

Glory to Glory Ministries – Minot, ND

Revelation Chapter 1:9-20

1. John is commissioned to write what he sees:

- a. **Revelation 1:9-11 (NKJV)** 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. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, 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."
 - i. (v9) John uses his own name because he was well known.
- b. (v9) the **persecution** (*tribulation*) that is "in Jesus",
 - i. John wants no praise for his suffering; he immediately identifies himself as a brother in Jesus and a companion in heartache and suffering.
 - ii. The Greek word here means "tribulation" or "suffering."
 - a. Jesus teaches that this "tribulation" is part of being His follower (see Matthew 24:9).
 - b. Paul reminds the church that it must past through many "tribulations" before we enter the Kingdom (see Acts 14:22).
 - c. This is an important concept in the NT and should be studied:
 - a. Consider: Matt 13:21; 24:9, 21, 29; Mark 4:17; 13:19, 24; John 16:21, 33; Acts 7:10–11; 11:19; 14:22; 20:23; Rom 2:9; 5:3; 8:35; 12:12; 1 Cor 7:28; 2 Cor 1:4, 8; 2:4; 4:17; 6:4; 7:4; 8:2, 13; Eph 3:13; Phil 1:17; 4:14; Col 1:24; 1 Th 1:6; 3:3, 7; 2 Th 1:4, 6; Heb 10:33; James 1:27; Rev 1:9; 2:9–10, 22; 7:14
- c. (v9) On the island called Patmos:
 - i. John was banned out of Ephesus by the Roman Caesar Domitian and as in exile on Patmos.

- ii. An island southwest of Ephesus in the Aegean Sea that was volcanic and mostly treeless,
 - iii. The Romans used it as a penal colony, forcing prisoners to work in the granite mines.
 - iv. He was in prison because of his witness for Jesus.
 - v. The island was not deserted; it included a Greek gymnasium and a temple and cult of Artemis.
 - vi. John saw every situation as an opportunity to spread the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus the Messiah.
- d. (v9) It is important to remember that at this time believers only had the TaNaCh (Hebrew Scriptures) of which the Torah Books of Moses – first 5 books of OT) was the foundation.
- i. Some Churches had some apostolic letters to add to their understanding of the Jewish scriptures.
 - ii. However, their faith was based on the Testimony of Jesus and the Hebrew scriptures alone.
- e. (v10) In the Spirit
- i. used also in Rev. 4:2, Rev. 17:3 and Rev. 21:10
 - ii. Seems to indicate that John experiences an “ecstatic” vision.
 - a. See Peter at Joppa in Acts 10:10; 11:5.
 - b. See Paul in Acts 22:17 and 2 Corinthians 12:2-4)
 - iii. This is probably parallel to the Spirit falling on prophets like in Ezekiel 3:12
 - iv. And different from the NT discussions of being “filled” with the Spirit.
 - v. Both, Isaiah and Ezekiel are given a vision of God in their ministries.
- f. (V10) on the Lord’s day
- i. Most Christian commentators of scripture believe this was most likely a reference to Sunday as the first day of the week set aside for worship.
 - ii. Ignatius, an early church Father, wrote a few years after John’s writings that “the first day of the week was sacred to the followers of Jesus Christ because on this day “our life sprang up through Him and His death.”

- iii. Therefore, it has been thought that it was natural for early Christians to call the first day of week, Sunday, “The Lord’s day”.
- iv. The Day of the Lord refers to the tribulation.
 - a. 1 Thess. 5:2-4
 - b. 2 Pet. 3:10
 - c. Isa. 2:12
 - d. Isa. 13:6
 - e. Jer. 46:10
 - f. Joel 2:31
 - g. Amos 5:18
- g. (v10) Prof (Dr) WA Liebenberg in his book “The Revelation of Yeshua HaMashiach: FULL Book Hebraic Perspective Verse by Verse (END-TIME STUDIES SERIES 2”
(Note: Throughout this commentary from Prof (Dr) WA Liebenberg has been slightly adapted to reflect names common to our English bible instead of the Hebrew names.)
 - i. “Yeshua HaMashiach” means Jesus the Messiah or common in English Jesus Christ.
 - ii. The original Greek word for “on” in this context is “en”, and the correct translation is “in”, meaning that John (Yochanan) was in the Tribulation.
 - iii. John was carried forward through the centuries until he saw a vision of the great and terrible Day of the LORD (YHWH) - the Tribulation hour.
 - iv. John is being transported into time to view the events leading up to and including the Day of the LORD (Joel 2: 1, 11; 3: 14).
 - v. The “Lord’s Day” is not a reference to the Sunday “Sabbath” or Sunday “Lord’s Day,” ...
 - vi. “The Day of the LORD” is the general time-period known as the end of the Tribulation and then into the Messianic Age.
 - vii. The 7 years of Tribulation, Jacob’s Trouble, is known as the Day of Messiah (2 Thes 2: 2-3).
 - viii. John not only saw the Tribulation Period but also the Messianic Age (Rev 20) and Eternity (Rev 21-22).

- ix. Also, this day has nothing to do with the Shabbat as some Messianics claim...
 - x. In Zeph. 1: 7-9, 14-15 both terms are used to describe the same time-period.
 - a. Zeph. 1: 7-9 (NKJV) Be silent in the presence of the Lord God;
For the day of the Lord is at hand,
For the Lord has prepared a sacrifice;
He has invited His guests.
⁸ “And it shall be,
In the day of the Lord’s sacrifice,
That I will punish the princes and the king’s children,
And all such as are clothed with foreign apparel.
⁹ In the same day I will punish
All those who leap over the threshold,
Who fill their masters’ houses with violence and deceit.
 - xi. A day consists of light and darkness (The Jewish day also begins at sundown meaning darkness first before daylight comes.)
 - xii. Jesus (Y’shua) paid the price and He is about to execute judgement now with His loud voice. It refers to the time when Jesus returns to judge and rule the world as King Messiah (Moshiach).
 - xiii. According to this study, what John was saying is that he was caught up in the spirit to see “The Day of the Lord” which in the tribulation and His second coming.
- h. (v10) In Tim LaHaye’s book “Revelation Unveiled”, he writes: “John’s use of “the Lord’s Day” in this connection with being “in the Spirit,” however, probably does not refer to being in the Spirit on the first day of the week. Rather, it is a reference to the fact that by the power of the Holy Spirit John was lifted in prophetic vision beyond the church age to “the day of the Lord.” This specifically refers not only to the glorious appearing of Christ to the earth, but also incorporates the many events of the Tribulation Period, including the Rapture of the Church and the seven years of Tribulation and culminating with the glorious appearing of Christ and the establishment of His millennial kingdom.”

- i. (v10) A “loud voice” compared to a trumpet blast,
 - i. a resonance of thunder is used 22 times in this Book and it always indicates a major message from Heaven.
 - ii. A trumpet shofar has always acted as a warning signal and this prepares John for a message.
 - iii. Visitors to Patmos are now shown a cleft in the roof of John’s cave where the voice has been said to have broken through the rock.
- j. (v11) Write in a book what you see...
 - i. John’s “commissioning” shares features similar to:
 - a. Isaiah’s (Chpt 6)
 - b. Jeremiah (Chpt 1)
 - c. Ezekiel (Chpts 1-3)
 - ii. In some other apocalypses the book is to be sealed and not opened until the proper time (2 Esdras 12:37-38, Dan, 8:26, Dan. 12:4, 1 Enoch 82:1, Assumption of Moses 10:11)
 - iii. John is told to write everything down with one exception, that is the 7 thunders that he was told to seal up. (See Rev. 10:4)
2. John has a vision of the Glorious Christ (1:12-20).
 - a. **Revelation 1:12-20 (NKJV)** Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; 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. ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. 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. ¹⁹ Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. 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.

b. (V12) Seven Golden Lampstands:

- i. *Jesus interprets these symbols at the end of this vision.*
- ii. “Lampstands” in Hebrew refers to Menorahs.
 - a. A menorah is a 7-piece lampstand standing 6 feet high.
 - b. Josephus said it was 100 pounds of gold with hollow shafts and 70 ornaments.
- iii. These 7 Lamps represents the 7 Congregations.
- iv. There are also 7 continents and the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel are scattered amongst all of them.
- v. A Menorah gives light, and the House of Israel is supposed to be a light to the world (Matt 5: 14-16).

c. (V13) Jesus is presented in this vision as Prophet, King and Priest

- i. In 1:1 He is the recipient and revealer of God’s word,
- ii. In 1:5 He is the Ruler of the kings of the Earth,
- iii. In 1:13 He is dressed as a Kingly priest.

d. (v13) In the Midst... One like the Son of Man:

- i. The center of the Body of Believers is Jesus, the main shaft of the Menorah.
- ii. **Daniel 7:9 & 13 (NKJV)** “I watched till thrones were put in place,
 And the Ancient of Days was seated;
 His garment was white as snow,
 And the hair of His head was like pure wool.
 His throne was a fiery flame,
 Its wheels a burning fire;...
¹³ “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.

- iii. **Daniel 10:4–10 (NKJV)** Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris, ⁵ I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! ⁶ His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude. ⁷ And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. ⁸ Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. ⁹ Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground. ¹⁰ Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands.

- e. (v13) Jesus is being identified with this human and yet more-than-human figure.
 - i. He is seen in Daniel as a representative of God’s people to God, and of God to God’s people.
 - ii. While in Daniel the son of man is distinguished from the Ancient of Days, here the son of man is described as if he were the Ancient of Days.
- f. (v13) By saying “Son of Man” the title describes the Messiah as ruler of the universe.
The Son of Man is:
 - i. Divine, dwells in eternity, possesses ultimate authority, and is the sovereign of an indestructible kingdom.
 - ii. This picture expresses majesty, power and authority that no human being can equal.
 - iii. Here He is the majestic Lord walking among the churches to reprove and encourage, and to command and commend them.
- g. (V13) A robe extending to His feet, A golden belt around His chest...
 - i. This is directly linked to the priestly garments.
 - ii. His clothing symbolizes priestly royalty:

- a. **Dan 10: 5-6 (NKJV)** I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! ⁶ His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.
- iii. The robe is a “tallit” a Jewish prayer shawl.
- h. (V14) Hair white as wool or snow symbolizes eternity and wisdom:
- i. **Dan 7: 9-14 (NKJV)** “I watched till thrones were put in place,
 And the Ancient of Days was seated;
 His garment was white as snow,
 And the hair of His head was like pure wool.
 His throne was a fiery flame,
 Its wheels a burning fire;
 10 A fiery stream issued
 And came forth from before Him.
 A thousand thousands ministered to Him;
 Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.
 The court was seated,
 And the books were opened.
¹¹ “I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. 12 As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.
¹³ “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.

- i. (v14) Eyes like flames of fire, symbolizes omniscience and wrath (Zeph. 1: 2-3; 18).
 - i. Jesus is righteously angry concerning the sins of the world many of them depicted in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 which Believers are doing. See Dan. 10:6; Hab. 1:13
- j. (v14) In short, the first description depicts Christ as an exalted, dignified figure.
 - i. The day laborer wore the sash around the waist, to tuck in a tunic for work.
 - ii. The aristocrat wore it around the chest, as here, to indicate high rank.
- k. (v15) His feet were like polished/burnished bronze...
 - i. *It is interesting to note that the feet of the Cherubim of Ezekiel 1:7 gleam as burnished bronze.*
 - ii. The imagery of “gleaming” or “burnished” metal pictures the molten state, with the metal glowing in all its purity
 - iii. Since feet in the ancient world portrayed the direction of one’s life, the image here depicts Christ’s life in both its strength or stability and its absolute purity.
 - iv. Symbolizes omnipotence. Meaning Jesus is everywhere.
 - v. See. Dan. 10:6
- l. (v15) His voice as the sound of many waters:
 - i. See Rev. 8:5, Rev. 10:2-4, Rev. 11:15, Rev. 14:2, Rev. 16:17-18, Rev. 19:6, Ps. 29, Heb. 12:26, Dan. 10:6
- m. (v16) Holding Seven Stars in His Right Hand:
 - i. The 7 stars are explained in verse 20 as the angels of the 7 churches.
 - ii. Right hand speaks of authority. Meaning Jesus sustain / protect / rule the 7 stars.
 - iii. This expression symbolizes shelter and security through the divine power that Jesus provides for His people who serve Him as messengers.
 - iv. The Interpreter’s Bible Revelation expands on the Seven Stars.

- a. "...a vivid description of the power of Christ over the planets..."
- b. "... which according to astral-theology had control over the fate and destiny of mankind."
- c. Paul wrote about this in Colossians 2:8. 'The Gentile Christians in this church had been worshipping "the elemental spirits of the universe.,, and had personified them as angels.'"
 - a. Col. 2:8 (RSV) See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ.
 - b. KJV uses "rudiments", NKJV uses "basic principles", NLT uses "spiritual powers", and the MSG tells us "superstitions of spirit beings."
 - c. This passage could have been translated as "the astral spirits of the universe."
 - d. In Col. 1:16 'Paul corrects their error, for he informs them that Christ, the first-born of all creation, had created all things "in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities"... hence he controls these astral spirits of the universe.'
- n. (v16) The Word comes out of His mouth and penetrates, The Sharp Double-Edged Sword
 - i. **Heb 4: 12 (NKJV)** For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
 - ii. At His return, Jesus will overthrow the lawless one with the breath of His mouth.
 - a. 2 Thess. 2:8 (NKJV) And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

- iii. Jesus fights his enemies with His word, the battle is not with flesh and blood but against forces of darkness. (See Eph. 6:12)
- iv. In warfare His word executes judgment and destroys the works of the evil one. (See. Rev. 2:12 & 16, Rev. 19:15 & 21 and Isa. 11:4 and Isa. 49:2)
- v. The divine Word constantly comes fourth from Jesus mouth. It is active, protecting His own and proving to be destructive to His enemies.
- vi. But Isaiah's description of the Messiah/Servant is also in the background here:
 - a. **Isaiah 11:4 (NKJV)** But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.
- vii. See also: Rev. 2:12 & 16, Rev, 19:15, Rev. 21. Compare to Eph. 6:17
- o. (v16) His Face, Shining like the Sun
 - i. His countenance suggests indescribable glory and majesty.
 - ii. See Dan. 10:6
- p. (v17) I fell at His feet as dead:
 - i. The sight of Jesus glorified is breathtaking, and the one who laid his head upon Jesus at the Last Supper, now falls prostrate at His feet.
 - ii. William Hendriksen wrote:
 - a. Notice that the Son of man is here pictured as clothed with power and majesty and with awe and terror. That long royal robe; that golden belt buckled at the breast; that hair so glistening white that like snow on which the sun is shining it hurts the eye; those eyes flashing fire, eyes which read every heart and penetrate every hidden corner; those feet glowing in order to trample down the wicked; that loud, reverberating voice, like the mighty breakers booming against the rocky shore of Patmos; that sharp, long, heavy great-sword with two biting edges; that entire appearance "as the sun shines in its power," too intense for human eyes to stare at – the entire picture, taken as a whole, is symbolical of Christ, the Holy

One, coming to purge His churches, and to punish those who are persecuting His elect.

- q. (v17) Fear Not
 - i. Phrase is found 80 times in scripture.
 - ii. Generally, of God quieting the fear of man because of His presence.
- r. (v17) the first and last,
- s. (v18) once dead, but now alive forever!
- t. (v18) holding the keys of death and hades:
 - i. KJV says “keys of hell and of death.”
 - ii. Jesus defeated Satan, took the keys from him and stripped him of his “dunamis” power.
 - a. 1 John 3: 8 (NKJV) He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.
 - iii. When Jesus died on the cross He descended into hades / sheol to take the keys of Hades and the grave:
 - a. **Eph 4: 9 (NKJV)** Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?
 - iv. The souls of all the righteous who died before Jesus were kept captive in the underworld by Satan.
 - v. The Interpreter’s Bible explains Death and Hades as:
 - a. “Hades is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Sheol, was not a place of punishment , but was the temporary abode in the lower world of souls of the dead, both good and evil, with the exception of the martyrs (whose souls went to heaven when they died)...”
 - b. The commentary further explains that hades is the place of the dead and that death is seen in Rev. 6:8 as the ruler of death and in Rev. 20:13 as the angel of death.
 - c. “The bottomless pit, a quite different place in the nether world, to which an angel had the key, Hades can be locked and unlocked.”
 - d. Jewish tradition also tells us:

- a. "Only God possessed the key of death."
- b. "Elijah once asked for the keys of the raising of the dead, but was told that they belonged to God alone."
- e. "...Christ assumes the power of God over Death and Hades."
- vi. 1 Cor. 15:54-55 (NKJV) So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.
- u. (v19) Therefore write what you saw, what is, and what will be after these things.
 - i. Describes a simple outline for the whole book:
 - a. What you saw - Chpt 1
 - b. What is - Chpts 2—3
 - c. What will be - Chpts 4—22.
 - v. (v20) 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.
 - i. 7 Messengers represent:
 - a. In Biblical times in Jewish Synagogues and early Congregations of Believers, the leading elder was called "the messenger of the assembly."
 - b. The Greek term angelos can refer to either messengers or angels.
 - c. These messengers of the seven assemblies may be types of messenger angels to the universal Assembly of Believers throughout history.
 - d. The Interpreter's Bible in commentary on Revelation 1:20 tells us:
 - a. **"The angels of the seven churches, identified with the seven stars, are to be considered the guardian angels of these churches. "**
 - b. "In chs. 2-3 the relationship between each angel and his church is close: the letter to each church is addressed to its angel, and both share equally in the praise and the censure of Christ.
 - ii. Zechariah 4:2-6 seems to be in the background of several of John's visions.

- a. In the Zechariah context, the lamps in the context of the Temple represent a restored, faithful Israel in some sense.
- b. In the context of John’s vision and in Jesus’ interpretation, the Lampstands of Revelation refer to churches.
- c. **Zechariah 4:2, 10 (NKJV)** And he said to me, “What do you see?”
So I said, “I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. ¹⁰ For who has despised the day of small things?
For these seven rejoice to see
The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.
They are the eyes of the Lord,
Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.”
- w. (v20) The Identity of the Lampstands:
 - i. This vision stands in distinction to the Jewish Menorah of one lamp with seven stems patterned after the instructions given to Moses in Exodus 25:31-37.
 - ii. Here these are seven individual lampstands that represent seven churches, or assemblies.
 - iii. The figure of “light giving” in reference to the churches probably indicates that these assemblies provide “illumination” in a sin-darkened world as they reflect the glory of the Creator in their unity and love.
 - iv. **Daniel 12:3 (NKJV)** Those who are wise shall shine
Like the brightness of the firmament,
And those who turn many to righteousness
Like the stars forever and ever.
 - v. **Philippians 2:14–15 (NKJV)** Do all things without complaining and disputing, ¹⁵ that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,