

Lesson 80

Perspective of Christ's return ⇒ Revelation 1:1~11 (cont.)

- Much of the content of the Book of Revelation reveals the period of Tribulation. However, like all other books of the Bible, the main message of Revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ. Revelation reveals Jesus in a way that the other books of the Bible had not yet done so clearly. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Therefore, it is more important to know the revealed person of Jesus as judge of all the earth than to know all the trumpets, seals, bowls, catastrophes, judgments, beasts, and horses of Book of Revelation. Always keep this in mind: We must position ourselves correctly so that God will reveal His Word to us and bless us in this study.

⇒ Revelation 1:1~3

➤ V.1; 'The revelation of Jesus Christ...'

This is the title of the Book. See how the revelation was transmitted in the sequence of the verse: God gave it to Jesus, who sent an angel to deliver it to John, who then passed it on to the Church. We are here today receiving this revelation because the things of God are eternal. **Hallelujah!** Isn't that wonderful?

Two thousand years later, we are receiving something that God gave to Jesus, who gave it to an angel, who gave it to John, who gave it to the Church, and now we are receiving this prophecy from God. It's hugely impressive.

➤ V.2; 'The testimony of Jesus Christ'

This is what the book is about. John will report and testify to the Word of God, '**to all things that he saw.**'

➤ V.3; 'Blessed...'

The Book of Revelation uses the expression '*blessed*' seven times.

'**Blessed is he who reads**' The original Greek is singular, blessed is he who reads. '**and those who hear.**' However, the emphasis is on '**those who keep.**' At that time, very few people knew how to read. Therefore, there was a blessing for those who could read. You might ask: Why does it not say those who read and those who hear? Aren't those who read already hearing?

However, few could read, and God emphasized through John those who read and those who hear. Both are blessed, but only if they keep the Word.

➤ 'For the time is near.'

You say: two thousand years have passed. Is it really near? Indeed, two thousand years have passed since all this was written.

There are two Greek words translated as time in our Bibles: '*chronos*' and '*kairos*.' The word '*chronos*,' from which chronology comes, means '*an indeterminate time*' or '*time in general.*' However, the word '*kairos*' determines a '*specific time or period.*' Here, in **V.3**, the word is '*kairos*,' meaning the specific time or period is near.

Since creation, we have studied the following periods: the period of Adam and Eve, innocence; the period of Cain and Abel, consciousness; the period of Noah, the formation of nations; the period of Abraham, the promise; and the period of the law and the Church. **V.3** says that this is the period in which these things will happen, and this period is near. This period is the one in which the Church is being formed. It is called the '*last days*.' This period, called '*the last days*,' goes beyond the Church but includes it. That is why the text says it is near and that there will be no other. What will the next period be? The Millennium. However, by the time the Millennium comes, everything reported here will have already happened.

⇒ Revelation 1:4~8

- In the entire Bible, no summary presents the Trinity and the redemptive work of Jesus as completely as the one we read here in so few words. Only the Holy Spirit could have made such a complete summary.

How do we normally begin a letter? With the author's introduction and greetings. In **V.4~6**, the author or authors introduce themselves. Since the Trinity forms one God, you can speak in the singular or plural. Many people claim there is no direct evidence of the Trinity, yet this passage is impressive.

- **V.4: 'Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come...'**

This is the name of God the Father – the eternal **I AM** – and of the **Trinity**.

- **'And from the seven Spirits who are before His throne'**

But are there seven spirits, or just one? How strange! In other passages of the Book of Revelation, the Holy Spirit is described as seven spirits. What does this description refer to? It does not refer to seven Holy Spirits, but rather to the Holy Spirit in his complete form and total manifestation. In the study on the Church, didn't we say that the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit will leave the Earth when the Church is raptured? The Holy Spirit will not leave the earth, but his restraining ministry will be removed.

This description in Revelation refers to the Holy Spirit's complete manifestation in His ministries.

⇒ **Isaiah 11:1~2**; Full Manifestation of the Holy Spirit: Each lamp on the Jewish menorah (*the lampstand*) represents one of the ministries of the Holy Spirit described here.

- Spirit of the Lord
 - Spirit of wisdom and understanding
 - Spirit of counsel and might
 - Spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord
- The Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible, and the '*number 7*' is His trademark. The Devil mocks the number 7, calling it the number of lies, but in the Word of God, it symbolizes '*everything that is complete and perfect*.' Everything that is complete and perfect has the number seven, which '*represents God*'. In how many days did God create the earth, including His rest? Revelation mentions seven bowls, seven trumpets, and seven seals. Revelation is the Book that completes God's judgments, which are perfect. Seven is the number of God, while '*the number 6 symbolizes man because he is incomplete*'. The beast has the number 666 because it is the number of '*man*'. Seven is the number of God.

➤ **V.5; 'And from Jesus Christ...'**

Did you see the Trinity? Jesus' identification with the Father is so profound that the description of the Father can also describe the Son, and vice versa (*The Father and I are one*). Here, Jesus presents himself with three titles: the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the Earth. Through these titles, Jesus's saving work is revealed:

⇒ **John 18:37**; Jesus is the '*faithful witness to the truth*' because he died to bear this testimony. Be faithful until death! (⇒ **1 John 5:9~12**).

⇒ **Acts 26:23** and ⇒ **1 Corinthians 15:20**; Jesus is the firstborn and the first to rise from the dead never to die again. He is the first man of the new race. While the '*faithful witness*' speaks of his death, the title '*firstborn from the dead*' speaks of his resurrection.

⇒ What is the third title? '*Prince (Sovereign) of the Kings of the Earth.*' This title speaks of his glorification. ⇒ **Revelation 19:16** shows Jesus being glorified during his second coming to Earth as the '*King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*'

Death, resurrection, and glorification show the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

➤ '**To Him who loved us...**'

He loves us in the present tense. This shows that His love works constantly in our lives. It is not that He loved us, loves us, or will always love us; it is that He loves us in the present moment. This demonstrates the constancy of God's love for us. When studying Revelation (*as with the entire Bible*), we must pay close attention to verb tenses, titles, speakers, and context. Any change has an influence in understanding (⇒ **Matthew 5:18**).

➤ '**To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood**'

Some translations say, '*freed us from our sins.*' The meaning is the same. Those who have Jesus Christ as their Savior are freed and washed. (⇒ **Revelation 22:14**).

➤ **V.6: 'And has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.'**

The Book of Revelation addresses those who love and have been freed by God, not those who have been made saints. However, it draws our attention to one important fact: we are kings and priests of God. We must act in accordance with the interests of the Kingdom of God on this earth. We are constituted priests of God. If we analyze the priestly garments described in the Old Testament, we see that the priest wore a gold plate on his forehead on his miter that read: '**HOLY TO THE LORD**' (⇒ **Exodus 28:36~38**)

Church! The most lacking quality in the Church of Jesus Christ is holiness. Remember, we are all priests and kings. Visibly, it must be written on our foreheads: Holy to the Lord. Is that written on your forehead? On mine? When people look at us, do they see that? '**HOLY TO THE LORD,**' '**HOLINESS TO THE LORD**'? Let us examine ourselves and remember that we wear the priest's garment everywhere we go. Everyone should see **HOLINESS** on our foreheads.

➤ **'Amen.'**

'Amen' is a title of Jesus; he is called **'The Amen'** (⇒ **Revelation 3:14**). What does amen mean? It means *'it is true, so be it.'* Amen is a Hebrew word and a transliteration from the original language. In many passages, Jesus says, *'Truly, truly, I say to you.'* In Hebrew, it would be *'amen, amen'* I say to you.

➤ **V.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. Even so, Amen.'**

⇒ **Zechariah 12:10**; the repentance of Jerusalem.

See the text about Israel. On the day Jesus returns, the armies of the Antichrist will surround Israel. The spirit of grace and supplication will fall upon the nation, and everyone will cry out. Jesus will return and the people of Israel will recognize him through the marks on his body. They will weep, repent, and be saved. **V.7** talks about the second coming of Jesus.

➤ **'He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him...'** Will every eye see Jesus when he returns to the Church? No, only those in the Church will see him when we reach the air. **'All the tribes of the earth will mourn over him.'** Why does it say *'tribes'* instead of *'all nations'* or *'all countries'*? Because it refers to Israel. Will the Church mourn when Jesus comes to take her? No, she will ascend singing. Here, however, it is speaking of the 2nd coming of Jesus to Earth. **'Yes. Amen.'**

➤ **V.8: 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, says the Lord, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.'**

The Almighty appears ten times in the N.T. It is a title that appears frequently in the O.T.; it is El Shaddai. Nine of the ten appearances in the New Testament are in Revelation, and it appears only once in ⇒ **2 Corinthians**. Note how Revelation is similar to the O.T.

At the beginning of the chapter, the Trinity introduces itself and gives greetings. *'The Lord says: I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.'* Does anyone doubt the origin of this letter? Who signed it? It is the Trinity – God, the Almighty – writing this letter directly to us, so pay close attention.

⇒ **Revelation 1:9~11**

➤ **V.9:** Now comes the one whom God used to transcribe everything for us. **'I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ...'** These are three words with which the Church must be remarkably familiar: tribulation, kingdom, and perseverance. Receive what the Holy Spirit reveals to you and then meditate on it. Being with Christ involves affliction (tribulation), the kingdom of God, and perseverance.

We must carefully examine God's Word and our lives. Some people say that before they truly accepted Jesus, everything was in order, but now everything is more troubled. Therefore, we can conclude that this person has truly accepted Jesus into their life. The idea that we should receive Jesus and everything will be calm and wonderful, and that there will be no more problems, is a lie. You receive Jesus and are saved, yet you remain in the world, in enemy territory.

How can there be no problems then? What will happen is that you will experience a peace that surpasses all understanding, and you will be victorious. It is wonderful! There will be tribulation, but you will not give up your salvation, will you? No, but believe me, you are in enemy territory, and life will not be easy. You accepted Jesus, and now the trouble begins! **Tribulation** and affliction are not necessary for us to experience, nor is it necessary for us to be advanced in age like John was when he was **on the island called of Patmos**. Why was John there? **'was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.'**

That is right. The Roman Empire punished him because he testified about Jesus. John was a Christian. How does John begin V.9, writing to the Church and to us? **'Fellow!, on the afflictions in the kingdom and in perseverance.'**

Perseverance, Church! Don't run away when affliction (*tribulation*) comes; persevere. It is glorious! There is no greater glory in this world or the universe than persevering through affliction and witnessing the Lord's victory. Nothing compares to that, right.

➤ **V.10: 'I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day,'**

There is a theological dispute over the meaning of the expression *'the Lord's day.'* Many claim that *'the Lord's day'* refers to Sunday, arguing that John was caught up in the Spirit before God on a Sunday. However, I find this difficult to accept. I believe that *'the day of the Lord'* refers to the period of tribulation. Remember when we studied the expression *'Day of the Lord,' the great and terrible day of the Lord?* After being caught up, John will receive the revelation and write about the Tribulation and what he saw. The Day of the Lord is the period of Tribulation. John was given the revelation as if he were present during the Tribulation.

➤ **V.11: 'What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches...'**

Who was the letter, or book, sent to? It was sent to the 7 Churches, which represent the whole Church.

- Let us read the verses we have studied again and receive the blessings of those who read and hear them. However, let us emphasize being those who keep them.

⇒ **Revelation 1:1~11**