

Revelation 1:4-6

- In the PRESENCE of God -

Author: Evert Jan Hempenius

© 2017

www.christianstudylibrary.org

For any questions about this Scripture passage or the notes, please contact us through the Contact Us tab on the website.

Foreword

- ❖ Revelation 1:4-6 is one of the most comprehensive messages and compact proclamations of the Bible. It is the complete gospel in a nutshell.
 - It is about the essentials of human life: “grace and peace.”
 - It discloses the Trinitarian Being of God and the NAME of God.
 - It lets the light of the Holy Spirit shine in front of God and in the church.
 - It emphasizes the Person and work of Jesus: he is the Ruler of this world.
 - It touches the heart by the love of Christ.
 - It shows the freedom of the Christian from bondage and slavery by sin.
 - It reflects the worship of the church, both in the Old Testament and in the New.
 - It highlights the office of the believers and the church, being a Kingdom of Priests.
 - It guides the church in its liturgy and service to God in glorifying his NAME and Jesus Christ, by songs, prayers, and the faithful witness to the world.
 - It joins the Old Testament with the New Testament like a bud is the pre-stage of the flower.
- ❖ The context, form and structure, theological notes, technical and hermeneutical notes given in this sermon outline show some overlap with other sermon outlines taken from the Book of Revelation. This makes it possible to use this sermon outline as a “stand alone.”

Context

- ❖ The Book of Revelation is like a large painting. You need to look at the whole in order to understand the details.
- ❖ A brief outline of the Book of Revelation:¹

Introduction (Rev 1:1-3)	
Rev 1:1-3	The origin and command to write this Revelation down.
The Book of Revelation (Rev 1:4-22:21)	
Rev 1:4-8	The opening liturgical setting.
Rev 1:9-3:22	PART 1
Rev 4:1-22:11	PART 2
Rev 22:12-21	The closing liturgical setting.

- PART 1: The risen and exalted Christ and his seven messages to the seven churches in the Roman Province Asia.
- PART 2: The heavenly courtroom and the judgment of God, ending with the descent of the new heaven and earth.

Part 1 (Rev 1:9-3:22)	
Rev 1:9-20	The risen and exalted Christ reveals himself to John and to the churches.
Rev 2:1-3:22	The seven messages to the seven churches of Asia. Jesus Christ knows the deeds of each church and of each individual. He calls them to repent where necessary to prepare them for the things to come, which they need to overcome.

- ❖ There is much discussion about the date of writing of the Revelation.
- ❖ Some commentators propose a date near the reign of Emperor Nero (AD 68).
 - Others propose a date during the reign of Emperor Domitian (AD 81-96).
 - In the case of the message to the Laodiceans, the outcome of this discussion is of lesser importance. The Laodiceans did not suffer persecution at the moment

¹ This outline for sermons is very brief and does not discuss all the (many) different theories about the structures and outlines of the Book of Revelation. Beale (1999) provides a detailed outline. For discussion see Garrow (1997).

of writing. Their own faith was weak or lukewarm. They were not prepared for “the great tribulation” (Rev 7:14).

- ❖ The socio-economical and historical-geographical context of 1st century Laodicea is also important. See below.

Form and structure

- ❖ Before looking at Revelation 1:4, 5, it is important to outline Revelation 1:4-8 in detail.

“Actor”	“The liturgy”	
<i>Reader</i>	<i>Greeting verse 1:4-5a</i>	John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.
<i>Hearers (response)</i>	<i>Praise verse 1:5b-6</i>	To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.
<i>Reader</i>	<i>Call verse 1:7a</i>	Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him.
<i>Hearers (response)</i>	<i>Acclamation verse 1:7b</i>	So shall it be! Amen.
<i>In the presence of God</i>	<i>Proclamation verse 1:8</i>	“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

- After the short introduction to the Book of Revelation (1:1-3), the readers or better the hearers are invited to partake into the “heavenly liturgy,” in which both heaven and the church are involved. The Book of Revelation contains many liturgical elements, such as liturgical attributes (censer, altar, ark of the covenant), songs, prayers, acclamations, blessings.
 - The reader and the hearers are drawn, while the liturgy evolves, into the presence of God (verse 1:8 – the voice of God is heard).

- John greets the seven churches as an ambassador of the Triune God: Father, Holy Spirit, and Jesus Christ.
 - The greeting from Jesus Christ contains a complete summary of the Gospel: crucified, resurrected, and glorified.

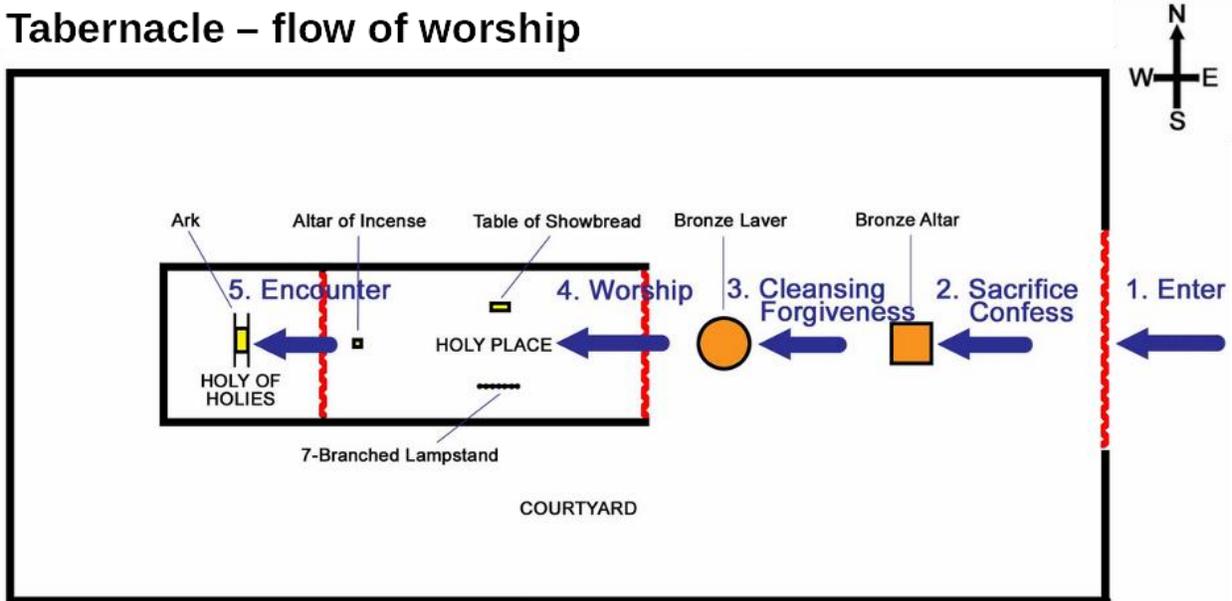
		<i>Comment</i>
<i>The reader as ambassador of John:</i>	John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia:	
	Grace and peace to you from	
<i>The NAME of God (Ex 3:14)</i>	him who is, and who was, and who is to come,	<i>God, the Father, the Almighty</i>
	and from the seven spirits before his throne,	<i>The Holy Spirit</i>
<i>The three titles of Christ</i>	and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.	<i>Jesus Christ, the Son</i> <i>crucified</i> <i>resurrected</i> <i>glorified</i>

Theological notes

- ❖ The Book of Revelation is trinitarian (God – Holy Spirit – Jesus Christ; Rev 1:4-5) in character.
 - God is the first and the last (Rev 1:8) – Jesus Christ is the first and the last (Rev 1:17).
 - Jesus Christ speaks to the churches (Rev 2:1-6) and the churches are summoned to listen to what the Spirit (Rev 2:7) says.
- ❖ The Book of Revelation is foremost a liturgical book with prayers, doxologies, confessions, prophecies and visions. It shows the heavenly liturgy in images and this liturgy affects the history of this world when the plagues of God strike this earth. Rev 4:11 explains why: **“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”**
 - The first priority in the life of every human being is to glorify God.
 - This liturgical book reminds us of the liturgy in the tabernacle (especially) and the temple of the Old Testament. This explains the many references to the altars and the priestly appearances of Christ and some of his angels.

- The OT was but a shadow of the eternal substance, an indication of the true ideal (Heb 8:5; 10:1). The tabernacle in which Christ ministered was a tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man (8:2). He is the high priest of “the greater and more perfect tabernacle” (9:11). “Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us” (9:24).²

Tabernacle – flow of worship



Copyright 2011, Ralph F. Wilson (pastor@joyfulheart.com).

❖ Overview of the elements of worship in the tabernacle (temple) in the context of Revelation:

Tabernacle	Rev 15:5	Ark of the covenant	Rev 11:19
Altar of incense	Rev 8:3-5	Lampstand	Rev 1:12, 20
(The hidden) manna ³	Rev 2:17		

- ❖ The Book of Revelation is also a prophetic book about the past, the present and the future. It sheds light on the past, the present situation of the seven churches in Asia Minor, and the future, culminating in the promise of the new heaven and the new earth.
 - From chapter 4 onwards the judgment of God is the dominating theme. He will do justice (Rev 4-5; Rev 6:10; Rev 21:1-15 and other passages).
 - ❖ The Book of Revelation is finally a politico-religious book.

² Caldecott, W. S., Orr, J., & Whitelaw, T. (1915, p. 2892).

³ “As the LORD commanded Moses, Aaron put the manna in front of the Testimony, that it might be kept” (Ex 16:34).

Technical and hermeneutical notes

- ❖ Reading and understanding the Book of Revelation requires:
 - Profound knowledge of the Old Testament.
 - The books of Exodus and Numbers, Ezekiel and Daniel are of particular importance in this regard. These books bear relation to oppression and deliverance of the people of God (Egypt and Babylon).
 - Knowledge of the Greek-Roman world of the first century.
 - Knowledge of figures of speech, because of all the metaphors and other figures of speech.
 - Knowledge of the structure of Revelation (see above).
 - (Elementary) knowledge of Hermeneutics.
- ❖ John received this Revelation from Jesus Christ and at the same time, this Revelation reveals the risen and exalted Christ, who holds the keys of (life and) death and Hades (Rev 1:17). John understood the words he heard and the visions he saw, though sometimes they were explained to him (Rev 1:19-20).
- ❖ John wrote down what he heard and saw in this book and sent it to the seven churches in Asia Minor, an important province of the eastern part of the Roman Empire. In these seven messages to the churches of Asia, Jesus Christ addresses major aspects of church life. He praises and rebukes them and gives them promises of the life to come. Christians, members of these churches, understood these messages. Twice, people are mentioned by name and they were warned against a movement called the Nicolaitans (Rev 2:6; 2:15), active among the churches. These Christians were far more familiar with the figures of speech used in the Revelation than we are nowadays.
 - Figures of speech are not always easily understood by 21st-century readers. Sometimes they are explained, more often not. Figures of speech allow for more than one explanation and application. That explains the multitude of commentaries and theories.
 - In the process of explaining and applying the prophecies of this book, the interpreter should ask himself two questions:
 - To which exegetical tradition do I belong? There is a plethora of traditions, especially in the Anglo-American World. To mention only three:
 - Amillennialism;
 - Postmillennialism;
 - Premillennialism.
 - Secondly, the interpreter should be aware of his own situation and of the local Christian community. What is my own political-religious situation and how does this situation affect my reading and understanding of the Book of Revelation?

Verse 4

- ❖ Grace = “**χάρις**”: 2. **a beneficent disposition toward someone, favor, grace, gracious care/help, goodwill.**⁴
 - “Grace is God’s constant love for his people, a love affirmed by and guaranteed in the covenant he made with them, in which he promised always to bless and protect them. This very important word appears many times in the New Testament, and it is not always easy to find a natural way of expressing the meaning of the term other than to use the word “love,” usually strengthened by an adjective. In the Old Testament, the equivalent word *hesed* is usually translated “steadfast love” by RSV and “constant love” by TEV (see Ps 13:5).”⁵
- ❖ Peace = “**εἰρήνη**”: 2. **a state of well-being, peace.** A. corresponding to Hebrew “shalom”: welfare, health. b. Since, according to the prophets, peace will be an essential characteristic of the Messianic kingdom, Christian thought also frequently regards “peace” as nearly synonymous with Messianic salvation.⁶
 - “Peace is not only the lack of external conflict and hostility, but also the presence of an inner sense of well-being, security, and wholeness. It results from faithful obedience to God’s commands and receiving his consequent blessings”⁷
- ❖ Church = “**ἐκκλησία**”: 3. **people with shared belief, community, congregation.**
 - a. of Old Testament Israelites *assembly, congregation* (Dt 31:30; Judg 20:2), Heb 2:12 (Ps 21:23); to hear the law (Dt 4:10; 9:10; 18:16) Acts 7:38.
 - b. of the New Testament Christians in a specific place or area. The term **ἐκκλησία** (church) apparently became popular among Christians in Greek-speaking areas for chiefly two reasons:
 - to affirm continuity with Israel through use of a term found in Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures,
 - and to allay any suspicion, especially in political circles, that Christians were a disorderly group.⁸

Verse 6

- ❖ Power = “**κράτος**”:
 - 1. **ability to exhibit or express resident strength, might.** a. of God’s power. Of the power of Jesus.

⁴ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000, p. 1079).

⁵ Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993, p.18).

⁶ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000, p. 287-288).

⁷ Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993, p. 18).

⁸ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 303).

- ❖ 3. **exercise of ruling ability, power, rule, sovereignty.** In a doxology: 1 Tim 6:16; 1 Pet 4:11; 5:11; Jd 25; Rev 1:6; 5:13.⁹

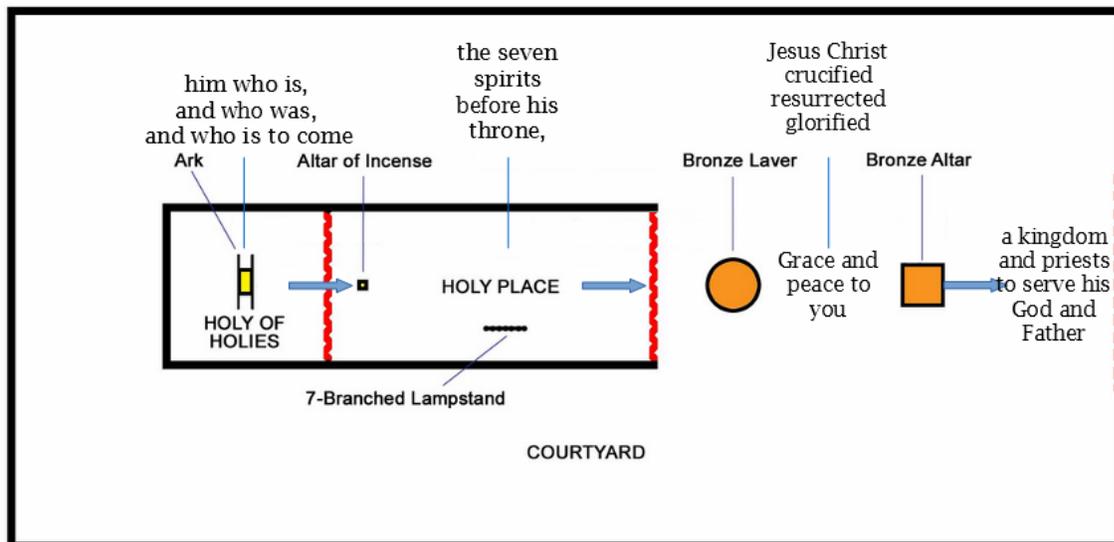
Exposition

Verse 4

- ❖ **“John.”** The writer doesn’t introduce himself. For this exposition, it is not necessary to discuss all questions about his identity. It will be suffice to know that he had an intimate relationship with the risen Lord, **“a servant”** (1:3). He has a profound knowledge of the Old Testament and is familiar with the situation of the church in the Roman province of Asia.
 - **“To the seven churches in the province of Asia.”** There were more churches located in this region, to mention Hierapolis and Colosse situated in the proximity of Laodicea. The number seven is number of fullness refers to the whole Christian church.¹⁰ The number seven is very prominent in this book. There are seven



Tabernacle – flow of greeting



Copyright 2011, Ralph F. Wilson (pastor@joyfulheart.com). Modified 2017, Evert J. Hempenius

⁹ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000, p. 565).

¹⁰ Beale, G. (1999, p. 186).

spirits (1:4), seven stars and seven golden lampstands (1:12, 20), seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb (5:6), seven heads on the dragon and the beast (12:3; 17:3), seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls.

❖ **“Grace and peace to you.”**

- Grace. The hearers of this letter and revelation are given the graceful privilege to dwell in the presence of God “as priests to serve his God and Father” (Rev 1:6). “Noteworthy is the order: Lasting peace is only found in the wake of grace.”¹¹
 - See also Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; 1 Pet 1:2.
 - Compare the priestly blessing (Num 6:24-26).
“The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”
- The readers will receive the peace of God. This peace stands in sharp contrast with the persecution and adversities in this world mentioned in the ensuing chapters.
- The peace is comforting in the light of the coming judgment (Rev 20:11-15).
 - “The Christian readers need grace to persevere in their faith in the midst of tribulation, especially pressures to compromise (Rev 2–3). And in the midst of such external turmoil they need the inner “peace” that only the eternal God who is sovereign over the vicissitudes of space-time history can give.”¹²

❖ **“from him who is, and who was, and who is to come”**

- Wallace observes:¹³
 - “Few scholars would disagree with Charles’ assessment: ‘The Seer has deliberately violated the rules of grammar **in order to preserve the divine name** inviolate from the change which it would necessarily have undergone if declined. Hence the divine name is here in the nominative.’¹⁴
“**The phrase is to be regarded as an indeclinable proper name** meant to be familiar to readers of the Greek Old Testament who read of the name which God revealed to Moses at the burning bush, ‘**I AM WHO I AM**’ (Ex 3:14, LXX), a text well familiar to early Gentile Christians.”
 - **“who is to come”**: this description doesn’t point to the future, but to the present. **He is right now coming.**
- The divine NAME is a mystery. His NAME reflects his incomprehensible being. In the Book of Revelation, several circumscriptions are found:

¹¹ Patterson, P. (2012, p. 57).

¹² Beale, G. K. (1999, p. 187).

¹³ Wallace, D. B. (2008, p. 62-64). See also Wallace, D. B. (2008, p. 237).

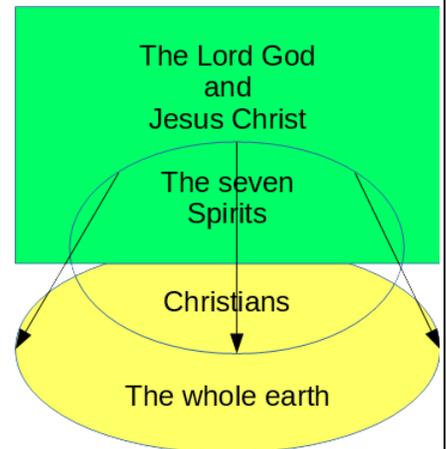
¹⁴ Charles, R. H. (1920, p. 1.10).

- “I am the Alpha and the Omega” (Rev 1:8). This is also applied to the glorified Christ:
 - “He said to me: ‘It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End’” (Rev 21:6). “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.” (Rev 22:13).
- This NAME reflects also the character of God:
 - He is “the Almighty” (Rev 1:8).
 - He is the Creator: “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being” (Rev 4:11).
 - He doesn’t change: “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, **who does not change like shifting shadows**” (Jas 1:17; see also Heb 13:8).

Verse 5

❖ **“and from the seven spirits before his throne”**

- “**seven**” = again the number of completeness.
- In the Book of Revelation **“the seven spirits”** are in front of the throne of God and the seven spirits are in the hand of Christ:
 - “These are the words of him **who holds the seven spirits of God** and the seven stars” (Rev 3:1). Compare this with Revelation 1:19: “The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this” (Rev 1:19).
 - “Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God” (Rev 4:5).
 - “Then I saw a Lamb... He had seven horns and seven eyes, **which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth**” (Rev 5:6).
 - The Holy Spirit is shining forth his light and speaking to the churches (Rev 2:7; a.o.)
 - The Holy Spirit is at the same time(!) in front of the throne of God and sent into all the earth. This implies that Christians are intimately presented by the Holy Spirit in the heavenly holy place.
 - Although each visual presentation of the relation between God and his people will be inadequate, it might be helpful to visualize, what is said in words.



- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. He is the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord” (Isa 11:2, 3).
 “God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God” (1 Cor 2:10).
 “The Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will” (Rom 8:26, 27).
- Zechariah: “I answered, ‘I see a solid gold lampstand with a bowl at the top and seven lights on it, with seven channels to the lights. Also there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.’ I asked the angel who talked with me, ‘What are these, my lord?’ He answered, ‘Do you not know what these are?’ ‘No, my lord,’ I replied. So he said to me, ‘This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: **“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the LORD Almighty**” (Zech 4:2-6).
- **“before his throne.”** God is the supreme ruler of this world (Rev 4; 22: 1).
- The seven spirits are not seven angelic beings as sometimes is stated. The imagery of the tabernacle excludes this explanation.

❖ **“and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.”**

- These are the three titles given to Jesus Christ, his threefold office of Prophet, Priest and King.¹⁵ (See quotes).
- **(1) “Who is the faithful witness.”** Christ was faithful to the proclamation of the Kingdom of God until the cross.
 - Because the Book of Revelation is “the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place (Rev 1:1),” this title underscores also the reliability of the whole book.
 - “Jesus answered (Pontius Pilate), ‘You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, **and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth**” (Jn 18:37).
- **(2) “The firstborn from the dead.”**
 - “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him” (1 Cor 15:22, 23).
 - This construction indicates that the dead are subordinate to the **firstborn**.¹⁶ Christ is Lord. “When I (John) saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: Do not be afraid. I am the First and the

¹⁵ Wallace, D. B. (2008, p. 62).

¹⁶ Wallace, D. B. (2008, p. 103).

Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades” (Rev 1:17; See also Rev 20:11-15).

- “And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy” (Col 1:18).
- Firstborn “does not mean ‘the first one raised from the dead,’ but ‘the highest of those raised from the dead.’ *Firstborn* is a title of honor” (see Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15, 18).¹⁷
- **3** “**And the ruler of the kings of the earth.**” Psalm 2 is illustrative. This Psalm plays an important role in the Book of Revelation. (See also Ps 89:27).
 - “And I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery” (Ps 2:9 – Rev 2:27).
 - “A male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter” (Rev 12:5; 19:15).
 - Christ received all power: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Mt 28:18; Ps 110:1; Rev 19:16).

❖ **“To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.”** This means salvation:

- **“who loves us.”** This love is enduring. This love is a very important theme in the Gospel and the letters of John. Some example:
 - “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (Jn 3:16).
 - **“Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends”** (Jn 15:13).
 - “May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me (Jn 17:23).
 - “This is love: not that we loved God, **but that he loved us** and sent his Son as an **atoning sacrifice for our sins**” (1 Jn 4:10).
- **“has freed us ... by his blood.”** This is a reference to the Passover Lamb (Rev 5:6; Jn 1:29, 35; 1 Pet 1:18, 19; Ex 12:5).
 - References to the Book of Exodus are very prominent. Just as the people of Israel were slaves of the Pharaoh, all people are enslaved to sin (Jn 8:34; Rom 6).
 - **“Has freed us”** from the enslaving power of sins (Rom 6:16-23).

Verse 6

¹⁷ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996, p.588).

- ❖ **“and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—”** (Rev 5:10).
 - This is a main theme in the Old *and* in the New Testament:
 - “Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me **a kingdom of priests and a holy nation**” (Ex 19:5-6; Israel at the Mount Sinai).
 - “But you are **a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God**, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Pet 2:9).
 - **“A kingdom of priests.”** Before a priest could enter the service he needed to offer sacrifice for his own sins before he could offer sacrifices for the sins of the people. With regard to the Day of Atonement:
 - “Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people” (Heb 5:1-3).
 - “Unlike the other high priests, he (Jesus Christ) does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. **He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself**” (Heb 7:27).
 - In the New Testament era, the priests are not a selected group, but every Christian is called to be a priest before our God and Father.
 - **“To serve his God and Father.”**
 - The Apostle Paul wrote about this service: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, **to offer your bodies as living sacrifices**, holy and pleasing to God—**this is your spiritual act of worship**. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will” (Rom 12:1, 2).
 - This service is summarized by “deeds” in the prophetic messages to the seven churches (Rev 2-3). The church of Sardis is called to repent because “I have not found **your deeds** complete **in the sight of my God**” (Rev 3:2).
- ❖ **“To him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.”**
 - This praise is also found in Rev 5:9: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.”
 - The earthly and the heavenly worship coincide.

- This worship of God and Jesus Christ is prominent in the Book of Revelation. There are songs and acclamations (Rev 4:11; 5:12; 5:13; 7:12; 11:17; 12:10; 15:3; 19:1; a.o.)
- Jesus Christ is the glory of the Father:
 - “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (Jn 1:14).
- **“power”** “which is not strength merely as it is possessed but as it is put forth in full action.”¹⁸
- **“Amen.”** The church affirms its salvation and calling as a kingdom of priests to praise God, and Jesus Christ.

Application

Remark

- ❖ It is possible to preach more than one sermon. Each sermon can have a different focus.
- ❖ As is stated in the Introduction: Revelation 1:4-6 is one of the most comprehensive messages and compact proclamations of the Bible.
 - (1) It is about the essentials of human life: “grace and peace.” This peace is not established by human efforts! It is free gift from God.
 - (2) It discloses the Trinitarian Being of God and the NAME of God.
 - (3) It lets the light of the Holy Spirit shine in front of God and in the church, and in the hearts and minds of individual believers.
 - (4) It emphasizes the Person and work of Jesus:
 - a. He is the faithful witness: a call to the church to stay faithful to the witness to the world (Rev 2:13).
 - b. He is the firstborn from the death: this encourages all who face death. It comforts those who are bereaved.
 - c. He is the Ruler of this world. This is especially comforting when Christians suffer due to oppression and persecution.
 - (5) It touches the heart by the love of Christ.
 - (6) It shows the freedom of the Christian from bondage and slavery by sin.
 - (7) It reflects the worship of the church, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament:
 - a. The tabernacle and the office of people of God (Ex 19:5, 6; Rev 1:5, 6).

¹⁸ Lenski, R. C. H. (1935, p. 47).

- (8) It highlights the office of the believers and the church as a Kingdom of Priests.
- a. "It probably gives Christians a mediatory role vis-à-vis the world."¹⁹
 - b. "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time" (1 Tim 2:1-7).
- (9) It guides the church in its liturgy and service to God in glorifying his NAME and Jesus Christ, by songs, prayers, and the faithful witness to the world.
- (10) It joins the Old Testament with the New Testament like a bud is the pre-stage of the flower.

Quotes

❖ Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 12.²⁰

31. Q. Why is he called Christ, that is, Anointed?
- A. Because he has been ordained by God the Father, and anointed with the Holy Spirit (Ps 45:7 = Heb 1:9; Is 61:1 = Lk 4:18; Lk 3:21, 22), to be our chief Prophet and Teacher (Deut 18:15 = Acts 3:22), who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption (Jn 1:18; 15:15); our only High Priest (Ps 110:4 = Heb 7:17), who by the one sacrifice of his body has redeemed us (Heb 9:12; 10:11-14), and who continually intercedes for us before the Father (Rom 8:34; Heb 9:24; 1 Jn 2:1); and our eternal King (Zech 9:9 = Mt 21:5; Lk 1:33), who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and who defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us (Mt 28:18-20; Jn 10:28; Rev 12:10, 11).
32. Q. Why are you called a Christian?
- A. Because I am a member of Christ by faith (1 Cor 12:12-27) and thus share in his anointing (Joel 2:28 = Acts 2:17; 1 Jn 2:27), so that I may as prophet confess his name (Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9, 10; Heb 13:15), as priest present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to him (Rom 12:1; 1 Pet 2:5, 9), and as king fight with a free and good conscience against sin and the devil in this life (Gal 5:16, 17; Eph 6:11; 1 Tim 1:18, 19), and hereafter reign with him eternally over all creatures (Mt 25:34; 2 Tim 2:12).

¹⁹ Boxall, I. (2006, p. 34).

²⁰ Lord's Day 12. (n.d.). Retrieved August 28, 2017, from <http://www.heidelberg-catechism.com/en/lords-days/12.html>

Bibliography

Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Beale, G. (1999). *The book of Revelation: A commentary on the Greek text*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Pub.

Boxall, I. (2006). *The Revelation of Saint John*. London: Continuum.

Bratcher, R. G., & Hatton, H. (1993). *A handbook on the Revelation to John*. New York: United Bible Societies.

Charles, R. H. (1920). *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Revelation of St. John: with introduction, notes and indices, also the Greek text and English translation*. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

Freedman, D. N., Herion, G. A., Graf, D. F., Pleins, J. D., & Beck, A. B. (Red.). (1992). In *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*. New York: Doubleday.

J. Orr, J. L. Nuelsen, E. Y. Mullins, & M. O. Evans (1915)(Eds.). *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (Vol. 1–5). Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company.

Garrow, A. (1997). *Revelation*. London: Routledge.

Hemer, C. (2001). *The letters to the seven churches of Asia in their local setting*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Pub.

Lenski, R. C. H. (1935). *The interpretation of St. John's Revelation*. Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern.

Osborne, G. (2002). *Revelation*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic.

Patterson, P. (2012). *Revelation*. (E. R. Clendenen, Ed.) (Vol. 39). Nashville: B&H.

Wallace, D. B. (2008). *Greek grammar beyond the basics: an exegetical syntax of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Walvoord, J. (1966). *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: A commentary*. Chicago: Moody Press.

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.