

Revelation, Part 3 — The Son of Man in the Midst of the Church

After declaring that the Lord is coming with clouds and every eye will see Him, John had an amazing encounter with the Son of Man.

Revelation 1:9 NKJV I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

As John is addressing the church, he wanted them to know that he was going through the same kinds of things they were. He was a partaker in the tribulation, kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul spoke often of the tribulations he endured. The early church was born into tribulation and persecutions for Christ's sake.

In Romans 5:3-5 he said, *“I glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance, character, and hope.”*

In 2 Timothy 3:12 he said, *“All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”*

Persecution and tribulation was a normal part of being in the kingdom of Christ and being a partaker in Christ.

Romans 8:17 “If children, then heirs— heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed if we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”

2 Timothy 2:12 NKJV If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.

John was exiled on the small island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Everyone in that region knew that Patmos was a place of punishment and harsh conditions.

The volcanic and

barren island was rich in marble and granite and prisoners were forced to labor in rock quarries. Patmos is 6 miles wide by 10 miles long and is 60 miles southwest of Ephesus in the Aegean Sea. John was banished to the island for his faithful testimony to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



Revelation 1:10a NKJV I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day,

What does it mean, "I was in the Spirit?"

Galatians 5:16 NKJV Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Paul was talking about a life that is responsive, guided, and controlled by the Holy Spirit. The normal and consistent life of the believer is to live step-by-step in the power of the Spirit. When we walk by the Spirit, we do not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Being *"in the Spirit"* has more meaning than John *"walked in the Spirit and not in the flesh."* *"In the Spirit"* is a state of being carried beyond the normal into a condition where God could reveal otherwise unknown events and realities. John was *"in the Spirit on the Lord's Day."* In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul spoke of a similar experience where he was caught up to the third heaven.

2 Corinthians 12:2-4 NKJV I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

Watch what happened when John was in the Spirit.

Revelation 1:10-11 NKJV I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

John had known the voice of the Lord, but now there is a distinct difference in the sound of His voice.

His voice was clear and sounded like a trumpet that demanded John's full attention. It is noteworthy that John heard the voice before he saw anything. It is the same voice that will call the dead from the graves.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 NKJV For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

The voice that John heard said, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia..."*

Some dreams, visions and revelations are personal. The purpose for this Revelation was not for John alone, it was to be shared with the church.

The seven churches in Asia are not far from the Island called Patmos in the Aegean Sea.

John was instructed to write to the seven churches in Asia: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea. There were other churches in the region. It may help us to understand that the Apostle Paul wrote to seven churches, Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi and Thessalonica. The church of all time is comprehended in the “seven.” Both Paul and John’s writing was intended to be read in all of the assemblies of believers. In the Revelation, the Lord is not just addressing local assemblies, He was showing His care and interest in the full church.

Revelation 1:12-13 NKJV Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

Take a look at the Son of Man first.

The voice was coming from the Alpha and the Omega, One like the Son of Man, Who was in the midst of seven lampstands. The last time he saw Him, Jesus was ascending into heaven after His resurrection. Now, He is clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about with a golden band. His garment is similar to the wardrobe of the High Priest in Exodus 39:1-5. The High Priest was constantly tending the golden lampstands in the tabernacle. In the tabernacle, the *golden “menorah”* or lampstand had seven lamps to give light. The fire in the golden lampstand and upon the altar were to be maintained so they never go out. Now, in Revelation there are seven golden lampstands and the Son of Man is in the midst.

Jesus has become the High Priest of the Church and He is ministering before the Presence of the Father.

Revelation 1:14-15 NKJV His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

This is a glimpse of the Lord in His glory and power attending to the light that is in the church. The image of the glorified Christ is reminiscent of His glory that appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration. When Peter, James and John saw Him then, *“His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.”* The change that is revealed to John is not transient or fading. This is the appearance of the First and the Last. This is the glory and majesty of the Son of Man. His eyes like a flame of fire — indicate His perfect knowledge, infallible insight, and inescapable scrutiny. He sees and knows all things. Nothing is secret or hidden from Him with whom we have to do. This is not the voice of one who is meek and mild, but inescapable and powerful.

powerful. “His voice was as the sound of many waters.”

Revelation 1:16-17 NKJV He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

[We will discuss the seven stars later.](#)

[Out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword.](#)

Hebrews 4:12 NKJV For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In our personal walk with Him, we have become somewhat familiar with the voice and word of God. Here in the Revelation, we see the voice and the word of God as it really is. It is living, powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. Back in the Exodus from Egypt, the people heard the voice of God from the midst of the fire and were afraid. They said, *“This great fire will consume us; If we hear the voice of the Lord our God anymore, then we shall die,”* (Deuteronomy 5:25). John was feeling and seeing the penetrating power of Christ’s words. It was like a sharp two-edged sword coming out of the mouth of the Son of God.

[His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.](#)

Everything about the Son of Man was glorious, radiant, and incomprehensible in power. In His hand were seven stars, but His radiant glory out shined them all.

Revelation 1:17-18 NKJV And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

Throughout the Bible, this seems to be a normal response when weak flesh stands in the presence of God Almighty. “When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.” John was overwhelmed by the glory of God that was in Christ. Ezekiel and Daniel had the same response when he saw the Son of Man, (Ezekiel 1:28; 44:4; Daniel 8:17-18; 10:8-9).

Daniel 10:8-9 NKJV 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. 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.

Revelation 1:17-18 NKJV And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

Jesus said, “*Do not be afraid*” several times to His disciples. When Peter, James and John caught the great number of fish, Jesus said, “Do not be afraid.” When He walked on water, He said, “Do not be afraid, it is I.” On the Mount of Transfiguration, “He touched them and said, “Do not be afraid.”

The glory and the majesty that surround the Son of Man was so great that Jesus needed to identify Himself to John.

Jesus said, “*I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.*” John was seeing the Christ in all of His victory and power. Jesus said, “I am He Who lives and I have the “keys” (authority) over Hades and Death. The resurrected and glorified Jesus Christ has authority over Hades and Death. That means that Jesus has the power over the body and the soul. He has power over the body that is in the grave and the soul. The ultimate end of all humanity is in His hands. One of these days the Lord will exercise His authority and call the dead out of the grave, and their body and soul will be reunited. We will have a new body and a new life.

Now the Son of Man told John the scope of what He is going to be shown.

Revelation 1:19-20 NKJV Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

This revelation is so great that it should not be kept secret or hidden.

John was to write it all down and share it to the seven churches. The scope of the revelation is the things that have been seen in the visions, the things which were presently happening in the churches, and the things that will happen after the churches. This covers the entire last days.

This is a breakdown of the Revelation.

- The things “which are seen” covers Chapter 1.
- The things “which are” relates to the church, in Chapters 2 and 3.
- The things “which will take place after this” is in Revelation 4 through 22.

What is the mystery of the seven stars and the seven golden lampstands?

The Son of Man was seen in the midst of the seven golden lampstands and he had the seven stars in His right hand.

First, the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

The Lord is in the midst of His Church. He is functioning as our Great High Priest. He is maintaining the Church. You need to know that the Lord is not far from His church. The church is not the light but bears the light. The light that we have is a result of the oil of the Holy Spirit that has been put in us.

Second, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.

Each church had its own angel. This may be literal angels or it may be the pastors that God has sent. The word “*angelos*” means messenger, an angel of God or one sent with a specific message. I want to believe that the pastors of the church are in the Lord’s hand. They have a special touch from the Lord on their lives. If it means there is a specific guardian angel sent to every church, this shows the Lord’s interest and care over the flock.