

"The Vision"

Part 1

Revelation 1:9-20

Introduction: Today as we return to the book of Revelation we are approaching a section in which no other passage of Scripture can begin to compare. It is in this passage which is before us that we shall see Jesus Christ in all of His glory. The only other passage which comes close is Revelation 19 when we see Jesus return from heaven in all His glory. As we look at this passage we will go much deeper than what we see on the surface for we shall plunge into the spiritual Truth within these verses.

So far we have looked at the:

1. Introduction
2. The Greeting

I. John's Circumstances

Notice Revelation 1:9a

As this verse opens up John the Apostle is going to write concerning the vision but before he does he will identify with his readers.

He explains to the readers that he was their:

- a. Brother
- b. Companion in tribulation.
- c. Companion in the kingdom.
- d. Companion in patience.

This verse is very interesting because John never mentions his apostleship. When I look at this verse I see a very humble man. When he opens the verse it is as though he is stating in disbelief that God would choose him to be a channel through which to unveil this Revelation. He says, "I John, the man who is your brother and companion. I am the one whom God has used to make known the contents of this vision".

I want to just touch upon the 4 statements which he makes in this verse.

- a. He identifies with them as their "brother". He sees himself on the same level they are on. He understood the honor of being an apostle for Jesus Christ but at the same time he never forgot where he had come from. He was a sinner saved by grace and therefore he was a brother to all believers. There was no pride in John but instead he was a humble man of the Lord.
- b. He also states that he is their companion in tribulation which helps us to understand that at this time in the Roman Empire life was very difficult for the believers. John was suffering for his faith as well as many others.
- c. John also stated that he was their companion in the kingdom. This is a reference to the spiritual kingdom which all believers are a part of right now.
- d. John was also their companion in patience. The word "patience" means "endurance/perseverance".

Now each of these four identities belong to each believer. These are 4 things that each of us have in common.

1. **We are all brothers and sisters in Christ.**
2. **We all experience tribulation as we live out our faith in this world.**

John 16:33

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.*

3. **We all belong to the kingdom.**
4. **We all will endure through the storms and the trials of this life.**

I want to look at this Christian Endurance for a few minutes because it is so important.

One of the marks of a true believer is endurance. By this I mean that we stick to our faith in Christ no matter what we face.

Mark 13:13

¹³ *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

Colossians 1:21-23

²¹ *And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled*

²² *In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:*

²³ **If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;**

Hebrews 3:14

¹⁴ *For we are made partakers of Christ, **if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;***

Hebrews 10:38-39

³⁸ *Now the just shall live by faith: **but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.***

³⁹ *But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; **but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.***

There are many more verses but from these we can see that one of the marks of a TRUE believer is that they endure through the trials and the tribulations of this life.

Notice Revelation 1:9b

John was in the Island of Patmos. He had been exiled there and if we look at the end of the verse we can see that he was sentenced to Patmos due to his preaching of the Word and his testimony of Jesus Christ.

Patmos was an island used by the Roman Empire for the punishment of criminals. It was basically a rock covered island full of marble about 10 miles long and 6 miles wide. It was the Alcatraz of Rome. The criminals would be sent to Patmos and placed under hard labor which consisted of mining the marble. They were forced to live in a cave and given little food and clothing. John was sent there in 95 AD under the Emperor Domitian. In AD 96 when Domitian died John was released to return to Ephesus under Emperor Nerva.

Now John was in his nineties when all of this took place.

Application:

There is an application here that is very important for us to see. It was in the darkest of times that God revealed this tremendous Revelation to John. God needed to get him away

from the world and into a place where he was near to Him. John was in a place that many would describe as the most miserable place on earth. But it was in this place that John was given this GREAT BOOK OF REVELATION.

This is the way in which God often works within our lives. He takes us into the darkness of suffering at times because it is there that He will give to us the blessings which we would have never received outside the sufferings.

Let me show you what God said concerning Cyrus.

Isaiah 45:1-3

Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

² I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

*³ And **I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places,** that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.*

Now let me place you in the Garden of Gethsemane the night Jesus was arrested.

Matthew 26:36-39

³⁶ Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

*³⁷ **And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee,** and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.*

³⁸ Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

³⁹ And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Jesus took with Him His eleven disciples and then He dropped 8 and took with Him Peter, James and John deeper into the darkness. It was there they were permitted to witness the greatest spiritual battle which ever existed and it was between Jesus and Satan.

The point is that God often takes us deeper into the darkness and the suffering to reveal more of Himself to us. This was the very situation John was in when he was given the Revelation.

II. The Vision

Notice Revelation 1:10

Here we see that John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. Let me first of all clarify "The Lord's Day". Many believe that this refers to the first day of the week which is the day which Jesus was resurrected. But the problem with that is the first day of the week is never referred to in the Bible as "The Lord's Day".

I believe this is a reference to a period of time which the Bible often refers to as "The Day of the Lord". John was supernaturally transported into the future and into the 7 year period of the Tribulation. It was in this supernatural state in which John was given the message of this book.

John tells us that he heard behind him a great voice which sounded like the piecing blast of a trumpet. This was the voice of Jesus Christ.

Notice Revelation 1:11

John as commanded to write that which he was able to see in the vision. The letter was to be sent to the 7 churches which are mentioned here and as we go deeper into the book we will look very closely at these churches.

Notice Revelation 1:12

The voice was behind John and as he turned to see where the voice came from he saw 7 golden candlesticks. This then raises a question, "What are the 7 candlesticks?"

Notice Revelation 1:20

Here we see that the 7 candlesticks are the seven churches. Now let me remind you that these 7 churches represent the complete church. The number 7 speaks of FULNESS or COMPLETENESS. So while the candlesticks represent the 7 named churches here they also represent every church that has been called into existence by God. I say this because there are many "churches" which are not true churches. They call themselves a church but they never speak of sin, wrath, judgment, or the Gospel.

These candlesticks represent the churches which are TRUE churches.

It is also very important to note that the candlestick which represents the church also speaks of the ministry of the church. Let me show you what I mean. Let me show you what Jesus said as He walked on this earth.

John 8:12

¹² Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, **I am the light of the world:** he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life

John 9:5

⁵ As long as I am in the world, **I am the light of the world.**

Now Jesus is ascended to the Father's right hand and so we are now His body.

Matthew 5:13-16

¹³ Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

¹⁴ **Ye are the light of the world.** A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Jesus gave 2 titles to the church here:

1. **The salt of the earth.**

Salt is a preservative. As we live in this world and we stand for the Truth of God's Word it is through our testimony that God convicts those who are not saved.

2. **The light of the world.**

I believe the idea which Jesus had here was the cities of refuge in the Old Testament.

There were 6 cities of refuge in the Old Testament and each of these cities was elevated on a mountain or a plain. Let me show you the purpose of those cities.

Joshua 20:1-6

The LORD also spake unto Joshua, saying,

² Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses:

³ That the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

⁴ *And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.*

⁵ *And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.*

⁶ *And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.*

The city was a refuge from the avenger of blood.

Today anyone who is unsaved is being pursued by the avenger who is DEATH. Man does everything he can imagine to escape it but the Bible tells us it is appointed unto men once to die.

But there is a place where people can flee and escape the terrors of death and that is IN CHRIST. That is what the church is to proclaim thus we are a city on a hill.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57

⁵⁵ *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*

⁵⁶ *The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.*

⁵⁷ *But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Conclusion:

Once the high priest died the people were forever safe. Two thousand years ago our HIGH PRIEST died and so IN CHRIST we are forever safe.