

TOPIC: JESUS IS ALIVE**TEXT: REVELATION 1**

- *Prologue (vv.1-3)*
- *Greetings and doxology (vv.4-8)*
- *The Vision of Jesus (One like a Son of Man), vv.9-20*

The book of Revelation is on one hand devastating, yet on the other hand reassuring, exciting and comforting.

Why is it devastating?

Imagine experiencing all of these horrors at the same time.

- An 8.0 earthquake
- Nuclear Bombs raining down on London
- Plagues greater than any in history causing friends and friends to get sick and to die
- Strange creature from the sky descending upon the earth killing people in their billions

Got the picture?

This is only part of the terrifying, electrifying, awe-inspiring twirl of events that make up the book of Revelation.

Why Exciting?

Revelation pictures a time when there will be:

- A glorious new heaven and a new earth
- A time when God will dwell with us in universal peace
- A time when there will be an end to all sorrow, pain and death
- A time when righteousness will triumph over evil
- A time when Jesus will defeat Satan once and for all

Dr. Earl Palmer, once said,

"This remarkable book is both hard to understand fully and impossible to forget."

The book of Revelation is not just a collection of mysteries and symbols images for the future; it is a vibrant and profound book applicable to us today.

Revelation is not the conclusion by mistake, it gathers from the rest of the Bible making it a

whole.

Revelation brings into brilliant focus the entire scope of human history and eternity

GENESIS AND REVELATION BOOKENDS THAT HOLD THE ENTIRE WORD OF GOD TOGETHER

Bookends	Genesis	Revelation
	Origin of Sin	Victory over Sin
	Origin of Human History and Civilization	The End of it and our entry into the eternal state
	The Beginning of God's Judgment and Grace	We see the awesome result of God's Judgment and the Triumph of His grace

The great themes of these two books are intricately intertwined.

A "SIGN-IFICANT" BOOK (REVELATION, PROPHECY AND SIGNS)

1-3 **Preface**, which tells us the **Purpose** of the book

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what, must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw--that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

Revelation and a Prophecy are words that reveal the nature of the book.

(1) REVELATION is apokalupsis, in the Greek and means, "an unveiling."

A revelation removes the veil, which obscures our understanding, it unravels the mystery, and it makes the meaning plain.

Accordingly, as we study Revelation, we will find many mysteries made clear.

- Why the persistence of evil
- Evil's ultimate fate
- Learn how to live godly lives in the midst of a broken world

(2) PROPHECY is the other word that describe the book of Revelation

- Revelation deals with Predictions of the Future
- People, Events, Personalities, and Circumstance of the Future

The book is called the "**revelation of Jesus Christ**," made known by Jesus Himself.

(3) SIGN-IFIED (MADE IT KNOWN)

The Greek word "*semaino*" translated "**signified**"--or, "**sign-ified.**" ¹

In other words, Jesus made His revelation known to John by signs or symbols.

Symbols help to simplify difficult concepts and to clarify things, which are baffling or difficult.

The book of Revelation, however, uses symbols with great precision and clarity.

The weird beasts and strange persons of Revelation are all symbols of things, which are real and literal. All these symbols will become clear as we go through Revelation.

The key is that every symbols in Revelation is found else where in scripture (**Isaiah, Psalms, Ezekiel, Daniel, Jeremiah, Zechariah etc**), that is why we need to read the whole Bible otherwise we will be doomed to confusion.

THE AUTHOR

The author of Revelation is The Triune *God Himself!*

1. The Eternal Sovereign Father
2. The Holy Spirit in his 7-fold plenitude power
3. Jesus the Faithful and True Witness.

¹

σημαίνω; impf. ἐσήμαινον (Acts xi. 28 L WH txt.); 1 aor. ἐσήμανα, for ἐσήμηνα which is the more com. form in the earlier and more elegant Grk. writ. (see Matthiae § 185; Kühner § 343 s. v.; [Veitch s. v.]; *Lob. ad Phryn.* p. 24 sq.; W. § 15 s. v.; B. 41 (35)); (fr. σῆμα a sign); fr. [Hom.], Aeschyl., Hdt. down; *to give a sign, to signify, indicate*: τί, Acts xxv. 27; foll. by indir. disc., Jn. xii. 33; xviii. 32; xxi. 19; i. q. *to make known*: absol. Rev. i. 1; foll. by acc. w. inf. Acts xi. 28.*

They are united in giving us this amazing prediction.

John² (The Apostle, the brother of James, the son of Zebedee, the beloved friend of Jesus) was merely a writer taking dictation unlike other Bible books.

THE GREETING AND DOXOLOGY (4-8)

We find there are certain numbers that hold a fascinating significance in the book of Revelation.

To the seven churches in the province of Asia:

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father--to him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen. Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." Rev.1: 4-8

THE GREETING

"Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come."

These words describe God the Father as the Lord of all time and all eternity. His name in Hebrew, *Yahweh*, and means **"I AM."**

"I AM"

In English sounds like a present tense statement

In Hebrew it contains all statements in Revelation 1:4

² But who is this man John, whose pen has preserved for us this awesome and powerful vision of the future? In verse 4 he simply identifies himself as "John." By comparing Revelation with other Scriptures and by examining the traditions of the early church, we can be reasonably sure that the author is John the apostle, the brother of James, the son of Zebedee, the beloved friend of Jesus, author of the gospel and three letters that bear his name. Certainly, there are Bible scholars who disagree, but when we compare the style, content, and structure of Revelation with that of the other writings of the apostle John, it is difficult to come to any other conclusion.

"I am he who is (present), and he who was (past), and he who is to come (future)."

THE NUMBER 7³

Next we come to the key number of Revelation, the first of a series of *sevens*: "and from the seven spirits before his throne."

Why is the number *seven* significant in Revelation? Because, whenever you encounter seven of anything in this book, it is a symbol of completeness and perfection.

Whom do the **"seven spirits before his throne"** signify?

Here we find the first of many echoes from Old Testament prophecy.

In Isaiah 11:2, the prophet speaks of the Spirit of God coming upon the Messiah:

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him--the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD . . . Revelation 1:4

In this passage the Spirit of God is described in a sevenfold way.

He is,

- The Spirit of the Lord
- The Spirit of wisdom
- The Spirit of understanding

³ Distinctive feature: 7 used 52 times

- 7 beatitudes (1:3)
- 7 Churches (1:4),
- 7 Spirits (1:4),
- 7 Golden Lampstands (1:12),
- 7 Stars (1:16),
- 7 Seals (5:1),
- 7 Horns and 7 eyes (5:6),
- 7 Trumpets (8:2),
- 7 Thunders (10:3),
- 7 Signs and 7 Hills (12:1,3; 13:13-14; 15:1; 16:14; 19:20),
- 7 Crowns (12:3),
- 7 Plagues (15:6),
- 7 Golden Bowls (15:7),
- 7 Hills (17:9),
- 7 Kings (17:10) and other sevens

- The Spirit of counsel
- The Spirit of power
- The Spirit of knowledge
- The Spirit of the fear of the Lord.

So the "**SEVEN SPIRITS**" of Revelation 1:4 are a symbol of the **Holy Spirit** in His **sevenfold completion, perfection, and fullness**.

The Greeting of Grace and Peace

- God the Father, the eternal "I AM"
- Holy Spirit
- Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the central figure of Revelation, who is introduced in threefold fashion⁴ as:

(1) THE FAITHFUL WITNESS (TRUE AND RELIABLE, TRUSTWORTHY)

In a confusing, chaotic, dying world, Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the truth-teller.

Jesus is the only one who is unarguably apodictic⁵

(2) THE FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD

Only Jesus was raised to eternal, incorruptible glory. It is this same eternal, incorruptible life that Jesus gives to those who believe in Him. He is the life-giver.

(3) THE RULER OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH.

There are many rulers and leaders who claim to be sovereign in their own countries, but Jesus exercises ultimate authority over them all. He is the great lawmaker, the king of kings.

THE FIRST DOXOLOGY (A THREEFOLD DOXOLOGY)

⁴ Jesus is introduced in threefold fashion as the *truth-teller*, the *life-giver*, and the *lawmaker*.

⁵ Necessarily or demonstrably true: incontrovertible. Absolutely certain, necessarily true, proved and demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt [Latin *apodictic*, from Greek *apodeiktikos*, from *apodeiktos*, demonstrable, from *apodeiknunai*, to demonstrate: *apo-*, apo- + *deiknunai*, to show.] Verbal Advantage

(1) "Him who loves us,"

He loves us. (Present tense). It's an amazing fact. Despite all our foolishness, waywardness, selfishness, and sin, the Lord Jesus loves us. He is always on our side.

(2) Who "has freed us from our sins by his blood"?

Jesus has given us liberty over addictions and dependencies, which harass us, enslave us, and chain us down.

It is true that many Christians continue to struggle with evil habits even after coming into a relationship with Christ. But the blood of Christ gives us the power to break the chains of sin--if we will but turn the control of our lives over to Him.

(3) Who "has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father."?

We are all sinners, estranged from a holy and just God because of our sin.

The role of a priest is to bridge the alienation between the people and God, to bring the people near to God again.

In the Old Testament, priests explained the meaning of sacrifices, called the people to repentance, and thus brought the people near to God.

PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

Today, *all* believers are called to perform the function of a priest. It's a high and holy calling, given to us by Jesus Himself.

Priestly Job Description

- We are to reach out to others in their pain, sorrow and confusion with eagerness and alacrity.
- We are to explain to them the sacrifice that Jesus has made on their behalf
- We are to share with them the fact that God loves them and longs to draw them to Him, to heal their loneliness and alienation.

THE SPLENDOR OF HIS COMING

In Revelation 1:7 (Zechariah 12:10-13:6)

The Lord is introduced to us in terms of who He is (His attributes and His glory)

And in terms of what He will do in the future:

"LOOK, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS."

All events on earth and from heaven are moving towards this single event--the focal point of all life.

One day Jesus Himself will break through the skies, and He will appear again in glory, just as when He left the earth. His coming will have worldwide impact, for, as Revelation 1:7 says, **"every eye will see him."**

Christ will appear everywhere, and He will be visible to everyone in the world at once. In 2 Thessalonians 2:8, Paul calls this event **"the splendor of his coming,"** or, more literally, **"the outshining of his parousia"** (parousia is the Greek word which describes the future presence of Jesus on earth).

Jesus' appearance will be so unmistakable that even the Jews will recognize Him.

John tells us,

"Even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him."

The Jews shall ask Him, "What are these wounds on your body?" and He will say, 'the wounds I was given at the house of my friends.'

Everybody including the Jews will say "Welcome back!" because they will see Him, they will know Him, and they--along with all the peoples of the earth--will mourn, knowing that the Messiah has visited this planet once before, that He was despised, rejected, and crucified.

According to Romans 9-11 Jewish people are blinded and cannot see Christ as the Messiah right now. But Jewish unbelief will not last forever.

The day will come when the Jewish people will recognize--and mourn--their Messiah. They will mourn, just as all the peoples of the earth will mourn, because of the tragic and terrible way they have treated Jesus and His work for all mankind upon the cross.

THE DIVINE AUTOGRAPH

In these opening verses--the "flyleaf" of the book of Revelation--God takes the pen in His own hand and signs the book with His own signature: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God," meaning He is the beginning and end of all things.

He continues, describing Himself in this inscription as the One "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Many of us love autographs from celebrities I remember getting one from Thierry Henry at the Landmark Hotel- that really made my year.

Revelation is God's own autograph to us, **"I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA"**

That doesn't just make your day or year but your eternity!

REVELATION 1:9-20

John was in the Spirit that doesn't mean some sort of religious ecstasy but rather that he was worshiping God and meditating on God's greatness and majesty on this little isle of Patmos.

TIME: A.D. 94 to 96

DESTINATION: Seven Churches in Asia (Turkey)

A **BLESSING**⁶ for those who read the book

- **What kind of favorable circumstance?**

His Comfort, Guidance, and Assurance, even through such times of upheaval and fear as described in Revelation.

We live in troubled and confused times, filled with temptations, pressures, and anti-Christian ideologies--and the days will grow darker as we near the conclusion of history.

But the person who understands the book of Revelation will have a faithful guide through the tumult and confusion of this dying age.

The Lord Himself said,

"Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches."

When John heard and saw the Lord he was standing among seven golden lampstands, holding seven stars in His hands.

Note the significance of the number seven again, the number of completeness.

JOHN'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE LORD

The symbols that characterize John's vision of the Lord Jesus⁷:

⁶ A favourable circumstance caused by God

⁷ 1. The **robe** with its **golden** sash. Jesus is a priest who is Himself God⁷.

2. His **head and His hair** are white. Denote wisdom and purity.

3. His **eyes (like blazing fire)** nothing is hidden from them and **His glowing bronze like feet**. Fire speaks of judgment.

5. His **voice** is like the sound of rushing waters. The sound of His voice is the sound of power, inspiring our awe.

6. **The sword from His mouth**. The Word of God, by which Jesus reveals truth to us

7. His **face** is like the sun shining in its strength. The brilliance of the sun symbolizes the burning intensity of truth.

He saw the Lord's coming in symbols of priestly garments, of brilliant light, of blazing fire, of thunderous sound (Judgment), of supreme power, purity, wisdom, and holiness.

This vision of Jesus is the most startling and graphic of all⁸. We will see other symbols of Jesus in chs.5, 19,21

John's response to this vision and encounter was humility and worship, which should be every human's response too.

Jesus reached out to John on his level and touched him, thereby reassuring him again as a disciple and friend.

"WRITE!"

Here is a lesson for you with every commission there is reassurance. Cf. Matthew 28:18-20

"Write, therefore," says the Lord, "what you have seen, what is now, and what will take place later."

Notice that Jesus gives him a three-part writing assignment.

That three-part assignment is basically our outline of the whole book:

- The things John saw, which occupy **chapter one**
- The things, which are (which existed in his day)---the seven churches, which occupy chapters **two and three**; dealing with the whole present Church age,
- The Prophetic Vision (4-22), this long section, which deals with things, which are "**hereafter.**"⁹

⁸ Throughout the remainder of Revelation, we will see other symbolism employed to describe various aspects of Jesus' character, power, and position. In chapter 5, He will appear as a lamb--and also as a lion. In chapter 19, He will appear as a rider on a great white horse. He is a bridegroom coming for His bride in chapter 21.

⁹ The words "hereafter" are a translation of the Greek words "meta autos", which literally means "after these things". So you have John writing that which he saw. He will be writing in chapters two and three the things that are during this present age, the things of the church. And then as you begin in chapter four, he is going to write of the things that transpire after the things of the church, the things that will be hereafter, or more literally after these things, so it is significant. You need to watch for it. Chapter four begins with the Greek words "meta autos". "After these things, I saw a door open in heaven: and the first voice was as of a trumpet saying unto me; Come up hither, and I will show you things which must be". Again the repetition of the Greek words "meta autos", "after these things." So you enter into the third section of the book when you get to chapter four. So, you get into the future aspects of the book. We are now living in the eras of chapters two and three, "the things which are". The church continues to exist, and the testimony and the witness of the church, and the witness of Jesus concerning His church, which is even more important. So, there are three divisions of the book. It is important that you catch this, because if you don't you are going to have a constantly confused and garbled view of the future. You will see the church in the midst of the tribulation and the one hundred and forty-four thousand—you'll try to twist to be the church. There are all kinds of twisted and exaggerated concepts that have come from the book of Revelation, because people did not catch the key in this first chapter here. Now, the Lord explains to John a little bit of the vision that he saw. Remember he turned and he saw Him walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. Chuck Smith

In Conclusion:

Jesus is the focal point, the central figure of Revelation and of the whole History.

To live our lives in abundance with joy, peace, love and triumph. Jesus is the Centre and we need to fix our eyes on Him.

References: Ray C Stedman, NIV, F LaGard Smith, Blue Letter Bible, Biblegateway