



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: 2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 3 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. (Rev 1:1-3)

Here is a glorious opening to a Book that is, in itself, a Revelation of Jesus Christ as is every Word of Holy Writ. Yet, this is a particular revelation of His person expressed in a variety of revelations. It is often titled as the Apocalypse. I will not make any particular issues of the title other than to say that the King James Version translators made a technical error (not a translational error) in titling the Book 'the Revelation of St. John the Divine.' The Book offers its own title in the first line – *the Revelation of Jesus Christ*. It may additionally be noted that the Book is, in summary, a revelation of our Lord; but, in detail, a series of revelations shedding a broad spectrum light on His Person and Nature. This Book may be compared to a 'rose unfolding' whose petals open one-by-one revealing an increasingly profound beauty; and as the petals of the revelations unfold, they discharge a sweet smelling savor just as does that blossoming rose.

The opening sentences quoted above provide distinct properties of the nature of the Book:

1. THE TITLE

Every book has a title for purposes of reference. The Title of this Book also stipulates its Author and Source – the Revelation of Jesus Christ. St. John was, in no sense, the author. He was merely the scribe who recorded all that the Lord showed and spoke to him.

2. SOURCE AND REFERENCE

Every authoritative book offers references to the Source of the material contained therein. Who is the Source of the Words of this Book? God the Father to His Son, Jesus Christ.

3. PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.

4. MEANS OF TRANSMISSION AND CONFIRMATION

he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Our good and loving Apostle, John, was honored with the role of transcribing to us this last Book of glorious finality. He was the Apostle for whom Christ harbored a special affection. He was the Apostle of Love who stood courageously, with the women, at the foot of the Cross as our Savior suffered. He received this Revelation while in exile on the Island of Patmos, and was living in the advanced years of his life. It may have seemed to John when he was sentenced to exile on that lonely island that his usefulness to our Lord as an Apostle had ended. But that was far from the truth as he was given the responsibility of recording one of the most important books of prophecy of the entire Bible.

5. BENEDICTION

There is a wonderful benediction tucked away in this short introduction given by John to the Book. This is a benediction that comes early, and also appears at the end in other words. *“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.”* Is it not a sweet reminder that all who are reading today, and hearing the teaching, of the words of this Book are blessed in a particular manner. Of course, all who read any portion of Holy Writ are blessed, but this Book is a Book that REVEALS to us the signs of the times, and reassures us of the Sovereignty of God in our lives and in the order of the world and Universe.

6. ADDRESSEE

Every letter bears the name of the addressee. In this case, the intended addressee is the SEVEN CHURCHES. *“4 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”* Rev 1:4 (KJV) God chooses to use His Son to transmit His Word to another man like unto one of us. John speaks specifically to the SEVEN CHURCHES. Even those churches which are less fervent than others are addressed and greeted. In summary, the Book is addressed to each person of the Elect of God who comprise the church membership (either IN walls, or WITHOUT).

The matter of the SEVEN CHURCHES will require further clarification. These represent the fullness of God’s Church in the New Testament era just as the Twelve Tribes constitute the fullness of the same Israel in the Old Testament. Just as one, or all, of the Twelve Tribes apostatized from the law and truth of God in times past, so have one, or all, of the Seven Churches in these latter days. In spite of the purifying fires of the Reformation, not many decades passed before *‘the dog had returned to its vomit, and the swine to rolling in the mud.’* *But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.* (2 Peter 2:22)

There is a very important prophecy given in Isaiah I believe points to these latter day churches: *1 And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.* (Isaiah 4:1)

Most often when a prophecy is given involving womanhood, the woman represents a spiritual entity – good or bad. We have an example of this in the Parable of the Ten Virgins. We also find an elaborate reference to a Woman in the Book of

Revelation: 1 *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.* (Rev 12:1) In this case, a virtuous example of a Woman is given as an illustration of the fullness of Israel, including those grafted in.

An opposite example is also given: *Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: 2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. 3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: 5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.* (Rev 17:1-6) This woman represents the anti-Christ system which we see flourishing in the One World, Globalist economy of today.

Now back to the prophecy of Isaiah 4:1. What do these seven women represent? The Seven Churches have one Lord – the Lord Jesus Christ. They each will claim Him as their Husband, *For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.* (Isaiah 54:5) And we should remember, above all, that THE Church – not a conglomeration of denominations – are referred to as the Bride of Christ: *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* (Rev 21:2) This last reference to the Bride of Christ as the Virtuous Woman to whom Christ is wed bears out the importance of defending biblical marriage against the perversions of homosexuality.

These seven women referenced by Isaiah represent the churches of our day who have forgotten their first love and turned to compromise and easy-believism. Note they all wish to claim One Man (the Lord Jesus Christ) as their own, but why? It is not because they hold him in the bonds of love – no, not at all! It is because, in their own words, *We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.* They do not desire the Bread of Heaven (John 6:35 - the Word manifested in Christ), they desire to live according to their own desires of social bread. They do not desire to wear the Robe of Righteousness offered by Christ, but their own filthy rags of unrighteousness.

And, at last, they desire to be called by His name, not because they are truly devoted to Him; but to give them respectability in the social circles of the world. They wish to be merely called ‘CHRISTIAN’ to take away their reproach (shame). May we never be such a church!

In Part Three, we will study the nature of the Alpha and Omega as the Testator, and in succeeding studies we will focus on the Seven Churches individually.