

The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Behold I Am Coming Soon

"Beholding the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ", pt.1

- I. The Second Revealing. What John *heard* and what John *saw*. (1:9-20)
 - A. (1:9) John humbly addresses the "seven churches".
 1. He calls himself one who "shares" with the saints in suffering.
 - a) Didn't pull rank! He was *somebody*– "one whom Jesus loved," in the Gospel of John. (ex. John 13:23; 19:26; 21:20). But HUMBLE.
 2. "sharer"/ "companion" in **suffering and kingdom and patient endurance**
 - a) John had suffered as an apostle. For example, read Acts 4 and 5. Yet, here in 1:9 he doesn't *hold it over the Church* but merely joins with them in the fellowship they share in "suffering and kingdom and patient endurance".
 3. "Why" John suffered. And, should we suffer also for the same reason?
 - a) However, not much is told to us about the circumstances leading to his exile to the island of Patmos, but you can be certain of this, it was punishment¹ for his preaching of "**the Word of God**" and his "**testimony concerning Jesus Christ**" that he suffered. And this is why true Christians suffer today!
 - (1) The Word of God and the testimony of Jesus, and Trials:
 - (a) Revelation 1:2– The revelation to which John testifies *IS* the word of God, which testifies to Jesus Christ and His majesty and glory!
 - (b) Revelation 6:9– believers martyred because of "the word of God and the testimony they had maintained."
 - (c) Revelation 12:7– the Dragon made war specifically against those who "obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus."

¹ John MacArthur informs us through F.F. Bruce that, "according to the Roman historian Tacitus, exile to such islands was a common form of punishment in the first century. He was probably exiled to Patmos during the rule of Emperor Domitian. –John MacArthur, *Because the Time is Near*, Moody Publishers, 2007, p33

(d) Revelation 19:10– It is something to “hold on” to.
Sounds like there is pressure from outside sources which tempt a believer to not “hold to the testimony of Jesus.

(i) That itself is a trial. That’s why you see the words like “endure”, “patience”, “persevere” throughout the Revelation. The Faithful believers are those who *patiently endure* (That is, to “remain under” the pressure and to hold to the testimony of Jesus no matter what!

b) A commentator named *Lehman Strauss* wrote, “God turned John’s bondage to blessing. His Patmos of persecution became... an open door for service.”

c) Should we suffer for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus?

(1) If we—if you— hold firmly to the Truth you will.

(2) Be encouraged. In Revelation we learn just how great are the rewards for patient endurance as you suffer for Christ.!

(a) Look up Revelation 2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:26-28; 3:5; 3:10, 12; 3:21; etc,etc.

B. (1:10) “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day...”

1. It should not surprise us that John was “in the Spirit”.

a) Men and women of God are commanded to always be “filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), to “live by (or)/ walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16); etc.

b) But this “in the Spirit,” also in Rev. 4:2 and 21:10, would *strongly* suggest that this “in the Spirit” was exceptional, and not the *normal* expectation of a Christian to be filled with the Spirit (see **a**) above).

2. “The Lord’s day”-- meaning that this was an exceptional day b/c the Lord chose that on this particular day, which John calls, “the Lord’s day” to assert His divine right to *unveil* His glory and the glory of things to come.

- a) This is the only time in Scripture that this phrase is used. And, it does not mean the same as the phrase, “the Day of the Lord”, which is found throughout the Bible. We will study later.
- b) However, it is an almost universal belief among Christians that “the Lord’s day” must be Sunday. But in the NT when the writers meant Sunday they used the phrase, “the first day of the week.”
 - (1) See Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2
- c) It was not until around the second century that the phrase became the way Christians referred to Sunday b/c Christ resurrected on a Sunday. (MacArthur, *ibid*, p34). But John may, in fact, mean “Sunday,” the resurrection day.

3. A loud voice behind him.

- a) A loud voice that sounded like a trumpet. IT IS NOT AN EARTHLY TRUMPET.
- b) Tony Garland points out that “in Scripture trumpets attend events of great importance: Garland lists the following:
 - (1) “God’s presence on Sinai (Exodus 19:16; 20:18); Year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:9); the fall of Jericho (Joshua 6:4-20); When God overthrows the kingdoms of the earth (Psalm 45:7); when the Day of the Lord is at hand (Joel 2:1); At the rapture of the Church (1 Cor. 15:42 and 1 Thess 4:6);” and in Revelation several times which we will get to later.

C. (1:11) The Authoritative Command from Jesus to John to *write what he sees*.

- 1. The loud voice (like a trumpet) said, “Write”
 - a) The sound of the Trumpet as you read in the biblical examples above, indicates that the following words are to be taken seriously.
 - b) **REMEMBER:** It is the Lord’s words to the Churches.
- 2. “Write what you see” and “Send to the seven churches”
 - a) So a two-fold command: *Write* and *Send*
 - b) Keep in mind that **John is writing to actual churches of his time.**

D. (1:12) As John turned to see the “Voice” he saw the seven lampstands

- 1. Here is a good lesson on interpretation in Revelation:

a) The seven golden lampstands are ***figurative***.

b) But what they are ***literally*** is learned in Revelation 1:20.

(1) In this case the seven lampstands of 1:12 are explained in 1:20, revealing that these are the seven churches.

c) **Lesson: When symbols and figures are used in Revelation, an explanation is close at hand. As is the case of 1:12 and 1:20.**

E. (1:13) The ***Christo-centricity*** of the Church.

1. Application: We don't make Christ the center of the church, He IS the center of the Church.

2. Who do we see? "One like a Son of Man"

a) This reference from **Daniel 7:13** should be familiar: "I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven ***one like a Son of Man*** was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him."

(1) See His glory, might, power and authority in **Daniel 7:14**—
"He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."

(2) **NOTE:** You should retain this knowledge concerning the phrase, "Son of Man" because it does declare the royalty, majesty and authority of Jesus Christ. In the Gospels Jesus refers to Himself as the Son of Man. Definitely a strong statement to the Jews concerning Himself.

3. "In the midst of..." or "...among the lampstands..."

a) This "one like the Son of Man" is the glorified Christ and He is in the midst of the Church!

b) He is the Center and Source of the church

(1) Colossians 2:19; Ephesians 4:15-16

c) And, He therefore walks in the midst of Her— saving, sanctifying, sustaining, even sequestering her at times. (Ephesians 5:25-33)

4. "Dressed in a robe reaching down to His feet and with a golden sash around His chest."

a) Is John referring here to Christ's royal robes as King?

(1) Isaiah 6:1: His robe filled the whole House of God.

b) Or, is John referring to Christ's robes like that of Prophets?

(1) Exodus 28:4, 31-35; 1 Samuel 15:27; 28:14

c) Or, with the additional description of the golden sash around His chest, is John calling attention to Christ being our Great High Priest?

(1) The description of the priests costume in Exodus 28:4 and Leviticus 16:4 would lead us to interpret Revelation 1:13b as also The Great High Priest of His people,

5. Application of 1:13: So our Lord is not only our King and Protector, Sovereign and Savior, Prophet and Sanctifier, **but also** our Priest and Sympathizer (Heb.2:18; 4:15)

a) C.H. Spurgeon brings to mind the imagery of "*velvet steel*". Christ Jesus *rules* but also *sympathizes* with the flock of His Church!