

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Part 1 (c. 95–96)

Revelation 1–3

Foreword

1:1 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,
 2 who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, *even* to all that he saw.
 3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

Greeting and Doxology

4 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,
 5 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—
 6 and He has made us *to be* a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever.
 Amen.

Summary Statement

7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, [cf. [Dan 7:13](#)] and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. [cf. [Zech 12:10](#)] So it is to be. Amen.
 8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

John’s Vision of Jesus Christ

9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance *which are* in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.
 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like *the sound* of a trumpet,
 11 saying, “Write in a book what you see, and send *it* to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”
 12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands;
 13 and in the middle of the lampstands I *saw* one like a son of man, [cf. [Dan 7:13](#)] clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash.
 14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire.
 15 His feet *were* like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice *was* like the sound of many waters.
 16 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.
 17 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, [cf. [Isa 41:4](#); [44:6](#)]
 18 and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.
 19 Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things.
 20 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.

Jesus’ Message to the Church in Ephesus

2:1 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:
 2 ‘I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them *to be* false;
 3 and you have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and have not grown weary.
 4 But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.
 5 Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent.
 6 Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.
 7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.’

Jesus’ Message to the Church in Smyrna

8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this:

9 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'

Jesus' Message to the Church in Pergamum

12 "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this:

13 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

14 But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit *acts of immorality*.

15 So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

16 Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.

17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give *some* of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

Jesus' Message to the Church in Thyatira

18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:

19 'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first.

20 But I have *this* against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit *acts of immorality* and eat things sacrificed to idols.

21 I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality.

22 Behold, I will throw her on a bed *of sickness*, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.

23 And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; [cf. [Jer 17:10](#)] and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

24 But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you.

25 Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come.

26 He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS;

27 AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, [[Ps 2:9](#)] as I also have received *authority* from My Father;

28 and I will give him the morning star.

29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Jesus' Message to the Church in Sardis

3:1 "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

2 'Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God.

3 So remember what you have received and heard; and keep *it*, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.

4 But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

5 He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

6 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Jesus' Message to the Church in Philadelphia

7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: [cf. [Isa 22:22](#)]

8 'I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

9 Behold, I will cause *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and *make them* know that I have loved you.

10 Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that *hour* which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

11 I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

Jesus’ Message to the Church in Laodicea

14 “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:

15 ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot.

16 So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.

17 Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

18 I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and *that* the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.

19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.

21 He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’”

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Chronological Notes

- 1) “Scholarly opinion concerning the date of Revelation’s composition is divided between an early date (64–69) and a late date (95–96). In addition, some opt for a middle ground, conjecturing that composition began in the 60s and was completed in the late 90s. Although certainty continues to be elusive, the late date, during the reign of Domitian, has considerably stronger support. On the whole the preponderance of the internal and external evidence suggests the mid-90s during the reign of Domitian as the most probable date of composition. The external testimony overwhelmingly favors the late date, which became the established tradition throughout church history. The internal testimony, while less than conclusive, also tends to support a later date. Although some passages may reflect historical circumstances prior to 70, most of the evidence seems to point to a later date. The book of Revelation was written around 95–96 by John in obedient submission to the vision he received while in exile on Patmos.”¹

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 814–824.