

The Resurrected Sovereign Christ

Rev. 1:9-20

Introduction

- Apart from the introduction and conclusion, the Book of Revelation consists of four **Visions**
- In the **Vision** of Chapters 1-3, Jesus is shown to be the divine agent of the Sovereign Father.
- In **Chapter 1** action begins with the revelation of the resurrected Jesus who has been granted all power in heaven and earth.
- We are privileged to see Jesus in His majesty and sovereign authority.

Introduction

- Jesus is active among the churches: He communicates His will as He examines the motives and actions of the people who make up the churches.
- He expects His followers to listen carefully and obey fully His instructions.

Outline

1:9-20 – The vision of the ascended and sovereign Christ.

- **Circumstances behind the Vision. (9-11)**
- **Characteristics of the Vision. (12-16)**
- **John's fear and Jesus' comfort. (17-18)**
- **John's commission to write the book. (19-20)**

Rev 1:9-11: Circumstances behind the vision

Revelation 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.

- **The person who saw the vision:** “I, John”
- **The book is written primarily for believers:** “your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ”

Rev 1:9-11: Circumstances behind the vision

Revelation 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.

The place where John saw the vision: “on the island that is called Patmos” - (7 ½ mi. long by 6 mi. wide).

Persecution put John there: “for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ”

Map of the 7 Churches





Rev 1:9-11: Circumstances behind the vision

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

- **John's spiritual condition and the day of the week that John saw the visions:**
 - **“in the Spirit”** – this is a key phrase that introduces each of the 4 visions.
 - **“on the Lord's Day”** – this is speaking of the Christian's “sabbath” – Sunday.

Rev 1:9-11: Circumstances behind the vision

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John's spiritual condition and the day of the week that John saw the visions:

- Because of the Lord's resurrection on the first day of the week (Sunday), the church hallowed that day, designating it as the Lord's Day and thereafter assembling together as a congregation regularly on that day.

Rev 1:9-11: Circumstances behind the vision

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."

- **Jesus' authority:** "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,"
- **Purpose of the 1st vision:** addressed to the 7 churches.

Rev 1:12-16: Characteristics of the Vision

- **Location & Identity of Christ (12-13a)**

¹² Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ^{13a} and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man,

- **“the Son of Man”** - this is the title Christ used most often for Himself during His earthly ministry (81 times in the gospels).
- Taken from Daniel 7:13 – a reference to the heavenly Messiah who is human.

Rev 1:12-16: Characteristics of the Vision

- **A description of the resurrected Jesus (1:13b-16)**

^{13b} clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

- Jesus is presented in the threefold office of **prophet, priest, and king.**

- As recipient of God's revelation in v. 1 he is a **prophet.**

- As "ruler of the kings of the earth" in v. 5 he is **king.**

- And the high-priestly garments of v. 13 present him as **priest** (Exod 28:4; 29:5).

Rev 1:12-16: Characteristics of the Vision

- **A description of the resurrected Jesus (1:13b-16)**

^{13b} clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

- The Greek word translated “a garment down to his feet” (*podērēs*) occurs only here in the NT. It is found seven times in the LXX, and in every case but one it refers to the attire of the high priest.
- The fact that high girding (“around his chest”) denotes the dignity of an important office, suggests that this part of the description is intended to set forth the high-priestly function of Christ.

Rev 1:12-16: Characteristics of the Vision

- **A description of the resurrected Jesus (1:13b-16)**

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

- In an apparent allusion to Daniel, Christ's head and hair are described as "white like wool, as white as snow" (Daniel 7:9; cf. 10:5).
- The functions of **ruler** and **judge** ascribed to the "Ancient of Days" in Daniel's vision are applied to Jesus.
- "**White**" does not refer to a flat white color but a **blazing, glowing, white light** (cf. Dan. 7:9). Like the glory cloud (or Shekinah), it is a picture of Jesus' holiness.

Rev 1:12-16: Characteristics of the Vision

- **A description of the resurrected Jesus (1:13b-16)**

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

- His eyes “were like blazing fire” (cf. Dan 10:6), a description repeated in the letter to Thyatira (2:18) as well as in the account of the victorious return of the conquering Messiah (19:12).
- It expresses the **penetrating insight** of the one who is **sovereign**, not only over the seven churches but over the entire course of history as well.

Rev 1:12-16: Characteristics of the Vision

- **A description of the resurrected Jesus (1:13b-16)**

¹⁵ His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

- The altar of burnt offering was covered with brass and its utensils were made of the same material (cf. Ex. 38:1–7).
- The bronze/brass altar is the place where sin was judged and also where people drew near to God with peace offerings, grain offerings, and burnt offerings.

Rev 1:12-16: Characteristics of the Vision

- **A description of the resurrected Jesus (1:13b-16)**

¹⁵ His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

- Jesus Christ with feet of judgment is moving through His church to exercise His chastening authority upon sin and to bring comfort to the righteous.
- Moral purity is required of all His followers who desire to please Him and receive His blessings and protection.

Rev 1:12-16: Characteristics of the Vision

- **A description of the resurrected Jesus (1:13b-16)**

¹⁶ 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.

- The number of stars is determined quite simply by the number of churches to which the Apocalypse is being sent.
- **“A sharp two-edged sword”** - is intended by John to describe the effects of every spoken word of the Son of Man. His word is piercing, cutting, separating, revealing (Heb 4:12), and absolutely irresistible.

Rev 1:12-16: Characteristics of the Vision

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- Christ warns the church at Pergamum that unless they repent he will come and fight against them with the “sword of [his] mouth” (2:16).
- Chapter 19 pictures the return of Christ from whose mouth comes a sharp sword to destroy the ungodly (19:15, 21).

Rev 1:12-16: Characteristics of the Vision

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¹⁶ 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.

- The sword symbolizes the irresistible power of divine judgment on those who would attack His people and destroy the church, both inside and outside of it.
- Finally, **the face of Christ** is likened to “the sun shining in all its brilliance.” This is a picture of Christ’s divine glory, preeminence, and victory.

Rev 1:17-18: John's Fear and Jesus' Comfort

• **John's Fear (1:17a)**

¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.

- When John saw the majesty, power, glory, and exalted position of Jesus, he was stricken with trembling and fear,
- The resurrected Jesus is no one to disrespect. He is all-powerful and expects His followers to take His instructions seriously and follow them completely!
- Are you ready to stand before Him and be examined?

Rev 1:17-18: John's Fear and Jesus' Comfort

- **Jesus' Comfort (1:17b-18)**

^{17b} But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ "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.

- Christ lays his right hand on John and speaks a word of strong assurance.

Rev 1:17-18: John's Fear and Jesus' Comfort

- **Jesus' Comfort (1:17b-18)**

^{17b} But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ "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.

- The laying on of the right hand communicated power and blessing. It is a commissioning hand that restores John's confidence and prepares him to hear the words of consolation and command.

Rev 1:17-18: John's Fear and Jesus' Comfort

- **Jesus' Comfort (1:17b-18)**

^{17b} But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

- The title "**the First and the Last**," which belongs to God in Isaiah 44:6 and 48:12 (where it means that he alone is God, the absolute Lord of history and the Creator), shows that in John's Christology Christ is the Almighty God.
- What an encouragement to know that Jesus stands at the beginning and at the end of human history and that he is always with His faithful followers.

Rev 1:17-18: John's Fear and Jesus' Comfort

• Jesus' Comfort (1:17b-18)

¹⁸ "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.

- Jesus gives testimony to the reality of His resurrection.
- Though He died, He is now alive and will never die again.
- He has in his possession "the keys of death and Hades." This grants him power and authority over their domain.
- For the Christian, death can only be seen as the servant of Christ.

Rev 1:19-20: John's Commission to Write

¹⁹ "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

- John is commissioned to write both what now is and what lies yet in the future.
- **“the things which are”** – Jesus' counsel to his followers who make up churches. (Chapters 2-3)
- **“the things which will take place after this”** – (Tribulation events (Chapters 4-19), and the Millennium to eternity (Chapters 20-22)).

Rev 1:19-20: John's Commission to Write

- ²⁰ "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.
 - **Part of Christ's priestly role is to tend the lampstands.**
 - The OT priest would trim the lamps, remove the wick and old oil, refill the lamps with fresh oil, and relight those that had gone out.

Rev 1:19-20: John's Commission to Write

- ²⁰ "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.
 - Likewise, Christ tends the ecclesial lampstands by commending, correcting, exhorting, and warning in order to secure the churches' fitness for service as lightbearers in a dark world (see chs. 2–3).

Rev 1:19-20: John's Commission to Write

- “the angels of the seven churches” – refers to the leaders in the churches.
- Although it can mean angel—and does throughout the book—it cannot refer to angels here because **angels are never leaders in the church.**
- The church is like a lamp, a receptacle that is to give light in darkness. However, like a lamp, the church is helpless to fulfill its mission without fuel.
- The fuel is oil which is a symbol for the Holy Spirit working in the lives of obedient Christians.

Rev 1:19-20: John's Commission to Write

- When Christians are filled with the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, they are able to serve as light to the world.
- Minus such filling, Christians have no real possibility of fulfilling the Great Commission mandate.

Summary

1:9-20 – The vision of the ascended and sovereign Christ.

- **Circumstances behind the Vision. (9-11)**
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