***“Reviewing Revelation”—Chapter 1***

**One of the most important aspects of Revelation is that every prophecy and promise which has not happened to this point will be fulfilled in this writing. And every eye will see Him: When Jesus comes, it won't be a secret coming. Everyone will know. At His first coming, Jesus was somewhat obscure. During His earthly ministry, He came as the shepherd. But when Jesus comes again, every eye will see Him. The whole world will know. This writing was scribed at Patmos. Early sources also indicated that about a.d. 96, and at Domitian's death, John was allowed to return to Ephesus when the Emperor Nerva was in power. Here, John was commanded to write what he saw. He would be commanded to write eleven more times in the Book of Revelation. We get the sense that unless John was commanded to write, he would have just kept it to himself. This book “bookends” the entire story of God for earth….it is the final climax of history, and it is the restoration of Jesus Christ as King!**

**1:1-2, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants; things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.”**

**OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 1**

**Verses 1-3 Introduction**

**Verses 4-11 Salutation and Occasion**

**Verses 12-18 Vision of the Risen Christ**

**Verse 19 Outline of the Book**

**Verse 20 Prep for Chapters 2 and 3**

1. **What does “Revelation” mean?** The Revelation of Jesus Christ: The ancient Greek word translated Revelation is *apokalupsis* (apocalypse). The word simply means "a revealing, an unveiling."
2. **God gave this to “whom?” Jesus Christ**
3. **What does the word “signified” represent? Signs**
   1. **See 2 Corinthians 12:2-4…. “**I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth ;) such a one caught up to the third heaven. 3And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” **Yet the signs are necessary because John expresses things of heaven, which Paul said he heard with *inexpressible words* (**[**2 Corinthians 12:4**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Corinthians+12:4&t1=en_nas)**). John described things he saw, so he could only use symbolic images to explain it.**
4. **Who is John?**
5. **Who are His servants? You**
6. **Define “Shortly take place.” Vertical, once it starts, it will be rapid. Shortly is the ancient Greek phrase *en tachei*, which means " 'quickly or suddenly coming to pass,' indicating rapidity of execution after the beginning takes place. The idea is not that the event may occur soon, but that when it does, it will be sudden."**
7. **The word, “show,” implies that this prophecy is meant to be understood, Revelation 22:10, “**And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.”
   1. **Contrast this prophecy with Daniel 12:4, “**But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”
8. **Who wrote Revelation?** Jesus  **Who scribed it?** John
9. **Discuss the angel mentioned. Use Revelation 5:2, “**And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?” **7:2, “**And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,”  **10:8-11:1, “**And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.9And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.10And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.11And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.11 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein,” **and 17:7, “**And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.” **By His angel: Many of the signs and visions of the Book of Revelation came to John through the supervision of an angel. THIS IS A MESSENGER ANGEL.**

**1:3, “Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near.”**

1. **Re-state the “threefold” blessing implied in Verse 3. 1. Blessed is he who reads . . . 2. Those who hear and 3. Keep those things which are written in it: The Book of Revelation offers a particular and unique blessing to those who *read* and *keep* the message of this book.** 
   1. **This is the first of seven beatitudes of Revelation. See also Revelation** [**14**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:14&t1=en_nas)**:13, “**Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on,”**16:15, “**Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed *is* he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame,” **19:9, “**Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God,” **20:6, “**Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years,”  **22:7, “**Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book,” **and 22:14, “**Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.” **Because they neglect the book of Revelation**, **many people miss this blessing. For example, the Anglican Church virtually omits Revelation in its regular schedule of readings for both public worship and private devotions. This is a typical attitude towards the Book of Revelation. Many people believe that only fanatics want to dig deep into this book, but really, it is a book for anyone who wants to be blessed.**
   2. **Elaborate on this thought: “He who reads” is in the *singular*, and "Those who hear" is in the *plural*. The idea is probably from custom of the early church, where attention was given to the public reading of Scripture, which was often then explained. It also says, “Blessed are those who keep those things which are written in it.” How can these concepts be applied in today’s world?**

**1:4-5a, “John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.”**

1. **Who is the greeting of this letter addressed to? To the seven churches which are in Asia: This letter was originally addressed to these seven selected churches of Asia. This was the Roman province of Asia Minor, which is the western part of modern day Turkey.**
2. **Point out the trinity in the phrase: “From Him who is and who was and who is to come.” As Lord over eternity, THIS IS GOD THE FATHER….He rules the past, the present, and the future.**
   1. **Who are “The seven Spirits who are before His throne?” THIS IS THE HOLY SPIRIT….. speaks to the *perfection* and *completion* of the Holy Spirit. John used an Old Testament description of the Holy Spirit.**
      1. **Refer to Isaiah 11:2. The idea of the seven Spirits quotes from the Old Testament.** [**Isaiah 11:2**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+11:2&t1=en_nas) **describes seven aspects of the Holy Spirit: “*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 fear of the Lord.”* It isn't that there are seven different spirits of God, rather the Spirit of the Lord has these characteristics, and He has them all in fullness and perfection.**
      2. **Does this complete the trinity? “From Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.” THIS IS THE SON. John brought a greeting from *God the Son*, who is described by *who He is* and by *what He has done*. The ancient Greek word translated witness is also the word for a *martyr*.**
         1. **Jesus became the “firstborn from the dead.” See Romans 8:29, “**29For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”
         2. **Rabbis also used firstborn as a Messianic title. "God said, 'as I made Jacob a first-born (**[**Exodus 4:22**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+4:22&t1=en_nas)**, “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Israel *is* My son, My firstborn.), so also will I make King Messiah a first-born' (Psalm 89: 2**[**7-28**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Psalm+89:28&t1=en_nas)**, “**Also I will make him *My* firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth. 28My mercy I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall stand firm with him.”

**1:5b-6, “ Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”**

1. **Explain how “To Him who loved us” points back to the cross. What a beautiful title for Jesus! When loved is used, in the *past tense*, it points back to a particular time and place where Jesus loved us by giving His life!** 
   1. **Refer to** [**Romans 5:8**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+5:8&t1=en_nas)**, “*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*.”**
2. **When did Jesus “wash us in His own blood?” See I John 1:7, “**But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin,” **and I John 1:9, “If *we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*.” Notice the order: first loved, and then washed. It wasn't that God washed us out of some sense of duty and then loved us because we were then clean. He loved us while we were dirty, but then He washed us. HERE’S AN INTERESTING NOTE--Some scholars believe that John wrote *and loosed us from our sins*. There is only one letter different between the words washed and *loosed* in the ancient Greek language. Both words show up in ancient manuscripts, so it's hard to say which one John wrote. Nevertheless, both are true - we are both washed and *loosed* from our sins.**
3. **Where else in scripture to we see “kings and priests?”** 
   1. **In the Old Testament, it was forbidden to combine the offices of king and priest. King Uzziah of Judah is an example of a man who tried to combine the two offices, and paid the penalty for it. Use** [**2 Chronicles 26:16-23**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Chronicles+26:16-23&t1=en_nas)**, “**16But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to *his* destruction, for he transgressed against the Lord his God by entering the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense. 17So Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him were eighty priests of the Lord—valiant men. **18And they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him, “*It is* not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the Lord, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have trespassed!** You *shall have* no honor from the Lord God.”19Then Uzziah became furious; and he *had* a censer in his hand to burn incense. And while he was angry with the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead, before the priests in the house of the Lord, beside the incense altar. 20And Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and there, on his forehead, he *was* leprous; so they thrust him out of that place. Indeed he also hurried to get out, because the Lord had struck him.21King Uzziah was a leper until the day of his death. He dwelt in an isolated house, because he was a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the Lord. Then Jotham his son *was* over the king’s house, judging the people of the land.22Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from first to last, the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz wrote. 23So Uzziah rested with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of burial which *belonged* to the kings, for they said, “He is a leper.” Then Jotham his son reigned in his place.”
   2. **Who is Melchizedek? See Genesis 14:18-20, “**18Then **Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he *was* the priest of God Most High**. 19And he blessed him and said: “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” And he gave him a tithe of all.”
   3. **Jesus is also a priest and a king. Examine Hebrews 6:19-20, “**This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the *Presence* behind the veil, 20where the forerunner has entered for us, ***even* Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”**
   4. **Discuss “us” being priests and kings. Revelation 1:6, “**and has **made us kings and priests t**o His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen **and 5:10, “**And have made uskingsand priests to our God; and weshall reign on the earth.”
      1. **Reference Hebrews 13:15, “**Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name **and Romans 5:1-2, “**Therefore, having been justified by faith, we havepeace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”
      2. **What is the “New Covenant?” we can be like Jesus in the sense that He is both King and High Priest (**[**Luke 1:31-33**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Luke+1:31-33&t1=en_nas)**, “**And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. 32He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will **give Him the throne of His father David**. 33And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end,” [**Hebrews 4:14**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hebrews+4:14&t1=en_nas)**, “**Seeing then that **we have a great High Priest** who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession.”**)**
4. **Elaborate about the use of the word, “Amen.”** This word - in the ancient Greek language, brought over from the Hebrew of the Old Testament - simply means "*Yes.*" It isn't a wish that it *may* be so, but it is an affirmation that, through God, it *will* be so. Jesus *will be praised*. **"The Greek word *amen* is a transliteration of a Hebrew word of similar sound meaning 'truth' or 'faithfulness,' hence the meaning 'be it true' or 'so be it.' "**

**1:7, “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”**

1. **Verse 7 shifts from praise to a description of Jesus Christ. Reference Matthew 24:24-25, *“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.25Behold, I have told you before.”*** Behold, He is coming: **This is a command to *look* - to *check it out*.** John moved from praising Jesus to describing His return.
2. **Compare the phrase, “Every eye will see Him,” with Daniel 7:13, “**I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him,” **Matthew 26:64, “**Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven,” **and 24:30, “**And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”
3. **The vision of Christ couples with John 14:3, “**And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” **Discuss.**
4. **Review the meaning of “clouds.” Use Acts 1:9-11, “**And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”  **He was taken up into a cloud and God said that He would return in the same manner (**[**Acts 1:9-11**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Acts+1:9-11&t1=en_nas)**).** 
   1. **See also** [**Hebrews 12:1**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hebrews+12:1&t1=en_nas)**, “**Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us**,” clouds are commonly associated with God's presence and glory,**  [**Exodus 13:21-22**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+13:21-22&t1=en_nas)**, “**And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:22He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people, “ [**16**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+13:16&t1=en_nas)**:10, “**And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud,” **19:9, “**And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee forever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord,” **and 24:15-18, “**And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. 16And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. 17And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. 18And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights,” **relating to the Old Testament cloud of glory called the *Shekinah*.**
   2. **Parallel this with Old Testament** [**Daniel 7:13-14**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Daniel+7:13-14&t1=en_nas)**, “**I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.14And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed,”  **and from Jesus' own words: “*I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven,”*** [**Matthew 26:64**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+26:64&t1=en_nas)**.**
   3. Review Matthew 24:26-27. **John heard Jesus Himself say, *Therefore if they say to you, "Look, He is in the desert!" do not go out; or "Look, He is in the inner rooms!" do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be* (**[**Matthew 24:26-27**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+24:26-27&t1=en_nas)**).**
   4. **Couple verse 7, even those who pierced him, with Zechariah 12:10, “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”** Even they who pierced Him: When Jesus comes, it will be a particularly meaningful revelation for the Jewish people. Of course, it was not the Jews alone who pierced Him. But we know John had in mind the revelation of Jesus to His own people because this is an allusion to [Zechariah 12:10](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Zechariah+12:10&t1=en_nas).
      1. **Reference** [**Matthew 23:39**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+23:39&t1=en_nas)**, “**I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,” **24:30, “**And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory,” **and** [**Romans 11:25-26**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Romans+11:25-26&t1=en_nas)**, “**For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.26And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” **When they see Jesus and His pierced hands and feet, it will be a painful reminder of their *previous* rejection of Him. It will fulfill the scene of** [**Zechariah 12:10**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Zechariah+12:10&t1=en_nas)**: “*And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn*.”**
      2. **Review Revelation 7:9. When Jesus comes, it won't be only the Jewish people who mourn because of their previous rejection of Jesus. Since there will be people saved from all the tribes of the earth (**[**Revelation 7:9**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+7:9&t1=en_nas)**), everyone will have a part in this mourning. We will all look at His scars and say "We did this to Him."**

**1:8, “"I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."**

1. **Why does Jesus introduce Himself? I am the Alpha and the Omega: In many translations, and in "Red-Letter" editions, these words are in red. This shows that the translators believed that these were the words of Jesus. John was finished with his introduction, and now Jesus introduced Himself. After all, it is His revelation (*the Revelation of Jesus Christ*,** [**Revelation 1:1**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:1&t1=en_nas)**), so it isn't strange that He introduces it.**
   1. **Who is “The Alpha and the Omega?” Use Revelation 11:17, “**Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned,”  **16:5, “**And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus,”  **and 22:13, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”**
   2. **Use Micah 5:2, “**But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting,” **and Hebrews 13:8, “**Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever,” **to explain “who is and who was and who is to come.”**
   3. **“Almighty” is from the Greek word, ‘pantokrater,’ which means “the one who has his hand on everything….sovereign control.’ Elaborate. This great word Almighty is used ten times in the New Testament, and nine of the ten times are in the Book of Revelation.**
   4. **Revelation has a striking emphasis on God’s sovereignty. Why?** understand that He has His hand on *everything*.

**1:9, “I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”**

1. **Who commands John to write?**
2. **Where is Patmos?** The island of Patmos was a like an Alcatraz Island in the Roman Empire. It was used as a prison island and functioned as a jail without bars. The island was rich in marble, and most of the prisoners were forced laborers in marble quarries. Patmos was a rocky, desolate island about 10 miles long and 6 miles wide.**" Lonely, desolate, barren, uninhabited, seldom visited, it had all the requisites which could be desired for a place of punishment; and banishment to that place would accomplish all that a persecutor could wish in silencing the apostle, without putting him to death." Yet this exile *didn't* silence the Apostle John. The ancient Christian historian Eusebius says John was imprisoned at Patmos under the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian. (*Church History*, III.18, 20 - from the *Nicean and Post Nicean Fathers Series 2*, Volume 1, pages 148-149). "According to Victorinus, John, though aged was forced to labor in the mines located on Patmos.”**
3. **How many times does John refer to himself writer of Revelation? 5 times.**
   1. **Look at: 1:1, 4, and 9; 21:2, and 22:8.**

**1:10-11,”I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."**

1. **Re-visit “The Lord’s Day,” or, according to Joel, Amos, and Zechariah, “The Day of the Lord.” Examine Joel 2:1-2, “** Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; 2A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations,” **Amos 5:18-20, “**Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! To what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. 19As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. 20Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? Even very dark, and no brightness in it?” **and Zechariah 1:14-15, “**So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, thus saith the Lord of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. 15And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction.”
2. **Find the four references to John being in the Spirit in the Book of Revelation. First at Patmos (**[**Revelation 1:10**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:10&t1=en_nas)**, “**I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,”**) then in heaven (**[**Revelation 4:2**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+4:2&t1=en_nas)**, “**And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne,”**) then in the wilderness (**[**Revelation 17:3**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+17:3&t1=en_nas)**, “**So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns,”**) and finally on the mountain of God (**[**Revelation 21:10**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+21:10&t1=en_nas)**, “**And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,”**). Parallel these.**
3. **Many scholars claim that the “Lord’s Day” is our Sunday. However, use Proverbs 22:28, “**Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set,” **to discount this. This says that we should not remove ancient landmarks…such as the Sabbath!**
4. **Talk about the “loud voice as a trumpet.” See Joel 2:1, “**Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand,” **and 15, “**15Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly,”  **and Numbers 10:10**, “Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God.”
5. **Where do we see the “First and Last” used elsewhere in the Bible? Refer to** [**Isaiah 41:4**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+41:4&t1=en_nas)**, “**Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am he,”  **[44](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+41:44&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank):6, “**Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; **and beside me there is no God,” and 48:12, “**Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last.”
6. **What are the seven churches addressed here? Why these churches? Each of these churches is in the region of the Roman province of Asia. HERE’S AN ACROSTIC TO HELP REMEMBER THESE CHURCHES--Every Saved Person Truly Seeks a Perfected Life—an acrostic for the Seven Churches. SIXTY-THREE YEARS AFTER THE PENTECOST OVER 100 CHURCHES EXISTED. ..ROME, COLOSSE, JERUSALEM, ANTIOCH, PHILIPI, GALATIA, ICONIUM, LYSTRA, DERBE, MILETUS, HIERAPOLIS, TROAS. Some suggest that it was because they are arranged in a roughly circular pattern. Others think it was because these were postal districts in the Roman province of Asia. Many believe seven churches were chosen because in the Bible, the number seven often represents completeness, and these letters - and all of the Book of Revelation - are written to the *complete* church, not *only* these seven churches. Seiss writes, "The churches of all time are comprehended in seven."**
   1. **Compare these seven churches with the seven churches written to by the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul also wrote to seven churches: Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi, and Thessalonica.**

**1:12-13, “Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.”**

1. **Who is the voice speaking here? I turned to see the voice: We can only imagine what went through John's mind as he turned. The voice he heard was probably not exactly the same sound as he remembered Jesus' voice to be (John described it *as of a trumpet*,** [**Revelation 1:10**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:10&t1=en_nas)**, “**I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,”**). Yet he knew from the voice's self-description (*Alpha and Omega*) that it was Jesus. This was John's opportunity to see Jesus again, after knowing Him so well during the years of His earthly ministry.**
2. **What are the golden lampstands? These were not candlesticks (which were used in the Tabernacle), they were not menorahs, but they were free standing oil lamp stands. The lamps set *on* these lampstands. There were seven separate lampstands. This is an image that *reminds* us of the *golden lampstand* that stood in the tabernacle and the temple (**[**Exodus 25:31-37**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+25:31-37&t1=en_nas)**, “**And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same. 32And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side: 33Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, with a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick. 34And in the candlesticks shall be four bowls made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers. 35And there shall be a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick. 36Their knops and their branches shall be of the same: all it shall be one beaten work of pure gold. 37And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it.”) **Yet this is different. The Old Covenant lampstand was *one lampstand* with *seven lamps* on it. Here in the New Covenant, we see seven lampstands. "In the Jewish tabernacle there was one golden candlestick, and seven lamps, to give light . . . John here seeth seven. God had but one church of the Jews, but many among the Gentiles." Therefore, the lampstands are a good picture of the church. We don't produce the light, we simply display it.**
3. **Who is walking in the midst of the seven lampstands? One like the Son of Man: Jesus was there in the midst of these lampstands, as the Son of Man,** 
   1. **Parallel with** [**Daniel 7:13-14**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Daniel+7:13-14&t1=en_nas)**, “**13I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.14And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”
4. **Describe Jesus in verse 13. Clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band: The clothing of Jesus indicates that He is a person of great dignity and authority. Long garments were only worn by those who didn't have to work much, so they were a picture of great status and authority.** 
   1. **Do the garments hint at a High Priest? See Exodus 29:5, “**And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod,” **and** [**Exodus 39:1-5**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Exodus+39:1-5&t1=en_nas)**, “**And of the blue, and purple, and scarlet, they made cloths of service, to do service in the holy place, and made the holy garments for Aaron; as the Lord commanded Moses.2And he made the ephod of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. 3And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into wires, to work it in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, with cunning work. 4They made shoulder pieces for it, to couple it together: by the two edges was it coupled together. 5And the curious girdle of his ephod that was upon it, was of the same, according to the work thereof; of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; as the Lord commanded Moses.”**…** Says that there **were golden threads in the band that went around the chest of the high priest of Israel. Jesus' band has more than a few golden threads.** It is all gold! How much greater is the eternal, heavenly priesthood of Jesus! **One of the duties of the Old Testament priests was to tend the golden lampstand in the tabernacle. Every day they had to fill the oil, clean the soot, and trim the wicks. They had to closely inspect and care for the lamps so they would burn continually before the Lord. Here is Jesus, our High Priest, in the midst of the seven lampstands, carefully inspecting and caring for the lamps, helping them to always burn brightly before the Lord.**
   2. **Compare this description with the Transfiguration in Matthew 17 and the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7.**

**1:14-16, “His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength.”**

1. **Describe the physical attributes of Jesus. Use also Isaiah 1:18, “**Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool,” **and Daniel 7:9, “**I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.” **His head and hair were white like wool: The white hair speaks of old age, and is therefore in that culture connected with the idea of great wisdom and the white hair and head also connect Jesus with the Ancient of Days in** [**Daniel 7:9**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Daniel+7:9&t1=en_nas)**.** 
   1. **Talk about “His eyes like a flame of fire.” Reference** Revelation 19:12, “His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself,” **and** [**2**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+5:2&t1=en_nas) **Peter 3:7, “**But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”  **Fire is often associated with judgment in the Scriptures. Jesus' eyes displayed the fire of searching, penetrating judgment.**
   2. **Why are his feet described as “fine brass?” Examine Exodus 27:1-6, “**And thou shalt make an altar of shittim wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be foursquare: and the height thereof shall be three cubits. 2And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof: his horns shall be of the same: and thou shalt overlay it with brass. 3And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basins, and his flesh hooks, and his firepans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass. 4And thou shalt make for it a grate of network of brass; and upon the net shalt thou make four brazen rings in the four corners thereof. 5And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath that the net may be even to the midst of the altar. 6And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with brass.” **Since fire is connected with judgment, these feet like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace speaks of someone who has been through the fires of judgment and has come forth with a refined purity**. Jesus has been through the "Refiner's Fire." **Brass is a metal connected with judgment and sacrifice. Brass is also a strong metal, the strongest known in the ancient world. Therefore feet . . . like fine brass are "An emblem of his *stability and permanence*, *brass* being considered the most durable of all metallic substances or compounds."**
   3. **What are the seven stars? Revelation 1:11, “**Saying, 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,” **and 20, “**The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.”  **He had in His right hand seven stars: The seven stars speak of the leaders or representatives of the *seven churches* mentioned in** [**Revelation 1:11**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:11&t1=en_nas) **(**[**Revelation 1:20**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+1:20&t1=en_nas)**). The stars are securely in the hand of Jesus. Since seven is the number of completion, we can say that "He's got the whole church in His hands."**
   4. **Describe Jesus’ voice. His voice as the sound of many waters: This means that Jesus' voice had the power and majesty of a mighty waterfall.**
   5. **Examine the “mouth of Jesus.” Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: This is a heavy sword (the ancient Greek word *rhomphaia*), used to kill and destroy. Sometimes the New Testament speaks of a smaller, more tactical sword known in the ancient Greek language as the *machaira*.** [**Hebrews 4:12**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Hebrews+4:12&t1=en_nas) **uses the term for this smaller, more precise sword.**
      1. **See also Ephesians 6:17, “**And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,” **and Hebrews 4:12, “**For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”  **The idea of it coming out of His mouth is *not* that Jesus carries a sword in His teeth. The idea is that this sword is His word. His weapon - and ours also - is the Word of God.**
   6. **Where else have we seen Jesus’ countenance? Read Matthew 16:28-17:2, “**Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. 17 And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, 2and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength: The glory of Jesus is so great, so shining, that it is hard to even look upon Him. Jesus has the same glory as in His transfiguration, when *His face shone like the sun.”* ([Matthew 17:2](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+17:2&t1=en_nas))
   7. **"What do you see in Christ's right hand? Seven stars; yet how insignificant they appear when you get a sight of *his face!* They are stars, and there are seven of them.**
   8. **Use Isaiah 53:2, “**For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form or comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him,” **to compare with this description of Jesus. We should consider the fact that this is the only physical description of Jesus given to us in the Bible. The only other description that comes close is in** [**Isaiah 53:2**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Isaiah+53:2&t1=en_nas)**: *He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him*.**
      1. **Reference also 2 Corinthians 5:16, “**Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more,” **But Paul said, *Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer* (**[**2 Corinthians 5:16**](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=2%20Corinthians+5:16&t1=en_nas)**).**
      2. **Reference Isaiah 50:6, “**I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.”

**1:17-18, “And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death."**

1. **Why did John not recognize Jesus?** When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead: John was overwhelmed by this awesome vision, even though he was an apostle who knew Jesus on this earth. Even the three years John spent with Jesus on this earth did not really prepare him to see Jesus in His heavenly glory. At this moment, John knew what a miracle it was that Jesus could shield His glory and authority while He walked this earth**.**
2. **Does the familiarity of Jesus’ touch bring John recognition of Jesus?** He laid His right hand on me: First, Jesus comforted John with a compassionate touch. Perhaps the *touch* of Jesus felt more familiar than the *appearance* of Jesus. Then Jesus gave John a command: "Do not be afraid." John didn't need to be afraid because He was in the presence of Jesus, and Jesus clearly identifies Himself to John with three titles.
   1. **Remind yourself of the titles of Jesus in this section, and how they, no doubt, brought to John the realization of whom was in His presence.**
      1. **Jesus is the First and the Last, the God of all eternity, Lord of eternity past and eternity future.**
      2. **Jesus is the one who lives, and was dead, and is alive forevermore. He has the credentials of resurrection, and lives to never die again. The victory that Jesus won over sin and death was a permanent victory. He didn't rise from the dead just to die again.**
      3. **Jesus is the one who has the keys of Hades and of Death. Some imagine that the devil is somehow the "lord of Hell." Some imagine that the devil has authority or power to determine life or death. Clearly, they are wrong, for only *Jesus* holds the keys of Hades and of Death. We can trust that Jesus never lets the devil borrow the keys.**
3. **List seven scriptures with God’s description as “The First and Last.”** 
   1. **Isaiah 41:4—Jehovah, “**Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am he.”
   2. **Isaiah 44:6—Jehovah, “**Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.”
   3. **Isaiah 48:12—Jehovah, “**Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last.”
   4. **Revelation 1:11—Jehovah, “**Saying, 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.”
   5. **Revelation 1:17-18—Jesus….this is the capstone of the argument against Jehovah’s Witnesses, “**And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.
   6. **Revelation 2:8—JESUS—“**And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; these things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive.”
   7. **Revelation 22:13—“**I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”
4. **What are the keys of Hades and Death? Verses17-18….JESUS AFTER THE RESURRECTION….GETS BACK THE KEYS.**
   1. **I Peter 3:18-22, “**For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: 19By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; 20Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. 21The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: 22Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.
   2. **Acts 2:29-31, “**Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. 30Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; 31He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.”
      1. **Sheol in Genesis 37:35, “**And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him, “**I Samuel 28:13-14, “**And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. 14And he said unto her, what form is he of? And she said, an old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself, ‘ **and Psalm 31:7, “**I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities.”
   3. **Luke 23:43, “**And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise.”
   4. **Luke 16:19-31, “**There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”
   5. **Psalm16:10, “**For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”
   6. **Jude 6, “**And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”
   7. **Ephesians 4:8-10, “**Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.”
   8. **Matthew 27:51-53, “**And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; 52**And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,** 53And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.”

Paul suggests as much in [Ephesians 2:1](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph%202.1): “You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked.” God made human beings to be embodied souls and ensouled bodies, and death rips this union asunder. **But what happens to these two parts after they’re separated?** [**Psalm 16:10**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%2016.10) **gives us a window into the biblical teaching. “You will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.” This** passage directs us to the normal account of what happened when a human being died prior to the death and resurrection of Jesus. **The soul was abandoned “to Sheol,” and the body saw corruption or decayed. In** [**Acts 2:29–31**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%202.29%E2%80%9331)**, Peter tells us that David, in writing this psalm, foresaw the resurrection of Christ, “that he was not abandoned to Sheol (that is, his soul wasn’t), nor did his flesh see corruption” (notice that Peter reads the second line as a reference to Jesus’s body or flesh).** Thus prior to Jesus, at death, souls normally went to Sheol, and bodies (flesh) decayed. What Is Sheol? In the Old Testament, **Sheol is the place of the souls of the dead, both the righteous (like Jacob,** [**Genesis 37:35**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%2037.35)**, and Samuel,** [**1 Samuel 28:13–14**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Sam%2028.13%E2%80%9314)**) and the wicked (**[**Psalm 31:17**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%2031.17)**). In the New Testament, the Hebrew word Sheol is translated as hades and the description of Sheol in the Old and New Testaments bears some resemblance to the Hades of Greek mythology. It is under the earth (**[**Numbers 16:30–33**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Num%2016.30%E2%80%9333)**), and it is like a city with gates (**[**Isaiah 38:10**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Isa%2038.10)**) and bars (**[**Job 17:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Job%2017.16)**).** It is a land of darkness, a place where shades, the shadowy souls of men, dwell ([Isaiah 14:9](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Isa%2014.9); [26:14](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Isaiah%2026.14)). It is the land of forgetfulness ([Psalm 88:12](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%2088.12)), where no work is done and no wisdom exists ([Ecclesiastes 9:10](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eccles%209.10)). Most significantly, **Sheol is a place where no one praises God (**[**Psalm 6:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%206.5)**;** [**88:10–11**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalm%2088.10%E2%80%9311)**;** [**115:17**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalm%20115.17)**;** [**Isaiah 38:18**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Isa%2038.18)**).** In the New Testament, the most extended depiction of the afterlife is found in [Luke 16:19–31](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2016.19%E2%80%9331). There we learn that, like the Hades of Greek mythology, the biblical Sheol has two compartments: Hades proper (where the rich man is sent, [Luke 16:23](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2016.23)) and “Abraham’s bosom” (where the angels carry Lazarus, [Luke 16:22](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2016.22)). Hades proper is a place of torment, where fire causes anguish to the souls imprisoned there. Abraham’s bosom, on the other hand, while within shouting distance of Hades, is separated from it by a great chasm ([Luke 16:26](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2016.26)), and is, like the Greek Elysium, a place of comfort and rest. While much mystery remains, the picture begins to take shape. All dead souls go down to Sheol/hades, but Sheol is divided into two distinct sides, one for the righteous and one for the wicked. The righteous who died prior to Christ dwelt in Sheol with Abraham, and though they were cut off from the land of the living (and therefore from the worship of Yahweh on earth), they were not tormented as the wicked were. Where Did Jesus Go When He Died? What, then, does this tell us about where Jesus was on Holy Saturday? Based on Jesus’s words to the thief on the cross in [Luke 23:43](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2023.43), some Christians believe that after his death, Jesus’s soul went to heaven to be in the presence of the Father. But [Luke 23:43](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2023.43) doesn’t say that Jesus would be in the presence of God; it says he would be in the presence of the thief (“Today you will be with me in Paradise”), and based on the Old Testament and Luke 16, it seems likely that the now-repentant thief would be at Abraham’s side, a place of comfort and rest for the righteous dead, which Jesus here calls “Paradise**.” Following his death for sin, then, Jesus journeys to Hades, to the City of Death, and rips its gates off the hinges. He liberates Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, John the Baptist, and the rest of the Old Testament faithful, ransoming them from the power of Sheol (**[**Psalm 49:15**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%2049.15)**;** [**86:13**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalm%2086.13)**;** [**89:48**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalm%2089.48)**). They had waited there for so long, not having received what was promised, so that their spirits would be made perfect along with the saints of the new covenant (**[**Hebrews 11:39–40**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb%2011.39%E2%80%9340)**;** [**12:23**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Hebrews%2012.23)**).** After his resurrection, Jesus ascends to heaven and brings the ransomed dead with him, **so that now Paradise is no longer down near the place of torment, but is up in the third heaven, the highest heaven, where God dwells (**[**2 Corinthians 12:2–4**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor%2012.2%E2%80%934)**).** Now, in the church age, when the righteous die, they aren’t merely carried by angels to Abraham’s bosom; **they depart to be with Christ, which is far better (**[**Philippians 1:23**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Phil%201.23)**).** The wicked, however, remain in Hades in torment, until the final judgment, when Hades gives up the dead who dwell there, and they are judged according to their deeds, and then Death and Hades are thrown into Hell, into the lake of fire ([Revelation 20:13–15](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev%2020.13%E2%80%9315)). Christ’s journey to Hades demonstrates that he was indeed made like us in every way. Not only did he bear the wrath of God on our behalf; he endured death, the separation of his soul from his body. **His body was in Joseph’s tomb (**[**Luke 23:50–53**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2023.50%E2%80%9353)**), and his soul was three days in Sheol, in the heart of the earth (**[**Matthew 12:40**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2012.40)**).** But as Psalm 16 makes clear, Jesus is not only like us, but different. Jesus’s body was buried, like ours, but it did not decay. Jesus’s soul went to Hades, like the Old Testament saints, but wasn’t abandoned there. God raised him from the dead, reunited his soul with a now-glorified body, so that he is the first fruits of the resurrection harvest.

**1:19-20, "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches."**

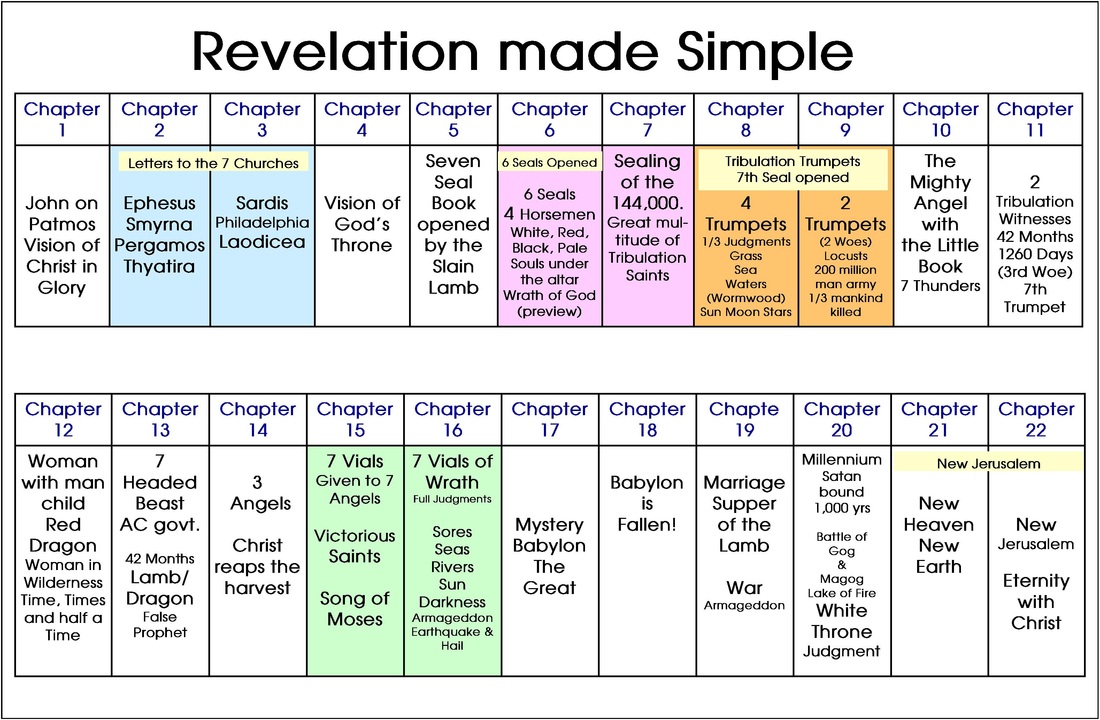
1. **Why was John commanded to write his vision?** This second command to write gives us a structure to understand the Book of Revelation. John is commanded to write regarding the past, present, and future (looking from John's perspective).
2. **Discuss the “Divine Outline” as prescribed in verse 19.** 
   1. **The things which you have seen, Chapter 1.** This means that Jesus wanted John to write the things he had just seen in his vision of the glorious, heavenly Jesus.
   2. **The things which are, Chapters 2-3.** This means that Jesus wanted John to write about the things of his present day, the things regarding the *seven churches which are in Asia*.
   3. **The things which will take place after this, Chapters 4-22.** This means that Jesus wanted John to write about the things that would happen after the things regarding the *seven churches*, the things of the last days.
3. **Who are “The seven stars?” The “lampstands?”** They are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches: Jesus kindly interprets His own images. The stars in His hand represent the angels of the seven churches. The lampstands represent the seven churches themselves.
   1. **Talk about Jesus interpreting His own images.** We note that each church had its own *angel*, and Jesus held these angels in His hand. It is more important to notice *where* the angels are: the right hand of Jesus. This is a place of safety and strength. Even the problem churches that will be described in the next chapters are in the right hand of Jesus.
4. **John’s spectacular vision of Jesus can be compared with that of the martyr, Stephen, in Acts 7:55, “**But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.”  **Comment.**
5. **How does the message of Revelation 1 translate to today’s world? How does the vision of Jesus, as seen by John, bring hope to us in the 21st century?**

***And, here are the promises:***

**Isaiah 46:9-10, KJV, “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”**

**2 Peter 1:19-21, “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of Godspoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit**

**Revelation 1:3 “Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near.**



**Churches of Revelation 2-3**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | | **Name of Church** |   Title of Christ | **Strengths/**  **Commendation** | **Failures/**  **Criticism** | | **Instruction** | **Promise To Faithful** |
| Loveless  **EPHESUS**  (Rev. 2:1-7) |  |  | |  |  |
| Suffering  **SMYRNA**  (Rev. 2:8-11) |  |  | |  |  |
| Worldly  **PERGAMUM**  (Pergamos)  (Rev. 2:12-17) |  |  | |  |  |
| Wrong  Doctrine  **THYATIRA**  (Rev. 2:18-29) |  |  | |  |  |
| Spiritually  Dead  **SARDIS**  (Rev. 3:1-6) |  |  | |  |  |
| Spiritually Alive  **PHILADELPHIA**  (Rev. 3:7-13) |  |  | | . |  |
| Complacent  **LAODICEA**  (Rev. 3:14-22  **Closing Phrase--“He that hath an ear” appears for all churches.** |  |  |  | |  |