

THE BOOK OF REVELATION: CHAPTER 1:

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION:

Church Age -- Rapture ---Tribulation (seals, trumpets, bowls, judgments) ---
Glorious Appearing --- Millennial Reign ---- Judgment --- Eternity...

CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW:

1. Church Age (Revelation 1-3)
 - a. Introduction to the Letter – (Rev. 1:1-8)
 - b. Christ Among The Churches (Rev. 1:9-20)

REVELATION 1:

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION: Revelation 1:1-8

BACKGROUND:

1. **This is Christ's revelation to John.**
2. **Timeframe for Chapter 1 – 1st Century, John in exile on the Island of Patmos. Christ is revealing Himself to John and revealing His purposes to come. Christ has come for John to write down His revelation for all generations.**
3. **Historically the events of Revelation 1 are a part of the Church Age.**
4. **Revelation 1 introduces Christ's Revelation and establishes Christ over the Churches of the Church Age.**

REVELATION 1:1-2

¹The 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, ²who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

- It is the Revelation of Jesus Christ...This is uniquely Christ's.
 - What is a revelation – an unveiling (Apokalypsis).
 - This book unveils many things to us...first who Jesus Christ is and God's intentions for His Church, Humanity, and Eternity.
- God has given this revelation to show “His Servants” what will take place.
 - We are His Servants...we are called to serve Jesus. He is speaking specifically then to the Church or all who are or will be His servants.
 - Jesus wants to make sure we know about this...it is important to Him that we know about this Revelation.
- “Soon take place.” Perspective is everything...is this from an eternal perspective or earthly perspective. Regardless, it says it will come soon.
- He revealed it through his angel to John.
 - Message was presented: From God, to Jesus Christ – through Christ's angel – to John – to us!

- “Testifies everything he (John) saw” – John is bearing testimony to the WORD OF GOD and THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST.
 - Factual eyewitness testimony holds up in a court of law...it has a great impact on a case. So John is the eye witness of these things.
 - Two things that Christians believe in: Word of God and Jesus Christ. He is connecting us two sources of authority and truth. Two things we depend on and rely on is the Word of God and Jesus Christ as our Lord.

REVELATION 1:3

³Blessed 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.

- Anyone who reads this revelation is blessed...it is for all generations and intended to be a blessing.
- It is a prophecy – proclamation of truth and events to unfold historically. It is proclaiming God’s will as a prediction.
- Blessed is the person who hears it and takes it to heart. (We are to do something with this information...we are to hear it, know it, live it, take it into our hearts.)
- The time is near. (It could happen at any time...so be ready)

REVELATION 1:4-8

⁴John,

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, ⁵and 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, ⁶and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

⁷Look, 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.

⁸"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

- **From John** to the seven churches in Asia: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea
- **“Who is, who was, and who is to come”** This is coming from God. The Triune God of the Scriptures....Clearly an early understanding of the Trinity; even though the doctrine of the Trinity was not officially established.

- **Seven Spirits** before his throne – Who are or who is the Seven Spirits? Most believe this is referring to the Holy Spirit...seven is a perfect number meaning completeness...instead of meaning seven Holy Spirits many believe it refers to seven ministries of the Holy Spirit to the Seven Churches.
- **Jesus Christ – faithful witness, firstborn of the dead, ruler of kings of the earth.**
 - Faithful Witness: Jesus is a faithful prophet revealing God's Word by His earthly ministry and through the prophecy of the book of Revelation. Jesus' witness is TRUE. Jesus will be faithful to His WITNESS about the things in this book.
 - Firstborn of the dead: Defines that Christianity stands upon the RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ.
 - Ruler of kings: Jesus is the King of kings...He is the sovereign ruler of Heaven and Earth. This is a statement of authority against the Roman government. Christ is in control...this is also an early statement pertaining to His Millennial reign on earth that is yet to come.
- **Jesus loves us...**Jesus giving of Himself is a continual act of love (John 3:16).
- **Jesus has freed us from our sins by His blood...**this demonstrates the belief in the power of the blood. The sacrificial atoning work of the blood of Christ frees all believers from their sins.
- **We are His kingdom** –The people of God make up His Kingdom. Christ's Kingdom has no boundary geographically and it exists throughout the centuries wherever He reigns over the hearts of men.
- **We are priests** – We have access to God directly through Jesus Christ as our mediator. This establishes the doctrine of the Priesthood of the Believer.
- **Kingdom and Priesthood** – we have a purpose to serve God the Father.
- **JESUS' FUTURE WORK: He will come again!!!!**
 - Jesus is coming in the clouds...everyone will see
 - Even those who killed him...all the people who played a part in the crucifixion.
 - Peoples of the earth will mourn...those who are earthly...those who have rejected Christ...Humanism, Atheism, and so forth. They will mourn over their loss of eternity.
- **ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS PERTAINING TO CHRIST:**
 - **Alpha and Omega**...He has always been...He was their in the beginning, He will be their in the end.
 - **who is, who was, and who is to come**...Eternal God, always been, Trinity.
 - **The Almighty** – Jesus is the Almighty God.

CHRIST AMONG HIS CHURCH: Revelation 1:9-20

⁹I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁰On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, ¹¹which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

¹²I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lamp stands, ¹³and among the lamp stands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. ¹⁵His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. ¹⁶In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

¹⁹"Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. ²⁰The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lamp stands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lamp stands are the seven churches.

- John is on Patmos because of his devotion to the Word of God and His testimony for Jesus...He is persecuted for His faith.
- John is in the Spirit...on the Lord's Day (Sunday).
 - John's connection with the Lord's Day is that he is in the spirit. Whenever we worship God we should be in the spirit...not the flesh.
- Heard a voice like a trumpet....Commanded to write the revelation down and send it to the seven churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."
- Golden Lamp stands...at this point John did not know that the Lamp stands represent Christ's church...
 - Specifically addressed to the churches in Asia in John's day
 - But also reflective of the church at large for all generations throughout the church age.
 - Also represents distinct historical time periods of the church.
- Lamp Stand significance:
 - Gold – we are worth a lot to Christ.
 - Light – we are a physical light in the world of darkness...our morality and our beliefs throughout the centuries bring light.
 - May our light never go out...God forbid.

- LOCATION OF CHRIST THROUGHOUT THE CHURCH AGE:
 - Son of Man was among the Lamp Stands – Jesus is among His Church...present and futuristic...it is Christ's church and He walks among His people.
 - Jesus still walks among the Lamp Stands of His Church today.
 - Jesus still wants us to bring light to the darkness.
 - Jesus still considers us of great worth.
- APPEARANCE OF CHRIST: (PORTRAIT OF JESUS...what does He look like?)
 - Son of Man
 - See Daniel 7:13 I continued watching in the night visions, and I saw One like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was escorted before Him.
 - See Daniel 3:25 "He exclaimed, "Look! I see four men, not tied, walking around in the fire unharmed; and the fourth looks like a son of the gods." (Son of Man)
 - Clearly John is presenting Christ as the Son of Man presented in the Scriptures and has Christ referred to Himself in the Gospels. This same Jesus who once lived and walked the earth with John is identified as the glorious and powerful Son of Man...this is a profound statement to the Deity and Manhood of Christ.
 - Robe with Golden Sash– (Mediator between man and God.)
 - Robes were typically associated with the priesthood of John's day.
 - John is declaring Jesus as the high priest...He is one who ministers in the Holy of Holies.
 - Jesus as High Priest can intercede on our behalf, He makes (because He is) the sin offering of atonement to God...Jesus represents God's people to God the Father.
 - Head and hair white like wool and snow – (All knowing and Wise)
 - Wisdom – Jesus is omniscient – He knows what is best for His people – Jesus is wise.
 - Antiquity – ancient of days.
 - Righteousness – Christ is righteous and pure.
 - Eyes were blazing fire. – (Sees all things)
 - Literally means "His eyes shot with fire."
 - Christ is angry about something...He is indignant perhaps about the condition of the church; perhaps at the condition of mankind.
 - Tells us that Christ sees the condition of the world and He will respond with righteous fury...as fire shooting from his eyes (Very graphic description of Christ's disposition toward wickedness).
 - Omnipresent – Christ is all present throughout time.
 - Feet like a furnace – (Powerful; authority)
 - The power in His feet demonstrate Christ's ultimate victory over evil.
 - Omnipotent – Christ is all powerful.

- Represents His authority to judge.
 - Voice like rushing water – (Speaks Constantly)
 - Niagara Falls...the rush is overwhelming. This is like the voice of Jesus...it surrounds John like the noise of water falls.
 - Like water coming to a beach...the voice of God is constant. We must always be listening to Him.
 - We need to be engulfed by the voice of God...like Niagara Falls or the Ocean Tide you cannot escape the roar of the ways of the fall.
 - Christ speaks to the church still today...do we listen. The question is not will Christ speak but to what voice we will listen too.
 - His mouth – like a double edged sword –
 - The Word of God is Christ’s weapon given to the Church throughout the centuries.
 - There is no defense against the Word of God.
 - The Word of God will be the very weapon that brings defeat to Satan, the Anti-Christ, anti-Christ’s, and the earthly.
 - The Word of God is Christ’s authority to judge the nations.
 - Face like the shining sun.
 -
- In His right hand - Jesus held seven stars...angels of the seven churches.
 - Possibly a guardian angel for each church or time period of church history?
 - Could this mean the messengers (angels)...human messengers as in pastors of the churches that deliver the teachings of God’s Word?
 - Not sure which position I take...angle literally means messenger...so the focus needs to be on the message of Christ to the Church, not the messenger per se.
- John fell before as a dead man...
- Jesus encouraged John...
 - Don’t be afraid
 - First and last
 - Living One (was dead, but behold I am alive for ever more.
 - John witnessed the resurrected Lord, but that was decades ago by this time.
 - Jesus was reinforcing what John knew to be true...Jesus is alive...it is me John.
 - Jesus has the keys of death and Hades.
- “What is now and what will take place later.” – this again gives us an idea about this revelation. It is pertinent now and to every generation in the now...but it also fore tells of events to come.
- Seven Lamp stands explained - the seven churches of John’s day.
 - Ephesus – Apostolic Church
 - Smyrna – Persecuted Church
 - Pergamos – State Church
 - Thyatira – Papal Church
 - Sardis – Reformed Church

- Philadelphia – Missionary Church
- Laodicea – Apostate Church
 - NOTE: These church represent historical time periods of the church age, but also represent churches of the 1st Century...it is my conclusion that these churches may represent church history throughout the centuries, but I believe they also speak to the type of churches that exist in every generation throughout the church age.