

Revelation 1:1-8 Behold he comes with Clouds

REV 1:1-3 INTRODUCTION

v1 Revelation: Gk. *apokalupsis* ie. "to uncover" or "unveil". What is hidden to the world is revealed to believers. The very title expresses a book that can be understood. This word is used 19x in the NT, often in the context of **Christ and the Saints being revealed in judgement**. It is also used in the context of overcoming trials and suffering. *Apokalupsis* is therefore a specially handpicked title. It is translated as "manifestation" in **Rom 8:19** and "revealing" in **1 Pet 4:13**.

Which God gave unto him: Jesus previously did not have detailed knowledge of times and seasons: **Mk 13:32; Acts 1:7**. Now in heaven, God has provided this. In a similar way that the angel in Gethsemane was sent to *strengthen* Christ, Christ gives this book to *strengthen* believers **Lk 22:43**.

Show unto his servants: Because the wise will understand: **Dan 12:10**. Similarly, Jesus taught in parables: **Mk 4:9-11** "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God." God's purpose in providing Revelation has not failed. Believers through the ages have understood God's unfolding purpose. This servant theme is a common one: **Rev 2:20; 7:3; 10:7; 11:18; 19:2,5; 22:3,6**, cp. **Jn 15:15; 1 Cor 7:21-23**.

Shortly come to pass: An Important statement! The letters to the 7 ecclesias (**Rev 2-3**) and then events of the first seal (**Rev 6:1**) commences shortly after Revelation is given. The seals, trumpets and vials all follow a natural chronological progression through time. **He signified it:** By symbols so only those who believe the gospel can understand. These can be interpreted by an appreciation of Scripture: **Prov 25:2**. Each symbol is the best possible representation Christ could use to explain the message. **His servant John:** John wrote one Gospel and 3 epistles. He was a man of deep spiritual understanding, revealing Christ's Divine attributes.

v2 Testimony of Jesus Christ: Means to *witness* and is a theme used throughout the book. See notes on **1:9**. Roth. "who bare witness as to the Word of God and the witness of Jesus Christ." Common theme in John's gospel and epistles. **v3 Blessed:** A blessing is given to those who not only *hear* the words of the prophecy, but to those who **practically apply** what is written. A study of this book can powerfully transform our lives: The same word is used here as in Christ's teachings in **Matt 5:1-12**. **Hear:** Fundamental principle: **Song 8:8-14; John 10:27**. **Keep those things:** The book is practical, therefore vital. Similar encouragement in **Rev 22:7**.

REV 1:4-8 REVEALING OF CHRIST AND THE SAINTS

v4 Seven ecclesias: Outside Israel, in the Roman Empire. This sets the pattern for the whole book. The word *ekklesias* is expressive of those "who are called out", very different to the English word "church". We are called to **come out from** the churches of Christendom: **Acts 15:16; Rev 18:4**. The first part of the word "ekklesia" is "ek" meaning "to come out of" as it is translated in **Rev 5:9; Acts 15:14; 2 Cor 6:17**. The second part is "klesis" meaning "calling".

THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:
2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

4 JOHN to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

The firstborn was consecrated to God: **Ex 13:2; 22:29**. He held the position of priest in the family: **Num 3:12,13; 8:14-18**. Unlike many in the OT (incl. the national firstborn Israel), Jesus Christ lived up to his responsibilities: **Col 1:18; Lk 1:32-33; 2:22; Rom 8:17-29; Heb 4:15; 1 Cor 15:25; Ps 89:24-27**.

Prince of the kings of the earth: The Saints will be *kings* in the sense that they will rule with Christ: **5:10**. Here again is the key theme - **the revealing of Christ and the Saints**. Christ is "Prince of princes" **Dan 8:25** (cp. **9:25**). He is "Lord of lords and King of kings": **Rev 17:14**. **Unto him that loved us:** Greek is in the present tense ie. "loves us". This is particularly expressed in Christ's prayer in **Jn 17**. **Washed us from our sins in his own blood:** Also in **Rev 5:9; 7:14** describing the redeemed in immortality. See also **Heb 9:22** and **1 Jn 1:7**. **v6 Kings and priests:** See **Rev 5:10**, literally meaning "a kingdom of priests". Gentile ecclesias are described as a "holy and royal priesthood" **1 Pet 2:5-10**. The OT symbols of Israel are used to represent Gentile believers, the "Israel of God" **Gal 6:16**.

The number 7 symbolises the complete ecclesia. The 7 ecclesias are therefore representative ecclesias: **Rev 22:16**.

Grace be unto you: Divine favour: **Eph 1:6-7; 2:7-9**. **Peace:** means "to be at one". Not just the end of war, but unity and a binding together: **Jn 14:27; 16:33**. **Which is:** Yahweh as manifested in Christ. **Which was:** Yahweh revealed Himself to the prophets, and Moses at the burning bush: **Ex 3:14**. **Which is to come:** Yahweh revealed in a multitude of Immortal Saints: **Deut 33:2; Isa 30:27; Zech 14:5; Rev 1:13; 10:1; 14:1**. Clothed with Divine nature! **2 Pet 1:4**.

Seven spirits: Lit. "which is before His throne". Describes the oneness of God's Spirit working in different ways: **Eph 4:4**. Represents God's perfect character revealed in Jesus Christ: **Isa 11:1-5** "The spirit of: Yahweh / wisdom / understanding / counsel / might / knowledge / the fear of Yahweh". Similarly, 7 angels reveal historical events. Angels are called "spirits" in **Heb 1:7,14**. "The Spirit" is the means by which God's Word was written: **Jn 6:63; Eph 6:17; Rev 2:7**.

v5 Faithful witness: See notes on **1:9**. Jesus Christ was the greatest witness: **Jn 18:37**. **First begotten of the dead:** Literally means "the chief born from among dead ones". Christ is the first to have been risen to immortality, the *firstfruits*: **1 Cor 15:23**. This is a title based upon the Law of the Firstborn:



Glory and dominion: John's prayer will be accomplished when Catholic Europe is subdued subsequent to Armageddon: **Psa 2:8; Rev 17:14; 19:20**. **For ever and ever:** Literally "the age of the ages", the Millennium. At the end of the 1000 years will be the greatest victory, when a *new heaven and a new earth* will not experience sin and death: **Rev 20:14, 21:1**.

v7 This verse is an all-encompassing summary of Revelation, and is "bracketed" by an "Amen" at the beginning and end. Various elements of weather are used to symbolise Christ coming with a cloud of witnesses: **Heb 12:1**, cp. **Rev 10:1**. This "coming" is of Christ revealing himself to the world. The resurrection and judgment will be past, the marriage of the Lamb complete, with saints prepared for war. See also **Mt 24:30; 26:64; Jude 14; 1 Pet 4:17; Heb 2:5**. Many Scriptures reveal Christ and the saints coming in judgment, eg. **Dan 7:22; Zech 14:5; Joel 3:11; Deut 33:2; Psa 68:17; Hab 3:3**.

v7 He comes with clouds: **The revealing of Christ and the Saints in glory**. Christ comes with healing in his beams: **Mal 4:2**. The saints are like dew drops upon the grass: **Psa 110:3; Isa 26:19**. They are symbolically drawn up into the atmosphere by the sun's rays. The saints are resurrected to immortal life, and are "kings of a sun's rising": **Rev 16:12**. The dew droplets evaporate and are gathered "in clouds": **Heb 12:1**. The clouds bring thunder and lightning as they judge the nations: **Rev 4:5; 11:19; 16:18-21**. Then like rain they bring the teaching of God's Word upon the mown grass, the mortal population in the Kingdom: **Psa 72:6; 32:2**.

Every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: How? When they see *the saints* in immortality: **Zech 12:10** The saints are "in Christ" and are one "in him". Israel will recognise him as their true Messiah: **Zech 13:6,7**. **All kindreds of the earth shall wail:** Because of God's judgments: **Isa 26:9**. These will be unprecedented: **Ez 38:23; Dan 12:1; Jer 25:30-33; Matt 24:30; Rev 11:19**. **Even so, Amen:** Yahweh is the "God of Truth" or "God of Amen" in **Isa 65:16**.

v8 Alpha and Omega: First and last letters of Greek alphabet. Jesus Christ is the beginning and the ending of God's purpose: **Heb 12:2; Rev 13:8**. **The Almighty:** **Rev 4:8, 11:17, 15:3, 16:7,14; 19:6**, tr. "omnipotent" in **19:15, 21:22**. The OT Hebrew equivalent is "Yahweh of Armies".

Colour code: Blue (God and Jesus Christ); Red (sin/devil/judgment of wicked); Green (Kingdom); Orange (important words & phrases); Purple (return of Jews to the land); Yellow (practical exhortation). Prepared for Rathmines Bible School Teenagers.