

Have No Fear, The End is Near

9.16.09

A Practical Discussion on the
Book of Revelation

A few reminders

- We can understand this book.
- If you want to discuss “what it means”, please do so with a pastor outside of small groups.
- In the spirit of 1 Corinthians 13:2
 - “If I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge...but have not love, I am nothing.”

Our Text

Revelation 1:9 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. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet ¹¹ 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." ¹² Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ 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.

¹⁴ The hairs of his head were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵ his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 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. ¹⁷ 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, ¹⁸ and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. ¹⁹ Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. ²⁰ 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.

John's Commission

- Exile on the island of Patmos
 - Roman penal colony
- Received the revelation on a Sunday
- “In the Spirit”
 - The Holy Spirit gave the visions and transported him to vantage points
- The seven churches
 - They are listed in the order of delivery



A loud voice like a trumpet

- Jesus is speaking
- “in the midst of the lampstands”
 - The lampstands are the seven churches (vs. 20)
 - Light bearers in the world
 - Fulfillment of the stands in the tabernacle and the temple
- Jesus is in their midst!
 - Walking among the churches as God’s glory cloud rested with Israel

FIG. 15. SIMILARITIES TO OLD TESTAMENT APPEARANCES OF GOD

Revelation 1:12–16	Ezekiel 1:25–28	Daniel 10:5–6	Daniel 7:9–10	Daniel 7:13–14
son of man	like that of a man	a man		son of man
robe		linen robe		
gold sash		gold sash		
white hair			white hair	
eyes like fire	fire	eyes like flame	fire	
feet like bronze	glowing metal	gleaming bronze		
voice like rushing water	sound like rushing water	sound of a multitude		
stars in hand				
face like the sun	radiance	like lightning		

From *The Returning King* by Vern Poythress, pg.78

One like a son of man

- “son of man”
 - Jesus fulfills the prophecies in Daniel
 - He is the one who will bring an end to pagan kingdoms
- “a long robe”
 - Priestly and pure
- “a golden sash”
 - Worn around the chest signifies high rank, beauty, and wealth

One like a son of man

- “hair white as snow”
 - Purity and wisdom of an old age
- “eyes like a flame of fire”
 - He sees into men’s hearts and burns away sin and impurity.
- “feet like bronze”
 - Metal used in weaponry, perhaps alluding to judgment

One like a son of man

- “voice like the sound of rushing waters”
 - He speaks with authority
- “in his right hand he held seven stars”
 - The angels of the seven churches (vs. 20)
 - He controls the heavenly host
- “from his mouth...sharp two-edged sword”
 - His powerful word (a common NT metaphor)
- “face was like the sun”
 - Majesty of appearance (OT visions of God)

John falls down

- Recall Isaiah’s commission
- Jesus is not weak or safe in this vision!
- But he tells John not to be afraid...
- He places the hand that held the stars on John!
- “the First and the Last”
 - Clearly identifying Jesus with God the Father
- “the keys of Death and Hades”
 - Power over death

What does it all mean?

- Jesus is speaking to his church
- Jesus is staying with his church
- Jesus is strong enough to protect his church