

- I) V9 INTRO: I John *your brother and companion in tribulation* and in the kingdom and
- II) When last together we noted how John reminded us that Jesus is returning (V7)
He had said Behold He is coming with the clouds
- III) I mentioned to you that *behold* is a word intended to draw our complete attention
It is a word encouraging us to *consider closely* what is being said
- IV) I mentioned that it is a word used quite often in scripture
- V) It is used around 581 times in the NKJV, and 25 times in the Book of Revelation alone
- VI) One of my favorite verses using the word *behold* is found in 2 Co
2 Co 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; *behold*, all things have become new.
- VII) With that said, John wrote Behold, *He is coming* with the clouds
This is something that is *for certain*: this means that we should be prepared, *now*
- VIII) The knowledge that Jesus is returning is intended to inspire the way that we live
We are to live in anticipation of seeing Him, and being with Him
- IX) It is intended to encourage people to be *ready for Him* when He returns
1 Jn 3:2-3 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him *purifies himself*, just as He is pure.
- X) His return is intended to give us hope
1 Th 4:16-18 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.
- XI) When John writes behold He is coming, he is not speaking only of His return
He is also speaking of the One who is returning: the Messiah

- XII) The bible uses various words to speak of Jesus, the Messiah**
He is called the prophet, The Branch, The Christ, The Bridegroom, the Son of Man
He is also called The Coming (Expected) One
- I) We see this in the gospel of Matthew**
John the Baptist was in prison, and he sent disciples to question Jesus
Mt 11:2-3 And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, “Are You the *Coming One*, or do we look for another?”
- II) The Coming One was another way of speaking of the Messiah**
John used this picture when He said He is coming with clouds
This is a reference to the return of Jesus, the Messiah
- III) His return is referred to throughout the Old and New Testaments**
Though it is spoken of often, there are those who reject that He will ever do such a thing
- IV) This is something we should expect and is actually a sign we are in the last days**
2 Pe 3:3-4 Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. They will say, “What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created.”
- V) I mentioned that approximately 1 out of every 25 NT verses promise it**
Jesus repeatedly spoke of His return, encouraging His followers to always be ready
Mt 16:27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works (Mt 24-25 speak of this)
Mt 26:64 Jesus said to him, “*It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.*”
- VI) V8 This is where we left off in our last study**
God assured us of the return of His Son
- VII) As the Alpha and Omega, He is all knowing, which makes this promise solid**
Is 57:15 says that God is the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity
Seeing that He inhabits eternity, He would know that this was a promise that is certain

VIII) V9 I John both your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom
This records John's vision of Jesus and His commission to write seven churches

IX) These churches are enduring tribulation and persecutions
This is something that Jesus prepared all believers to expect
Jn 16:33 I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world *you will have tribulation*. But take heart! *I have overcome the world*.

I) V9 Notice how he speaks of himself as a brother and companion in tribulation
He is on Patmos, located in the Aegean Sea, 30 or 40 miles of the Turkish coast
On the Lord's Day (Sunday) which was the customary way of speaking of Sunday

II) He has been arrested and exiled because of the word of God and for his testimony

III) By the end of the first century Christianity had already become a hated religion in Rome
The faith of Christians was regarded as superstition, held fast to by uneducated masses

IV) This is because the majority of people coming to Jesus were common people
1 Co 1:26-29 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

V) The Roman governor Pliny said *Christianity* was a depraved and extravagant superstition
The Roman historian Tacitus said: *Christians* are a class hated for their abominations

VI) Rome was opposed to Christianity for various reasons
Romans considered believers disloyal for not acknowledging Caesar as all powerful
Christians would not burn incense before his image

- VII) Because Christians met at night they were accused of plotting to overthrow government
Christians were considered *atheists* because they rejected Rome's many gods
- VIII) Christians were falsely accused of cannibalism (communion) and incest (brothers marrying Christian sisters), disruption of business (for interfering with the sales of idols), anti-family (because of a believer's loyalty to Jesus), causing natural disaster (because believers would not worship their gods, when bad things happened the Christians were blamed), and because believers did not attend festivals and other pagan events, they were regarded as antisocial.
- IX) By the time of John persecution against Christians had become more common
Rev 2:13 Antipas, a faithful pastor had been martyred, and John was imprisoned
- X) Under the Emperor Domitian, governmental persecution now formally begins
John was a victim of this persecution
2 Ti 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.
- I) John's readers can be comforted, knowing that Jesus will triumph over His enemies
- II) V9 I John both your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom
This is the third time he refers to himself by name
- III) Still, he identifies himself simply as your brother and companion in tribulation
- IV) He is suffering with them, but the suffering is for the word of God and testimony of Jesus
Suffering was not something that should come as a surprise to them
1 Pe 4:12-13 Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.
- V) PATIENCE OF JESUS: He is holding fast and enduring without giving up
Not patience *for* Jesus, nor the patience *of* Jesus, but the kind of patience that draws its life of endurance *from* Jesus
- VI) V9 He was on the island for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ

He was exiled because of his *uncompromising stand* for the gospel of Jesus

VII) This persecution obviously had a very early origin in the mission of the church
Peter and John were jailed for the healing of the crippled man at Beautiful Gate
(Ac 3-4)

Stephen was martyred for preaching that Jesus is Messiah (Ac 8)

King Herod martyred James and imprisoned Peter (Ac 12)

VIII) Very early in the history of the church, the apostles were jailed for preaching (Ac 5)

When ordered to cease teaching in the Name of Jesus, Peter gave a classic response

Ac 5:29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said We ought to obey God rather than men

IX) Today, pastors need to continue preaching and teaching even when threatened with jail

Some pastors seem to be willing to see their people go to jail

X) V10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day and I heard behind me (wonderful surprise!)

He was beyond the normal realm of human experience and under the Spirit's influence

XI) On the Lord's day speaks of Sunday, the first day of the week

Chrysostom archbishop Constantinople (347-407AD) It is called the Lord's day because this is the day that the Lord rose from the dead and was devoted to Him

I) V10 And I heard behind me a *loud voice* as of a trumpet (but is not an actual trumpet)

This would be a picture of an announcement of royalty

This occurred when he was in prayer and personal worship

II) V11 I am the Alpha and the Omega The first and the Last

The first time this is used, it is God Himself speaking (V8)

This is Jesus communicating that He is God the Son (V13)

III) V11 What you see write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia

Write in a book, not just loose notes so it will be preserved

This book will be regarded as *Scripture*

- IV) V11 Send it to the seven churches which are in Asia
This is not the Far East, but the Roman provinces of Asia Minor
Seven churches speaks of the totality of churches: 7 is the number of completeness
These seven churches represent all churches, each having a particular significance
- V) I went on a trip with Pastor Chuck and several pastors to visit the seven churches
- VI) The seven churches were 30-50 miles apart, in a circular route:
They were postal districts so they were the central points for disseminating information
- VII) V12-13 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me And having turned I saw seven
- VIII) Seven golden lampstands: Perhaps seven single lampstands, forming a circle
- IX) The seven lampstands are the seven churches (seven representing completeness)
This would speak of the church, throughout the world
- X) Gold would reveal *the value* that God places on the churches
The church is the most valuable community on earth, paid for with Jesus' blood
- XI) These represent the kinds of churches that exist throughout church history
We will look at each one individually when we look at chapters two and three
- XII) The menorah/lampstand remains to this day a symbol of Israel, the light of the World
Is 42:6 I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand;
I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles
QUOTE: The sages emphasize that light is not a violent force; Israel is to accomplish its mission by *setting an example*, not by using force
- I) THIS SYMBOL: Now spiritually represents the church, as Jesus taught us
Mt 5:14 You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.
- II) Paul made this clear in his writings

Phil 2:15 (he wrote) 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

1 Th 5:5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

III) V13 And in the midst of the seven lampstands One like *the Son of Man*
In the midst: At this point He is not walking, but is standing still
This would emphasize His constant actions in the midst of His church

IV) THE SON OF MAN: Is a messianic title, first mentioned in Daniel 7:13
The Son of Man is used twice, here and in ch 14:14
The title emphasized his humanity and messianic character

V) What do you think when you picture what Jesus looked like?
I often think of Him as He looked on the cross, broken and bloody
Is 52:14 Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;
Is 53:2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.

VI) Many think of Him as a soft, gentle man carrying a lamb in His arms
We often think of Jesus, meek and mild
Is 40:11 He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.

VII) This picture of Messiah is accurate because Jesus is gentle, kind and loving
We forget that He is holy and is also the righteous Judge of the whole earth
We forget that He gently held children but also drove moneychangers from the temple
Eze 34:16 I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment.

VIII) We can concentrate on Jesus as He walked on earth and fail to realize His glory
Here John gives us a brief glimpse of *the risen Christ*

I) V13 Clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden
This robe speaks of Him being our great High Priest

- II) The robe represents His dignity and judgment, like Aaron, the High Priest's robes
Ex 28:2 Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron, to give him dignity and honor
- III) The golden girdle (belt) is like the girdle of the High Priest
The girdle (belt) worn by the High Priest was a reminder that he was a servant
- IV) V14 His head and His hair were white like wool as white as snow and His eyes like a flame
- V) Here we get a description of Jesus, the risen Christ
It is a picture of majesty, glory and holiness reminiscent of the Transfiguration
Mt 17:2 He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light
- VI) This reminds me of Jesus' High Priestly prayer in the gospel of John
Jn 17:5 And now, O Father, *glorify Me together with Yourself*, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.
Jn 17:24 Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, *that they may behold My glory* which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.
- VII) This description emphasizes His purity, Holiness and eternity
- VIII) It also reveals that He is the Judge of the whole earth
Ps 9:8 He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.
Dan 7:9 As I looked, "thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze.
- IX) V15 His feet were like fine brass as if refined in a furnace and His voice as the sound of
Brass (bronze) in scripture often refers to a symbol for judgment
- X) In the OT, the brazen, or brass altar was connected with sacrifice for sin
Ex 38:30 They used it to make the bases for the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, the *bronze altar* with its bronze grating and all its utensils
- XI) This is reminiscent of what we read in Isaiah 63

I) There, Messiah is questioned as to why His garments are so red

Is 63:3-6 I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes. For the day of vengeance *is* in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come. I looked, but *there* was no one to help, And I wondered That *there* was no one to uphold; Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; And My own fury, it sustained Me. I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, Made them drunk in My fury, And brought down their strength to the earth.”

II) HIS VOICE: Is as the sound of many waters (V10)

The voice of depth, of authority and important for all to hear (trumpet/many waters)

His voice will not calm the troubled sea, but will call down judgment on the wicked

III) V16 He had in His right hand Seven stars out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword

Seven stars: Angels (pastors/messengers) of the churches (V20)

He is holding on to them, and they are under His protection and His security

IV) V16 And out of His Mouth went a sharp two edged sword

The two edged sword speaks of His word

Heb 4:12 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.

Eph 6:17 Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

V) God's word will be active as He brings His Divine judgment

What takes place is exactly what He has said would take place: They have no excuse

Rev 19:15 Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

VI) V16 And His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength (brilliant glory)

VII) V17 And when I saw Him I fell at His feet as dead

No longer did John lay his head on His bosom in comfort, because His glory is revealed

- VIII) This vision caused him great fear, as he saw the glory of Jesus
This is a holy fear, the fear of the Lord that results in resisting sin
It is like Isaiah: Woe is me for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips,
and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of
hosts
- I) V17 Do not be afraid I am the First and the Last
There was no casual relationship with Jesus but one of reverence and godly
fear
- II) John was His cousin and knew Him over a lifetime
He ministered along side of Him, heard His teachings, laid his head on his
bosom
Now He sees Him for Who He is, and it causes great fear in Him
- III) Seeing Jesus for Whom He is caused him to see himself for what he was
The result was immediate humility which is actually a sign of deep faith
- IV) Do not be afraid, I am the First and Last
I am first because all things are from Me, and the Last because all things are
Mine
- V) V18 I am He who lives and was dead and behold I am alive forevermore! Amen
I am the One who once was alive or is now alive, but has always been alive
I am alive and I give life to all who trust in Me
- VI) V18 I have the keys to hades and of death
Hades is the invisible world, and I have authority over it and death has been
defeated
I am sovereign over death, and existence after death
- VII) V19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the
things
HAVE SEEN: Contained in this chapter (V10-16)
WHICH ARE: Contained in Ch 2-3
TO COME: Ch 4-22
- VIII) V20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand and the
seven golden
He explains once again what these are

IX) Revelation contains references from or allusions to 28 of the 39 OT books

There are over 505 such citations and allusions, (some saying more than 635) contained in its 404 verses. Around 325 are from the prophetic books of the OT – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Of the Minor Prophets, references to Zechariah, Joel, Amos, and Hosea are most common. Of the books of the Pentateuch, greatest use is made of Exodus, and of the poetic sections, the book of Psalms

**X) We can read newspapers or watch the news to see this unfolding
The better way to understand all of this is to read your bible!**