



# WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE

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## Revelation 1

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



**Learn the Bible at Home**

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

# Revelation 1.

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## Topics.

- The first and the last, the Alpha and Omega.
  - Things that must soon take place.
  - Blessed is the one who reads, hears and keeps what is written.
  - Which is and which was and which is to come.
  - The magnificence of the word amen.
  - I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.
  - A voice tells John to write what he sees and send it to the seven churches.
  - John sees one like the Son of man.
  - I am he that lives and was dead.
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**INTRODUCTION:** my goal in this study is to give greater insight into the beauty of Bible prophecy and inspire the reader to expand upon what I have shared. Whether Christian or non-Christian I am sure the reader's knowledge will be enhanced and that these studies will give greater insight into the following three things:

1. Future things to come upon earth.
  2. The wonder of Bible prophecy and the beauty of Scripture.
  3. The path to God's love, His grace and to eternal life.
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**A personal note:** though I have always loved reading and studying the Scriptures and have now walked with Christ and in God's grace for around fifty years the following studies should not be taken to be dogmatic, inflexible or the final word on the matter since I am fully aware that my mind is limited by mortality and that greater understanding of God's revelation is continually becoming clearer before our eyes as we move closer to the time of Christ's glorious return in glory.

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## REVELATION 1:1-3

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### The First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega.

- **Revelation 1:1-3:** The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place (shortly come to pass in KJV). He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, <sup>2</sup>who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. <sup>3</sup>Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

God the Father gave His Son Jesus a revelation of things that will come to pass to show the faithful who belong to his Kingdom. Jesus sent his angel to give this message to a godly man named John on the Isle of Patmos, John was told to write the messages and visions on scrolls for

future generations could read the revelation God gave to Jesus. Those who read this prophecy and endeavour to live a life that honours God and brings a good testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ are promised a blessing. The blessings that the reader will receive upon reading the words of this prophecy refer to the knowledge and insights concerning the following glorious events:

- The final events concerning the church and the world prior to Christ's glorious return.
- Christ's return in glory and the resurrection of the faithful to eternal glory.
- The heavenly New Jerusalem descending to earth.
- Christ returning for his Bride.
- The faithful ruling and reigning with Christ as kings and priests to God.
- The faithful forming the global government with Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords to bring Gods Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace to earth.
- Eternity in all its glory descending to earth.
- God Himself descending to earth to dwell with the faithful.

Added to these blessings we are told that all who have not denied Jesus name and have kept his works and endured in the faith until the end will inherit the following promises.

#### **Jesus will:**

- Allow them to eat of the tree of life in the paradise of God. (Rev. 2:7).
- Not allow them to be hurt by the second death. (Rev. 2:11).
- Give them a new name. (Rev. 2:17).
- Give them authority over the nations. (Rev. 2:26).
- Grant to them the authority to rule the nations with him. (Rev. 2:27).
- Give them the morning star. (Rev. 2:28).
- Cloth them in white garments. (Rev. 3:5).
- Never blot their name out of the Book of Life. (Rev. 3:5).
- Confess their name before his Father and before his angels. (Rev. 3:5).
- Set before them an open door, which no one is, able to shut. (Rev. 3:8).
- Exalt them so everyone will learn that Jesus has loved them. (Rev. 3:9).
- Keep them from the hour coming to try all who dwell on the earth. (Rev. 3:10).
- Make them a pillar in the temple of his God. (Rev. 3:12).
- Write on them the name of his God, and his own new name. (Rev. 3:12).
- Invite them to sit with him on his throne as he sat down with his Father on his throne. (Revelation 3:21).

**Things that must soon take place:** (v1) (shortly come to pass in KJV) the word shortly comes from the Greek word (*en*) and means quickly, shortly and speedily. In the context of this chapter it means that some parts of what John wrote have been fulfilled, other parts are continually being fulfilled and some predictions are to be fulfilled in future generations and the latter days. Jesus said to John:

- Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. (v19).

The word, shortly and speedily in this chapter carries the idea that all, of what John wrote will begin to take place very soon and will continue, on to its fulfilment through the succeeding generations of mankind. It means John foretold of things which would shortly begin to be fulfilled, (which they did shortly after it was given) and would succeed in their due season and order until they were all accomplished.

When the following verses are kept in mind:

- For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night. (Psalm 90:4).

Meaning from God's, heavens and eternities perspective our time is but a blink of the eye.

- I am God, and there is none like me, <sup>10</sup>declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose. (Isaiah 46:10).

Meaning God declares the entire story from beginning to end, even though it has not yet taken place and may not for centuries.

- I am coming soon (quickly in KJV). Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. (Rev. 3:11).
- Behold, I am coming soon (quickly in KJV). Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. (Rev. 22:7).
- Behold, I am coming soon (quickly in KJV), bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done. (Rev. 22:12).

These verses all refer to Christ's return as being at hand, coming soon and quickly, yet over two thousand years have already passed since these verses were spoken and the faithful are still patiently waiting for that glorious day. With all this before us it is easy to see that the word shortly and quickly in these contexts carry the idea that some of what is spoken would soon begin and continue through the preceding generation and would not finish until Christ returns.

Four major events still to happen:

1. Christ's return and the resurrection of the faithful.
2. Christ's thousand-year millennial reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.
3. The destruction of the armies of Gog and Magog.
4. God Himself descending on a Great White Throne.

This revelation was made over two thousand years ago, and not one of these events has taken place yet they are all spoken of in the sense that they should very quickly begin to be fulfilled. This clearly shows that the meaning is, that they will soon begin and from then onward continue to go on being fulfilled until all is accomplished.

**The time is near:** (v3) (time is at hand in KJV) the word hand comes from the Greek word (*agkale*) it means, near of place or time, close at hand, nigh at hand and ready. The expression, "the time is near," can apply to any event that is beginning or is soon to occur even though the end of the event might be far away. The time is near in this context carries the idea that a series of events is soon to begin and will stretch far into the future. However, by using such a statement as, "the time is near," it is certain John intended to press upon the mind of the faithful the

importance of keeping these things upper most in their mind and holding fast to the word of the Lord. During the era of John and the generations following. Throughout all generations, the mind and heart of the faithful has quietly rested and been comforted in the glorious hope and expectation that these things John has written would entirely or in part soon come. The apostle Paul wrote:

- Do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (2 Peter 3:8-9).

These words clearly highlight the truth that the way in which we view time is not the same as the way God views time.

**Blessed is the one who reads, hears and keeps what is written:**

(v3) this is the only book in the Bible that a special blessing is pronounced on those who read it. This does not mean that a blessing will be pronounced upon those who casually peruse its pages or read it as they would read a novel or from curiosity. Those who receive this blessing are those who read or hear the words and predictions of the prophecy contained in the book of Revelation and who intend to keep the things that are written in it. The blessing is to those who keep in memory the things written and live in view of it, and believe its prophecies. There are some things in this book which are of a practical nature, especially in the letters to the seven churches, so the blessing is to those who put in practice what they read and hear. The statement, "blessed is the one who reads, hears and keeps what is written," (v3) could be stated, "happy are those who observe, and take notice of what is written and meditate upon them, and ponder them in their minds, and retain them in their affections and memories. While there may be many obscurities in this book, it does contain much that is easily understood and helpful in supporting the faith of Christians and giving them comfort, encouragement and exciting views of the final triumph of their faith and of the glory of the world to come. Anything that enables us with such glorious hope and future joy to look forward to is a blessing.

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## **REVELATION 1:4-7**

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### **Which Is and Which Was and Which is to Come.**

- **Revelation 1:4-7:** 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, <sup>5</sup>and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood <sup>6</sup>and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. <sup>7</sup>Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

John addresses this letter to the seven churches which are in Asia (but by extension the promised blessings apply to every faithful brother and sister in Christ of all generations).

The words, "Who is and who was and who is to come," is not referring to the Lord Jesus Christ (as some believe), we know this because John later introduces Jesus after making the statement, "Who is and who was and who is to come." These words are referring to God the Father the immortal, invisible, eternal God Almighty the creator of all things and source of all life who will ultimately be All in All when eternity comes to earth in all its glorious fullness and royal majestic glory and God's eternal plan for the earth, the world, the universe and mankind's eternal salvation that He planned and purposed in His eternal mind before the world began is complete in all its eternal and perfect fullness.

**Who is** ----- Carries the idea of being present.

**Who was** ----- Carries the idea of past.

**Who is to come** ----- Carries the idea of future.

**Was and is and to come:** carries the idea of eternally existing in all ages. John begins this greeting with his focus set upon God Almighty by saying grace and peace to all the faithful from God the Father who is always existing in the present and who was always existing in the past and who is to come, in the future and grace and peace from the seven Spirits which are before God the Fathers throne.

**Then in verses five:** John shifts his focus from God the Father to His Son by saying, "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first resurrected from the dead to eternal life, and who is the prince of the kings of the earth, to Jesus who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

**Then in verse six:** John shifts his focus back to the Father, saying that Jesus has made the faithful priests to God his Father and that it is to his heavenly Father all glory and dominion belong for ever and ever. Amen.

**Then in verse seven:** John shifts his focus back onto the Lord Jesus Christ by telling us that Jesus will come in clouds and every eye will see him even those who pierced him (the Jews) and all nations of the earth (in contrast to Israel only).

**Amen:** to gain greater understanding and insight into verse eight it will help to firstly look at the universal glory of the word amen, which comes from the Hebrew word (*'aman*) and literally means, sure, faithful, trustworthy, true and steadfast and carries the following ideas: -

- So be it, may it be verified and may it surely come to pass.
- To believe, to be faithful, to be assured, to trust, to be firm and to have assurance.
- To be continually faithful (especially for a long continuing period).
- To be permanent quiet, moral true and certain of a thing.
- To go to the right hand of a nursing father for support and to build up and establish.

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Amen has been called the best-known word in human speech, it is directly related and almost identical to the Hebrew word for believe (*'aman*) or faithful which is also (*'aman*), showing that the word amen not only came to mean sure and truly, but also came to be an expression of absolute trust and confidence. It is a most remarkable word that has been translated directly from the Hebrew into the Greek of the New Testament, then into Latin and then into English and many other languages, so that amen is practically a universal word worldwide.

**Amen at the beginning of a discourse:** means surely and truly. Saying amen was a custom, which passed over from the synagogues to the Christian assemblies. When he who had read, or offered up solemn prayer to God, the others responded by saying amen, and by doing so agreed to it and made the substance of what had been spoken their own.

**Amen at the end of a discourse:** means so it is, so be it, and may it be fulfilled. It signifies the end of that discourse or subject. It is the same as a full stop, it ends the subject being spoken about and signifies that it is final, at the end of a paragraph it tells the reader this is the end of the previous subject, and that the story will now bring a new subject into focus, therefore, when the reader comes into verse eight it is a new subject. In actual, fact it is not so much that it is a new subject in this case since John has just reverted, back to the earlier subject of the

previous verses and is refocussing on God the Father. John is now bringing his previous subject back into focus and finishes verse seven with amen, meaning so be it and may it be fulfilled and after ending his statement then shifts the focus from Christ back onto God the Father.

**NOTE:** the reason believers say amen through Jesus name is because Paul stated, "yes and no is not in Jesus Christ because in Jesus it is always yes," (meaning they are guaranteed) (2 Cor. 1:19-22), for the following reasons; God has redeemed and saved and established believers through faith in Jesus and put His seal on them because of their faith. Added to this wonder God has given those who belong to Christ His Spirit and His love in their hearts as a guarantee of salvation and eternal life this, is why believers say, "Amen in Jesus name," because all of God's promises concerning salvation and eternal life are in the Lord Jesus Christ and are guaranteed to all who endure in faith to the end.

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## REVELATION 1:8

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**I am Alpha and Omega, who is, who was and who is to come, the Almighty.**

- **Revelation 1:8:** "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

The King James Bible says:

- I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. (Rev. 1:8).

John again gives God the Father the title: "Which is and which was and which is to come" (see the notes following verse four). It is very clear that this title belongs to God the Father, the immortal, invisible, eternal God Almighty the creator of all things and source of all life and not to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is God the Father who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending. The words, "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last," in verse eight have been used to support the theory Jesus is God. In this study, we will travel through each verse for the following two reasons, firstly it presents a glorious vision of the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ and secondly, to discover the context of what John was saying prior to the words, "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last." Though all Bible versions have the words Alpha Omega in verse eight the the King James Bible and the New King James Bible are the only Bibles that have included the words the Alpha and the Omega in verse eleven. The following four major Bibles have omitted the words Alpha and Omega in verse eleven.

**The American Standard Bible.**

- Saying, "What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea" (Rev. 1:11).

**The New American Standard Bible.**

- 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" (Rev. 1:11).

**The New International Bible.**

- Which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea" (Rev. 1:11).

**The New Revised Standard Bible.**

- Saying, "Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea" (Revelation 1:11).

These four major Bible versions have not included the words, Alpha and Omega in verse eleven because in this context it is the title of God the Father and not the title of the voice of one like the Son of man (v13). Verse four and verse eight clearly show that in this chapter the title the Alpha and Omega belongs to God the Father the Almighty. However, the title (the Alpha and the Omega," is also found in Revelation chapter twenty-one and chapter twenty-two.

**The Alpha and Omega in Revelation chapter twenty-one:** in this chapter John heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. (21:3). Then the one seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new" (21:5), and that, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end." (21:6). Then he said, "The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son." (21:7). The words, "I will be his God and he will be my son," are the words of a Father, which means that the one seated on the throne in this chapter is the immortal, invisible Lord God Almighty the Creator of all things and source of all life and the heavenly Father of us all.

**The Alpha and Omega in Revelation chapter twenty-two:** in this chapter the voices of the angel, Jesus and God seem to be interchangeable throughout the chapter, which makes it is somewhat difficult to discover who the title, "the Alpha and the Omega," applies to. The safest way to find the answer, is for us to follow the conversation of the angel through the chapter, which is what we will do. The chapter begins with:

- An angel showing John the river of the water of life, the throne of God and the tree of life and then the angel says to John, "the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place." (22:1-6).
- Then the angel says, "I am coming soon, blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." he then told John that he must not worship him for he is his fellow servant. (22:7-8).
- Then the angel told John to worship God and to seal up the words of the prophecy of this book (22:9-10).
- Then the angel says, "I am coming soon, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." (22:12-13).
- The very next voice we hear is Jesus, saying that he has sent his angel to testify to John about these things. (22:16).
- Finally, we are told that the one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! (22:20).

**Summing it up:** it is the angel who says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." (22:12-13), but the angel also says three times, "I am coming soon," which clearly applies to Jesus, and then Jesus says, "he sent his angel to testify to these things." Putting all these facts together it seems unwise to limit the title, "The Alpha and the Omega," to God the Almighty or to the Lord Jesus Christ only as it can also apply to the angel God sent to show John what must come to pass. This is logical since the angel is Jesus angel (22:16) and God, Jesus and the angel are all one in Spirit, unity, mind and love and therefore all have the same goals, plans and purposes. This means that the words the angel speaks are the same words God and Jesus would speak, which means each can be viewed as speaking on behalf of the other.

**Words of comfort and encouragement:** since the words, "who is and who was and who is to come," (v4) and the words, "I am the Alpha and the Omega," (v8) have been used to support the idea that Jesus is God and the teaching that Jesus is God has such a strong hold on much of



traditional Christianity the following will encourage and comfort faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who maybe in some doubt and unsure of what to believe concerning the Father and the Son. The Bible very clearly shows that even if Jesus was God no one has, to know this to be saved to eternal life since there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states:

- We must believe that Jesus is God to be saved.

Nor is there one verse from Genesis to Revelations that says:

- Whoever believes that Jesus is God will be saved.

In total contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures throughout the pages of the New Testament that very clearly proclaim:

- We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved.

And that say:

- Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved.

Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was God to be saved to eternal life Jesus, the apostles and Paul would have told us at least once in all their teaching concerning salvation, but all we hear from Paul, the apostles and Jesus himself is them saying that we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved to eternal life. Jesus himself said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). For further information, see the title:

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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## REVELATION 1:9-11

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### **A Voice Tells John to Write what He Sees and Send it to the Seven Churches.**

- **Revelation 1:9-11:** I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account 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 a trumpet <sup>11</sup>saying, "Write what you see in a book 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."

**Patmos:** was a desolated island amongst a cluster of islands in the Aegean Sea anciently called the Sporades. It lies between the island of Icaria and the promontory of Miletus. It is about seven miles (twelve kilometres) long from north to south and at its widest is six miles (ten km) from east to west. It is the northernmost island of the Dodecanese. With an area of thirteen square miles (thirty-five square kilometres) and a circumference of twenty-five miles (thirty-seven kilometres), the volcanic island presents a largely rocky and treeless landscape. Though it is deficient in trees, it abounds in flowery plants and shrubs. Walnuts and other fruit trees are raised in the orchards, and the wine of Patmos is the strongest and the best flavoured in the Greek islands. The most imposing building on the island is the Monastery of constructed by Christodoulos in 1088 as a memorial to John located in the town of Chora overlooking the harbor. With walls fifty feet (fifteen metres) high, because of the threat from pirates. It was built like a fortress on top of the remains of a fourth century AD church and an earlier temple of Artemis. An inscription that mentions the temple of Artemis is displayed in the monastery's museum. According, to Pliny and Tacitus, the Romans often sent their prisoners to islands. It is not clear if John was imprisoned on Patmos or banished there to live, but it is clear, that he was not banished as an evil-doer, but for the testimony of Jesus and for bearing witness to Christ as the Saviour.

**Your brother:** (v9) John identifies himself not as an apostle, whose ministry was to witness the past earthly history of Jesus and the Gospel, but as a prophet, whose message was primarily to the future. He viewed himself as a fellow-Christian and sharer in the common good of Christians and their suffering and afflictions and as a fellow-partner in the Kingdom of the Redeemer and sharer in the blessings that belong to those who with patience endure whatever might follow as, a result of them being his friends and followers.

**NOTE:** The word brothers, does not always refer to Christian brothers, sometimes it simply refers to people of the same nation. The Jewish nation viewed a Jewish man or woman as a brother regardless of their belief or whether they were female or male. The expression brothers, is an ancient expression that shows a kindred spirit, either as belonging to the same family, the same nation or the same faith, but does not always mean that two people are united in friendship. An example of this is seen in Paul writings; in his letter to the Galatians he refers to false teachers as brothers, not because he is one with them in spirit or friendship (obviously), but because they belong to his nation Israel. Which means a brother in Bible language can be an enemy to Christ or a friend depending on the context. Another interesting fact regarding the use of the word brothers is that during the ancient Roman era even woman (especially those who had authority) were still referred to as brothers by the Roman Empire. In Christ's time the word, brothers, was not limited in its use to men only, but included both men and woman since it was an expression that signified a person belonged to the same family, the same faith, the same nation or the same group of people etc. The word, brothers was not used to differentiate between male and females during the Roman and New Testament era unless the context specifically states it. Brothers was a perfect expression for those in Christ since, brotherly love is love that protects, defends, guards and shelters and is free from any romantic thought.

**I was in the Spirit:** (v10) this expression may mean:

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- a) John was in the presence and under the influence of God's Spirit.
- b) John's mind was in an elevated state that God's Spirit produces.
- c) John was in a spirit of high and overwhelming devotion and enjoyment.
- d) John was in a state of spiritual ecstasy wonder meditation and prayer.
- e) John was unaware of his body and in an ecstasy of spirit, not knowing whether in the body or out of it.
- f) John was in a state of being overwhelmingly inspired by an extraordinary influence of the Spirit of God.
- g) John was wholly focused upon God and taken up with divine and spiritual things.
- h) John was so overwhelmed with God's love and filled with the light of the Holy Spirit, that his mind entered a trance like state which caused him to be wholly taken up with heavenly and spiritual things, so much so that he was utterly devoid of any concern of outward things and was therefore affected by extraordinary visions and communication of the Spirit, as in the following verses:
  - He (Peter) became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance (Acts 10:10).
  - I (Peter) was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. (Acts 11:5).
  - A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." (Acts 16:9).

- The Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent. (Acts 18:9).

God can meet His people anywhere; whether in solitude or in circumstances of outward affliction and persecution, whether rich or lacking, noble or lowly, whether surrounded with Christian friends or isolated God can meet them with the comfort of His grace and inner joy to their heart and peace to their mind.

**The Lord's day:** (v10) this is not the Passover or the Jewish Sabbath, we know this because since Jesus death and resurrection these were abolished and the Jewish Sabbath was never called the Lord's day, and if John did mean that, he would have said, "on the Sabbath Day." It refers to the first day of the week, the Lord's day.

- On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. (Acts 20:7).

The Lord's day is the Christian Sabbath, the first day of the week, the day on which Christians met for the breaking of bread, and gather together for close communion to remember and celebrate the day the Lord rose from the dead.

**I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet:** (v10) the trumpet was used to summon the people to religious feasts; to lead armies to battle; to proclaim victory over enemies and to accompany the revelations of God Himself. The reason the trumpet was used for these purposes was because it gave a loud and clear and triumphant sound. It is used in this context to signify four things:

1. The importance and power of the message that John is about to receive.
2. The importance of recording the message in a book.
3. The importance of taking the message to the seven churches.
4. It carries the sound of victory and triumph over enemies at the end of the battle.

The message John is about to receive proclaims the battle Christians endure in this world and the coming of the great King, and his victory over all his enemies. The voice that spoke to John would not only reach from his exile at Patmos and the Ephesus church and its six sister churches, but to all churches throughout all generations.

**Write what you see in a book:** (v11) John was told to write all he heard and saw in a book so that it would remain, and be read to the seven churches and all churches of future generations and be profitable to all believers at that time and in all future ages. The visions and extraordinary manifestations made to him would have either been held so long before the eye of his mind or so engraved upon his mind that it made it possible for him to record them to the book and then send it to the churches.

**Send it to the seven churches:** (v11), since there were more than seven churches in Asia Minor the mystical number seven is most likely used because it signifies completeness, totality and universality and there were specific reasons for sending this book containing the seven letters to each of these churches. Each letter in the book has a special reference to the conditions of each church it is directed to. However, they may be regarded as letters conveying appropriate lessons to all churches of that age and of future ages. The seven churches selected are not taken at random and can therefore be, seen as embodying the chief spiritual characteristics of the global church in all ages, whether faithful or unfaithful. In all these cities, there were congregations of Christians formed into churches, to who God orders John to send these visions to,

when he had written them in a book. It was not only the following seven letters that were sent to the churches, but the whole account of all the visions that he saw and wrote in a book that was sent to them, for their practical use, benefit and encouragement.

**NOTE:** at, this time the Christian church was mostly held in the homes of faithful brother and sisters. It is interesting to notice that there is no mention a Christian church building in the New Testament. This is because the church is not a building, but the faithful in Christ, which means wherever they are gathered in the name of Jesus, whether in a park, riverside, the shores of the sea or in a home it can be said, that the church is at these places.

**The Alpha and Omega:** the King James Bible adds the following words at the beginning of verse eleven:

- Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last (Rev. 1:11).

Most newer Bibles omit these words, the expression the first and the last is an explanation of the title the Alpha and Omega. For information concerning this see the notes under the title, "I am Alpha and Omega, who is, who was and who is to come, the Almighty," following (Rev. 1:8).

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## THE SEVEN CHURCHES

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1. **Ephesus:** is perhaps mentioned first since it was the capital of that portion of Asia Minor; the most important city of the seven; the place where John had preached and the nearest to Patmos. It was a noble city in that part of Greece which was called Ionia and the most famous city that Paul preached in for three years (Acts 19:10) (Acts 20:31). Ephesus means, the beloved or desired, it lies about forty-six miles from Smyrna. The people were intolerant of evil and of false apostles, but had left their first love. The Ephesus church is supposed by some theologians to represent the waning period of the apostolic age. (Rev. 2:1-7).
2. **Smyrna:** was a sea-port city in the same country, it is still a famous place, but not for pompous buildings, but for a, number of inhabitants, riches, and its commerce. The church (or churches in Smyrna) were exposed to brutal persecutions, cruel sufferings and death. It lies about forty-six miles from Ephesus and sixty-four miles from Pergamos. The Smyrna church is supposed by some theologians to represent the martyr period of the Roman Decian and Diocletian age. (Rev. 2:8-11).
3. **Pergamos:** was a city of Mysia, situated by the river Caicus, it is likened to, Balaam in that its teachers caused the people to stumble by allowing sexual immorality and eating of idol-meats. The church possessed earthly power, but decreased in spirituality. It lies almost sixty-four miles from Smyrna and forty-eight from Thyatira. The Pergamos church is supposed by some theologians to represent the era of Constantine through to the seventh century. (Rev. 2:12-17).
4. **Thyatira:** a city of Lydia, near the river Lycus, formerly called Pelopia, and Euhippia. The church was abounding in works, love, service, and faith, yet they allowed Jezebel a false prophetess to seduce many into sexual immorality, adultery and to eat food sacrificed to idols. It lies about forty-eight miles from Pergamos and thirty-three from Sardis. The Thyatira church is supposed by some theologians to represent the Papal Church in the first half of the Middle Ages. (Rev. 2:18-28).
5. **Sardis:** a city of Lydia, situated at the side of Mount Tmolus, it was the metropolis of Lydia, and the seat of King Croesus. Now instead of being a famous city, it is an obscure little village, with scarcely any other inhabitants in it than shepherds and cattle keepers. It had no opposition and a high name for spiritual life, but was dead. It lies about thirty-three miles from Thyatira and twenty-seven from Philadelphia.

The Sardis church is supposed by some theologians to represent the close of the twelfth century to the Reformation. (Rev. 3:1-6).

6. **Philadelphia:** was a city in Lydia, next Mysia situated at the foot of Mount Tmolus; it had its name from Attalus Philadelphus, the builder of it. Today there is nothing beautiful or magnificent in it. The church had little strength, yet it kept Christ's word and therefore Christ kept open the door of ministry even though it was, in conflict with the Jewish synagogue and their legalism. Philadelphia meaning brotherly love lies about twenty-seven miles from Thyatira and about forty-two from Laodicea. The Philadelphia church is supposed by some theologians to represent the first century of the Reformation. (Rev. 3:7-21).
7. **Laodicea:** is a city of Lydia, near the river Lycus, first named Diospolis, afterwards Rhoas. Laodicea was a prosperous wealthy city and the church had no opposition. In their own eyes, they considered themselves as being rich and having need of nothing, but in Christ's eyes they were lukewarm. It lies half way between Philadelphia and Colossae, and not far from Hierapolis and is now inhabited by wolves, foxes, and jackals. The Laodicea church is supposed by some theologians to represent the waning period of the apostolic age and the reformed church after its first zeal had become lukewarm. (Rev. 3:14-22).

**NOTE:** though the messages contained in these letters naturally apply to the seven churches they were sent to, they are not limited to them, but apply to all churches of all generations that have or are in similar circumstances.

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## REVELATION 1:12-16

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### John sees One like the Son of Man.

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- **Revelation 1:12-16:** Then I (John) turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands (seven golden candlesticks in KJV), <sup>13</sup>and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. <sup>14</sup>The hairs of his head were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, <sup>15</sup>his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. <sup>16</sup>In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

**The voice:** (v12) was the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Seven golden lampstands** (v12) (seven golden candlesticks in KJV) these candlesticks signify the seven churches. The unity of the Old Testament Jewish church, represented by the one candlestick with its seven branches each with a lamp at its end, is now exchanged in the New Testament for the unity which arises from the presence of Christ being in the midst of the church. The unity of the church does not depend on being forced into one organization, but on all its many parts being gathered around Jesus. Candlesticks and or lamp-holders give light signifying that the function of each church is to radiate the light of the Lord Jesus Christ. John now has a vision of one like unto the Son of man which of course is the title of the resurrected glorified immortal and eternal Lord Jesus Christ. John had been with Jesus when he was alive on earth this is most likely why he gives Jesus the title, "One like the Son of man." It is almost certain that John recognised the One like the Son of man as Jesus, but since he looked nothing like he did while he walked on earth as a human mortal man John naturally refers to him as One who looked like Jesus. John's first glimpse was of the glorified Lord Jesus Christ standing in the blaze of celestial light. Ponder for a moment the awe and rush of memories and surprise that would have flooded his mind and heart as he saw in vision form the One who he had walk with and who had ascended from the Mount

of Olives. Seeing the Saviour, he loved so deeply impacted upon him with such overwhelming surprise and power that he was drained of all strength and instantly fell before him as one dead. Following, is a brief explanation of the symbolisms:

**In, the midst of the golden lampstands:** (12) (golden candlesticks in KJV) the lampstands refer to the seven churches (v20) and Jesus being in the midst of them carries the idea that he is always with his churches filling them with light and life, and love to the end of the world (as we know it).

**Clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest:** (v13) expresses Christ's kingly and priestly dignity and his righteousness and priesthood, as Mediator. It carries the idea that he was fully clothed with righteousness and the royal majesty and glory of God his heavenly Father. The golden sash could be seen to symbolise his precious love and affection for his people.

**The hairs of his head were white like wool, as white as snow:** (v14) indicate the purity of Christ and the glorified transfiguration in light of his mortal body. It carries the idea that his entire body was without blemish and full of the perfect holiness and righteousness of God.

**His eyes were like a flame of fire:** (v14) symbolise Jesus all-seeing wrath against all kinds of evil. It carries the idea that he is, able to pierce even the hardest of hearts, nothing can be hidden from him, no secret thought, hidden action or motive of the heart can be kept secret from the eyes of the Lord. (Rev. 23).

**His feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace:** (v15) symbolize Christ's exalted power to tread down his enemies and consume them. It carries the idea that he is, able to judge with perfect judgment and will not let the guilty, the wicked and the corrupt go free.

**His voice was like the roar of many waters:** (v15) as the roar of the waves of the ocean dashing upon rocks or the shore, or of the roaring waters of a waterfall or of flood waters rapidly flowing over the stones of a river.

This expression signifies the following two things:

1. The power and authority of the voice of Christ and the Gospel, as preached by his apostles and ministers, which was heard far and near and which did make a great noise in the world.

- I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world." (Rom. 10:18)

By extension it also embraces the voice of every faithful brother and sister in Christ of every generation who has testified to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and have been and still are his faithful witness.

2. The power of Christ's word and his voice pronouncing judgment and vengeance on his enemies to destroy and the power of his word going out amongst the Babel-sounds of the world.

**In his right-hand he held seven stars:** (v16) the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches (v20). Stars signify authority and light shining in darkness. They are emblems of the ministers of the seven churches who Christ upheld and directed and to who John was ordered to write. They refer to ministers filled with the Spirit of Christ who under his authority and by his authority bring his light into this world of darkness. The stars by extension also embrace the churches themselves.

**From his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword:** (v16) this expression signifies two things, firstly, Christ's justice, and his word, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, and discerning the thoughts

and intentions of the heart. (Heb. 4:12). Secondly, the power of Christ's word (the message of the cross and the Gospel) to save the redeemed to eternal life or destroy enemies to eternal death. This power is magnified by the symbolism of the sword having two sharp edges and coming from his mouth.

**His face was like the sun shining in full strength:** (v16): this is most likely taken from the dazzling rays of the sun when they shine so brightly that they are too intense and glaring for mortal eyes to behold. The expression is used to magnify the greatness, the magnitude and excellence of Christ's glory and carries the idea that the immortal and eternal glory of Christ is breathtakingly glorious.

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## REVELATION 1:17

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### **I am the First and the Last.**

- **Revelation 1:17:** When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last."

The glory of Christ was so breathtakingly glorious and stunningly awesome that John (a most godly and faithful man) after seeing the vision was so humbled and awed he fell at the Lord's feet as a dead man. The Lord reaches down and comforts John telling him he has nothing to fear.

**First:** comes from the Greek word (*protos and pro*), it means foremost (in time, place, order or importance) and carries the idea of being before, being the beginning or the best and the first, of all. The word *pro* means to be above (i.e., superior to) or before (i.e., in time, position, place or authority) and of being first in time, rank, influence or honour (i.e., the chief or principal one).

**Last:** comes from the Greek word (*eschatos and echo*), it carries the idea of being the farthest or final (of place or time), the end of, the last, the latter and uttermost end (of the earth).

**The first and last:** this expression in this context is referring to Christ, it carries the idea that Jesus is the first and only one of his kind begotten (or born) of God the Father, he is the beginning and end of God's plan of salvation and the new covenant of grace. In Christ is the entire beginning and end of God's eternal foreordained plan of eternal salvation for mankind that God planned and purposed in His eternal mind before the world began. It means that there will never be another Saviour or another plan of salvation. The words, "The first and last" means that in Christ is God's entire foreordained plan that He purposed from the beginning it means that all things together concerning God's eternal plans for the earth, the world, the universe and mankind's eternal salvation are brought together in Christ. The cleansing power of Jesus blood not only flows over all the faithful of the New Testament, but also flows back over all the faithful of the Old Testament so that all who have been faithful to God and His Promised Messiah the Christ are made clean in the blood of Christ and saved by faith in him. Jesus is the only Saviour God planned and purposed in His eternal mind before the foundations of the world who would be the Saviour of mankind, there is no other nor will there be any other. It is in this sense that Jesus is the first and the last. He is the only Saviour and redeemer from the beginning of time to the end of time to come to this earth for the salvation of all who come to him.

**The Saviour:** since the Bible does refer to the immortal, invisible, eternal God Almighty the God of all creation as the Saviour and the following words of Paul and of Peter refer to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour, some have presumed that this means that Jesus is God.

- The appearing of the glory of the great God and Saviour Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).
- The righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:1).



The theory that that Jesus is God stems from ancient religious teaching, tradition and a lack of understanding Bible language and the eternal and unique relationship of perfect love and perfect unity between the heavenly Father and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. The one true immortal, invisible, eternal God Almighty the God of all creation is the Saviour of us all for the following reasons, He is the source of all life and in His eternal mind before time began planned and purposed that salvation to eternal life would be in his Son. This means the following two things:

1. Jesus is the eternal fulfilment of God's foreordained plan of salvation for all mankind.
2. Without Christ God's eternal plan of Salvation for mankind would be left bankrupt and no-one could be saved to eternal life.

Putting both, of these truths together it becomes clear that both the immortal invisible eternal God Almighty the one true God and the Lord Jesus Christ are both the Saviour, but in a different manner. God is the Saviour in that He is the source of all life and planned and purposed the eternal way of salvation, but Christ is our Saviour in that he is the fulfilment of God's eternal plan. Without God, there would be no salvation, but God's eternal plan without Christ would be left bankrupt. This is the reason the Bible in various contexts can refer to God the Father or the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour.

For further information see the title, "Words of Comfort and Encouragement," following (v8) (above).

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## REVELATION 1:18-20

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### **I am He that Lives and was Dead.**

- **Revelation 1:18-20:** and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. <sup>19</sup>Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. <sup>20</sup>As for the mystery of the seven stars that 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 is still the focus, he tells John that he is the one that was alive, and then was dead, but was then made alive again. This of course refers to Jesus time on earth, his death and his resurrection to eternal glory. Though God the Father the Almighty immortal, invisible, eternal God the creator of all things is the source of all life He has given Jesus authority over all flesh to give eternal life (John 17:2).

### **Concerning eternal life Jesus himself said:**

- This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ (John 17:3).
- Whoever believes in me has eternal life (John 3:15-16).
- God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:15-16).
- Labour for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal (John 6:27).
- For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day (John 6:40).
- Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day (John 6:54).
- I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand (John 6:28).



John wrote:

- Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him (John 3:36).

Jesus has the keys of eternal life and of death, in that whoever confesses the Son has the Father also and no one has the Father who denies the Son (1 John 2:23). It is only through faith in the Son of God the Lord Jesus Christ that a sinner can be reconciled to God the Father and given life eternal.

**NOTICE:** the book of Revelation is not only about things future, but contains things which John has seen during his lifetime, things that were happening while John was on the Island of Patmos having this most incredible and glorious vision and things that will come to pass in the future (v19).

**A final note:** though this letter is directed toward the seven churches that existed during the time of John the warnings, encouragements, promise, blessings and messages, principals and prophecies they contain by extension apply to all churches and all believers of all generations.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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