

## 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, <sup>2</sup> who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. <sup>3</sup> 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.

The word Revelation comes from the Greek word *apokalupsis* and means an unveiling or revealing. The word apocalypse is derived from this Greek word.

Notice that the “revelation” pertains to Jesus Christ which God the Father gave Him to show (reveal) to His servants. The things which must shortly come to pass were determined by God.

John’s prophecy is primarily the revelation of Jesus Christ, not the revelation of future events. You must not divorce the Person from the prophecy, for without the Person there could be no fulfillment of the prophecy.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed the book of Revelation provides numerous prophecies pertaining to the future, the revealing is of the Person of Christ.

Numbers are important in the Book of Revelation.

**3** often represents God.

**6** represents incompleteness. Thus the number 666 represents that man is incomplete. The evil one is incomplete. The Anti-Christ whose number shall be 666 is incomplete and unholy.

**7** represents completeness, wholeness or something that is perfectly whole. Thus, often representing Christ.

<sup>4</sup> 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, <sup>5</sup> 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, <sup>6</sup> and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

The book of Revelation is rich in symbolism. One needs to remember that symbolism can be a powerful tool to communicate timeless truth. While John used a lot of symbolism it is important to understand the symbolism represented real truth.

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<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, Warren W. *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Vol. 2. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996. Print.

What does the “seven Spirits who are before the throne” represent? Warren Wiersbe offered: “Next, the Holy Spirit is seen in His fullness, for there are not seven spirits, but one. The reference here is probably to Isaiah 11:2.”<sup>2</sup>

The phrase “firstborn from the dead” indicates a position of honor. In other words, Jesus Christ, was not the first person raised from the dead, but His resurrection holds the highest honor and prominence.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> “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.”

Revelation is all about the return of Jesus Christ to the earth. This should not be confused with the rapture which will occur before the Tribulation. When Jesus Christ returns to the earth, everyone living at that time will see it.

How can those who “pierced Him” see his return since they have been dead for over 2,000 years? John is referring to the nation of Israel. Notice the response of the earth’s inhabitants— “All the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.” Why? Because of His just judgment that will come upon them.

Revelation chapter 1 uses many images for Christ. For example:

Verse 5 He is the Faithful Witness, the First begotten of the dead and the Prince of the Kings of the Earth.

Verse 8 He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending.

Verse 11. The First and the Last.

Verse 13. The Son of Man.

Christ is described in the following ways in 1:13-16

Verse 13. He is dressed in a long robe with a golden breastplate. This represents that Jesus is our High Priest.

Verse 14. His head and hair were white like wool; white as snow. This represents the purity of Christ.

And his eyes are like a flame of fire. This represents the all-piercing eye of Christ in relation to judgment. No one can hide anything from the Lord.

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<sup>2</sup> Wiersbe, Warren W. *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Vol. 2. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996. Print.

Verse 15. His feet were like unto fine brass that burns in the furnace. This represents the stability and eternity of Christ and his judgment.

Verse 16. And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. This represents the judging power of the Word of God.

The seven golden candlesticks or lamp stands = the churches.

The seven angels = pastors or messengers.

Dr. Bill R. Scott      March 4, 2015