



**A Funny Thing Happened During Devotions the Other Day  
John, Time Traveler, and Eyewitness to the Apocalypse  
Revelation 1:1-20**

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Just as we discovered in John 21, Jesus desires to have fellowship with us. It is an expectation of His for those who follow Him that we also long for fellowship with Him. Prayer, study of the word, sitting and listening, meditating on what it is He reveals to us in the word; that is all part of it.

Jesus longs for it and that is the place where many times, He shows up. He reveals to us what it is He has in store for us.



John understood this and he spent time alone with the Lord frequently and now in his mid to late 80's, it is a pattern of his life.

By this time in his life, all his close friends, the disciples that walked with Jesus, have all been killed. Martyred for their witness and John is the only one left alive. And he is an old man on the outs with the Roman Emperor Domitian, who has exiled him to the little Greek island of Patmos there in the Aegean Sea. This makes it tough for him to oversee all the churches he has worked with and loved on. It is 96 AD, and John is about to discover that Jesus isn't finished with him yet.

Yes, there have been rumors floating around that he will live to see Jesus Christ remove His church, but those are only rumors. He even referenced it in his book about Jesus that he wrote.

Between Paul, Peter and Jude, the church knew all about the last days and the lay of the land to include the pre-day of the Lord removal of the church fulfilling Jesus' promise that John wrote about in John 14. Paul let us know more about the timing and the how it will work in his letter to Thessalonica and Corinth.

But as of this point in time, the details of what will take place during the day of the Lord are still a bit foggy.

Let's take one more look at what Jesus said talking to Peter there in Galilee.

John 21:20–23

“Peter turned around and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them—the one who also had leaned back on His chest at the supper and said, “Lord, who is the one who is betraying You?” So Peter, upon seeing him, said to Jesus, “Lord, and what about this man?” Jesus said to him, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!” Therefore this account went out among the brothers, that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but only, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?”” (NASB 2020)

And with those words, as we reviewed in our study of John, the other disciples began the first round of trying to determine when Jesus will return for His church. This is not something we are to be engaged in. But while praying and waiting on the Lord there in a cave on Patmos, Jesus did indeed show up, and in His glorified body, and in glory to boot. He had an Eli moment, on steroids. Eli, as a young boy, slept in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle in view of the Holy of Holies. And one night, the Lord walked through the curtain from the Holy of Holies, and had a discussion with him (1 Samuel 3:10). What happens to John, makes that look like nothing.

Revelation 1:10–11

“I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, saying, “Write on a scroll what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”” (NASB 2020)

How cool is that Jesus shows up at John's devotions, and says, “Hey John, could you take a letter for me?”

Something to ponder as we begin our study of this book, is it possible that John did indeed “remain until I come?”

Jesus shows up in John's cave there on Patmos, in person and in His glorified body.

Later, in Revelation 4, John is told to “come up here” just like all the church will hear when Jesus personally comes to take us to be with Him in the rapture of the church. And then there is John, time



traveler, seeing and reporting on the events he sees taking place in heaven, and on earth as the wrath of God is poured out onto an unbelieving planet. Ultimately, John provides the eyewitness account of Jesus breaking through the darkness of Armageddon to save His people the Jews and to finalize His assumption of the ownership of what He purchased on the cross, kicking out the usurper once and for all.

So, yes, John did indeed “remain until I come.”

We are beginning a great adventure, a study of the one book that many today think they know, but really do not. A book that many find to be confusing and hard to understand. With all the references to the Old Testament in this book, I get that. Many in the church today have disconnected from the Old Testament, so when you find a very Jewish book here at the end of the New Testament, confusion sets in.

The name of the book is Revelation. It isn't Mysterion, or Gotcha. The intent is for us, His followers, believers in Jesus Christ, to fully get it.

Remember what Jesus taught about the Holy Spirit's ministry in John 16?

John 16:13–15

“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take from Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; this is why I said that He takes from Mine and will disclose it to you.” (NASB 2020)

The intent of Jesus, as He shares this revelation given to Him by the Father is for John and for all of us to understand what He is laying out about the “things which must soon take place.”

Revelation 1:1–3

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, everything that he saw. Blessed is the one who reads, and those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things which are written in it; for the time is near.” (NASB 2020)

This book is prophecy, but for John, it is more than that. John will be a time traveler. He is an eyewitness to pre-history and when he writes to us, he is telling us history in advance. He was there.

The book is about Jesus, He is the rock star here. He is unveiling all of this for us.

This book comes with a promise and a built-in outline provided for us by Jesus Himself.

First the promise. A guarantee from Jesus through John, of blessings x 3.

Revelation 1:3

“Blessed is the one who reads, and those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things which are written in it; for the time is near.” (NASB 2020)

- When you read (the Greek means out loud) this book – blessed.
- When you hear me read from this book and the Spirit speaks – blessed.
- As you also keep those things in this book – blessed.
- Blessing x 3.



It is obvious that one cannot keep what he does not possess, nor could he be blessed by it, so that this wonderful promise clearly presupposes that those who read or hear these words are well able to understand and appropriate them. And this can only be true if the words are to be taken literally. (Morris 1983, 36)

And we will be doing so, by taking this book at face value as we study it.

Did you notice the last phrase? The “time is near.” How near?

The events in this book, once we get to chapter 4, all take place after the rapture of the church. The view will be of earth, and the church is no longer mentioned, because the church is with Jesus.

The rapture can take place at any time. There is nothing that must happen beforehand, there are no signs, nothing. Paul expected it to take place in his time, I do too. The signs we talk about around us, they are all connected with the second coming of Jesus Christ. Those signs are all converging now.

Jesus said that the things being revealed must “soon take place.”

But Ken, John is writing this around 96 AD, and now we are living in the 21st century. How can you possibly agree with his statement? You must look at the Greek, the language John wrote this in. What he is saying is that once these events begin to take place, they will do so at a rapid pace. The word, τῶν (tachei), conveys the sense of swiftness of speed. We have derived the English word tachometer from this Greek word. In other words, once the events outlined in Revelation start, look out.

And about that outline. Jesus provides that for us in verse 19.

Revelation 1:19

“Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things.” (NASB 2020)

- The things which you have seen – Revelation 1:1-20
- The things which are – Revelation 2:1 – 3:22
- And the things which will take place after these things – Revelation 4:1 – 22:21

If you simply need a bit more detail, then here you go. I will leave that for you to review later in the notes.

### Outline

- Introduction 1:1 – 3
- Salutation 1:4 – 8
- The things you have seen
  - Jesus glorified 1: 9 – 16
  - What it means 1:17 – 20
- The things which are
  - Ephesus 2:1 – 7
  - Smyrna 2: 8 – 11
  - Pergamum 2: 12 – 17
  - Thyatira 2:18 – 29
  - Sardis 3:1 – 6
  - Philadelphia 3: 7 – 13
  - Laodicea 3: 14 – 22
- The things which will take place after these things



- The divine council and Jesus
  - The throne room 4:1 – 11
  - The property deal of all eternity 5:1 – 14
  - The 70th 7 of Daniel
  - The first 3 ½ years
  - The seal judgements 6:1 – 17
  - The 144,000 7:1 – 8
  - Tribulation saints 7:2 – 17
  - The seventh seal = the trumpet judgements 8:1 – 9:21
- Halftime
  - The little book 10:1 – 11
  - The tribulation temple 11:1 – 2
  - The two witnesses 11:3 – 14
  - The seventh trumpet 11:15 – 19
  - Israel, the birth of Jesus, and war 12:1 – 17
  - The monster from the sea 13:1 – 10
  - The monster from the earth 13:11 – 18
  - A word or two from our sponsor 14:1 – 20
- The last 3 ½ years
  - The warm up 15:1 – 8
  - The bowl judgements 16:1 – 21
- The two Babylons
  - Religious Babylon (1st half) 17:1 – 18
  - Political Babylon (2nd half) 18:1 – 24
- The Second Coming, mopping up and consolidating
  - Setting the stage 19:1 – 10
  - The Second Coming of Christ 19:11 – 18
  - Armageddon 19:19
  - Finally (the anti-Christ and the False Prophet get theirs) 19:20
  - The gentile armies 19:21
  - Satan in chains 20:1 – 3
- The Kingdom of Messiah
  - Messiah on the throne 20:4
  - The first resurrection 20:5 – 6
  - At the end of the millennium
  - The final revolt 20:7 – 10
  - The Great White Throne Judgement 20:11 – 15
- All things are new
  - The new, new world order 21:1 – 8
  - New Jerusalem 21:9 – 22:5
- Wrapping it all up
  - Authentication 22:6 – 9
  - A final word 22:10 – 16
  - One more invitation 22:17
  - A warning 22:18 – 19
  - One more affirmation 22:20
  - Benediction 22:21

Revelation 1:1–3

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, everything that he saw. Blessed is the



one who reads, and those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things which are written in it; for the time is near.” (NASB 2020)

The word translated revelation is the Greek word, Ἀποκάλυψις (apocalypses). Meaning making fully known, revelation, disclosure. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 112)

This is the very first word in the Greek text and it tells us, right at the very beginning, Jesus wants us to understand that which has been revealed to Him by the Father. The English translation throws an article in front of the word, but there is none in the Greek. This is “a” revelation, not “the” revelation.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ—This implies not just “to” and “from” Him, but actually “of” Him. This book is about the manifestation “of” Jesus Christ. (Creamer 2010, 1)

John 15:15

“No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, because all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.” (NASB 2020)

Jesus said that on His way to the cross. The Father has now revealed something further to Jesus and Jesus wants all of us, His friends, His brothers and sisters, to know this. God gave it to Jesus, Jesus gave it to the angels, the angels mediated it to John, and John writes it all down. God gave this to Jesus to specifically show us, to signify for us by John being a witness, what is to come.

He is giving it to us. As friends, we have a need to know, and we are being told here that this is a message to us from Jesus. As such, we are not to tamper with it, add to it, subtract from it or alter it in any way. We are to simply communicate it.

Revelation 22:18–19

“I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.” (NASB 2020)

The visions of this book are presented as an “uncovering of hidden truths,” namely the hidden reality of God’s sovereign control of the future, of how he is going to bring an end to the seeming success of the forces of evil in the present age. (Osborne 2002, 53)

How unique is this book? It is the only book in the Bible that was sent and delivered by angels. They show up all throughout this book. The unseen realm is all over this book.

John tells us he is the recipient, and he is the eyewitness of the events described in this book. He was there and he will do his best to tell us what he sees. Now the thing we must remember is this, John has never seen Star Wars. He will do his best, but his frame of reference is agrarian at the end of the 1st century. He will be witnessing modern weapon systems being used and will also be a witness to how modern militaries operate in the field, and then try to describe it for us.

He will be a witness to the usage of holograms, computers, quantum computers, space-based weaponry, biological warfare, advanced drone technology, and transhuman genetic manipulation.



And here is the thing, not only will the events in this book, once they start, roll downhill one after another, but the language used is done with the intention of creating in us, the expectation of it all taking place right now. Our expectation of the soon fulfillment of what is in this book produces in us responsibility. We are, because of studying this book, responsible for reaching those who do not know Jesus and telling them about Him so they will not have to go through the events we will talk about.

Revelation 1:4–8

“John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood—and He made us into a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen. “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”” (NASB 2020)

Now that is how you start off a letter. Wow. John is writing this book to seven churches in Asia Minor, today we would call this area Turkey. There are many more churches than the ones he is writing to there, but we will discover there is a reason for the seven churches and the order in which they are addressed. All three members of the Trinity are linked together in this opening as well.

First is the Father, YAHWEH. “He who is, and who was, and who is to come,” is Jehovah. This is the literal meaning of the mystic name communicated to Moses. “Jehovah” is a compound formed from three words: the first meaning He is, the second, He was, the third, He will be, or He will come. (Ironside 1920, 15)

Then the Holy Spirit is referenced. The reference of the seven spirits is found in Isaiah 11:1-2.

Isaiah 11:1–2

“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.” (ESV)

Yes, this is the second time we see the number seven show up. Seven is all over the place in this book. Seven means perfection and completion. For those geeks in the fellowship, Jesus is referenced 14 times in Revelation (2x7), the Lamb 28 times (7x4), seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls, seven blessings, and a seven headed dragon. Also, God is worshipped with 7 terms x 2.

The Holy Spirit is sevenfold in His gracious character and imputation of spiritual attributes. The phrase may also, by its symbolic seven-ness, emphasize that, while the Spirit is indeed “before the throne,” He is also omnipresent. (Morris 1983, 37)

Then Jesus is referenced. And as John talks about Jesus, he worships and proclaims that it is Jesus who is returning and when He does, it is as the avenger of blood.

I remember wondering just how everyone could see Jesus as He enters the atmosphere returning to the planet as referenced here. Pastors such as Harry Ironside conjectured about the miracle this would take.

Today, we know this will not only be on global television networks but will also likely be uploaded and available on social media. What past ages thought would require a miracle, today is accepted as eminently doable.



Jesus is the faithful witness.

- He is the firstborn of the dead; He walked out of the grave.
- He is the ruler of Kings of the earth. This is in judgement as well as in the Kingdom.
- He loves us, and this is in the present tense meaning He is continually loving us and has no intention of ever stopping.
- He freed us from our sins, pointing back to the word He used on the cross, tetelestai, it is finished. Paid in full.
- He has made us to be a kingdom of priests.

This leads to praise and then a bonus.

John then also adds in the greetings from Jesus Himself. Jesus declares that He is God.

Here in the original Greek the Omega is not spelled out as is the Alpha. Why? Because Christ is the beginning, and the beginning is already completed. But the end is yet to be; so He didn't spell out the Omega in this instance. One day He will complete God's program. This is a very interesting detail in the Greek text. (McGee 1991, 44)

And with that, John takes us to what it was that disturbed His devotions there in the cave on Patmos.

Revelation 1:9–11

“I, John, your brother and fellow participant in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, saying, “Write on a scroll what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.”” (NASB 2020)

This is not a reference to the Tribulation, but a reference to his present situation and being at odds with the Roman Emperor Domitian. He is talking about persecution of the church.

As believers we are part of His kingdom in the present, but also in the future, and working to reach others to also discover His kingdom as well.

John had been pastoring the church in Ephesus then he was exiled to Patmos and remained there until Domitian died, then Emperor Nerva allowed him to return to Ephesus. He is there working in the quarries and waiting on the Lord. It was there, during His time alone with the Lord, that he hears a voice. He is commanded to write down everything he sees and send it to seven churches.

The reality is this will be a message that will be for all churches, but the seven churches referenced and the order they are referenced would be a familiar travel path for John as he would visit this circuit of churches. The whole book was to go to all seven of these churches. John was familiar with the conditions in each of these churches, he had been there in the past and ministered in them.

So just who is this that has squeezed into the cave and is behind John? He turns around even as the voice is speaking to him to look and discovers that he's not in Kansas (Patmos) anymore.

Revelation 1:12–16

“Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And after turning I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and wrapped around the chest with a golden sash. His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze when it has





been heated to a glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.” (NASB 2020)

There were seven *luxνίαι* (*luxniai*), not “candlesticks” (our versions) but grand pedestals, each bearing an ancient vessel for oil, each vessel having a nozzle in which lay a wick burning with a clear, brilliant flame. These grand holders were, it seems, placed in a circle, their lamps were elevated, so that the Lord stood (and walked, 2:1) in their midst. They are made of gold and John is clueless as to what this all means. But he does recognize the person walking around among these stands. (Lenski 1935, 63)

Revelation 1:17–20

“When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things. As for 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 are the seven churches.” (NASB 2020)

John responds to what he sees and does exactly what most of us would do if we suddenly found ourselves looking at the resurrected Jesus Christ in all His glory, fall to the ground. This is a natural reaction and John will do this several times before he is done with the book.

Yes, John had been with Jesus for three years, he was at the crucifixion and has also seen and talked with the resurrected Christ. But this is new, Jesus is all of His glory.

Jesus knows John, He knows all of us and He swiftly moves to touch John and reassure him. The touch may have even been something that John would recognize. He tells John not to be afraid.

There are reasons why not to be afraid. Jesus is the God of all eternity, past, present and future. Jesus all states He is the one who is resurrected never to die again. Remember John, you were there, it's me. And one more thing, Jesus is the one with the keys of death and Hades, not Satan. In light of this John, do not be afraid, because I have a job for you. John, take a letter.

Revelation 1:19–20

“Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things. As for 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 are the seven churches.” (NASB 2020)

Revelation 1:19 is also our outline for the book. John will be obedient to the command of Christ, and he will indeed write about the past, present and the future, those things he is commanded to write about. And John, since I see questions in your eyes, let me tell you about what you are seeing right now.

The seven stars, lampstands have to do with the seven churches you have been told to write this to. Each star represents an angel who has been assigned to each church.

So, consider this, as we moved forward in faith to launch Calvary Chapel, the Lord assigned an angel to watch over us. Jesus is personally in the middle of the churches, and He still is today.

But consider this possible explanation of why an angel per church. Jesus is over the Divine Council (1 Kings 22:19-23) which at present has angels and other divine beings on it. The church is intended to



replace them in the future, but that is in the future. As a church, there is an angel assigned to us, who represents us before the Lord and His council and in turn mediates His will to us.

Angelic mediation of God's will and word to believers—which involved both praise and admonition, as we saw in the Old Testament—seems to be operative in this relationship. (Heiser 2018, 146)

Admittedly, the concept of an angel of God assigned to each church and, in some degree, responsible for the effectiveness of its ministry is one which is largely unrecognized among Christians. Nevertheless this seems to be the teaching of the Lord's words here. (Morris 1983, 45-46)

And with that, we come to the end of Revelation 1. Jesus picks up in chapter 2 dictating letters to John dealing with each church and we will speak more about that, next time.

Here is the thing we need to take away today. This book was given to us because He is coming back to remove His church and the time is very near indeed.

Are you ready to be part of that evacuation operation, or will you find yourself going through what we are going to be studying here in Revelation.

Trust me, you don't want to be here.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

### **ABC's of Salvation**

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.



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