

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Revelation: 1:1-6 | Session 2 | Notes

The Revelation of Jesus Christ (or, the unveiling of Jesus Christ) was given by God, via Jesus > Angel > John to show his servants things which will transpire rapidly once they begin. The book is addressed to: His (Jesus's) **servants** (See notes from session 1 for a discussion on **servants**). The author is: **John**. We assume it was the apostle John, but the text does not state which John, maybe it is best to just say it was *John on Patmos*.

Verse 2—

John **bare record** (Greek verb: *martureo*) or, *gave a witness or testimony* (Greek noun: *marturia*) **of Jesus Christ**. It is unclear, but perhaps by testimony he means Jesus's own prophetic teaching while on earth. **All the things that he** (John) **saw**¹ This too is ambiguous, but probably the things he saw are those things represented in vision (Later we will see it is a vision of *The Lord's Day*) which came, as noted above, from God, to Jesus, to the Angel, to John.

Verse 3—

Blessed is he that readeth (The Greek word *anaginosko*) normally to *read out loud*. The one who *reads it out loud* is **blessed**, a word which is from a Greek word that means **happy and happier**. This word is used seven times in The Revelation. Some might think it odd that a book about judgment would use the word *happy* but each time it refers to those who will not face the wrath of judgment of the Tribulation, as we will see. And, since the dispensation of the Tribulation will be based on the Law, notice how many of the **blessed** passages are connected with works (not grace).

Blessed is he that readeth... 1:3

Blessed those which die in the Lord... 14:13

Blessed is he that watcheth... 16:15

Blessed are they which are called... 19:9

Blessed...is he that hath part in the first resurrection... 20:6

Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy...22:7

Blessed are they that do his commandments... 22:14

Not only is the reader blessed, but also, **they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things...written**. The word *keep* is *tereo* which is also translated "hold fast" "observe" "take care of." It doesn't mean *keep (or ponder) those things in your heart*, that is a different

¹ Notice the past tense, **saw**; he is writing this introduction last.

word, *suntero* (as in Luke 2.19, *But Mary kept all these things...*). We have to conclude this is not a promise given to us directly, since we cannot **keep** this prophecy and as we will see (and have already noted above) it is works based and contrary to grace.

It is possible that the blessing or happiness for the reader applies to all in every dispensation who read this **prophecy** of future events regarding *the revelation of Jesus Christ*, but not necessarily. The word **prophecy** is used seven times in The Revelation. The number seven always denotes *spiritual perfection* (*blessed* is also found seven times). Since every word of Scripture is inspired there is undoubtedly a reason for *the sevens*; perhaps it is to point us to the Holy Spirit who inspires His complete Word as the one who will bring these prophecies completely to life?

For the time is at hand. The word **time** is more clearly translated as **season**. **Time** here is the Greek word *Kairos* which is often translated **season**. It is more of a broad word, whereas John could have used the Greek word *chronos* from which we get our word, Chronometer (or, a watch/timepiece). In Acts 1:7 we see both words used, *chronos* and *Kairos*.

What a blessing it would be if we always were in a state of mind that the season of the Lord's return is near. Walking in the expectation of Him returning as King of kings and Lord of lords should be something that influences our daily living. The apostle Paul instructs how we should live as believers in a season of expectation (Titus 2:12,13).

Verses 4,5—

Who is **John** testifying to: **the seven churches which are in Asia**? Last week we proposed that whenever the word **church(es)** (*ekklesia* which means assemblies) is used we have to make an interpretation. What kind of an assembly? Since the body of Christ is not in the book of Revelation (my assumption), **the seven assemblies** (seven being the *number of perfection* in Scripture) likely represent all of Israel. We don't know what kind of assemblies since, at this point in the book, we have no other information about them.

Let's not jump the gun and read into (eisegesis) the seven assemblies. We will be able to better identify them when we get to chapters 2 and 3. All that we know about these seven assemblies, as of verse 4, is that, 1) They are in Asia which in the Bible is modern day Türkiye (formerly Turkey). 2) When the prophecies of this book are fulfilled (in the future), these assemblies will be on earth. We must remember The Revelation is a prophecy of future events (1:3). Therefore, when we look at these assemblies more closely in chapters two and three, we have to be careful to not separate them from the rest of the prophecy. This entire book is one Revelation.

We will see that the Revelation concerns *The Day of the Lord* (or, The Tribulation), which during that time, there will be assemblies of people who will need certain instruction on how to live *in That Day*. In our dispensation of Grace, we have letters (or epistles) from the apostle Paul in which we develop our doctrine for Christian living. During the Tribulation, these seven churches

living again under the Law, will receive their own prophetic doctrine in seven epistles on how to live by the Law during the Day of the Lord.

Insight: The Day of the Lord = The Tribulation.

Old Testament Names:

- ✍ Old Testament most common name for the Great Tribulation is “The Day of the Lord.”
- ✍ The Great and Terrible Day of the Lord—Joel 2:31
- ✍ The Time of Jacob’s Trouble—Jeremiah 30:7
- ✍ One Week (or, the Seventieth Week of Daniel)—Daniel 9:27
- ✍ The LORD’s Strange Work and Strange Act—Isaiah 28:21
- ✍ The Day of Israel’s Calamity—Deuteronomy 32:35; Obadiah 12-14
- ✍ The Tribulation—Deuteronomy 4:30
- ✍ The Indignation—Isaiah 26:20; Daniel 11:36
- ✍ The Overflowing Scourge—Isaiah 28:15,18
- ✍ The Day of Vengeance—Isaiah 34:8; 35:4; 61:2
- ✍ The Year of Recompense—Isaiah 34:8
- ✍ The Time of Trouble—Daniel 12:1; Zephaniah 1:15
- ✍ The Day of Wrath, Distress, Wasteness, Desolation—Zephaniah 1:15
- ✍ The Day of Darkness, Clouds, Thick Darkness—Zephaniah 1:15; Joel 2:2
- ✍ The Day of The Trumpet, Alarm—Zephaniah 1:16

The New Testament names for the Tribulation:

- ✍ The Day of the Lord—1 Thessalonians 5:2
- ✍ The Wrath of God—Revelation 15:1, 7; 14:10, 19; 16:1
- ✍ The Hour of Trial—Revelation 3:10
- ✍ The Great Day of the Wrath of the Lamb of God—Revelation 6:16,17
- ✍ The Wrath to Come—1 Thessalonians 1:10
- ✍ The Wrath—1 Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 2:22; 7:14
- ✍ The Great Tribulation—Matthew 24:29
- ✍ The Hour of Judgment—Revelation 14:7
- ✍ The Lord’s Day—Revelation 1:10

Verses 4,5 (continued)—

Grace be unto you, and peace from him which is (time present), and which was (time past), and which is to come (forever). In Exodus 3:14,15, *I AM, or Yahweh (LORD)*.

And grace and peace be unto you from...

The seven spirits before the throne. I do not agree this is referring to *The Holy Spirit* as so many claim; If the Holy Spirit is equal with God, how can He be divided into seven? Likewise, the Holy Spirit, being equal with God does not *serve* God. Angels are called both *spirits, and servants* (Hebrews 1:7). Psalm 104:3 states “Who maketh his angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire.” These spirits are mentioned again in 4:5, and *seven angels stand before God in 8:2*. The plain sense is that these are some sort of *servants* (created beings).

And grace and peace be unto you from...Jesus Christ.

Also, in regards to the **seven spirits** for a moment, some say they refer to the Holy Spirit because God the Father, and Jesus Christ are included in this salutation. They believe seven spirits complete the Trinity. In the New Testament Holy Spirit is never included in any salutation which includes the Father and the Son (Romans 1:7; Philemon 3; 2 Peter 1:2).

Therefore, the passage could be read as, **Grace be unto you, and peace from Jehovah, from Jehovah’s servants, And from Jesus Christ.**

At His first coming Jesus humbled himself (Philippians 2:7). At His second coming he is exalted and glorified (Philippians 2:9-11)

The Jesus of The Revelation is: 1) **The Faithful Witness**, Because He is faithful, we can trust this Revelation given Him by the Father. **The first begotten of the dead** since there were others in Scripture who were resurrected, we have to assume they all died again, but Jesus was the first to rise in an immortal body in which many will follow, **and the prince** (Greek: Arkhone=ruler) **of the kings of the earth**, that in all things he might have preeminence (Colossians 1:18). Psalm 89:27,37 uses all of these titles (*Firstborn, higher than kings, faithful witness*).

I have stated the Body of Christ is not found in The Revelation, and yet we have this in verse 5: **Unto him that loved us**, while this sounds like a statement, we would make for us in the body of Christ the **us** is referring to the *seven churches* which at this point I am assuming are Jewish assemblies (vs. 4). Also, God loved the world (John 3:16). Again, the pronoun **us** seems to be specific to the assemblies and to Israel in general. The statement **him that loved us** is true of God’s lovingkindness to Israel (Jeremiah 31:3; Isaiah 54:10). **And washed² us** (that is, those in the seven churches) **from our sins in** (better, **by**) **his own blood**, washing **by blood** is how sins were purged away in the Old Testament.

King David knew God would **wash** him **thoroughly from his iniquity**, and asked God to **wash** him and he **shall be whiter than snow** (Psalm 51:2,7), and because of Judah’s iniquity they needed to be **washed** (Isaiah 1:16,18).

² Modern translations from the critical text have the word *loosed* us or *freed* us.

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We too as believers in Jesus Christ in the body of Christ are *washed* (1 Corinthians 6:11), but things that are similar are not the same. We are washed by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit when we believe by grace through faith (not by works of righteousness; Titus 3:4-7).

Verse 6—

And hath made us kings (as in royalty: 1 Peter 2:9) **and priests unto God**. This is one of the statements that is easy to *read into* (eisegesis). We should ask is this meant for Israel? If so, then we cannot apply it to the body of Christ.

Here are just a few examples from several commentaries where the body of Christ is *read into* this passage because of misinterpreting the pronoun **us**:

“Believers are now a kingdom and priests with the purpose now and forever of serving God.”³

“By virtue of being washed in Christ’s blood, believers become a kingdom (community) of priests...”⁴

“Christians, therefore, are a kingdom, because they are priests...”⁵

“This idea is expressed here by saying that Christ had made us in fact kings and priests; that is, Christians are exalted to the dignity and are invested with the office, implied in these words.”⁶

It is no wonder so many people have difficulty figuring out The Revelation; we are told by authorities from the very beginning of the book that it’s all about us.

Rather, this expression **and hath made us Kings** (denoting royalty; as in 1 Peter 2:9) **and priests unto God and his Father**, is very Jewish, and is addressed to the seven churches (follow the pronouns). John is quoting from Exodus 19:6, referring to Israel. Israel shall be unto God a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. One more thought about **priests**; The office of Priest was hereditary; only those from the line of Aaron were eligible (Exodus 29:9: *“And the Priest’s office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute”*). **Perpetual** means FOREVER. The last I checked my family tree; Aaron was not at the top. Peter quotes the same in his epistle⁷ regarding Israel (1

³ Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, Dallas Theological Seminary. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985. Print.

⁴ Wilkin, Robert N., ed. *The Grace New Testament Commentary*. Denton, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 2010. Print.

⁵ Lange, John Peter et al. *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Revelation*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008. Print.

⁶ Barnes, Albert. [Notes on the New Testament: Revelation](#). Ed. Robert Frew. London: Blackie & Son, 1884–1885. Print.

⁷ Peter’s first epistle is addressed to “The (elect) strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” not to the body of Christ. The only people in the Bible shown to be *elect* is the nation of Israel (See Deuteronomy 7:6; The body of Christ cannot highjack the status of Israel for ourselves. Believers in the body of Christ are not *elect*, we have accepted the gift of salvation by grace through faith.

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Peter 2:9). Christians are not kings, or a kingdom of priests. We are the body of Christ, and we are not in The Revelation.

To him (That is, the Father) be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.