

## ~REVELATION~

## Lesson 4- Unveiled Glory part 1

Over the past couple of lessons in the book of Revelation we have been seeing the Father unveil Jesus Christ in all His glory to us. And as Jesus is unveiled, we begin to see His Kingdom and the eternal triumph of His Kingdom unveiled. And last week, we began to see the people of the Kingdom unveiled: those who love their King, those who hate their King, and those still waiting for their King. And now today, we will see Jesus speak, and as He speaks, we will see His Glory unveiled to us, which will lead to John giving us a physical description of Jesus in all His glory. And we will find that each one of His physical attributes comes with a special purpose in this book.

In chapter 1, we have been discussing the 21 descriptions of who Jesus is. So far, in the first 7 verses, we have looked at 13 of them. And now today we will see the next 6 unveiled to us.

21 DESCRIPTIONS OF JESUS		
The Word, v.2	The Ruler of kings, v.5	The A-Ω, v.8
The One who IS, v.4, 8	The One who loved us, v.5	The Beginning and the End, v.8
The One who WAS, v.4, 8	The One who washed us, v.5	The Lord, v.8
The One who is Coming, v.4, 8	The One who made us kings and priests, v.6	The Almighty, v.8
The Christ, v.5	The One coming with the clouds, v.7	The First and the Last, v.11, 17
The Faithful Witness, v.5	The One who was pierced, v.7	The One who is Alive forever, v.18
The Firstborn from the dead, v.5	The I AM, v.8, 17	The One who has the keys of Hell and Death, v.18

Along with these 21 descriptions of who Jesus is, John also gives us a physical description of what Jesus looks like in all His glory. And we find there are 10 physical attributes that become extremely significant to us because they begin shaping the happenings of what is to come in the remainder of the book. They first are intricately connected to how Jesus is dealing with His Church, then from there, He goes on out to the world. Let's start by reading these next eleven verses, **Revelation 1:8-18**.

There is a major purpose in every one of these descriptions that will be unveiled to us through the course of the next couple of chapters. Remember, as Jesus is unveiled, it unlocks the revelation of the plan of Redemption and God's plan for us in His Kingdom. But notice at the beginning and the end of this section are bracketed by two I AM statements creating "book ends" to this section. Continually through chapter 1, we are reminded that Jesus is God, the Great I AM, the One who has always existed, and the One will always be existing forever, AMEN!

**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."**

This statement finishes John's opening salutation and Jesus Himself puts His stamp of approval on this letter by naming Himself as God. These are not John's titles; this is coming directly out of the mouth of Jesus. This is the first of 7 "I AM" statements in this book saying, "**I AM the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.**" He repeats this again in verse 11 saying something very similar, "**I AM the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last...**" Jesus is the Great I AM who has always existed and will always be existing which is exactly what He says in the next phrase saying, "**who is and who was and who is to come...**" We covered this phrase extensively in Lesson 2 when we studied verse 4. Jesus is the Existing One, the One who Was Existing, and He is the Coming One. All three of these titles prove that Jesus is, and always has been, and will always be God. And now notice this last title, **the Almighty**. This is another title exclusively used for God Himself in the Old Testament. Remember we said that Jesus is "the express image of God the Father," Heb 11:3; "the image of the invisible God," Col 1:15; "the fullness of the Godhead bodily," Col 2:9. Here is another example of this because this phrase, "the Almighty," ὁ παντοκράτωρ, is used 149 times in the LXX exclusively as a title of God. (55 times in the Prophet Zechariah alone.) Many times, this word is translated as "Lord of Hosts" in our English Bible. It is the idea that God

is the Almighty leader of His army and Kingdom, the Omnipotent One, Rev 19:6. It is undeniable that Jesus is our all-powerful God and King who reigns forever.

After John opens with this amazing salutation, he gives us a little background into this letter starting in verse 9...

**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.**

This is the Apostle John that followed Jesus for three years and wrote the Gospel of John and his three other epistles. But John is not writing this as the Great Apostle John, but rather as a fellow brother in Christ. A companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle John was an amazing man. He was born around 10AD. He was a fisherman by trade with his father and brother of which he left the family business to follow our Lord. John had a special, close relationship that seemed more intimate than any of the other disciples. John, although he never referred to himself by name, he called himself, “the disciple whom Jesus loved”, Jn 13:23, 19:26, 21:7, 20. This shows the closeness he had with Jesus. He was always in the “inner circle” of the disciples with his brother James and Peter, healing of Jairus’ daughter, Mk 5:37; Mount of transfiguration, Mk 9:2; the Olivet Discourse, Mk 13:3; the Garden of Gethsemane, Matt 26:37.

He laid his head on the bosom of our Lord at the Last Supper, Jn 13:23, 21:20. When Peter wanted to know who Jesus meant that would betray Him, he didn’t ask Jesus himself, but motioned to John to ask him, Jn 13:23. Jesus specifically chose John to take care of his mother Mary after His departure. Jn 19:25-27- <sup>26</sup> ... *“Woman, behold your son!”* <sup>27</sup> *Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.*” Another interesting thought, John is the only disciple mentioned as being at the crucifixion.

John stayed in Jerusalem, but when living became unbearable in Jerusalem because of the persecution and turmoil among the Jews, John moved from Jerusalem to Ephesus. This would have been sometime after Paul’s death in 66ad and before the fall of Jerusalem in 70ad. Paul had established Ephesus as the new central headquarters for Christianity and after he was martyred, both Timothy and John helped tend the flock in Ephesus.

John outlived all the other disciples. In fact, he is probably the only Apostle still living when he writes the Revelation. John is also the only Apostle who wasn’t martyred. Although it was not from lack of trying. Before being exiled, a 2<sup>nd</sup> century church historian named Tertullian tells us that *“John was plunged into boiling oil, unhurt, then exiled to the Isle of Patmos.”* Tertullian, a 2<sup>nd</sup> century historian, *“The Prescription against Heretics”*

According to Eusebius, John was exiled to the Roman penal colony on the isle of Patmos by Emperor Domitian in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of his reign, 94 or 95AD and he was in complete isolation for one year and then in 96AD after Domitian died, Nerva took over, John was released and returned to Ephesus. <sup>Euseb book 3.1; 18-20.</sup> John lived another four years and died in the year 100ad in Ephesus. But during this isolation on Patmos, God revealed the Revelation of Jesus Christ to him. Satan thought he had stopped John, but what the enemy meant for evil, God turned it for good. Much like he did with Paul when he was imprisoned and 1,500 years later with Martin Luther in the Wartburg Castle, the Patmos of Luther.

By this time, John is an old man, probably about 85, isolated on this island of Patmos suffering persecution, for the sake of **the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ**. Notice John says he is a companion in **the tribulation and kingdom and patience (endurance) of Jesus Christ**. To be a Christian means tribulation and persecution, especially in the first few centuries, **2 Tim 3:12; John 15:20; 16:33; Acts 14:22**. John mentions “the tribulation,” but this is not the 7-year Tribulation. There is a big difference between this tribulation John speaks of and the Great Tribulation that Jesus speaks of in Matthew 24:21. The 7-year Tribulation is a time of God’s Righteous Wrath poured out on an unbelieving world; persecution and tribulation in this time comes as a result of the enemy who wants to steal, kill and destroy, John 10:10.

Satan was doing everything he could to keep John from preaching the Word. John has been boiled in oil and now suffering and enduring tribulation on the isle of Patmos. But do you think that stopped John? Notice what he is doing on this island... he is praying and worshipping God!

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

John is in the Spirit, praying and worshipping God. John says it was the Lord's Day. Some scholars suggest this is the Day of the Lord as we see commonly throughout the Bible, but this particular way it is written is unique to only here in the entire Bible. It is not the Day of the Lord, ἡ ἡμέρα Κυρίου in reference to the Tribulation time period. In verse 10, the word Lord is an adjective, being written as τῇ Κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ. Which could be translated as "lordly, majestic, or noble day." A day that John was enjoying being in the presence of God in the Spirit. And as he is praying, he hears something behind him and says, "**I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet.**" It is interesting Jesus' voice is depicted as sounding like a trumpet. We are going to see a lot of trumpets mentioned in the book of Revelation and here is one these instances. God's voice is like a trumpet. This is significant when we get to chapter 4, but we will wait and talk about it then. So John turns around to see what this voice is. This is a natural human response which shows John is not in some trance, but fully alert as to what is going on.

**1:11) 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."**

These were John's instructions... "**What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches.**" This book of Revelation as a whole was meant for the Church. Not just the individual letters addressed to each of them, but the entire book was meant to go to all seven churches.

This is now the second I AM statement by Jesus. In verse 8 He said, "**I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End**" and now in verse 11, He says something very similar, "**I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last**" Jesus uses the beginning and ending letters of the Greek alphabet to make the point that He is the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last: the Α and Ω. It is interesting to note that Jesus doesn't use the Hebrew letters, the Alef and the Taw, but Greek; proving that Jesus is speaking Greek to John. Jesus is the Existing One, who has always existed and will always be existing. All things, including the Beginning and the End, came out of Jesus, Col 1:15-17. In fact, time itself, including eternity came out of Jesus because God is outside of time. "Eternity" or "Forever" in Greek is αἰῶνας, we get the word "ages." The word "forevermore" as we see it in verse 18 is the phrase εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, "unto the forever of the forever," unto the ages of the ages. But Jesus actually created eternity. Paul tells us in Hebrews 1:2- "has in these last days spoken to us by His Son... through whom also He made the worlds, τοὺς αἰῶνας, the forever. Jesus created forever!

Jesus doesn't have a Beginning or an End, but the plan of Redemption does, and it was placed in Christ. The plan of Redemption was placed in Christ before the foundation of the world... before time even, and when time began, the plan of Redemption began. The end refers to the culmination of Redemption. Redemption will never end because it is in Christ, but there is a final fulfillment of Redemption in Christ. Paul tells us in Hebrews 12:2 that Jesus is the author, ἀρχηγὸν, principal leader and finisher, τελειωτής, of "The Faith." He is not finishing our faith, but rather finishing or completing the plan of Redemption and reconciliation in Christ. These words, "author" and "finisher" are derived from the same words, "Beginning" and "End." Jesus is the end, the completion, the finisher of The Faith, the plan of Redemption.

This phrase, "The First and the Last" was a title that Isaiah the Prophet used for God, and now this Revelation is drawing on this title as Jesus is unveiled, **Isaiah 41:4; 44:6; 48:3, 12; 46:9-11.** Jesus is the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End and He knows the end from the beginning because He is outside of time. The fact that God knows what will happen in the future, and He tells His Prophets to write it down and then it comes to pass, is perfect proof that He is God. There is no other besides Me. And

now as Jesus is unveiled, we begin to see the complete revelation of God through Jesus. It is undeniable that Jesus is this First and the Last, especially when you overlay **Revelation 1:17-18** which clearly tells us the First and the Last was the One who died but is now alive forevermore.

This letter is to the Church. Jesus loves His Church and has appeared to John on the isle of Patmos to make sure this final piece of Divine Revelation comes down to us from heaven and He tells John, **“What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches...”** God loves us so much that He wanted us to know the culmination of His plan of Redemption for His Church and for His people. John now begins describing what he saw...

**1:12-13)** <sup>12</sup> Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup> and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man...

John turns and sees the risen Jesus Christ in all His Glory standing in the midst of seven golden lampstands. We don't have to guess what these lampstands are, because in verse 20, Jesus explains this saying... *“the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.”* The lampstand is a beautiful description of the Church because we the ones who bear the Light of Christ. We are not that Light, but we carry that Light to the world just like a lampstand carries the flame. We have an image of these lampstands described in Exodus 25:31-40. They are made from solid hammered gold. Hammered gold is refined, forged and molded by the hands of the craftsman. An amazing depiction of our new birth, a new creation in Christ; made Righteous in and by Him. And notice where Jesus is... He is in the midst of us, **in the midst of the seven lampstands**. This was Jesus' promise just before He ascended, *“...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* Amen. Matthew 28:20.

There are 10 physical descriptions of Jesus in these next 4 verses, 1:13-16. Let's read these verses as a whole and then come back and look at each of the 10 descriptions...

**1:12-16)** <sup>12</sup> Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup> and in the midst of the seven lampstands <sup>1</sup> One like the Son of Man, <sup>2</sup> clothed with a garment down to the feet and <sup>3</sup> girded about the chest with a golden band. <sup>14</sup> <sup>4</sup> His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and <sup>5</sup> His eyes like a flame of fire; <sup>15</sup> <sup>6</sup> His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and <sup>7</sup> His voice as the sound of many waters; <sup>16</sup> <sup>8</sup> He had in His right hand seven stars, <sup>9</sup> out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and <sup>10</sup> His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

These 10 descriptions have huge significance to God's purpose as they begin shaping the happenings of what is to come in this book: specifically, to the Church first and then the world.

Homework: connect these 10 descriptions of Jesus with the titles He gives Himself to the churches in chapters 2-3.