

## Revelation Session Two – Chapter 1

Why focus on Eschatology – we're going to be gone anyway, RIGHT?

### **Positive Reasons to Search it Out**

**Revelation 19:10** - “. . . for the testimony of Jesus is *the spirit of prophecy*”

1. We study it because ***God includes it*** in His Word and we are to study *the whole counsel of God* (Acts 20:27).
2. We study it because it helps us *understand the times* in which we live (**1 Chronicles 12:32** – People from the tribe of Issachar **commended** for “understanding the times”)
3. As we understand our “*times*” better, we are better equipped to share God's truth with others (**1 Peter 3:15**).
4. We take comfort from knowing God's plan from the end to the beginning (**Titus 2:13**)
5. An understanding of eschatology creates a desire for ***holiness*** within us (**1 John 3:2-3**).

### **Negatives**

**Matthew 16:3** – Religious leaders scolded *for not knowing* the “signs of the times”

**Luke 19:44** – Jesus Christ *held Israel accountable to know* when He would come to them (us too)

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## Overview of Chapter One

Vss. 1-3 – Introduction (“to show to His bond servants – that's US!) study it!

Vss. 4-8 – Message to the Seven Churches (expanded in chapters 2-3) (Father, Spirit, Son)

O.T.- Israel God's witnesses to the world

Transition – Jesus the 'Faithful witness'

Church Age – We are His witnesses to the world

End of the Age – (vs. 7) He is coming again

Vss. 9-20 – Vision of Christ in His glory

The Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:3) is addressing His churches. He appears in all His glory. He is Holy – treat Him as such – reverence Him! He is not a baby in a manger - He is the exalted Lord of glory! (John fell at His feet as though dead)

Why are these seven churches chosen? Why not Alexandria, Egypt – or Antioch or even Jerusalem? There is a reason. We will explore that in chapters 2 and 3 beginning next week. Our church here at Christ The Rock will be taking a test. Jesus Christ is the examiner. Will we pass the test – will we meet His standards? Stay tuned.

He is pictured as the High Priest.

The churches are the lamp-stands – not the light itself – but the light-bearers.

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### Gospel of John

Believe (20:31) (100 x's)

Salvation

Prophet (faithful witness)

### Epistles

Assurance (know) (1 Jn 5:13)

Sanctification

Priest

### Revelation

Anticipation (22:20)

Sovereignty

King

**John 20:30-31** – Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may *believe that Jesus is the Christ*, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

**1 John 5:13** – I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may *know that you have* eternal life.

**Revelation 22:20** – He who testifies to these things says, **“Surely I am coming soon.”** Amen. *Come, Lord Jesus!*

### Titles of Christ in chapter One

#### Verse 5

1. “THE FAITHFUL WITNESS” (martyr)
2. “THE FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD”
3. “THE RULER OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH”

#### Verse 8

4. “THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA”
5. the one “WHO WAS, AND IS, AND IS TO COME”
6. “THE ALMIGHTY”

#### Verse 13

7. “THE SON OF MAN”

#### Verse 17

8. “I AM THE FIRST AND THE LAST”

#### Verse 18

9. “THE LIVING ONE”

## Verse 1

Revelation (singular): Apocalypse - “Unveiling” [Daniel sealed until the time of the end (Daniel 8:26)] but Revelation to remain unsealed because the time is at hand (Rev. 22:10).

- The Father gave it to the Son (Jesus revealed) (Mark 13:32-33) [Doctrine of Imminence]
- Rendered it into “signs” (sēmainō)

Hosea 12:10 - “I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets.” (Matthew 12; 13:12-14)

Psa 25:14 “The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.”

Amo 3:7 “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” (see also Daniel 2:28 (10:19); Gal. 1:12)

John 15:15 - “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”

Why does the Holy Spirit use so much symbolism? Why not just speak plainly?

1. Explaining inexpressible things, as Paul when caught up to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:3-4).
2. Symbolism not only relays information but also expresses emotion. (John could have said, a dictator will rule the world in that day but instead describes him as a “beast”)
3. The symbolism in John's day stands the test of time (relatable today as well as then)

**However**, just because types and symbols are used that doesn't mean we interpret through our own imaginations. Biblical symbols are consistent throughout the scripture and as always, we must allow scripture to interpret scripture. We must base our interpretation on the things God has already revealed.

## Verse 2

“who bore record” (martureo: martyr—witness) 44 X's in John's writings (only 25x's rest of N.T.)

## Verse 3

**He who reads** is in the *singular*. (*ho anaginōskōn*). Present active singular articular participle It speaks of one person who reads out loud (lector).

**Those who hear** is in the *plural*. It speaks of many people hearing. Custom of the early church, where attention was given to the public reading of Scripture, which would often be explained. In our modern way of speaking, John might say “Blessed is the pastor who reads and teaches

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Revelation, and blessed is the congregation who hears it.” But most of all, pastor or congregation, **blessed** are those who **keep those things which are written in it**.

“**Keep**” – the exercise of active and strenuous care, rather than of watching over to preserve. No wonder it is so attacked by Satan and so neglected by churches today.

A person cannot keep what they do not possess. It is assumed by these Holy Spirit inspired words that the diligent student will be able to understand and then live out those truths.

**Luke 11:28** – But he said, “**Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!**”

For the time is near [kairos – period of time] . . . (doctrine of Imminence)

**1 Peter 4:7** – The *end of all things is at hand*; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

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**Verse 4** -- *Ephesians 3:9-11* “and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:”

“churches” – local churches with real, visible members, but also churches that are representative of all churches everywhere.

Paul wrote to seven: Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, Thessalonica  
Jesus is going to write to seven others in Asia Minor – modern day Turkey.

**Father**: Him who was, and is, and is to come (Daniel 7:9-10 – **Ancient of Days**)

The “**Everlasting Father**” (**Isaiah 57:15**) “Behold the high and lofty one which inhabits eternity” (Rev 1:8; Exo 3:14; Psa 90:2, Psa 102:25-27; Isa 41:4, Isa 57:15; Mic 5:2; Joh 1:1; Heb 1:10-13)

**The Holy Spirit**: (**Isaiah 11:2**) : Omnipresent (**the 7 Spirits**) fullness, completeness (Rev 3:1, Rev 4:5, Rev 5:6; Zec 3:9, Zec 4:10;)

Isaiah 11:2 -- *And 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 the fear of the LORD.”*

**Verse 5** --

the title of Jesus as **the Faithful witness**:

As John records it in his gospel, chapter 18 verse 37, “Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “**You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.**”

Jesus Christ, God come in human flesh, not only came to die for our sins on the cross but also came to reveal the eternal God to us. As John 14:9 states, “if you've seen me (Jesus said) you've seen the Father.

The English word we translate as “witness” is 'martyr' in the Greek. Jesus was faithful unto death but unlike others who have and will die for their faith, Jesus alone had the power to lay down His life as well as raise it up again (**John 10:18**). As we discussed previously, the Holy Spirit will define types, symbols and other things based on the Old Testament scriptures and how they were used previously. In this case, John is using a title of Christ in chapter one that will be used again in Jesus letter to the church at Laodicea in chapter 3 verse 14. These title of Christ will used again so they are always identifiers of Jesus.

This leads us to His next title in chapter one verse 5, “the **firstborn from the dead**”.

Paul says in **1 Corinthians 15:20-23**, But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. *For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead*. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

There were others raised from the dead before Jesus such as Lazarus and the widow's son in the city of Nain but they were raised only to die again. Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection in the sense He rose from the dead NEVER to die again.

The third title of Jesus in **verse 5** is the '**Ruler of the Kings of the Earth**'. Some of your versions use the word “prince” some use ruler. The original Greek word is 'Archon' which mean the chief or preeminent one. We will see this born out in Revelation 19:16 when Jesus returns as the rider on the white horse with the name written on His thigh which says, “King of Kings and Lord of Lords”.

The ending of verse 5 is critical for us as believers in Christ today. “He (Jesus) loved us and released us from our sins by His blood”.

This verse describes the three aspects of our salvation: *past, present and future*.

Released us, in the *past tense*, refers to our Justification. (God has looked upon us and judged us as

through we had never ever sinned.

He “loves” us, *present tense*. That refers to our sanctification. It is the process whereby we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ day by day. It is the process of being spiritually refined. Then the future tense beginning in verse 6 where He has made us to rule and reign with Him in eternity as Kings and Priests.

This short phrase in verse 5 contains a summary of the gospel. God loved us and released us from the penalty of our sins by shedding His righteous blood on the cross. The plan of God to have Jesus die for yours and my sins was not some kind of 'plan B' in God's cosmic scheme of things. In fact, **Revelation 13:8** tells us that in God's sight, Jesus was already slain for sin before God laid the foundation of the world.

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### Verse 6

goes on to say, “He has made us *to be* Kings and priests”. Future tense (we will literally rule with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom) in the future.

There have only been two people in Biblical history legitimately called to be a king and a priest. (King Saul tried it but paid a severe price).

The first was the old Testament character **Melchizedek** talked about in Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6-11; 6:20—7:28. He was a real person but also a type of the Christ who was to come. His name, 'Melchizedek', means King of Righteousness and he was king over the city of “Salem”, later to be Jerusalem. **Jesus** is that true King of Righteousness who will one day literally rule and reign from Jerusalem on the throne of King David as was prophesied to Mary through the angel Gabriel.

**Luke 1:30-33** And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God **will give** (future tense) to him **the throne of his father David**, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be **no end**.”

There is a third king and priest, however. The believers in Jesus Christ. Even though we are individual members we constitute ONE BODY. Spiritually, we are seated today with Christ on His Father's throne in the heavenly places (**Ephesians 2:6**) but we will literally also rule and reign with Him. (**Revelation 20:6**; 2 Timothy 2:12).

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**Verse 7** – In **Matthew 24:30**, what we call the Olivert discourse, Jesus told his disciples in advance of this same truth when He stated, “**Then will appear in heaven *the sign* of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man**”

coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

This should remind us of **Zechariah 12:10** which says, “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.

We've already seen a glimpse of this national repentance in history in **Acts 2:37** after Peter first sermon on the Day of Pentecost when it says the people were cut to the heart and said “what must we do”?

They will “mourn” for Him, Jesus, the one pierced with the Roman spear (John 19:34), the one they (and us) pierced because of our sin. It would seem that a prerequisite for the second coming (not the rapture) of our Lord is Israel calling out to Christ for deliverance after first having accepted the AntiChrist as their deliverer – the event which begins the 7 year Tribulation.

**Daniel 7:13-14** – “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with *the clouds of heaven* there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given **dominion and glory and a kingdom**, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an **everlasting dominion**, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

**Verse 8** – past present future elements

	Past	Present	Future
God (Rev. 1:4)	Which was (John 1; Col. 1:15-17)	Which is (Heb. 7:25)	Which is to come (Rev. 1:7)
Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:5)	The Faithful witness (Rev. 3:14; John 14:9)	First begotten from the dead ( 1 Cor. 15:20-23)	Prince of the Kings of the Earth ( Eph. 1:20-22)
Unto Him That (Rev, 1:5)	Loved us (1 John 4:8)	Washed us in His blood (Rev. 7:14; 1 Peter 1:18-21)	Made made us kings/priests (Rev. 5:10; 20:6; 1 Peter 2:5-9; Eph. 2:6)
Write (Rev. 1:19)	Things which thou hast seen (John 21:24; Rev. 1:12-18)	Things which are (Rev. 2-3)	Things which shall be after (Rev. 4:1)
Salvation	Justification (not guilty) (Ephesians 2:8-9)	Sanctification (Positional/practical) (Romans 6)	Glorification (new bodies) (Romans 8:23)



Isaiah 44:6-7 – 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. Who is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and set it before me, since I appointed an ancient people. Let them declare *what is to come*, and what will happen. (Revelation)

### Verse 9

End of the first century, 95 AD. At the time the Apostle John recorded this Revelation from Jesus all the other 11 Apostles were dead. Judas, the betrayer, dead first by suicide but the other 10 also dead by violent martyrs deaths scattered throughout the Roman world of that day. Jesus death, burial, resurrection and ascension were 65 years before John received this Revelation, as was the birth of the new Testament church. John's brother James, the other Son of Zebedee was martyred 50 years prior by Herod Agrippa I.

Jerusalem (the home of Judaism) and it's temple were destroyed 25 years before (in 70 A.D.) The sacrificial system of the Jews could no longer be observed because there was no temple and, therefore, no altar on which to offer those sacrifices. God kept the Apostle John alive in order to, among other things, receive and then record this Revelation and make it available for us today.

### Verse 10

“in the spirit”	
Patmos	Rev. 1:10
Before the throne in heaven	Rev. 4:2
Carried into the wilderness	Rev. 17:3
Carried to a mountain	Rev. 21:10

John states he was “**in the Spirit**”. In Revelation 4:2; 17:3; and 21:10 this phrase clearly implies he was translated into a future state or dimension of time to be personally shown what is going to take place in the later days. There are four references to John being **in the Spirit** in the Book of Revelation. This reference at Patmos ([Revelation 1:10](#)), then in heaven ([Revelation 4:2](#)), then in the wilderness ([Revelation 17:3](#)), and finally on the mountain of God ([Revelation 21:10](#)). There is no reason to think the meaning is any different here in verse 10 then that John is translated out of the natural realm and is about to see the glorified Lord of Glory Himself in his eternal state. It is very much like Isaiah or Paul or Ezekiel being caught up into the throne room of God or Phillip when he was “caught up” by the Spirit and translated to Azotus after baptizing the Ethiopian Eunuch.

John's phrase “**on the Lord's Day**” often makes people think of the first day of the week, or Sunday. The problem is the day after the Sabbath is nowhere else in scripture called “the Lord's Day”. (It is



referred to as “the first day of the week”). The best interpretation here seems to be the John was caught up into the spiritual realm on what is referred to as “the day of the Lord”. It is referred to throughout the Old Testament in Isaiah, Joel, Amos, Zephaniah and Zechariah.

The phrase “the day of the LORD [Yahweh]” refers both to the ultimate time when Yahweh will punish and restore the whole world through Christ’s first and second comings and to the periodic pen-ultimate days that clarify and anticipate it. Unrepentant sinners should fear the day of the Lord, but those forgiven and redeemed can anticipate it with hope.

**Zephaniah 1:14-16** “The great **day of the LORD** is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

The Apostle Peter ties this theme to the N.T. Age in his first sermon after the Day of Pentecost. In Peter's first sermon he says in . . .

**Acts 2:19-21** – “and I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before **the day of the Lord** comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

As opposed to the “still, small voice we tend to associate with God as He speaks into our hearts today, this instance was a “loud” voice like that of a trumpet. Judgment is coming and there will be no mistaking it.

### **Verse 11**

This is the first of 12 commands John is going to receive throughout Revelation to write what he specifically “saw” in these visions.

Seven churches in “Asia” (Turkey)

Why these seven....No Jerusalem, Rome, Antioch, Alexandria

### **Verse 12**

the number 7 = fullness, lampstands = “light-bearers” (menorah in the Tabernacle)

### **Verse 13**

the Son of Man was the most common title used of Himself in the gospel record and it originates in Daniel 7. The perfect man, the last Adam who would not only redeem mankind but also come to rule and reign over all humanity one day.

The New Testament record tells us . . .

Jesus Christ was “made” in the likeness of man (Phil. 2:7)

He was “made like unto His brethren (Hebrews 2:17)

He was made “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Romans 8:3)

### Seven (7) Physical descriptions of Jesus

- ➔ Hair, head: (Daniel 7:9; Isaiah 1:18)
  - ➔ Eyes ('flame of fire'): I Cor. 3:13; Mal. 3:2; 2 Chronicles 16:9; Heb. 4:13)
  - ➔ Feet (brass: judgment) Brazen serpent (Num. 21), brazen altar
  - ➔ Voice (many waters): Ez. 1:24; 43:2; Dan. 10:6
  - ➔ Right hand (seven stars, yet walks in the midst)
  - ➔ Mouth (two-edged sword): Hebrews 4:12, Ephesians 6:17, Isaiah 49:2
    - Judges by His mouth
    - 1. unbelievers (John 12:48)
    - 2. Earth (Isaiah 11:4)
    - 3. Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:8)
  - ➔ Countenance (as the sun): (Matthew 17, Mal. 4:2)
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Vs. 15 – Brazen (bronze) feet (**Numbers 21**) (John 3:14)

Vs. 16 - “Stars” = angelos (messengers)

“sharp two-edged sword” (Eph. 6:17 – The Word of God; Matthew 10:34 – divides; Heb. 4:12)

“face like the sun” (Matthew 17; Mal. 4:2)

Vs. 17 – common response to angelic visitations

**Verse 19** – Jesus divine outline for the book

Ch 1 – things which you have seen (Image of Christ)

Ch. 2 – 3: The things which are (Church age)

Chps. 4- 22: “after these things” (meta tauta)

Vs. 20 - Lampstands (Gr. 'luchnos' = light-bearers) are the churches