# **Revelation Chapter 1– Verse by Verse**

Revelation 1:1-6

* Need to understand the context. Who was given the revelation from Jesus Christ? John
  + Who was John? An apostle of the Circumcision; of Israel
  + In order to understand the context of the book of Revelation, need to know the timeline
* God raises up Israel through Abraham
  + Gen 12:1-3
    - What are God’s promises to Abraham?
      * Land, bless them that bless and curse them that curse
  + Gen 15:1-7
    - What are God’s promises to Abraham?
      * His own child will be heir, will have the land, multiplied nation
  + Gen 15:8-20
    - What are God’s promises to Abraham?
      * His descendants will be oppressed 400 years (Egpyt)
      * His seed will inherit the land from river of Egypt to Euphrates
  + Gen 17:1-22
    - What is the covenant?
      * God will give the land and multiply, Abraham to circumcise
      * Circumcision – REQUIRED or they lose the blessings of the covenant
        + **Circumcision is the sign** **of the covenant** that Abraham’s seed will have the land
      * Ishmael not to inherit this, clearly Isaac is the heir
  + Gen 26:19-34
    - Jacob gets the birthright instead of Esau, blessing of Abraham to pass to Jacob
  + Gen 28:1-4
    - Clearly the blessing of Abraham passes to Jacob
  + Gen 32:24-30
    - Jacob’s name changed to Israel, and his descendants (this nation) to have the blessing of Abraham
* Israel sojourns to Egypt as God says in Gen 15; God delivers them through Moses, to Mt Sinai
* Ex 19:1-6
  + God added the Law to who? The nation Israel
  + What is Israel to be? A nation of priests, the holy (set apart) nation
  + What are the conditions? Ex 19:5 – the must obey God and keep His covenant
  + What is the covenant to keep? We commonly know it as The Law, or the Law of Moses
    - Summed up in the 10 Commandments to come in Ex 20
    - Note circumcision still required in Leviticus 12:1-8
    - This Law was added because of transgressions (Gal 3:19)
* God chose to reveal Himself to Israel and then to the world through Israel
  + Anyone desiring to be saved from sin and death must believe in God and follow what God says at this time, which is to proselytize to Judaism
  + Summarily this is referred to as faith + works (believe God at His word and keep the covenant)
* There is a sign of the covenant given to Moses (Law)
  + Ex 32:12-18
    - **Keeping the Sabbaths is the sign of the covenant**
    - Again this is required or the result is to be cut off from the blessings (vs 14-15)
* What is known as the Davidic covenant is established while David is on the throne in Israel
  + 2 Sam 7:1-17 – note that the chastening would refer to Solomon in vs 14, but there is also a clear reference to the Messiah as this throne is established forever
* Recap – Israel to be a kingdom of priests in a specified land with Messiah as their king to minister to the world IF they obey God’s voice and keep the Law
* Law was still how God was dealing with mankind in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We need to understand what was happening here to understand Revelation as the end times are asked about
* First, Mark 1:1 tells that the good news is that Jesus is the Christ
  + Mark 1:14-15 records Jesus saying that the “time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand”
  + What kingdom? The kingdom promised to Israel if they kept the Law
  + What time was fulfilled?
* Dan 9:24-27
* Note these 70 weeks are determined on Daniel’s people and Daniel’s holy city
  + This would be Israel and Jerusalem
  + The fulfillment of these weeks would bring an end of sins – clearly hasn’t happened yet
  + Still, 69 of these 70 weeks have been fulfilled because Messiah was cut off, but not for Himself (vs 26). This was the crucifixion of Jesus.
  + What hasn’t happened yet is the 70th week, where the prince that *shall* come will make a covenant for the 7 years and set up the abomination in the middle of that period
    - This is referred to by Jesus in His earthly ministry in Matt 24:15
    - At that time, Jesus instructs the Jewish believers (Little Flock referred to in Luke 12:32) to get out of Jerusalem and leave everything behind
    - Should give us reason to understand why He taught His disciples to pray “give us this day our daily bread” as they will have nothing. On top of this is when the mark of the beast is issued, so the Jewish believers will have no way to get anything other than supernatural provision by God
    - Note that this 70th week is referred to as the time of **Jacob’s** trouble (Jer 30:7) and is described throughout the prophetic books
* Why haven’t we seen this 70th week fulfilled?
  + It was interrupted by “the Mystery” as revealed to the apostle Paul
  + The age in which we live today is an interruption to the Prophecy/Law program with Israel (Acts 9-13, Rom 9-11)
  + The book of Acts shows the fall of Israel and the rise of the dispensation of grace, the message of reconciliation to all nations (Gal 3:28, Col 3:9-11)
  + It is recorded 3 times that salvation turns to the Gentiles from unbelieving Israel (Acts 13:46, 18:6, 28:28)
  + Israel is set aside for a season, until the fulness of the Gentiles come in (Rom 11:25-32)
  + Prophecy/Law program will recommence at the snatching away of the Body of Christ, which is commonly called the Rapture. God will fulfill His promises with Israel
    - Rom 9:1 – 11:36, 1 Cor 15:35-58, 1 Thess 1:10, 4:13-18, Titus 2:11-14
  + Peter confirms this in 2 Pet 3:1-18 and Acts 15:1-12
* Jesus’ earthly ministry was preparing the Little Flock to go through the Tribulation period, or Daniel’s 70th week, which should have happened shortly after Pentecost and the distribution of the Holy Spirit to the 12 apostles (Mal 4:1-6, Acts 1:1-12)
  + As we have seen, God concluded Israel in unbelief to usher in the dispensation of grace
  + The book of Revelation is giving the details of what will take place in that Tribulation period of 7 years
* Look again at Revelation 1:1-6
  + Note the apostle John would be an apostle to Israel to proclaim their kingdom is coming after that Tribulation period
    - The audience would be Israel
  + Vs 1 says something interesting. **Pay attention to the pronouns**.
    - This is Jesus Christ’s revelation; given to Him by God the Father, so Jesus would show His servants
    - Semi colon indicates a separate but related sentence. The “he” after the semi colon is God the Father again
    - God the Father sent and signified this revelation by His angel – which is Jesus Christ as we will see in vs 17-20

**Revelation 1:1**

*The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto [Christ], to show unto [God’s] servants things which must shortly come to pass; and [God] sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John*

* + Vs 2 indicates John took in the vision and was now going to write it down
  + Vs 3 speaks of prophecy and that the fulfillment is “at hand”. When John wrote it, it was expected to take place soon, not knowing of the nearly 2,000 year interruption of the dispensation of the grace of God (Rom 16:25, Eph 3:1-11)
  + Vs 4 speaks of seven local Jewish churches in the Asia province
    - No reason to think this is some sort of symbolic writing as John is a Jew and writing to Jews who will go through the time of Jacob’s trouble
    - Grace and peace is offered by:
      * God the Father (Him which is, and which was, and which is to come)
      * Seven spirits which are before God the Father’s throne
      * God the Son, Jesus Christ (vs 5)
    - These 7 spirits are NOT what is written in Isaiah 11:2, but actual spirit beings
      * Gabriel is one of them: Luke 1:19. We aren’t told of any others
      * Don’t forget the spiritual realm is very real according to scripture, though our eyes cannot see it. Jesus says he can call 12 legions of angels (Matt 26:53), Elisha opened the eyes of his servant to see the spiritual army (2 Ki 6:15-17), and Daniel mentions spiritual forces in Dan 10-12
  + Vs 5 – note salvation for the Jew is still found in the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ
    - Works of the Law/OT pointed to this (See Hebrews)
  + Vs 6 – Note well the language. Israel was to be a kingdom of priests, NOT the Body of Christ under the dispensation of grace as given to Paul
    - Body of Christ is described as “ambassadors” 2 Cor 5:16-21. This is because we bring the message of reconciliation as mentioned in 2 Cor 5:16-21, but we will be taken home to Heaven before the time of Jacob’s trouble commences (1 Cor 15:35-58, Phil 3:20-21, 1 Thess 1:10, 4:13-18, Titus 2:11-14)
    - The “Us” in Rev 1:6 is referring to believing Jews as John was a believing Jew and writing to Jews
    - Cross ref Ex 19:1-6, Isa 61:6, 2 Pet 2:9 – looking for that promised kingdom

Revelation 1:7-11

* Vs 7 – which coming of Jesus? There is the coming of the Lord catch away the Body of Christ (1 Thess 4:13-18) and there is a coming of Christ on earth to the mount of olives (Luke 24:33-53, Acts 1:1-12)
  + John is describing the earthly coming, the one relevant to Israel
  + Details are found in Rev 19:11-16
    - This is the sign Jesus speaks of in Matt 24:29-31, Mark 13:26-27, Luke 21:27-28
* Jesus Christ is the righteous judge and will purge Israel and the nations at His coming to earth before inaugurating the kingdom with the believing “little flock” of Israel (Matt 25:31-46, Eze 36:21-36)
* Vs 8 – Jesus is clearly God, being the first and last, which is and was and is to come, the Almighty
  + The same phrase was used in verse 4
  + Remember, this is Jesus’ revelation that He wanted his servants to have and God the Father gave it to John by his angel (this word means messenger in the Greek, more on that later)
  + The book of John had the purpose of proving the deity of Christ (John 20:30-31)
  + This is why John has a different feel than Matthew, Mark, and Luke when reading
* Vs 9 – Again, John is a brother to fellow Jews, going through the tribulation known as Jacob’s trouble (Jer 30:7) and they are looking for that kingdom to come that was promised Israel in Ex 19:1-6
  + They are waiting for Christ to return, as He indicated to the apostles while He was on earth (Luke 19:11-28, Acts 1:11)
  + John had this vision on the isle of Patmos. He was sent there because of his preaching of the gospel of the kingdom and that Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God/Messiah (John 1:36)
* Vs 10-11
  + Was this a Saturday? Was this a Sunday? What is meant by “the Lord’s Day?”
  + Let the bible define it and not man – John is going to describe the time of Jacob’s trouble, which is oft referred to as “that day” or “the day of the Lord” in the prophets
    - Isa 2:12, 13:6,9, 34:8, Eze 30:3, Amos 5:20, Oba 15, Zech 14:1, Mal 4:1, etc
  + This is not a Saturday or Sunday, but the prophesied “Day of the Lord”, the day of vengeance as in Isa 61:2
  + The voice in vs 11 clearly belongs to Jesus Christ as He uses the same language as vs 8
  + Again writing to very real, future Jewish churches established in the Tribulation period
    - These churches will be established by the 2 prophets (Rev 11:3-12) and the 144,000 witnesses from the 12 tribes of Israel (Rev 7:1-8, 14:1-5)

Revelation 1:12-20

* Vs 12-17a
  + John describes his vision of Jesus Christ
  + Note that he says “like unto the Son of man” meaning he didn’t see Jesus in this kind of glory yet
    - John knew Jesus in His humiliation, not His glory. John knew Jesus as in the likeness of man, though He was God, and how he humbled Himself and became obedient to the death of the cross (Phil 2:5-8)
  + John did witness a glimpse of the glory during the transfiguration encounter, but this doesn’t quite compare to what we read in Revelation (Matt 17:1-8, Mark 9:1-13, and Luke 9:28-36)
  + This description would be the “angel” referred to in verse 1: Christ Himself
  + Recall what John already wrote in John 1:18
  + Take note of this description, because it is referred to in each of the letters to the seven churches
  + The vision of the seven golden candlesticks in vs 12 and the stars in vs 16 is explained by Jesus in vs 20
    - The stars are the angels of the seven churches (more in a moment)
    - The candlesticks are the seven churches
* Vs 17b-20
  + Jesus again tells John it is He with similar language as in vs 8 and 11
  + Vs 18 – once more a verse that shows Jesus’ deity. God the Father did not die and resurrect, yet Jesus claims to do so and still be the first and the last
  + Vs 19 – Note well what Jesus says. John will write the things John has already seen, those which are, and those that will be in the future. Let’s clear confusion on this
    - The things which thou hast seen – vision of the Lord Jesus Christ AND all the rest of the events of the Tribulation period
      * Recall that John saw it all and is now recording it from vs 2
      * Also reference Rev 6:2a, Rev 14:6a
    - The things which are – explaining the symbolism of the vision. John is to write to his audience the meaning of the vision and what things are when need be
      * Example is in vs 20 of this chapter
    - The things which will be hereafter – the order of events. John is to give the chronology of the Tribulation period
  + Vs 20 – Just let God say what He says to understand this verse
    - The 7 stars are 7 angels OF the 7 churches
    - The 7 candlesticks ARE the 7 churches
  + Should be clear the candlesticks represent light. Jesus said the believing Jews are the light of the world (Matt 5:14-16)
    - These are future Jewish assemblies during the time of the Tribulation teaching righteousness from God’s word
  + What about these angels?
    - First understand the meaning of the inspired word God uses, the Greek aggelos (ang’-el-os) and means a messenger or envoy (Thayer)
    - The biblical definition of the *spiritual* angel is found in Heb 1:14
    - God has legions of angels (Matt 26:53)
    - Recall that the prophets of old received the law by angels (Acts 7:51-53)
    - By biblical definition: An angel can be a *human* being or a *spirit* being
    - This is true regarding the Hebrew word malak (mal-awk) that is translated angel or messenger in the OT
    - Examples of human being “angels” – 2 Sam 11:4, 19, 22, 23, 25, Matt 11:10, Mark 1:2, Luke 7:24, 27, 9:51-52, James 2:25
    - Examples of spirit being “angels” – Gen 16:7, 9, 10, Matt 1:20, 24, 2:13, 4:6,11, 13:39, 41, 49 Luke 1:19, 26-28
    - With this in mind, it is my belief that John is writing to human beings that are leaders of these seven churches in Asia. We may call them pastors since they have a message to give the Jews assembled there
      * These “angels” will give the messages to their respective churches, who will then circulate the message (repeated phrase “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches”-plural)