

THE REVELATION

Exalted Christ

Revelation 1: 9-20

Revelation chapter one contains essentially three introductions to the book: the first three verses are a general prelude, the next five verses contain essentially John's personal introduction, and the last thirteen verses actually contain the address of Jesus Christ Himself. It is most interesting that in these three introductions the tri-fold office of Christ is clearly seen: vv.1-3 Prophet—Jesus receives and transmits the Word of God; vv.4-8 King—Jesus, the Alphas and Omega, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, has made us to be a kingdom of priests; vv.9-20 Priest—Jesus is seen wearing the long garment of the High Priest and interceding for the seven churches of Asia.

I. John Identifies With His Readers

- A. He is on the Island of Patmos because of his faithfulness to Christ; it is a penal colony of exiles
- B. He understands first hand their struggles and persecution for the faith
- C. He is instructed to write to the seven churches by Jesus Christ Himself

II. The Vision of the Exalted Christ

- A. The One Who walks among the Lampstands
 - 1. The similarity to the Menorah in the Holy Place
 - 2. The role of the Church is to bring light into a dark world
- B. The High Priestly robe
- C. The golden breast plate and golden sash
- D. the hair of the Ancient of Days
- E. The penetrating, all knowing eyes
- F. The feet like glowing burnished bronze
- G. The voice like many waters and the Word of God coming from His mouth
- H. The face shining like the sun, the original LIGHT of the Universe

III. The Identity of the One in the Vision

- A. Not an angel; the very Son of God Himself
- B. The eternal pre-existence, incarnation and atonement, resurrection and eternal life
- C. The message for the present and the future
- D. The identity of the angels (pastors) and lampstands (churches)

In Revelation chapter one we have this glorious vision of the exalted Christ and His personal and intimate ministry to each of the congregations. Isn't it wonderful to know that Jesus takes a personal interest in our congregation? And, not as Jesus the Man, but as the resurrected and glorified, all powerful High Priest Who ever lives to make intercession for us. What do you suppose His personal message to us would be if He were to write us a letter? What would be our strong points? Our weak points? Our danger zones? Give thought and prayer to that as we continue our study of the letters and ask Him for the answer to these probing questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Explain the significance of the lampstands.
2. What three official offices of Christ are referenced in Revelation, chapter one?
3. Are the feet of Christ glowing hot in the vision or do they only appear to be heat treated? What difference does it make?
4. Is His head or His hair white like wool? Explain.
5. How does this vision of Christ bring you comfort? Or does it provoke another feeling? What is that feeling and what causes it for you?
6. Explain the messengers of the seven churches.

NOTES

I, John, am your brother and your partner in suffering and in God's Kingdom and in the patient endurance to which Jesus calls us. I was exiled to the island of Patmos for preaching the word of God and for my testimony about Jesus. It was the Lord's Day, and I was worshiping in the Spirit. Suddenly, I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet blast. It said, "Write in a book everything you see, and send it to the seven churches in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea." When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands. And standing in the middle of the lampstands was someone like the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were like flames of fire. His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his face was like the sun in all its brilliance. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last. I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave. "Write down what you have seen—both the things that are now happening and the things that will happen. This is the meaning of the mystery of the seven stars you saw in my right hand and the seven gold lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

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MATTHEW 28:18-20™