

1,27,22 Revelation Ch. 1, John's Vision of Christ Ascended

Let me recap briefly the world-events overview from last week and then we'll dive into chapter one.

(Rev. 13:16-17) "He compels all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, that no one will be able to buy or sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name."

What we are watching is a global transition into the Tribulation period; the seven-year reign of the Antichrist. The enemy's plan is to collapse the current social structures in order to bring in a totalitarian, global government and instigate a universal basic income (UBI) tied into a digital currency. At some point a chip will be needed to buy or sell, and that will only be available to the followers of the Antichrist.

As this author put it,

"(The Antichrist) will be charismatic, brilliant and have all the answers to the world's problems. Things must get much worse though before he's revealed, as he must rise from extreme world chaos, like the Phoenix rising from the ashes."

"Things much worse" means a world in massive confusion, desperate for answers.

Since 2019 there has been a rapid increase of the development of both the technology, and the psychological and social conditioning needed to prepare the world for this.

Covid and the vaccine have helped condition the world to make this transition by convincing the nations that medical, financial and social credit score information need to be *implanted* to be effective in bringing about the Great Reset.

As we'll see in the book of Revelation, the result, during the Tribulation, will be the complete governmental control of every person on the planet.

The following is a speculative overview of how all of this is being worked out. I say "speculative" because even though some of these things are already happening,

some are predictive. But we can (and should) be aware of the potential impact of what we see happening around us and of what's potentially coming soon.

The writer is drawing from what we know *must* happen as shown in Rev. 13, and then making application to what we are seeing *now* as preparation for the fulfillment of those events.

As I mentioned last week, any speculation we do now would have to be based on the idea that if what we see in the book of Revelation were to start tomorrow, this is what it would look like. The specifics may change, but the goal is the same and is absolutely certain, because nothing prophesied in Revelation will fail to happen.

The author is Daymond Duck, and keep in mind that this was written *before* some of the more recent headlines exposing, and to some extent minimizing, the value of the vaccine. We don't know yet how this is going to play out. Here's what Daymond wrote;

"The real purpose of so-called 'Vaccine Passports' is not the vaccination history or medical records of the vaccinated. The real purpose is getting the data that will be required of those that want to function in the future global society and entering the information into a global tracking system (creating a *Global* Passport, not just a Vaccine Passport).

Globalists are trying to get everyone on earth into the global system so they can monitor and control every aspect of each person's finances (and therefore, every aspect of each person's behavior).

Globalists are using two tactics to get people into this system: 1) Incentives for those that co-operate, and 2) Threats of punishment for those that do not co-operate.

Those that do not co-operate will receive less money, have their money seized, be denied health care, or whatever, to force them to comply (they will not be allowed to function outside the system). Those that get into the system (and put their children into the system) will be in it permanently - there will be no getting out.

Here's what he means by that last statement "there will be no getting out".

(Rev. 14:9-11) "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."

Once that mark is taken, there's no way out.

So, think about what these few articles are saying – I'm going to highlight the parts that are relevant to the enemy's overall plan.

Here's the first headline:

(In many countries), the walls are closing in on anti-vaxxers

Here are a few lines from that article published in The Washington Post,

"French President Macron vowed in less than tactful language to make the life of the unvaccinated a living hell. . . (Macron added) "When some make their freedom a motto, not only do they put others' lives at risk, but they are also curtailing other's freedom. That, I cannot accept. When you are a citizen, you must agree to do your civic duty."

Now, let's switch to Canada under Trudeau, who said,

"People are seeing cancer treatments and elective surgeries put off because beds are filled with people who chose not to get vaccinated; they're frustrated. When people see that we're in lockdown, or there are serious public health restrictions because of the risk posed to all of us by unvaccinated people, they get angry."

Finally, here's a headline published in Forbes;

Austria sends unvaccinated into lockdown.

"Austria sent millions of unvaccinated people into lockdown as it battles to contain record levels of Covid-19. Austria became the first country in Europe to make vaccination compulsory as of Feb. 1st, 2022. It is still unclear what penalties will be exacted for those who refuse to be vaccinated."

The article goes on to list several other countries around the world that are doing the same thing.

Like Daymond said,

“Globalists are trying to get everyone on earth into the global system so they can monitor and control every aspect of each person’s finances, and therefore every aspect of each person’s behavior.”

No one will be able to buy or sell *outside* that system – which is exactly what we read in Rev. 13.

Now, we’re going to switch gears and move into chapter one.

The age we’re living in, the Church Age, has (as one author puts it) “an unwholesome designation”. What he means is that passages like Gal. 1:4 call it “an evil age”, which is characterized by the increasing anger of Satan, who is called its “god” in 2 Cor. 4:4.

And without going into it now (it will come up later) our *specific* generation in this age is *especially* evil, beyond any generation in human history.

As you probably remember from last week, I kind of doubled down on the fact that the book of Revelation centers in a Person more than simply in information about future events. Anything we discover about the future as we study Revelation will give us only an academic understanding at best, if each event is not seen in relation to the Person and activity of Christ.

Studying this book can only help us spiritually if we remember that it’s the Revelation of Jesus Christ first, and a book about the future second. We have to be careful not to rearrange those priorities.

As Newell writes,

“It will be vain to become occupied with one-hundred-forty-four-thousand, six-six-six, the revived Roman Empire, the person of the Antichrist, two wild beasts, the millennium, or even the new Jerusalem; unless, Christ is ever before our eyes!”

And since this is His creation, Christ is the Lord of History.

(John 1:3) “All things were made and came into existence through Him; and without Him nothing was made that has come into being.”

(Col. 1:16-17) “By Him all things were created in heaven and on earth, [things] visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities; all things were created and exist through Him and for Him. And He Himself existed and is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. [His is the controlling, cohesive force of the universe.]”

(1 Timothy 1:17) “Now to the King of the ages (the Lord of History) [eternal], immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.”

The One who wrote history, all the way to the end of time, has shown *throughout* history that before He moves in a major way, He forewarns those with ears to hear. A couple of quick examples of this would be;

(Gen. 18:17) “Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I will do?”

(Amos 3:7) ““Surely the Lord God will do nothing, unless He reveals His (plans) to His servants. . .”

For those who walk closely with God and study His word, listening to His voice, He will make sure they are aware of upcoming developments in His plan. The enemy, however, wants to make sure we are *unaware*, so we can be unprepared.

Now, let’s look at the first part of chapter one;

(Rev. 1:1-9) “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near. 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, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom of priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. 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. 'I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.' 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."

We spent a great deal of time last week on the meaning of "The revelation of Jesus Christ" in vs. 1 and the meaning of "keeping the words of this prophecy" in vs. 3, (as opposed to just hearing them)

So, today we're going to focus on the vision of Christ that John saw and on why the Spirit began this book with that vision.

There is no place in all of scripture that gives us a more comprehensive and detailed description of the glorified Christ than here.

This vision of Christ centers in that fact that whatever He shows John about Himself will in some way reveal His role as the One who governs, sovereignly, everything that will happen in the future.

Rev. 1:11 tells us that this entire book was sent to seven churches in Asia minor;

"Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches; to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

Before we break down the description of Christ that's given to us, we need to touch on the introduction to that description in vs 4.

(Vs. 4); "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."

Jesus is eternal (the same yesterday, today and forever). The 'seven spirits' takes a little more explanation.

Christ, Himself, prophesied what this would mean in John 16:12-14;

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will

declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

Let’s look at some passages that will help clear this up for us;

(Rev. 3:1) “To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”

(Rev. 4:5) “From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God.”

(Rev. 5:6) “Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.”

(Isa. 11:2) The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord.”

The Holy Spirit, Who is the ultimate communicator of all Biblical revelation, including *prophetic* revelation, is symbolized by a seven-fold operation.

Seven is the Biblical number of completeness or perfection, and this perfectly fits the fullness of God’s Spirit as proceeding from the *Throne* of God to reveal the *thoughts* of God to His people.

The ‘seven spirits’ is a symbol representing the Person and ministry of the Holy Spirit acting under the authority of Christ declaring to us everything we see in the book of Revelation concerning the Son of God.

As I mentioned last week, there is no book in the Bible that contains more symbols than Revelation. That’s how God chose to communicate these truths to us, so we have to do what we can to search out their meaning before we can fully understand what this book is teaching us about the end of the age.

(Rev. 1:7) “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.”

First, I want us to look at something that commentaries have been all over the map on in vs. 7 where it says, “every eye will see Him.” Since the world is a ball, every eye seeing Him at the same time would be a challenge.

Most commentaries just ignore that verse beyond stating it as a fact.

But some say it’s because of satellite TV, and that when Christ returns His appearing will be broadcast around the world. And that seems to be the popular view for commentators who try to explain how that can happen.

Here’s my view and I really wish I could have found at least one commentator who said this so I could quote them and add some credibility to my opinion.

So, this is just, apparently, an isolated speculation on my part. You’ll have to decide if you think it’s a *reasonable* speculation.

(Eph. 1:22-23) “God put everything under His feet and made Him head over everything for the church, which is His body . . .”

(Eph. 2:15) “. . . to create in Himself one new man.”

(Eph. 3:21) “To Him be the glory in the church . . .”

(1 Cor. 12:12) “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so also is Christ.”

There are many other verses that teach this truth, but when you put *these* together, what you see is that following the ascension of Christ, the Lord became the head of a vast spiritual body called the Church. And because of that, in 1 Cor. 12:12, Paul simply calls the Church, (lit.) “the Christ” (there’s a definite article in the Greek).

We know from other passages (that we’ll look at later in Revelation) that the Church returns to earth *with* Christ. So, when the inhabitants of this planet look up and see Christ invading, they will see Him, not just as an individual, but as a corporate New Man, Head and body of a new creation, surrounding the earth with His glory.

(John 17:21-22) “May they also be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. I have given them the glory You gave Me . . . “

(Col. 1:27) “. . . Christ in you, the hope (the confidence) of glory”.

So, there you go. You can run with that if you want; it’s either that or satellite TV.

Now, let’s see what the glorified Christ looks like after His ascension.

(Rev. 1:10-18) “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 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.’ Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 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. The hair of his head was white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 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. 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, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. 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.”

In vs. 12, the first thing John saw was ‘seven golden lampstands.’ Vs. 20 tell us what those lampstands represent; “the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”

The churches are meant to provide the light of truth to this darkened world. Jesus calls us “the light of the world” in Matt. 5:14.

When we get to chapters 2 & 3, we’re going to see how the Lord ‘examines’ each of the churches to determine whether they are expressing that light; or hiding it.

Chapter one shows us Who will be *doing* the examination (the One Who's eyes are like a flame of fire); chapters 2 & 3 show us the *results* of His examination.

Listen to how this author puts it;

“In the second and third chapters of the Book of the Revelation we have the Lord's survey of the seven churches. As those eyes that are as a flame of fire peer into the inner spiritual state and lay bare the condition - analyze, dissect, separate, place on the two sides of debit and credit, and form and pass their final verdict - we see one thing to be at issue with regard to them all. There may be particular differences in them; the aspects may vary; the elements may be very different: yet when all has been surveyed and gathered together it is to establish but one fact, namely, the presence or absence of that which, from the Lord's standpoint, constitutes justification in the continuance of the Lord's full committal to anything which claims to represent Him.”

As we briefly look at each of the symbols which describe the Lord, keep in mind that this is exactly Who Christ is now in appearance. With the exception of the Mount of Transfiguration (which only three men saw), this is the only part of the Bible that presents Christ to us, *as He is*, in glory.

I'm going to use Joseph Seiss to help explain these symbols because he's more thorough (and I feel, more accurate) than most commentators.

Vs. 13 “. . . the son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest.”

The long robe - Isaiah also saw this in his vision of Jehovah in Isa. 6:1; “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple.”

In that culture a long robe represented dignity and honor. The priests had robes and Jesus is our High Priest.

From Seiss, “These symbols describe personal qualities, official dignity, and celestial majesty, at which we may well bow down in the deepest reverence.”

And he adds this personal comment,

“I believe that our blessed Lord is, at this moment, arrayed just as he is here described, and that this is the robe in which he will deal with the Churches when the judgment begins. But everything outward in heaven is in exact correspondence with the inward. Official robes are confined to official dignitaries, and whatever the attire of Christ indicates - that he is. Everything there is reality.”

The same will be true of us. The outward will represent the inward. To whatever measure Christ has been formed *in us*, that measure of light and glory will manifest *through us*.

Now, here's H.A. Ironside's input on the golden sash,

“The sash or girdle speaks of service. We read of the servant girding himself and waiting on the table in Luke 17:8. In Revelation the sash represents a high-priestly service. Our blessed Lord is now serving us at God's right hand.”

And gold has always been the color of Deity, which is why the furniture in the tabernacle was overlaid with gold – the innermost court of the tabernacle was where Jehovah met with man, and gold was the most prominent color in that chamber.

Now, vs. 14, “The hair of his head was white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire.”

Again, from Seiss,

“Every symbol found in this book is explained somewhere else in the Bible. In Daniel 7 we read of the Ancient of Days and of the Son of man. John said that the One in the midst of the seven lampstands was ‘like unto the Son of man.’ He was undoubtedly linking that up with the seventh chapter of Daniel. John described the Son of man as one whose hair is white as snow. He had all the appearance of great age, though the Lord Jesus was cut off at the age of thirty-three. Observe Daniel 7:9, ‘And the Ancient of days did sit . . . and the hair of his head was like the pure wool.’ Who is the Ancient of days? In the 7th chapter of Daniel, He is the Jehovah of Israel. In other words, the Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Jesus of the New Testament. Christ is Himself ‘God manifest in the flesh.’”

And we saw in the comments by Spark's earlier that "eyes like a flame of fire" describes the Lord's all-seeing insight piercing into the reality of the spiritual condition of the seven churches. This is another symbol of the omniscience of deity.

Vs. 15 "His feet were like fine brass; and His voice like the sound of many waters."

Seiss, "Brass in the Old Testament is the symbol of judgment. The brazen altar that stood before the tabernacle was that on which the fire of God's judgment was burning continually. . . When you stand on the cliff by the seaside and hear the sound of many waters, you are awed by their power. The ship, which looks so large and strong at the docks, is helpless when at sea and the ocean rouses itself in furious anger. His voice is as the sound of the billows of the sea - a voice of power. That power put forth in grace means your salvation; put forth in judgment, it means eternal damnation."

Finally, vs. 16 "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 Lord explains the seven stars in vs. 20, ". . . the seven stars are the angels (lit. 'messengers') of the seven churches".

And we all know what the "sharp two-edged sword" is.

Heb. 4:12-13; "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account."

John's vision of Christ is in preparation for the Lord's evaluation of the churches in chapters 2 & 3.

I realize that we are looking at this objectively because before we can see the implications of anything in the scriptures to our own lives, we have to first understand what the passages mean.

But if the Lord was to reveal the full spiritual reality of this vision of Christ to us, we'd react exactly as John did in vs. 17;

“When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. . .”

This was also Isaiah’s response in Isa. 6 and Paul’s response on the road to Damascus in Acts 9.

Fortunately, our Lord adds this:

“Do not be afraid, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forever, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.”

When we see Him, we may be so astonished that we’re speechless; but we will know we’re safe. Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Here’s a portion of one of the most incredible songs ever written. “I Can Only Imagine” by Mercy Me;

“I can only imagine what my eyes will see when Your face is before me
Surrounded by Your glory, what will my heart feel?
Will I dance for You Jesus, or in awe of You be still?
Will I stand in Your presence, or to my knees, will I fall?
Will I sing hallelujah? Will I be able to speak at all?
I can only imagine.”

At present, our belief in the reality of our destiny is being tested and deepened. But when He returns, what we see *in* Him and hear *from* Him will remove any remaining doubt about how much He loves us and how safe we have *always* been.

So, for now, we are in training for what’s to come – our faith is being deepened through testing.

This ‘training’ we’re going through in this life started the day we were born again. I’m going to close our study with this quote from Guyon (which was written over a century ago);

"The true land of promise always lies beyond this vast wasteland. Promise is found only on the far side of a desert. When you can go beyond that place and not seeing your Lord, believe He is there by faith alone; when you can walk further and further into Christ when there are no senses, no feelings, not even the slightest registration of the presence of God; when you can sit

before Him when everything around you and within you seems to be either falling apart or dead; and when you can come before your Lord without question and without demand, serene in faith alone, and there, before Him, worship Him without distraction, without a great deal of consciousness of self and perhaps with no spiritual sense of Him, then will the test of commitment begin to be established. This is the true journey of the Christian life (as we await our Lord's return)."

For now, our *assurance* is based on faith – *then*, when we're caught up to meet Him in the air, faith will give place to sight.

As the writer to Hebrews defines it;

(Heb. 11:1) "faith gives substance to that which is hoped for; and provides evidence for things *not* seen."

So, as Jesus told Thomas,

"Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed."

And in 1 Pet. 1:8 we read this;

"Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory."

Before the Lord can examine and guide the development of all believers in the Church Age, as represented by the seven churches in Asia Minor, He must first present *Himself* to us as the criterion or standard of measure He is using to carry out that examination.

So, chapter one is the revelation of Christ in glory – chapters two & three contain the results of His evaluation of Church Age believers in the light of His goal for all of us – which is conformity to His image.

