

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 1

Outline / Notes

Revelation 1:1 NKJV The Revelation of Jesus Christ,(1) which God gave Him to show(2) His servants; things which must shortly take place.(3) And He sent and signified it by His angel(4) to His servant John,

Verse 1 Notes:

(1) The “Revelation of Jesus Christ (the Anointed)” is more than just about the second coming. Revelation completely reveals who Jesus is. It includes the whole end time sequence of events, as the rest of the sentence indicates. The judgments contained in this book reveal Jesus taking control of the nations, that should make you think of Psalm 2:7-9, beginning with the opening of the seven seals. The Lamb is the only one worthy enough to open the seven-sealed scroll of God’s judgments.

(2) The Father gave the Son the things contained within this book to personally reveal to the Christian assemblies through the Apostle John.

(3) This prepositional phrase literally means, “within a very short span of time.” Nothing in this phrase necessarily requires that the beginning of this short time-frame is or was close to when John wrote it, only that the events themselves will occur within a short space of time, and rapidly or suddenly when it does begin. (See: Revelation 22:6-7, 12, 20).

(4) “The Angel (Messenger) of the LORD” who appeared to Abraham (Genesis 22:11-12, 15-18), to Moses (Exodus 3:2-6), who led Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 23:20-23; Judges 2:1-4) is identified here as Jesus, the Christ (Anointed), the one who testified to John in Revelation 1:18... the One who “lives, was dead, and is alive forevermore.” He is also identified as Jesus in the Old Testament, being called “the Messenger of the Covenant” in Malachi 3:1, and “the Messenger of Great Council” in Isaiah 9:6 of the LXX. Compare also Revelation 22:6.

Revelation 1:2 NKJV who bore witness to the word of God,(5) and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.(6)

Verse 2 Notes:

(5) John previously bore witness to the Logos of God in John 1:1-14 and 1 John 1:1-3. (cf. Revelation 19:13).

(6) He’s telling you what he saw. Whether or not he understood all that he saw, and or heard. John is just telling the reader exactly how it was presented to him. Nothing more, nothing less.

Revelation 1:3 NKJV 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.(7)

Verse 3 Notes:

(7) The sense is that the end time events are “ready” or “prepared.” This term does not necessarily mean “near” in time. The Greek word was commonly used in reference to the **Day of the Lord** in the LXX (Isaiah 13:6; Ezekiel 30:3; Joel 1:15; Joel 2:1; Joel 3:14; Obadiah 1:15; Zephaniah 1:7, 14). These prophets were much farther removed in time from the Day of the Lord than the book of Revelation. Here the sense is that the specific time has been prepared or appointed; So the events are certain to occur. (See Revelation 22:10).

When Jesus was on the land He did not know the appointed time (Mark 13:32; Acts 1:7). This statement implies that the time was now known to Him.

Revelation 1:4 NKJV John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is(8) and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits(9) who are before His throne,(10)

Verse 4 Notes:

(8) This is the essential meaning of God's name in Hebrew, 'the Existing One.' Compare to Exodus 3:14, John 6:20, and John 8:58, "I AM".

(9) cf. Isaiah 11:1-5; Zech. 3:9; 4:10 LXX & Revelation 5:6. Notice that there is no Trinity represented here. Paul began all of his Epistles (except Hebrews) with a similar statement of grace and peace to the assemblies from the Father and the Son, but never from a third person. John follows Paul's pattern, but adds the "seven Spirits" or literally "Breaths," one for each of the "seven assemblies." This is because the holy Breath of God is not a distinct person, but is a limited manifestation of God's presence and power. In this case the holy Breath is the catalyst for each local assembly in worship to "enter the holiest" in the celestial Temple (Hebrews 10:19). This is why the seven assemblies in Asia Minor are represented as "seven lampstands" (Revelation 1:20), but the "seven lamps" that correspond to them are said to be before the throne of God and are identified as the "seven Breaths" (Revelation 4:5). The "seven Breaths" are also the "seven eyes" on the Lamb (Revelation 5:6). It is through the holy Breath of God – the seven eyes – that Jesus can be present and observing all seven of these assemblies (the 7 letters indicate that He had been observing them), that He is able to observe all of His assemblies (Matt. 18:20), and also remains with His people to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). The holy Breath of God is the link between the local assemblies and the presence of Father and Son in the celestial Temple of God. For this reason we are commanded to "*come with boldness to the throne of grace...*", Hebrews 4:16.

(10) Revelation 4:5

Revelation 1:5 NKJV and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness,(11) the firstborn(12) from the dead,(13) and the ruler over the kings of the earth.(14) To Him who loved(15) us and washed(16) us from our sins in His own blood,

Verse 5 Notes:

(11) Isaiah 55:3-4 refers to the Son as follows: "Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you – The sure mercies of David. Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, A leader and commander for the people."

(12) "First-produced" likely refers to Jesus' words in John 12:24 and Paul's amplification of it in 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-44.

(13) Jesus is the prototype of the resurrection to immortality. John borrowed this title from Paul (Colossians 1:18).

(14) Psalm 2:7-12; Revelation 11:15; Revelation 19:15

(15) The Textus Receptus follows a minority reading in this case which has the aorist indicative (past) form of the verb "love." The majority of manuscripts, as well as the older manuscripts, have the present tense.

(16) Several manuscripts read "loosed."

Revelation 1:6 NKJV and has made us kings and priests(17) to His God(18) and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Verse 6 Notes:

(17) The Textus Receptus reads “kings and priests.” A better rendering of the Greek phrase is “kingdom priests”. This Kingdom priesthood of believers will commence in the thousand-year reign of Christ, Jesus. See Revelation 20:6.

(18) Jesus called the Father His God many times in the New Testament. (See John 20:17; Romans 15:6; 2 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 11:31; Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 1:3; 1 Peter 1:3; Revelation 3:12).

Revelation 1:7 NKJV Behold, He is coming with clouds,(19) and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him.(20) And all the tribes of the earth will mourn(21) because of Him. Even so, Amen.

Verse 7 Notes:

(19) “Coming with the clouds” is quoted directly from Daniel 7:13, showing that the whole book of Revelation is an expansion of the celestial court of the Ancient of Days described in Daniel 7:9-14, 21-22, 26-27.

(20) Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 12:10; John 19:37

(21) Matthew 24:30

Revelation 1:8 NKJV "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,"(22) says the Lord,(23) "who is(24) and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."(25)

Verse 8 Notes:

(22) Here the Father referred to Himself as “the alpha and the omega” (cf. Revelation 21:6, 13)

(23) The Textus Receptus omits “God.” It should say, “...says the Lord God,”

(24) The God who “is” or who “exists” is the sense of the Hebrew name, YHVH, and the name “I AM” (Exodus 3:14).

(25) The titles, “Lord” and “God” are applied in Scripture to both the Father and the Son. However, the title “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL” (παντοκράτωρ) is exclusive to the Father in the LXX as well as the NT. It is usually translated “Almighty” and “Lord of hosts.” But both English terms are inadequate in expressing the full meaning. The real sense is the One who holds total and sole sovereignty and power over everything and everyone, the ultimate authority. That it refers to the Father alone is clear from **Jeremiah 3:19 LXX**, “*And I said, So be it, Lord, for You said I will set you among children, and will give you a choice land, the inheritance of the Almighty God of the Gentiles. And I said, You shall call me Father; and you shall not turn away from Me.*” Paul paraphrased this passage in 2 Corinthians 6:18. All other references to this title in the NT are exclusively in Revelation (1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22). Also in the LXX, the “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL” is distinguished from His “Anointed.” “For, behold, I am He that strengthens the thunder, and creates the wind, and proclaims to men His Anointed, forming the morning and the darkness, and mounting on the high places of the the land. The Lord, God, SOVEREIGN OVER ALL is his name” [κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ ὄνομα αὐτῷ] (Amos 4:13 LXX). Zechariah far exceeded all other writers in using this title (55 times). He also portrayed “the Messenger of Jehovah” (the preincarnate Son of God) as addressing God using this title, showing His subordinate role to the Father (Zechariah 1:12 LXX). The title, “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL,” expresses the core of biblical monotheism and explains why the Father is referred to as the “God” of the Son of God (vs. 6). This fact makes the Trinitarian idea of three co-equal and co-eternal persons impossible to reconcile with Scripture. The Son of God has **always** been under the supreme authority of His Father.

Revelation 1:9 NKJV I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation(26) and kingdom(27) 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.

Verse 9 Notes:

(26) “The tribulation”, with the definite article (...τη θλῦσει...) refers specifically to the time just prior to the Second Coming (cf. Matthew 24:29 and Revelation 7:14). This also means that John will be present in the Great Tribulation. How might that be since he is long dead? The answer can be found in chapter 10. John was given further prophecy through “seven thunders” but told not to write it down, Revelation 10:4. John was told not to write about the seven thunders because, as we will see in verse 11, he will be sent as one of the two witnesses to prophecy again in the end times. He will tell us about the seven thunders at that time. We will not know why until then. Early Christian writers understood from this passage that John would be raised from the dead in the last days to proclaim the message of the seven thunders as well. (See Hippolytus, App. xxi)

(27) The Textus Receptus (TR) has “in the Kingdom,” but neither the Alexandrian or Majority Text (MT) do.

Revelation 1:10 NKJV I was in the Spirit(28) on the Lord's Day,(29) and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

Verse 10 Notes:

(28) Being “in the Spirit” (literally breath) was generally something that occurred in the assembly (Romans 8:9; Ephesians 2:22; Philippians 3:3), as the Breath of God came to dwell in the local gathering. See also Revelation 4:2, 17:3, 21:10.

(29) τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ – “the Chief Day” (often incorrectly translated “the Lord’s Day”). The term κυριακῇ is an adjective derived from the noun, κύριος (master, chief, superior, lord). “The Chief Day” was the anniversary of Jesus’ resurrection, also known as “μῆ τῶν σαββάτων” (the first [day] of the Sabbaths, referring to Firstfruits, which began the 50-day, 7 Sabbath countdown to Pentecost, Leviticus 23:10-12, 15-16). Ignatius, disciple of John, used the term “the Chief Day” (τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ) for both the actual day of Jesus’ resurrection, “at the dawning of the Chief Day He arose from the dead” (Epistle to the Trallians, ch. ix), and again of the anniversary of the resurrection, “living in the observance of the Chief Day on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death” (Epistle to the Magnesians, ch. ix). The longer version reads: “And after the observance of the Sabbath, let every friend of Christ keep the Chief Day (τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ) as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days.” The Sabbath was the weekly observance of Christians, but “the Chief Day” was the **annual** festival of the resurrection. Thus, John’s vision of Jesus occurred on the anniversary of His resurrection.

Revelation 1:11 NKJV saying, “*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,*” and,(30) “What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia:(31) to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

Verse 11 Notes:

(30) The Textus Receptus adds the phrase, “*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, and,*”. It does not appear in earlier copies of the TR, it only appears in a few later copies. The phrase does not appear in either the Alexandrian Text or the Majority Text.

(31) Asia Minor, today’s Turkey.

Revelation 1:12 NKJV Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands,(32)

Verse 12 Notes:

(32) Cf. Zechariah 4:2

Revelation 1:13 NKJV and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet(33) and girded about the chest with a golden band.

Verse 13 Notes:

(33) Cf. Zechariah 3:4

Revelation 1:14 NKJV His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;(34)

Verse 14 Notes:

(34) cf. Daniel 10:4-6

Revelation 1:15 NKJV His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

Revelation 1:16 NKJV 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.(35)

Verse 16 Notes:

(35) When Moses was in the presence of Jehovah or YHVH on Mount Sinai, he began to glow (the Greek word is *δεδοξασται* and means ‘glorified’. The Hebrew word *יָרָא* means ‘shine’) to the point that he had to veil his face from the Israelites (Exodus 34:28-35; 2 Corinthians 3:13). The Son of Man seated at the Father’s side seems to have experienced something similar to Moses, but to a much greater extent.

Revelation 1:17 NKJV 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.(36)

Verse 17 Notes:

(36) Jesus applied the descriptive phrase “the first and the last” to Himself, drawn from Isaiah 44:6 & 48:12. In Isaiah 48, it was the “Angel of the LORD” (Messenger of Jehovah) speaking for Jehovah who used this title. “Listen to Me, O Jacob, And Israel, My called: I am He, I am the first, I am also the last. Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; When I call to them, They stand up together. Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord GOD and* His Spirit Have sent Me” (Isaiah 48:12-13, 16 NKJV). The LXX has “and now the Lord has sent Me, even His Spirit (Lit. Breath).” This is the “Spirit (Lit. Breath) of Christ” which spoke through Isaiah (1 Peter 1:10-11). Cf. Revelation 2:8 and 22:12-13.

* The word ‘and’ is the Greek word ‘*καί*’ and has many, many different meanings. Here, to translate it to English using the word ‘and’ gives the impression of two separate and distinct “persons”. This interpretation adds credence to the Trinity doctrine of the Catholic Church. That would in turn create confusion in so many other passages throughout the Bible. And Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:33 that God is NOT the author of confusion. It would be better translated as “even”.

Strong definition:

G2532 - καί

Apparently a primary particle, having a copulative and sometimes also a cumulative force; and, also, even, so, then, too, etc.; often used in connection (or composition) with other particles or small words: - and, also, both, but, even, for, if, indeed, likewise, moreover, or, so, that, then, therefore, when, yea, yet.

Revelation 1:18 NKJV “I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys(37) of Hades(38) and of Death.(39)

Verse 18 Notes:

(37) By virtue of the fact that Jesus conquered death, having died and risen again immortal, He alone possesses the authority over death and the grave. The resurrection unto life is through Him and Him alone. See John 5:21, 25-26; John 11:23-26. The Jews had a tradition that God had the sole custody of four keys which He entrusted to no one, not man nor angel: the Key of Rain, the Key of Provision, the Key of the Barren Womb, and the Key of Death and the Grave. (Sanhedrin, fol. 113, 1)

(38) The Greek word ᾠδης (hades) refers to the common grave of all mankind (“the grave” as an abstract concept) as opposed to an individual grave as is used in 1 Corinthians 15:55. The twin terms “death and the grave” (ὁ θάνατος καὶ ὁ ᾠδης) are parallel abstract concepts in Revelation 20:13-14. In Greek mythology, ὁ ᾠδης (Hades) was in the underworld, a place of departed ghosts. This concept is NOT found at all in the Bible in the original languages. Wherever you see the word ‘hades’ in Scripture, think the word ‘grave’. And the context will tell you how to understand it, abstractly or definitively, as in an individual grave.

(39) John 5:25-26

Revelation 1:19 NKJV “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.”(40)

Verse 19 Notes:

(40) This statement provides a three-part division to the book, past, present, and future. “What you saw” refers to the vision of Jesus. “What is” refers to the current situation among the seven assemblies described in the seven letters that Jesus was about to dictate. “What is to come” is the prophecy of the future beginning in Revelation 4:1.

Revelation 1:20 NKJV “The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels(41) of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.”(42)

Verse 20 Notes:

(41) These were members of the respective assemblies who traveled between each assembly and Patmos to communicate with John.

(42) Notice that the seven assemblies are portrayed as individual single lampstands. The lamps corresponding to these are before God’s throne in Revelation 4:5. Yet in Zechariah 4:2, the single lampstand had seven lamps, symbolizing the nation of Israel. Single lampstand, Israel, seven lampstands, representing seven different categories of assemblies, not seven “church ages”, are the Gentile nations. In the end times, the churches of today will fall into one of these categories depending on their obedience to Christ’s commandments.