

Jesus In His Glory • Rev. 1:9-20

INTRODUCTION • Read vs. 9-11 • Image of Jesus

1. Are your ideas about Jesus drawn from His movies?
  - a. The Jesus Movie. Jesus of Nazareth. The Greatest Story Ever Told. The Bible miniseries.
  - b. You do know those aren't Jesus. They're actors, reciting lines from a screenplay.
2. The image some church people have of Jesus was set for them early on, in the pictures of their **Children's Bible**.
3. It's a lot like the images of Jesus in stained glass windows.
  - a. Jesus as Shepherd. Tall white guy w/long flowing brown hair, neatly trimmed facial hair, & kindly blue eyes.
  - b. He holds a staff in one hand and a little lamb in the other.
  - c. Or, it's the scene where He's seated on a rock and a dozen children are gathered round, one sitting on His lap as He tells them a story; and they're all looking at Him in silent & rapt attention.
4. That's the image many, maybe most, have of Jesus.
5. We're going to nuke that today. Really JOHN is going to demolish it ion what he writes here.

The Fear to End All Fear

1. Even though there's a title for this message, as I shared last week, as we go thru Revelation, we're studying vXv.
  - a. It's less a sermon and more a bible study.
  - b. But the verses we're looking at today are John's vision of Jesus in His glory.
2. There's **another** title I considered, because there **is** something important for us to glean from these vs.
3. That title was "The Fear to End All Fear."
4. Why that title well suits our study today will become clear later.

Recap

1. As we begin, let's briefly remember what we learned last week: It's About **Jesus**
2. Look at v. 1 –  
The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants.
3. This week we **see** that revelation.

Vs. 9-11

<sup>9</sup>I, John, both your brother & companion in the tribulation & kingdom & patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God & for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

1. As I mentioned last week, John was the last of the original Apostles.
  - a. The Church had grown steadily in many places around the Roman Empire, really without much attention paid to it until the time of the Emperor Domitian in 81 AD.
  - b. Domitian was a tyrant who demanded to be worshipped as a god.
    - 1) He did this for **political** reasons. The Empire had becomes so large it was difficult to manage.
    - 2) Domitian thought to **unite** it by requiring an oath of loyalty to himself as the **embodiment** of the Roman spirit.
    - 3) The Emperors of Rome had claimed deity since the time of August but none had DEMANDED worship.
    - 4) Domitian was the first; and that spelled trouble for the Christians.
      - a) Pagans had no problem worshipping Domitian; they just added one more god to their list of many.
      - b) But Christians believe in only 1 God & can worship of Jesus.
    - 5) Domitian was furious & ordered a general persecution of Christians where ever they were found.
    - 6) He especially went after their leaders; arresting and torturing them before executing them, in the hope it would terrorize the rest.
  - c. So John was arrested & tortured by being placed in a vat of boiling oil. Nothing happened.
  - d. When they pulled him out, there wasn't a mark on him.
  - e. The men charged with dealing with him were spooked.
    - 1) They didn't' want to get on the bad side of the God that was obviously protecting John,
    - 2) So they did the only thing they thought they could; they shipped him off to a barren rock of an island in the middle of the Med; the prison island of Patmos. Think **Alcatraz**.

3) At least there He couldn't continue his infernal preaching.

f. It was there John was given the visions & message of Revelation.

g. When Domitian died, the persecution was pulled back and John was allowed to return to the city of Ephesus where he spent his last couple years.

<sup>10</sup> I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, & I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

2. Scholars love to debate what John means by he was "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day."

a. Some think it just means he was in his little cave there on Patmos; it was Sunday, so he was worshipping God.

b. Others think the awkward grammar John uses here means he was transported in the Spirit to the Day of the Lord; that is, the end times.

3. Honestly: Both have about equal evidence, so we can't say for certain. But either way; it doesn't really matter because it's what he says **next** that's important.

I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

4. ? : You ever have a dream, but when you wake up, it's hard to remember?

a. Bits & pieces are clear, but the overall narrative of the dream is lost.

b. And by mid-day, you've forgotten it.

5. What John saw was **note** like that.

6. This was a wide-awake **vision**; not a foggy dream because the night before he ate too many jalapenos.

7. It was **so** real & clear, there was a **definite locality** to it.

a. He heard a voice **behind** him.

b. And it was **clear**, like a **trumpet**; not a whisper, not something he wondered if he really heard.

c. It said

<sup>11</sup> "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,"

8. Last week in vs. 7&8 we saw these titles applied to **Jesus**

9. In Isaiah 44:6 we read this –

"Thus says [**Yahweh/Jehovah**], the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I *am* the First and I *am* the Last; besides Me *there is* no God.

a. Jesus IS Jehovah / Yahweh!

b. That's a bit of a surprise to Jehovah's Witnesses who don't believe in Jesus.

c. The **real** Jehovah's Witnesses aren't the folk who go door to door with The Watchtower.

d. Christians are the real JW's!

10. Jesus tells John . . .

"What you see, write in a book and send it to the 7 churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, & to Laodicea."

11. Jesus tells John to **write** 12 times in Rev.

a. He's so amazed by what he sees he just stands there, so Jesus tells him to **keep** recording.

12. John was to send this msg to 7 specific congregations in Asia Minor.

a. There were many more than these 7 but these were selected for a reason we'll see later.

b. The order in which their given marks a rough oval, the route a postal carrier would make.

Vs. 12-18

<sup>12</sup> Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw 7 golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup> & in the midst of the 7 lampstands **One** like the Son of Man, clothed w/a garment down to the feet & girded about the chest w/a golden band.

1. When John turned he saw 7 golden lamps.

a. These were like floor standing lamps – but made of solid gold.

b. Their light came from an oil lamp at the top.

2. Having just heard about the 7 churches & now immediately seeing these 7 lamps, John saw them arranged in a circle – with Jesus standing in the center.

3. Now, we need to jump ahead to v20 where the meaning of all this is given.

<sup>20</sup> The mystery of the 7 stars which you saw in My right hand, & the 7 golden lampstands: The 7 stars are the angels of the 7 churches, and the 7 lampstands which you saw are the 7 churches.

4. We'll see the 7 stars a bit later. For now just note what the 7 golden lamps represent; the 7 churches.

5. Remember who's seeing this John.
  - a. As a Jew, the very first thing John would think of when he turned & saw 7 golden lamps is the 7-branched golden menorah in the temple in Jerusalem.
  - b. It stood in the Holy Place as a symbol of God's covenant with Israel and how they were to be a light to the world.
  - c. That was an assignment they'd failed in.
6. Now John sees the 7 branches made into 7 separate lamps; & each of them represents a local church.
  - a. Remember what Jesus said to His disciples in Matt. 5?  
You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father In heaven.-
  - b. In Phil 2, Paul says believers ought to "shine as lights in the world." [v15]
7. Before Jesus, everyone had to go to the temple in Jerusalem to worship and learn about God – symbolized by that 1, 7-branched menorah.
8. Since Jesus, God's light is found where-ever His people, indwelt by His Spirit, gather to worship and grow in Him.
9. This is why John sees Jesus in the midst of the 7 lamps. Jesus is in His Church, His people!
10. The Church is HIS; Once again It's all about Jesus!
11. Before we go on: What are these lamps made of? **Gold. Solid** gold, BTW.
  - a. They are not made of wood or stone. They aren't copper or bronze. They're gold.
  - b. They are precious! Special – of great value.
  - c. The world may despise us.
    - 1) Critics point out our many flaws.
    - 2) Skeptics mock us.
    - 3) And even some within our own ranks go after each other to tear down.
    - 4) Never forget that Jesus LOVES His Church! She is **precious** to Him.
    - 5) And one day soon, He will come to rescue his bride from her critics & the skeptics.
12. Standing in the midst of the lamps John sees 1 *like* the **Son of Man**; Jesus's favorite title for Himself.
  - a. This is a MAN, but one whose glory is unlike any other's.
  - b. John was well acquainted w/the **human** Jesus.
    - 1) He'd spent a little over 3 yrs w/Him.
    - 2) He leaned on Jesus chest at the Last Supper // They were close = Pals.
    - 3) John had only known the Jesus whose glory was **veiled, laid aside** during the Incarnation.
    - 4) Oh, there was a brief moment when Jesus' glory was allowed to shine out; at the Transfiguration.
      - a) But what it was too bright to bear.
      - b) Here John is allowed to **gaze on** & really **SEE** Jesus in His glory.
13. What he sees is Jesus arrayed **as a High Priest**.
  - a. His robe reaches to His feet. Around His waist is a gold band.
  - b. Again, this sounds like the temple & its priest.
  - c. It's said when the Jewish high priest wore his uniform, there was no one in all history more beautifully arrayed.
  - d. What we need to remember is that the temple and high priest were just **models** of Heaven.
  - e. Imperfect examples of that reality.
  - f. Shadows that can only point to the light.
14. So as beautiful and glorious as the high priest may have been, his uniform was but a **costume** compared to what John sees here Jesus in His glory.
 

<sup>14</sup> His head & hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, & His eyes like a flame of fire; <sup>15</sup> His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, & His voice as the sound of many waters;
15. It borders on blasphemy for I or any other to think we can comment on this description of Jesus' glory.
  - a. I worry our words just make a fog that obscures.
  - b. Oh Lord, give me grace to help Your people SEE You as John did.
16. Men wore **full beards** because it was a mark of maturity.
  - a. **White** hair meant one was advanced in years – and that meant **wisdom**.
  - b. The ancients would consider **our** obsession w/youth as insane.

- c. They regarded youth as something to endure as you became mature & wise w/the passing of years.
  - d. The problems of old-age were to them just a necessary part of the **privilege** of being old.
  - e. The elderly were recognized as a great treasure for the wisdom they provided their family & community.
17. Jesus' **white-hair**-covered-head speaks of His wisdom; His skill as Counselor.
18. But lest that move us to think of Him as all old & wrinkly, bent over & crippled by arthritis; he adds His **eyes were like a flame of fire**.
- a. Not filmly w/age. Bright, piercing, clear, & alert.
  - b. These are eyes to make your heart go all pitter-patter.
19. As John looked down to below the hem of Jesus' priestly robe he saw **His feet** like brass just taken from the furnace.
- a. Brass is used in the temple for things related to God's judgment of sin.
  - b. It's fitting John sees Jesus' feet as **freshly cast brass**.
  - c. In His first coming, J fulfilled the promise given all the way back in Gen. 3 that the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head, but in the act would have his heel bruised.
  - d. Jesus defeated satan at the cross – but it cost His life.
  - e. The Resurrection ensures Jesus' eternal victory over sin & death.
  - f. The bruised heel has been healed. & soon Jesus will put His foot down **once & for all**.
20. Jesus' **voice is as the sound of many waters**.
- a. If you've ever stood at the bottom of Vernal Falls in Yosemite, or even better, overlooked Niagara Falls – that's the idea here.
  - b. It's so loud, nothing else can be heard.
  - c. The very air thrums w/the energy of sound.
  - d. When Jesus speaks, no other can.
  - e. He has true Veto-power.
21. The vision John's had to this point is pretty straight-forward. Nothing too bizarre has come up. That's about to change
- <sup>16</sup> He had in His right hand 7 stars, out of His mouth went a sharp 2-edged sword, & His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength.
21. We'll look at the 7 stars when we get to v20.
22. How are we to understand this **sword** coming out of Jesus' mouth?
- a. While the **image** is odd, the **symbolism** isn't.
  - b. Heb. 4:12 likens God's Word to a sharp, 2-edged sword.
  - c. In Eph. 6:17, Paul calls the Word of God the Sword of the Spirit.
  - d. Jesus isn't some character in a Marvel movie here, wading down Main Street, a big ole' sword coming out of his mouth, knocking down buildings & flipping over cars.
  - e. The idea is that what comes out of Jesus mouth is the Word of God because He IS God!
  - f. And it's sharp all-round. It does what He intends it to do.
  - g. Jesus is never dense or dull. We may be, but HE **never** is.
  - h. later in ch19, we'll see J smite the rebellious kingdoms w/the sword of His mouth.
    - 1) He doesn't need to wage war w/weapons; His Word is enough.
    - 2) He who spoke & a billion galaxies sprang into existence, needs only to speak a word & all the power of satan is brought to an end.
    - 3) "The prince of darkness grim, We tremble not for him.  
His rage we can endure, For lo, his doom is sure; 1 little word will fell him."
23. John says Js' face glowed w/a radiance like the Summer sun at noon in a cloudless sky.
- a. John could see this w/o going blind because he was In the Spirit.
  - b. You & I will see Jesus in His glory too – but only after we've been changed from these mortal shells into our resurrection bodies.
  - c. 1 John 3:2 says we'll see Jesus face to face after that glorious change.

<sup>17</sup> And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.

24. When confronted w/Jesus' glory, John was wiped out.

- a. His strength fled, & his little brain shut off. It was all just too much.  
But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First & the Last.
25. Jesus laid His hand on John & comforted Him.
- That Jesus told him ***not to be afraid*** means John’s problem was ***what?***
  - He was afraid; terrified – as every 1 of us would be if we’d encountered what He did.
  - John wasn’t scared Jesus would do something ***to*** him.
  - He was undone by Jesus’ goodness, His holiness & glory.
  - There was just no way he could stay who & what he was in light of what he now knew.
26. There was only one response to the revelation of Jesus’ glory John has seen > Abject Fear!
27. And ***because*** John responded the right way, w/such fear, Jesus comes to lift it.
28. And note how He does: He ***first*** tells John NOT to be afraid, ***then*** reminds John who He is.  
I am the First & the Last. <sup>18</sup> I am He who lives, & was dead, & behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.
29. How does Jesus reminding John of these great titles for Himself still his fear?
- “Don’t fear John. I’m just the Eternal God, Creator of All Things, Goal of Creation.
  - Resurrected & Ever Living Lord. Oh – Yeah, & I have all authority over Death & Hell.”
  - That all might seem to ADD to John’s distress, not ease it.
  - It’s like when someone calls in to a national radio program & says how nervous they are & the host says, “Don’t worry, there’s only 14 million people listening to you right now.”
30. But the fact is, what Jesus said & did here DID ease John’s fear Forever!
- You’ve got to ***see*** this.
  - John passes out. He’s lying there totally undone. Not a bit of either physical, spiritual or emotional strength in him. He’s ***paralyzed*** by fear.
  - Jesus lays His ***right*** hand on John, the hand that bestows favor.
  - And He speaks these words of revelation about Who He is ***while His hand is still there on John.***
  - Jesus isn’t speak ***at*** John. He’s not even speaking ***to*** him. He’s speaking ***INTO*** him.
  - John’s very right fear of Jesus has paved the way for Jesus to pour His revelation into John.
  - What John has SEEN, now becomes part of who John IS >>  
Someone in whom Jesus lives IN HIS GLORY!
31. And THAT forever cured John of ALL fear.
32. The fear of God means we don’t have to fear anything else.
33. And it isn’t until we’ve conquered fear that we can begin to really live.
34. This is why Proverbs say the Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.
35. What do we have to fear if Jesus, the Eternal One Who conquered sin & death is our Savior & Best Friend?
36. We’ve got to understand that Jesus didn’t just show John this & tell him to write it to give Bible teachers something to talk about and authors something to write books about.
37. This vision transformed John & it’s meant to do precisely the same for us.
38. If by faith we can see Jesus in His glory, we’ll never need to worry about how crazy the world’s getting; how insane the culture seems.
39. So Jesus says
- <sup>19</sup> Write the things which you have seen, & the things which are, & the things which will take place after this.
40. This is the ***outline*** for the entire book. John is to write about . . .
- 1) What ***he’s seen***; the vision of Jesus in Glory of ch1
  - 2) The ***things which are***; the 7 Churches of chs 2-3
  - 3) & ***the things which shall be after this***; that’s the future which is laid out in chs. 4-22
41. Now Jesus explains the 7 stars & lamps.
- <sup>20</sup> The mystery of the 7 stars which you saw in My right hand, & the 7 golden lampstands: The 7 stars are the angels of the 7 churches, and the 7 lampstands which you saw are the 7 churches.
42. We’re out of time, but that’s okay because we’ll take a closer look this vs in 2 wks when we look at the letter to the first Church – at Ephesus.
- As we saw earlier, the 7 lamps Jesus stood in the middle of represented the 7 churches of Asia Minor this letter was addressed to.

- b. The 7 stars were the 7 angels, or literally, *messengers* of those same churches.
- c. Knowing the ministry of the *pastor* in a local church, it's best to understand these stars as pastors – the guys who bring God's message to His people.
- d. But as I said, we'll get into that more in 2 weeks.