

Revelation, Chapter 1

Author, Nature, and Purpose of the Revelation (Rev 1)

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Introduction

Winston Churchill characterized the former Soviet Union as “a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma”. As we discussed last week, many hold this view about the book of Revelation!

- If embrace this idea, we are likely to shy away from the book that contains so much richness that we are in awe
- Revelation holds a high view of God’s inspired Word.
 - Of the 404 verses in Revelation, 278 allude to Old Testament Scriptures (70%)
- It re-emphasizes the depth of man’s sinfulness.
- It affirms God’s love for us, and that Christ releases us from our sins by His sacrifice (Rev 1:5)
- It again clearly states the absolute deity of Christ, “I am the first and the last.”
 - Isa 44:6, *The Lord, the king of Israel, is the Lord All-Powerful, who saves Israel. This is what he says: “I am the beginning and the end. I am the only God.*
- It clarifies and details prophecies only hinted at in other books of the bible.
 - Clarity which many obscure by creating allegory, rather than looking at it literally.
 - For example, some views place much the book in the past or the present, rather than the future.

Four Main Views of Revelation

- Preterist View – Believe the events described were fulfilled in AD 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - Revelation itself claims to be prophecy, not history. Plus, it was written in the late AD 90’s
- Historicist View – Viewed as an overview of church history, allegorically describing various events.
 - In order to take this view, scholars have to symbolize everything as actually meaning something else
- Idealist View – Revelation portrays the timeless struggle between good and evil.
 - Viewing Revelation as neither history nor prophecy disconnects it from any real events it portrays.
- Futurist View – Chapters 4-22 describe actual future events.
 - The view results from a literal interpretation of the text. This is our approach to it.
 - Chapter 1 is an intro, and chapters 2-3 are letters to actual churches existing at the time John wrote.

Author - The Apostle John wrote this book!

- He identifies himself four times throughout.
 - 1:1, 1:4, 1:9, 22:8
- John spent a long time in Ephesus, was exiled to Patmos, then returned to Ephesus near the end of his life.
 - Patmos is a short boat ride from Kusadasi, Turkey, the current seaport near ancient Ephesus. (40 mi).
 - John built a house in Ephesus for Mary, the mother of Jesus, which you can visit today. QUESTION: Why?
 - John 19:25-27 NASB, *But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He *said to His mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” 27 Then He *said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” From that hour the disciple took her into his own household.*
 - In AD 135, the ancient historian Justin Martyr, who lived in Ephesus, wrote this about John, “There was a certain man with us, whose name was John, one of the apostles of Christ, who prophesied, by a revelation that was made to him, that those who believed in our Christ would dwell a thousand years in Jerusalem; and that thereafter the general, and, in short, the eternal resurrection of all men would likewise take place.”

- Many other early church historians also confirm John’s authorship.
- As far as we can determine, John died a natural death as an old man in the late 90’s AD. It is generally accepted that he was just a teenager when he walked with Christ during his earthly ministry.
- John’s tomb is located just a couple of miles from the city center of Ephesus.

Timing - It was written in about 96 AD during the end of the reign of emperor Domitian

- John most likely fled to Asia Minor and to Ephesus after the Jewish revolt against Rome, 66 – 70 AD
- The churches to which he was writing were quite healthy in the **mid-sixties** after Paul’s missionary journeys.
 - Paul’s farewell speech, Acts 20:17-31, *From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. 18 And when they had come to him, he said to them,*
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 - *“You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in [a]Asia, how I was with you the whole time, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me [b]through the plots of the Jews; 20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and [c]from house to house, 21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And now, behold, bound by the [d]Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. 24 But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.*
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 - *25 “And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my face. 26 Therefore, I [e]testify to you this day that I am [f]innocent of the blood of all men. 27 For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. 28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you [g]overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He [h]purchased [i]with His own blood. 29 I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.*
- Yet, by the time John wrote Revelation, they had already started seeing decline, and were experiencing various issues.
- Also, the second century church father Irenaeus wrote, “ We will not, however, incur the risk of pronouncing positively as to the name of Antichrist [my thought: they wanted to know back then as well]; for if it were necessary that his name should be distinctly revealed in this present time, it would have been announced by him who beheld the apocalyptic vision [Revelation]... towards the end of Domitian’s reign. [96 AD]
- The churches now were facing severe persecution, emperor worship was everywhere, and false teachers HAD crept in, teaching “destructive heresies”.

Revelation is prophecy. Many of us would love to know the future!

- Unbelievers look to astrology, horoscopes, Tarot cards, psychics, Palm Reading, the Farmer’s Almanac. But who knows the end from the beginning? Who is the first and the last? Why would we go anywhere else?
 - *1 Sam 28:7-14, 7 Then Saul said to his servants, “Seek for me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her.” And his servants said to him, “Behold, there is a woman who is a medium at En-dor.” 8 Then Saul disguised himself by putting on other clothes, and went, he and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night; and he said, “Conjure up for me, please, and bring up for me whom I shall [a]name to you.” 9 But the woman said to him, “Behold, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off those who are mediums and spiritists from the land. Why are you then laying a snare for my life to bring about my death?” 10 Saul vowed to her by the Lord, saying, “As the Lord lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing.” 11 Then the woman said, “Whom shall I bring up for*

you?” And he said, “Bring up Samuel for me.” 12 When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice; and the woman spoke to Saul, saying, “Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul.” 13 The king said to her, “Do not be afraid; but what do you see?” And the woman said to Saul, “I see a [b]divine being coming up out of the earth.” 14 He said to her, “What is his form?” And she said, “An old man is coming up, and he is wrapped with a robe.” And Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and did homage.

- God had left Saul because of disobedience, so he consulted a medium
- Are we failing to hear from God for the same reason of disobedience?
- I only need to know the future one day in advance, and I could be a billionaire!
 - QUESTION: Does God know the future? Yes! He plans the future!
- Revelation is the most detailed look at future events of any book in the entire bible.
- So, let’s jump in to Chapter 1! I will start slow, and then speed it up toward the end.

Prologue (Rev 1:1-6 NLT)

1 This is a revelation from[a] Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon[b] take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, 2 who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

3 God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near.

John’s Greeting to the Seven Churches

4 This letter is from John to the seven churches in the province of Asia.[c]

Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit[d] before his throne; 5 and from Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world.

All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. 6 He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

Twelve characteristics that reveal Revelation’s essential nature (Rev 1:1-6):

1. The Revelation

- The Greek word occurs 18 times in the New Testament
 - i. Luke 2:32, *A Light of revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.*”
 - ii. Rom 8:18, *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*
 - iii. 1 Cor 1:7, *so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ*
- What does Revelation reveal? Quick Summary...
 - i. It warns of the danger of sin.
 - ii. It instructs about the need for holiness.
 - iii. It displays the strength of Christ.
 - iv. That believers must overcome Satan.
 - v. The glory and majesty of God.
 - vi. The constant reverent worship that surrounds His throne.
 - vii. The end of human history.
 - 1. The final political setup of the world.
 - 2. The career of Antichrist.
 - 3. The battle of Armageddon.
 - viii. Christ’s earthly reign during the Millennial Kingdom.

- ix. The Great White Throne of Judgement.
- x. The “recreation” of the new heavens and the new earth
- xi. Christ's ultimate victory over all human and demonic oppression
- xii. The New Jerusalem - God now lives with his people!
 1. Rev 21:3-5, *I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” And the one sitting on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new!” And then he said to me, “Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true.”*

2. Of Jesus Christ – The Central Theme

- The whole bible really is about Jesus:
 - i. John 5:39, *You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me.*
- But Revelation emphasizes and gives us specific insights about Him (10 in just the first chapter):
 - i. The faithful witness (we can believe his testimony).
 - ii. The first to rise (the firstborn) from the dead (humor me for a minute here).
 1. Acts 25:18-19 NLT (words of Festus while Paul was his prisoner): *But the accusations made against him weren’t any of the crimes I expected. 19 Instead, it was something about their religion and a dead man named Jesus, who Paul insists is alive.*
 2. QUESTIONS: Is Jesus alive? Some Christians act as if Jesus died 2000 years ago!
 - a. What does He look like?
 - b. Does He have a physical body?
 - c. Where is He right now?
 3. Many Christians have a faulty view of resurrection.
 - a. Just this past weekend, Nate’s Dad thinking it’s just a spiritual event.
 - b. 1 Cor 15:12 NLT, *But tell me this—since we preach that Christ rose from the dead, why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead?*
 - i. Resurrection (Gr: anastasis) to stand on your feet again, to recover.
 - ii. We’ll dig in much deeper into this in our Rapture session!
 - iii. Ruler of the Kings of the Earth
 - iv. The Alpha and Omega
 - v. The one who was and is to come.
 - vi. The Almighty
 - vii. The First and the Last
 - viii. The Living One
 - ix. I was dead, and behold I live forevermore.
 - x. I have the keys to death and of Hades.

3. Which God gave Him.

- The book of Revelation has a divine source, and the book is given by the Father to the Son

4. To show to his bond-servants.

- QUESTION: What’s a bond-servant (Gr: doulos)? – used throughout NT scripture
 - i. Someone who serves (becomes a slave)
 - ii. But in the NT, the implication as followers of Christ is always willingly, as willing slaves
 - iii. Rom 6:16-18, *Don’t you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living. 17 Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we have given you. 18 Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living.*
 1. Present yourself – you yourself stand before God, not by obligation! No one made you!
 2. No one is making you a slave. You decided for yourself (with God’s prompting of course)

- iv. See Exo 21:5-6, *But the slave may declare, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children. I don't want to go free.' 6 If he does this, his master must present him before God.[a] Then his master must take him to the door or doorpost and publicly pierce his ear with an awl. After that, the slave will serve his master for life.*
 - Show (Gr: deiknuo) to point out, to present to the sight, to cause to see.
 - God causes his bond-servants to see the Revelation which Jesus is sharing with us in this book!
 - Revelation was given by the Father to His Son to show His bond-servants (something)
 - i. This book is not intended for unbelievers! No wonder most people find it incomprehensible.
 - ii. God doesn't "show" this to those who are not his bond-servants. They don't get it!
 - 1. 1 Cor 2:14 NLT, *But people who aren't spiritual[a] can't receive these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them and they can't understand it, for only those who are spiritual can understand what the Spirit means.*
5. The things which must soon take place.
- Revelation's primary emphasis (Chaps 4-22) is on what will take place in the future.
 - We shouldn't be trying to determine when!
 - i. Acts 1:7 NLT, *He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know.*
 - But instead, are called to be on the alert
 - i. Mat 24:42 NLT, *"So you, too, must keep watch! For you don't know what day your Lord is coming.*
 - And how should we be living?
 - i. 2 Pet 3:13-15a NLT, *But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness. 14 And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight. 15 And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved.*
6. And He sent and communicated it by His angel.
- Revelation is the only book in the bible communicated entirely by angels!
 - i. Rev 22:16 NLT, *I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this message for the churches.*
7. To His bond-servant John ...
- Human author-John identifies himself clearly, not just "the disciple whom Jesus loved"
 - John was faithful to write down everything he was told to record.
8. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it.
- To hear means to listen to, to take to heart.
 - We will soon see this phrase repeated, "he who hears, let him hear..."
 - i. So, in a nutshell: Read, Hear, Do
9. For the time is near. This speaks of compelling urgency!
10. **To the Seven Churches** that are in Asia
- These were real churches at the time of John's writing.
11. **FROM HIM... And From the Seven Spirits** who are before His throne.
- This at first glance can seem confusing! This is the first time we have ever heard of "seven spirits".
 - Remember, the number seven is symbolic of perfection.
 - Throughout Revelation you'll see many, many references to sevens – used 31 times in Revelation,
 - Possibilities to explain this:
 - i. Seven-fold "nature" of God's spirit of Isaiah 11:2 (from the Septuagint), speaking about Jesus...
 - 1. *And the spirit of God shall rest on him, the spirit of [1] wisdom and [2] understanding, the spirit of [3] counsel and [4] might, the spirit of [5] knowledge and [6] godliness. The spirit of the [7] fear of God will fill him.*
 - ii. The seven "graces" (giftings) of the Spirit from Romans 12:6-8,

1. *Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if [1] prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if [2] service, in his serving; or he who [3] teaches, in his teaching; or he who [4] exhorts, in his exhortation; he who [5] gives, with liberality; he who [6] leads, with diligence; he who shows [7] mercy, with cheerfulness.*
 - iii. BEST VIEW: The original temple Menorah was a golden lampstand that had seven branches.
 1. not the current “hanukkah”, which has nine, and based on a Maccabean legend.
 2. A pure gold Menorah provided light so the priests could see in the temple, Exo 25:37
 3. Zech 4:2, “[I see] a lampstand all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it” and Zech 4:10, “these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—these are the eyes of the Lord which range to and fro throughout the earth.” **-Where have we heard that phrase before?**
 4. 2 Chr 16:9, *For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His.*
 5. Rev 4:5, *And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;*
 6. Rev 5:6, *Then I saw a Lamb standing in the center of the throne and in the middle of the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb looked as if he had been killed. He had seven horns (symbols of power) and seven eyes (omnipresence, omniscience), which are the seven spirits of God that were sent into all the world.*
 - iv. Bottom line, the Holy Spirit is clearly in view here, but rather than think of him as “seven individual spirits”, perhaps it’s best to think of the seven-fold nature of the Holy Spirit (NLT).
 - v. The sense here is the seven-fold, to and fro, roaming, all-seeing nature of the Holy Spirit doesn’t miss anything, and He has a message for the churches.
12. The gospel is in verse 6! Along with a doxology.

Preview of the Second Coming (Rev 1:7-11) NLT

Rev 1: 7-8, Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see him—even those who pierced him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for him. Yes! Amen! 8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end,”[a] says the Lord God. “I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One.”

1. He comes with the clouds of heaven. Jesus WILL return!
 - a. Dan 7:13, 13 *As my vision continued that night, I saw someone like a son of man[a] coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence.*
 - b. QUESTION: What are the “clouds of heaven”
 - c. QUESTION: How did Jesus ascend? Acts 1:9, 9 *After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him.*
 - d. QUESTION: How will we ascend, whether we are alive or dead?
 - i. 1 Thes 4:17, *we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.*
2. And everyone will see Him – even those who pierced Him.
 - a. QUESTION: Who on earth will see Him when he comes?
 - b. QUESTION: who pierced Him? Was it the Roman soldiers?
 - c. Zech 12:10, *“Then I will pour out a spirit[a] of grace and prayer on the family of David and on the people of Jerusalem. They will look on me whom they have pierced and mourn for him as for an only son. They will grieve bitterly for him as for a firstborn son who has died. 11 *The sorrow and mourning in Jerusalem on that day will be like the great mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddo.*
 - i. Righteous King Josiah died at *Hadad-rimmon* in the valley of Megiddo and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for him.*
3. Yes! Amen!

- a. John adds his own comment here. I believe he is excited.
- 4. Then Jesus explains again who He is!
 - a. He is the beginning and the end.
 - b. And He is timeless.
 - c. And He is the Almighty, so He will bring it to pass.
 - d. QUESTION: What about those who claim Jesus is not equal with the Father? (the Way)

Rev 1:9-11, I, John, am your brother and your partner in suffering and in God's Kingdom and in the patient endurance to which Jesus calls us. I was exiled to the island of Patmos for preaching the word of God and for my testimony about Jesus. 10 It was the Lord's Day, and I was worshiping in the Spirit.[a] Suddenly, I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet blast. 11 It said, "Write in a book[b] everything you see, and send it to the seven churches in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

- 1. John shares in the suffering (and patient endurance) of the saints who are being persecuted.
 - a. Official persecution began when Emperor Nero blamed Christians for burning Rome in 64 AD.
- 2. He was exiled to Patmos as a criminal for "preaching the word of God"
 - a. Notice he also adds his own testimony. Testimonies are powerful!
 - i. People can argue with the word of God, but this is the voice of experience!
- 3. It was the "Lord's Day". QUESTION: What day is that?
- 4. He was "in the Spirit". QUESTION: What does this mean? Was he dreaming? It was a vision.
 - a. Ez 2:2, *The Spirit came into me as he spoke, and he set me on my feet. I listened carefully to his words.*
 - b. Acts 22:17-18, "It happened when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I fell into a trance, 18 and I saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about Me.'
- 5. Loud voice like a loud trumpet blast. It got John's attention!
- 6. The Seven Churches are listed here.
 - a. These are actual churches listed in a circular route throughout Asia Minor (Southwest Turkey)
 - i. Historians confirm it was an ancient postal route, connected by Roman Roads
 - b. But we will soon see they are representative of churches throughout history and even today.

Rev 1:12-13a, Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 13 and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like [a] a son of man,

Rev 1:20, As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

- 1. Seven golden lampstands represent the seven churches.
 - a. The lamps are to provide light. The churches should be making an impact on their culture!
- 2. Seven stars are the "angels" (aggelos – which means messengers) of the seven churches.
 - a. Aggelos are "messengers"
 - b. The bible nowhere else says the churches have angels,
 - i. these are more likely the leaders or pastors. Those who proclaim God's message in the church.
 - c. Notice that Jesus holds them in his hand. He has special concerns for church leadership.
 - i. *John 3:10, Jesus replied, "You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don't understand these things?"*
 - ii. *James 3:1, Dear brothers and sisters,[a] not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged more strictly.*
 - iii. We will see next week that Jesus has concerns to share with the "messengers" of the churches.
- 3. One like a son of man
 - a. Jesus used this to describe himself throughout the NT. This is clearly Jesus in view here.

- b. Dan 7:13, *As my vision continued that night, I saw someone like a son of man[a] coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence.*

Rev 1:13b-16 [He was] clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15 His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. 16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun [b]shining in its strength.

1. He is dressed like a High Priest in the Temple
2. QUESTION: What was the High Priest's role on the OT?
 - a. Heb 4:15, *14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*
3. His appearance does not really need explanation and is not necessarily "symbolic". It is real. He is deity!
 - a. Dan 7:9, *"I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow, And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was [a]ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire.*
4. Eyes like a flame of fire, feet like burnished bronze – He searches out and sees everything, feet: authority!
 - a. Heb 4:13, *13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.*
 - b. Psa 33:13-14, *The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men; 14 From His dwelling place He looks out On all the inhabitants of the earth,*
 - c. Dan 10:6 NLT, *His body looked like a precious gem. His face flashed like lightning, and his eyes flamed like torches. His arms and feet shone like polished bronze, and his voice roared like a vast multitude of people.*
5. Many Waters
 - a. Ez 43:2 NLT, *2 Suddenly, the glory of the God of Israel appeared from the east. The sound of his coming was like the roar of rushing waters, and the whole landscape shone with his glory.*
6. *In His Right Hand he holds the stars (Messengers)*
 - a. *This may signify protection, but even more so, control.*
7. QUESTION: What is the Two edged sword?
 - a. Heb 4:12 NLT, *For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.*
 - b. But, more than this, it is now shown to be an offensive weapon.
 - i. 2Th 2:8 NLT, *8 Then the man of lawlessness will be revealed, but the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by the splendor of his coming.*
 - ii. Rev 2:16 NLT, *Repent of your sin, or I will come to you suddenly and fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*
 - iii. Rev 19:15 NLT, *From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will release the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty, like juice flowing from a winepress.*

Rev 1:17-19 *17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last. 18 I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.[i] 19 "Write down what you have seen—both the things that are now happening and the things that will happen.[j]*

- QUESTION: What sense do you get from Jesus reading this closing section of chapter 1?