

Revelation Lesson 16
Meeting the Glorified Christ: Part 3
The Purity of the High Priest

Revelation 1:14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow;
and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

Last time we noted the garments in which Jesus was clothed. They were quite different from the “swaddling” cloths used to wrap Him as a babe, these are descriptive of the garments of a priest – our High Priest. Now John continues his description of the Glorified Christ.

His head – Some Bible teachers seek to spiritualize the reference of “His head” to infer that this is speaking of God the Father as 1 Corinthians 11:3 states: “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and **the head of Christ is God.**” But this is clearly not evidenced here due to two reasons:

1. The following “and” connects the hairs mentioned to the aforementioned noggin.
2. If we appeal to “the Greek” *Textus-Receptus* we find the word KEPHALE (kef-hal-ay) G2776 we find there are two uses of this noun. One is to use it literally as in the ol’ noggin and the other use is to utilize it in a metaphorical manner as in a leader or boss.

The clear intention of John is he is describing what he **sees** (Rev.1:11 “what thou seest, write in a book” and Rev. 1:12 “I saw”) hence this shows in English without an appeal to “the Greek” that this usage is **literal** not symbolic or figurative. While a symbolic use could be used to show application, to do so here would possibly lead to confusion. Better to use such applications in verses where it is relevant such as the aforementioned one from 1 Corinthians or Colossians 2:10 and Ephesians 1:22.

and his hairs Again another suggestion by some is to spiritualize this wording and make it stand for the members of the Church (i.e. the Body of Christ) or all of those who have ever (or ever will) receive forgiveness. So I reckon these folks would apply the “grafting” in” in Romans 11:17 & 24 as God getting Hair plugs or a bosley hair transplant each time somebody gets saved? Some people go overboard – especially here in Revelation. Leave the magic spiritualizing pixie dust at home and just read it for what it is – The Word of God! See where such rampant spiritualization and/or symbolism can lead you? No, no, no. The hairs mentioned are hairs that is what the word in the Greek (Thrix “Threeks”) means. Let’s no apply this to us or Him knowing the number of hairs on our heads (as per Matthew 10:30) because the hairs and the head are all said to be HIS (that is Jesus’) and if this is the case, then we recall John is describing what he sees. Remember the golden rule of interpretation is: If the common sense makes sense, seek no other sense.

were white – Some have used this to say that Jesus is white or Caucasian. I don’t think that is the case here. The word is defined as: White, also shining, glittering. Used of clothing sometimes in the sense of bright. So the sense is indeed whiteness in colour but also of white due to light.

Recall that Moses’ face shone from his meetings with the Lord. One could say too that Moses’ face there was “white” but he was a Hebrew. This is not a statement of Race, but one of letting the light of the Truth shine forth. More will be forthcoming on this when we get to Revelation 1:16 (which is in essence the built-in dictionary for this reference – in regards to the head of Christ being seen as the colour white.

Meanwhile the word white – when applied to the hairs of the head – refer literally to the white hair upon Christ’s head. This has a symbolic meaning in and of itself here – not the symbolism of age/maturity. White hair is seen among human beings as a sign of old age (Leviticus 19:32) and a

Crown of Glory (Proverbs 16:31). It reflects decay or decrepitude. As such it is called “the hoary head” and as stated in Proverbs it must be found in Righteousness. By the way hoary means white. Hence hoary head = white head. Hoarfrost = white frost.

We acknowledge that Christ is ageless and is perfect. I would like to point out however that we are not attempting to blaspheme and portray God as an old man. Rather this shows us further conclusive evidence that the prophet Daniel did indeed see and speak to the post-incarnate Christ.

- Daniel harkens back in Daniel 7:9 in which he beheld a vision, he saw Christ as the Ancient of Days! “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.”

So the whiteness here refers to purity and glory as this represents the other symbolic meanings of the use of white.

like wool, - To further illustrate the purity he sees John appeals to two well known and well established object lessons. The first is that he says the white colour is like wool.

Seems to me that John may be using this not only in connection and attempting to make a connection (with reference) to the person in Daniel 7:9 “hair of his head like the pure wool.” Notice **pure** wool. Here it also seems that reference is being made to salvation. Sheep have wool and we are told in the Bible that Christ was the Lamb of God slain for sinners. Note: Revelation 7:14 “And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them **white** in the blood of the Lamb.”

Hence John is speaking of the colour but also symbolically appealing to the purifying work of Christ.

as white as snow; - This also matches John's earlier object lesson in pulling the reader to the conclusion that Christ Himself is pure, absolute sinless perfection! We become this way when we get saved. Our sins are washed away in the Blood of the Lamb. But we see this illustrated in the Old Testament in Isaiah 1:18 “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as **white as snow**; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” This speaks of the purity that comes to us through Christ's shed blood. Again, John is using the “wool” and “snow” to illustrate how white Christ's head is shining and how white His hair is.

The phrase “white as snow” occurs 8 times in the Bible. Most of the times it is used in reference to Christ or His saving work in regards to what happens to our sins. However, it is used twice in a derogatory way to refer to leprosy (Num. 12:10 and 2 Kings 5:27) which is symbolic of sin.

Dr. Waite states in his Commentary: “Some of the translations that are wrong, in different versions all over the world, don't say in Isaiah 1:18, that your sins shall be as “white as snow,” because they say, “Well, the translators didn't know anything about “snow,” so let's put another word in there.” So they use some other word instead of snow. My conviction is, teach them what “snow” is. If they don't know what “snow” is, show them a picture of it. Show them on the television or on the Internet. God uses the illustration of “white as snow.” As the “snow” falls down it's “white,” it's pure. When it gets dirty on the ground after people walk on it, it's different.”

and his eyes – Here John looks into the eyes of Christ. The first reference to “eyes” in the Bible was used by Satan in Genesis 3:5 when he informed the woman (after the fall she was named Eve)

that the reason God forbade them from eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was that when they did, their “eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Thus the first mention rule shows us that “eyes” can refer to knowledge. Here it is the literal meaning, the to ocular devices by which you observe something.

were as – This merely is John's way of saying “was like.” Again, he is trying to describe this in a way we can understand it. In other words its a simile. It's a picture

a flame of fire; - The reference in Daniel 10:6c “...and his eyes as lamps of fire...” again shows us that the “certain man” that the Old Testament prophet saw is none other than Jesus Christ *after* His Resurrection AND His glorification in Heaven.

Now please don't get this image of Jesus mixed up with Cyclops from the X-men shooting lazer beams or fire shooting out of his eyes! This is NOT when John portends here.

Fire is piercing. It is clearly seen. It must not be symbolized to the point that we think he ONLY means that Jesus looked at him with a “fiery look” or that he has “fire in his eyes” as someone does when they are angry.

We can apply this meaning here, that when Jesus looks at the 7 churches He is going to unearth sin and He hates sin.

While fire can be used in application to mean anger. It also indicates God's holiness and justice (Acts 7:30 and Hebrews 12:29). When God came down on Mount Sinai the people were in awe at God's power as fire, thunder and lightning were upon the Mount. It is in Acts 7:30 that Deacon Stephen – before his death – spoke of Christ being in a “flame of fire” on Sinai. Hebrews reminds us that our God is a consuming fire. He burns away sin – which requires fuel to burn. When Christ looks over us and our lives He seeks to burn away any impurities so that we will be as refined silver as Ezekiel 22:22 states: “As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you.” When does the silversmith know the silver is pure? When he sees His reflection.

Fire is described in the book: *A Fearful Master* in the following way: Government, like fire, is a useful servant, but a fearful master.

There is nothing basically that is hidden from the burning fiery eyes of the Lord. Note they appear again at the Campaign in Revelation 19:12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

We note in Hebrews 4:12-13 that nothing is hidden: “For the word of God is quick, 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. 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.”

You see it isn't Santa who “sees you while you're sleeping and knows when you're awake.” The mythical elf stole that from our High Priest Who is said to know: “....my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.” Psalm 139:2

So here is the purity of our High Priest. Nothing sinful can withstand his searching pure eyes. Nothing can withstand the pure sinless brightness of his being. He is our Lord and Saviour, may we be faithful to the One Who searches our hearts and knows us each by name.