

## NASB 1977 The Revelation of Jesus Christ

*9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, 11 saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea." 12 And I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 13 and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. 14 And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; 15 and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. 16 And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.*

Last week we finished the prologue and now John begins with his tale, and the message that resulted from his very real experience. What a story John had to tell.

There is purpose in John's approach. He could have introduced himself as John, a chosen apostle, chosen by Jesus during His earthly ministry, who was perhaps 2nd in importance in the inner circle after Peter.

John, who Jesus loved, who sat next to Him during the last supper, who laid his head on Jesus breast, who was from a human standpoint, closer to Jesus than anyone else. John, the special friend of Jesus, like Jonathan was to David. John who, if it was possible, was Jesus best friend.

Sometimes it's telling to consider the different intro's that the author's did for their particular audiences. For instance the letter to the Hebrews has no author at all. Why? many of us think it was likely written by Paul, and

many of those folks were angry with and disliked Paul. So a letter turns up with no name.

Sometimes the apostleship is prominent because a group is challenging that apostleship. So that's how you begin. Other times you just identify yourself as a fellow slave. From one slave to the fellow slaves. Brothers in a brotherhood of slaves that all belong to Jesus. A wink and a nod. We're slaves of Jesus and we wouldn't take freedom from Him, ever. We're all bond slaves with our ear lobes punched.

So that makes John's introduction of himself as author here something we can ponder as perhaps adding color. Some between the lines information here perhaps.

*9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus*

As you read through the book you can sort of feel John's amazement that, first of all, this level of revelation was given, what an amazing grace of God to tell us these things, to close out the new testament revelation period of new revelation from God with this prophecy. It's just jaw dropping amazing.

And second, you can sort of feel John's amazement as he keeps saying, I, John! Me! Little old just me John. God chose ME to give these revelations to. Me!! Of all people! I, John saw this stuff! Ordinary and old as dirt John. He picked me.

We're all far less amazed than John was. His amazement is true humility. From our perspective, John is perhaps singularly suited to such a recognition of his vast lifetime of faithfulness to feed Jesus sheep. Of course you picked John. Brilliant and poetic gifted faithful slave John.

*9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos,*

*because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.*

Church tradition says that John was banished to the island of Patmos by Domitian around 94 AD. One account has him being boiled in a caldron first and from which he was unharmed, and thus banishment.

Patmos was a rocky isle, devoid of trees, and with little sustenance. Banishment was a punishment short of death. You don't kill the nuisance person but you remove him.

John selects 3 aspects of christian brotherhood at his moment.

*fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus*

You have been called out of this current world and into Christ's authority to reign. Christians, one and all, are in Christ's kingdom. He is our king. That brings consequences.

In John's case, the christians he is writing too are fellow partakers, with him, of trouble. Tribulation. Being a christian brought with it harm, from the rest of the world. Trouble, beginning with your family, sometimes ostracizing you, and then with your status in the community around you. Rejection, and sometimes poverty because of that.

For real christians, that brought perseverance. If it costs everything to be a christian and to be a member of Jesus family and under His dominion, then that purifies the church. Pretenders don't gain anything that they would persevere to keep. Only true regenerated christians have staying power when persecution comes.

It's almost as if Satan got smarter over time. For the first few centuries after Jesus, the church was challenged by different persecutions, and it only causes the purification of the real church. Then Satan wises up and Emperor Constantine makes it illegal to NOT be a christian and that causes

disaster to the church.

John's perspective is that his brothers in Christ are first, in Christ's kingdom, and no longer part of this world's sinful lifestyles, and accordingly, persecuted and ostracized, and finally, because of that they are those who are persevering in trouble. That's who John's writing too.

I need to confess my deepest fear. We know almost nothing of what was ordinary and expected of John. There is zero cost to being a christian. We know nothing of persecution, nothing of perseverance.

If you think about that a little bit, it's a perfect storm. Covid was like a little stress test for the church of Jesus on earth, and we largely failed. We fought with each other about what to do.

If the government crosses over into the church's business and begins telling us what we can and cannot do, our own beliefs and consciences aside, it will be pandemonium. That's a perfect storm waiting to hit our shore. Persecution and real cost would hit the so called evangelical church like a tidal wave.

That's who John addresses his letter to.

*9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.*

John tells us the reason for his banishment to this prison island. He says it's because of the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus. John wouldn't shut up about God's word, His book, His revealed truth. And John wouldn't shut up about Jesus. And so he woke up one morning in a cave in a natural grotto on a rock off the coast of greece. Removed. Forgotten. Ostracized from public life. Banishment.

But it was the perfect place for God to bring new revelation and prophecy

to His apostle. Domitian meant it for harm, but God meant it for good. Where have we heard that before. Sovereign God works all things for His purposes and for our good. Even if there's persecution and loss involved.

*10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet,*

What does it mean that John was in the Spirit? Well, he tells us it was Sunday and John was in a worship state. He wasn't doing normal survival stuff. Hauling water up the hill. Figuring out what to eat. He was "in the spirit" tells me he was worshipping Jesus in that moment, on the Lord's day. He was filled with the Holy Spirit and worshipping Jesus.

*and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet,*

That would startle you. Quietly worshipping and suddenly a voice at trumpet strength.

*11 saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches:*

I'm going to wear you out sounding this same alarm each time I come across it in scripture, but that's my job description. ***Write what you see in a book.***

For 1930 years no one questioned this method of substantiating truth. Reliable witnesses see with their eyes, hear with their ears, smell with their noses, touch with their hands, and we do not question their report. Mostly it's what is seen.

I believe AI has Satanic inference because it wipes out someone making a truth claim based in sight. We are bombarded with images that are not based in reality.

Facebook. Someone posts a picture. Based on the vehicles, what year

would you say this image was taken. Well, let me see, there's a '55 Ford and same year Chevy and a '57 or '58 Plymouth Taxi so people start coming back with 1959. But you gaze further into the image and there's a jumble of cars that never existed, and the words on the buildings are garbled nonsense, and the right answer is that picture was never taken and it's an image of nothing. Complete with Coca Cola billboards and '54 Oldsmobiles. It's computer generated binary nonsense that is convincing enough that people are responding.

Satan wins. How? Suddenly what you think your eyes see, or saw, is non substantiating. You thought you saw a photograph from 1959. But it never happened. How quickly that idea translates to . . . all truth.

In 2026 if Jesus tells John to write what he sees, in a book, what difference would it make. No one can prove John saw what he thought he saw. Truth based in vision is canceled. Good job Satan. In 2026 I could tell AI to make a movie that would far surpass what John actually saw.

It gives a whole new meaning to Jesus prophecy in Matthew 24:23 *At that time, if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There He is!' do not believe it. 24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders that would deceive even the elect, if that were possible....*

We believe John's vision. In 2026 we are wary of believing new things our eyes are informing us they think they've seen.

*"Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."*

These were seven real churches, in real places in what is now, modern Turkey. And they were like county seats. Regional postal stops on a natural postal route. They form a giant circle beginning at Ephesus and ending at Laodicea.

Each region got a letter, and the smaller churches near by would have copied those letters. There are thousands of fragments of such letters that have survived. They are the basis for an entire study of biblical origins.

*12 And I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 13 and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle.*

The Bible is consistent in speaking of truth, as light, and error as darkness. In this metaphor, the lampstands that elevate the flaming oil lamps are the seven churches.

In this world of confusion and chaos and darkness we are to be luminaries of God's truth and order. Lights in the darkness that illumine the way. The church is to be lights in this darkness.

Psalm 119:105. We all know it because of the song. Who was it? Amy Grant? *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*" The church's job is to spread the light of God's Word in this dark world. And thus in this metaphor the churches are seen as lamps on golden lampstands.

Gold is and has always been the most valuable commodity. Gold is a symbol of the ranking of God's church in this world. Nothing is more valuable than God's revealed truth, God's word, in a lost world. Value and illumination are how the churches are presented.

*13 and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man,*

We need to pause here and consider this title. Son of man. Because we have seen that before. It originates in the old Testament. And Daniel chapter 7 is probably the most definitive of who this is. Two visions of two persons, God the Father and God the Son. Listen as I read and you'll see who the Son of Man is;

9 *"I kept looking  
Until thrones were set up,  
And the Ancient of Days was seated;  
His clothing was like white snow  
And the hair of His head like pure wool.  
His throne was ablaze with fire,  
Its wheels were a burning fire.*

10 *A river of fire was flowing  
And coming out from before Him;  
Thousands upon thousands were attending Him,  
And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him;  
The court sat,  
And the books were opened.*

11 *Then I kept looking because of the sound of the great boastful words  
which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was killed, and  
its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire.*  
12 *As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an  
extension of life was given to them for an appointed season of time.*

13 *"I kept looking in the night visions,  
And behold, with the clouds of heaven  
One like a Son of Man was coming,  
And He came up to the Ancient of Days  
And came near before Him.*

14 *And to Him was given dominion,  
Glory, and a kingdom,  
That all the peoples, nations, and men of every tongue  
Might serve Him.  
His dominion is an everlasting dominion  
Which will not be taken away;  
And His kingdom is one*

*Which will not be destroyed.*

There's a lot going on in there. The beast is the antichrist who is a one world government during the tribulation. We'll consider him and probably re-visit these words later on in Revelation.

But for now we want to dwell on the crossover of how the "Ancient of Days" is described and some of the imagery in our study this morning that we're about to look at. Because the Son of Man is about to be very clearly defined for us. It's YahWeh, Jesus, Lord of all the earth.

And that clears that up, but the crossover in the imagery of the appearance of the Son of Man here in Revelation, with the Ancient of Days, who is the Father here in Daniel 7 tells us; Jesus is God. Jesus is God.

Think about the parallels with Adam. He was Son of God who was a man, and he failed. His sin spread to all of his progeny. We are all born condemned in Adam. We all sinned.

And God purposed to redeem some of the sons of Adam by a perfect Son, who never sinned, who by substitution, in our place, receives our due punishment upon Himself and gives us instead of our sin, which He has paid for, He gives us His righteousness.

It pleased God to call this second perfect Son, the Son of man. That's who we're dealing with in this vision. *one like a son of man*, This is none other than Jesus, the annointed One, the Messiah, the Christ, the Redeemer.

What is He doing. He is seen in the midst of the seven lampstands. Jesus is at work within His church. Here represented by these seven churches in Asia minor, but Jesus is at work in the midst of His church today, walking in the midst of golden lampstands, as we speak.

And Jesus is active in His church universal and local. Some He is building up and strengthening. Some He is trimming and pruning. Some He is

killing with death. Many, I believe, are about to be vomited out of His mouth.

Suffice it to say, Jesus is never static in His church. He isn't a removed onlooker, He is active. Let's continue and look at His attire. Because depending on what we're doing, these elements of His being are either working for us, or against us. We want Him to be for us. Trust me.

*13 and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. 14 And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; 15 and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters.*

*clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle.*

This would have had instant understanding by jews. It pictures the old testament requirements for the priesthood. This is the attire of prophets and priests. And not of Kings.

We've already been told that Jesus is King of all kings of the earth. That isn't what's going on here. This imagery is Jesus dealing with His church, not dealing with a corrupted rebellious world who doesn't want Him to rule. That comes later.

Right now, Jesus is Prophet and Priest to His people, His church. This greek word for robe, in the greek translation of the old testament is the same word used to describe the priests attire and also used when speaking of the attire of prophets. Jesus is in priestly mode here, in His church. And He is prophet to His church. The robe and girdle speak to what He is doing as He works in the midst of His churches in the world.

*14 And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and*

*His eyes were like a flame of fire;*

The words indicate the brilliance of the white. Brilliant in purity. Brilliant white holiness.

Why is this important. This blazing purity and holiness of Jesus. Let me remind you of something. This is the bridegroom. We are the bride. Paul speaks to us, the church, and he says; *For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.* 2Cor. 11:2

We gaze at the brilliant purity and holiness of that blazing white head and hair of Jesus and then we think about the church, as His bride. What a horrific thought when I think about all of the compromise and shallowness of what calls itself the church in our time. This is your bridegroom, church. You are the bride.

There is a parallel view in Daniel 7 that we already looked at above;  
9 *"I kept looking  
Until thrones were set up,  
And the Ancient of Days was seated;  
His clothing was like white snow  
And the hair of His head like pure wool.*

The pure holiness of the Son of Man is equivalent to the pure holiness of the Ancient of Days. The church is to be the chaste bride of the Son of Man. How're we doing at that? Maybe He isn't watching what we're doing?

*14 And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire;*

We'll see each one of these attributes as we go through the seven letters to the seven churches. To Thyatira, the 4rth church He says;

18 *“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: This is what the Son of God, the One who has eyes like a flame of fire and His feet are like burnished bronze, says:*

The writer of Hebrews tells us;

*“There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do,”* Hebrews 4:13

We have looky loo's. People who hear something is going on up at that church and they come a few times to check us out. Then they vanish. I never chase after those folks.

Being a christian is serious business. It's tough enough for those of us who are born again, committed, regenerated sold out believers to somehow be the bride of Jesus on that day. It's impossible for the real christians. I don't chase after the tares.

Those eyes that see all things, those laser flames of fire, are serious business folks. Those words in Hebrews should haunt us. Him, with whom we have to report, we will be held to account, and shepherds like me will be held to a higher judgement, Him with whom we have to do, has eyes that are flames of fire, and they see all things.

*15 and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace,*

Red orange hot blazing on fire feet. He sees all and His feet can judge all. Psalms 110:1 says this about the Messiah;

*The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”* Psa. 110:1

Those feet of fire, glowing red hot bronze, will trample all enemies. God will make His enemies a footstool for those feet.

That introduction to the letter to Thyatira also includes these feet. They get the laser eyes and the judgement glowing hot feet. The Lord of the church, fights against His own church, when that becomes necessary.

Glowing white holiness, firey lazer focused eyes the see all, and feet on fire to trample in judgement. This is our Jesus. Glorified. He means business.

You walk in some of these modern churches and they want you to feel like Jesus is just one of the guys. Rubba dub dub thanks for the grub Jesus. He's like a cool older brother. **Jesus get's us.** What is that supposed to mean?

He gets us alright. The Jesus with blazing purity of holiness brilliant white hair and the lazer focus eyes with fire coming out that see everything and the feet of burning firey bronze gets us.

*14 And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; 15 and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters.*

Have you ever stood some place where the roar of the water is deafening. This glorified Jesus voice is not like any voice we've heard on earth before.

I'm quite sure the combination of wind and waves that was about to send the little fishing boat to the bottom of the Sea of Galilee was deafening that night. Those men would have had to shout to be heard above the cacophany of wind and waves pounding them.

And Jesus, perhaps in a small little voice said to the wind and waves. *Cease, Be still.* And immediate silence. You could hear a pin drop. What happens when He speaks with this voice like many waters?

Well, for one thing, just as an example; the universes were formed out of nothing, when that voice spoke. Everything that is, came into being, by

that voice. Just for starters.

Let me show you the first time we will hear that voice for ourselves. It's one thing to read about it and try to imagine it, but John records a time when we will all hear this very voice.

Revelation chapter 4. We will get there. Have faith in me. Or perhaps we'll hear this voice and we won't get to chapter 4. My vote is for that. This is the voice of the glorified Jesus, the same voice that created all that is;

*Rev. 4:1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “**Come up here**, and I will show you what must take place after these things.”*

John tells us that this voice is the same as the first voice that he heard, the one in chapter 1 that we're studying. That voice.

But I want to point out something that is patently obvious. He says the exact same thing two times.

You say, maybe God is forgetful and He's getting sort of doty, and he repeats Himself. He forgot He already said it. OR, maybe this is important for us to pay attention to. Maybe we're the doty ones and God is gracious enough to tell us twice.

When the voice says come up here and the church meets the Lord in the sky, everything else beginning here in vs 1 of chapter 4 is after these things. So we've got letters to churches, and then we've got after these things.

What takes place after the church, after these things, letters to the church, is the tribulation period, 7 remaining years of Daniels prophecy, to the jews. The church will leave. End of chapter 3, Come up here, 4:1, the church is never seen again in the whole book.

There is a clear demarcation. These things, which is the church, and after these things, which is 7 years of Jacob's trouble. That begins when the church leaves. He says it twice.

Pre-tribulation rapture of the church is the only thing that makes good sense. We will hear the same voice that John heard in chapter 1 speaking to Him.

*16 And in His right hand He held seven stars;*

We're out of time. The seven stars are the seven angels, or ministers, of the seven churches. He tells us that in verse 20.

Each church has a delegated messenger that delivers the Word of God, or in this case, these letters to the individual churches, to that church. The word can mean anything or anyone that God might use to deliver His message. Angels are the most common messengers from God to deliver His message.

But the word works the same for a pastor who stands in front of a congregation and labors to make them understand God's Word. The speaking pastor who is faithful to this book is simply the connection from Christ, to His people.

That's exactly why James says; 3:1 *My brethren, be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.* Jas. 3:1

If I'm the delegated messenger that's tasked to deliver God's message to you, and I mess it up, I'm in big trouble. Smart people don't seek out this post. But if God assigns it to you, you better get serious about the book.