

Revelation made Simple

Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6	Chapter 7	Chapter 8	Chapter 9	Chapter 10	Chapter 11
John on Patmos Vision of Christ in Glory	Letters to the 7 Churches Ephesus Smyrna Pergamos Thyatira		Vision of God's Throne	Seven Seal Book opened by the Slain Lamb	6 Seals Opened 6 Seals 4 Horsemen White, Red, Black, Pale Souls under the altar Wrath of God (preview)	Sealing of the 144,000. Great multitude of Tribulation Saints	Tribulation Trumpets 7th Seal opened 4 Trumpets 1/3 Judgments Grass Sea Waters (Wormwood) Sun Moon Stars		The Mighty Angel with the Little Book 7 Thunders	2 Tribulation Witnesses 42 Months 1260 Days (3rd Woe) 7th Trumpet
		Sardis Philadelphia Laodicea					2 Trumpets (2 Woes) Locusts 200 million man army 1/3 mankind killed			

Chapter 12	Chapter 13	Chapter 14	Chapter 15	Chapter 16	Chapter 17	Chapter 18	Chapter 19	Chapter 20	Chapter 21	Chapter 22
Woman with man child Red Dragon Woman in Wilderness Time, Times and half a Time	7 Headed Beast AC govt. 42 Months Lamb/Dragon False Prophet	3 Angels Christ reaps the harvest	7 Vials Given to 7 Angels Victorious Saints Song of Moses	7 Vials of Wrath Full Judgments Sores Seas Rivers Sun Darkness Armageddon Earthquake & Hail	Mystery Babylon The Great	Babylon is Fallen!	Marriage Supper of the Lamb War Armageddon	Millennium Satan bound 1,000 yrs Battle of Gog & Magog Lake of Fire White Throne Judgment	New Jerusalem New Heaven New Earth New Jerusalem Eternity with Christ	

REVELATION

<i>“I am the Alpha . . .” (1:8)</i>	“The things which you have seen . . .”	“The things which are . . .”	“The things which will take place.” (Revelation 1:19)	<i>“ . . . and the Omega” (22:13)</i>
	Personal and biographical	Christ’s letters to the seven churches	Christ as Judge (chapters 4–5) The tribulation (chapters 6–18) The coming of Christ (chapter 19) The millennium (chapter 20) The eternal state (chapters 21–22)	
	<i>CHAPTER 1</i>	<i>CHAPTERS 2–3</i>	<i>CHAPTERS 4–22</i>	
Scope	History: looking back		Prophecy: looking ahead	
Style	Dialogue		Observations and questions	
Scene	On earth		Shifts between earth and heaven	
Theme	Christ’s future triumph over the forces of evil and His re-creation of the world for the redeemed			
Key Verses	1:7, 19; 22:12–13			
Christ in Revelation	Jesus is the coming King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who will return as Judge and King to usher in the kingdom of God on earth (19:11–20:6).			

Prologue

1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave^a him to show his servants what must soon take place.^b He made it known by sending his angel^c to his servant John,^d ²who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God^e and the testimony of Jesus Christ.^f ³Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it,^g because the time is near.^h

Greetings and Doxology

⁴John,

To the seven churchesⁱ in the province of Asia:

Grace and peace to you^j from him who is, and who was, and who is to come,^k and from the seven spirits^a^l before his throne,⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness,^m the firstborn from the dead,ⁿ and the ruler of the kings of the earth.^o

To him who loves us^p and has freed us from our sins by his blood,^q ⁶and has

1:1 ^aJn 12:49; 17:8 ^bver 19; Da 2:28,29; Rev 22:6 ^cRev 22:16 ^dver 4,9; Rev 22:8 **1:2** ^ever 9; S Heb 4:12 ^fver 9; 1Co 1:6; Rev 6:9; 12:17; 19:10 **1:3** ^gLk 11:28; Rev 22:7 ^hS Ro 13:11 **1:4** ⁱver 11,20 ^jS Ro 1:7 ^kver 8; Rev 4:8; 11:17; 16:5 ^lIsa 11:2; Rev 3:1; 4:5; 5:6 **1:5** ^mIsa 55:4; Jn 18:37; Rev 3:14 ⁿPs 89:27; Col 1:18 ^oS 1Ti 6:15 ^pS Ro 8:37 ^qS Ro 3:25

1:6 ^rS 1Pe 2:5; Rev 5:10; 20:6 ^sRo 15:6 ^tS Ro 11:36 **1:7** ^uDa 7:13; S Mt 16:27; 24:30; 26:64; S Lk 17:30; S 1Co 1:7; S 1Th 2:19; 4:16; 17 ^vJn 19:34,37 ^wZec 12:10; Mt 24:30 **1:8** ^xS ver 17; Rev 21:6; 22:13 ^yS ver 4 ^zRev 4:8; 15:3; 19:6

made us to be a kingdom and priests^r to serve his God and Father^s—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.^t

⁷Look, he is coming with the clouds,^u and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him;^v and all the peoples of the earth will mourn^w because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

⁸“I am the Alpha and the Omega,”^x says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come,^y the Almighty.”^z

One Like a Son of Man

⁹I, John,^a your brother and companion in the suffering^b and kingdom^c and patient endurance^d that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God^e and the testimony of Jesus.^f ¹⁰On the Lord’s Day^g I was in the Spirit,^h and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,ⁱ ¹¹which said: “**Write on a scroll**

1:9 ^aver 1 ^bS Ac 14:22; 2Co 1:7; Php 4:14 ^cver 6 ^d2Ti 2:12 ^ever 2; S Heb 4:12 ^fS ver 2 **1:10** ^gAc 20:7 ^hRev 4:2; 17:3; 21:10 ⁱEx 20:18; Rev 4:1

^{a4} Or the sevenfold Spirit

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

— Revelation 1:1 (KJV)



Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

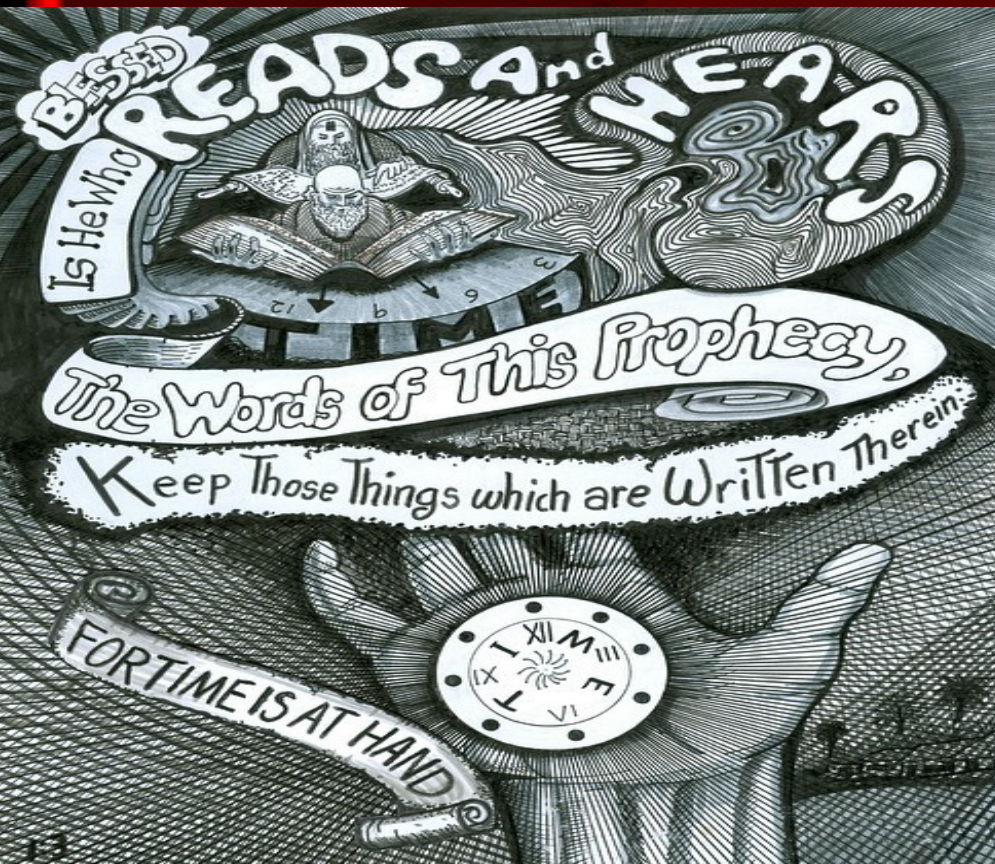
Revelation 1:2 (KJV)

Now write down all that you have seen, the things happening now, and what will happen after these things.

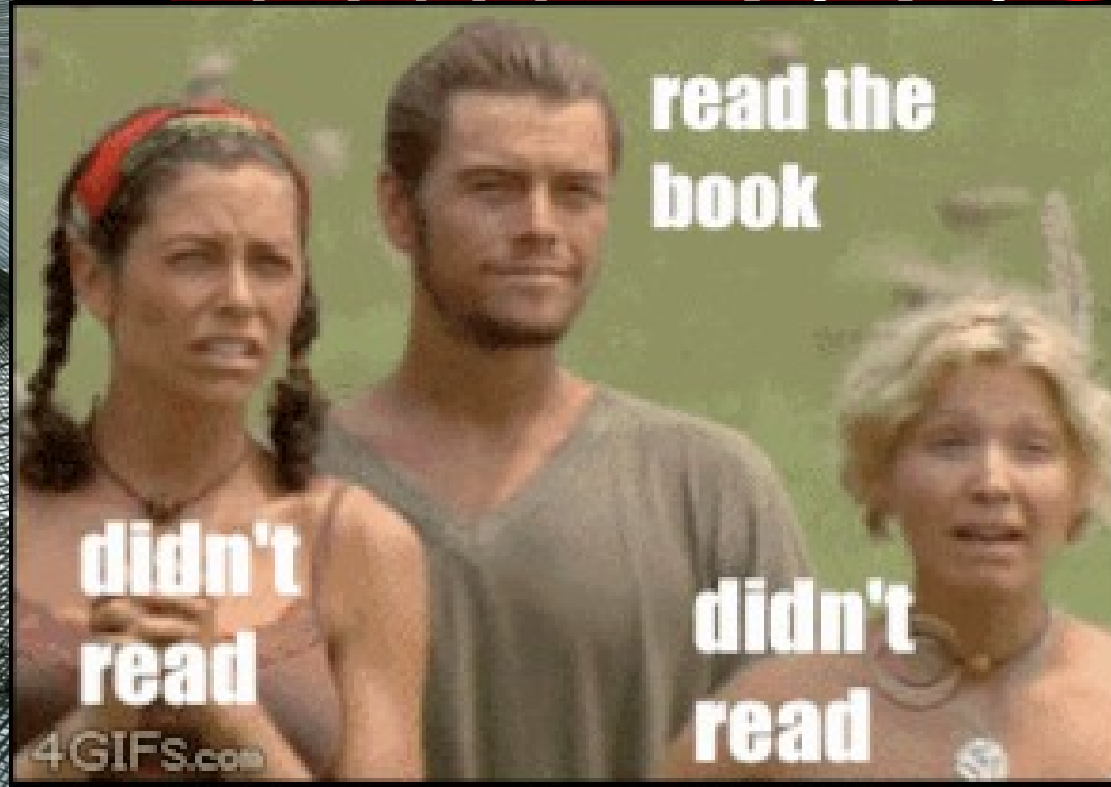
Rev 1:19



Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.



Revelation 1:3 (KJV)



John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

Seven Churches of Revelation

— Chapters 2-3 —

- 1 Ephesus
- 2 Smyrna
- 3 Pergamos
- 4 Thyatira
- 5 Sardis
- 6 Philadelphia
- 7 Laodicea

Island of Patmos: where John received the vision



Revelation 1:4 (KJV)



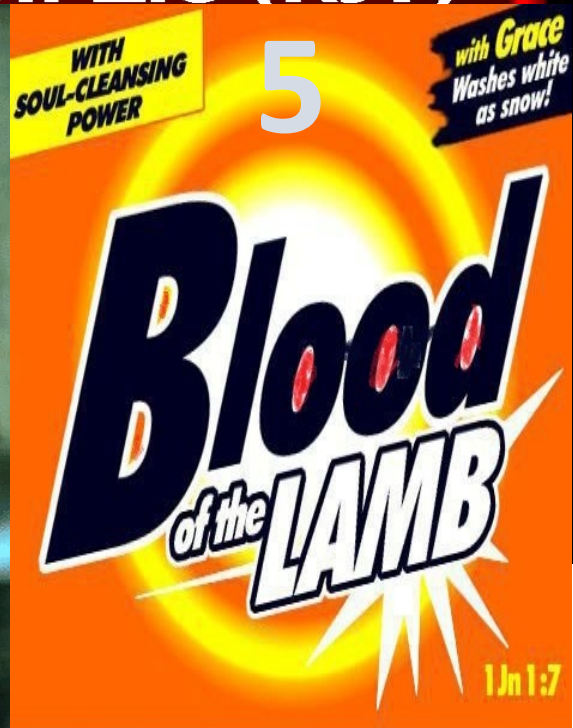
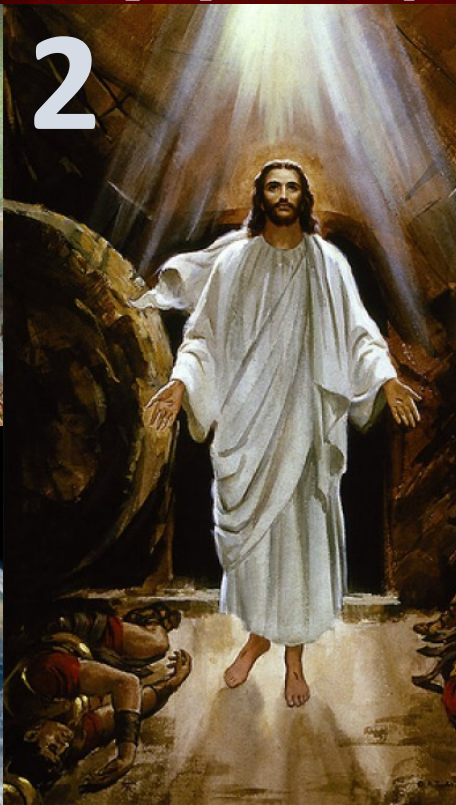
7 IN REVELATION

7 occurs **57** times in the Book of Revelation.
7 is used to describe **22** different things.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. 7 SPIRITS of GOD, Rev 1:4,
4:5, 5:6 | 12. 7 THUNDERS, Rev 10:3, 4 |
| 2. 7 CHURCHES, Rev 1:11, 20 | 13. 7th ANGEL, Rev 10:7, 11:15, 16:17 |
| 3. 7 LAMPSTANDS, Rev 1:12, 20 | 14. 7,000 KILLED, Rev 11:13 |
| 4. 7 STARS, Rev 1:16, 20 | 15. 7 HEADS, Rev 12:3, 13:1, 17:3, 7, 9 |
| 5. 7 LAMPS of FIRE, Rev 4:5 | 16. 7 CROWNS, Rev 12:3 |
| 6. 7 SEALS, Rev 5:1, 5, 6:1 | 17. 7 LAST PLAGUES, Rev 15:1, 6, 8,
21:9 |
| 7. 7 HORNS, Rev 5:6 | 18. 7 BOWLS of WRATH, Rev 15:7,
16:1, 17:1, 21:9 |
| 8. 7 EYES, Rev 5:6 | 19. 7 MOUNTAINS, Rev 17:9 |
| 9. 7th SEAL, Rev 8:1 | 20. 7 KINGS, Rev 17:10 |
| 10. 7 ANGELS, Rev 8:2, 6,
15:1, 6, 7, 8, 16:1, 17:1, 21:9 | 21. "BELONGS TO THE 7 ," Rev 17:11 |
| 11. 7 TRUMPETS, Rev 8:2, 6 | 22. 7th CHRYSOLITE, Rev 21:20 |

1 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful
witness, and the first begotten of the dead, **2**
and the prince of the kings of the earth. **3**
4 Unto him that loved us, and washed us from
our sins in his own blood, **5**

Revelation 1:5 (KJV)



6 And hath made us kings and priests unto
God and his Father; to him be glory and
dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7

CHRIST MADE US KINGS/PRIESTS

Revelation 1:6 (KJV)

WE REIGN ON THE EARTH!

➤ You will be called **THE LORD'S PRIESTS**;
they will speak of you as **MINISTERS OF
OUR GOD.** **ISA 61:6 HCSB**

➤ From Jesus Christ... the Ruler
of the Kings of the Earth... made
us **KINGS AND PRIESTS** to
God and His Father, to Him be
glory and dominion forever and ever.

REV 1:5-6 MKJV

➤ And **YOU MADE US KINGS AND
PRIESTS TO OUR GOD, and WE
WILL REIGN OVER THE EARTH.**

REV 5:10 MKJV



Solomon and the Queen of Sheba by
Demin (1789-1859)

Unto him be glory in the church by Christ
Jesus throughout all ages, world without
end. Amen.

— Ephesians 3:21 (KJV)

to the only God our Savior, through Jesus
Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty,
dominion and authority, before all time
and now and forever. Amen.

— Jude 1:25 (NASB®)

To our God and
Father be the glory
forever and ever

Phil 4:20

To Him be
the glory
and the
dominion
forever and
ever. Amen.

I Peter 5:11

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

Revelation 1:7 (KJV)



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.

— Revelation 1:8 (KJV)

I am the **ALPHA**
and the **OMEGA,**
the first and the last,
THE BEGINNING
and the end.

REVELATION 22:13

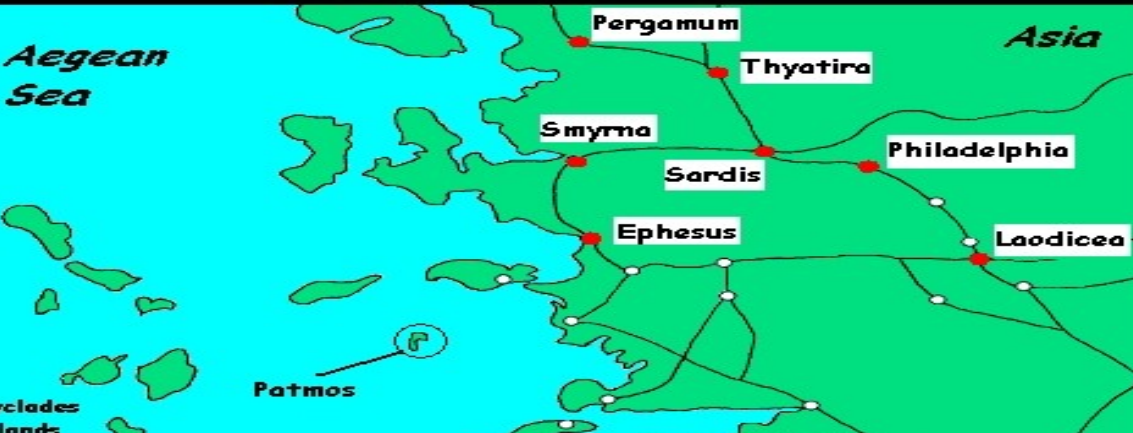
The four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying..



Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God Almighty
which was, and is, and is to come

Revelation 4:8

I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.
Revelation 1:9 (KJV)



hello there do you have time for our lord jesus christ



**I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and
heard behind me a great voice, as of a
trumpet,**

— Revelation 1:10 (KJV)



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



Revelation 1:11 (KJV)



1:1 *revelation*. Apocalypse (“unveiling” or “disclosure”). *of Jesus Christ*.† Means primarily “by or from Jesus Christ”; secondarily it is also an unveiling “about Jesus Christ.” A claim of inspiration. *servants*. All believers. *soon take place*. See v. 3; 22:6–7, 10, 20. *his angel*. A mediating angel. The word “angel” occurs over 70 times in Revelation. *John*. See Introduction: Author.

1:3 *Blessed*. The first of seven beatitudes in the book (see 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14). “Blessed” means much more than “happy.” It describes the favorable circumstance God has put a person in (see notes on Ps 1:1; Mt 5:3). *prophecy*. Includes not only foretelling the future but also proclaiming any word from God—whether command, instruction, history or prediction. *time is near*. See note on Jas 5:9.

1:4 *seven churches*. Located about 50 miles apart, forming a circle in Asia moving clockwise north from Ephesus and coming around full circle from Laodicea (east of Ephesus). They were perhaps postal centers serving seven geographic regions. Apparently the entire book of Revelation (including the seven letters) was sent to each church (see v. 11). *Asia*. A Roman province lying in modern western Turkey. *Grace and peace*. See notes on Jnh 4:2; Jn 14:27; 20:19; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2. “Grace” is used only twice in Revelation (here and in 22:21) but over 100 times by Paul. *who is . . . was . . . is to come*. A paraphrase of the divine name from Ex 3:14–15. Cf. Heb 13:8. *seven spirits*.† See NIV text note; cf. Zec 4:2, 10 and the sevenfold description of the Holy Spirit in Isa 11:2: (1) of the Lord, (2) of wisdom, (3) of understanding, (4) of counsel, (5) of power, (6) of knowledge, (7) of the fear of the Lord.

1:6 *a kingdom and priests*.† This OT designation of Israel (see notes on Ex 19:6; Zec 3) is applied in the NT to the church (1Pe 2:5, 9). Cf. also 5:10; 20:6.

1:7 *he is coming with the clouds*.† See Da 7:13; Mt 24:30; 26:64; Mk 13:26; 14:62; Lk 21:27; Ac 1:9. The

first prophecy in the book, which opens, as it closes (22:20), with a reference to the second coming of Christ. *pierced*. See Ps 22:16; Isa 53:5; Zec 12:10; Jn 19:34, 37. *So shall it be! Amen*. A double affirmation.

1:8 *the Alpha and the Omega*.† The first direct message of Jesus in the book (cf. v. 17); he makes the same claim at the end of the book, 22:13 (cf. 21:6). The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. God is the beginning and the end (see 21:6). He rules over all human history. *Almighty*. Nine of the 12 occurrences of this term in the NT are in Revelation (here; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22). The other three are in Ro 9:29; 2Co 6:18; Jas 5:4.

1:9 *suffering . . . kingdom . . . patient endurance*. Three pivotal themes in Revelation: (1) “suffering” (2:9–10, 22; 7:14), (2) “kingdom” (11:15; 12:10; 16:10; 17:12, 17–18), (3) “patient endurance” (2:2–3, 19; 3:10; 13:10; 14:12). *Patmos*. A small (four by eight miles), rocky island in the Aegean Sea some 50 miles southwest of Ephesus, off the coast of modern Turkey. It probably served as a Roman penal settlement. Eusebius, the “father of church history” (A.D. 265–340), reports that John was released from Patmos under the emperor Nerva (96–98). *because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus*.† Exiled as a punishment for preaching the gospel (cf. v. 2).

1:10 *the Lord’s Day*. A technical term for the first day of the week—so named because Jesus rose from the dead on that day. It was also the day on which the Christians met (see Ac 20:7) and took up collections (see 1Co 16:2). *in the Spirit*.† In a state of spiritual exaltation—not a dream, but a vision like Peter’s in Ac 10:10. Cf. 2Co 12:1–6.

1:11 *scroll*. Pieces of papyrus or parchment sewn together and rolled on a spindle (see note on Ex 17:14). The book form was not invented until about the second century A.D. *seven churches*.† See note on v. 4. The order mentioned is no doubt the order in which the churches would be visited.

what you seeⁱ and send it to the seven churches:^k to Ephesus,^l Smyrna,^m Pergamum,ⁿ Thyatira,^o Sardis,^p Philadelphia^q and Laodicea.”^r

¹²I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands,^s ¹³and among the lampstands^t was someone “like a son of man,”^u dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet^v and with a golden sash around his chest.^w ¹⁴His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire.^x ¹⁵His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace,^y and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters.^z ¹⁶In his right hand he held seven stars,^a and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword.^b His face was like the sun^c shining in all its brilliance.

¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet^d as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me^e and said: “Do not be afraid.^f I am the First and the Last.^g ¹⁸I am the Living One; I was dead,^h and behold I am alive for ever and ever!ⁱ And I hold the keys of death and Hades.^j

¹⁹“Write, therefore, what you have seen,^k what is now and what will take place later. ²⁰The mystery of the seven

1:11 /ver 19 ^kver 4,20 /S Ac 18:19 ^mRev 2:8
ⁿRev 2:12
^oAc 16:14;
 Rev 2:18,24
^pRev 3:1
^qRev 3:7
^rS Col 2:1;
 Rev 3:14
1:12 ^sver 20;
 Ex 25:31-40;
 Zec 4:2; Rev 2:1
1:13 ^tRev 2:1
^uEze 1:26;
 Da 7:13; 10:16;
 Rev 14:14
^vIsa 6:1
^wDa 10:5;
 Rev 15:6
1:14 ^xDa 7:9;
 10:6; Rev 2:18;
 19:12
1:15 ^yEze 1:7;
 Da 10:6; Rev 2:18
^zEze 43:2;
 Rev 14:2; 19:6
1:16 ^aver 20;
 Rev 2:1; 3:1
^bIsa 1:20; 49:2;
 Heb 4:12;
 Rev 2:12,16;
 19:15,21
^cJdg 5:31;
 Mt 17:2
1:17 ^dEze 1:28;
 Da 8:17,18
^eDa 8:18
^fS Mt 14:27
^gIsa 41:4; 44:6;
 48:12; Rev 2:8;
 22:13
1:18 ^hRo 6:9;
 Rev 2:8
ⁱDt 32:40;
 Da 4:34; 12:7;
 Rev 4:9,10; 10:6;
 15:7 /Rev 9:1;

stars that you saw in my right hand^l and of the seven golden lampstands^m is this: The seven stars are the angels^c of the seven churches,ⁿ and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.^o

To the Church in Ephesus

2 “To the angel^d of the church in Ephesus^p write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand^q and walks among the seven golden lampstands:^r ²I know your deeds,^s your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested^t those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.^u ³You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name,^v and have not grown weary.

⁴Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.^w

⁵Remember the height from which

20:1 **1:19** ^kver 11; Hab 2:2 **1:20** /S ver 16 ^mS ver 12 ⁿver 4,
 11 ^oMt 5:14,15 **2:1** /S Ac 18:19 ^qRev 1:16 ^rRev 1:12,13 **2:2**
^sver 19; Rev 3:1,8,15 ^t1Jn 4:1 ^u2Co 11:13 **2:3** /S Jn 15:21
2:4 ^wJer 2:2; Mt 24:12

^b /3 Daniel 7:13 ^c20 Or messengers ^d /1 Or messenger; also in verses 8, 12 and 18

And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

— Revelation 1:12 (KJV)



**And in the midst of the seven candlesticks
one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a
garment down to the foot, and girt about the
paps with a golden girdle.**



- Revelation 1:13 (KJV)



Hair & head white like wool (v16)

Face shining like the sun (v16)
& eyes like a flame of fire (v14)

Sword coming from His mouth (v16)

Jesus holds the seven stars (v16)

Golden sash around His chest (v13)

Clothed down to His feet (v13)

Feet like burning brass (v15)

(Description taken from Revelation 1:13-16)

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

Daniel 10:6

His body [was] like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his **eyes** like torches of **fire**, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.

Revelation 2:18

"And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, 'These things says the Son of God, who has **eyes** like a flame of **fire**, and His feet like fine brass:

Revelation 1:14 (KJV)



Revelation 19:12

His **eyes** [were] like a flame of **fire**, and on His head [were] many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.

**And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they
burned in a furnace; and his voice as the
sound of many waters.**

— Revelation 1:15 (KJV)





The person clothed in line that John and Daniel saw is Jesus Christ dressed as the High Priest.

Revelation 1:13-16

- A long robe
- A golden band
- White hair
- Eyes of fire
- Bronze feet
- Thunderous voice
- A sword from His mouth
- Face like sun

Daniel 10:5-6

- A linen garment
- A golden belt
- ---
- Eyes of fire
- Bronze feet
- Thunderous voice
- ---
- Face like lightning

And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.



Revelation 1:16 (KJV)



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



Daniel 10
NKJV (online)



7 ¶ And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.

8 Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength.

9 Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

10 ¶ Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and *on* the palms of my hands.

Revelation 1:17 (KJV)



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



Revelation 1:18 (KJV)

**Surprise QUIZ:
Verses 12-18**



**Write the things which thou hast seen, and
the things which are, and the things which
shall be hereafter;**

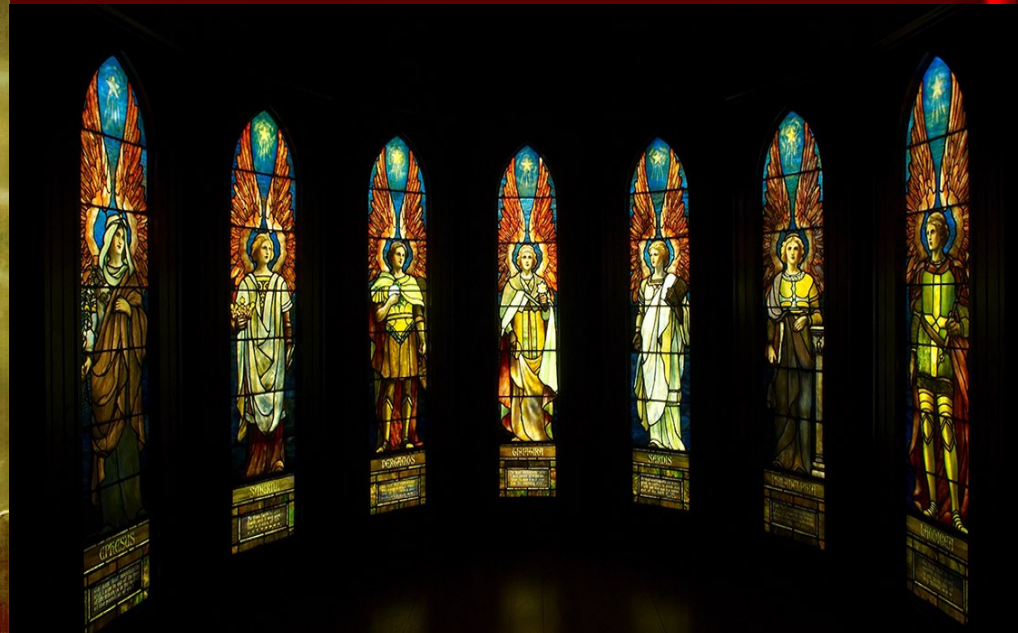
— Revelation 1:19 (KJV)



The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.



Revelation 1:20 (KJV)



1:12 *seven*. See Introduction: Distinctive Feature. *golden lampstands*.† The seven churches (see v. 20). Cf. symbolism in Mt 5:14–16.

1:13 *son of man*. See notes on Da 7:13; Mk 8:31. *robe . . . to his feet*. The high priest wore a full-length robe (Ex 28:4; 29:5). Reference to Christ as high priest is supported by the reference to the golden sash around his chest.

1:14 *white like wool*.† Cf. Da 7:9; Isa 1:18. The hoary head suggests wisdom and dignity (Lev 19:32; Pr 16:31). Whiteness is symbolic also of purity, holiness and righteousness. *eyes . . . like blazing fire*.† Penetrating insight (see 4:6). In the OT God's eyes suggest his knowledge or his concern for his people (see Da 7:9; 10:6).

1:16 *sharp double-edged sword*.† Like a long Thracian sword (also in 2:12,16; 6:8; 19:15,21). The sword in 6:4; 13:10,14 was a small sword or dagger. The sword symbolizes divine judgment, authority and God's word (see Isa 49:2; Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12).

1:17 *fell at his feet*. A sign of great respect and awe (4:10; 5:8; 7:11; 19:10; 22:8). *Do not be afraid*.† A fitting introductory message to the gospel, as to Zechariah, to Jesus' mother Mary and to the shepherds (Lk 1:13,30; 2:10). *I am*. See note on Jn 6:35. *the First and the Last*. Essentially the same as "the Alpha and the Omega" (v. 8; cf. Isa 44:6; 48:12).

1:18 *Living One*. Based on OT references to the "living God" (e.g., Jos 3:10; Ps 42:2; 84:2). In contrast to the dead gods of paganism, Christ possesses life in his essential nature. *keys of death and Hades*. Absolute control over their domain (see Mt 16:18 and note).

1:19 Many take the threefold division of this verse as a clue to the entire structure of the book. "What you have seen" would be the inaugural vision of ch. 1; "what is now" would be the letters to the seven churches (chs. 2–3); "what will

take place later" would be everything from ch. 4 on. An alternative interpretation sees the initial clause as the essential unit (it parallels v. 11), followed by two explanatory clauses. The sense would be: "Write, therefore, what you are about to see, i.e., both what is now and what will take place later." Some who hold the latter view make no attempt to outline the book on this basis, maintaining that there is a mixture of "now" and "later" throughout.

1:20 The first of several places where the symbols are interpreted (see also 17:15,18). *angels*.† Either (1) heavenly messengers, (2) earthly messengers/ministers (see NIV text note) or (3) personifications of the prevailing spirit of each church. In v. 1 the reference no doubt is to a heavenly messenger or spirit; in v. 20 and 2:1,8,12,18; 3:1,7,14 the reference is to earthly messengers, probably the pastor of each congregation.

2:1–3:22† Some take the seven letters as a preview of church history in its downward course toward Laodicean lukewarmness. Others interpret them as characteristic of various kinds of Christian congregations that have existed from John's day until the present time. In reality, they were historical churches in Asia Minor (see map No. 11 at the end of the Study Bible). The general pattern in the letters is commendation, complaint and correction.

2:1 *angel*. See note on 1:20. *Ephesus*. See Introduction to Ephesians: The City of Ephesus. *holds the seven stars*. See 1:16,20. *seven golden lampstands*. See 1:12,20.

2:2 *tested*.† The necessity of testing for correct doctrine and dependable advice was widely recognized in the early church (see 1Co 14:29; 1Th 5:21; 1Jn 4:1). The method of testing may have been that used by the Bereans (Ac 17:11).

2:4 *first love*. The love they had at first for one another and/or for Christ.

2:5 *remove your lampstand*. Immediate judgment.

**Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus
write; These things saith he that holdeth the
seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in
the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;
— Revelation 2:1 (KJV)**