

Glory to Glory Ministries – Minot, ND

Revelation Chapter 1:1-8

1. Jesus Introduces the vision. (1:1-3)

- a. Revelation 1:1-3 (NKJV) The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must Shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, ² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. ³ Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.
- b. (v1) We begin our study by immediately recognizing the noun is revelation singular, not revelation plural.
- c. This reminds us of **Amos 3:7 (NKJV)** Surely the Lord God does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.
- d. (v1) “must Shortly take place” or another version “Take place with speed”:
 - i. In the original Greek, can mean “soon to come” or “in quick succession,” meaning rapidly of action once there is a beginning.
- e. (v1) The Greek word for “signified” can mean to communicate / make known.
- f. (v1) An angel of God gave the message (visions) to John.
- g. (v2) He gives testimony of the witness of Jesus Christ.
- h. (v3) Jesus promises:
 - i. While He was on the earth, blessings to those who keep His Word (Torah) (Matt 5: 3-12).
 - ii. He now promises blessings to those who “read, hear, and keep” the things written in His Revelation.
 - iii. This is the only Book in the Bible where you are promised a blessing if you
 - 1) read, 2) hear and 3) keep the things which are written in it.
 - a. when you understand and accept it..

- b. John wants this read in the church services along with the Jewish scripture (OT) (The OT was the only scripture available to them at this time in church history. – more on this later.)
- c. It was to be read at once and preferably aloud in a church meeting.
- i. “time is near” means “imminent” (impending).
 - a. Near and imminent are not synonymous, the event could happen immediately or for example in 10 years. Imminent is always used when speaking about the return of Jesus.
 - b. James says “... be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (Jam 1: 22).
 - c. The blessing is for the active doer and not for the passive hearer.

2. John greets the churches (1:4-6)

- a. **Revelation 1:4-6** From John, to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace and peace to you from He who is, and who was, and who is coming, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,⁵ and from Jesus Christ—the faithful witness, the firstborn from among the dead, the ruler over the kings of the earth. To the one who loves us and has set us free from our sins at the cost of his own blood⁶ and has appointed us as a kingdom, as priests serving his God and Father—to him be the glory and the power for ever and ever! Amen.
- b. (v4) Contains the ultimate blessing.
- c. (v4) Seven Churches in Asia.
 - i. The Seven churches in Asia – Modern Day Turkey
 - ii. The seven historical churches are viewed as representative of all the churches in Asia Minor and by extension, the church universal.
 - iii. There was more than 7 Churches at the time but 7 is the number of completeness.
 - iv. There was 1000 cities in Asia minor but these 7 were the largest and most pagan cities.
 - v. Paul started most of the Churches. Paul died in 67 AD.
 - vi. The definite different characteristics of the 7 one from one another indicate that they are representative of all assemblies.
- d. (v4) Grace and Peace from...

- i. The greeting itself is typical, found in most of the NT letters (often with “mercy” added).
 - ii. “Grace” (*chairein*) was the common Hellenistic greeting, and
 - iii. “peace” (*šālôm*) the common Hebrew greeting.
 - iv. In the NT, however, these terms are eschatological promises of spiritual blessings sent from God.
 - v. In other words, Christian writers were saying, “Now in Christ you can experience what was only a hope before, namely true ‘Grace’ and ‘peace.’
 - vi. It is not “peace and favor” but “favor (grace) and peace” from God, because this is God’s program for sinners.
 - vii. You first receive grace and then shalom (peace) follows (Eph 2: 8-9; Titus 2: 11; Rom 5: 1; Col 1: 20; Rom 15: 13).
 - viii. The grace is from Jesus who is also God, God in the flesh (John 1: 18, John 10: 30)
- e. (v4) From He who is, and was, and is to come...
- i. This speaks to the reality that Jesus is eternal.
 - a. Eternal past and eternal future
- f. (v4) From the **Seven Spirits**:
- i. There is only one Holy Spirit.
 - ii. 7 here refers to the Holy Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh) in His manifold and perfect dynamic activity.
 - iii. There has been endless debate over the meaning of these “Seven Spirits.”
 - iv. It is widely held that this may be a reference to the “Sevenfold” Spirit of God as in
 - v. **Isaiah 11:2** The Spirit of the Lord shall:
 - a. rest upon Him,
 - b. The Spirit of wisdom
 - c. And understanding,
 - d. The Spirit of counsel
 - e. And might,
 - f. The Spirit of knowledge

- g. and of the fear of the Lord.
- vi. **May refer to Zech 4: 10b ...** “They are the eyes of the Lord, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.”
- vii. **Associated with the seven stars, which are angels”.**
 - a. **Rev. 3:1a (NKJV)** “And to the ^[a]angel of the church .in Sardis write, ‘These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: “
- viii. **Equated with seven burning torches.**
 - a. **Rev. 4:5b (NKJV)** Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.
- ix. **Maybe the seven spirits sent into the Earth?**
 - a. **Rev. 5:6b (NKJV)** ...in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.
 - b. Based on this verse, these may be seven specific angelic servants of the Lamb Christ that are sent out into the earth to be his “eyes” watching over things
- x. **Names of Angels in Rabbinic Judaism**
 - a. It is highly probable that they are related to the 7 Archangels in early Jewish non-biblical texts, there is a reference to 7 archangels before the throne of God (Eze. 9:2, Tobit 12:15; 1 Enoch 20:1-8, 3 Enoch 17:1-3, Testament of Levi 8:2)
 - b. who are named: Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Saraqael, Gabriel, and Remiel.
 - c. Jewish thought was that stars represented angels. (1 Enoch 82:8, 86:1-6, 2 Enoch 19:1-6 and 3 Enoch 17:6)
 - d. God tells us in His word that heavenly signs are associated with prophetic events.
 - e. Understanding at the time of the John’s writing it was popular belief concerning 7 “planets” that could be seen with the naked eye. These included the sun, moon, and 5 actual planets.

- g. (v5) Jesus Christ: the firstborn from among the dead,
 - i. In the NT, Jesus is the first human being to experience resurrection. He is the “firstfruits”
 - a. **1 Cor. 15:20 & 23 (NKJV)** But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep... ²³ But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.
 - ii. Why is Jesus the first born from the dead when Lazarus and others were raised first?
 - a. The answer is that they were raised to life but died again.
 - b. Jesus was raised to a glorified body.
 - iii. Five times Jesus is called the “first begotten” or the first born from the dead, which refers to His resurrection.
 - iv. Another five times He is called “the only begotten”, which refers to His incarnation (Heb 1: 6; Col 1: 15; Col 1: 18; Rom 8: 29).
- h. (v5) from Jesus Christ: the faithful witness,
 - i. The word “witness” that is used of Christ here is the word that has come into English as *martyr*.
 - ii. It simply means witness, but as the unfolding of Revelation will reveal, to be a witness for Christ in a time of (imperial) persecution means to be someone who is faithful even to death.
 - iii. Throughout Revelation John encourages believers to accept martyrdom. Indicating that during certain times of persecution it would be required of them as an act of their devotion to Christ.
 - iv. When you think about it, Jesus was truly the first Christian Martyr.
 - v. The promise to martyrs will be victors in death for the sake of Christ.
- i. (v5) Jesus Christ: the ruler over the kings of the earth
 - a. Jesus will reign from Jerusalem during the Millennial (1000 year) Reign (Isaiah 2: 2-3, Zech 14: 16-17) and has made us sovereigns and priests to His God and Father.

- a. **Is. 2:2-3 (NKJV)** Now it shall come to pass in the latter days
 That the mountain of the Lord's house.
 Shall be established on the top of the mountains,
 And shall be exalted above the hills;
 And all nations shall flow to it.
³ Many people shall come and say,
 "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
 To the house of the God of Jacob;
 He will teach us His ways,
 And we shall walk in His paths."
 For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
 And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
- b. **Zech. 14:16-17 (NKJV)** And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of
 all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year
 to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.
¹⁷ And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up
 to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be
 no rain.
- j. An interesting possibility centering on the three stages of Jesus' ministry:
- i. in his life he was a ...faithful witness.
 - ii. in his resurrection he became ... firstborn from the dead.
 - iii. At His second coming he will become ... ruler of the kings of the earth.
- k. (v5) loved us and washed (freed) us from our sins in His own blood...
- i. This is the only place in the NT where the exact phrase "freed us from our sins" occurs.
 - ii. As the beloved of Christ, we are set free – all of us who belong to Him.
 - iii. While the sins of the enemies of God continue to pile up in readiness for divine judgment, the sins of those who have turned to God have already been "loosed" by the "blood" of Christ.
 - iv. This is spoken in conjunction with Christ appointing us as a kingdom of priests.

I. (v6) The One who **appointed** us as Kingdom, Priests...

- i. So that we may all function as “kingly priests”
- ii. In the here and now AND ALSO in His Kingdom when it comes in full power and glory.
- iii. Anticipates **Revelation 22:3–5 (NKJV)** And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. ⁴ They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. ⁵ There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.
- iv. **Exodus 19:5-6 (NKLX)** Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. ⁶ And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”
- v. **1 Peter 2:4-5 (NKJV)** Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- vi. “In A.D. 90, shortly before this work was written,
 - a. the Roman Empire received a new name - the eternal empire.
 - b. The Emperor was meant to be the eternal king.
 - c. But John’s theology is that Jesus alone is King of Kings, and His followers are not slaves but rather kings and priests.”
- m. (V6) To Him be glory and power forever and ever!
 - i. Jesus is worthy of this expression of praise to God.

3. **Christ Second Coming Foretold:**

- a. **Revelation 1:7 (NKJV)** Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him,
- b. even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.
- c. (v7) This is not to be confused with His return in the air to catch away His people (the Rapture).

- d. (v7) When He comes to catch-away He will come as a thief and only those who are “Born again” will see Him. (Rev. 3:3 and 16:15, 1 John 3:1-3).
- e. (v7) The event mentioned here will be witnessed by the whole world – especially by the repentant nation of Israel. (Dan. 7:13, Zech. 12:10-12)
- f. (v7) It will be public and not secret (Matt. 24:30-31) and will be the climax of the tribulation leading to the final battle.
- g. (v7) Because of Jesus’ death, He said you are now:
 - i. “my people/ Bride” making us a royal priesthood.
 - a. **1 Peter 2: 9 (NKJV)** But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
 - ii. Who minister to God during the Messianic Age
 - a. See the book of Ezekiel chapters 40-48
- h. (v7) Jesus will come on a cloud when He returns at the Second Advent!
 - i. **Act 1: 9-11(NKJV)** Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹ who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”
- i. (v7) This will also be the fulfillment of the Lord’s Prayer as well as the prophecy of Dan 7: 13-14— the “Blessed Hope” of the Believers!
 - i. **Daniel 7:13-14 (NKJV)** “I was watching in the night visions,
 And behold, One like the Son of Man,
 Coming with the clouds of heaven!
 He came to the Ancient of Days,
 And they brought Him near before Him.
¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,
 That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom the one
Which shall not be destroyed.

j. (v7) “They who pierced Him”:

- i. According to Hebrew scholars this is connected to Zech 12: 10.
 - a. **Zechariah 12:9-12 (NKJV)** It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. ¹⁰ “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. ¹¹ In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. ¹² And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves;
- ii. Is talking about the 12 Tribes of Israel.
- iii. At the present time they are scattered all over the world, “hidden” among the nations of the world.
- iv. The eyes of the Jews (those who really believe in the coming Messiah— Rom 9: 6), whose temporary blindness (Rom 11: 25) has been removed, will recognize that He is their Messiah when He returns and will mourn in sorrow because they have rejected and crucified Him.
 - a. **Rom 11:25 (NKJV)** For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

k. (v7) The Greek for “even so” is amen, and amen.

- i. “amen” is the Hebrew for “even so”.
- ii. John is literally shouting the praises of God in two languages as he says, “Amen and Amen, He is coming!

4. The Lord declares His identity:

- a. **Revelation 1:8 (NKJV)** “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

- b. (v8) “Alpha and Omega”, from the beginning to the end.
 - i. This is a very important declaration.
 - ii. In Hebrew, the “Aleph and Tav” is the first and the last letters of the Hebrew alphabet.
 - iii. Each letter from the ancient Paleo Hebrew has a picture and meaning.
 - a. “Aleph” means Leader / strong / bull /Creator.
 - b. “Tav” means sign / covenant / mark / /truth / perfection.
 - c. When Jesus spoke to John they spoke in Hebrew, and this is what John heard and understood:
 - a. “I am the Creator God and Absolute Truth and Perfection.”
 - b. (The Revelation may have very well first written in Hebrew before being translated into Greek)
 - d. The Tav in ancient Paleo Hebrew was written in a form of a cross, amazingly Jesus was nailed to a Tav, the Covenant Mark of Perfection!
- c. (v8) Some people think that Jesus only came into existence 2,000 years ago, when He was born.
 - i. Scripture clearly reveals that Jesus has always existed:
 - a. **John 1: 1 & 14 (NKJV)** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
 - b. **Heb 1: 3 (NKJV)** who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
 - ii. Paul declared that Jesus created the universe and continues to maintain it.
 - a. Col 1: 14-17 (NKJV) in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that

are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

- iii. Further, God Himself said in Gen 1: 26, “let us make man in our image”, indicating the Godhead was there from the very beginning.
 - iv. Scripture says in the beginning ‘Elohim’ (Hebrew is plural and male – meaning more than one – the Composite Godhead) created the Heavens and the Earth.
 - v. Thus, Jesus is God who created everything.
- d. (v8) Some Bibles leave “... the beginning and the end” out, check your Bible.
- e. (v8) Jesus seals this prophecy with the authority of His own name.
- i. The Son is called the “mighty God” (El Shaddai) in Isaiah 9: 6, thus, Jesus is God – Almighty / Shaddai!
 - ii. Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV) For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.