

The Revelation of Jesus Christ



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The Authority and Hope of Jesus Christ

Revelation 1:9-20

What did you or do you expect the Christian life to be like?

John lived out his final days as a criminal on the island of Patmos, having been found guilty of the crime of being a part of an illegal religious sect. Roman persecution of Christian was a real and constant threat, one that John knew too well. Of the original disciples, John at this point stood alone (and in exile nonetheless). During this period, Jesus Christ revealed to John the coming end.

John hears the voice of God calling first, and turns to see who stands behind him. The voice is described as a loud trumpet, heralding His coming. There is a strength and power behind its timbre. Jesus tells John to write down what he is encountering and to spread it to the churches. This is the God given word to be delivered to all the churches. Furthermore, Jesus amidst the seven lampstands, holding the seven stars. He is intimately involved in the details of the life of the church.

The Imagery of Jesus Christ

As John beholds Jesus, this passage is filled with imagery that readers at the time would have readily understood. Drawing primarily from previous visions given to Zechariah and Daniel in previous prophetic visions and apocalyptic literature, Jesus represents himself as the fulfillment of the Old Covenant, the son of man come to die for mankind, and the High King over all eternity.

- **Robe and Golden Sash** - Jesus is our Great High Priest, interceding on behalf of mankind for their sake to approach the Father.
- **Hair White As Wool** - Jesus is the ageless Ancient of Days that spans all of time and beyond. .
- **Eyes Like Blazing Fire** - Jesus' vision is all powerful, all seeing and piercing even the strongest of barriers. There is nothing capable of escaping His sight.
- **Feet Like Glowing Bronze** - what Jesus does and where He goes has been refined as a fine metal, pure and holy.
- **Voice Like Rushing Waters** - Jesus' voice speaks with power

and might, with an intimidating authority, giving forth the double edge sword that God cut down or defend.

Jesus is fully divine. The readers of Revelation are immediately reminded of that fact. Although fully man, Jesus is also in carnation, the word made flesh to rule over all mankind as one of them. Furthermore, to die in our place on the cross as an atonement for our sins. Yet, in the end, Jesus reigns in full victory. With His first coming, Christ came to set the captives of sin free. With His second coming, Christ comes to return His people to Himself.

Hope in Persecution

Based on the description that John first encounters, fear would be a legitimate reaction. Jesus does not present himself as one who is weak or powerless. There is strength and authority define the description of Jesus Christ, not weakness or being a push over. Jesus is the Holy, Ageless, and Righteous King who judges the living and the dead, deciding who should be who. It is no wonder that John's reacted by falling as though dead.

Yet, for all of the power of authority that define Jesus Christ, there is much more than that. Jesus Christ came in hope and His return is the institution of that hope. In carrying authority over death and the grave is also the profound ability of carrying authority over life. Those who are in Jesus Christ, having put their faith in Him, have nothing to fear. Their hope is secure in the eternal victory and reign of God.

Hope is fragile. It can be easily broken and shattered to pieces. To often people's hope is placed in the hands of others only to find let down and disappointment. It is only when one places their hope in an unchangeable and unbreakable, promised reality that is cannot be destroyed. This hope comes in the form of Jesus Christ. As the church endures persecution, trial, and even death, our hope goes beyond all of those. Just as John could remain hopefully during the end of His life, we too can remain hopeful as well. Our victory is secured in Jesus Christ and our Hope comes from knowing God, being fully united with Him.

Discussion Questions

1. How does John describe his situation in verse 9? Why does John say he is suffering? How does this compare with our preconceived ideas with how faith in Christ would look?
2. What descriptors does John give as he looks at Jesus?
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 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
3. How does John react when He sees Jesus Christ standing before him? Why does he react this way? How does this compare with us when we encounter God?
4. What are the two things of seven and what do they symbolize? How is Jesus' relationship to these items significant and what does it imply?
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 - _____
5. How does Jesus demonstrate that He is the ruler over all things? What descriptions does He give for Himself in verse 18?
6. What are some of the other things we tend to put our hope in as people? Why is Christ superior to these things? Why can we trust Jesus as the source of our hope?
7. How has Jesus provided for you in the past? Where do you need Jesus to provide for you now?