

THE BOOK OF REVELATION, REVISITED

Part II - JOHN'S DIVINE VISITOR ON PATMOS

Wednesday, October 21, 2020 / First Assembly of God / Ft. Myers, FL

with Pastor Dan Betzer

Revelation 1:10-20

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, [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. [12] And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; [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. [14] His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; [15] And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. [16] And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. [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: [18] I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of bell and of death. [19] Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; [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.

During my several trips to Patmos, I walked around, attempting to feel what John felt when he heard behind him a voice calling his name, and it sounded like a trumpet. That would be quite a jolt! Paul reminded the church at Thessalonica [Greece] what when Jesus returns to take us home with Him, He will shout once again:

1 I Thessalonians 4:16-18

2 *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the*
3 *voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in*
4 *Christ shall rise first: [17] Then we which are alive and remain shall be*
5 *caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:*
6 *and so shall we ever be with the Lord. [18] Wherefore comfort one*
7 *another with these words.*

8

9 In this first chapter of Revelation, we learn some marvelous aspects of
10 Jesus – as He is now! So many painting and film have made Jesus so
11 dainty and gentle that I believe they have done us all a mis-service. Our
12 Lord is none of those things. Remember that John was a cousin of Jesus
13 and further he sat next to Jesus at the last supper. No one knew Jesus better
14 [in flesh and blood] than John. But now, on Patmos, he sees Jesus in a
15 whole new aspect!

16

17 A. His hair – Revelation 1:14

18 *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his*
19 *eyes were as a flame of fire;*

20

21 This speaks of long life and eternity. Daniel called Him:

22 Daniel 7:9

23 *I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit,*
24 *whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure*
25 *wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels [feet] as*
26 *burning fire.*

27

28 His eyes, as a flame of fire! Nothing escapes His notice, His awareness.
29 He sees you, right now, just as you are.

30

31 B. His feet and voice – Revelation 1:15

32 *And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his*
33 *voice as the sound of many waters.*

34

35 His feet, like unto brass, reminds us that He is the Judge of us all.

36

1 Revelation 20:12-13

2 *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books*
3 *were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life:*
4 *and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the*
5 *books, according to their works. [13] And the sea gave up the dead*
6 *which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were*
7 *in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

8

9 Every one of us will one day stand before Him and give an account of our
10 lives, which will be substantiated by the written record "in the books"
11 about us.

12

13



14

15 *Victoria Falls, which forms the boundary between the African nations of Zambia and Zimbabwe.*
16 *We visited this site years ago. While neither the highest nor the widest falls in the world, Victoria*
17 *is still 354 feet high and over a mile wide. The sound is deafening! John compared Jesus' voice*
18 *with the sound of many waters!*

19

20

21

1 The concept of Christ's voice is amazing. It was the voice that called the
2 entire universe into existence. It is the voice that will waken bodies from
3 the grave one day. It is the voice that will rapture the saints into glory!
4 No, we cannot imagine that voice - but one day we will hear it!

5
6 C. His hand and countenance – Revelation 1:16

7 *And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a*
8 *sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in*
9 *his strength.*

10
11 I believe the seven stars are explained in chapters 2 and 3, the churches
12 along the west coast of Turkey - seven of them. Christ holds the churches
13 in His hands. He is in control. The churches are His. THIS CHURCH is
14 His! It does not belong to a pastor or even a denomination of fellowship.
15 The church is sacred because it belongs totally to Jesus Christ!

16
17 D. John's Reaction to Jesus – Revelation 1:17

18 *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand*
19 *upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:*

20
21 “When John saw the glorified Christ on the Isle of Patmos, he did
22 not go up to Him and pat Him on the back or shake hands with Him.
23 He didn't even try to begin a conversation. He fell at His feet as dead!
24 The effect of the vision upon John was nothing short of paralyzing.
25 My friend, since John reacted like that, we can be sure that when
26 you and I get into the presence of Jesus Christ, we are not going to
27 approach Him in a familiar way.”

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29
30 We often observe in contemporary churches a kind of “buddy”
31 relationship between the congregation and Jesus. This concerns me
32 [frightens me, a bit!]. Jesus said to John, “I am first and last.” This speaks
33 of eternity, which has no beginning and no ending.

THE COMMAND OF JESUS TO JOHN

Revelation 1:19

Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

What is the book of Revelation really all about? Horsemen? Bowls of wrath? Angels? Not really, although those issues are certainly addressed. No, the book of revelation is about [a revealing of] Jesus Christ. Remember, Christ is not our Lord's last name; it is His title: Messiah!

SYMBOLS

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.

When people say the book of Revelation is “too mysterious” or “it cannot be understood,” it is clear they haven't read it. John clearly defines the terms of the Revelation so they can be received and known.

INCREDIBLE FACT!

In the next two chapters of Revelation, we deal with the seven churches in Asia [the country of Turkey where John pastored. Here is the astounding fact:

After chapter 3, we do not read about the church again! So far in this book, Christ's church has been mentioned 19 times. Starting with chapter 4, the church of our Lord is never mentioned again, as such. Why not? Because the remainder of Revelation deals with the Earth and the people in it. **THE CHURCH IS NOT THERE BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN RAPTURED.** The saints of God, living and dead, have been taken to be forever with God! Hallelujah!

1 In Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, we read of Jesus' direct words about “the
2 seven churches in Asia,” which was really Asia Minor or the country
3 of Turkey.

4

5 Why did Jesus direct these admonitions to John to deliver? John was
6 pastoring in Ephesus; it is possible that he was an overseer or
7 superintendent of those seven congregations. They were:

8

- 9 1. Ephesus - the church that had left its first love
- 10 2. Smyrna - the persecuted church
- 11 3. Pergamum - the church that mixed doctrines and needed to repent
- 12 4. Thyatira - the false church that followed a seductive prophetess
- 13 5. Sardis - the spiritually dead church
- 14 6. Philadelphia - the city of love
- 15 7. Laodicea - the church that was neither hot nor cold

16



17

18

19

20

21

1 In each of these seven churches, there is a pattern to the divine message:

2

3 1. There is a commendation - or something that our Lord was pleased
4 about. But those commendations were followed in most of them by
5 a rebuke.

6

7 2. The messages from Jesus were addressed to “the angel” of that church.
8 Most commentators would teach that this was the leader, perhaps the
9 pastor, of that church.

10

11

EPHESUS

12

13 John lived for many years in Ephesus. It was a lovely city, visited by such
14 Romans as Marc Antony and Egyptian royalty, Cleopatra. Alexander the
15 Great knew this city, as well. In last week's notes, there was a picture of
16 the ruins of Ephesus today where so much from New Testament days
17 remains. The total ruins are about twelve miles apart.

18

19 The city was formed around the temple of Diana, constructed around a
20 bay, which has long since silted up. Not much of that temple remains, save
21 a lone pillar. In its day, it was one of the wonders of the ancient world.
22 100 external columns, 56 feet in height, were originally featured in this
23 construction. A magnificent staircase was carved from one vine from the
24 Island of Cyprus.

25

26 Revelation 2:1-4

27 ***Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he***
28 ***that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst***
29 ***of the seven golden candlesticks; [2] I know thy works, and thy labour,***
30 ***and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and***
31 ***thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast***
32 ***found them liars: [3] And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my***
33 ***name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. [4] Nevertheless I have***
34 ***somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.***

35

1 Jesus had such good things to say about this church in Ephesus; however
2 the last line was devastating. Yes, the people did all the right things, it
3 seemed; but the truth was they had left their initial love for the Lord.

4
5 Marriages remain precious when the love still burns brightly. When it
6 sadly becomes tedious and or boring, the couple may stay together, but
7 they have departed from the joy of that first love. Unfortunately, there are
8 those in churches who may go through all the motions, but the love for
9 Christ is gone.

10
11 So what is our Lord's response?

12
13 Revelation 2:5
14 ***Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do***
15 ***the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove***
16 ***thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.***

17
18 Do we need to repent? No, we may not have fallen into deep sin, but is
19 the love for Jesus fading away?

20
21 Revelation 2:7
22 ***He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the***
23 ***churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life,***
24 ***which is in the midst of the paradise of God.***

25
26 **SMYRNA**

27
28 Many years ago, I had the delight of exploring Smyrna, now known as
29 Izmir, one of the largest cities in Turkey. It was here on February 23, 155
30 AD that the great saint Polycarp was tied to a stake and set on fire. He had
31 been given the chance to recant his faith before the blaze was started, but
32 he said, “86 years have I followed the Lord and He has never done me any
33 harm. How could I deny Him now?”

34

1 The fire began and took his life but did not totally consume his body. His
2 killers then stabbed him repeatedly. What a loss, what a tragedy, to take
3 place in such a beautiful city!

4
5 The very word "Smyrna" means "suffering." From about 100 AD to 300
6 AD, Smyrna was known for persecution of Christians. Jesus had nothing
7 but praise for these people.

8
9 Revelation 2:9-10

10 *I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, [but thou art rich] and*
11 *I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but*
12 *are the synagogue of Satan. [10] Fear none of those things which thou*
13 *shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye*
14 *may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful*
15 *unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

16
17 It comes as a surprise to some shallow believers that there can be
18 tribulation to believers; but there can be! No, Jesus was not referring to
19 the Great Tribulation, which is the last half of the coming tribulation, after
20 the Rapture. But tough times can come to faithful Christians! This present
21 year of 2020 is a good case in point.

22
23 Dr. Vernon McGee has identified ten intense periods of persecution.

24
25 NERO 64-68 AD Paul was beheaded during his reign / Peter was crucified

26 DOMITIAN 95-96 AD John was exiled to Patmos

27 TRAJAN 104-117 AD Ignatius was burned at the stake

28 MARCUS AURELIUS 161-180 AD Polycarp was burned at the stake

29 SEVERUS 200-211 AD

30 MAXIMINIUS 235-237 AD

31 DECIUS 250-253 AD

32 VALERIAN 257-260 AD

33 AURELIAN 270-275 AD

34 DIOCLETIAN 303-313 AD [Probably the worst emperor of all]

35 THRU THE BIBLE /VOLUME 5 /PAGE 906/ J. VERNON MCGEE/NELSON PUBL

36
37 **Next week [continued seven churches of Asia]**