

221225-1 Revelation 1, 9-20, John's Vision of Christ's Work among the Churches—CThurman

In the previous text, vss.4-8 John wrote to the seven churches of Asia. We defined churches as bodies of baptized, believing disciples that were organized around their Leader, Jesus Christ. Shortly after Jesus' ascension to the Father's right hand in glory the very first church, which Jesus organized during the time of His earthly ministry, began to be identified with a locality (i.e. the church which is at Jerusalem) and its members began to be numbered (120 in the upper room). So, a church is a local body constituted of *particular* members. (cf. 1Co.12.27) It is this kind of a church that Christ would preserve throughout all ages, world without end.

John wrote to these churches stating that they had grace and peace from the Triune God, God the Father, Spirit, and Son. At this we considered the three Persons of the Godhead and warned against the error of modalism or Sabbellianism which says that God only appears to us in these forms. This is heretical teaching as it rejects the reality of the three Persons of the Godhead. Was the apostle John pointing out to the saints of the churches that antichrists would be known for their rejection of the three forms of God or for their rejection of the Three Persons of God?

1Jo 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

John went on to write that every eye shall see Christ when He comes. Every eye is defined as the eyes of the Jews and the Gentiles. This same Jesus that ascended into glory will return to this earth one day. And for many it will be a day of great wailing.

And finally the descriptive terminology which John used of the Heavenly Father in verse 4, *which is, and was, and which is to come* is also applied to the Lord Jesus in verse 8. The Father and the Son are of the very same eternal existence.

9 ¶ I John,

This is interesting because Daniel the prophet uses the same terminology. He is said to be the only other person in the word of God that does this, *I Daniel*. Seven times *I Daniel* is found in the Book of Daniel (cf. Dan.7.15; 8.15, 27; 9.2; 10.2, 7; 12.5)

Daniel's prophecy, concerning events to be fulfilled in the last days, was sealed unto the time of the end.

Dan.12.9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

Revelation would be the unsealing of his prophecy.

who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Patmos – The island of Patmos is said to be 10 miles long running north and south, about 6 miles broad at the north end, and having a coastline of about 37 miles. The island is made of three main masses of volcanic hills and located in the Aegean Sea almost due west of the coastal city of Miletus. It is thought that John was banished to this island in the year A.D. 95, 96. The Revelation is a *post-A.D.70* letter. (cf. Hastings 'A Dictionary of the Bible' and 'Smith's Dictionary of the Bible', & John Gill's 'Exposition of the Old & New Testaments', vol.9)

brother, and companion – The apostle John uses two descriptive phrases that shows a connection that he has with the disciples of these seven churches.

1. ***Brother*** – John identifies with them by spiritual birth. He writes that he is their brother, but he is not their brother in a natural sense. He is their brother in a spiritual sense. Both he and they have been *born again*. John is writing to the churches, and churches are made of *regenerated members*. The Greek for *brother* is ἀδελφός, and means 'of the same womb.'

2. **Companion** – John states that he is a *companion*. A companion is one that partakes with them in similar things. A companion is one that has a special *fellowship* with them.

companion, συγκοινωνός, a noun, σύν together, with + κοινωνός, tss. *a partaker, a fellowship, a companion.*

John writes that he is a *companion*, he *partakes* with them, he *fellowships* with them. How? ^ain tribulation, ^bin the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and ^cin the patience of Jesus Christ.

a. John wrote that he is a partaker with them in tribulation. Gr. θλίψις, *tribulation, trouble, affliction, anguish*. There is a common tribulation that John and these church-related brethren experience. Both he and they came into trouble because of their identification with the Lord Jesus. Because he and they had gone beyond faith in Christ, and beyond baptism, and into one of the Lord's churches they were partakers of trouble that comes for this kind of a walk with Christ. They suffered trouble for this. The child of God that never comes into the fellowship of one of the Lord churches will never suffer trouble in the way that church-related disciples.

Jn.16.32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

b. John wrote that he is a partaker with them in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Both John and the faithful of these churches to whom he writes had set apart their lives to be of service *in the kingdom* of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were busy about the business of Christ's kingdom. They were executing the will of their King until He returned. (Lk.12.32; 19.12-15, 17)

Joh 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Christ has a kingdom which source is not derived from this world, but it is of Divine origin. And He has in His kingdom servants that are waiting upon Him, doing His will, keeping His commandments even to this present hour. His servants are not currently attempting to usurp the powers of this world, but because of Christ's commandment they are subject to the authorities that are presently in power. (Ro.13.1-5) Until Jesus Christ returns, He has commissioned His servants to carry out the Great Commission. (cf. Mt.28.18-20)

c. John wrote that he is a partaker with them in the *patience* of Jesus Christ. Patience is tss. from the Greek noun ὑπομονή.

ὑπό under + μένω, *to abide, to continue, to dwell, endure, remain, stand, and tarry.* ὑπομονή is tss. *patience, patient continuance, patient waiting, enduring.*

Both John and these brethren *continued under* the commandments of Christ, *waiting* upon Christ, by the grace of God doing His perfect will *while under tribulation.* For this they were suffering trouble. For identifying with Jesus Christ, they came into tribulation. (2Th.3.5; Re.3.10) Patience presupposes hardship and difficulty while waiting upon the Lord in service.

Ro 5:3 ... tribulation worketh patience ...

2Ti 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us ...

If we deny Him in suffering, He will reject us the privilege of reigning when He comes. So, if we

bear up under suffering, if we continue faithful through it then the Lord, he will appoint us to reign as kings in the earth with Him in His kingdom.

For (διὰ, because of) **the word of God, and for** (διὰ, because of) **the testimony of Jesus Christ** – John writes that the reason he came to be on the island called Patmos was because of the things which he said, *because of the word of God*, and because of the way he lived, *because of the testimony or witness of Jesus Christ*. What John preached is what John lived. He knew that the only way to have confidence of faith in Christ was to put on Christ.

1Jn.3.18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

9 Ἐγὼ Ἰωάννης ὁ καὶ ἀδελφὸς ὑμῶν καὶ συγκοινωνὸς ἐν τῇ θλίψει καὶ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ καὶ ὑπομονῇ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἐγενόμην ἐν τῇ νήσῳ τῇ καλουμένῃ Πάτμῳ διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

10 I ^{ἐν} was ^{ἐν} in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, came to be

as of a trumpet,

was, ἐγενόμην, 1s, aor. ind. mid. of γίνομαι, to be.

In the spirit – Perhaps this has the idea of being impressed by the Spirit of the Lord on this day, in a way that is above other days. (cf. Ac.19.21) Or, perhaps there is an emboldening or strengthening above that other days. (cf. Ac.18.25) Or, to be constrained by the Spirit of the Lord. (cf. Ac.20.22) There was a more profound sense of the Spirit's presence and working on this particular day.

the Lord's day – There is no doubt that John could have called this day the first day of the week or even the Sabbath day, but he did not. But let's reason this through for a moment.

This day John called the Lord's Day. Evidently this was a day set apart from every other day of the week. To emphasize this what this day is we could also call this the Lord Jesus' Day. (cf. Re.1.5) John knew that the churches understood which day it was to which he referred. So, which day came to the minds of the NT saints? The seventh day Sabbath or the first day of the week, Sunday? Wouldn't it be the first day of the week? Isn't that because this was the day of the week that the Lord Jesus rose bodily from the dead? (cf. Mk.16.9) Isn't it because Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week that the NT saints began to assemble in the churches? (cf. Jn.20.19; Ac.20.7; 1Co.16.2) The Lord's Day is the first day of the week.

The Jewish saints of the first churches in and around Israel began meeting on the first day of the week. It is to be expected that as the churches became more numerous among the Gentiles and predominately of a Gentile membership that the first day of the week was emphasized because it was the day of Christ's resurrection. Given the late time of the writing of the Revelation (A.D.95, 96) the issue of a Sabbath day, which was given to Israel (cf. Ex.20.2, *I am the LORD they god, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt*; Deu.6.4, *Hear, O Israel ...*) must have given way to an holy convocation on the first day of the week, and especially so now that the churches are among the nations of the Gentiles and composed of a predominately Gentile membership. Certainly, the churches may assemble at any time and on any day they choose (cf. Ro.14.6) but the fact remains that Christ rose from the dead on a particular day, the first day of the week, and it is universally understood by the NT saints that this is the Lord's Day.

It was on this day that John heard a great voice, a loud voice like to a blast from a like a trumpet. How that voice must have suddenly awakened him to hear the things to be said.

10 ἐγενόμην ἐν πνεύματι ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ καὶ ἤκουσα ὀπίσω μου φωνὴν μεγάλην ὡς σάλπιγγος

11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last:

Alpha and Omega – These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. To the Hebrew it would be to say, *I am the א* and the *ת*. To the English it would be to say, *I am the A* and the *Z*. It was in the 8th verse that the Lord Jesus introduced Himself by saying, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending*. Each phrase, ‘*the beginning and the ending*’ and ‘*the first and the last*’ are found two times each in Revelation.

Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος
Re.1.8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending ...

Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω, Ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος·
Rev.1.11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last ...

the beginning and the ending (Re.1.8, 21.6; 22.13)
the first and the last (Re.1.11, 17; 22.13)

But both of these come together into one statement and refer to the Son of God, the Lord Jesus.

ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος
Re 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Of course the one speaking is Jesus Christ.

Re.1.12 ... And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw ...

13 ... one like the Son of man ...

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last ...

If these words are to be understood with reference to this creation Christ in effect says that he was before all things and when these shall all pass away, He still remains.

Jn.1.1 ¶ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

*3 All things were made by him; and **without him was not any thing made that was made.***

Col 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

*17 And **he is before all things**, and by him all things consist.*

Isa 48:12 Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last.

13 Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together.

The Lord Jesus is not a created being but is the Creator of everything. If any ever read that Jesus Christ is saying that He is God, it is here.

Isa 44:6 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his (Israel's) redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. (Clearly stating that the King of Israel is God.)

7 And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them.

Jesus Christ is the immutable, eternal God.

Mal 3:6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

1Ti.6.15 Which (appearance our Lord Jesus Christ) in his times he shall shew (δεικνύω, present, display), who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16 Who only hath immortality (ἀθανασία, ἄ negative particle + θάνατος, deathlessness), dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. (cf. Ex.33.20, ... for there shall no man see me, and live.)

1Ti.1.17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal (ἄφθαρτος, an adj., ἄ negative particle + φθείρω [the verb form is not used in the NT], to defile, to destroy, to corrupt [so, 'incorruptible'],), invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

In view of the things that are revealed in this book, perhaps the Lord would have His faithful, baptized believing, church-related disciples to remember that He is God, that He loves them with an everlasting love (Jer.31.3, *Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.* Also, Ps.25.6; 89.33-35), and that he is faithful and will keep every promise and every word He has made to them. (cf. Deu.7.9; Ne.1.5; Mt.5.18; 1Th.5.24; 2Ti.2.13; Re.1.5; 19.11) Perhaps we should remember the words of the prophet Habakkuk as he wrote of the terrible judgment that the LORD would bring upon Israel by the Babylonians in light of the things before us. (Read Habakkuk Ch. 3)

Hab.3.17 Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:

18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

19 The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.

I think we should be prepared for the time when God will judge this earth and its inhabitants through several means: the one-world confederacy of the nations, rising up of the Antichrist, and the outpouring of several woeful judgments over massive portions of the earth prior to the coming of Jesus Christ.

11 *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*

seest, βλέπεις, 2s. pres. ind. act. of the Greek verb βλέπω, *to see*.

write, γράψον, 2s. aor. **imper.** act. of γράφω, *to write*. (12 times in this book the apostle John is commanded 'write!' (Re.1.11, 19; 2.1, 8, 12, 18; 3.1, 7, 14; 14.13; 19.9; 21.5))

book, βιβλίον, a noun tss. *a writing, a bill, a book, a scroll*.

send, πέμψον, 2s. aor. **imper.** act. of πέμπω, tss. *to send* (79), (Re.1.11; 11.10; 22.16), *to thrust* (2), (Re.14.15, 18).

This book, or an exact copy of it, was sent to each church in these cities. There was one church in each city. These churches were not members of a bigger church organization. Each of these churches were a body of Christ where they were.

11 λεγούσης Ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ Α καὶ τὸ Ω, Ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος· καὶ ὁ βλέπεις γράψον εἰς βιβλίον καὶ πέμψον ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις ταῖς ἐν Ἀσίᾳ, εἰς Ἔφεσον καὶ εἰς Σμύρναν καὶ εἰς Πέργαμον καὶ εἰς Θυάτειρα καὶ εἰς Σάρδεις καὶ εἰς Φιλαδέλφειαν καὶ εἰς Λαοδίκειαν

12 *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me.*

to see, βλέπειν, pres. infin. act. of the Greek verb βλέπω, *to see*.

To this point John had heard the great voice like a trumpet speaking from behind him. At this he turns *to see the voice that spake*, of course meaning that he expected to see the One that was speaking to him.

And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

candlesticks, λυχνίας, acc. pl. of the noun λυχνία, always tss. with the English *candlestick* (12); (**Re.1.12, 13, 20 (twice); 2.1, 5; 11.4**); to help us better understand because of what we think of candlestick today, this rather refers to a ***candle stand or lampstand***.

The definition of a '*candlestick*,' in the dictionary is: a holder with a socket for a candle.

Mr 4:21 And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

These seven golden candlesticks are a figure for, a representation of, the seven churches. The interpretation of this figure is given in the 20th verse.

Re.1.20 ... and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

When John turned around he saw seven golden candlesticks, these vessels that were made for holding lights.

Mt.5.15 Neither do men (Men do not ...) light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick (candlestand); and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine (Let your light shine in this manner. In what manner? Let your light shine from the candlestick, the lampstand ...) before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

The churches are the places where the children of God should put their lives so that others might see Christ more clearly. Until our light, our witness for Jesus Christ, shines from this place Christ is not shown forth to others *as* He has ordained us to witness of Him.

12 Καὶ ἐπέστρεψα βλέπειν τὴν φωνὴν ἣτις ἐλάλησεν μετ' ἐμοῦ καὶ ἐπιστρέψας εἶδον ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσαῖς

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man,

like, ὅμοιον, acc. of the adj. ὅμοιος, and always tss. with the English *like*.

one like unto the Son of man – John saw one *like* to the Son of man. John saw one that represented the Son of man. Now we know that the Lord Jesus said Himself that He IS the Son of man.

Mt 16:13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

The term *son of man* refers to one descended of men, so an offspring of a man, a descendant.

Ps 144:3 LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

Now we know that the Son of Man is the Lord Jesus Christ. So here Christ is *represented*, and that representation is communicating the work of Christ as it is *presently* being done in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

Re.1.17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

We know that Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father and ministering for us as the intercessor and mediator for the children of God. By His intercessions he is obtaining for us grace to help us in our present weaknesses. (cf. Is.53.12; Ro.8.34; He.7.25) By His mediation He is dispensing to us the covenant blessing. (cf. He.8.6; 9.15; 12.24) But again, in our text, here is one that is *like* or representing the Son of man. Before our Lord died on the cross, He said that He was going to leave them but that He would come to them.

Joh 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

...

20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

...

28 ¶ Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

The Holy Spirit was coming as a representative for the Son of man. He would come only to the baptize, believing church-related disciples of Jesus Christ.

Jn.14.26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Joh 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

This representation of the Son of man is shown in Ac.2.33.

*Ac.2.32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.
33 Therefore (Jesus) being by the right hand of God exalted, and (Jesus) having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he (Jesus) hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. (Which is what? That the promise of the Holy Spirit of God has come. Proof positive that our Lord Jesus is at this very moment seated at the Father's right hand.)*

Now, John saw the likeness of the Son of man. This sets aside two false reports by some well-meaning brethren.

1. First, the second coming of Christ will involve His real, physical, bodily presence. There will be one day a real and bodily presence of Christ on this earth one day. Some falsely report

that the Lord Jesus' coming is to be understood only in a spiritual sense, rather than real.

2. Second, the second coming is still future. Some falsely report that Christ came in A.D. 70, and that the resurrection is past. We are not living in the time of the millennium!

At this present time the Holy Spirit of God is representing to us our living Lord and the service of the Holy Spirit in His churches. When we read of Christ walking in the midst of the churches, we understand it to mean that the Holy Spirit presently dwells among the churches of Christ and that He is working the will of the Son of man in them.

Re 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks ...

So John is being shown a *likeness*, a representation of the Son of man that is being carried out among the churches by the Holy Spirit of God.

Eph 2:22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

πρὸς (v.17)

clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

at

clothed with, ἐνδεδυμένον, acc. sing. masc. part. perf. pass. of the verb εἰδύω, tss. to put on, to be clothed with or in, to be endued, to be arrayed, clothed with a garment.

garment down to the foot, ποδήρη, acc. sing. masc. of the noun ποδήρης, ποῦς foot + αἴρω to take, carry, to bear up; ποδήρης is only this once in the NT.

girt, περιεζωσμένον, acc. sing. masc. part. perf. pass. of the verb περιζώννυμι, περί about + ζώννυμι to gird; περιζώννυμι, is tss. to gird about, to gird –self, to gird; (Re.1.13; 15.6)

paps, μαστοῖς, dat. pl. of the noun μαστός, always tss. with the English *paps* (3), meaning 'breasts,' (Lk.11.27; 23.29).

girdle, ζώνη, noun tss. *girdle* (6), *purse* (2).

This representation of the Son of man is not dressed for warfare as in Re.19.11-16. Some say that He is dressed in His royal garb, and others say that He is dressed in His priestly garments.

Being the color of the garment is not given it would be difficult to say that Christ is represented here with royal garments. The girdle is also not one that belongs to the High Priest's garment. That girdle is called a *curious girdle*, and this probably because it was *wonderfully* woven of several, beautiful materials.

Ex 28:8 And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.

So, it is not clear whether Christ is represented in his kingly or high priestly function here. All we know about the garment is that it comes down to His feet and that it is held fast with a golden girdle. God is, as I understand it, symbolic of Deity. (cf. Is.2.20; 46.6; Dan.3.1, 5) Certainly the Son of man is presented as being girt with the power of God.

*Lu 9:43 And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,
44 Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.*

Perhaps we should think of this representation of the Son of man as the *Glorified Lord and Master of the House of God*. (cf. Lk.19.12, 13, 15)

Joh 13:14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

The Lord Jesus is not wearing that towel to wash feet any longer. That was during His earthly ministry. We are to do as He did. But now He is judging the servants of His house. (More to this in a moment.)

13 καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἑπτὰ λυχνιῶν ὅμοιον ὑἱῷ ἀνθρώπου ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη καὶ περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσοῦν

14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

hairs, τρίχες, nom. pl. of θρίξ, always tss. with the English *hair* (14). See **Re.1.14; 9.8**.

snow, χιών, a noun always tss. with the English *snow*. (Mt.28.3, *his raiment was white as snow*;

eyes, tss. from the noun οφθαλμός, and refers to the organ used for sight. (cf. Mt.5.29; Mt.6.22; Mt.20.34)

flame, φλόξ, a noun and always tss. with the English *flame*. In the Book of Revelation this always refers to the eyes of the Lord Jesus. (**Re.1.14; 2.18; 19.12**)

fire, πυρός, gen. sing. of the noun πῦρ, tss. *fire (oft), fiery* (1). *Fire* is used to 'try.' (1Co.3.13; 1Pe.1.7; Re.3.18)

There are other extraordinary descriptions of the Lord Jesus. At the mount of transfiguration we read how Christ was temporarily *changed* before the eyes of Peter, James, and John.

Mk.9.2 And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

*3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as **snow**; so as no fuller on earth can white them.*

Mt 17:2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

transfigured, the Gr. verb μεταμορφόομαι, μετά changed + μορφόομαι, to be formed, μεταμορφόομαι is tss. transfigured (2 [Mt.17.2; Mk.9.2]), transformed (Ro.12.2), and changed (1Co.3.18).

The prophet Daniel depicts the reality of the Son of man in the day of His appearing, not a resemblance, likeness, or figure. This is the appearance of the Son of man when the last kingdoms of this world are cast down.

Da 7:9 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

What John sees is this representation of Christ in the churches and how He dwells among them. The idea of a lowly, meek, gentle, not going to offend, soft master is not what John sees. There is no question that John sees the glorified Lord and Master. But perhaps He is depicted best as the Judge, the Ancient of days who sits in judgment at the end of time, but here, first, judging among the churches. He see one that should be loved, one that should be feared, one that should be obeyed, one that should have first place in the lives of His disciples, one who will act against the disobedient.

His eyes were as a flame of fire, so trying, discerning, proving, testing among His churches.

*Ps 11:4 ¶ The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.
5 The LORD trieth the righteous ...*

Ps 82:1 « A Psalm of Asaph. » God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

1Th 2:4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

1Co 10:13 There hath no temptation (trial, examination) taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Jas 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation (trial, examination): for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

1Pe 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial (trial, examination) which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

14 ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡσεὶ ἔριον λευκόν ὡς χιών καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρός

15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace;

*brass, χαλκολιβάνω, dat. sing. of the noun χαλκολίβανον, twice in the NT, **Re.1.15; 2.18.***

*furnace, καμίνω, dat. sing. of the noun κάμινος always tss. with the English *furnace*. (Mt.13.42, 50; Re.1.15; 9.2)*

*burned, πεπυρωμένοι, nom. pl. masc. part. perf. pass. of the verb πυρώω, tss. to burn (1Co.7.9; 2Co.11.29; **Re.1.15**), to be fiery (Eph.6.16), to be on fire (2Pe.3.12), to try (**Re.3.18**)*

Brass communicates the idea of judgment or examination.

Ex 38:8 And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the lookingglasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Lev.26.18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

19 And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron (hard), and your earth as brass (judged):

Jud.16.21 But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

Here, *feet* communicate the idea of the kind of stance or the manner of the walk of the Son of man among the churches. That His feet looked like *fine brass, as if they burned in the furnace*, He is standing or walking in the churches, judging and examining His people.

1Pe 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

*1Co.11.31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.
32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*

and his voice as the sound of many waters.

By the term *voice as the sound of many waters*, ‘*many waters*’ typically represents many people.

Nu 24:7 He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters (the people of Israel shall be in many people), and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.

This is certainly understood in Re.17.1.

Re 17:1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters ...

The sound of *many waters* is the compilation of all of the children of God giving praise in Re.19.6.

Re.19.1 ¶ And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

5 ¶ And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

6 (As a result of the commandment in v.5 ...) And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

Like John, the prophet Ezekiel shows this voice to be the Son of God.

Eze 43:2 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

Remember that our context speaks of Christ as He presently stands among the churches. What can we make of this? He stands as a representative of all of His people, particularly so that are among His churches. His voice is

found among the masses of every nation, kindred, tongue and people. (cf. Re.5.9; 14.6)

15 καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένοι· καὶ ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ ὡς φωνὴ ὑδάτων πολλῶν

ἐν

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword:

stars, τss. of the noun ἀστήρ, τss. always with the English *star* (24).

sword, ῥομφαία, a noun always τss. with the English *sword* (Lk.2.35; **Re.1.16; 2.12, 16; 6.8; 19.15, 21.**

twoedged, δίστομος, adj., δῖς *twice, again* + στόμα *mouth, edge, face*; δίστομος, τss. *twoedged* (He.4.12; **Re.1.16**), *two edges* (**Re.2.12**).

sharp, ὀξεῖα, nom. sing. fem. of the noun ὀξύς, an adj. τss. *swift* [to shed blood] (once, Ro.3.15), *sharp* (7, **Re.1.16; 2.12; 14.14, 17, 18; 19.15**).

went, ἐκπορευομένη, nom. sing. fem. part. pres. of ἐκπορεύομαι, ἐκ of, from, out of + πορεύομαι *to go* (**Re.19.15**), *walk, journey*; ἐκπορεύομαι, τss. *to go out, to proceed out, to come, to depart, went* (Wigram, 'coming forth,' **Re.1.16**), *to proceed* (**Re.4.5; 11.5; 22.1**), *which proceeded* (**Re.19.21**), *to issue* (**Re.9.17**), *which issued* (**Re.9.18**), *to go forth* (**Re.16.14**)

And he had in his right hand – Reference to the right hand is to His power, ability.

Ex 15:6 Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

Job 40:14 Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

Ps 20:6 Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.

And he had in his right hand seven stars – The literal interpretation of this the seven stars is given in verse 20.

Re.1.20 The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches ...

As we consider the next chapter, chapter 2 it will become clear that the stars represent someone that is accounted as the messenger of the church. For example,

Re.2.2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars ...

The stars do not represent the spiritual, created beings, the elect angels but pastors of the churches. Here it is clear that this messenger is in and part of the church. Stars refer to one whose special charge it is to sound for the gospel and doctrine of Jesus Christ in and through the church. This messenger is the pastor. During the ministry of the apostle Paul Timothy was such a messenger at this church, the church at Ephesus.

*2Ti.4.1 ¶ I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;
2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*

and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword – The refers to the word of Christ or the power, the authority of His voice. He commands, He speaks, and it is done.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is quick (is the Son of God), and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

Remember, this is defining the Son of man in figurative terms so that we understand what He is really doing among His churches. His word to us is authoritative. We should obey His word. It will not return to Him void.

Isa 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

face

countenance, ὄψις, noun tss. appearance (Jn.7.24), face (Jn.11.44), countenance (Re.1.16).

*shineth, φαίνει, 3s. pres. ind. of the verb φαίνω, tss. to appear, to be seen, to shine (Re.1.16, **shineth**; 8.12, **shone**; 18.23, **shine**; 21.23, **shine**).*

strength, δυνάμει, dat. sing. of the noun δύναμις, tss. wonderful works, mighty works, ability, miracle, virtue, strength (Re.1.16; 3.8; 12.10), power (Re. 4.11; 5.12; 7.12; 11.17; 13.2; 15.8; 17.13; 19.1), might, violence, abundance (Re.18.3).

The face of Christ was brilliant and radiant. His face shined as the sun would shine on a clear day, full and unobstructed. The apostle Paul saw the brilliance of the face of Christ when he was on His way to Damascus, Syria.

Ac.9.3 *And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:*

4 *And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

Ac 22:6 *And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.*

...

11 *And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.*

Ac.26.13 *At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.*

16 καὶ ἔχων ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ χειρὶ ἀστέρας ἑπτὰ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ῥομφαία δίστομος ὀξεῖα ἐκπορευομένη καὶ ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος φαίνει ἐν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ

πρὸς

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

dead, νεκρός, adj. always tss. with the English *dead* (ones), and 13 times in the Book of Revelation.

he laid, ἐπέθηκεν, 3s. aor. ind. act. of the verb ἐπιτίθημι, ἐπί for, upon, among + τίθημι to appoint, to ordain, to purpose, to lay; ἐπιτίθημι, to lay, to put, to laden, to set (each could include the preposition on **Re.1.17, laid ... upon; 22.18, to add unto** [twice]).

Fear not; I am the first and the last – What John saw was an awesomely fearful sight. We can only imagine that we'd be stricken with the same sudden sense of overwhelming fear to see these things. But the Lord Jesus speaks words to comfort him and lifts him with his right hand.

How could the words *I am the first and the last* be comforting to John? It is not that John should not fear Christ and reverence Christ. After all, He is God! Where slavish fear causes children shrink back from an abusive, harsh, and cruel father, filial fear draws the child closer because he knows that he is loved.

Mt.14.25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

The Lord laid His right hand upon John and John was comforted, he was strengthened.

17 Καὶ ὅτε εἶδον αὐτόν ἔπεσα πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ ὡς νεκρός καὶ ἐπέθηκεν τὴν δεξιὰν αὐτοῦ χεῖρα ἐπ' ἐμὲ λέγων, μοι, Μὴ φοβοῦ· ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold,
and the living One

that liveth, ζῶν, nom. pl. sing. part. pres. of the verb ζάω, to live, to be alive.

I am alive **for evermore,** **Amen; and** **have**
living into the ages of the ages I

Though Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin died, He rose from the dead and shall never die again, the sin problem for His people fully settled by His death.

the keys of hell and of death.

keys, κλεῖς, acc. pl. of the noun κλείς, tss. always with the English *key* (6), Mt.16.19; Lk.11.52; **Re.1.18; 3.7; 9.1; 20.1**).

The verb of κλείς is κλείω, tss. *to shut, to shut up*, and it is always used with reference to *shutting up* something or someone: shutting the door, shutting up someone, shutting up the kingdom of heaven, shutting up the bowels, shutting up heaven.

hell, ᾅδου, gen. sing. of the noun ᾅδης, tss. *hell* (10, **Rev.1.18; 6.8; 20.13, 14**), *grave* (1).

death, θανάτου, gen. sing. of the noun θάνατος, tss. always with the English *death*.

Christ possesses the power to shut up both hell and death. In every instance where the word key or keys is found in the NT it has reference to, not opening, but shutting or closing. That one has the keys means that he has the power to shut up this or that things for his own purpose. In this case, that Christ has the keys of hell and death (noting the order), hell being the grave and death being that which follows the grave for the unbelieving, the child of God has no fear. The grave has no power over them and death cannot touch them.

1Co 15:55 O death, where is thy sting? (Here death is dying and not the same to which John refers in our text. But notice concerning the grave Paul wrote ...) *O grave, where is thy victory?*

Joh 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

1Jo 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

Jesus Christ rose from the grave and destroyed him that wielded the power of death over men. (cf. He.2.14)

Hell is the place of the disembodied spirits.

Ac 2:27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul (not the body in the grave, but the soul) in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Hell should not be thought of in the usual sense prior to the resurrection of Christ from the dead. During the OT period, everyone that died came to hell. (Lk.16.22,23) Then there was a place of torment for the unbelieving, and a temporary place of comfort for the children of God. Since Christ's resurrection hell is only the place of torment for the unbelieving because the children of God come immediately into the presence of the Lord at death. (cf. 2Co.5.6-8; Phl.1.23)

What follows hell is death. What follows the grave is death. There is life after the grave. The prospect of being separated from God after the grave is put away for the children of God. This death is eternal separation from God.

Re 2:11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Re 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

18 καὶ ὁ ζῶν καὶ ἐγενόμην νεκρὸς καὶ ἰδοῦ, ζῶν εἰμι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων ἀμήν· καὶ ἔχω τὰς κλεῖς τοῦ ᾄδου καὶ τοῦ θανάτου

19 Write the things which thou hast seen,

thou hast seen, εἶδες, 2s. aor. ind. act. of the verb εἶδέω, tss. to see, to know, to perceive, to know how, to behold.

μετὰ ταῦτα
and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;
is to be after these

which are, εἰσὶν, 3pl. pres. ind. of the verb εἶμί, *to be*.
shall, μέλλει, 3s. pres. ind. of the verb μέλλω, *to be about, to be ready*.

be, γινέσθαι, pres. infin. of the verb γίνομαι, *tss. to make, to fulfill, to be, to be done*.

This letter to the seven churches will contain the revelation which John saw in our reading today. It will contain the revelation of things as they are presently among the churches in chapters 2, 3. And then it will contain the revelation of the things that concern the future. That this part of the revelation which John saw concerns the future that does not negate referencing things that are past, i.e., Re.12.1-5, referring to the birth of Christ.

Again I would note that this letter of Revelation is the last of the Books of the New Testament and of the Bible. Written about the year A.D. 95, 96 it is a post A.D. 70 letter. It is NOT a revelation of things that will occur in A.D. 70. The future things in this letter are the unfolding of the week of Daniel (seven years).

19 γράψον ἃ εἶδες καὶ ἃ εἰσὶν καὶ ἃ μέλλει γινέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα

ἐπὶ
20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks.

(among which I am)

The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches:

angels, ἄγγελοι, nom. pl. of ἄγγελος, a noun tss. *angel* (76 times in the Book of Revelation), *messenger*.

There are seven angels of these seven churches. What these churches receive will be from the pen of the apostle John and through select messengers of God for these churches. Again, I think that as we begin to read into the next chapter we will conclude that these messengers represent the pastors of these churches.

and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

mystery, μυστήριον, a noun, always tss. with the English *mystery*.
(Re.1.20; 10.7; 17.5, 7)

The candlestick is defined as a church. It is the place where the children of God are to put their witness so that the world around them might see the glory of Christ in a proper *light* or context.

What a vision! If there is anything that we should take away from this vision which John saw of Jesus Christ, it is that by the Spirit, which He sent to us from the Father, He is presently trying and judging the saints of the churches. To what end is this? I think this is answered as we begin to read in the next chapters concerning the churches.

20 τὸ μυστήριον τῶν ἑπτὰ ἀστέρων ὧν εἶδες ἐπὶ τῆς δεξιᾶς μου καὶ τὰς ἑπτὰ λυχνίας τὰς χρυσαῖς· οἱ ἑπτὰ ἀστέρες ἄγγελοι τῶν ἑπτὰ ἐκκλησιῶν εἰσιν καὶ αἱ ἑπτὰ λυχνία ἃς εἶδες ἑπτὰ ἐκκλησίαι εἰσίν