

This final Book in the Bible is God's final written revelation to man. Often, we'll see John described as, 'John, the revelator' but that is not correct. Let's begin with the first verse:

'The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants...'

God, the Father, is the One Who reveals and then gives that revelation to the Lord Jesus Christ Who, in turn, gives it to the Church through His chosen servant, John.

The first half of this verse is interesting, also, in that it shows a division, a separation, an individualization within the person of God, Almighty. We know that our God is One God but we also know that He has revealed Himself as three distinct Persons within the Godhead and it is difficult to think about Him without making the separation within our own minds. God is One while at the same time (outside of time, actually) He is also 3 distinct persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Verse 1: *'The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: ² Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.'*

John is a witness to three things: the Word of God, all that the Lord Jesus Christ says and then of all the things he will see as we, also observers, see all these things through the eyes of John.

Notice it says, to show unto His 'servants'... this wasn't just for John; this is meant for us... all of us, the Body and Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ; we are His servants and He is showing us... not just telling us... He has meant for this to be a picture, a moving picture for us to see and understand... to understand clearly and completely; He intends for us to actually 'see' what is written as if in Panavision or IMAX.

This was never meant to be 'too hard to understand,' which is the cry of so many through the centuries and it was never meant as 'allegory.' Just like every other passage of Scripture, as much as is possible, we are to **read and understand the Revelation in a literal sense**. When that is not possible, then we are seeing a picture which represents its obvious reality. We are expected to use our imaginations and to actually 'see' what we read. I believe we are the first generation to be able to understand this Revelation clearly and completely because we are the generation to see all the pieces coming together like a magnificent, cosmic game of chess. We are meant to understand what is coming and then to be faithful to warn those upon whom this will fall in a very short time. This is God, Himself, revealing to us what He said must shortly come to pass. It won't come to pass before He removes us in the Rapture but the stage is now set and it will begin to come to pass immediately upon our departure.

During the first 3 chapters, Jesus Christ, Himself will be speaking to John; actually, He is speaking to the Church through John. After that, it will be angels who speak to John and it will be meant for all those left behind.

Verse 3: *'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.'*

God has promised a special blessing to us as we read and hear this Book; He says, 'the time is at hand!' Chapter's 2 and 3 are written to the Church during the Age of the Church, on Earth, which is almost finished. The 7 letters to specific churches of the late first Century are also intended to show a panorama of the entire Church Age from the time of Pentecost, when the Church was born, until the Rapture when the true Church is removed.

Verse 4: *'John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.'*

Once again, God is pointedly revealing Himself as two distinct Persons, **He Who is Eternal** and also **Jesus Christ**. But then, to force us to study even more, we read this, in Isaiah, of Jesus Christ: *'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called*

*Wonderful, Counselor, **The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.** ⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever.' Isaiah 9:6*

The Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is called the **Mighty God and the Everlasting Father**. Some things... we will only know when we are with Him as He or an angel explains to us some of the things we could never understand with our mortal minds.

John will receive this revelation from Jesus Christ Who received it from God, the Father and then report it first, to these Churches of his time and then, by extension, to all the Saints during the time of the Church, culminating now... in our time... we are the final generation of the Church on Earth.

Jesus speaks His message first to 7 existing churches but, obviously, there were others: Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Philippi, Colossae and Thessalonica... but He knew that what He had to say to these specific 7 churches would also pertain to the entire history of the Church before He returned for her in the Rapture.

His letters to 7 churches had 3 specific purposes:

1. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, His Body and Bride, will tell each individual church what they needed to hear at that moment.
2. He will prophetically reveal the entirety of Church history until He would come for us in the Rapture.
3. He will give instruction and admonition to individual churches and believers which would exist through the entire time of Church history.

We are blessed to be part of an individual church which aligns most closely with Philadelphia. Sadly, much of the Church, today, is moving ever closer toward Laodicea... far afield, out into apostasy.

John tells us this Revelation comes from 3 sources: first, from 1. 'He which is, and which was, and which is to come.' He is Eternal; He has always been and He will always be; He is our Eternal God, Almighty... and, from 2. 'the sevenfold Spirits which are before his throne, ' and also from 3. Jesus Christ

From God, Almighty, from Jesus Christ and from the sevenfold Spirits of God.

What is the identity of the seven Spirits of God. We see Him/Them, 3 more times:

*'And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath **the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars;**' Rev 3:1*

*'And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are **the seven Spirits of God.**' Rev 4:5*

*'And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, **which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.**' Rev 5:6*

Who is this? We should seek to know Who this is; we shouldn't just gloss over it, not caring...

The Eternal One, Jesus Christ, the Seven Spirits of God: this is another depiction of the Trinity. The Seven Spirits of God is a description of the Holy Spirit. This corresponds to what we see in Zechariah's vision in Zech 4:2: he sees a solid gold lampstand with a bowl atop and the pipes for seven flames above. How do we know that this represents the Holy Spirit? Because just after this, we read: *'Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. ⁶ Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, **but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.**' zech 4:5*

He showed Zerubbabel the 7-fold golden lampstand and then said: '... by My Spirit.'

In Rev 5:6, the Lamb has 7 eyes which are the 7 Spirits of God sent forth into all the Earth. Why 7? In the Bible, 7 represents fullness and completion. In Isaiah 11:2, we read, of Jesus,: *'And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;'* *The 7-fold Spirit of God: 1. The Spirit of the Lord. 2. the Spirit of Wisdom 3. the*

Spirit of Understanding 4. the Spirit of Counsel 5. the Spirit of Might 6. the Spirit of Knowledge 7. the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord.'

The Spirit as Seven Eyes represents His all-knowing Omniscience; His being sent out into all the Earth represents His ever-present Omnipresence.

We are seeing another clear depiction of our Triune God: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, 3-in-1 and 1-as-3.

Jesus Christ is always our faithful witness; He always speaks the truth because **He is the Truth...** and, the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.

He was raised from the dead and He is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Verse 5b: *'Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, ⁶ And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

Forever and ever... we will praise, honor and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, to the very best of our abilities. He washed our sin and He made us pure and acceptable to God; He has made us kings and priests unto God; glory honor, praise, dominion, power, might and majesty all are His forever! Again... 7!

We will, during the coming seven years of Tribulation, Daniel's 70th Week of years, learn just how much He has done for us and we will learn what it really means to worship Him. Right now... we do not understand.

Verse 7: *'Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.'*

Soon, He will come for us in the Rapture but that is not what He is referring to here: this is His Second Coming at Armageddon at the end of the Tribulation and not the Rapture, 7 years before. He will refer to the Rapture in two of His letters: to Sardis and to Philadelphia. When He comes for us in the Rapture, one day soon, every eye will not see Him; the Jews who crucified Him will still not understand along with all kindreds, whose sin was the reason for His Crucifixion... all these will be deceived by the coming Antichrist; they will be left to suffer the unimaginable 7 years of God's Wrath poured out on all the World... 7 years to completion.

*'And then (after the Rapture) shall that Wicked (the Antichrist) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: ⁹ Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, ¹⁰ And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; **because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.** ¹¹ And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: ¹² That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.'* 2 Thes 2:8

Even churches, today, have many of these same people in them; they are deceived and believe the lies of the enemy. They are not saved because Salvation has never been explained or even offered to them because those leading them are wolves and false teachers. *Thankfully, that is not so here!

* In case you are reading this and wondering to what I refer: we are privileged to be part of the body of 'Grandview Baptist Church' in Beaver Creek, Oregon... email us if you'd like to know more. *

Verse 8: *'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.'*

This is Jesus Christ saying that He is Eternal; nothing was ever before Him in time, nothing is before Him in eminence and nothing is before Him positionally. He is ultra in every way possible. Everything that exists had its beginning in Him and if He chose to do so, He could, in an instant, cause everything to cease existing.

'For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. ¹⁹ For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;' Col 1:16

'But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. ¹¹ Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, ¹² Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.' 2 Pet 3:10

The Lord Jesus Christ is the first and last, beginning and end, before and above all things.

Verse 9: *'I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,'*

John says he's just a regular Christian; he's our brother and companion, going through trials like us. He was exiled to Patmos because he refused to stop preaching the Gospel. Patmos, just off the coast of Turkey, was inhabited; it is not a barren rock where John existed out in the elements. In fact, it's now considered a nice place to visit: Forbes magazine, in 2009, named Patmos "Europe's most idyllic place to live," writing that "Patmos has evolved over the centuries but has not lost its air of quiet tranquility, which is one reason why people that know it return again and again." John's disciples, who would have been many as he was the last remaining disciple of Jesus, could probably visit him, supplying his needs; he had the freedom and the writing supplies necessary to write this entire book in a fashion sturdy enough to be taken to the main land and distributed to all the churches and to have been preserved until now. Jesus said, *'Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.'* Mark 13:31

John being on Patmos 'for the Word of God,' is a double meaning: he was there because of his preaching the Gospel but he was also sent there by God because that was the place He intended the Revelation to be given. We can only surmise what John meant by his having been 'in the Spirit.' It was a Sunday, 'the Lord's day,' and his probable habit would have been to spend the day in prayer and worship. As he did so, he heard this great voice which sounded to him as something like a trumpet.

Verse 11: (The Voice said) *'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.'*

Jesus Christ told John to write down **what you see...** it's all meant to be visual. To the best of your ability, John, **write down exactly what you see...** no matter how fantastic it looks to you... write it down; I will give you the exact words I want you to use... you are simply to be a witness of what you see; you don't have to explain it or apologize for its outlandishness; if you see it... write it! Write it in a sturdy and completed form.

As you can see on the map, this all happens in Turkey; Patmos is under Greek control but it is near the coast of Turkey. The nearest church to Patmos is Ephesus. Then, up to Smyrna, up to Pergamos and then a straight line south, to the remaining 4 churches, all in perfect order.

