Revelation 1

2020

### Prayers

† Blessed is our God always, as it is now, was in the beginning, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. ... in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Through the prayers of our holy Ancestors, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen. Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

† Εὐλογημένη ἡ Βασιλεία τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, νῦν καὶ ἀεί, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

† Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, You are everywhere and fill all things, Treasury of blessings, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

† Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (three times).

† Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it is now, was in the beginning, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

“εἰ οὖν ὑμεῖς πονηροὶ ὑπάρχοντες οἴδατε δόματα ἀγαθὰ διδόναι τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν, πόσῳ μᾶλλον Ὁ Πατὴρ Ὁ ἐξ Οὐρανοῦ δώσει Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον τοῖς αἰτοῦσιν Αὐτόν.” — Luke 11:13[[1]](#footnote-1)

“Ὁ θεός, ἱλάσθητί μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ.” — Luke 18:13[[2]](#footnote-2)

“Ἰησοῦ, μνήσθητί μου ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.” — Luke 23:42[[3]](#footnote-3)

“David ascended in the Ascent of Olives, ascending and weeping, with head covered, he went barefoot; and each person with him covered his head, so they went up, ascending and weeping.” — 2 Samuel 15:30 LXX

“The sowers will reap in joy. The ones going, went and wept, casting their seeds; yet, the ones coming, will come in exultation, carrying their sheaves.” — Psalm 125:5-6 LXX [126:5-6][[4]](#footnote-4)

“Send away your bread on the surface of the water: because, in a multitude of days you will find it.” — Ecclesiastes 11:1 LXX

“Indisputably great is the good-worship mystery: Who was clearly displayed in [the] flesh; Who defended righteousness in [the] Spirit; Who was witnessed by messengers; Who was proclaimed internationally; Who was believed cosmically; Who was taken up in Glory.” — 1 Timothy 3:16

“…: for, when prophecy came, not by human will: but, being carried by [the] Holy Spirit, humans, spoke from God.” — 2 Peter 1:21

“These [Bereans] were better-begotten than the [people] in Thessaloníki; who welcomed the Word with all enthusiasm: daily examining the writings if He might have it so.” — Acts 17:11

“Similarly, younger people, be submitted to [your] elders; all of you be clothed with humble mindedness toward one another: because, ‘God opposes [the] proud; but, gives grace to the humble.’[[5]](#footnote-5) Therefore, be humbled under the strong hand of God, so that He would exalt you in due time: casting all your care on Him: because, He cares about you.” — 1 Peter 5:5-7

Be clothed with poverty, Peter says: for: humility and poverty are very close synonyms.

### Introduction

“I know that with my arrival[[6]](#footnote-6) fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the little flock. Out of you yourselves men will stand up, speaking well established perversions[[7]](#footnote-7), to wrench away the disciples after themselves.” — Acts 20:29-30

“For, [though] walking about in flesh, we do not soldier according to the standard of flesh: for, the armaments of our soldiering [are] not fleshly, but powerful in God for destroying bastions... destroying [corrupted] reasoning, with every arrogance rising against the knowledge of God, capturing every thought in the obedience of Christ.” — 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

The Naked Truth   
of Prophetic Light   
Begins to Dawn   
Over the Human Race

### Revelation Chapter 1

Verses 1-3

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to His servants, things which must happen in a short time[[8]](#footnote-8). He sent this oracle[[9]](#footnote-9) through His angel to His servant John, Who witnessed The Word of God[[10]](#footnote-10), [which was] also the witness of Jesus Christ, all He[[11]](#footnote-11) saw. Blessed is the reader, and the hearers [of these] words of prophecy, and the protectors of things written in it: for, the time is near.” — Revelation 1:1-3

The language of “a short time” and “the time is near” suggest to us that at least the first iteration of the events in chapters 2 and 3, would be fulfilled within the lifetimes of late first century and early second century readers. God’s analysis of current church events was going on in the present tense. That such events have echoed down through the ages only shows us that human nature doesn’t change a lot. Satan’s strategies and tactics haven’t changed much either: he has a limited arsenal.

On the other hand, “Blessed is the reader” suggests that future generations will have plenty to glean from those principles pictured here. In some way, the seven churches of Asia Minor, with their battles and sufferings, will typify churches in all ages and locations: again, because human styles of sinning have not changed, nor have Satan’s methods. We are not surprised to see the first century shining a mirror in our own faces.

We cannot enter into this topic without being accused of anti-Semitism. This is not anti-Semitism: for, the Semitic peoples include all of Shem’s descendants: Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram; as well as Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash; Salah, Eber; and a good many more; including Ishmael, and the children of Keturah.[[12]](#footnote-12) All of these are Semites. So to call anyone anti-Semitic on these grounds is amazing: for, the Jews are among the most exclusivist and prejudiced people on earth. Their malice toward their fellow Semites is a case in point….

However, John calls them anti-Christ: that is the point. These are John’s words, not ours: we merely point to what they say. Down through the past two millennia, the central tenet of Judaism has been that Jesus is not the Christ. Now if there were not a great deal of cultural and religious bias attached to this, why would the Jews even care? They obviously do care; throughout the past two millennia Judaism has been directly adversarial to Christianity: for example, 70% of the Bolsheviks are reported to be unbelieving Jews.

You remember the Bolsheviks: they were the ones murdering Christians in the USSR. Even before Hitler began to exterminate Jews; Jews were active in the extermination of Christians.

So, let’s get the shoe on the right foot: this is, and always has been anti-Christ, not anti-Semite. The guilty cannot escape their guilt by trying to reverse the charges and by hiding behind their false accusation. Judaism is guilty of the charge of anti-Christ.

However, Judaism is not alone in this wickedness. Long before Josephus, Judaism developed powerful political alliances with Rome. Historical accounts and even historical literature, such as *I Claudius*, are filled with this lore. Herod himself held his position because of Rome.

What we might not expect, but John insists, is that this relationship will continue throughout history. So, the Communist-Judaism link is far from accidental. We would not be surprised if crypto-Judaism infiltrates all world governments, churches, and just about every other facet of life… controlling… sowing discord.

Would you dispute the domination of Judaism in entertainment, finance, medicine, politics, publishing, and sports? As one wag put it, we don’t care what you call us, as long as we are in control.

So, the Judaism-Rome link is insidious. Of course, neither all Jews nor all Romans participate in this linkage of antagonism. This is not about individual people, who may or may not be innocent; this is about waring philosophical, demonic versus spiritual systems of belief. Make no mistake: this is spiritual warfare. This is about systems operating behind their leaders and with their minions; the armies of Christ are pitted against the demonic armies of Satan: but, Satan has already been defeated at the Cross, by the death of Christ.

John’s thematic message has not especially changed from John 1. There, Christ appears as the light of the world; here, as the blazing Glory in the midst of His new menorah, the seven churches. There, He comes to His own who do not receive Him; here, they continue their vicious rejection; there, He makes those who do receive Him, the children of God; here, He personally ministers to the difficulties and faults of His younger brothers and sisters.

Let our warfare be accomplished:[[13]](#footnote-13)

“For, [though] walking about in flesh, we do not soldier according to the standard of flesh: for, the armaments of our soldiering [are] not fleshly, but powerful in God for destroying bastions... destroying [corrupted] reasoning, with every arrogance rising against the knowledge of God, capturing every thought in the obedience of Christ.” — 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

“Because, our conflict is not against blood and flesh: but, against rulers, against authorities, against world powers of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies.” — Ephesians 6:12

“Jesus replied, My Kingdom is not of this world; if My Kingdom were of this world, My attendants would have begun fighting; so that, I would not [have been] given over to the Jews: but now, My Kingdom is not from this place.” — John 18:36

“Do not begin in an unmatched-yoking with unbelievers: for, what sharing [have] righteousness and lawlessness? Or, what communion has light toward darkness? Now, what symphony has Christ toward Belial? Or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever? Now, what agreement has a temple of God with idols? For, we are a temple of the living God: as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk about [amid them]. I will be their God. They will be My people. Wherefore, come out from amid them. Be separated, says [the] Lord. Do not cling to an unclean thing. I will also welcome you in. I will be a Father to you. You will be sons and daughters to Me, says Almighty Lord.” — 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

Do not fall into the trap of making Revelation primarily about physical things. Revelation is primarily about spiritual things… about the heart… about getting the heart right before God. Almost all of the promises and actions are realized after death, not in this life….

### Revelation Chapter 1

Verses 4-8

“John, to the seven churches in Asia[[14]](#footnote-14): Grace to you, and peace, from He[[15]](#footnote-15) Who Is, Who was, Who is coming; and from the seven Spirits[[16]](#footnote-16) which are before His throne; from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, the chief of the kings of the earth. To He Who loves us, and loosed us out of our sins in His blood. He has made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father… to Him be glory and might into the ages of ages. Amen. Consider this. He comes with clouds. Every eye will see Him; even all those who pierced him. All the families of the earth will mourn upon Him. Yes. Amen. ***I Am***[[17]](#footnote-17) the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, Who Is, Who was, Who is coming, the Almighty.” — Revelation 1:4-8

If verses 1-3 invite us to consider the temporality of human life; and thus, the limits of earthly churches: verses 4-8 call us to weigh the eternality of Jesus Christ and everything associated with Him. His life extends from the present, He is; to the infinite reaches of the past, He was; into the future ages of ages, He is coming. Thus, the eschaton is not cyclical repetition; nor is it merely future: rather, it is an immeasurable vastness that swallows all the limitations of time and now and distance and space. This foils, in part, the concept of neo-Orthodoxy in that the tangency of Christ with reality is more than a single event: it is seen as an ever present relationship.

Nested in this beautiful introductory hymn of praise to Christ, is the fact that He has made us a kingdom of priests. We will learn a great deal about church government and structure from John. Here we discover that all True Christians are priests. Are we taking the status of our priesthood seriously? Are we performing the duties of our priesthood faithfully? What are these duties? How do we accomplish them? What is the first act you will perform in your office of priest?

There is a great coming event: the Second Coming of Christ. Are we prepared for it? Are we watchful? Even Christ’s mortal enemies will not avoid the occasion. Will we also be ashamed at His coming? The certainty of the event is overwhelming.

Nevertheless, we cannot rule out the possibility that this Second Coming of Christ could be to spiritual bodies, seen only with spiritual eyes.[[18]](#footnote-18)

### Revelation Chapter 1

Verses 9-20

“I, John, your brother, and partner[[19]](#footnote-19) in persecution, in kingdom, and in perseverance with Jesus, happened to be on the island named Patmos, through the Word of God[[20]](#footnote-20), and the witness of Jesus. I happened to be in the Spirit on the Lord’s day. I heard behind me, a great sound, like a trumpet, saying, What you see, write in a book. Send it[[21]](#footnote-21) to the seven churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

“I turned to see the voice which had begun to speak with me. Turning, I saw seven golden lampstands. In the midst of the lampstands a Son of Man likeness,[[22]](#footnote-22) being clothed to the foot, being belted around the chest with a golden sash. The hairs of His head, white as wool, white as snow. His eyes, as blazing fire. His feet, like brass, as glowing in a furnace. His voice, as the roar[[23]](#footnote-23) of many waters. Having in his right hand seven stars. Out of his mouth a swift two-edged sword came pouring out.[[24]](#footnote-24) His face, as the sun shining in its power.

“When I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. He set His right hand on me, saying, Do not be frightened. ***I Am*** the First and the Last, the Living. I became dead. Consider this, Living am I, to the ages of the ages. I have the keys of the Death and of the Hades.

“So, write [what things] which you saw, which are, and which are about to happen with them. 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. The seven lampstands are the seven churches.” — Revelation 1:9-20

John concedes no space for hierarchy; all True Christians have received the Heavenly Spirit: all are brothers or sisters and partners… there are no ranks. The hallmarks of sincere Christian discipleship are persecution, a kingdom (of priests)[[25]](#footnote-25), perseverance with Jesus (unto death), walking in the Spirit; not domination, pride, and wealth in this world.

John is in exile on Patmos for Christ’s sake. His testimony has put him in trouble with Roman authorities. No doubt he has had more than one clash over the temple of Diana[[26]](#footnote-26); other clashes with Judaizers; and possibly with the Gnostic sect as well. He writes in coded language so as not to expose he readers excessively. Perhaps the Romans would write him off as a crazy old man.

John is also in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, κυριακῇ or Kyriake is the common Greek word for Sunday. Real worship does not take place without the Spirit’s communication and guidance. Not nearly enough is said about this important gift, without which, one cannot be a True Christian.[[27]](#footnote-27) As a result there are all sorts of falsified activities of the Spirit, on the one hand; and on the other hand, abysmal neglect. The Spirit primarily teaches us about Jesus from the Old Testament,[[28]](#footnote-28) and empowers us to learn of Christ from Communion.

The purpose of Chrismation or Confirmation is to ensure, as far as is humanly possible, that Christians are in constant and regular communication with the Holy Spirit, as John is here. What John witnesses in the Spirit is nothing less than spectacular: but, that spectacularity is not the main point of the vision. We may have to rein in our emotions to take the message more seriously. John is commissioned to write this book, and send it to the seven churches. The intention is that each church is to receive the entire twenty-two-page book, not just the tiny portion with the church name attached.

Christ is in His glorified body, which is an overwhelming sight: John falls at His feet as he did at the Transfiguration.[[29]](#footnote-29) Christ stands in the midst of His local churches, the lampstands. He holds and protects His angels or presbyters, the stars. Seven Spirits, a guardian Angel for each church, are also involved.[[30]](#footnote-30) Let is not take the words, “Christ is in our midst”, lightly or exclusively.

A swift two-edged sword pours from Christ’s mouth; this is why He is called the Word of God: He is everything the Father ever willed. He is the personification, fulfillment, example, and teacher of the Father’s exact Words: Scripture merely gives us a recording of this. Christ shows us the Father; the Spirit teaches Christ.

Here, Christ has the keys of Death and Hades; does He not also hold the keys of the Kingdom? If the Whole Church together has the keys of the Kingdom, this is a delegated authority, it can be removed easily.[[31]](#footnote-31)

[[32]](#footnote-32)

1. If therefore you, evil rulers, had known to give good gifts to your children: how much more, The Father out of Heaven will give [the] Holy Spirit to them [if] they ask Him? [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. God, let me be pardoned, the sinner. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Jesus, let me be remembered when you come in your kingdom. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The name, Jezreel (יִזְרְעֶ֑אל) means God spreads or scatters; in its positive connotation, it paints a picture of God sowing seed on the earth. In its more negative meaning, it suggests that God is dispersing a gainsaying, wicked people. Matthew 13; Mark 4; Luke 8; Ecclesiastes 11:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Proverbs 3:34 LXX [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Paul refers to his arrival in heaven; which would be a departure from earth. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. These διεστραμμένα are in the perfect passive: the most likely source of these is Jewish fables, such as Oral Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Revelation 22:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ἐσήμανεν is an unusual word emphasizing that this came directly from the temple Oracle of God. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. This is among the more significant names of Christ Himself and not a specific reference to Scripture. Jesus is frequently called The Word of God because He is the exact expression and representation of the Father: they are identical in essence. Revelation 19:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Jesus, not John [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Genesis 10:22-31; 16:15; 25:1-5 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Isaiah 40:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Asia proper is a small province located at the western end of Anatolia, mostly composed of the seven city states that John has designated and little else. Asia appears to be the primary focus of John’s Apostolic duties… even though Paul evidently planted the first church there. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. He, or the One, as part of the participle, rather than Him, since it is attracted away from being the object of the preposition, from, to being the subject of the verb, is. Do not miss the sense of I Am. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. We do not entirely understand the idiomatic meaning of seven Spirits. Perhaps this is John’s code language for seven guardian Angels, each with responsibility for one of the seven churches. Otherwise, this is not clear at all. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. ἐγώ εἰμι [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. 1 Corinthians 15:44 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Συγκοινωνὸς is συν + κοινωνὸς, or the gathering together of the koinonia, the fellowship of the One Body of Christ, especially in the Communion of His Body and Blood. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. This is a reference to Jesus, not to Scripture: it is among Jesus’ more important names. People were not being killed for the Bible, else all the Jews would have been killed: they were murdered for taking their stand with Jesus… being called Christians. The test between life and death was the denial of Jesus, not the denial of the Bible. The Bible was a legal book; Christianity was an illegal sect. Revelation 1:2; 6:9; 19:13; 20:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Evidently, each of the seven churches was to get its own copy of all 22 chapters, or all 22 chapters were sent as a circular letter. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. This is a vision specifically granted by the Holy Spirit. It is a picture of heavenly reality: but, who can say if it itself is dream, reality, or trance? It is what it is, a profound mystery disclosing important truth. Note how much comes from other Scripture. This is how the Spirit teaches: primarily from Scripture. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. This is also the word, voice: the voice of many waters is a deafening tumultuous roar, experienced at any seaside or waterfall. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The Bible is taken from this River: this is the source of Truth. We must be careful to respect the ancient manuscripts: but, not so much so that we lose sight of the fact that there is always an untouched greater source in Christ Himself, with Whom we may remain in constant contact through the power of the Spirit. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Revelation 1:6; 5:10 … the fulfillment of Exodus 19:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Acts 19:28, 34, 35 [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Luke 11:13; Romans 8:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Luke 24 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Matthew 17; Mark 9; Luke 9 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Revelation 1:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Romans 11 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
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