**THE REVELATION of Jesus Christ**

1. ***Genesis*** is the book of beginnings
2. ***Revelation*** is the book of consummation (the point at which something is complete or finalized.)
3. In it, the divine program of redemption is brought to fulfillment, and the holy name of God is vindicated before all creation.
4. Although there are numerous prophecies in the Gospels and Epistles, Revelation is the only New Testament book that focuses primarily on prophetic events.
5. Its title means “unveiling” or “disclosure.”
6. Thus, the book is an unveiling of that which otherwise could not be known.
	1. A better title comes from the first verse: Apokalypsis Iesou Christou, “Revelation of Jesus Christ.”
	2. This could be taken as a revelation which came from Christ or as a revelation which is about Christ—both are appropriate.
7. Revelation was *Penned* (*Not the Author*) by John during his exile on the island of Patmos,
	1. History say that John was approximately 90 years old
8. Revelation centers around visions and symbols of the resurrected Christ, who alone has authority to judge the earth, to remake it, and to rule it in righteousness.

***Spurgeon* once said** “The great fault of many professors is that Christ is to them a character upon paper; certainly, more than a myth, but yet a person of the dim past, an historical personage who lived many years ago, and did most admirable deeds, by the which we are saved, but who is far from being a living, present, bright reality.”

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

1. **The Revelation of Jesus Christ:** The ancient Greek word translated **Revelation** is *apokalupsis* (***apocalypse***).
2. The word means “a **revealing**, an **unveiling**.”
3. From the begining, we are given the most important truth about the Book of Revelation.
	1. This book shows us ***the Antichrist***,
	2. it shows us **God’s judgment**,
	3. it shows us **calamity** on the earth,
	4. and it shows us **Mystery Babylon** in vivid detail.
	5. Most of all, it is the **Revelation of Jesus Christ** to us.
	6. If we catch everything else, **but miss Jesus** in the book, **we miss the Book of Revelation.**
4. **Which God gave Him to show His servants**: He gave it **to *show* His servants**. God gave this revelation that it might ***be shown***, ***not hidden***.
	1. This is an **apocalypse** — a revelation, *not* ***apocrypha*** *(something hidden).*
5. **Things which must shortly take place**: This describes *when* the events of this book will **take place** — they will happen **shortly**.
	1. This means that the Book of Revelation is a book of ***predictive* prophecy**. It speaks of things that will happen in the future — at least future from the time of its writing.
	2. **Shortly** is the Greek phrase en tachei, which means “‘quickly or suddenly coming to pass,’ *indicating rapidity of execution after the beginning takes place*.
		1. The idea is not that the event may occur soon, but that when it does, it will be ***sudden***.”
		2. Not all prophecy is predictive, but this prophetic book clearly is predictive. It describes things that **must shortly take place**. *The time is near* for the fulfillment of these things, but the time was not present at the time of writing.
		3. Some people say that we should not be concerned with prophecy, that it is a frivolous exercise — but if God was concerned enough to talk about it, we should be concerned enough to listen.
		4. Some tell us that what is yet future should not to be examined into till after it has come to pass.
	3. **Shortly take place**: Short and *near* are relative terms, and this is God’s timetable, not man’s.
6. **He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John**: This describes *how* the message is delivered.
7. It is a book that communicates in signs.
	1. It is true that the signs used in Revelation have been a source of confusion and controversy for many readers.
	2. Yet the signs are necessary because John expresses things of heaven, which Paul said he heard with ***inexpressible words***
	3. **2 Corinthians 12: 1-4** This boasting will do no good, but I must go on. I will reluctantly tell about visions and revelations from the Lord. I was caught up to the third heaven fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don’t know—only God knows. Yes, only God knows whether I was in my body or outside my body. But I do know that I was caught up to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell.
	4. John described things he saw, so he could only use symbolic images to explain it. To us, this book is prophecy, but John simply recorded history unfolding before him, as he saw it. “John had visions from heaven; but he described them in his own language and manner.”
	5. The signs are also necessary because there is tremendous power in symbolic language. It is one thing to call someone or something evil or bad, but it is far more vivid to describe the image of a woman *drunk with the blood of the saints* ([**Revelation 17:6**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/17/6/s_1184006)).
	6. Though it is filled with signs, the Book of Revelation *is* accessible to those who have an understanding of the first 65 books of the Bible, and especially an understanding of the first 39 books of the Bible, the Old Testament.
	7. The Book of Revelation is rooted in the Old Testament. It contains more than 500 references to the Old Testament, and 278 of the 404 verses in Revelation (that is almost 70%) make some reference to the Old Testament.
8. **By His angel to His servant John**: This tells us *who* wrote (penned) the Book of Revelation. It was **His servant John**, and the best evidence points to this being the Apostle John, the same writer of the Gospel of John and John 1, 2, and 3.
	1. Also known as John of Patmos, John the Revelator, John the Devine and John the Theologian.
	2. He was the son of Zebedee, a Galilean fisherman, and brother to James
9. **By His angel**: Many of the signs and visions of the Book of Revelation came to John through an angel ([Revelation 5:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/5/2/s_1172002), [7:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/7/2/s_1174002), [10:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/10/8/s_1177008) to 11:1, and 17:7 are some examples).
10. **Who bore witness to the word of God**: In this prologue, we see John knew this book was Holy Scripture, **the word of God**.
	1. He knew it was Holy Scripture because he called it a **revelation** from God. He knew it came from the Father through Jesus, and not from any mere human.
	2. He knew it was the Holy Scripture because he called it the **word of God,** as an Old Testament prophet would say. He also called it the **testimony of Jesus Christ**.

[**Revelation 1:3**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/3/s_1168003) **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.**

* 1. This is the first of seven beatitudes of Revelation ([Revelation 1:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/3/s_1168003), [14:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/14/13/s_1181013), [16:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/16/15/s_1183015), [19:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/19/9/s_1186009), [20:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/20/6/s_1187006), [22:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/22/7/s_1189007), and [22:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/22/14/s_1189014)).
	2. Because many neglect the book of Revelation, many people miss this blessing.
	3. For example, there are Churches that omit Revelation in its regular schedule of readings for both public worship and private devotions. This is a typical attitude towards the Book of Revelation.
1. Many people believe that only fanatics want to dig deep into this book, but really, it’s a book for anyone who wants to be **blessed** and know the truth about the end times.
2. Fortunately, John didn’t say that we had to *understand* everything in the Book of Revelation to be **blessed**.
3. The Book of Revelation gives us much more than information for prophetic speculation. If we understand the Book of Revelation, it can and should *change the way we live*.
4. **He who reads**: This is in the *singular*. It speaks of one person who **reads**.
5. **Those who hear** is in the *plural*. It speaks of many people **hearing**.
6. 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.
7. In our modern way of speaking John might say, “Blessed is the pastor who teaches Revelation, and blessed is the congregation who hears it.”
8. *Most of all*, pastor and congregation, **blessed** are those who **keep those things which are written in it**.
9. Since so much controversy has risen over the interpretation of the Book of Revelation, it is helpful to know the four basic approaches people have used through the centuries to understand Revelation.
	1. **The Preterist View**: The Book of Revelation was for *then*.
	2. **The Historicist View**: Revelation is full of symbols that describe *now*.
	3. **Idealist View**: It’s a book spiritual approach.
	4. **The Futurist View**: It’s a book that mainly describes the *end* times.
10. Which approach is correct? *Each one* is true in some regard. The Book of Revelation did speak to John’s Day.
	1. It speaks to church history.
	2. And it does have meaning for our personal life.
	3. So, while elements of the first three views have their place, we can’t deny the place of the **futurist** view.
	4. We can know the Book of Revelation speaks with clarity about the end times because of two central principles drawn from [Revelation 1:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/1-3/s_1168001).
		1. **First**, we believe that the Book of Revelation *must mean something*. This is a book that Jesus gave *to show His servants* something. It isn’t a book of meaningless nonsense. It has a promise of blessing, not a promise of confusion.
		2. **Secondly**, we believe that Revelation definitely claims to contain *predictive prophecy*. John made it clear: *things which must shortly take place… the time is near*. John wrote about events that were still future to him.

**Revelation 1:4-5 Greeting the Seven Churches**

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. 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, which is the western part of modern-day *Turkey*.
2. **From Him who is and who was and who is to come**: John brought a greeting from *God the Father*, who is described with this title.
	1. **Him who is and who was and who is to come** speaks to the eternal nature of God.
	2. It is never enough to just say that God **is**, or to just say that He **was**, or to just say that He **is to come**. As Lord over eternity, He rules the past, the present, and the future.
	3. The description **Him who is and who was and who is to come** applies to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
3. **From the seven Spirits who are before His throne**: John brought a greeting from *God the Holy Spirit*, who is described with this title. **The seven Spirits who are before His throne** speaks to the *perfection* and *completion* of the Holy Spirit. John used an Old Testament description of the Holy Spirit.
	1. The idea of the **seven Spirits** quotes from the Old Testament. [**Isaiah 11:2**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/isa/11/2/s_690002) 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.*** *(7=Spiritual Perfection)*
	2. 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.
4. **From Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth**: John brought a greeting from *God the Son*, who is described by *who He is* and by *what He has done*.
5. Jesus is the **faithful witness**: This speaks to Jesus’ utter reliability and faithfulness to His Father and to His people, even unto death. The ancient Greek word translated **witness** is also the word for a *martyr*.
6. **Firstborn from the dead**: This speaks to Jesus’ standing as *preeminent* among all beings, that He is first in priority.
	1. **Firstborn from the dead** means much more than that Jesus was the first person resurrected. It also means that He is preeminent among all those who are or will be resurrected.
	2. [**Romans 8:29**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rom/8/29/s_1054029) For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.
7. The use of **firstborn** does not mean that Jesus had a birth date and is therefore a created being, and not God.
	1. The ancient Rabbis called Yahweh Himself “Firstborn of the World”
8. Jesus is the **ruler over the kings**. Before the Book of Revelation is over, Jesus will take dominion over every earthly king.

[**Revelation 1:5b-6**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/5-6/s_1168005)

**To 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. **To Him who loved us**: 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.
	1. It should be pointed out that many translations have *loves us* (such as NASB, NIV, and NLT), but there is something beautiful about *loved* us. *It looks back to the cross*.
	2. Every believer should be secure in God’s love, not based on their present circumstances (which may be difficult), but based on the *ultimate demonstration of love* at the cross.
	3. This is worth praising Jesus about.
2. Paul put it like this in [**Romans 5:8**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rom/5/8/s_1051008): *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*.
	1. The work of Jesus on the cross for us is God’s ultimate proof of His love for you. He may give additional proof, but He can give no greater proof.
	2. No wonder many believers are not secure in knowing the love of Jesus towards them, because they look to their *present circumstances* and measure His love.
	3. *Many measure his love on what they think he should be doing according to their own ideas.*
	4. Instead, they need to look back to the cross, settle the issue once for all, and give praise to Jesus, **to Him who *loved* us**.
3. **And washed us from our sins in His own blood**: This is what happened when Jesus **loved us** at the cross.
	1. He **washed us** — cleansed us from the deep stain of sin, so that we are really *clean* before Him. This is worth praising Jesus about.
	2. This seems almost too good to be true. We can stand clean before God, clean. (Without spot or wrinkle)
	3. No wonder the same Apostle John also wrote,[**1 John 1:9**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/1jo/1/9/s_1160009) *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*
4. **In His own blood**: To wash us in His own blood meant the ultimate sacrifice of God the Son.
	1. (Spurgeon) “The priests could only cleanse with blood of bulls and goats; but he has washed us from our sins ‘**in his own blood**.’ Men are willing enough to shed the blood of others. How readily they will enter upon war! But Christ was willing to shed his own blood, that we might be saved.”
5. Notice the order: 1st he **loved**, then he **washed**.
	1. It wasn’t that God washed us out of some sense of duty and then loved us because we were then clean.
	2. He **loved us** while we were dirty, and then He **washed us.**
6. In fact, washing *proves* his love for us.
	1. If you had an old pair of pants, and got them *covered* in paint, you would only wash them and keep them for two reasons.
	2. **1st**, you might wash them and keep them if you *were poor*. You can’t or won’t spend money on another pair of pants, so you wash them and keep them.
	3. **2nd**, you might wash them and keep them if you *really loved* those old pants. Money isn’t the issue. You could go down and buy a new pair of pants any time; but you love that pair so much that you spend the time and the effort to clean them, and use them again.
	4. God loves us so much that He **washed us**. God certainly is not poor.
	5. With merely a thought, He could destroy every sinner and started over with brand-new people.
	6. But He didn’t. He loves us so much that He **washed us**.
7. **And has made us kings and priests to His God and Father**: This is status that Jesus gives to those whom He **loved** in His work on the cross and who are **washed… *in His own blood***.
	1. It would have been enough just to love them and cleanse them. But He goes far beyond, and makes **us kings and priests to His God and Father**. *This is worth praising Jesus about.*
8. We are **kings**, so we are *God’s royalty* — this is privilege, status, and authority.
9. We are **priests**, so we are *God’s special servants*. *We represent God to man and man to God.*
10. **Kings *and* priests**: 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
11. [**2 Chronicles 26:16-23**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2ch/26/16-23/s_393016) But 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. So Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him were eighty priests of the LORD—valiant men. And 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.” Then 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. And 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. King 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. Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from first to last, the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz wrote. So 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.
12. **To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever**: In light of all that Jesus did for us, *it is right to praise Him*.
	1. We should honor Him with all **glory and dominion forever and ever**.
	2. When we say this, we aren’t *giving* Jesus’ **glory and dominion**. We are simply *recognizing* that *He has it*, and honoring Him for it.
	3. (Spurgeon) “Some of you are very like a mouse behind the wainscot (paneled wooden lining of an interior wall). You are in the Lord’s house, but you are not known as one of the family: sometimes you give a little squeak in your hiding-place, and sometimes come out at night, as the mouse does, to pick up a crumb or two, without being seen. Is this worthy of yourself? Is it worthy of your Lord and Master?”
	4. To recognize the **dominion** of Jesus is to let Him truly rule over us. Every person is a little empire of three kingdoms — body, soul, and spirit — and it should be a *United Kingdom*.
	5. (Spurgeon) “Make Christ king of it all. Do not allow any branch of those three kingdoms to set up for itself a distinct rule; put them all under the control of your *one King*.”
13. **Amen**: This word in the ancient Greek language, brought over from the Hebrew of the Old Testament — simply means “***Yes****.*”
	1. It isn’t a *wish* that *may* come true, but it is *confirmation* that, through God, **it *will* be so**.
	2. Jesus has done all this and more for you. You have much to praise Him for — *so praise Him*!
	3. (Spurgeon) “Would you not wish to be in heaven when your life on earth is over? The time will come when you must ***die***; would you not desire to have a good hope of entering then into the felicities of the perfected ones? I am sure you would; but if you are at last to be numbered amongst the redeemed host on high, you must here learn their song. You cannot be admitted into the choirs above without having practiced and rehearsed their music here below.”

(World Death Rate 2023, *per day* 332,648, *per hour* 13,860, *per minute* 231, *per second* 3.85 (USA only per day 7,974)

[**Revelation 1:7**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/7/s_1168007) **An opening description of the return of Jesus.** 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. (This is *not* the Rapture)

1. The Rapture is a Secret, compared to the 2nd coming.
2. **Behold** – See, Look or Observe.
3. **He is coming with clouds,** (Some believe this refers to cloud of witnesses in Heb 12:1) “He is coming” is present tense with a future meaning. John makes a *forceful* statement by using this kind of grammar.
4. Jesus came once in the past and will come**2** times in the future.
5. 1st, He will come “for” His saints
	1. [**John 14:3**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/John%2014.3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where Iam, *there* you may be also.
	2. [**Philippians 3:20**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Phil%203.20)

 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait

 for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

* 1. [**1 Thessalonians 4:15-17**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Thess%204.15-17) For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.  And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.
1. 2nd He will come “**with**” His saints
	1. [**Zechariah 14:5**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Zech%2014.5) And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You.
	2. [**Jude 14**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jude%2014) Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints,
2. [**Revelation 19:11-14**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Rev%2019.11-14)Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.
3. **and every eye will see Him,**Jesus’ 2nd coming will be public. He will come in**visible** glory and every person on earth will see Jesus.
4. **even they who pierced Him.**“They who pierced Him” may refer to the nation **Israel**. Israel will finally see their Messiah come. Israel is in a state of apostasy (the abandonment or renunciation of a religious or political belief)
	1. What they deny today, they will accept in that day. Jesus will restore the nation Israel to Himself at this time and establish His universal rule over the earth as *King Jesus*, King of the World.
5. [**Zechariah 12:10**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Zech%2012.10) “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”.
6. **And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.**
	1. The word “**mourn**” means to have *remorse* or grief.
	2. Realizing their sin and guilt, and anticipating the coming wrath
7. **Even so, Amen**
	1. “Even so” is the *Greek*, and “amen” is *Hebrew* for **affirmation**. John strongly affirms his belief in the Second Coming and its impact on the world.
8. The coming of Christ is the pivotal point of history.
9. All history is moving toward a focal point. One day Jesus will break through the clouds, and all creation *will change*. His coming will impact *everything* in the world. *He will restore the world to its original intent.*
10. **He is coming with clouds**: When Jesus comes, He will be surrounded by **clouds**.
	1. This will be true literally, because when Jesus left this earth, He was taken up into a cloud and God said that He would return in the same manner
	2. [**Acts 1:9-11**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/act/1/9-11/s_1019009) **Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.**
11. **And every eye will see Him**: When Jesus comes, it won’t be a secret coming.
	1. Everyone will know.
	2. At His 1st coming, Jesus was somewhat obscure. During His earthly ministry, He never made front-page news in Rome.
	3. But at Jesus’s 2nd comes, **every eye will see Him**. *The whole world will know.*
	4. **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**.
12. **All the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him**: When Jesus comes, it won’t be only the Jewish people who **mourn** because of their previous rejection of Jesus.
	1. [**Matthew 24:30**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/mat/24/30/s_953030) ***Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*.**
13. [**Revelation 1:8**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/8/s_1168008) **An introduction from Jesus Himself. “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.”**
14. **I am the Alpha and the Omega**:
	1. In many translations, and in “Red-Letter” editions, these words are in red.
	2. This shows that the translators believed that these were the words of Jesus.
	3. John was finished with his introduction, and *now Jesus introduces Himself.*
	4. After all, it is His revelation.
15. **Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End:** The idea behind these titles for Jesus is that He is *before* all things and will remain *beyond* all things.
	1. **Alpha** was the first letter of the ancient Greek alphabet, and **Omega** was the last letter.
	2. Jesus says, “I am the ‘A to Z,’ **the Beginning and the End**.”
	3. If Jesus is both the **Beginning** and the **End**, then He also has authority over everything *in-between*.
	4. This means that Jesus has a plan for history, and He directs the path of human events toward His designed fulfillment.
	5. Our lives are not given over to blind fate, to random meaninglessness, or to endless cycles with no resolution.
	6. Instead, Jesus Christ who is **the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End** directs all of human history and *even our individual lives*.
16. **Who is and was and who is to come**: This communicates the *idea* behind the great Old Testament name for the Triune God, *Yahweh*.
	1. It reflects His eternal nature and His unchanging presence.
		1. Jesus has this eternal nature just as much as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit does.
	2. [**Micah 5:2**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/mic/5/2/s_898002) prophetically expressed it this way: ***Whose goings forth are from old, from everlasting.***
	3. [**Hebrews 13:8**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/heb/13/8/s_1146008) expressed it this way: ***Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever*.**
17. **The Almighty**: This word **Almighty** translates the ancient Greek word *pantokrater*, which literally means *“the one who has his hand on everything.”*
	1. It speaks of the great sovereign control of Jesus over everything *past*, *present*, and *future*.
	2. This word **Almighty** is used 10 times in the New Testament, and 9 are in the Book of Revelation.
	3. This book has a striking emphasis on God’s sovereignty, (Supreme power or Authority) the understanding that He has His hand on *everything*.
18. [**Revelation 1:9**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/9/s_1168009) **John on the Island of Patmos. 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.**
19. **I, John… was on the island that is called Patmos**:
	1. The island of **Patmos** was a like an Alcatraz Island in the Roman Empire.
	2. It was used as a prison island and functioned as a jail without bars.
	3. History says the island was rich in marble, and most of the prisoners were forced laborers in marble quarries.
	4. Patmos was a rocky, desolate island about 10 miles long and 6 miles wide.
	5. It is said that Patmos had no regular drinking water.
	6. The island of [Patmos](https://greekreporter.com/2016/08/10/locals-revive-old-religious-tradition-on-greek-island-of-patmos/) in the eastern Aegean have achieved water independence in 2017 with the creation of *desalination units*, ending their longtime dependency on *water tankers*.
	7. A travel company says “On Patmos: Don't Drink the Water! -- One essential you need to know about Patmos from the outset is that tap water is not for drinking. Drink only bottled water.
20. At the writing of Revelation, John was in exile, upon this lonely and desolate island.
	1. But *nothing can separate* Christians from one another or from Christ. (Nothing but yourself)
	2. Patmos lies out in the open sea, near the coast of Western Asian Minor.
	3. They say it had neither trees nor rivers, nor any land for cultivation, except some little nooks between the ledges of rocks.
	4. There is still a dingy cave, in which John is said to have lived, and in which he had his vision.
	5. Today a chapel covers it, hung with lamps kept burning by the monks.”
21. **For the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ**:
	1. Most scholars assume that John was on **Patmos** because he was arrested and imprisoned in persecution from the Romans.
	2. This is probably the case, especially because John said that he is **your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ**.
	3. The ancient Christian historian Eusebius says John was imprisoned at Patmos under the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian.
		1. According to Victorinus, John, though aged, was forced to labor in the mines located at Patmos.
		2. Early sources also indicated that about ad 96, at Domitian’s death, John was allowed to return to Ephesus when the emperor Nerva was in power.
22. [**Revelation 1:10-11**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/10-11/s_1168010) **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.”**
23. **I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day**: To be **in the Spirit** seems to have more meaning than simply saying John walked “*in the Spirit*” as opposed to being “*in the flesh*” in the sense Paul meant in
	1. [**Galatians 5:16**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/gal/5/16/s_1096016) **I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh**
	2. The idea isn’t simply that John was *walking in the Spirit*, but that he received unique revelation from the Holy Spirit. This was a unique spiritual experience for John.
	3. Walvoord defined **in the Spirit** like this: “Carried beyond normal sense into a state where God could reveal supernaturally the contents of this book.”
24. There are 4 references to John being **in the Spirit** in the Book of Revelation.
	1. **1st - at Patmos** - [**Revelation 1:10**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/10/s_1168010) On the Lord’s Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,
	2. **2nd - then in heaven** [**Revelation 4:2**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/4/2/s_1171002)Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne.
	3. **3rd - in the wilderness** [**Revelation 17:3**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/17/3/s_1184003)So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.
	4. **4th - finally on the mountain of God** [**Revelation 21:10**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/21/10/s_1188010)And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,
25. **On the Lord’s Day**:
	1. When is **the Lord’s Day**?
	2. Among the pagans of the Roman Empire, the first day of each month was called “Emperors Day” in honor of the Roman Emperor.
	3. *Most* Christians proclaimed their allegiance to Jesus by honoring the first day of the *week* as their own **Lord’s Day**.
		1. Some say the 1st day is Sunday – (Because of his resurrection)
		2. Others say the 1st day is Saturday – (God rested on the 7th day)
	4. This is *not* the same term used for ***The Day of the Lord*** in the Old Testament, nor is it the same idea.
	5. The Book of Revelation will deal with the idea of *The Day of the Lord*, but it doesn’t do it here.
26. **I heard behind me a loud voice**:
	1. The **loud voice** John heard was clear and striking as the sound as of a **trumpet**.
	2. The **loud voice** belongs to the **Alpha and Omega**, the **First and the Last,** who is the beginning and the end of all things.
	3. Since Jesus introduced Himself with these titles in [**Revelation 1:8**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/8/s_1168008), we know this was the **loud voice** of *Jesus*.
27. **The First and the Last** is a title that belongs to the Lord, Yahweh, the God of Israel, the title **Alpha and the Omega** has the same *idea* as **First and the Last**. This is one of the New Testament passages where Jesus *clearly* claimed to be God.
28. **What you see, write in a book**: John was *commanded* to write what he saw. He would be commanded to *write* 11 more times in the Book of Revelation.
	1. We get the sense that unless John was *commanded* to *write*, he would have just kept it to himself.
	2. It’s always best to keep visions and revelations to one’s self unless *commanded* otherwise.
29. **Send it to the seven churches which are in Asia**: John was commanded to write to **seven churches** in seven cities.
	1. Each of these churches is in the region of the Roman province of **Asia**.
	2. These were not the *only* cities with churches in this region.
	3. There was a church in the city of Colosse (to which the Apostle Paul wrote the letter of *Colossians*), but the city of Colosse isn’t included in this list of **seven churches**.
	4. Why were these specific **seven churches** chosen?
	5. 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.
	6. Many believe the **7 churches** were chosen because in the Bible, the number 7 often represents completeness, and these letters — and all of the Book of Revelation — are written to the *complete* church, *not only these seven churches*.
	7. (Poole) “It is the opinion of very learned writers upon this book, that our Lord, by these *7 churches*, signifies all the churches of Christ to the end of the world; and by what he saith to them, designs to show what shall be the state of churches in all ages, and what their duty is.”
	8. Interestingly, the *Apostle Paul* also wrote to **7 churches**: Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi, and Thessalonika.
30. [**Revelation 1:12-13**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/12-13/s_1168012) **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. **I turned to see the voice**: We can only imagine what went through John’s mind as he **turned**.
	2. The voice he heard was probably not exactly the same sound as he remembered Jesus’ voice to be
		1. John described it *as of a trumpet in*, [Revelation 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/10/s_1168010). Yet he knew from the voice’s self-description (*Alpha and Omega*) that it was Jesus.
		2. This was John’s opportunity to see Jesus again, after knowing Him so well during the years of His earthly ministry.
	3. 1st, John didn’t see Jesus. He **saw 7 golden lampstands**. These were not candlesticks, they were not menorahs, but they were free standing oil lamp stands. The lamps set *on* these **lampstands**.
	4. There were **7** 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](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/exo/25/31-37/s_75031)). Yet this is different.
	5. The Old Covenant lampstand was **1** *lampstand* with ***7*** *lamps* on it.
	6. Here in the New Covenant, we see **7 lampstands**. “In the Jewish tabernacle there was **1** golden candlestick, and **7** lamps, to give light… John sees **7** here.
	7. The light *doesn’t* come from the **lampstands**. The light comes from the *oil lamps* themselves.
	8. The stands merely make the light more visible. Therefore, the **lampstands** are a good picture of the church. We don’t produce the light; we simply display it.
	9. “A lamp is not *light in itself*, it is only the *instrument* of dispensing light, and it must receive both *oil* and *fire* before it can dispense any light.
	10. We are a lamp to the world and we must receive everything (oil and fire) from Christ, or we can’t dispense light.”
31. **And in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man**.
	1. Jesus was there in the midst of these lampstands, as the **Son of Man**.
	2. [**Daniel 7:13-14**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/dan/7/13-14/s_857013). 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. And 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.
	3. Though the title **Son of Man** sounds like a humble title, in light of the Daniel passage, it is not a humble title at all.
32. **Clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band**:
	1. The clothing of Jesus indicates that He is a person of great dignity and authority.
	2. Long garments were only worn by those who didn’t have to work much, so they were a picture of great status and authority.
	3. The **golden band** around the chest probably hints at the garments of the high priest
	4. [**Exodus 29:5**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/exo/29/5/s_79005) 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:
	5. [**Exodus 39:1-5**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/exo/39/1-5/s_89001) 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. And he made the ephod of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And 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. They made shoulderpieces for it, to couple it together: by the two edges was it coupled together. And 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.
	6. Jesus’ **band** has more than a few golden threads. It is all gold! How much greater is the eternal, heavenly priesthood of Jesus!
33. One of the duties of the Old Testament priests was to tend the golden lampstand in the tabernacle.
	1. *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.
	2. 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.
34. [**Revelation 1:14-16**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/14-16/s_1168014) **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. **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 timelessness.
	2. The phrase **white as snow** also emphasizes the idea of purity
		1. [**Isaiah 1:18**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/isa/1/18/s_680018) **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.**
	3. The white hair and head also connect Jesus with the Ancient of Days in
		1. [**Daniel 7:9**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/dan/7/9/s_857009) “The term of *Ancient of Days* belongs to God the Father, yet it also agreeth to Christ, who is equal with the Father as to his Divine nature.”
35. **His eyes like a flame of fire**: **Fire** is often associated with judgment in the Scriptures
	1. [**Matthew 5:22**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/mat/5/22/s_934022) But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell *fire*.
	2. [**2 Peter 3:7**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2pe/3/7/s_1159007) 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.
	3. Jesus’ eyes displayed the *fire* of searching, penetrating judgment.
36. **His feet were like fine brass**: Since fire is connected with judgment, these **feet like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace** speak of someone who has been through the *fires* of judgment and has come forth with a refined purity. Jesus has been through the “*Fire*.”
37. **Brass** is a metal connected with judgment and sacrifice. Israel’s altar of sacrifice was made of brass
	1. [**Exodus 27:1-6**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/exo/27/1-6/s_77001) 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. And 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*. And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basons, and his fleshhooks, and his firepans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of *brass*. And thou shalt make for it a grate of network of *brass*; and upon the net shalt thou make four brasen rings in the four corners thereof. And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midst of the altar. And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with *brass*.
	2. It was called the “**brazen altar**” Because it was made of brass.
	3. **Brass** is also a strong metal, the strongest known in the ancient world.
	4. 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.
38. **His voice as the sound of many waters**: This means that Jesus’ voice had the power and majesty of a mighty waterfall.
39. **He had in His right hand seven stars**: The **7 stars** speak of the leaders or representatives of the *seven churches* mentioned in [Revelation 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/11/s_1168011)
	1. [**Revelation 1:20**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/20/s_1168020) 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.
	2. The **stars** are securely in the hand of Jesus. Since **7** is the number of completion, we can say that *“He’s got the whole church in His hands.”*
40. **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*.
	1. Sometimes the New Testament speaks of a smaller, more tactical sword known in the ancient Greek language as the *machaira,* the term for this smaller, more precise sword.
	2. [**Hebrews 4:12**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/heb/4/12/s_1137012) For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged 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.
	3. The idea of it coming **out of His mouth** is *not* that Jesus carries a sword in His teeth.
	4. The idea is that this **sword** is *His word*.
	5. The *Word* is His weapon and ours.
		1. [**Ephesians 6:17**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/eph/6/17/s_1103017) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:
	6. (Barnes notes) say that maybe John didn’t necessarily *see* a sword coming out of Jesus’ mouth. “He heard him speak; he felt the penetrating power of his words; and they were *as if* a sharp sword proceeded from his mouth.”
	7. It is **a sharp two-edged sword**: (Spurgeon) “There is no handling this weapon without cutting yourself, for it has no back to it, it is all edge. The Word of Christ, is all edge.”
41. **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 at Him.
	1. Jesus has the same glory as in His transfiguration, when *His face shone like the sun*
		1. [**Matthew 17:2**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/mat/17/2/s_946002) and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.
	2. (Clarke) “His face was like the sun in the brightest summer’s day, when there were no clouds to decrease the splendors of his rays.”
42. (Spurgeon) “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; but who can see seven stars, or, for the matter of that, seventy thousand stars, when the sun shineth in his strength? How sweet it is, when the Lord himself is so present in a congregation that the preacher, whoever he may be, is altogether forgotten! I pray you, dear friends, when you go to a place of worship, always try to see the Lord’s face rather than the stars in his hand; look at the sun, and you will forget the stars.”
43. Everything in this vision speaks of *strength*, *majesty*, *authority* and *righteousness*.
	1. There is an impressive difference between this vision of Jesus and the many weak, *effeminate* portrayals of Jesus seen today.
	2. But the Jesus that John saw is the *real* Jesus, the Jesus that *lives and reigns* in heaven today.
	3. We should consider the fact that this is the only physical description of Jesus given to us in the Bible.
44. The Jesus we see in our modern pictures, isn’t like the picture that John just revealed to us here in Revelation.
	1. We prefer to see and know the Jesus born in the flesh.
45. [**Revelation 1:17-18**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/17-18/s_1168017) **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. **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.
	2. Even the three years John spent with Jesus on this earth did not really prepare him to see Jesus in all of His heavenly glory.
	3. At this moment, John knew what a miracle it was that Jesus could shield His glory and authority while He walked this earth.
	4. (Spurgeon) “Blessed position! Does death alarm you? We are never so much alive as when we are dead at his feet.”
46. **But He laid His right hand on me**: 1st, Jesus comforted John with a compassionate touch.
	1. Perhaps the *touch* of Jesus felt more familiar than the *appearance* of Jesus.
	2. Then Jesus gave John a command: “**Do not be afraid**.”
	3. John didn’t need to be afraid because He was in the presence of Jesus, and Jesus clearly identifies Himself to John.
		1. **the First and the Last**, the God of all eternity, Lord of eternity past and future.
		2. The one **who lives, and was dead, and** is **alive forevermore**. He has the credentials of resurrection, and lives to *never die again*.
		3. The victory that Jesus won over sin and death was a permanent victory. *He didn’t rise from the dead just to die again*.
47. **And I have the keys of Hades and of Death**:
	1. Some imagine that the devil is somehow the “lord of Hell.”
	2. Some imagine that the devil has authority or power to determine life or death.
	3. They’re wrong, because ***Jesus*** holds **the keys of Hades and of Death**.
	4. We can trust that Jesus never lets the devil borrow **the keys**.
48. [**Revelation 1:19-20**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/19-20/s_1168019) **Another command to write and an explanation. 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. **Write the things**: This command to write gives us a structure to understand the Book of Revelation.
	2. John is commanded to **write** regarding the past, present, and future (looking from John’s perspective).
	3. **The things which you have seen**: This means that Jesus wanted John to write the things he had just **seen** in his vision of the glorious, heavenly Jesus.
	4. **The things which are**: This means that Jesus wanted John to write about the things of his present day, the things regarding the *7 churches which are in Asia*.
	5. **The things which will take place after this**: This means that Jesus wanted John to write about the things that would happen after the things regarding the *7 churches*, the things of the last days.
49. The Book of Revelation is arranged in this three-part structure.
	1. **The things which you have seen**: [**Revelation chapter 1**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/1/1-20/s_1168001)
	2. **The things which are**: **Revelation** [**chapters 2**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/2/1-29/s_1169001) **and** [**3**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/3/1-22/s_1170001)**.**
	3. **The things which will take place after this**: [**Revelation 4**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/4/1-11/s_1171001) **-** [**22**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/rev/22/1-21/s_1189001)**.**
50. **The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches**:
51. Jesus kindly interprets His own images.
	1. The **stars** in His hand represent **the angels of the seven churches**.
	2. The **lampstands** represent the **seven churches** themselves.
52. We note that each church had its own *angel*, and Jesus held these **angels** in His hand. Some believe these **angels** are the pastors of these seven churches.
	1. This idea is based on a literal understanding of the ancient Greek word translated angel, *aggelos*.
	2. That word literally means “messenger,” and certainly pastors are “messengers” to churches.
	3. Others think the **angels** might be “guardian angels” over each congregation.
	4. Some suggest that the **angels** are not literal beings at all, but they just represent the prevailing spirit of each church.
	5. There are strengths and weaknesses to any of these interpretations, but we do know that in some way, these **angels** are *representatives* of each congregation.
	6. ***Adam Clarke*** (Wesleyan Methodist who published a Bible Commentary) believed the **angel** of each church was its *pastor*.
	7. It’s important to notice *where* these **angels** are:
		1. They’re in the **right hand** of Jesus.
		2. This is a place of safety and strength.
		3. Even the problem churches that will be described in the next chapters are in the **right hand** of Jesus.
53. This was a spectacular vision, and many people wish they could have a vision like John had, but we *can* know the same Jesus that John saw.
	1. We can know His purity, His eternal wisdom, His searching judgment, His victory, His authority and His majesty. Each of these aspects of His nature are ours to know intimately.
	2. When you think of John’s spectacular vision, we should remember where John was: ***imprisoned on Patmos*.**
	3. Jesus is often known most intimately in the ***midst of suffering and trials.***