

Revelation 1

Who wrote the book of Revelation? The Apostle John. **The Book of Revelation is the revelation of what (v. 1)?** It reveals the person of Jesus Christ, His power and His program for all of eternity. Revelation is really an uncomplicated book. In the end, the bottom line is.....Jesus wins! He has defeated Satan and sin for all of eternity.....the two greatest victories in the history of mankind!

From whom did the revelation originate (v. 1)? God the Father. **Through whose hands did it pass from its origin?** From God the Father, to Jesus, to an angel, to John the apostle.....and to Christians everywhere.

What was the purpose of the revelation? To describe the conclusion of God's progressive plan of redemption for mankind which was first revealed in Genesis 3:15 after the fall of Adam and Eve. Secondly, the purpose of the revelation is to open the eyes of the nation of Israel to the realization that Jesus Christ, whom they crucified, is their promised Messiah.

John records how God sent His angel to show to His servants the things which must soon take place (1:1; 22:6). This statement reinforces a futuristic interpretation of Revelation which sees the book from chapter 4 to the end as proclaiming prophecies yet to be fulfilled. We will be taking a look at the book of Revelation as futuristic and premillennial and from a literal perspective unless otherwise defined.

What is the reward for reading/hearing/taking this prophecy to heart (v. 3)? Blessing. This is the first of seven beatitudes of Revelation (Revelation 1:3, 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7, and 22:14).

What did John do with the revelation (v. 4)? Shared it with seven churches. **Why seven churches?** Perhaps because they were representative of the state of all churches up to and including today. They symbolized the universal church. **What does the number seven imply in the Bible?** Perfection or completeness. The number seven is found 54 times in this book.

How is God described (v. 4)? *Him who is, and who was, and who is to come.* **What message does that convey about God?** It communicates the idea of a timeless Being who is eternal. As Lord over eternity, He rules the past, the present, and the future. We can trust God in the present because He's been faithful in the past and will be so in the future.

Who are the seven spirits? Probably the Holy Spirit in His perfection and fullness (the number seven implying perfection or completeness), or perhaps the seven angels of the seven churches referred to in chapters 2 and 3.

How is Jesus described (v. 5)? The faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. **How is He the faithful witness?** He proclaimed His message and died in the course of that witness.

In what sense is He the firstborn from the dead? He was the first person resurrected to live forever, who didn't have to die again. Firstborn refers to a position; He is *pre-eminent* among all beings, He is first in priority. It doesn't mean literally the first one born since Jesus was not a created being. He is an eternal being; He has existed for all eternity.

How is Jesus the ruler of the kings of the earth (v. 5)? This envisions His upcoming reign during the millennium.

What has He done for us (vv. 5-6)? He loves us and has freed us from the penalty and power of sin by his blood shed on the Cross. And He has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father (Hebrews 9:11-10:18).

In what sense are we priests? We represent God to man and man to God (1 Peter 2:5). We offer sacrifices unto Him (Hebrews 13:15; Romans 12:1-2). We have privileged access to God's presence (Romans 5:1-2). The New Testament concept is a priesthood of all believers.

What will happen when He comes (v. 7)? When Jesus comes, it won't be a secret coming. The whole world will know. At His first coming, Jesus was somewhat obscure. During His earthly ministry, He never made front-page news in Rome. But when Jesus comes the second time, every eye will see Him. And unbelievers will mourn because He comes to judge those who are in a state of rebellion against Him.

How did the Lord described Himself (v. 8)? *I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God.* Alpha was the first letter of the ancient Greek alphabet, and Omega was the last letter. Jesus is saying, “I am the ‘A to Z,’ the Beginning and the End.” *The One who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.* He is *before* all things and will remain *beyond* all things. He is eternal. His omnipotence and sovereign authority over all the universe are in view here.

What did John share in common with those to whom he wrote (v. 9)? They were brothers and companions in three things: the suffering (persecution), the kingdom (both now and upcoming) and patient endurance (steadfast in the face of persecution).

Where was John when he wrote this book? The island of Patmos. It was like the Alcatraz Island of the Roman Empire. **Why was he there?** He was exiled by Rome because he witnessed for Christ.

When did he receive the Revelation (v. 10)? On the Lord’s Day, i.e. the Sabbath. He was most likely worshipping.

What did it mean he was “in the Spirit?” The idea wasn’t simply that John was *walking in the Spirit*, but that he received unique revelation from the Holy Spirit. It was a visionary state or a state of heightened spiritual awareness.

What did John hear (v. 10)? A loud voice like a trumpet. **What did the voice say (v. 11)?** Write down this vision I will show you and share it with seven churches.

Where did the One “like a Son of Man” stand (v. 13)? Among the seven golden lampstands. **What did the seven lampstands represent?** Seven churches (v. 20). The seven churches of vv. 4, 11.

“Son of Man” was Jesus’ favorite title for Himself, according to the writers of the Gospels (Mark 13:26). This expression refers to the divine Messiah in Daniel 7:13-14.¹

How would you describe His personal appearance (vv. 13-15)? Dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace.

What was the point of His apparel? He was dressed like a priest which was befitting since Jesus Christ currently serves as our Great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14).

How did His voice sound (v. 15)? Like the sound of rushing waters. Like the majesty of a mighty waterfall.

What was in His right hand (v. 16)? Seven stars. **What do the seven stars represent?** Seven angels of the seven churches (v. 20) which He could dispatch at His command. **What did it mean that He held the seven stars in His hand?** They were held tightly and securely in the hand of Jesus. The right hand symbolized possession, power, control, and honor.

What came from His mouth (v. 16)? A sharp double-edged sword. This was a heavy sword (the ancient Greek word *rhomphaia*), used to kill and destroy—a symbol of judgment.

How would you describe the appearance of His face? Like the sun at high noon, shining in all its brilliance and splendor. **How did this affect John (v. 17)?** He fell at His feet. John was overwhelmed by this awesome vision. Even the three years John spent with Jesus on this earth did not prepare him to see Jesus in His full heavenly glory.

What reassurance was John given? Jesus comforted him with a compassionate touch. He placed his right hand on him and told him not to be afraid. This was a wonderful expression of the grace of God.

How did the Speaker describe Himself (vv. 17-18)? *I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.* In the Bible a key is a sign of access and authority. Jesus Christ has the authority to decide who dies and who lives; He controls both life and death.

¹ Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on Revelation, 2017 Edition (published by <http://planobiblechapel.org/soniclight/>), p. 21