

# The Book of Revelation

Lesson One

Revelation 1:1-8

## JESUS – THE FAITHFUL

### Introduction

1. The book of Revelation was “signified” to John (cf. John 12:32-33; 18:32; 21:19).
    - a. Cross / Red Cross
    - b. Key / Candlestick / Trumpet / Babylon / Beast / Dragon
    - c. Symbolism of art – statues, engravings, painting, etc.
  2. Because the first three chapters take the more usual form of an epistle, it helps the reader to gain an understanding of how signs and symbols are used throughout the book.
  3. Thus, we must look closely at these early chapters and build upon them as we study the remainder of this writing.
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- I. The Revelation of Jesus Christ (1:1-3)
    - A. This book is the revelation (singular) of Jesus Christ.
      1. It is a revelation about Him.
      2. It is a revelation from Him.
    - B. It came from God for His servants – *God wants man to have and know His Word!*
    - C. The things revealed “must shortly come to pass.”
      1. In 6:9-10, the souls of the martyrs ask, “How long?”
      2. The message of the book is, “Not long” – God has not forgotten them.
    - D. This revelation was given to John who faithfully recorded all that God made known (cf. 22:6-8, 16).
    - E. There is a blessing upon those who read and study this book.
      1. The reader was the one who read the book publicly to the congregation.
      2. The hearers were those in the assembly who listened to the reading.
      3. All were to keep (obey) the things revealed in this book.
  - II. Salutation and Introduction (1:4-6)
    - A. The book is addressed to the 7 churches of Asia (listed in verse 11).
    - B. Here we have our first foray into symbolism.
      1. This letter was literally addressed to seven specific congregations.
      2. However, there were more than seven churches in Asia.
      3. Furthermore, the application of the book is to all congregations.
      4. Thus, these 7 churches symbolize the church as a whole.
      5. The number 7 is symbolic of completion or perfection.
      6. Perhaps the persecution was greater in this part of the world than anywhere else.
      7. Thus, by addressing them, God sends His message of comfort and hope to the entire church.
    - C. The source of this revelation is God – the eternal, ever-existing Almighty.
    - D. Yet, this revelation also comes from the Holy Spirit – described as 7 spirits before the throne of God.
      1. Obviously, there is only one Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 4:4).

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2. However, He is identified by the number 7 to symbolize His perfection and completeness (cf. Zech. 4:10).
  3. He is perfectly capable in revealing God's will (cf. John 16:13).
  - E. Also, this revelation comes from Jesus – described by Who He is and by what He has done.
    1. He is the faithful witness – to the Truth (John 18:37; Heb. 1:1-2).
    2. He is the first begotten of the dead – raised with no human help, never to die again (1:18; 1 Cor. 15:54-57; John 10:17-18).
    3. He is the prince of the kings of the earth – ruler of the world (19:16; 1 Tim. 6:15). {*Caesar was not in control – Jesus is!*}
  - F. Jesus is the One who loves us – literally, loveth (continues to love).
  - G. Jesus is the One who washed us – an act accomplished in the past.
    1. He loosed or redeemed us from sin (1 Pet. 1:18-19; Acts 20:28).
    2. He did this by the power of His blood.
    3. This happens in baptism (Acts 22:16).
  - H. Jesus is the One who made us a kingdom – the idea is a kingdom of priests (cf. Exo. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:9).
    1. Note that we are already a kingdom, not that we will become one in the future.
    2. As a kingdom, we are subject to the rules and laws of our King.
    3. As priests, we offer worship and sacrifice to our God.
  - I. The logical conclusion – “to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.”
- III. A Reminder of Judgment (1:7)
- A. This One Who is God and Who has done so much for man – He is coming again.
  - B. Some try to limit this to the destruction of Jerusalem (cf. Matt. 24:30; 26:64).
  - C. Some try to limit it to the judgment of Rome (cf. Egypt [Exo. 11]).
  - D. However, this seems to refer primarily to His final coming in judgment of the world at the end of time.
    1. Comes with clouds as at His ascension (Acts 1:9-11)
    2. Seen by every eye – implies resurrection (John 5:28-29)
    3. All nations caused to mourn (2 Thes. 1:8-9)
  - E. The judgments of Jerusalem and Rome are just figures of the last, great Day of Judgment.
- IV. The Power of Jesus (1:8)
- A. Some attempt to apply this verse to God the Father instead of Jesus.
  - B. However, the context indicates that Jesus is being discussed.
  - C. Jesus is eternal – the Alpha and Omega, beginning and ending.
    1. Notice the use of the symbol here.
    2. Alpha (the first letter of the Greek alphabet) symbolizes the beginning.
    3. This is certainly true of Jesus (1:17; John 1:1-4; 20:28; Heb. 13:8).
  - D. Jesus is omnipotent – He has all power (Matt. 28:18; Rev. 19:6-7).
  - E. The message is: His Word and His faithfulness can be trusted completely.