is derived from the Latin word **tribulum** (literally a thing with teeth that tears), which was a heavy piece of timber with spikes in it, used for threshing the corn or grain. The **tribulum** was drawn over the grain and it separated the wheat from the chaff. As believers experience the "tribulum" of tribulations, and depend on God's grace, the trials purify us and rid us of the chaff.

Thlipsis 5x in Revelation - Rev. 1:9; Rev. 2:9; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 2:22; Rev. 7:14

Perseverance (5281) (**hupomone** from **hupo** = under + **meno** = stay, remain, abide) literally means abiding under. The root idea of **hupomone** is to remain under some discipline, subjecting one's self to something which demands the submission of one's will to something against which one naturally would draw away from. It portrays a picture of steadfastly and unflinchingly bearing up under a heavy load and describes that quality of character which does not allow one to surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial. The picture is that of steadfastness, constancy and endurance. It has in it a forward look, the ability to focus on what is beyond the current pressures (eg Jesus "Who for the joy set before Him **endured** [verb form hupomeno] the Cross despising the shame" see notes on [Hebrews 12:2](#)).

Hupomone in the Revelation - Rev. 1:9; Rev. 2:2; Rev. 2:3; Rev. 2:19; Rev. 3:10; Rev. 13:10; Rev. 14:12

Word (matter, message, news, reason, saying, statement, utterance) (3056) **logos** from **légo** = to speak with words; English = logic, logical) means something said and describes a communication whereby the mind finds expression in words. Although **Lógos** is most often translated **word** which Webster defines as "something that is said, a statement, an utterance", the Greek understanding of **lógos** is somewhat more complex. See discussion of "The Logos" (Jesus Christ) in John 1:14 [Commentary](#)

Logos in the Revelation - Rev. 1:2; Rev. 1:3; Rev. 1:9; Rev. 3:8; Rev. 3:10; Rev. 6:9; Rev. 12:11; Rev. 17:17; Rev. 19:9; Rev. 19:13; Rev. 20:4; Rev. 21:5; Rev. 22:6; Rev. 22:7; Rev. 22:9; Rev. 22:10; Rev. 22:18; Rev. 22:19

In the Greek mind and as used by secular and philosophical Greek writers, **lógos** did not mean merely the name of an object but was an expression of the thought behind that object's name. Let me illustrate this somewhat subtle nuance in the meaning of **lógos** with an example from the [Septuagint \(LXX\)](#) (Greek of the Hebrew OT) in which **lógos** is used in the well known phrase **the Ten Commandments**.

The [Septuagint](#) translates this phrase using the word **lógos** as "the ten (**deka**) words (**logoi**)" (Ex 34:28), this phrase giving us the familiar term **Decalogue**. Clearly each of the "Ten Commandments" is not just words but words which express a thought or concept behind those words.

This then is the essence of the meaning of **lógos** and so it should not be surprising that depending on the context **lógos** is translated with words such as "saying, instruction, message, news, preaching, question, statement, teaching, etc". This understanding of **lógos** also helps understand John's repeated usage of this Greek word as a synonym for the second Person of the Godhead, the Lord Jesus Christ ([see related discussion](#)).

Lógos then is a general term for speaking, but always used for speaking with rational content. **Lógos** is a word uttered by the human voice which embodies an underlying concept or idea. When one has spoken the sum total of their thoughts concerning something, they have given to their hearer a total concept of that thing.

Thus the word **lógos** conveys the idea of “a total concept” of anything. **Lógos** means the word or outward form by which the inward thought is expressed and made known. It can also refer to the inward thought or reason itself. Note then that **lógos** does not refer merely to a part of speech but to a concept or idea. In other words, in classical Greek, **lógos** never meant just a **word** in the grammatical sense as the mere name of a thing, but rather the thing referred to, the material, not the formal part. In fact, the Greek language has 3 other words (rhema, onoma, epos) which designate a **word** in its grammatical sense. **Lógos** refers to the total expression whereas **rhema** ([see word study](#)) for example is used of a part of speech in a sentence. In other words **rhema**, emphasizes the parts rather than the whole.

Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet,

NET Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day when I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,

NLT Revelation 1:10 It was the Lord's Day, and I was worshiping in the Spirit. Suddenly, I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet blast.

ESV Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet

NIV Revelation 1:10 On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,

GNT Revelation 1:10 γεν μην ν πνε ματι ν τ κυριακ μ ρ κα κουσα π σω μου φων ν μεγ λην ς σ λιπιγγος

KJV Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

ASV Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet

CSB Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard a loud voice behind me like a trumpet

NKJ Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

NRS Revelation 1:10 I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet

YLT Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's-day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying,

- **I was in the Spirit:** Rev 4:2 17:3 21:10 Mt 22:43 Ac 10:10-33 2Co 12:2-4
- **on the Lord's day:** Joh 20:19,26 Ac 20:7 1Co 16:2
- **like the sound of a trumpet:** Rev 4:1 Rev 10:3-8

"Loud Voice"
Gk "Megas + Phone"

JOHN WAS IN THE SPIRIT

I was in the Spirit ([pneuma](#) - [see sermon](#)) **on the Lord's day** - Thankfully almost all the translations capitalize "**Spirit**" (exception NRSV!) While I think "in the Spirit" in this context was a unique and special variation of being in the Spirit, but the fact is that if we are not living in the Spirit, the only source of power we have is our fallen flesh. So my contention is that believer's must continually be in the Spirit. We have just seen that John's perseverance was in Jesus (Rev 1:9). **In the Spirit** speaks of one's "position" **in** (en) which identifies the so-called **locative of sphere**, which in simple terms describes one as being in the "atmosphere of" or under the influence of something, in this context the influence (and power) of the Spirit. A fish stays in the water, the atmosphere in which he lives. John says that in a unique and special way he is in the presence, power, influence, etc of the Holy Spirit. This is his supernatural position, but it is one which believers are to pray (supernaturally energized to pray) without ceasing as Paul exhorted the believers in Ephesus "With all prayer and petition pray at all times **in the Spirit**, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints." (Eph 6:18) Note the "all's"! So while "in the Spirit" is to be the believer's position all day long, there is clearly something unique about John's being "in the Spirit."

[Brian Bell](#) on **in the Spirit** - every Christian lives in 2 locations! John was in Patmos & in the Spirit. [a human environment, & a heavenly one]

ILLUSTRATION - A Christian was asked if he was you going to heaven. To which he replied, "I live there"! Was he right? Well, a workman had a little store in which he cobbled shoes. He also had an apartment

upstairs over his shop. Someone asked him about his situation. "I work down here," he said, "but I live up there!" - That's it!!!

Walvoord on in the Spirit - "Carried beyond normal sense into a state where God could reveal supernaturally the contents of this book. Such was the experience of Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:2; 3:12, 14; etc.), Peter (Acts 10:10–11; 11:5), and Paul (Acts 22:17–18)." ([Revelation 1: Introduction](#))

MacArthur on in the Spirit - John received his vision while he **was in the Spirit**; his experience transcended the bounds of normal human apprehension. Under the Holy Spirit's control, John was transported to a plane of experience and perception beyond that of the human senses. In that state, God supernaturally revealed things to him. Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:2; 3:12, 14), Peter (Acts 10:9ff.), and Paul (Acts 22:17–21; 2 Cor. 12:1ff.) had similar experiences. (See [Revelation Commentary](#))

MacDonald has a comment on in the Spirit that gives us a very practical application - John was in the Spirit, that is, walking in unclouded fellowship with Him and **thus in a position to receive divine communications. This reminds us that a person must be near to hear.** "The secret (intimacy) of the Lord is with those who fear Him" (Ps. 25:14⁺).

Bishop Trench helps understand "in the Spirit" in the context of the Revelation writing "In one sense the faithful are always **in the Spirit**;' they are 'spiritual' (1Co 3:1, 15), are 'led by the Spirit' (Ro 8:14) and 'walk in the Spirit' (Gal. 5:16, 25). But here, and in Rev 4:2; Rev 21:10 (cf. Ezek. 40:2, 'in the visions of God'), the words are used in an eminent and peculiar sense; they describe not the habitual condition of faithful men, but an exceptional state, differing from the other not in degree only, but in kind; a condition in which there is a suspension of all the motions and faculties of the natural life; that a higher life may be called, during and through this suspension, into a preternatural activity. It is the state of trance or ecstasy, that is, of standing out of oneself," (Online "[Commentary on the epistles to the seven churches in Asia : Revelation II, III](#)")

In the Spirit is found 20x/20v, and 4x in Revelation - Matt. 22:43; Lk. 1:17; Lk. 2:27; Acts 19:21; Rom. 8:9; 1 Co. 6:11; 1 Co. 14:16; Eph. 2:22; Eph. 3:5; Eph. 4:23; Eph. 6:18; Phil. 3:3; Col. 1:8; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Pet. 4:6; **Rev. 1:10; Rev. 4:2; Rev. 17:3; Rev. 21:10**

Revelation 4:1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." 2 **Immediately I was in the Spirit**; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne.

Revelation 17:3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

Revelation 21:10 And **he carried me away in the Spirit** to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Guzik - Among the pagans of the Roman Empire, the first day of each month was called "Emperors Day" in honor of the Roman Emperor. Perhaps Christians proclaimed their allegiance to Jesus by honoring the first day of the week as their own [Lord's Day](#).

Walvoord does not think **Lord's Day** as first day of the week - Some have indicated that "**the Lord's Day**" refers to the first day of the week. However, the word "Lord's" is an adjective and this expression is never used in the Bible to refer to the first day of the week. Probably John was referring to the [Day of the Lord](#), a familiar expression in both Testaments (cf. Isa. 2:12; 13:6, 9; 34:8; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14; Amos 5:18, 20; Zeph. 1:7–8, 14, 18; 2:3; Zech. 14:1; Mal. 4:5; 1 Thes. 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10). "In the Spirit" could also be rendered "in [my] spirit" (cf. Rev. 4:2; 17:3; 21:10). That is, he was projected forward in his inner self in a vision, not bodily, to that future day of the Lord when God will pour out His judgments on the earth. (See [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

I agree with **John MacArthur's** interpretation of the **Lord's Day** - John received his vision on the **Lord's day**. While some argue that this refers to the time of eschatological judgment called the Day of the Lord, it is best understood as a reference to Sunday. The Greek phrase translated the **Lord's day** (tē kuriakē hēmera) is different from the one translated "the [Day of the Lord](#)" (tē hēmera tou kuriou, or hēmera kuriou; cf. 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:10) and appears only here in the New Testament. Further, the vision John received had nothing to do with the eschatological Day of the Lord; it was a vision of Christ's present ministry in the church. Finally, in the second century the phrase kuriakē hēmera was widely used to refer to Sunday (cf. R. J. Bauckham, "The Lord's Day," in D. A. Carson, ed., [From Sabbath to Lord's Day : a Biblical, historical, and theological investigation](#)). The phrase the **Lord's day** became the customary way of referring to Sunday because Christ's resurrection took place on a Sunday. (See [Revelation Commentary](#))

J Vernon McGee - John says that he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day and, in my judgment, the Day of the Lord and the Lord's Day are two different things. We recognize that anti-fat and fat auntie are two different things and that a chestnut horse and a horse chestnut are two different things. And I would say that the Day of the Lord and the Lord's Day are two different things also, and that

the Lord's Day refers to what we call Sunday.

And I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet([salpigx/salpinx](#)) - While Christ is never mentioned by name in this description, clearly this is the Lord Jesus Christ speaking. John was prepared for what happened next because he was in the Spirit. Had he been in sin, he would not have heard even this **loud voice** (megas + phone - think of "megaphone"). **Like** is a [term of comparison](#). This is the first use of **like** in the Revelation, and there are 8 uses in 5 verses in Revelation 1:10-16 (Rev 1:10, 13, 14, 15, 16). John under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is using common terms to help us begin to get a grasp of the incredible sight he beheld - the glorified Christ in all of His radiance and splendor! **Like the sound of a trumpet** indicates a sound as loud and clear as a trumpet's blast, which in context signals the necessity to submit to whatever is commanded. While the trumpet is a shofar, [here is a link to listen](#) to the clear, loud tone of a shofar that might give us some idea of what John heard.

MacArthur - Throughout the book of Revelation, a **loud voice** or sound indicates the solemnity of what is about to be revealed (cf. Rev 5:2, 12; 6:10; 7:2, 10; 8:13; 10:3; 11:12, 15; 12:10; 14:2, 15, 18; 16:1, 17; 19:1, 17; 21:3). The scene is reminiscent of the giving of the Law at Sinai: "So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled" (Ex. 19:16). (See [Revelation Commentary](#))

THOUGHT - Terms of comparison (such as "like" which more accurately is a [simile](#)) are the most common type of figurative language in the Bible, usually expressing similarity between things that are otherwise dissimilar. The basic idea of comparison is to take something with which everyone is familiar and use give the reader insight into something which is unfamiliar or less familiar. In everyday life, when we see two of anything alike, the similarity immediately draws our attention and this same phenomenon is true in Bible study. How often do you see children out in public and don't pay that much attention? But when we see twins, our attention is heightened and more focused. In the same way, similarities stand out thus the Bible frequently uses comparison things well known and understood, in order to give insights into truths which may not as well known or understood. Behind every comparison there is a literal truth. We must be very careful to rightly divide the Word of Truth with comparison lest we be tempted to use our imagination and attach an interpretation to the figure of speech which the Spirit never intended. (See [example of Augustine's interpretation](#) of the [metaphor](#) of the **two-edged sword** in Rev 1:16).

James Smith - IN THE SPIRIT. from his larger work "[The Holy Spirit](#)"

Having received the Spirit, and having Him indwelling and filling us, our life is now to be lived "in the Spirit." That is, under His guiding, ever present, almighty overshadowing influence, like the Israelites under the pillar of cloud. From Scripture we observe there are certain privileges and blessings which can only be enjoyed by those who are "in the Spirit." We mention the following—

1. God is to be worshipped.

We worship God in the Spirit (Phil. 3:3). God is a Spirit, and our spirit must worship Him (John 4:24). But that is not all, our spirit must worship in the Spirit of God, or as in the Revised Version, "Who worship in the Spirit of God." We may be serious and solemn in our worship, and yet not be in the Spirit; and if not in the Spirit, then no acceptable worship is given. All such worshippers, no matter how earnest, worship they know not what. In all the churches as well as in Athens, how many there are of whom it might be said, "They are too superstitious."

2. God's voice is heard and His glory witnessed.

I was in the Spirit, and heard behind me a great voice,... and saw the Son of Man clothed in glory" (Rev. 1:10-18). Those who are continually in the Spirit are continually enraptured with the glory of the Lord. Those not in the Spirit may talk fluently about the "voice" and the "glory," but to their own hearts it is all unreal. In the Spirit we hear not the still small voice only as of one speaking from afar and heard with difficulty, but "a great voice as of a trumpet," about which there can be no doubt.

3. Heavenly things are understood.

"Come up hither, and I will show you things,... and immediately I was in the Spirit" (Rev. 4:1, 2). We cannot understand the things of God but by the Spirit of God, for they are spiritually discerned. Then if God would show thee,... immediately you must be in the Spirit. The book of the Revelation of Jesus may be divided into four sections. The first beginning at chap. 1:10; second at chap. 4:2; third at chap. 17:3; fourth at chap. 21:10. At each of these changes in the scene of Revelation, John reminds us that he was "in the Spirit." How else could he understand the great mysteries? How else can we? Is our not being in the Spirit not the chief reason why "the things to come" are so little understood? Paul undoubtedly understood the unspeakable words he heard in Paradise, although it was impossible for him to utter them (2 Cor. 12:4). Every one who is in the Spirit is unspeakably above those who are not.

4. Man's helplessness and God's power are seen.

"The Lord carried me in the Spirit, and set me in the valley of bones;... so I prophesied and they stood up" (Ezek. 37:1-10). It was while he was in the Spirit that he saw how dead and dry the bones were, and when he prophesied so successfully. Those in the Spirit see the need as others cannot, and so have no faith in the mere human remedies, but speak the word as God has commanded (vs. 7-10), and so witness the quickening power of the almighty breath.

5. Divine strength and comfort are enjoyed.

"Behold I go bound in the Spirit," bonds and afflictions abide me, but none of these things move me (Acts 20:22-24). When in the Spirit a man is dwelling in the holy calm and undisturbable element of Heaven, and made strong in the midst of otherwise crushing circumstances. The peace of God keeps his heart. "God is our refuge, we will not fear though the earth be removed. There is a river, the streams whereof make glad" (Psa. 46:1-4).

6. Is the proof of His indwelling in us.

"Ye are in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you" (Rom. 8:9). If the Spirit of God is not abiding in us we cannot live in the Spirit. It is easy to preach the theory of the Spirit's indwelling, but living in the Spirit is the practical manifestation of it. He does not come to dwell in us as a candle under a bushel, or as a helpless invalid whose presence cannot be seen or felt outside, but as a mighty life-quickener and a spiritual wonder-worker, whose presence cannot be hid.

7. All service is to be rendered.

"Look ye out men full of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 6:3). Even for the work of an almoner this was needed. Paul's preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:4); "Apollos taught, being fervent in the Spirit" (Acts 18:25); all prayer is to be in the Spirit (Eph. 6:18); to be in the Spirit is to be in immediate touch with God, and not to be in direct contact with God is to be out of fellowship, and consequently fruitless (John 15:6).

Question - [What is the Lord's day?](#)

Answer: The Lord's day (as distinguished from the day of the Lord) is Sunday. The term Lord's day is used only once in Scripture. Revelation 1:10 says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet." Since the apostle John does not elaborate on the meaning of "Lord's day," we can assume that his target audience, first-century Christians, were already familiar with the expression.

Some have assumed that the Lord's day is the New Testament equivalent of the Sabbath. The Sabbath day was instituted by God for the nation of Israel to commemorate His deliverance of them from Egypt (Deuteronomy 5:15). Sabbath began Friday at sunset and ended Saturday at sunset and was to be a day of complete rest from all labor, symbolic of the Creator's resting on the seventh day (Genesis 2:2-3; Exodus 20:11; 23:12). The Sabbath was a special sign to the Israelites that they had been set apart as followers of the most High God. Their keeping of the Sabbath would help distinguish them from the nations around them. However, nowhere in Scripture is the Sabbath ever referred to as the Lord's day. The term Sabbath was still in use within the Jewish community in New Testament times and is referred to as such by Jesus and the apostles (Matthew 12:5; John 7:23; Colossians 2:16).

Sunday was the day that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, an act that forever separated Christianity from any other religion (John 20:1). Since that time, believers have gathered on the first day of the week to celebrate His victory over sin and death (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2). Even though the Sabbath day was designated by God as a holy day, Jesus demonstrated that He was Lord over the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8). Jesus stated that He had come not to abolish but to fulfill the whole Law. Rule-keeping could not justify anyone; only through Jesus could sinful humanity be declared righteous (Romans 3:28). Paul echoes this truth in Colossians 2:16-17 when he writes, "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ."

The Lord's day is typically thought of as Sunday, but it is not a direct counterpart to the Jewish Sabbath—in other words, Sunday is not the "Christian Sabbath." Although we should set aside a day for rest and honoring the Lord who died and rose for us, we are not under the Law (Romans 6:14-15). As born-again followers of Jesus, we are free to worship Him on any day that our conscience determines. Romans 14 gives clear explanation of how Christians are to navigate those subtle gray areas of discipleship. Verses 4 and 5 say, "One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God."

Some Messianic Jews want to continue regarding the Sabbath day as holy because of their Jewish heritage. Some Gentile

Christians join their Jewish brothers and sisters in keeping the Sabbath as a way to honor God. Worshiping God on the Sabbath is acceptable—again, the day of the week is not the most important issue—but the heart motivation behind that choice is crucial. If legalism or law-keeping motivates the choice to observe the Sabbath, then that choice is not made from a right heart condition (Galatians 5:4). When our hearts are pure before the Lord, we are free to worship Him on Saturday (the Sabbath) or Sunday (the Lord's day). God is equally pleased with both.

Jesus warned against legalism when He quoted Isaiah the prophet: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules" (Matthew 15:8–9; cf. Isaiah 29:13). God is not interested in our keeping of rituals, rules, or requirements. He wants hearts that are on fire with His love and grace on the Sabbath, on the Lord's day, and on every other day (Hebrews 12:28–29; Psalm 51:15–17). (Source: GotQuestions.org)

Revelation 1:11 saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

NET Revelation 1:11 saying: "Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches— to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

NLT Revelation 1:11 It said, "Write in a book everything you see, and send it to the seven churches in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

ESV Revelation 1:11 saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

NIV Revelation 1:11 which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

GNT Revelation 1:11 λεγο σης, βλ πεις γρ ψον ες βιβλ ον κα π μψον τα ς πτ κκλησ αις, ε ς φεσον κα ε ς Σμ ρναν κα ε ς Π ργαμον κα ε ς Θυ τειρα κα ε ς Σ ρδεις κα ε ς Φιλαδ λφειαν κα ε ς Λαοδ κειαν.

KJV Revelation 1:11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

ASV Revelation 1:11 saying, What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

CSB Revelation 1:11 saying, "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

NKJ Revelation 1:11 saying, "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."

NRS Revelation 1:11 saying, "Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

YLT Revelation 1:11 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,' and, 'What thou dost see, write in a scroll, and send to the seven assemblies that are in Asia; to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.'

- **What:** Rev 1:19 2:1 10:4 14:13 19:9 21:5 De 31:19 Isa 30:8 Jer 30:2 Hab 2:2
- **seven:** Rev 1:4 2:1,8,12,18 3:1,7,14
- **Ephesus:** Ac 18:19-21,24 19:1-41 20:17 1Co 15:32 16:8 Eph 1:1 1Ti 1:3
- **Laodicea:** Col 4:15,16

Saying, "**Write** ([grapho](#)) in a book ([biblion](#)) what you see ([blepo](#) in present tense), and **send it to the seven** ([hepta](#)) churches ([ekklesia](#)) - Jesus commands John to **write** and **send** (both [aorist imperative](#) - Do this now! Do not delay!). John obeyed and so we are reading what he wrote describing what he saw. Recall that **see, saw, seen** are key words in the Revelation and occurs 8x/7v in Rev 1 (Rev 1:2, 7, 11, 12, 17, 19, 20) making it a very "visual" book. One great way to study the Revelation is to keep a notebook with pictures you have drawn of the things John saw. This practice will help you remember the events in each chapter. In sum we are reading a first person account or testimony, an "eye witness" account. Notice that "**book**" is singular which indicates one **book** which is sent to all 7 churches. Of course they could have made 7 copies but the text does not state that they did.

To Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea- See Revelation 2-3 for in depth discussions of each of these 7 specific churches. They were real churches in existence at the time John wrote the book and correspond to "**the things which are**" in Revelation 1:19+. If you locate these churches on a map they begin at about 9 o'clock for Ephesus and move clockwise in a circular arrangement. These were representative cities because there were other churches such as the one at Colossae.

[Brian Bell](#) - these are mentioned in geographical order, on Asia Minor(Turkey), in which mail would have been delivered. [clockwise] John just became Postmaster General of Patmos!

MacArthur - These seven churches were chosen because they were located in the key cities of the seven postal districts into which Asia was divided. They were thus the central points for disseminating information. (Borrow [Because the time is near : John MacArthur explains the book of Revelation](#))

Write (1125) [grapho](#) from root **graph-** = primarily means to scratch on or engrave as on an ornament, reports, letters, etc; **English** = graph, graphic, etc) means to engrave or inscribe with a pen or stylus characters or letters on a surface which can be wood, wax, metal, leather, stone, parchment, dirt (John), paper, etc. **It is written** occurs 76 times in the **NAS**. When we were children and our parents told us to do something and we questioned "Why?", the answer was usually "Because I said so!". Why are we commanded to be holy? Because God said so! A popular saying is "God said it, I believe it, that settles it." This sounds good but isn't accurate because God's Word is true, regardless of whether we believe it or not. A more accurate "saying" would be "God said it, that settles it!" **It is written** should put a stop to every complaint or excuse. Paul is saying don't judge but remember you will appear before Me to give an account (as the next verse clarifies). This sobering thought should motivate us to obey this injunction.

Grapho is a keyword in the Revelation - 29x in 28v - Rev. 1:3; Rev. 1:11; Rev. 1:19; Rev. 2:1; Rev. 2:8; Rev. 2:12; Rev. 2:17; Rev. 2:18; Rev. 3:1; Rev. 3:7; Rev. 3:12; Rev. 3:14; Rev. 5:1; Rev. 10:4; Rev. 13:8; Rev. 14:1; Rev. 14:13; Rev. 17:5; Rev. 17:8; Rev. 19:9; Rev. 19:12; Rev. 19:16; Rev. 20:12; Rev. 20:15; Rev. 21:5; Rev. 21:27; Rev. 22:18; Rev. 22:19

Book (975) [biblion](#) from **biblos** = the inner bark of a papyrus plant, hence a [scroll](#), a book) is the diminutive form of **biblos** and means a book, a roll, a volume, a document, a [scroll](#), a writing. Ancient writing were in the form of [ascroll](#), which was "sheets of [papyrus](#) glued together and rolled at each end to collect a long literature work in a form for public reading or private study." (Holman; See also [Hastings' Dictionary](#))

Biblion is uses in 29 verses in the NT but by far most uses are in the Revelation- 19x in 17v - Matt. 19:7; Mk. 10:4; Lk. 4:17; Lk. 4:20; Jn. 20:30; Jn. 21:25; Gal. 3:10; 2 Tim. 4:13; Heb. 9:19; Heb. 10:7; Rev. 1:11; Rev. 5:1; Rev. 5:2; Rev. 5:3; Rev. 5:4; Rev. 5:5; Rev. 5:8; Rev. 5:9; Rev. 6:14; Rev. 10:8; Rev. 13:8; Rev. 17:8; Rev. 20:12; Rev. 21:27; Rev. 22:7; Rev. 22:9; Rev. 22:10; Rev. 22:18; Rev. 22:19

Revelation 1:12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands;

NET Revelation 1:12 I turned to see whose voice was speaking to me, and when I did so, I saw seven golden lampstands,

NLT Revelation 1:12 When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands.

ESV Revelation 1:12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands,

NIV Revelation 1:12 I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands,

GNT Revelation 1:12 Καὶ ἐστρεψάμενος εἶδον ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσεῖς

KJV Revelation 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

ASV Revelation 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And having turned I saw seven golden candlesticks;

CSB Revelation 1:12 I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me. When I turned I saw seven gold lampstands,

NKJ Revelation 1:12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands,

NRS Revelation 1:12 Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands,

YLT Revelation 1:12 And I did turn to see the voice that did speak with me, and having turned, I saw seven golden lamp-stands,

- **see:** Eze 43:5,6 Mic 6:9
- **I saw:** Rev 1:13,20 2:1 Ex 25:37 Zec 4:2



A Menorah - 7 Branches
John saw 7 Lampstands

JOHN SEES SEVEN GOLDEN LAMPSTANDS

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me - Note that Jesus had just told him to write what you see and as John turns the first thing is that he saw seven golden lampstands and so he recorded what he saw. This is an interesting description for usually we turn to see the one speaking. The **NET** picks up the sense rendering it "I turned to see whose voice was speaking to me."

And having turned I saw seven (hepta) golden lampstands (luchnia) - John sees **seven lampstands**, each one having a base, a single vertical stem, and an oil-burning lamp at the top. This is clearly figurative (or symbolic) language but just as clearly it has a literal meaning which is discovered by comparing Scripture with Scripture (see [Compare Scripture with Scripture](#)). So if we compare Revelation 1:12 with Revelation 1:20 it is clear that **"the seven lampstands are the seven churches"** Since these 7 churches are geographically spread apart by many miles, it is clear that the Spirit is giving John "supernatural vision". Recall he is "in the Spirit" and this is one of the manifestations of the Spirit's power on him. So John sees in some supernatural way the 7 churches that the loud voice (Jesus) has instructed him to write.

THOUGHT - How do you cut a diamond? With a diamond! Not with a commentary written by men. **Tony Garland** commenting on the importance of studying Scripture *"in the light of related passages"* says that [Comparing Scripture with Scripture](#) "is the biblical equivalent of a "safety net." In the same way that trapeze artists performing on the high-wire are protected by a net below which catches them in the event of a fall, [comparing Scripture with Scripture](#) provides a doctrinal "safety net" to keep the interpreter from "falling" into an inconsistent understanding or interpretation. (See [The Art and Science of Interpretation](#))

Golden lampstands - The very precious metal was often used in connection with the heavenly or divine. The Mosaic lampstand for the Tabernacle, that which stood (one or more) in the later temples and in the vision of Zech. 6:2, had seven branches, but here we have seven distinct lampstands, each with its one light. It has nothing to do w. candlesticks but is a kind of lamp with a wick and oil

MacArthur on the **seven golden lampstands** (**luchnia**) - These were like the common portable oil lamps placed on lampstands that were used to light rooms at night. They symbolize churches as the lights of the world (Phil. 2:15). They are golden because gold was the most precious metal. The church is to God the most beautiful and valuable entity on earth—so valuable that Jesus was willing to purchase it with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Seven is the number of completeness (cf. Ex. 25:31–40; Zech. 4:2); thus, the seven churches symbolize the churches in general. These were actual churches in real places, but are symbolic of the kinds of churches that exist through all of church history. (See [Revelation Commentary](#))

Guzik - The light doesn't come from the lampstands. The light comes from the oil lamps themselves. The stands merely make the light more visible. Therefore, the lampstands are a good picture of the church. We don't produce the light, we simply display it.

Adam Clarke - "A lamp is not light in itself, it is only the instrument of dispensing light, and it must receive both oil and fire before it can dispense any; so no Church has in itself either grace or glory, it must receive all from Christ its head, else it can dispense neither light nor life."

Matthew 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; 15 nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the **lampstand**, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Philippians 2:14- 15 Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, 16 holding fast (OR HOLDING OUT) the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain

Lampstands (3087)(**luchnia** from **luchnos** a portable lamp fed with oil and not to a candle usually placed on a stand) is the ordinary word for the stand upon which a "lamp" (**luchnos**) was placed. Such a lampstand was elevated and thus helped to extend the light. The translation of **luchnia** as "candlestick" is highly unlikely since there is no evidence of a lamp that did not use oil in either the Old or New Testaments. The vital function of lamps and lampstands in the ancient world was taken for granted. It was in such a context that Jesus illustrated the role of His disciples in the world (Mt 5:15; Mk 4:21; Lk 8:16; 11:33). "The disciples are to have an illuminating effect upon their environment," even as the lamp set on its stand lights up the darkness (Hahn, "light," Colin Brown, 2:487). In Revelation (Rev 1:12,13,20; 2:1,5) the seven churches are spoken of as seven golden **luchnia**.

Friberg - as a place for setting a lamp, other than a candlestick lampstand (Mt 5:15); metaphorically; (1) of a church as a place where people can learn things about God as they really are (Rev 1:20); (2) of a witness who tells things as they really are (Rev 11:4) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

TDNT - The **luchnos** is a lamp, originally an open bowl, then a closed lamp in various forms, usually put on a stand to give better light, the **lychnía** being the stand. Both words are common in the LXX (cf. the seven-branched candelabra, a **luchnia** with seven **luchnoi**). The lamp is a common metaphor in the OT. It denotes length of life (2 Sam. 21:17), the source of divine help (Job 29:3), and the law (Ps. 119:105). The lamp of the wicked will be put out (Job 18:6). In the NT Jesus makes figurative use of the fact that to give its light a lamp must be put on a stand. In Matt. 5:15 this seems to suggest that the disciples must give open witness, although a reference to Jesus' own ministry is not excluded. In Luke 11:34 Jesus calls the eye the lamp of the body; we must be open to the light of the gospel if we are to know full health. The exhortation in Luke 12:35 presents the burning lamp as a symbol of readiness. The woman in Luke 15:8 lights a lamp in her search for the lost coin, a token of her great anxiety to find it. In Jn. 5:35 Jesus honors the Baptist by calling him a burning and shining lamp; he cannot be called the light itself (cf. 1:8) but he has given faithful witness to it. Rev. 11:4 describes the two witnesses as **lychníai** (cf. Zech. 4:2, 11), while the seven churches are seven golden **lychníai** in 1:12-13 etc. (cf. Zech. 4 and Matt. 5:15), and the Lamb himself is the lamp of the heavenly city in Rev 21:23. Heb. 9:2 refers to the temple lampstand, and 2Pet. 1:19 calls the prophetic word a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns. (Borrow [Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament : abridged in one volume](#))

Luchnia - 11v - Matt. 5:15; Mk. 4:21; Lk. 8:16; Lk. 11:33; Heb. 9:2; Rev. 1:12; Rev. 1:13; Rev. 1:20; Rev. 2:1; Rev. 2:5; Rev. 11:4

Luchnia in the Septuagint - Exod. 25:31; Exod. 25:32; Exod. 25:33; Exod. 25:34; Exod. 25:35; Exod. 26:35; Exod. 30:27; Exod. 31:8; Exod. 35:14; Exod. 37:17; Exod. 39:37; Exod. 40:4; Exod. 40:24; Lev. 24:4; Num. 3:31; Num. 4:9; Num. 8:2; Num. 8:3; Num. 8:4; 1 Ki. 7:49; 2 Ki. 4:10; 1 Chr. 28:15; 2 Chr. 4:7; 2 Chr. 4:20; 2 Chr. 13:11; Jer. 52:19; Zech. 4:2; Zech. 4:11;

ANSWER - In Revelation 1:12–13, the apostle John experiences a vision of Jesus Christ standing amid seven candlesticks: “And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle” (KJV). Most modern translations refer to the “seven candlesticks” as “seven golden lampstands.”

Jesus spoke to John in the vision and explained what the seven candlesticks were: “The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches” (Revelation 1:20).

The [seven churches](#), represented by the seven candlesticks, were actual churches that existed at the time John experienced the vision. The churches were located in seven cities of western Asia Minor: in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. In Revelation 2 — 3, Jesus Christ addresses a letter to each of these churches, a letter that included words of commendation, criticism, and consolation. This part of Revelation comprises the “what is now” section of Revelation (see Revelation 1:19).

Most scholars agree that the seven candlesticks carry a meaning beyond those seven Asiatic churches in John’s day, representing in some way the entire church of Jesus Christ. Because the number seven often represents wholeness or completion in Scripture, many conclude that the seven churches represent all churches, or the church universal. Still others see the seven individual churches as symbols of the local church.

Some commentators view these seven candlesticks as representatives of the church in every age. Others see them as predictive of the church in different stages throughout history, with the first, [Ephesus](#), symbolic of the apostolic church and the last, [Laodicea](#), symbolic of the present-day, postmodern church. Another interesting parallel points to the lampstands being made of gold, a metal that shines brilliantly. As such, the candlesticks could represent the churches not as they were then but as all of them ought to be.

As mentioned, these candlesticks were made of **gold**, the most precious and valuable of all metals. In this sense, the golden lampstands symbolize the preciousness of the church as God’s most valued possession (see John 3:16). The gold of the lampstands may also be symbolic of purity and [holiness](#). The church is called to be an example of God’s holiness to the world (1 Peter 1:15–16).

And of course candlesticks are designed to bring light to dark places. God’s purpose for the church is to hold forth the light. Jesus said, “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:14–16). In Jesus’ letter to the church of Ephesus, a church that had [left its first love](#), the Lord warns that they must repent or He will come to them and “remove your lampstand from its place” (Revelation 2:5). In other words, the church was in danger of losing its opportunity to testify of Christ in their community.

In John’s vision, Jesus Christ stands in the center of the seven candlesticks, in the midst of His people. Christ is always present with His church. **A candlestick is not the light itself but the bearer of the light.** Jesus is the [light of the world](#) (John 8:12), and, as candlesticks, the church’s mission is to hold that light up for the world to see: “So that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life” (Philippians 2:15–16). [GotQuestions.org](#)

Revelation 1:13 and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash.

NET Revelation 1:13 and in the midst of the lampstands was one like a son of man. He was dressed in a robe extending down to his feet and he wore a wide golden belt around his chest.

NLT Revelation 1:13 And standing in the middle of the lampstands was someone like the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest.

ESV Revelation 1:13 and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest.

NIV Revelation 1:13 and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest.

GNT Revelation 1:13 καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν λυχνιῶν ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ὁ ὢν ἐδεδυμένος ἱμᾶν ἄχρι ποδῶν καὶ περιεζωσμένος ἦν μετὰ χρυσῆς ζώνης.

KJV Revelation 1:13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

ASV Revelation 1:13 and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

CSB Revelation 1:13 and among the lampstands was One like the Son of Man, dressed in a long robe and with a gold sash wrapped around His chest.

NKJ Revelation 1:13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

NRS Revelation 1:13 and in the midst of the lampstands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest.

YLT Revelation 1:13 and in the midst of the seven lamp-stands, one like to a son of man, clothed to the foot, and girt round at the breast with a golden girdle,

- **like:** Rev 14:14 Eze 1:26-28 Da 7:9-13 10:5,6,16 Php 2:7,8 Heb 2:14-17 Heb 4:15
- **clothed:** Da 10:5
- **and girded:** Rev 15:6 Ex 28:6-8 Ex 39:5 Lev 8:7 Isa 11:5

Related Passages:

Ezekiel 1:26-28 Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was a figure with the appearance of a man. 27 Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him. 28 As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.

Daniel 7:9-13+ "I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the **Ancient of Days took His seat**; His vesture was like white snow And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire. 10 "A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him; Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, And the books were opened. 11 "Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn (ANTICHRIST) was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire. 12 "As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time. 13 "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, **with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming**, (RECALL THE JEWS REFERRED TO THE MESSIAH AS THE COMING ONE OR EXPECTED ONE - CF Mt 11:2-3) And He came up to the Ancient of Days (GOD THE FATHER) And was presented before Him.

CLOTHING OF ONE LIKE THE SON OF MAN

I love what **James McConkey** said about John's inspired description of the glorified Christ - The Spirit ransacks the realm of nature for symbols that might convey some faint conception to our dull and finite minds of the glory, splendor, and majesty of this coming One, who is the Christ of Revelation. ([The Book of Revelation: A Series of Outline Studies in the Apocalypse](#))

And in the middle of the lampstands([luchnia](#)) - Note the strategic location of the glorified Christ -- in the **middle of the lampstands**, indicating He is the **middle** of these seven churches. His location in the **middle** indicates He has contact with all seven churches and that they should have contact with Him. He is the Light of the churches. One is reminded of Paul's description of Christ in Colossians 2:19 "and not holding fast to the head (CHRIST), from Whom the entire body (CHURCH), being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God." In Eph 4:15-16 we read "but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body (THE CHURCH), being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body (THE CHURCH) for the building up of itself in love." Jesus **in the middle of the lampstands** (churches) recalls a parting

promise In Matthew 28:20 that "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." The lampstands picture the church as the "light of the world"(Phil. 2:15; Eph. 5:8; Matt. 5:16).

THOUGHT - Christ is in the middle of the churches! Is Christ in the middle of your life or is He off to the side, left or right of the middle? He is always be in the middle, seated on the throne of our heart. Do you daily present yourself on the altar to Him as a living and holy sacrifice which is your spiritual service of worship (Ro 12:1+)? Remember that Paul states that "Christ is our life" (Col 3:4+)! Our life is best and most abundant when He is in the middle of our life and our heart!

I saw one like a son of man - This is a clear reference to Daniel's description "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One **like a Son of Man** was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him." (Da 7:13+) It is no accident that John would use the term "**son of man**" because he had heard Jesus use it many times - in fact **Son of Man** was Jesus' favorite Name to refer to Himself (84x/80v in Mt-Jn). But now in His glorified state Jesus appeared quite different but John's use of this term clearly indicates that despite not seeing him for 60 years, he still recognized the this One as "like" the One he had followed for 3 years, the One Who changed his life. Stephen also called the risen Christ, the "**Son of Man**" in Acts 7:56+. The point is that even in His glorified state He is a man.

As **Adrian Rogers** says "Jesus is forevermore a man—Jesus is forevermore a man. Jesus was not a man before His incarnation. Jesus became a man at Bethlehem. Jesus took upon Him human flesh. But, learn this, and learn it well: Jesus did not take that human flesh upon Him to say, "I will wear it for awhile, and then discard it and go back to Heaven." Jesus will keep His humanity for all eternity. There's a man in Glory—don't forget it....And, I believe with all of the unction, function, and emotion of my soul you'll see the nail prints in His hands. The only man-made thing in Heaven will be the print of the nails in His hands and in His feet. I turned and saw—He's the resurrected Christ. He was raised as a man, ascended as a man. He's coming back again as a man."

MacDonald points out that "There was nothing between Him and the individual **lampstands**, no agency, hierarchy, or organization."

Clothed in (enduō) a robe reaching to the feet - Note there is no term of comparison (like or as) here, so this is a literal **robe**, etc. **Robe reaching to the feet** is one Greek word, **poderes** (pous = foot + aro = to adjust), found only here and descriptive of a garment that reaches to the feet. In the Septuagint poderes is used to describe the robe of the high priest (Ex 25:7,2 28:4, 31, 29:5, 35:9; Ezek. 9:2, 3,11; Zech. 3:4). This recalls Isaiah's vision of Jesus (cf Jn 12:41) in Isaiah 6:1+ writing "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple."

And girded (perizonnumi) across His chest with a golden sash - This literal description parallels the description of the garments of the high priest as described in Lev 8:7+ "He put the tunic on him and girded him with the sash, and clothed him with the robe and put the ephod on him; and he girded him with the artistic band of the ephod, with which he tied it to him." Indeed, Jesus is "**great high priest who has passed through the heavens**." (Heb 4:14).

Robertson - High girding like this (**across the chest**) was a mark of dignity as of the high priest (Josephus, [Ant. III. 7. 2](#)).

Alan Carr - This is the attire of both a King and a Priest. As a King, Jesus is the Sovereign Lord. He is in absolute control and He rules today, even though the world does not recognize Him, Rev. 17:14. Jesus is sovereign over His churches and over His world. As a Priest, Jesus is our "man on the inside". He is our Intercessor; the One Who prays for us in Heaven day by day, Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 John 2:1. When we see Him, we will see our High Priest and our King.

Revelation 1:14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire.

NET Revelation 1:14 His head and hair were as white as wool, even as white as snow, and his eyes were like a fiery flame.

NLT Revelation 1:14 His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were like flames of fire.

ESV Revelation 1:14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire,

NIV Revelation 1:14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire.

GNT Revelation 1:14 ὁ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡς ῥιζὸν λευκὴν ὡς χιὼν καὶ οἱ φθάλμοι αὐτοῦ ὡς φλὲξ πυρρῆς

KJV Revelation 1:14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

ASV Revelation 1:14 And his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

CSB Revelation 1:14 His head and hair were white like wool-- white as snow-- and His eyes like a fiery flame.

NKJ Revelation 1:14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;

NRS Revelation 1:14 His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire,

YLT Revelation 1:14 and his head and hairs white, as if white wool -- as snow, and his eyes as a flame of fire;

- **and his hair:** Da 7:9 Mt 28:3
- **and his eyes:** Rev 2:18 Rev 19:12 Da 10:6

Related Passage:

Revelation 2:18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, **Who has eyes like a flame of fire**, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:

HIS HAIR AND HIS EYES

His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow- Like is a simile, a figure of speech that draws a comparison between two different things (i.e. as white as a sheet!) In Da 7:9 there is a similar description of the Ancient of Days, God the Father. The description in this passage refers to the Son of God. Given the truth of that the Son is coequal, coexistent, and coeternal with the Father, it should not be surprising to see similar descriptions. **R L Thomas** agrees writing that the similar descriptions "is in line with his Christological practice of granting to the Second Person of the Trinity attributes and titles previously reserved for the Father (cf. Rev 1:18; 2:8; 5:12; 22:13) (Swete)."

Daniel 7:9+ I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow And **the hair of His head like pure wool**. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire.

Alan Carr - John talks about his head. That head was laid on Mary's breast for comfort as a child. That head had no place to rest itself as an adult. That head was crowned with thorns and His Own blood mixed with the spittle of His enemies. That head was laid in a cold, dark tomb and covered with a napkin. One day, one glorious day, that head will be adorned with many crowns!

John Walvoord points out that "It is evident that His ultimate glory was veiled in order to make possible a ministry to His disciples in scenes on earth. After His ascension into heaven, Christ never appeared again apart from His glory. In Acts 7:56+, Stephen saw Christ standing at the right hand of the Father in the midst of the glory of God. In the appearance of Christ to Paul recorded in Acts 9:3-6+, the glory of Christ was such that Paul was blinded. A similar experience befell the Apostle John in Revelation 1:12-20, where John fell at the feet of Christ as one dead when he beheld the glory of Christ in His resurrection. ([Revelation 1: Introduction: The Things Which Thou Hast Seen](#) online)

Spurgeon says that "When we see in the picture His head and His hair white as snow, we understand the antiquity of His reign."

Adam Clarke - "This was not only an emblem of in antiquity, but it was evidence of his glory; for the whiteness of splendour of his head and hair doubtless proceeded from the rays of light and glory which encircled his head, and darted from it in all directions."

MacDonald - **His head and hair were white like wool**, picturing His eternity, as the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9), and also the wisdom and purity of His judgments. **Eyes like a flame of fire** speak of perfect knowledge, infallible insight, and inescapable scrutiny.

And His eyes were like a flame of fire- This simile speaks of the penetrating, perfect discernment of Christ. Flames of fire burn away impurities.

Hebrews 4:13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Proverbs 15:3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Watching the evil and the good.

2Chr 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His.

Lehman Strauss writes that "John had seen His eyes filled with tears when He wept at the grave of Lazarus (John 11:35), but these are the eyes of the Judge before whom all things are laid bare (Hebrews 4:13). This speaks of His omniscience." (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

QUESTION - [What does it mean that Jesus' hair was like wool \(Revelation 1:14\)?](#)

ANSWER - In Revelation 1:12–16, Jesus is described using multiple [similes](#) such as "the hair on His head was white like wool, as white as snow" (Revelation 1:14). John the apostle, the author of Revelation, is in the presence of Jesus Christ in chapter 1. Throughout this chapter, John provides an introduction and an account of his vision of Jesus Christ. Jesus will then give John the imperative to record "what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later" (Revelation 1:19).

In his description of Jesus, John utilizes the images of wool and snow to symbolize the color of Jesus' hair in the vision. As John sees Jesus for the first time in Revelation, he simply describes Jesus' appearance. Throughout the Bible, authors utilize various figures of speech to emphasize a fact or observation. The meanings of these figures of speech are not left to the reader to determine in some obscure way; rather, the meanings are intended to be discovered utilizing context and other passages.

In examining Revelation 1:14, we should remember at least three things. One, John is seeing a vision, and what he sees is symbolic, not literal. Second, John is using an obvious simile: Jesus' hair is *like* wool; it is not actually wool. And, third, John is describing the *color* of Jesus' hair in the vision, not the texture. The hair is only like wool in that it is white—John also compares the color to that of snow.

Why might John have described the hair of Jesus, and what was his intended meaning in saying that it was "white like wool"? There are many aspects of Jesus' appearance John could have described, but he focused on just a few, including the color of Jesus' hair. As Paul shows in Galatians 3:16, every detail of Scripture has significance—John described what he did for a reason. Jesus' hair being white like wool creates an interesting connection with Daniel 7:9.

Daniel 7 records an eschatological vision giving details about the millennial kingdom (cf. Revelation 20:1–6) and the One who will reign in an everlasting kingdom. In Daniel 7:9, Daniel sees the "Ancient of Days," the covenant-keeping God of the Bible, Yahweh. In this description of God, Daniel describes His clothing as "white as snow" and His hair as "white like wool." The whiteness of the clothing and hair, in both Daniel 7 and Revelation 1, speak of purity and holiness. God is holy and completely unstained by sin.

In the next verses, "one like a [son of man](#)" (later revealed as Jesus Christ) approaches the Ancient of Days and receives from Him a never-ending kingdom (Daniel 7:13–14). The description of Jesus' hair in Revelation 1:14 is the same as Daniel used for God, showing that Jesus has a oneness and shared identity with God Himself. It is likely that John's original audience would have quickly made this connection.

Jesus claimed in His earthly ministry, "Before Abraham was even born, I Am!" (John 8:58, NLT), pointing to the self-proclaimed name of God in Exodus. Paul claims the [deity of Jesus](#) as well in Colossians 1:15–20. The deity of Christ is proclaimed throughout the Bible, including the symbol of Revelation 1:14.

Jesus' hair is "white like wool" in Revelation 1:14 to emphasize the holiness, purity, and perfection of the sinless Lord. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Revelation 1:15 His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters.

NLT Revelation 1:15 His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves.

ESV Revelation 1:15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters.

NIV Revelation 1:15 His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters.

GNT Revelation 1:15 καὶ ὁ πᾶς αὐτοῖς χαλκοῖς ὡς ἂν καμνὴν πεπυρωμένης καὶ φωνῇ αὐτοῦ ὡς φωνὴ πολλῶν,

KJV Revelation 1:15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

ASV Revelation 1:15 and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters.

CSB Revelation 1:15 His feet were like fine bronze as it is fired in a furnace, and His voice like the sound of cascading waters.

NKJ Revelation 1:15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

NRS Revelation 1:15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters.

YLT Revelation 1:15 and his feet like to fine brass, as in a furnace having been fired, and his voice as a sound of many waters,

- **his feet:** Rev 2:18 Eze 1:7 40:3 Da 10:6
- **his voice:** Rev 14:2 19:6 Ps 93:4 Isa 17:13 Eze 43:2

Related Passages:

Ezekiel 1:7 Their legs were straight and their feet were like a calf's hoof, and **they gleamed like burnished bronze.**

Ezekiel 1:24 I also heard the sound of their wings like the sound of abundant waters as they went, **like the voice of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army camp**; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings.

GLOWING FEET THUNDERING VOICE

His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace- Burnished bronze is the Greek word chalkolibanon found only here and in Rev 2:18 which says "His feet are like burnished bronze," and describes by [Friberg](#) as "a highly refined metal or alloy of uncertain identity, probably burnished bronze, fine brass; the old Latin translation has aurichalcum, an alloy of gold and copper."

Rev 2:18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and **His feet are like burnished bronze**, says this:

"The serpent's fangs once fastened on those feet.

Now the red-hot brass will trample on the serpent's head."

Strauss says **burnished bronze** "speaks of righteous judgment for which He firmly stands. It is upon those feet of beauty that He came preaching the gospel of peace, the glad tidings (Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:15). But when He comes again He shall tread down all abominations and crush those who hate Him." (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

MacDonald - Since brass is a consistent type of judgment, this supports the view that it is the *judicial office* that is primarily in view. (**ED**: AND THIS FITS WITH HIS JUDGING OF THE 7 CHURCHES IN CHAPTERS 2-3).

One is reminded of the Brazen (brass) altar in the OT which was the place where the fire consumed the sin offering.

Alan Carr - Brass, or bronze, in the Bible speaks of judgment. The "brazen serpent", Num. 21, was a symbol of the sin of the people being judged by the chastisement of God. Jesus appears here in the midst of His churches as One having the authority to judge. He sees all and when He sees that which displeases Him, He exercise His authority as King and Lord and He moves in judgment to set things right.

And His voice was like the sound of many waters - Have you ever visited Niagara Falls? Even if you have not take a moment and listen to the sound of water falling in this [youtube video](#) (which has 12 hours of the sound if you want more!) This **sound** might give us some sense of what John heard on this incredible Lord's Day!

Strauss on His voice - This is the voice of power and authority that shall roar from on high upon His habitation (Jeremiah 25:30). It is the voice that is full of majesty (Psalm 29:4). When He comes again all that are in the graves shall hear His voice (John 5:28). To the unbeliever it will be the voice of final judgment. To His own, His voice will give confidence and joy (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18). (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

Alan Carr - Brass, or bronze, in the Bible speaks of judgment. The "brazen serpent", Num. 21, was a symbol of the sin of the people being judged by the chastisement of God. Jesus appears here in the midst of His churches as One having the authority to judge. He sees all and when He sees that which displeases Him, He exercise His authority as King and Lord and He moves in judgment to set things right. Today, men turn a deaf ear to His voice; but there is coming a day when He will speak and His voice will be one that will and cannot be ignored. One day, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Him as Lord at the sound of that voice. This is the same voice that spoke this world into existence. This is the same voice that declared redemption's work complete, **John 19:30**. This is the same voice that will call the Bride up to glory, **1 Thes. 4:16-17**. This voice will be most cruel to ever fall upon the ears of a lost man, **Matt. 7:23**. But, it will be the most precious ever heard by those who have been saved by grace, **Matt. 25:23**.

Life Application Study note - Revelation will challenge your mental picture of Jesus Christ. What forms your impression of him right now—famous paintings, movies, Sunday school art? Do you ever picture Jesus with a gold sash and snow white, woolly hair? Do his eyes flash fire and his feet glow like bronze? When you imagine Jesus speaking to you, does his voice thunder like mighty ocean waves? Reevalue the way you think of Jesus as you read and study Revelation. Allow his powerful presence to transform your life. (Borrow [LIFE APPLICATION STUDY BIBLE](#))

QUESTION - [What does it mean that Jesus' feet were like burnished bronze?](#)

ANSWER - In Revelation 1, John describes the person who was speaking to him and who commissioned him to write down what he saw. One of the descriptions John wrote of this person was that His feet were like fine brass "as if they burned in a furnace" (Revelation 1:15, KJV) or, in the NIV, "his feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace." For this and many other reasons evident in John's description, this was an unusual person.

John describes the person he heard as like a son of man (Revelation 1:13), so He at least appeared to be human. He was clothed in a long robe that reached down to His feet and had a golden sash across His chest (Revelation 1:13). Notice that, when John describes what this person was wearing, he doesn't use the literary device of simile (describing something by likening it to something similar). Rather, he simply describes what he sees. But when describing the person Himself, John has to use the word *like* because he is describing an incredible person who has incredible traits. This person's head and his hair were white *like* wool or snow (Revelation 1:14)—they were very bright and pure white. His eyes were *like* flaming fire (Revelation 1:14). His feet were *like* fine brass burned in a furnace, and His voice *like* the sound of many waters (Revelation 1:15). In His right hand He held seven stars (*asteras*), and from His mouth came a sharp, double-edged sword, and His face was very bright, like the sun (Revelation 1:16).

This person that John is describing is Jesus. He calls Himself the first and the last, connecting His identity to Isaiah 48:12, where He refers to Himself as the one who named Israel (which the preincarnate Christ did in Genesis 32:28–30), as Yahweh (the Lord) the Redeemer (Isaiah 48:17). This One also refers to Himself as the eternal, living One who was dead and as the one who has the keys of death and Hades (Revelation 1:18). In Revelation 2:18 He describes Himself as "the Son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire and His feet are like burnished bronze." These descriptions are not merely coincidental; they help confirm the identity of this One as the first and the last—this is not a new character introduced to the story at this late juncture, rather He is—as He claimed—the eternal One.

Many of the descriptions John records are directly related to accounts and prophecies from the Hebrew Scriptures, as is the description of His feet as like fine brass burning in a furnace (Revelation 1:15). In Daniel 10, Daniel records an appearance of this One to him personally. Daniel describes this One as a certain man dressed in linen with a gold belt (Daniel 10:5). His face was bright like lightning, and His eyes like flaming torches, and His arms and feet gleamed like polished bronze, and the sound of His words was like a roaring (Daniel 10:6). The parallels between John's description of Jesus and Daniel's description of the "certain man" are virtually identical. That Jesus identifies Himself with some of those descriptions also makes evident that He wanted to be recognized as the one whom Daniel saw. He was the Revealer in Daniel's day, and the Revealer in John's as well. This is the same Revealer, the One who proclaimed that He would come suddenly and promised blessing for those who would heed the words of the prophecy of the book that John was told to write (Revelation 22:7).

The fact that the feet of Christ appeared to John as if they were white-hot, burning metal points to the glory of the risen Lord. The feet like fine brass as if burning in a furnace may speak of the work of Christ, as [our High Priest](#), ministering on our behalf in the heavenly temple. Or the vision could speak of Christ's victory over His enemies: in holy judgment, the Lord will trample His enemies in the "great winepress of God's wrath" (Revelation 14:19–20), and "He must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet" (1 Corinthians 15:25). [GotQuestions.org](#)

Mighty Waters

His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters. —
Revelation 1:15

Today's Scripture: Revelation 1:9-17

While in Brazil, I went to see Iguazu Falls, one of the greatest waterfalls in the world. The massive falls are breathtaking, but what impressed me most at Iguazu was not the sight of the falls or the spray of the water. It was the sound ([LISTEN](#)). The sound was beyond deafening—I felt as if I was actually inside the sound itself. It was an overwhelming experience that reminded me how small I am by comparison.

Later, with this scene in mind, I couldn't help but think about John in Revelation 1:15. While on the island of Patmos, he saw a vision of the risen Christ. The apostle described Jesus in the glory of His resurrection, noting both His clothing and His physical qualities. Then John described Christ's voice "as the sound of many waters" (Rev 1:15).

I'm not sure I fully appreciated what that meant until I visited Iguazu and was overwhelmed by the thundering sound of the falls. As those mighty waters reminded me of my own smallness, I better understood why John fell at the feet of Christ as if dead (Rev 1:17).

Perhaps that description will help you grasp the awesomeness of Jesus' presence and prompt you to follow John's example of worshiping the Savior. By: Bill Crowder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Pay honor to our marvelous Savior—
Daily His wonders proclaim;
Dwell always in the presence of Jesus,
And worship His holy name.
—Branon

True worship of Christ changes admiration into adoration.

Revelation 1:16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

NET Revelation 1:16 He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp double-edged sword extended out of his mouth. His face shone like the sun shining at full strength.

NLT Revelation 1:16 He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his face was like the sun in all its brilliance.

ESV Revelation 1:16 In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

NIV Revelation 1:16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

GNT Revelation 1:16 καὶ ἔχων ἐν τῇ δεξιῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ ἑπτὰ ἀστέρας καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ὡς ἡλιοειδὲς ὡς ἡλιος φάνηκεν ἐν τῷ ὄντι αὐτοῦ.

KJV Revelation 1:16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

ASV Revelation 1:16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

CSB Revelation 1:16 He had seven stars in His right hand; a sharp double-edged sword came from His mouth, and His face was shining like the sun at midday.

NKJ Revelation 1:16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

NRS Revelation 1:16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force.

YLT Revelation 1:16 and having in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth a sharp two-edged sword is proceeding, and his countenance is as the sun shining in its might.

- **He held:** Rev 1:20 Rev 2:1 Rev 3:1 Rev 12:1 Job 38:7 Da 8:10 12:3
- **out of His mouth:** Rev 2:12,16 Rev 19:15,21 Isa 11:4 Isa 49:2 Eph 6:17 Heb 4:12
- **and His face was like:** Rev 10:1 Isa 24:23 60:19,20 Mal 4:2 Ac 26:13

STAR HOLDING AND SONGAZING

In His right hand He held seven ([hepta](#)) **stars** - Scripture is the best commentary on Scripture and here we compare Rev 1:20 which gives us the correct interpretation stating that "the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches." **His right hand** signifies possession, power, control, and honor.

Spurgeon - What do you see in Christ's right hand? Seven stars; yet how insignificant they appear when you get a sight of his face! They are stars, and there are seven of them; but who can see seven stars, or, for the matter of that, seventy thousand stars, when the sun shineth in his strength? How sweet it is, when the Lord himself is so present in a congregation that the preacher, whoever he may be, is altogether forgotten! I pray you, dear friends, when you go to a place of worship, always try to see the Lord's face rather than the stars in his hand; look at the sun, and you will forget the stars."

and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword - Augustine called the **two-edged sword** "the old and the new law," but this is a **clear example of allegorizing or spiritualizing** the text (See discussion). There is no Scriptural to support this interpretation. Be a Berean (Acts 17:11+) anytime you read a commentary, but especially when you read commentaries on the Revelation (even the one you are currently reading)!

Isaiah 49:2 He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; And He has also made Me a select arrow, He has hidden Me in His quiver.

Ephesians 6:17 And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Revelation 19:15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

[Guzik](#) on the **sword** - The idea of it coming out of His mouth is not that Jesus carries a sword in His teeth. The idea is that this sword is His word. His weapon—and ours also—is the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17).

[MacDonald](#) says the **sword** "refers to the keen and accurate verdicts concerning His people, as seen in the letters to the seven churches."

Spurgeon on a **sharp two-edged sword** - "There is no handling this weapon without cutting yourself, for it has no back to it, it is all edge. The Word of Christ, somehow or other, is all edge."

[Alan Carr](#) - This reminds us that He is coming not with words of peace and blessing; but with words of righteousness and judgment. When Jesus came the first time, He came with a message of peace and salvation. The next time He comes, He will judge the world with a word from His mouth. The Word of God, reviled by the atheist, the agnostic, the infidel, and the liberal will one day be the standard by which all men are judged! The Word of God will judge man some day, Rev. 20:12; John 12:48.

Life Application Study note - The sword in Jesus' mouth symbolizes the power and force of his message. His words of judgment are as sharp as swords (Isaiah 49:2; Hebrews 4:12). (Borrow [LIFE APPLICATION STUDY BIBLE](#))

Guzik - We should consider the fact that this is the only physical description of Jesus given to us in the Bible. The only other description that comes close is in Isaiah 53:2: He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. In our modern pictures of Jesus, we like to think of Him as He was, not Jesus as He is. We prefer to see and know Jesus after the flesh. But Paul said, Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer (2 Corinthians 5:16).

and His face was like the sun shining in its strength- This speaks of His transcendent glory. Have you ever accidentally looked at the full sun in the middle of a summer day? Then you can imagine what John saw on this day. Normally looking at the sun shining in its strength will blind a person, but John was supernaturally enabled to gaze at the Son like the sun and not be blinded. Though he was not blinded, he clearly was overwhelmed by what he heard and saw, for in the next verse he fell at Jesus' feet!

Matthew 17:2 And He was transfigured before them; and **His face shone like the sun**, and His garments became as white as light.

MacDonald - Combining all these thoughts, we see Christ in all His perfections as supremely qualified to judge the seven churches. Later in the book He will judge His foes, but "judgment (must) begin at the house of God" (1 Pet. 4:17). Note, however, that it is a different kind of judgment in each case. The churches are judged with the purpose of purification and reward, the world with the purpose of punishment.

Wikipedia describes the dangerous practice of **Sungazing** which is a bit ironic for the most dangerous thing to do in all eternity is to fail to gaze at (and believe) the Son. Not only is **Songazing** a life-saving gaze (by which we are born again) but is continually a life-giving gaze (by which we are progressively sanctified as described in Heb 12:2+)! **C H Spurgeon** was born again by **Songazing** one stormy Sunday morning (when the clouds ironically hid the literal sun!) when he obeyed God's command in Isaiah 45:22 "**Look** (command; Lxx - epistrepho = command to turn around and turn to Christ!) unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." (Read Spurgeon's Testimony)

Sungazing is the dangerous practice of looking directly into the [Sun](#). It is sometimes done as part of a spiritual or religious practice, most often near dawn or dusk.^[1] The human eye is very sensitive, and exposure to direct [sunlight](#) can lead to [solar retinopathy](#), [pterygium](#),^[2] [cataracts](#),^[3] and often blindness.^{[4][5][6]} Studies have shown that even when viewing a [solar eclipse](#) the eye can still be exposed to harmful levels of [ultraviolet](#) radiation.^[7]

QUESTION - [What do the seven stars represent in Revelation?](#)

ANSWER - In Revelation chapters 1—3, "**seven stars**" are referenced four times. There are other "sevens," as well: [seven lampstands](#), [seven spirits](#), and [seven churches](#). Also, the first few chapters of Revelation contain letters from Jesus to seven historical churches in Asia Minor.

In Revelation 1, John is "in the Spirit" and hears "a loud voice like a trumpet" behind him (Rev 1:10). He turns around and sees a vision of the Lord Jesus in His glory. The Lord is standing in the midst of seven golden lampstands, and "in his right hand he held **seven stars**" (Rev 1:16). John falls down at Jesus' feet "as though dead" (Rev 1:17). Jesus then revives John and strengthens him for the task of writing the coming revelation.

The fact that the stars are in Jesus' right hand indicates that they are important and under His authority. The right hand is a sign of strength and control. Jesus explains to John that the "**stars are the angels of the seven churches**" (Revelation 1:20). An "**angel**" is literally a "**messenger**." But that leads us to the question—are these human messengers or heavenly beings?

It could be that every local church has a "guardian angel" who oversees and protects that congregation. Even if that is the case, a better interpretation of the "messengers" of Revelation 1 is that they are the pastors or bishops of the seven churches, symbolized by the lampstands. A pastor is God's "messenger" to the church in that he is responsible to faithfully preach God's Word to them. John's vision shows that each pastor is being held in the Lord's right hand. And, as we learn in John 10:28, no one can snatch them out of Jesus' hand.[GotQuestions.org](#)

Revelation 1:17 When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, **Do not be afraid**; I am the first and the last,

NET Revelation 1:17 When I saw him I fell down at his feet as though I were dead, but he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid! I am the first and the last,

NLT Revelation 1:17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last.

ESV Revelation 1:17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last,

NIV Revelation 1:17 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.

GNT Revelation 1:17 Κα τε εδον α τ ν, πεσα πρ ς το ς π δας α το ς νεκρ ς, κα θηκεν τ ν δεξι ν α το π μ λ γων, Μ φοβο · γ ε μι πρ το ς κα σχατος

KJV Revelation 1:17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

ASV Revelation 1:17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last,

CSB Revelation 1:17 When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. He laid His right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last,

NKJ Revelation 1:17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

NRS Revelation 1:17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he placed his right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last,

YLT Revelation 1:17 And when I saw him, I did fall at his feet as dead, and he placed his right hand upon me, saying to me, 'Be not afraid; I am the First and the Last,

- **I fell:** Eze 1:28 Da 8:18 Da 10:8,9,17-19 Hab 3:16 Mt 17:2-6 Joh 13:23 Joh 21:20
- **And he:** Da 8:18 Da 10:10
- **Do not be afraid:** Ge 15:1 Ex 14:13 20:20 Isa 41:10 Da 10:12 Mt 28:4 Mk 16:5,6 Lu 24:37-39
- **I am:** Rev 1:8,11 Rev 2:8 Rev 22:13 Isa 41:4 Isa 44:6 Isa 48:12

Related Passages:

Ezekiel 1:28 As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.

Habakkuk 3:16 I heard and my inward parts trembled, At the sound my lips quivered. Decay enters my bones, And in my place I tremble. Because I must wait quietly for the day of distress, For the people to arise who will invade us.

Matthew 17:7 (FEARFUL DISCIPLES AT JESUS' TRANSFIGURATION) And Jesus came to them and **touched them** and said, "Get up, and **do not be afraid.**"

JOHN'S OVERWHELMED BY VISION OF OUR AWESOME CHRIST

When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man - As noted above "saw" is a keyword in the Revelation (49x in 42v). John had a view of the risen Christ and fell down in awe, overcome by the vision of the glorified Christ.

THOUGHT - As we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18+), we will also have an increasing awareness of His presence and power. We should grow in our reverence and awe of and for Him. And we will live "fallen at His feet" lives (so to speak), living as bond-servants increasingly submitted to His Word and His Will. Our faith will increase for "faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ." Our obedience will become more and more a delight and less a sense of duty and certainly not a sense of drudgery. In effect we will experientially be obeying Paul's command in Ro 13:14+ "**put on** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no**

provision ([present imperative with a negative](#)) for the flesh in regard to its lusts."

Spurgeon - Blessed position! Does the death alarm you? We are never so much alive as when we are dead at his feet. It matters not what aileth us if we lie at Jesus' feet. Better be dead there than alive anywhere else."

Brian Bell - John in the upper room leaned on Jesus chest (Jn 13:23); but when he saw the glorified Christ, he fell at his feet as a dead man.

Warren Wiersbe - He fell at the Lord's feet as though he were dead! And this is the apostle who leaned on Jesus' breast! (John 13:23) A vision of the exalted Christ can only produce awe and fear (Dan. 10:7–9). We need this attitude of respect today when so many believers speak and act with undue familiarity toward God. John's response illustrates what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:16: "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." John no longer "nestled" next to the Lord's heart, relating to Him as he had done before. (Borrow [Be Victorious](#).)

MacArthur - In stark contrast to the silly, frivolous, false, and boastful claims of many in our own day who claim to have seen God, the reaction of those in Scripture who genuinely saw God was inevitably one of fear. Those brought face-to-face with the blazing, holy glory of the Lord Jesus Christ are terrified, realizing their sinful unworthiness to be in His holy presence. Summarizing the proper response to God's holiness and majesty, the writer of Hebrews exhorts believers to "offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:28–29). (See [Revelation Commentary](#))

Trench "This falling, as is evident, is no voluntary act of homage on the part of St. John, but an involuntary expression of the effect produced upon him by that awful vision which he saw....The unholy, and all flesh is such, cannot endure immediate contact with the holy, the human with the divine. ...The beloved disciple, who looked upon, and whose hands had handled, the Word of life (1 John 1:1), who had lain in his Lord's bosom in the days of his flesh, could as little as any other endure the revelation of his majesty, or do without that 'Fear not,' with which that Lord at once reassures him." (Online "[Commentary on the epistles to the seven churches in Asia : Revelation II. III](#)")

THOUGHT - Compare a similar reaction by mortal men in many Scriptures - Gen. 3:8; 17:3; Exod. 3:6; Num. 16:22; 22:31; Josh. 5:14; Judg. 6:22; 13:6, 20, 22; 1 Chron. 21:20; 2 Chron. 7:3; Job 4:12–15; 42:5, 6; Isai. 6:5; Ezek. 1:28; 3:23; 43:3; 44:4; Dan. 7:15; 8:17; 10:7–9, 15; Tob. 12:16; Matt. 17:6; 28:4, 5; Mark 16:5, 8; Luke 1:12, 29; 2:9; 5:8; Lk 24:5; John 18:6; Acts 9:4; 10:4. Here is the line that always grips my heart - [Surrounded by You glory What will my heart feel?](#) Beloved, He is our Blessed Hope, not our hope so, but our hope sure! We can be confident that one day (soon) we will truly see the very One John saw on this fateful Lord's Day. But unlike John's momentary vision, our vision will be our reality forever and ever. Amen and amen!

This recalls the lyrics of the popular Christian song [I Can Only Imagine](#)..

I can only imagine what it will be like
When I walk, by your side
I can only imagine what my eyes will see
When you face is before me
I can only imagine
I can only imagine

[Surrounded by You glory](#)

What will my heart feel
Will I dance for you Jesus
Or in awe of You be still
Will I stand in your presence
Or to my knees will I fall
Will I sing hallelujah
Will I be able to speak at all
I can only imagine

C H Spurgeon - WE long, sometimes, to behold Christ in his glory. Certainly, it is one of our brightest hopes that we shall see him as he is. Every true believer can say, with Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." But, brethren, as we are now constituted, we are quite unfit for the vision of our Master's glory. It was well that, when he was on earth, he veiled himself in the form of man, for when he did uplift the veil a little, as he did on the mountain of transfiguration, the sight, though it was but a glimpse, was too much for Peter, and James, and John. They were overpowered by it,

they fell asleep even upon the holy mount; and even when they were awake, they knew not what to say. And as we now are, if we could be favoured with a sight of Christ in his glory, it would be too much for us also. It was too much even for John, and we are far inferior to him; our eyes are not as clear and strong as his eyes were; yet he could not endure that wondrous vision. The grey old saint in Patmos had been familiar with his Master more years than most of us have known him; he had laid his head upon the Saviour's bosom,—a privilege accorded to none beside himself; he had stood at the cross, and seen the blood and water flow from that dear heart that loved him so well; and yet, though he was "that disciple whom Jesus loved," when even he had a sight of his glorified Master, he fell at his feet as dead. The full glory of Christ is too much for us to behold while we are here on the earth, so ask not to have it yet, dear friends. By-and-by, when you are fitted for it, and Christ has prepared a place for you, his prayer shall be fulfilled in your happy experience, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." He might say to each one of you, "Not yet, my child, not yet may you see me as I am; your eyes are not yet fit for such a sight as that." ([The Ever-Living Christ](#))

And He placed His right hand on me, saying - Holiness personified touching a sinful man (Saved but still a sinner). Is this not amazing grace indeed! This picture reminds me of the old song "[He Touched Me](#)."

THOUGHT - First, he laid his right hand upon him; and that is where your comfort and mine must always come from,—from the hand that was crucified for us. There streams from that pierced hand a wondrous power that makes the weakest strong. A touch of it proves how near Christ is to us. We know, when he touches us, that he is man as well as God; and the familiar touch, which brings him so consciously near our spirit, makes us glad and joyous, and we become strong again. ([Spurgeon](#))

Trench on the right hand "The right hand being ever contemplated in Scripture as the hand of power alike for God (Deut. 33:2; Isa 48:13; Acts 7:55) and for man (Gen. 48:14; Zech. 3:1; Matt. 5:30), it is only fit that with the right hand of the Lord he should be thus strengthened and revived (cf. Isa 41:10)." (Online "[Commentary on the epistles to the seven churches in Asia : Revelation II, III](#)")

At the **transfiguration** John had fallen on his face

Matthew 17:6-7 When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground and were terrified. And Jesus came to them and **touched them** and said, "**Get up**, ([aorist imperative](#)) and **do not be afraid** ([present imperative with a negative](#))."

Do not be afraid - [Phobeo](#) in [present imperative with a negative](#) was a command to stop an action in process - stop being afraid.

Trench - This same 'Fear not' is uttered on similar occasions to Daniel (Da 10:12), to Peter (Luke 5:1), to the Three at the Transfiguration, of whom John himself was one (Matt. 17:7); to the holy women at the sepulchre (Matt, 28:5; Mark 16:6). Nor is this reassurance confined to words only; the Lord at the same time lays his hand upon him,—something parallel to which goes along with more than one 'Fear not' of those referred to just now (cf. Jer. 1:9; Isai. 6:7); and from the touch of that hand the Seer receives strength again, and is set, no doubt, upon his feet once more (Ezek. 1:28; 2:1, 2; Acts 26:16). (Online "[Commentary on the epistles to the seven churches in Asia : Revelation II, III](#)")

THOUGHT - ARE YOU FEARFUL DEAR SAINT? Jesus would say to you as "he did to John, "Fear not." The Master is saying that to each one of you who believe in him, but especially to such of you as are very faint and weak, and who feel that you are soon to die. He is drawing near to you, sisters and brothers, who are shortly to lay aside the frail tabernacle of this mortal body. The glintings and gleamings of the glory yet to be revealed overcome you; but he whispers in your ear, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead." All these words are full of good cheer to spirits that faint away with expectation of the coming of the King, and to hearts that are ravished with desire for the company of the Best beloved. ([C H Spurgeon](#))

I am the first and the last - **I am** is *ego eimi* (cf Rev 1:8) signifying I am continually. And so with a touch and a word the Lord revived him by revealing Himself as **the First and the Last**, a title of Jehovah (see Isaiah passages below). He is before anything else. This designation of Jesus the Messiah as the first and the last is mentioned three times in Isaiah and doubtless was Scriptures that would have been familiar to John...

Isaiah 41:4 "Who has performed and accomplished it, Calling forth the generations from the beginning? **I, the LORD, am the first, and with the last.** I am He."

Isaiah 44:6 "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: **I am the first and I am the last,** And there is no God besides Me.

Isaiah 48:12 "Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, **I am the first, I am also the last.**

Trench comments "He is from eternity to eternity, so that there is no room for any other. All creation comes forth from Him (John 1:1-3), all creation returns to Him again, as from whom and by whom and to whom are all things." (Online "[Commentary on the](#)

Three times in the Revelation, Rev 1:17 and...

Revelation 2:8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: **The first and the last**, who was dead, and has come to life, says this:

Revelation 22:13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, **the first and the last**, the beginning and the end."

Triumphant "I Ams" in the Book of Revelation

- "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending" (Revelation 1:8).
 - "I am the first and the last" (Revelation 1:17).
 - "I am alive forevermore" (Revelation 1:18).
 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end." (Revelation 21:6).
 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." " (Revelation 22:13).
 - "I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." " (Revelation 22:16)
-

Vance Havner - The First and the Last

"Fear not; I am the first and the last." Rev. 1:17

Why should I fear? He is the alpha and omega, the author and finisher, the first and the last. He was here before there was any fear and he will be here when all fear has passed away!

Before there was a universe he saw everything from the beginning. If I could stand for five minutes at his vantage point and see the entire scheme of things as he sees it, how absurd would be my dreads, how ridiculous my fears and tears! But I see only this mixed and muddled present. I snatch these hours out of the pattern of the ages and of course there are ragged edges and loose ends, and things don't seem to make sense. Like jerking a text out of its context I tear this leaf of today out of the book of eternity and wonder why it looks so incomplete. He sees it all and if I could see it all I would not fear.

But why should I fear anyway? He has told me that there is nothing to fear and he knows. Can't I take his Word for it? He has overcome pain and sorrow and fear and death: he will outlast them all. My life is in union with Christ in God and I shall outlast all of life's pressures. We think of ourselves as transient and these things as permanent but really they are but transient and we are eternal! I am identified with him: "To live is Christ"... and even to die is gain! What is there to fear?

Charles Roll on "The first and the last" - Great comfort is to be derived from Christ's claiming to be the First and the Last. In this capacity He outlives all idolatrous opposition and all iniquitous oppression. They who inflict penalties on His people and imprison His servants and saints must needs succumb to His enduring sovereignty. So this title is definitely directed to help and hearten John in his banishment. He proves that his Lord and Master is wholly familiar with the pressure of circumstances to which he has been subjected because of his witness. Why be afraid when the almighty One says, "Fear not; I Am the first and the last." Why fear sin? The sinless One atones adequately. Why fear life? The living One lives and loves abidingly. Why fear death? The risen deathless One ascends triumphantly. Why fear the beyond? The exalted One assures convincingly. Why fear the ages? The ageless One administers immortally. Why fear foes? The enthroned One rules and reigns eternally. Why fear defects? The spotless One avails perfectly. Yea, verily, we are altogether accepted in the Beloved, everlastingly. Christ's name and fame as the First and the Last cover the whole wide range of realism; indicating that He is the Sum and Substance from start to finish, the Fountain and Fullness from spring to sea, the Origin and Objective from gateway to goal, yea, the Framer in priority and Finisher in finality of all things. We need our thoughts of Him to be enlarged, expanded, and exalted, until He fills and thrills our hearts with loftier conceptions of His transcendent glory. We should resolve to take a more attentive look at His lofty lordship as Son of man, recall afresh that this dignified Lover "loved us and loosed us from our sins by His own blood," and then learn anew to admire and adore His intrinsic loveliness, by virtue of which we shall long to live and labor for Him alone. If we rate His love highly, we shall be stirred to ardent activity, our gratitude will grow deeper, our devotion stronger, and our loyalty firmer. (Names and Titles of Jesus Christ)

Look! ye saints, the sight is glorious,
See the Man of Sorrows now,
From the fight returned victorious:
Every knee to Him shall bow.
Crown Him! Crown Him!
Crowns become the Victor's brow.

A well-known minister was in his study writing an Easter sermon when the thought gripped him that his Lord was living. He jumped up excitedly and paced the floor repeating to himself, "Why Christ is alive, His ashes are warm, He is not the great 'I was,' He is the great 'I am.' " He is not only a fact, but a living fact. Glorious truth of Easter Day!

THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND - A RENOWNED violinist announced before a concert that he would play one of the world's most expensive violins. He played the first composition flawlessly, and the audience was thrilled at the performance. After taking his bows, the musician suddenly smashed the instrument, completely demolishing it, as the audience watched in horror.

The violinist explained that he had been playing a cheap violin, and then, picking up the expensive instrument, he drew the bow across the strings. The sound was beautiful, but most of the people couldn't tell any difference between the music from the expensive violin and the cheap one. The quality of the instrument was secondary to the skill of the violinist.

It's something like that in our service for the Lord. The Master can take ordinary instruments like us and produce beautiful music from our lives. The results of our service depends not so much on us as it does on Him. The apostle Paul said that "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise" (1 Corinthians 1:27). God did so "that no flesh should glory in His presence" (v. 29).

Like that cheap violin, we can be instruments in the Master's hands to declare the beauty of the Lord and to bless others.—R W DeHaan

THOUGHT - BELOVED, IS YOUR LIFE "OUT OF TUNE" THEN LET THE MASTER TOUCH YOUR LIFE LIKE HE DID JOHN!

Play Wayne Watson's [Touch of the Master's Hand](#)

This song seems to be based on the writing by Myra 'Brooks' Welch

The Touch of the Masters Hand

Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
thought it scarcely worth his while to waste much time on the old violin,
but held it up with a smile; "What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,
"Who'll start the bidding for me?" "A dollar, a dollar"; then two! "Only
two? Two dollars, and who'll make it three? Three dollars, once; three
dollars twice; going for three.." But no, from the room, far back, a
gray-haired man came forward and picked up the bow; Then, wiping the dust
from the old violin, and tightening the loose strings, he played a melody
pure and sweet as caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer, with a voice that was quiet and low,
said; "What am I bid for the old violin?" And he held it up with the bow.
A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two? Two thousand! And who'll make
it three? Three thousand, once, three thousand, twice, and going and
gone," said he. The people cheered, but some of them cried, "We do not
quite understand what changed its worth." Swift came the reply: "The touch
of a master's hand."

And many a man with life out of tune, and battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd, much like the old violin, A
"mess of pottage," a glass of wine; a game - and he travels on. "He is
going" once, and "going twice, He's going and almost gone." But the Master
comes, and the foolish crowd never can quite understand the worth of a soul
and the change that's wrought by the touch of the Master's hand.

Myra 'Brooks' Welch

Then he placed his right hand on me and said, "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last." Revelation 1:17

Today's Scripture & Insight: Revelation 1:9–18

It was just a touch, but it made all the difference to Colin. As his small team was preparing to do charitable work in a region known for hostility to believers in Jesus, his stress level began to rise. When he shared his worries with a teammate, his friend stopped, placed his hand on his shoulder, and shared a few encouraging words with him. Colin now looks back on that brief touch as a turning point, a powerful reminder of the simple truth that God was with him.

John, the close friend and disciple of Jesus, had been banished to the desolate island of Patmos for preaching the gospel, when he heard "a loud voice like a trumpet" (Revelation 1:10). That startling event was followed by a vision of the Lord Himself, and John "fell at his feet as though dead." But in that frightening moment, he received comfort and courage. John wrote, "He placed his right hand on me and said, 'Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last'" (v. 17).

God takes us out of our comfort zone to show us new things, to stretch us, to help us grow. But He also brings the courage and comfort to go through every situation. He won't leave us alone in our trials. He has everything under control. He has us in His hands.
By: Tim Gustafson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

How is God taking you out of your comfort zone? What friends has He given you for support and comfort?

Jesus, help me recognize Your presence and Your touch in the midst of things that frighten me.

Revelation 1:18 and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

NET Revelation 1:18 and the one who lives! I was dead, but look, now I am alive— forever and ever— and I hold the keys of death and of Hades!

NLT Revelation 1:18 I am the living one. I died, but look-- I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.

ESV Revelation 1:18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

NIV Revelation 1:18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

GNT Revelation 1:18 καὶ ζῶ, καὶ γένετον νεκρὸς καὶ ὁ ζῶ ἐμὲς τοῦ αἰῶνος τῶν αἰώνων καὶ ἔχω τὰς κλεῖς τοῦ θανάτου καὶ τοῦ θανάτου.

KJV Revelation 1:18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

ASV Revelation 1:18 and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

CSB Revelation 1:18 and the Living One. I was dead, but look-- I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades.

NKJ Revelation 1:18 "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

NRS Revelation 1:18 and the living one. I was dead, and see, I am alive forever and ever; and I have the keys of Death and of Hades.

YLT Revelation 1:18 and he who is living, and I did become dead, and, lo, I am living to the ages of the ages. Amen! and I have the keys of the hades and of the death.

- **the living One**; Job 19:25 Ps 18:46 Joh 14:19 Ro 6:9 2Co 13:4 Ga 2:20 Col 3:3 Heb 7:25
- **and I was dead**: Ro 14:8,9 2Co 5:14,15 Heb 1:3 Heb 12:2
- **behold, I am alive forevermore**: Rev 4:9 Rev 5:14 Heb 7:16,25
- **the keys**: Rev 3:7 Rev 9:1 Rev 20:1,2,14 Ps 68:20 Isa 22:22 Mt 16:19

A LIFE AND DEATH VERSE

And the living (zao) One - To His touch, Jesus added His Word. **Living** is in the present tense, continuously living. But notice the paradox for the next phrase says the ever living one died. He died once that we might not have to die eternally. He death made possible our new life in Him.

Living God - 28v - Deut. 5:26; Jos. 3:10; 1 Sam. 17:26; 1 Sam. 17:36; 2 Ki. 19:4; 2 Ki. 19:16; Ps. 42:2; Ps. 84:2; Isa. 37:4; Isa. 37:17; Jer. 10:10; Jer. 23:36; Dan. 6:20; Dan. 6:26; Hos. 1:10; Matt. 16:16; Matt. 26:63; Acts 14:15; Rom. 9:26; 2 Co. 3:3; 2 Co. 6:16; 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Tim. 4:10; Heb. 3:12; Heb. 9:14; Heb. 10:31; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 7:2

Job declares "As for me, **I know that my Redeemer lives**, And at the last He will take His stand on the earth." Play "[I Know My Redeemer Lives](#)."

And I was dead - This speaks of His crucifixion.

Paul writes "For if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. (Romans 14:8; 9)

Behold (idou) I am alive (zao - present tense) **forevermore** - **Behold** is a command to "**look**, now I am alive— forever and ever!" Christ is alive in a glorified body. John has nothing to fear. Jesus speaks of His resurrection to which the writer of Hebrews would say "Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." (Hebrews 7:25).

John 11:25-26 - Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

And I have the keys of death and of Hades (hades) - **Keys** open and lock and Jesus has both. Death is the condition and Hades speaks of place where the dead sinners reside today. Jesus has the authority and control over both death and Hades and is able to raise the dead and to judge those who are raised "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son." (John 5:22+) MacArthur adds "Jesus Christ has the authority to decide who dies and who lives; He controls life and death."

Warren Wiersbe - At the very beginning of this book, Jesus presented Himself to His people in majestic glory. What the church needs today is a new awareness of Christ and His glory. We need to see Him "high and lifted up" (Isa. 6:1). There is a dangerous absence of awe and worship in our assemblies today. We are boasting about standing on our own feet, instead of breaking and falling at His feet. For years, [Evan Roberts](#) prayed, "Bend me! Bend me!" and when God answered, the great Welsh Revival resulted. (Borrow [Be Victorious](#))

Guzik - Jesus is the one who has the keys of Hades and of Death. Some imagine that the devil is somehow the "lord of Hell." Some imagine that the devil has authority or power to determine life or death. Clearly, they are wrong, for only Jesus holds the keys of Hades and of Death. We can trust that Jesus never lets the devil borrow the keys.

Hades (86) (hades) is the transliteration of the Greek word **Hades** (from **a** = negative + **eido** = to see) literally means "not seen" or "unseen". Usually in the NT as the temporary underworld prison where the souls of the ungodly await the judgment. 10v - Matt. 11:23; Matt. 16:18; Lk. 10:15; Lk. 16:23; Acts 2:27; Acts 2:31; Rev. 1:18; Rev. 6:8; Rev. 20:13; Rev. 20:14

Revelation 6:8 I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.

Revelation 20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.

Revelation 20:14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

Gotquestions on **Hades** - In the Hebrew Scriptures, the word used to describe the realm of the dead is *sheol*. It simply means "the place of the dead" or "the place of departed souls/spirits." The New Testament Greek equivalent to *sheol* is *hades*, which is also a general reference to "the place of the dead." The Greek word *gehenna* is used in the New Testament for "hell" and is derived from the Hebrew word *hinnom*. Other Scriptures in the New Testament indicated that sheol/hades is a temporary place where souls are kept as they await the final resurrection. The souls of the righteous, at death, go directly into the presence of God—the part of sheol

called “heaven,” “paradise,” or “Abraham’s bosom” (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23) ([What is the difference between Sheol, Hades, Hell, the lake of fire, Paradise, and Abraham’s bosom? | GotQuestions.org](#))

Warren Wiersbe Summarizes Why Study Revelation

It is a Christ-centered book. To be sure, all Scripture speaks of the Saviour; but the Book of Revelation especially magnifies the greatness and glory of Jesus Christ. The book is, after all, the revelation of Jesus Christ and not simply the revelation of future events.

It is an “open” book. John was told not to seal the book (Rev. 22:10) because God’s people need the message it contains. Revelation can be understood, despite the fact that it contains mysteries that may never be comprehended until we meet at the throne of God. John sent the book to the seven churches of Asia Minor with the expectation that, when it was read aloud by the messengers, the listening saints would understand enough of its truths so as to be greatly encouraged in their own difficult situations.

It is a book filled with symbols. Biblical symbols are timeless in their message and limitless in their content. For instance, the symbol of “Babylon” originates in Genesis 10–11, and its meaning grows as you trace it through Scripture, climaxing with Revelation 17–18. The same is true of the symbols of “the Lamb” and “the bride.” It is exciting to seek to penetrate deeper into the rich meanings that are conveyed by these symbols.

It is a book of prophecy. This is definitely stated in Revelation 1:3; 22:7, 10, 18–19; note also 10:11. The letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor dealt with immediate needs in those assemblies, needs that are still with us in churches today; but the rest of the book is devoted almost entirely to prophetic revelations. It was by seeing the victorious Christ presented that the persecuted Christians found encouragement for their difficult task of witnessing. When you have assurance for the future, you have stability in the present. John himself was suffering under the hand of Rome (Rev. 1:9), so the book was born out of affliction.

It is a book with a blessing. We have already noted the promise in Revelation 1:3, as well as the six other “beatitudes” scattered throughout the book. It is not enough simply to hear (or read) the book; we must respond to its message from the heart. We must take the message personally and say a believing “Amen!” to what it says. (Note the many “Amens” in the book: Rev. 1:6–7, 18; 3:14; 5:14; 7:12; 19:4; 22:20–21.)

It is a relevant book. What John wrote about would “shortly come to pass” (Rev. 1:1) because “the time is at hand” (Rev. 1:3). (note also Rev. 22:7, 10, 12, 20.) The word shortly does not mean “soon” or “immediately,” but “quickly, swiftly.” God does not measure time as we do (2 Peter 3:1–10). No one knows when our Lord shall return; but when He begins to open the seals of the scroll (Rev. 6:1ff), events will occur with speed and without interruption.

It is a majestic book. Revelation is the book of “the throne,” for the word throne is found forty-six times throughout. This book magnifies the sovereignty of God. Christ is presented in His glory and dominion!

It is a universal book. John saw nations and peoples (Rev. 10:11; 11:9; 17:15) as part of God’s program. He also saw the throne room of heaven and heard voices from the ends of the universe!

It is a climactic book. Revelation is the climax of the Bible. All that began in Genesis will be completed and fulfilled in keeping with God’s sovereign will. He is “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending” (Rev. 1:8). What God starts, He finishes!

But before visiting the throne room of heaven, we must pause to listen to “the Man among the lampstands” as He reveals the personal needs in our churches and in our own hearts. “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches!” (Borrow [Be Victorious](#))

QUESTION - [What are the keys of death \(Revelation 1:18\)?](#)

ANSWER - In Revelation 1:18 Jesus says, “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.” Possessing the “keys of death” means that the risen Christ has control and authority over death. In John 10:17–18, Jesus says, “The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.” When Jesus died, He died according to His own timing, when He “gave up his spirit” (John 19:30). Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was already dead (Mark 15:44). Jesus, who has the authority over death, had the unique power to

give up His spirit and to rise from the dead. Moreover, He has the authority to release His followers from death in order that they may be with Him forever.

Think of the concept of giving someone “the key to the city.” This key is sometimes a large, cartoonish key that fits no lock but is symbolic of an honor bestowed. Someone given “a key to the city” is considered welcome and honored within that city. The Bible frequently speaks of keys as representing control or authority over something or someone. This concept makes sense; to possess a master key to a building is to have the authority to open any of its doors and enter any room.

Isaiah 37:2 speaks of Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, an honorable man sent on an important errand. In chapter 22, it was written that Eliakim would be given authority and that God would “place on his shoulder the key to the house of David.” By the “key to the house of David,” it is meant that the Lord would place Eliakim in a position of authority. Later, Eliakim becomes the governor of the palace in Jerusalem.

In Revelation 9:1–2, an angel is given a key to, or control over, the [bottomless pit](#), and he uses the key to open that pit. Later, an angel is seen locking things in the bottomless pit (20:1–3).

Eternal life through Jesus Christ is the blessed assurance John describes in 1 John 5:6–13. Jesus having the keys of death means He has the power to release from death those who receive the gift of salvation He offers. [GotQuestions.org](#)

David Jeremiah - LISTEN TO JESUS REVELATION 1:17–18

I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore.

Who is Jesus? He's the Son of God and the Son of Man. He is the God-man and the man-God. He is Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. He is God walking around in a body. He is God forever enthroned in heaven now at the right hand of the Father. Jesus Christ is God. **One of the greatest illustrations of who Christ is and why we should listen to His words is found in the prologue of the Book of Revelation.** John was in exile on the Isle of Patmos, and he saw this One to Whom we are appealing and said, “*When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen’*” (Revelation 1:17–18). There is no one like Jesus Christ. He is the only one who has ever lived or ever will live who has a true grasp of the future. Because the Lord Jesus Christ as God lives in the time about which He speaks, He views all of time as if it were the present. He is the Eternal One, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. (Borrow [Sanctuary : finding moments of refuge in the presence of God](#))

He Was Dead But Now Lives

I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. — Revelation 1:18

Today's Scripture: Luke 24:1-12

Many years ago I was scheduled to speak at a Bible conference in Pennsylvania. A few days before it was to begin, a member of the conference committee telephoned my office. Someone in Pennsylvania had received a newspaper clipping from a Michigan paper reporting my death. The news had spread all over the area, and the conference representative wanted to verify the report so he could get another speaker in my place. The reason for all the confusion was the death of someone else with the same last name. Some people had jumped to the conclusion that the report was about me.

When I arrived at the conference, I found a very curious crowd assembled. I chose Revelation 1:18 for my text and said, “The reports you heard about my death were true. I did die, but I am now here, risen from the dead, and alive forevermore.” While Revelation 1:18 applies first of all to the death and resurrection of Jesus, it reminds me of what has happened to every member of the body of Christ. We were spiritually dead in sins (Eph. 2:1), but we were also spiritually raised (v.5). Every Christian can say, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal. 2:20).

Is this your testimony too? —M. R. De Haan, M.D. (founder of RBC Ministries) ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Dying with Jesus, by death reckoned mine,
Living with Jesus, a new life divine,
Looking to Jesus till glory doth shine,
Moment by moment, O Lord, I am Thine.
—Whittle

Because Christ lives in us, we will live with Him forever.

Revelation 1:19 "Therefore **write** the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things.

NET Revelation 1:19 Therefore write what you saw, what is, and what will be after these things.

NLT Revelation 1:19 "Write down what you have seen-- both the things that are now happening and the things that will happen.

ESV Revelation 1:19 Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this.

NIV Revelation 1:19 "Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.

GNT Revelation 1:19 γρ ψον ο ν ε δες κα ε σ ν κα μ λλει γεν σθαι μετ τα τα.

KJV Revelation 1:19 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

ASV Revelation 1:19 Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter;

CSB Revelation 1:19 Therefore write what you have seen, what is, and what will take place after this.

NKJ Revelation 1:19 "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

NRS Revelation 1:19 Now write what you have seen, what is, and what is to take place after this.

YLT Revelation 1:19 'Write the things that thou hast seen, and the things that are, and the things that are about to come after these things;

- **the things:** Rev 1:11,12-20
- **and the things which are:** Rev 2:1-3:22
- **and the things which shall be:** Rev 4:1-22:21

THE PLAN OF THE REVELATION

This verse is the key that opens the door to the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Notice three sets of "the things."

Therefore write - This is the second command ([aorist imperative](#)) for John to write.

The things which you have seen - John refers to the glorified Christ he has just seen in Revelation 1

And the things which are - This refers to the seven letters to the churches which were in existence when he wrote the book and are identified in Revelation 2-3

And the things which will take place after these things- The things that are yet future in Revelation 4-22. Notice the time phrase **after these things** in Rev 4:1. Notice that there is no mention of a church or churches after Revelation 2-3, an interesting thought to ponder.

Strauss writes "These three divisions are clear and they do not overlap. Each division is complete in itself and distinct from the other two. This is God's own division of the book. Hold fast to it, and you cannot go astray in your quest to understand its meaning. Do not at any time lift events from one division and attempt to place them in another. (Borrow [The Book of the Revelation: Outlined Studies](#))

- Chapter 1—The Unveiling of His Person (His Glory)
- Chapters 2 and 3—The Utterances of His Purpose (His Grace)
- Chapters 4-22—The Unfolding of His Power (His Government)

W A Criswell, commenting on the threefold outline asks "Is there a key to this book from God? Does God have an analysis of it? Does God have an interpretation? Is there something from heaven by which we can study the meaning of these visions? Yes, there is. When I was a student in school, I remember some lecturers saying that there was a key to the interpretation and the meaning of

the Revelation, possessed in ancient times, but that key has been lost and we do not possess it today. Therefore, those lecturers concluded, the book is an enigma to us. I have learned just the opposite of that as I have studied the book. The same key that those first and primitive Christians had in the Roman province of Asia to whom the letters were addressed, we have today; because the key is written here in the first chapter of the book itself. This is the grand foundation. This is the great starting point. This is the key to the meaning of this vast outline of God's future.

Revelation 1:20 "As for 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 are the seven churches."

NET Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

NLT Revelation 1:20 This is the meaning of the mystery of the seven stars you saw in my right hand and the seven gold lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

ESV Revelation 1:20 As for the mystery of the seven stars that 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 are the seven churches.

NIV Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

GNT Revelation 1:20 τ μυστ ριον τ ν πτ στ ρων ο ς ε δε ς π τ ς δε ξι ς μου κα τ ς πτ λυχν ας τ ς χρυσ ς· ο πτ στ ρες γ γελοι τ ν πτ κκλησι ν ε σιν κα α λυχν αι α πτ πτ κκλησ αι ε σ ν.

KJV Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

ASV Revelation 1:20 the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven churches.

CSB Revelation 1:20 The secret of the seven stars you saw in My right hand and of the seven gold lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

NKJ 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.

NRS Revelation 1:20 As for the mystery of the seven stars that 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 are the seven churches.

YLT Revelation 1:20 the secret of the seven stars that thou hast seen upon my right hand, and the seven golden lamp-stands: the seven stars are messengers of the seven assemblies, and the seven lamp-stands that thou hast seen are seven assemblies.

- mystery: Mt 13:11 Lu 8:10
- the seven stars: Rev 1:13,16
- the seven golden: Rev 1:12
- **The seven stars:** Rev 2:1,8,12,18 3:1,7,14 Mal 2:7
- and the: Zec 4:2 Mt 5:15,16 Php 2:15,16 1Ti 3:14-16

THE MYSTERY

As for the mystery ([musterion](#)) of the seven ([hepta](#)) stars which you saw in My right hand - NET = "The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and the seven golden lampstands is this" Don't miss the important truth in this passage regarding **mystery**. What does John say about **mystery**? In other words does he use the word like we commonly do in secular writings to describe that which is concealed or does he use it to describe what is revealed? Revealed of course. So what does that teach us about the definition of "**mystery**?" It is something previously hidden which has now been revealed. **Mystery** occurs 4 times in the Revelation - Rev. 1:20; Rev. 10:7; Rev. 17:5; Rev. 17:7.

Walvoord points out that "In Revelation a symbol of vision is often presented first, and then its interpretation is given. So here the seven stars were declared to be the angels or messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches themselves. The Book of Revelation, instead of being a hopeless jumble of symbolic vision, is a carefully written record of what John saw and heard, with frequent explanations of its theological and practical meanings." (See [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

Notice that the number seven occurs 11 times in Revelation 1 including 6 times in Rev 1:20. - Rev. 1:4; Rev. 1:11; Rev. 1:12; Rev. 1:16; Rev. 1:20

And the seven ([hepta](#)) golden lampstands ([luchnia](#)) - These are the seven churches which were to be light-bearers, a fitting "job description" of local **churches**, which are supposed to shine for God amid the darkness of this world.

The seven ([hepta](#)) stars are the angels ([aggelos/angelos](#)) of the seven ([hepta](#)) churches ([ekklesia](#)) - The 3 considerations are (1) literal angels, (2) messengers sent to John and (3) leaders of the churches who served as messengers (pastors, elders, etc). Most writers favor the third option.

Guzik - We note that each church had its own angel, and Jesus held these angels in His hand. Some believe these angels are the pastors of these seven churches. This idea is based on a literal understanding of the ancient Greek word translated angel, *aggelos*. That word literally means "messenger," and certainly pastors are "messengers" to churches. Others think the angels might be "guardian angels" over each congregation. Some suggest that the angels are not literal beings at all, but they just represent the prevailing spirit of each church. There are strengths and weaknesses to any of these interpretations, but we do know that in some way, these angels are representatives of each congregation.

And the seven ([hepta](#)) lampstands ([luchnia](#)) are the seven ([hepta](#)) churches ([ekklesia](#)) - Scripture is the best commentary on Scripture.

Mystery ([3466](#)) **[musterion](#)** from **mustes** = one initiated [as into the Greco-Roman "mystery" religions] from **mueo** = to close or shut) in the NT is a truth never previously known, and a truth which human intellect could never discover, but one which has now been made known by divine revelation. A mystery is a truth which man cannot know by his natural powers, so that if it is known it must be revealed. Scripture uses **[musterion](#)** to indicate truth which was previously unknown but which now has been made known through revelation mediated by God. **[Musterion](#)** in the Bible means those truths which are part of God's plan and can only be understood as He reveals them by His Spirit through His Word. **[Musterion](#)** refers to truth previously hidden, which when revealed, is understood by the believer.

Musterion 4x in the Revelation - Matt. 13:11; Mk. 4:11; Lk. 8:10; Rom. 11:25; Rom. 16:25; 1 Co. 2:7; 1 Co. 4:1; 1 Co. 13:2; 1 Co. 14:2; 1 Co. 15:51; Eph. 1:9; Eph. 3:3; Eph. 3:4; Eph. 3:9; Eph. 5:32; Eph. 6:19; Col. 1:26; Col. 1:27; Col. 2:2; Col. 4:3; 2 Thess. 2:7; 1 Tim. 3:9; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 1:20; Rev. 10:7; Rev. 17:5; Rev. 17:7

ILLUSTRATION - A father was attempting to read his Sunday paper. His little girl, as small children do, was constantly interrupting him and asking him questions. Finally, not wishing to be disturbed by his little girl any longer, he cut up a map of the world, gave it to her, and told her to put it together. He thought this would keep her busy for some time. However, in just a few minutes she returned with the map and every piece was in the right place. The father was very much surprised and said: "How in the world did you put this puzzle together so quickly? You don't know anything about geography." The little girl replied, "Well, daddy, there was a picture of Jesus on the other side, and I knew when I had Jesus in the right place, the whole world would be all right." What a truth! That is what John is trying to do here at the very start of the book of Revelation. He is trying to get us to see Jesus as He really is! He is not the humble man of Galilee any longer. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lord and He deserves to be worshiped, served and glorified. When He is in the right place, the whole world will be all right. Until then, the world will be out of balance and will continue to wobble under the affects of sin and rebellion, until Jesus comes and sets it right.

QUESTION - [Are the “angels” of the churches in Revelation 1-3 real angels, or are they human messengers?](#)

ANSWER - In Revelation 1, John the apostle sees the glorified Christ in a vision. Jesus is standing among seven golden lampstands. In His hand, Jesus holds seven stars (Revelation 1:13, 16). In Rev 1:20 Jesus explains, “The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.”

The meaning of the lampstands is plain. They represent the seven churches of Asia Minor. We know that a lampstand is intended to give light. The people of God, both as individuals and as congregations, are to be bearers of light. Jesus told His followers that they were the “light of the world” (Matthew 5:14). Paul told the church in Philippi that they were “seen as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:15). Since Jesus is the “true light” of the world (John 1:9), it makes sense that He is standing “among the lampstands” (Revelation 1:13)—the light shed abroad by the churches comes from Him. The stars held in Jesus’ hand are also light-bearers.

However, the meaning of the angels is less plain. The Greek word *angelos* simply meant “messenger”; usually, the word was used for supernatural “messengers” from God. However, sometimes the word was applied to human messengers of God’s Word: John the Baptist is called an “*angelos*” in Matthew 11:10.

Some scholars interpret the angels of Revelation 1:20 as heavenly beings. Others view them as the human messengers who bore John’s letter. Others identify them as those who actually read the message to the congregations, that is, church leaders such as pastors, elders, or bishops. A pastor of a church functions as a “messenger” for God, delivering God’s Word to the congregation.

If the angels of the seven churches are heavenly beings, then that would perhaps mean that each church had a [guardian angel](#)” or some type of heavenly being associated with each congregation. There is a difficulty with this interpretation. John was writing the letters to them. Why should he write letters to angels—were the letters going to be read to the congregations by celestial beings? That is highly doubtful.

A better view is that the “angels” are envoys sent to John During the time that the apostle was exiled on the Isle of [Patmos](#), it is possible that local congregations sent delegates to him to inquire of his condition. These delegates could be the “angels” or “messengers” that were entrusted with the letters on their return trip.

Probably the best interpretation, however, is that the seven angels are the human leaders—the bishops, elders, or pastors—in the churches. Jesus used the apostle John to write messages addressed to seven notable church leaders, and these leaders would then share the messages with the rest of the church. The fact that the “stars” are held in Jesus’ “right hand” is significant. The Lord Himself protects, upholds, and guides the leaders of the church with His strength and wisdom. [GotQuestions.org](#)