

Lesson Two

Vision of the Glorified Christ (1:9-20)

We are not prepared to confront the time of terror and divine wrath until we have seen the living, glorified Christ.

John's Commission (1:9-11)

1:9. John called himself their "brother," suggesting John knew the churches intimately. He called them "fellow partakers in the tribulation." Tribulation here is not the Great Tribulation but common tribulation that Believers experience from persecution (John 16:33; Rev.2:10,13). John is a political prisoner on the island of Patmos because of the "word of God" and "the testimony of Jesus." John's faith in "Jesus is Lord" and his ministry of leading others to the same faith caused Rome to arrest and consider John a political prisoner.

1:10. The Lord's Day is a clear reference to the precise day of the week John received his first vision. Some experiences are so etched in our minds that we never forget the day they occurred. "Trumpet" references the grandeur of Jesus' voice.

1:11. Jesus commissioned John to write what he would see in a book. We do not know how long John was on Patmos. Most likely it was not too long. How did John get the book of Revelation off the island? He could have either sent it via a ship or he could have taken it himself once his exile came to an end.

Vision of the Glorified Christ (1:12-16)

1:12. John sees seven golden lampstands (cp Ex.25:31-40). The lampstands represent churches. Churches of Jesus Christ give light to the world; this describes the mission of the Church.

1:13a. John saw Jesus alive and moving among his churches. "Son of man" is a messianic title that was the most common designation Christ made for himself. This is the second time John saw the glorified Jesus (cp. Matt.17:1-8). Throughout Revelation we see deceased Believers wearing white robes. These are not glorified bodies or transitional bodies of Believers awaiting the resurrection. NT scriptures describe the Believer's glorified body (I Cor.15:43; Phil.3:21; I John 3:2). The picture of the glorified Jesus in Revelation is the best picture of the glorified bodies of saints. Oh the glory of our inheritance!

1:13b. Jesus is wearing a high priest's garment (Ex.28:4-5; 39:1ff).

1:14a. Jesus' white head and hair represent his purity, holiness, and sinless.

1:14b. Jesus' eyes were like flames of fire. "Flame" appears to suggest the omniscience of Jesus. "Fire" appears to suggest judgment.

1:15a. Jesus' feet were like glowing brass. This suggests strength.

1:15b. Jesus' voice was the sound of many waters. This signifies the power and might of Jesus' words.

1:16a. Jesus holds seven stars in his right hand. John interprets the stars as the seven angels of the seven churches of Asia Minor (1:20). This signifies the care and protection Jesus provides the pastors of His churches.

1:16b. Jesus' words were like a two-edged sword. This signifies the way the words of Jesus pierce the lives of man (cp. Eph.6:17; Heb.4:12).

1:16c. Jesus' face shined like the sun at high noon. This signifies the degree of the glory of Jesus.

John's Reaction and Jesus' Explanation (1:17-20)

1:17a. John's reaction to this vision is common for humans who experience divine theophanies (Isa.6:5; Eze.1:28; Dan.8:17; 10:9; Matt.17:6-7). Jesus is too glorious for man to behold.

1:17b-18. "First and the last" references the divinity of Jesus. Jesus is the "Living One." Jesus is the same historical figure that died but is now glorified into His eternal estate. Jesus has the "keys of death and Hades." Keys signify authority. Jesus won the victory over death and hell.

1:19. Jesus restates his commission to John.

1:20. Jesus tells John that the seven lampstands are the seven churches and the seven stars are the angels to the seven churches. Why was this necessary? John and the first century Believers would have interpreted the seven lampstands as Israel (Zech.4:2), but Jesus used them to describe his church.

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