

# A Future Journey with Christ

## The Patmos Vision (Part 1)

### Revelation 1:9-20

#### INTRODUCTION:

This morning we get a glimpse of the first vision that Christ gives John on the isle of Patmos. He is going to proclaim a message for the "seven churches". But before he does, He gives John a vision of Himself. He wants believers down through the ages to know that the message to the churches is coming from the Supreme Majesty of the universe.

#### All Stand and Read Scripture

Revelation 1:9-20 (NASB)

<sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like *the sound of* a trumpet, <sup>11</sup> 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."

<sup>12</sup> Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; <sup>13</sup> and in the middle of the lampstands *I saw* one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. <sup>14</sup> His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> 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, <sup>18</sup> and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things. <sup>20</sup> 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.

#### Prayer

#### BODY:

#### I. THE SETTING.

## Revelation 1:9-10 (NASB)

<sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day,

The first thing we look at is **the setting**. John is the last living apostle, probably about 95 years old. Even in his nineties, John was witnessing enough, and doing enough damage to the politicians of his day, that they exiled him. They sent him to Patmos to get rid of the "old man".

1. **9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker** or "companion" (KJV) **in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus,"**

By brother he means that he is a fellow believer. We are **brothers and sisters** in Christ.

John reminds the churches that he is a partaker with you in the tribulation, kingdom, and perseverance. **These are three important themes throughout the book of Revelation. They are present tense experiences and possessions.**

John says he is a fellow partaker in the day to day tribulation just as they are because of their faith in Christ. Is this tribulation a part of an ongoing "**great tribulation**" as described in Matthew 24 or is it just the persecutions of the day? We will investigate that at a later time.

John also says I am a companion with you in the "**kingdom**". As this verse states, those who are "in Christ" are the kingdom. Christ's kingdom is composed of those who have believed the gospel, repented of their sins, and been baptized into Christ. The New Testament knows of no far-off time when the kingdom will come. It is a present reality. The thousand years' reign with Christ is going on right now, and has been going on, since the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ rules as King over the Kingdom of God! He is currently reigning and will continue to reign until all enemies are abolished.

## 1 Corinthians 15:24-26 (NASB)

<sup>20</sup> But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, <sup>24</sup> then *comes* the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

Paul says Christ will reign over the kingdom until the evil is abolished and all who are Christ's are resurrected at His second coming.

John also shares in the quality of "**perseverance**" that is required of the children of God.

## Colossians 1:21-23a (NASB)

<sup>21</sup> And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, *engaged* in evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— <sup>23</sup> **if indeed you continue in**

**the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard,...**

We must live a "new life" in Christ by remaining steadfast in our faith.

2. **9 I ...was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.**

Patmos is a small rocky island measuring ten miles long and 6 miles wide. In John's day the island was mainly a rock quarry that was used by the Romans as a place of banishment for various types of offenders. Tradition suggests that John had been exiled to the island for his steadfastness of preaching the Word of God and his testimony of Christ.

3. **10 "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day,"**

Not much is known about this state of being "in the Spirit". John uses this phrase to underscore that the source of his vision was God. It came out of a supernatural encounter far beyond the typical indwelling of the Spirit in a believer's life. John was transported into a special, heightened spiritual experience.

While John was in the spirit, he saw real things. But they were not necessarily physical things. John saw things more real than the things we see and experience in this physical world. Despite how foreign this vision appeared to John, he had to try to describe it using a materialistic mind. John was given a deep spiritual experience that lifted his mind and spirit above this world and put him in the very presence of Christ Himself. This wasn't a dream. John was supernaturally transported out of this material world to an experience beyond normal human senses. He was in direct fellowship with God.

Note that John was taken up in the Spirit from a sparsely populated island. Although he was physically in exile, his spirit was not. We are never so isolated that God cannot find us and we are never be so bound that the Spirit can't lift our soul with hope!

What Peter said will be true:

**1 Peter 4:12-14 (NASB)**

**<sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; <sup>13</sup> but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. <sup>14</sup> If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.**

4. **10 "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day,"**

The "Lord's Day" is on a Sunday. That is the day that Jesus rose from the dead, the very same day that the apostles met Him in the upper room. On the following Sunday Jesus met with the assembled apostles again. Sunday was the day that the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost. It was also the day that the disciples in Acts 20:7 came together to break bread. It was also the day the Corinthians took up a collection to be taken to the Jerusalem church in I Cor. 16:2.

There is good reason to believe that the Christians started using "The Lord's Day" to protest against "Caesar worship". From 30 A.D. through the end of the century, the Romans celebrated one day of each month as "Augustus Day". It certainly could have been that the Christians started referring to the first day of the week as "The Lord's Day" in opposition to the current idolatry directed toward Roman emperors.

## II. THE INSTRUCTION.

Then there was the loud trumpeting voice of someone **giving instructions**.

Revelation 1:10b-11 (NASB)

<sup>10</sup>...I heard behind me a loud voice like *the sound* of a trumpet, <sup>11</sup> 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."

John hears a loud voice behind him. It must have been pretty loud to be like a trumpet. We don't know if the voice was that of the Son of Man or if it was a herald-like prelude to the appearance of the glorified Christ. In other verses the Lord's voice is said to be "like the sound of many waters". Such as in verse 15.

<sup>11</sup> saying, "Write in a book what you see,

The voice instructed John to write what he saw and send it to the seven churches of Asia. Notice that John tells us that he is the **writer**, not the author, the Holy Spirit is the author.

A book in John's time was pieces of papyrus or parchment sewn together and rolled on a spindle. The book form as we know it was not invented until about the second century A.D.

<sup>11</sup> ..., 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."

Note that the message was not for John but for the "seven churches". The number used for the churches has more significance than the identification of each one. The New Testament names other churches that existed in the same province such as Troas, Colossae, and Hierapolis.

Revelation uses numbers symbolically to communicate something more than quantities. The Jews considered the number seven to be a sacred number symbolizing the whole or completeness of something. Thus, since the number seven symbolizes completeness, the "seven churches" could be interpreted as all of the congregations of Christ throughout the world for all time. The evidence that this revelation is for ears beyond the seven churches is found in the repeated exhortation "**He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches**".

The characteristics that were described for each of the churches are characteristics that have occurred throughout this age. In other words, given any period of this dispensation we will find churches exhibiting the same characteristics as those found in any one of these seven churches.

This is all the more reason why we must not choose to ignore this book due to its complexity and difficulty to understand.

### III. THE VISION.

So, the vision begins. What did he see?

Revelation 1:12-13 (NASB)

<sup>12</sup> Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; <sup>13</sup> and in the middle of the lampstands *I saw* one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash.

I find it interesting that John turned to SEE the VOICE that was speaking to him. We are told that he was "in the Spirit". I cannot imagine the astonishment he must have had to turn around and see a different dimension with overwhelming bright spiritual lights that were real and alive!

When John turned around he saw seven lampstands. They are reminiscent of the sevenfold golden lamp that was called a menorah. The menorah was designed by God and it was built to His specifications. It was made of pure gold and used in the portable sanctuary set up by Moses in the wilderness and later in the Temple in Jerusalem. It was filled with oil and gave light in the tabernacle.

It represents God as Israel's light.

John 8:12 (NASB)

<sup>12</sup> Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

We are the fulfilled Israel in the New Covenant. We are His followers.

It also represents God's people (Israel) as God's light to the world.

Matthew 5:14-16 (NASB)

<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; <sup>15</sup> nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup> Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

John saw Christ standing in the middle of the lampstands. We are told later in verse 20 that the lampstands represent the churches. Thus Jesus is providing the light to the churches. But just as Israel was supposed to be a light to the world, this task is now placed on the churches. Unless He stands in the midst of the church, the church has no light. The church must see to it that Christ is in its midst, and the church must proclaim the light of Christ to the world.

<sup>13</sup> and in the middle of the lampstands *I saw* one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash.

Standing in the midst of the golden lamp stands or in the midst of the church was the Son of Man, Christ Himself. The reference to "Son of man" here is the heavenly figure mentioned in Daniel 7:13-14.

Daniel 7:13-14 (NASB)

<sup>13</sup> "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man (this is the exact phrase that is used here in Revelation 1:13) was coming, (it is important to note that the only time that "coming with the clouds of heaven" and "Son of man" are used together in the Old Testament is here) And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him.

Where is the Ancient of Days dwelling? The Ancient of Days is God. He is in HEAVEN! So here is the question. Where did the clouds of the Son of man take Him? HEAVEN!

Whenever we read " And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming," what do we immediately think of?

Christ's second coming, right? Jesus coming from the heavens to the earth.

But Daniel says "No! Coming in the clouds like a Son of man is coming from the earth and going to Heaven!

Isn't that what it says? Let me read it again.

"I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him.

**The clouds take Him to the presence of the Ancient of Days in Heaven!** Then we read verse 14. **This is the point!** Every time that the phrase "Coming in the clouds like a Son of man" is used it is as kingdom language. Listen to verse 14.

<sup>14</sup> "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

What is that describing? The establishment of the kingdom! It happens when Jesus goes from earth to Heaven. When did Jesus go from earth to Heaven in a cloud? **(Repeat)**  
**The ascension!**

When did Jesus' kingdom get established? **When He went to heaven in a cloud!**

It is very important to understand what Daniel is telling us here in order to make sense of Revelation. The kingdom was established by Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection. John uses this passage in the Old Testament to describe the establishment of the everlasting kingdom that will not stop reigning.

We will pick up here, Lord willing, next Sunday.

## **CONCLUSION:**

What a lesson we draw from this passage of scripture! Because of Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection, Jesus has been give authority over all heaven and earth. He has established a new kingdom. When we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior, we become priests in His kingdom. We have been become Israel, God's chosen people.

**He is Lord!**