

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Revelation Chapter 1

Bible Study Notes

Outline of the Chapter

Verses 1-3	Introduction
Verses 4-11	Salutation and Occasion
Verses 12-18	Vision of the Risen Christ
Verse 19	Outline of the Book of Revelation
Verse 20	Preparation for Chapters 2 & 3

Revelation Chapter 1 verses 1 to 3: Introduction to the Book

V 1 The Title, Sender and Method of Communication

What does the Title of the Book tell us?

Its title is singular, not plural – it is a singular revelation
The Greek name is *apokalupsis* which means to reveal, unveil or uncover
Apocalypse (noun) (19 times in scripture) means unveiling or uncovering
Apocalypsis (verb) (26 times in scripture) means to reveal, unveil or uncover

What is the Apocalypse?

The Catastrophic end-crisis of the present age
The Spectacular reappearance of the King of Kings in His global empire
The Internment of Satan in the Aboussou
The Millennial Earth-Reign of Christ
The Final Insurrection and the Abolition of Sin
The New Heaven and New Earth

Who Is the Revealer?

God is the Revealer

Whose Revelation is it – Who is the Author?

Yeshua is the receiver of God the Father's Revelation
There is an Implication of the Father revealing to the Son things previously hidden,
even to Him – see *Matthew 24: 36*

The book's Author is Jesus through John (the disciple) via His Angel
By His angel - the Revelation: Father—Son—Angel—John

Signified it – that is, rendered into signs

The signs are explained either in Revelation itself or in the Old Testament

What is the Revelation About?

“Things which must shortly take place”

Shortly - they will happen quickly when they come...suddenly

V 2 **John's Testimony**

What does verse 2 tell us?

It is John the disciple

John - who bore witness to the Word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ

It is he who testified in his gospel of Yeshua and His words

Witness to things he saw

Saw...visual images...John was there...not a dream

John was transported, in the Spirit, to the end times

What do we know of John?

John also wrote John's Gospel and 3 Hebrew Epistles

John was born in Bethsaida – a Galilean fisherman

An early disciple – first of John the Baptist, then of Yeshua

A Beloved disciple – see *John 13: 23-25*

Daniel, who was also 'greatly beloved', also received significant end-time revelation – see *Daniel 9: 23-27, 10: 18-19*

His mother (Salome) was a prime supporter of Jesus

He was well connected (High Priest, Nicodemus) – see *John 18: 15-16*

Thought to be deep...not soft – a Son of Thunder

One of Jesus' inner-circle of disciples (Peter, James & John)

Jesus gave His mother into John's care – see *John 19: 25-27*

Released from Patmos 96AD (Domitian died) and retired to Ephesus

Patmos is 24 miles offshore from Miletus in the Aegean Sea

It was a penal colony to which John was exiled by Domitian (81AD-96AD)

Revelation was written either on Patmos 95AD or in Ephesus soon after John's release

V 3 **A Unique Blessing**

What is unique about verse 3?

Revelation is the only book to say 'read me, I'm special'

Verse 3 pronounces a blessing on its readers (and hearers...and those who keep the words of the prophecy)

Blessing for reading...hearing...keeping

Watch out for the 'threes' in this chapter –usually three tenses or aspects

This blessing is one of Seven Beatitudes (blessings) in Revelation

It is repeated in *Revelation 22: 7* with the focus on 'keeping'

Note the word 'prophecy' – the book claims to be (and is) prophecy, not allegory

What is meant by 'the time is at hand'?

The time is at hand, repeated in *Revelation 22: 7* and *22: 10*

Time refers to epochs, eras, or seasons – the next great epoch of God's redemptive history is imminent

Although Christ's coming is the next event, it may be delayed so long that people begin to question whether He will ever come (see *Matthew 24: 36-39; 2 Peter 3: 3-4*)

Revelation Chapter 1 verses 4 to 11: Salutation and Occasion

VS 4 & 5 John Writes as an Emissary of the Triune God

To the 7 Churches in Asia

Asia – the Roman Province of what is now Western Turkey

Why these 7 churches?

There were more than 7 in Asia...but it is to these churches that chapters 2 & 3 are addressed

A Greeting of Blessing – John shows the Lord God's (and his) heart for the churches

Grace and Peace (Greek: *charis* and *eirēnē*) both embodied in the Hebrew word *shalom*

Not just salutations but biblical statements – this is an apostolic benediction

From whom does this Greeting of Blessing come?

From Him who is and who was and who is to come (3 tenses) – The Father God; and from the Seven Spirits before the Throne (see *Isaiah 11: 2*) – The Holy Spirit; and from Jesus Christ, named specifically...it is His revelation

The descriptive names of Christ in Ch1 will be used in the letters in Chs 2 & 3

Faithful Witness (First Earthly Ministry) – Yeshua often said “I tell you the truth”

– See *Matthew 11: 11, 13; 17, 17: 20, 18: 13, 24: 2, 26: 21*

Yeshua is ‘the truth’ – *John 14: 6* – He is a completely trustworthy and perfectly accurate witness to the truth of God

A title used in the letter to Laodicea (*Revelation 3: 14*)

First Born from the Dead (Firstfruits) – see *Colossians 1: 15-18*

It emphasises Yeshua, Jesus, as the one who rose from the dead – He is the ‘resurrection and the life’ (*John 11: 25-26*) - and because He lives, we to shall live (*John 14: 19*)

Similar to a title used in the letter to Smyrna (*Revelation 2: 8*)

Prince of the Kings of the Earth (Now and at His Second Coming)

– see *Matthew 28: 18; Ephesians 1: 21*

The key of David refers back to *Isaiah 22: 15-25* and is a messianic term indicating authority - see *Isaiah 9: 6-7; Luke 1: 32-33; Matthew 28: 18; and Revelation 1: 18*

Implied in a title used in the letter to Philadelphia (*Revelation 3: 7*)

Note the 3 titles - these also represent 3 tenses

VS 5 & 6 What Yeshua has Done for Us

John Responds with a Doxology (a short hymn of praise)

What does John say that the Lord has done for us?

To Him That: Loved us, Washed us from our Sins in His own Blood, and Made us Kings and Priests unto God - Again: 3 tenses (Past – Loved; Present – Washed; and Future – Made Kings & Priests)

To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Loved Us – many versions translate this in the present continuous sense – it is an ongoing continual love – see *John 13: 1 and 34; Romans 8: 35-39*
Washed Us – many versions translate this in the present continuous sense – it is a washing both complete (at our rebirth) and continuous – see *Ephesians 1: 7; Ephesian 2: 13; 1 John 1: 7*

“To Him loving us and washing us from our sins by His blood,” Rev. 1: 5b (LITV)

What is the Significance of Us Being made Kings and Priests?

Made us Kings and Priests – only true of Melchizedek (*Genesis 14: 18-20*), Yeshua (*Psalms 110: 4; Hebrews 6: 20*) and Believers (*Rev. 1: 6 and 5: 8-10*)

In Jewish ancestry – the Kingly line was through the tribe of Judah and the Priestly line was through the tribe of Levi – the two lines were separate

Some translations render this as "a kingdom and priests." – e.g.: *“who has caused us to be a kingdom, that is, cohanim for God, his Father” (CJB)*

All who believe live in the sphere of God's rule, a kingdom entered by faith in Jesus Christ; and as priests, believers have the right to enter God's presence and can do so with boldness (*Hebrews 10: 19-22*)

V 7 Yeshua’s Second Coming

What does John tell us of Yeshua’s coming again?

Behold, He is coming – the theme of the book...there is a link here to the closing of the book (see *Revelation 22: 20*) His coming is certain to happen

With clouds (see *Daniel 7: 13*) ...every eye will see Him...even they that pierced Him (see *Zechariah 12: 10-11*)

This echoes Yeshua’s prophetic words about His coming at the end of the Tribulation (see *Matthew 24: 29-30, 25: 31*)

V 8 Yeshua – the Great ‘I Am’

The gospels contain 8 ‘I Am’ statements by Yeshua

1. *And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst” (John 6:35).*
2. *Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” (John 8:12).*
3. *“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture” (John 10:9).*
4. *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep” (John 10:11).*
5. *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live” (John 11:25).*
6. *Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6).*
7. *“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser” (John 15:1).*
8. *Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.” (John 8: 58).*

This statement by Yeshua to the Pharisees is a reference back to the declared name of God to Moses from amidst the burning bush ‘I AM THAT I AM’ (*Exodus 3: 14*)

Here, in the Book of Revelation, is the supreme ‘I Am’ statement by the Lord

What does the Lord say He is – and what does it mean?

Alpha & Omega – from the Greek alphabet, the first and last letters...His excellence exhausts the vocabulary

Repeated in *Revelation 22: 13*

Beginning and the End – He spans time and eternity (*Isaiah 41: 4*)

Repeated in *Revelation 22: 13*

Who is, who was and who is to come - 3 tenses of Yeshua (see *Isaiah 9: 6*)

He spans time and eternity: He is the source and goal of creation and it is He who began and will end the divine program in the world (see *Colossians 1: 15-18*)

The Almighty - Greek: *pantokratōr*, meaning the all ruling one – that is, God as absolute and universal sovereign

He is El Shaddai; Almighty and Omnipotent, eternal and unchangeable

VS 9-11 How and Why the Book was Written

V 9 John Affirms his Authorship – his hand wrote the record... “I, John”

How does John describe himself?

John describes himself as a brother (of those in the churches)

The Father, through His Son, has made us brothers and sisters (*Romans 8: 29*)

John describes himself as a companion (walking the same road)

In the tribulation - persecution for their faith

In the kingdom - membership of the redeemed community over which Yeshua is Lord and King

In patience – twofold; (i) eager anticipation of the glory of His coming millennial reign on earth; and (ii) endurance and perseverance in spite of difficult times

On Patmos...why?

For the Word of God – hold fast to the truth

For His testimony to Jesus...his witness (martyria)

Patmos: located in the Aegean Sea off the coast of Asia Minor (modern Turkey) and part of a group of about fifty islands, Patmos is a barren, rocky, crescent-shaped island that is about ten miles long and less than six miles wide at its widest point. It served as a Roman penal colony. According to early Christian historian, Eusebius, the emperor Nerva (A.D. 96-98) released John from Patmos.

V 10 John Speaks of His Experience

What does John mean when he says “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day”?

I was in the Spirit - John was transported by the Spirit
His body may have been on Patmos but John in his spirit was transported
- into the presence of the Lord
- later into the throne room of heaven (Chs 4 & 5)
- and later still through time into the tribulation period and beyond

This was not a dream. John was supernaturally transported out of the material world awake, not sleeping – to an experience beyond the normal senses (similar to Peter in *Acts 10: 11*)

The Holy Spirit empowered his senses to perceive revelation from God

On the Lord's Day – commonly in the New Testament this refers to Shabbat or Sunday
It could also be a reference to the Revelation having its focus on 'The Day of the Lord', when Yeshua will return to rule and reign

John hears "a Loud Voice, as of a trumpet"

Loud (Greek: *megas* – from which we get the word megaphone)

Such a voice signifies the solemnity and importance of the announcement

Such loud voices of proclamation and announcement are heard throughout

Revelation (1:10, 1:12, 1:15; 3:20; 5:1-2, 5:11-12; 6:6-7, 6:10; 7:2, 7:10; 9:13; 10:3-4, 10:7-8; 11:12; 12:10; 14:2, 14:7, 14:9, 14:13, 14:15; 16:1, 16:17; 18:2, 18:4, 18:22-23; 19:1, 19:5-6, 19:17; and 21:3)

Like a trumpet - announcing...John hears a similar 'trumpet' voice in Revelation 4: 1

The Voice comes from 'Behind' him – possibly to accustom John to the voice, and to avoid him collapsing in fear and awe immediately (as he does subsequently in verse 17)

V 11 John Hears the Identity of Who is Speaking and is Given Instructions

Who is Speaking?

The Identity of the Speaker is revealed in His Nature (repeated in *Revelation 22:13*)

Alpha and Omega- it is Yeshua...as in *Revelation 1: 8*

First and the Last – Yeshua is the creator, sustainer and culmination of creation
(see *Colossians 1: 16-17*)

What is John Instructed to Do?

Write - Yeshua instructs John to write what he sees (and hears)

In a 'book' (Greek: *biblion*) –this was to be no short memo – rather a long scroll

What you see – John was going to see and hear things for himself, and have conversations with angels and elders – it was not a 'dream'.

To the 7 Churches – the churches are listed...they are the churches of Chs 2 & 3

These seven churches portray prophetically the churches of the church age chronologically; and the types of churches which will exist

The entire letter is to all the churches...and to us

Revelation Chapter 1 verses 12 to 18: The Risen & Glorified Christ

Who is it that John Sees...and how would you Characterise Him?

It is the Lord Jesus Christ...Yeshua

It is a description of Him like no other in scripture

It is the Risen and Glorified Christ

It is Jesus as Judge...cf. Jesus as Saviour

In *Luke 4: 16-21* Jesus announces His ministry – it is right at the start of His ministry and announces His coming as Jesus the Saviour

He reads from *Isaiah 61* but stops at a comma...in verse 2

The phrases He reads describe His first earthly ministry

The phrases He omits describe the Jesus who is now revealed to John

V 12 John Turns to see who is Speaking

What is the first thing John Sees?

Seven golden lampstands – explained in v20...the seven churches

The Risen Glorified Yeshua is in the midst of His Church(es)

Note – the impact and importance of looking to Yeshua: ‘Turn your eyes upon Jesus’

V 13 John Sees ‘One like the Son of Man’

How does John characterise the person he Sees?

One like the Son of Man

Son of Man – a title of Yeshua used of Himself frequently (especially in Luke)

See, for example; *Matthew 8: 20, 18: 11; Mark 8: 31; Luke 6: 5, 12: 8, 22: 69; John 3: 14*

A title used of Yeshua in Daniel’s vision of the end times (*Daniel 7: 9-14*)

VS 13-16 John Describes the Son of Man

How does John describe the Son of Man he sees, and what does this tell us?

Clothed...a garment down to the feet...a golden band about the chest (v.13)

Similar to Daniels vision (*Daniel 10: 5*) and to the Angels with the Bowls (*Revelation 15: 6*)

Garment down to the feet – a priestly robe

Most occurrences of this word in the Septuagint, the Greek OT, refer to the garment of the high priest

Golden band about His chest – like Aaron’s breastplate (*Exodus 28: 15-30*)

The golden sash across His chest completes the picture of Christ serving in His priestly role

Head and hair white – like wool/snow...indicating purity and holiness (v.14)

This is not a ‘flat’ white but a glowing white of *shekinah* (meaning abiding or dwelling) glory of God’s presence (see *Exodus 24: 16-18; Leviticus 16: 2; Numbers 7: 89*)

The same glory as was seen by Peter, James and John at Christ's transfiguration (see *Matthew 17: 2; Mark 9; 2-2; Luke 9: 29*)

Similar to the Ancient of Days seen by Daniel (*Daniel 7: 9*)

Eyes like a flame of fire (v.14)

Piercing eyes indicate perfect knowledge (*Hebrews 4: 13*)

Fire indicates purification and righteousness (*Malachi 3: 2*)

The eyes of the exalted Lord look with a penetrating gaze into the depths of His church and all mankind (*Revelation 19: 12*) – indicating that all will be revealed and sin will be exposed and judged

Feet like fine brass – as if refined in a furnace (v.15)

Brass indicates an offering for sin...as on the brazen altar

Brass refined in the furnace speaks of the judgement of sin and purification

The allusion here is to the Brazen Serpent (a serpent being a symbol of sin) – yet looking to this serpent brought healing and life (*Numbers 21: 4-9*)

This peculiar symbol was only explained later by Yeshua in conversation with Nicodemus (*John 3: 14-15*)

Yeshua exercises chastening authority in His church

His Voice – like the sound of many waters (v.15)

Like the roar and thunder of a 'Niagara' (*Ezekiel 43: 2*); not like Elijah's still small voice

It is the Voice of Authority (as in *Revelation 14: 2*)

Psalms 29 tells of the power and authority of 'the voice of the Lord'

Seven stars in His right hand (v.16)

The seven stars are explained in v 20...the angels of the seven churches

The messengers to the churches are in His right hand - He controls the churches and its leaders through His Word to them

The 'Right Hand' is a phrase with Hebraic symbolism

Quiz – Mentions of the Lord's Right Hand in Scripture, and what they Teach Us:

First Mentions in the Song of Moses:

Strength & Power	<i>Exodus 15: 6 and 12</i>
Anointing	<i>Exodus 29: 20; Leviticus 8: 23</i>
Cleansing	<i>Leviticus 14: 14, 17, 25, 28</i>
Law & Decree	<i>Deuteronomy 33: 2</i>
Strengthening	<i>Psalms 16: 8; 18: 35</i>
Blessing	<i>Psalms 16: 11; 17: 7</i>
Saving Strength	<i>Psalms 20: 6; 60: 4-5; 108: 5-6; 138: 7</i>
Victorious Power	<i>Psalms 44: 3; 78: 54; 98: 1; 118: 15-16</i>
Awesome Reverence	<i>Psalms 45: 3-4</i>
Righteousness	<i>Psalms 48: 10</i>
Sustaining Power	<i>Psalms 63: 8; 139: 9-10; Isaiah 41: 10</i>
Establishing Power	<i>Psalms 80: 14-15</i>
Authority & Decree	<i>Psalms 110: 1-2; Isaiah 62: 8-9; Revelation 5: 1</i>
Creative Power	<i>Isaiah 48: 13</i>
Judgement	<i>Lamentations 2: 3-4; Habakkuk 2: 16</i>
A Place of Honour	<i>Matthew 20: 23; 26: 64</i>
A Place of Blessing	<i>Matthew 25: 33-34</i>

Yeshua's Place Now	<i>Acts 7: 56-57; Romans 8: 34; Hebrews 1: 3, Hebrews 8: 1, 10: 12-13, 12: 2</i>
A Place of Intercession	<i>Romans 8: 34</i>
A Place of Authority	<i>Ephesians 1: 20-21</i>
Authority over the Church	<i>Revelation 1: 16</i>
Comfort & Assurance	<i>Revelation 1: 17</i>

A sharp two-edged sword – out of His mouth, not literally but metaphorically (v.16) - see *Isaiah 49: 2*

It is a metaphor for the word of God (*Hebrews 4: 12; Ephesians 6: 17*)

The sword signifies judgement

By the word of His mouth He:

Judges unbelievers (*John 12: 48*)

Smites the earth (*Isaiah 11: 4*)

Consumes the Antichrist (*2 Thessalonians 2: 8*)

Strikes the Nations (*Revelation 19: 15*)

Countenance like the sun as in its strength (v.16)...the dazzling splendour of Christ's transcendent glory – echoes of the Transfiguration (*Matthew 17: 1-2*) which John witnessed

Shining like the sun speaks of revealed glory

One cannot look at the blazing sun without damaging ones vision

These are all examples of biblical similes which are also metaphors

VS 17-18 John's Reaction to Seeing the Son of Man and Yeshua's Reassurance

How does John react to seeing the Glorified Christ?

He fell at His feet as dead...others in scripture had similar experiences

Isaiah – *Isaiah 6: 1-8*

Ezekiel – *Ezekiel 1: 26-28*

Daniel – *Daniel 10: 1-9*

Why do even holy men react in this way?

John was overpowered with the greatness of the lustre and glory in which Christ appeared, though he had been so familiar with him before

Mortal man cannot see the face of God and live – *Exodus 33: 17-23*

This applies even to holy men and women – only in the righteousness of Christ can we stand before the Living God or stand before the Son

How will we react in the Heavenly kingdom?

We too will fall before Him – but this time in worship (*Revelation 4: 9-11*)

In Heaven, after the Rapture, we too will have glorified bodies – we shall be like the risen and glorified Yeshua (*1 John 3: 1-3*)

How does the Son of Man reassure John?

He lays His right hand upon John – a reassuring hand of comfort to strengthen and revive him

Daniel had a similar experience – *Daniel 10: 17-19*

He tells John not to be afraid – ‘Do not fear’ is a phrase that the Father and the Son are recorded as often voicing in scripture!

He speaks of His Divine, Risen and Glorified Nature

He is the First and the Last – a title of Jehovah (see *Isaiah 41: 4, 44: 6; 48: 12*) which Yeshua now applies to Himself (see *Rev.: 1: 11, 17-18, 2: 8, 22: 13*)

He speaks of His Divine eternal nature

He lives, was dead and is alive forevermore (see also *Rev. 2: 8*) – the same one who died, is now alive forevermore – just as Yeshua said He would be raised from death (see *Matthew 12: 39-40, 16: 21; Mark 8: 31; John 10: 17-18*)

He speaks of His suffering and death and His conquest of death and His eternal life – for He is the Resurrection and the Life (*John 11: 25*)

I have the keys of Hades and of Death...He has control – He has authority to judge (*John 5: 21-27*)

Hades and Death will be cast into the Lake of Fire (*Rev. 20: 13-14*)

Note: Hades is incorrectly translated as Hell in KJV

He speaks of His sovereign dominion

V 19 Yeshua gives John an Instruction to Write

This verse provides a simple outline for the entire book

“The things which you have seen” refers to the vision John has just seen

"The things which are" denotes the letters to the churches (chapters 2 and 3) – these churches were in existence when John received this Revelation

"The things which will take place after this" refers to the revelation of future history (chapters 4 to 22)

Note the 3 tenses again

John had already written his Gospel, whilst at Ephesus between AD 80 and AD90

Why was John instructed to write?

For the Revelation of God’s purposes to be made known to the churches

For the understanding of future days by those who live in them

That those who read and those who hear the words of this prophecy would be blessed – and that they would keep (treasure) these words (see *Revelation 1: 3*)

That the Bride would join with the Holy Spirit in saying ‘Come’ (*Revelation 22: 17*)

Because the time is near (*Rev. 1: 3*) and Yeshua is coming quickly (*Rev. 22: 20*)

This verse is a microcosm of the whole book – a revealing of mysteries

Mystery (Greek: *mustērion*) is from a root word meaning ‘to shut the mouth’ – it is a secret, kept by the silence of Him who knows, but now being made known

What is the mystery reveal to John (and to us)?

The seven stars in His right hand... are the angels of the seven churches

Angels are messengers and guardians – to the seven churches

We understand from chapters 2 and 3 that these seven churches, in the order which they are mentioned, reveal the history of the church throughout the ‘church age’

Hence the angel messengers are active still today!

In His Right Hand – the hand right hand represents authority

The Seven golden lampstands... are the seven churches (Chapters 2 & 3)

In chapters 1, 2 and 3 these lampstands are on the earth - in chapters 4 & 5 they are in heaven (see *Rev. 5: 9-10*...the song of the redeemed saints)

The lampstands are ‘golden’ – which speaks of royalty

Lampstands are light-bearers...not the light itself (that is Christ), but the bear (hold up) the light so that it may be seen and illuminate the darkness