

9.28.17

# The Revelation to John 1: The Revelation Begins

## The Greeting: Revelation 1.1-3

1 Revelation = *Apokalupsis* = an uncovering

'Of Jesus Christ' – the message/vision comes from Christ Jesus and is about Christ

'Shortly/swiftly take place'? In what way is this true? (Luke 18.8; Romans 16.20; 1 Peter 4.7)

'By his *angelos* to John' – 67 times; 'messenger'

- a. Angels are members of YHWH's court, there to serve Him (Job 1.6; Isaiah 6.2-3)
- b. They worship at the heavenly throne (Rev. 4.8f; 5.9-11; 7.11; 11.16; 19.4)
- c. Mediate revelation and interpret visions (Rev. 1.1; 10.1-10; 14.6-11; 17.7-18)

2 'bore witness': 'the fearless public proclamation of divine realities in word and life' (Osborne)

Whose message is John revealing?

3 *makarios* – blessed; Matthew 5, Luke 6; First of seven beatitudes in Revelation

'he who reads and . . . ' – a message meant to be heard in community

What does this tell us about the early Church?

1C temple practice: seven readers on the Sabbath

'those who hear and keep' – the Revelation demands a response from us

Urgency

## 4 – 8: Greeting and Doxology

4 to seven churches in Asia (Roman province in w. Asia Minor) from seven spirits and Christ

- Perhaps seven angels, or perhaps seven emphasizes the perfect work of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11.2); also Rev. 3.1; 5.6

Grace and peace from 'one who is, was, and is coming' – a la YHWH (Exodus 3.14-15)

5 Christ is:

- a. Witness: *martys* (Rev. 3.14; David as a 'lasting witness' - Psalm 89.37; Isaiah 55.4)
- 'Firstborn from the dead': *Messia* called 'firstborn (Psalm 89.27 – 'I will make him the firstborn, the highest of earthly kings')
- b. *Archon*: 'the ruler/prince of temporal rulers' – only used of Christ here in NT

(He) Loves us – *agaponti* (present tense)

(He) 'Has released us from our sins by His blood'

- *hamartia* – 'every departure from the way of righteousness'
- Leviticus 16 – Yom Kippur

- Jesus offered the 'perfect sacrifice' (*hilasterion*) for sin (Romans 3.25; 1 John 2.2; Hebrews 9.11-14)

6 Church is 'a royal house (*basileian*), priests to God and Father'

- Israel as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19.5-6; also 1 Peter 2.9)

Glory – *doxa*, honor; Used in Rev. 17 times, and in John 18 times

7 Zechariah 12.10 and Daniel 7.13, a testimony

Heavenly clouds of glory, associated with the Divine Presence (Exodus 13.21; Acts 1.9)

What/why the lament?

8 God speaks (again in 21.3-8)

? Alpha and Omega – first and last letters in Greek alphabet; Revelation 21.6 adds 'the beginning and the end'

God is: a. *Kyrios* (Lord), and *ho pantokrator* (the Almighty) – used repeatedly in Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi

## 1.9-11: Greetings to Seven Churches from Patmos

9 'your brother and partner' - Mark 10.29-30

they share in : tribulation, kingdom, and endurance

Christians in Asia Minor face exile, imprisonment, slander, poverty, exploitation, violence, and the constant threat of judicial action (Schussler Fiorenza)

The Christian response? Endurance (2.2-3, 19; 3.10; 13.10; 14.12)

'Through many hardships we enter the kingdom of God' (Mark 10.29-30; John 16.33; 1 Thess. 3.3; 2 Timothy 3.12; 1 Peter 2.21)

1 Peter 1.11: 'the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow' are our model

Patmos: Eusebius wrote that John was banished there in the 'fourteenth year of Domitian's reign' (AD 95); In 96, after Domitian's death, new emperor Nerva gave a general amnesty to all exiles (Aune 77)

Why was John banished? because of his preaching 'the word of God' and witnessing for Jesus

10-11 *en pneumati*: 'in the Spirit' (1.10; 4.2; 17.3; 21.10) [Acts 11.5; 22.17; 2 Cor. 12.2-4], also Ezekiel 2.2; 3.12; 11.1

*Pneumati* as source of prophetic inspiration in OT: Num. 24.2; 1 Kings 18.12; Joel 2.28; Ezekiel 3.12-14; 8.3; 11.1, 24; 37.1; 43.5

'on the Lord's Day' – Sunday (since 2C [Bauckham])

Trumpet - a harbinger of the Day of the Lord (Matthew 24.31; 1 Cor. 15.52; 1 Thess. 4.16)

7 cities: form the circular route of a letter carrier: Ephesus to Smyrna to Pergamum to Thyatira to Sardis to Philadelphia to Laodicea (W.M. Ramsay)

### **1.12-3.22: Vision of the Exalted Christ**

lampstand – (Exodus 25, 37, Numbers 8, Zechariah 4) On which oil lamp with a wick was set. In Zechariah, they represent Israel. Used here to signify the Church as shining light for God in the midst of a hostile world. Also 11.1-13

Daniel 7.13-14: *'one like a son of man'*; Daniel 10; 'Son of Man' sayings in the Gospels?

Christ Jesus is the prophesied Messianic Deliverer

1.13-16: Describe Jesus? (Do not) 'unweave the rainbow. John uses his allusions not as a code in which each symbol requires separate and exact translation, but rather for their evocative and emotive power. This is not photographic art' (Caird 26-26)

See Daniel 10.5-6

Daniel 7.9-12 describes the Ancient of Days: *'His clothing was white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool'*; also Christ on Mt. Transfiguration (Mark 9.3)

voice 'like the sound of roaring waters'

right hand - symbolizes power and authority (Ps. 110.1; Matt. 26.64)

seven stars - the seven churches identified in verse 20 (image found in Daniel 12.3, 6-7)

'sword from his mouth' - Isaiah 11.4: *the Messiah 'will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth; with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked'*; also Isaiah 49.2

2 Thessalonians 2.8: *Christ at the parousia will destroy the 'man of lawlessness' with the 'breath of His mouth.'*

18 phrase for God used in Deut. 32.40; Daniel 4.34; 12.7

20 lampstands and angels

