



*Revelation 1-3, The First Facet*  
*Revelation 1*

The First Facet: Revelation 1  
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The Fellowship of Ailbe  
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## Revelation 1

Revelation 1 establishes the theme and tone for the entire book of Revelation. This book is not about scary prophesies, current events, or mysterious beasts and events. It's about Jesus, the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, and His will for us, His kingly and priestly people.

John draws us into his fellowship as brethren and companions with him in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. He tells us what to expect and how to approach life in Jesus.

Then he shows us Jesus, exalted in glory. The images are overwhelming. John is nearly crushed by them, and we should be as well. Jesus radiates the glory and power of God, and He calls us, in His call to John, to take up the work of making known His glory to the world.

Revelation opens with a bang of glory, precisely as it will end. Glory to glory: We begin our study where we will end, and where John and Jesus intend us to be all along.

We are happy to provide *Scriptorium* studies in PDF format at no charge. We hope you will find them helpful and encouraging as you press on in your journey toward spiritual maturity with the Lord.

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If you find these studies, or any of our other resources, helpful, we hope you will consider making a contribution to help support our work. You can do so by using the donate button at the website or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 19 Tyler Dr., Essex Junction, VT 05452.

We hope you find this study of Revelation a challenging and stretching experience of journeying more deeply into the Word of God. Thank you for joining us.

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## 1 The Focus of Revelation

*Week 2, Monday: The Revelation concerning Jesus*

The book of Revelation begins in a blaze of glory, radiating from the Lord Jesus Christ, exalted, ruling, and directing His people in the last days before He comes again. The “last days” actually began on the first Christian Pentecost, as Peter explained (Acts 2.14-17), so the message of Jesus in Revelation is for all times and all believers. The Lord appears to John with a commission that comes to every believer: To bear witness to the things we have seen, and which are, and which shall take place in the days to come (v. 19).

The book of Revelation moves from the frightening yet comforting vision of Christ, revealing Himself in glory to John on a desolate Mediterranean island, to Christ revealing Himself in glory at the end of history and in the new heavens and new earth, for all eternity. Glory to glory, and glory throughout: This is the focus of Revelation, and the hope of every believer in Jesus Christ (Rom. 5.1, 2).

Revelation opens with a clear and concise statement of what God intends for the words of divine revelation that follow.

*Read Revelation 1*

*Meditate on Revelation 1.1-3*

1. These verses introduce the book of Revelation. This book is not, in the first instance, a revelation of “last days” events. It is *the* revelation of (or concerning) Jesus Christ, the “word of God, and...the testimony of Jesus Christ.” What does this suggest concerning how we ought to read the book of Revelation? What primarily should be the focus of our learning?
2. Why does John emphasize “read”, “hear”, and “keep” as the way to blessing? What’s the difference between these? How can we make sure that each is part of our time in God’s Word?
3. The following verbs relate to the revelation of Jesus Christ and what God intends for it. Explain each, and comment on how you are presently involved with each (the words are from the NKJV):
  - “show” (v. 1):
  - “take place” (v. 1):
  - “signified” (v. 1):
  - “bore witness” (v. 2):
4. Notice the emphasis in vv. 1 and 3 on the *time parameters* for this Revelation. Is this a book for events far off and yet to come? How do you understand “shortly take place” and “the time *is* near”?
5. In what sense should we expect to be “blessed” from reading, hearing, and keeping the words of God written in the book of Revelation?

*My Reflection*

What can you learn about yourself, or about our calling as disciples of Christ, from Revelation 1.1-3?

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*The Glory of God*

God is revealing His glory, telling us something about Himself or His will, even in these three short verses. What can you discern of the glory of God in Revelation 1.1-3?

*Glory to Glory*

Just as Revelation moves from the glory of chapter 1 to the glory of chapters 19- 22, so our lives move from seeing the glory of God in His Word to living the glory of God in His world. Write a prayer, based on your study of Revelation 1.1-3, to express how you hope to live for God's glory today:

*Memorize*

Our memory verses for this week are Revelation 1.18, 19. Write these verses on an index card, using your preferred translation of the Bible. Carry this with you throughout the week, and spend some time each day working to memorize these verses.

*Closing Prayer*

But You, O LORD, *are* a shield for me,  
My glory and the One who lifts up my head.  
I cried to the LORD with my voice,  
And He heard me from His holy hill...  
Arise, O LORD;  
Save me, O my God!  
For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;  
You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.  
Salvation *belongs* to the LORD.  
Your blessing *is* upon Your people.

Psalm 3.3, 4, 7, 8

## 2 Glory and Dominion!

*Week 2, Tuesday: Grace and Peace*

Do not read John's greeting as merely formulaic. In those days, a typical letter began something like, "Greetings and good health." Nice, but hardly arresting. "Grace to you, and peace..." Now you've got my attention! Write on, brother, and let me get as much of that grace and peace as your pen can scrawl!

*Read Revelation 1*

*Meditate on Revelation 1.4-6*

1. "Grace and peace" set the tone for the book of Revelation. Taken together with what we saw yesterday about the focus of Revelation, how do these words "set" our expectations for reading this book? What should we expect as a result of learning the message of Revelation?
2. Can you see the three Persons of the Trinity in vv. 4-6? How is each characterized? (For the "seven Spirits" look at Isaiah 11.2 and the "sevenfold" character of the Spirit.) What do these various descriptions imply about our relationship to God?
3. John reveals the overarching purpose of the book of Revelation in vv. 5 and 6, beginning with "To Him..." What does John mean by:
  - glory?
  - dominion?

Complete the following: "Jesus gave the book of Revelation of John so that..."

4. Revelation is a book about Jesus. It comes with a message of grace and peace. Its purpose is to bring glory and dominion to Jesus. Note the pattern: *From* heaven, *to* earth (us, the readers), *back to* heaven and King Jesus. This pattern will recur in various ways throughout the book of Revelation. This is how John intends us to think about our lives in these last days. Suggest some applications of this pattern, this way of thinking, for your walk with and work for the Lord:
5. In what sense (v. 6) are we "kings and priests" to God because of what Jesus has done for us? Which of your daily activities look most like:
  - priest?
  - king?

*My Reflection*

Look for yourself in the "mirror" of Revelation 1.4-6: What do you see? What do you learn about yourself? About us as Christians and our calling as disciples? Do you observe any changes, anything you need to "repair" before you head out for your day (Jms. 1.22-25)?

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*The Glory of God*

The full “weight” of the Trinity is reflected at us in these few verses. How should this affect your understanding and experience of God?

*Glory to Glory*

From, to, from: Write a prayer, based on your study of Revelation 1.4-6, to express your sense of how this pattern should operate in your life:

*Memorize*

Our memory verses for this week are Revelation 1.18, 19. Make one observation from Revelation 1.18, 19 that “harmonizes” with anything you’ve learned from Revelation 1.1-6:

Review your memory verse. Pray it back to the Lord, as best you can.

*Closing Prayer*

Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples!  
Shout to God with the voice of triumph!  
For the LORD Most High *is* awesome;  
*He is* a great King over all the earth...  
Sing praises to God, sing praises!  
Sing praises to our King, sing praises!  
For God *is* the King of all the earth...  
God sits on His holy throne...  
He is greatly exalted.

Psalm 47.1, 2, 6-8, 9d

### 3 The Lord Who Is, and Who Is to Come

*Week 2, Wednesday: He is Coming!*

In our passage for today, John is already looking forward to the end. The great advantage believers have over all other people is that we know the end from the beginning. And when you know where things are heading, and that you stand on the eternal-joy-and-blessing side of their outworking, well, you can endure a lot.

And this is what Jesus, speaking through John, wants us to understand.

*Read Revelation 1*

*Meditate on Revelation 1.7, 8*

1. What is your immediate reaction to the phrase, “Behold, He is coming with clouds...”? Where does this promise touch you? In your thinking? Your affections? Your priorities and plans?
2. John mentions that “they who pierced Him” will also see Him. How will they respond? In what sense will Jesus’ return be a “vindication” of His claims while He was on earth?
3. Jesus is the “Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the End.*” What does that mean? What does it mean for:
  - the teaching of the Bible?
  - the Christian life?
  - the course of history?
  - the church?
  - you?
4. Jesus is “the Almighty” (in the Greek, *pantokrator* – Sovereign-Over-All)? What’s the relationship of this to the grace and peace John intends us to gain from Revelation? Do you think most Christians really believe that Jesus is Sovereign-Over-All, “a great King over all the earth”? Why or why not?
5. The book of Revelation will give us many everyday objects that can remind us of the grace and peace Jesus intends us to know, so that we can fulfill our callings as priests and kings. For example: clouds. Jesus will come again on the clouds. How can clouds prompt us to rest in the grace and peace of Jesus and to live for Him as priests and kings?

*My Reflection*

Look at yourself, and at your fellow Christians, in the light of Revelation 1.7, 8. Do you look like a person who trusts in Jesus as the Sovereign-Over-All? Why or why not?

*The Glory of God*

The glory attributed to Jesus is here expressed in titular (His titles) and temporal (in terms of time) forms. How should you expect see His glory in these ways?

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*Glory to Glory*

The book of Revelation will continuously encourage us to look up, look ahead, and look around. Write a prayer, based on your study of Revelation 1.7 and 8, concerning how you expect to practice this kind of outlook today:

*Memorize*

Review the memory verses for this week, Revelation 1.18, 19. Note the emphasis on the fact that Jesus *lives*. How do you hope to see more of Him *living through you* as a result of this study of Revelation? Share your answer to this question – and your memory verse – with a Christian friend today. Ask your friend to pray for you as you work through this study of Revelation.

*Closing Prayer*

Psalm 2.7-12 ([Agincourt: "O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High!"](#))

Proclaim the message far and wide that God has exalted the Crucified!  
From heav'n He sent us His only Son, Who has for us salvation won!

To Christ, the Lord, be given all who humbly embrace Him and on Him call.  
Be wise, be warned: His judgment comes to break the prideful, sinful ones.

Rejoice with fear in Jesus' grace, and worship before His exalted face!  
Beware His anger and judgment grim; how blessed are all who rest in Him!

(Taken from [The Ailbe Psalter](#))

## 4 In Jesus

*Week 2, Thursday: Voice like a Trumpet*

John, in exile on the island of Patmos, is “in the Spirit” on the Lord’s Day. It’s Sunday, and John is remembering and observing the Lord’s Day as God intends. He introduces himself and reports on how the Lord’s commission came to Him, in a voice like a trumpet.

*Read Revelation 1*

*Meditate on Revelation 1.9-11*

1. In what sense is the Apostle John our “brother and companion”?
2. John has been introducing patterns that will recur throughout Revelation. Here’s another one: “tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.” What does it mean to be John’s companion in tribulation (cf. Jn. 16.33; 2 Tim. 3.12)?
3. What does it mean to be John’s companion in the “kingdom”? Which Kingdom? How do “companions” in that Kingdom relate to one another? How do they share peace with one another?
4. John says the tribulation, Kingdom, and peace we share with him are “in” Jesus (NKJV, “of” Jesus). This prepositional phrase has a *locative* sense; that is, it intends to show us where something is lodged or may be found. What’s the difference between these things – tribulation, Kingdom, and peace – being *in* Jesus as opposed to being *of* Jesus?
5. John was minding His own business when suddenly, a “loud voice, as of a trumpet” blasted behind him (cf. v. 10)? What does this suggest about the voice of Jesus, that is, the Word of God? How would you feel, hearing this? Does the Word of God hit you like a sudden, surprising blast of a trumpet? Explain.

*My Reflection*

What does it mean for you to be “in” Jesus?

*The Glory of God*

John has mainly used verbal descriptions thus far to point us to the glory of Jesus. Now he uses sound. What does the sound of a trumpet suggest about the glory of God? How should that glory impact us?

*Glory to Glory*

Jesus says to John – and through John to us – “...see...write...send...” What does this mean for you today?

*Memorize*

Try reciting Revelation 1.18, 19 in your best “voice, as of a trumpet.” You might like to make sure you’re by yourself for this – maybe in your car. Does shouting these two verses give them any more glory or *oomph!*?

*Closing Prayer*

You are fairer than the sons of men;  
Grace is poured upon Your lips;  
Therefore God has blessed You forever...  
Your throne, O God, *is* forever and ever;  
A scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom.

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Psalm 45.2, 6

## 5 Weight of Glory

### *Week 2, Friday: Radiant with Glory*

John's primary message to all readers of Revelation is that Jesus is the King of Glory. He is all glory. He rules in glory. His glory is overwhelming, overpowering, irresistible, crushing, and for those who know Him, their source of grace, peace, and patience.

The beauty and glory of Jesus revealed here will be matched, in chapter 21, by the beauty and glory He bestows upon His Bride, the Church. But we need not wait until the "then and there" to enter into the glory of the Lord. John didn't.

### *Read Revelation 1*

### *Meditate on Revelation 1.12-16*

1. John continues to represent the glory of the Lord Jesus with as many images and to as many of our senses as he can. What is suggested about the glory of Jesus by the *colors* John mentions here?
2. What additional *sounds* does John use to help us experience the glory of Jesus? How should these sounds lead us to think about Him?
3. Jesus is seen standing in the midst of "seven golden lampstands." What do you suppose is the effect of His presence and glory on those lampstands?
4. Jesus holds seven stars in His right hand. According to Genesis 1.14-19, what purpose do the stars fulfill in the divine economy? Why are they held in Jesus' right hand, as opposed to His left?
5. Eyes like fire, a two-edged sword coming out of His mouth, face radiant like the sun, the brightness of stars and the power over time and times: How do you suppose you would respond to experiencing this "weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4.17)? Should we expect to see something like this vision, or some aspect of it, (vv. 12-16) every time we open the Scriptures? Explain:

### *My Reflection*

Jesus is powerful, glorious, bright, radiant, roaring, fearful, bearing down and overpowering, Sovereign-Over-All. And I am...

### *The Glory of God*

Based on what you have seen of the glory of Jesus thus far in Revelation, how should we be able to know when we have actually begun to experience that glory as we read and study Scripture? What can keep us from this?

### *Glory to Glory*

Spend a little more time meditating on the image of Jesus described in the verses for today. Let each sight, sound, and item, and the positioning of everything, surround and draw you into the glory of the Lord. While you're there, think about the people you will see today. Pray for them.

### *Memorize*

By now you should have Revelation 1.18, 19 committed to memory. Recite these verses aloud. Now use Revelation 1.18, 19 as your closing prayer for today:

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*Closing Prayer*

Lord Jesus, You are He Who is alive from the dead!  
You were dead, but now You are alive forever and ever!  
You are Sovereign-Over-All, including death and hell!  
What should I proclaim about You today? To whom?  
Teach me to trust in You, no matter what comes my way today!

## 6 “Write!”

*Week 2, Saturday: Blown Away!*

The weight of the glory of Jesus Christ, bearing down on the Apostle John, knocks our brother and companion right to the ground!

What should the glory of Jesus do in us?

*Read Revelation 1*

*Meditate on Revelation 1.17-20*

1. John goes down, “as dead.” Why? Is he afraid? Should he be? Should we?
2. Note that Jesus touches John with the same hand that holds the seven stars. Do you attach any significance to this? Why didn’t He touch him with His free hand?
3. Jesus outlines what is to follow: “things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.” Using this as an outline, briefly describe your personal experience of knowing Jesus:
  - “things which you have seen”:
  - “things which are”:
  - “things which will take place after this”:
4. What do the lampstands and stars represent? How does their positioning in this image of Jesus reinforce the fact that He is Sovereign-Over-All?
5. Jesus says to John, “Do not be afraid...” Why should John *not* be afraid? Under what circumstances should he and his brethren and companions (including us) *not* be afraid?

*My Reflection*

Do you ever experience the “weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4.17) like this? What is that like? How does it affect you? What keeps you – or any of John’s brothers and companions – from knowing this glory more consistently?

*The Glory of God*

What do the colors, sounds, and images of this revelation of Jesus Christ suggest about where we might expect to encounter the glory of God *other than* in Scripture?

*Glory to Glory*

Jesus said to John, “Write...” What’s He saying to you?

*Memorize*

Recite your memory verse aloud. Now get down on your knees, bow your head, and let the glory of the Lord “weigh” on you as you recite your verse again. Make a point to share this verse with someone today.

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*Revelation 1*

*Closing Prayer*

The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty;  
The LORD is clothed,  
He has girded Himself with strength...  
Your throne *is* established from of old;  
You *are* from everlasting...  
The LORD on high *is* mightier  
Than the noise of many waters,  
*Than* the mighty waves of the sea.  
Your testimonies are very sure;  
Holiness adorns Your house,  
O LORD, forever.

Psalm 93.1, 2, 4, 5

## 7 Mystery

### *Week 2, Sunday: The Commission*

John was impressed with the importance of the commission Jesus appointed for him, and he wanted to make sure we understood it as well. This chapter combines as many descriptions, reports, images, sights, and sounds relative to God and His glory as you'll find almost anywhere else in Scripture. We need to make sure we are clear about what Jesus intends.

### *Read Revelation 1*

### *Meditate on Revelation 1.20*

1. Why are the stars and lampstands a “mystery”? What is a mystery, and should our lives contain mystery?
2. Just because something is mystery, does that mean we can't understand *anything* about it (cf. Is. 55.8-10; Eccl. 3.11)? What would you suggest as a rule of thumb for living with mystery?
3. Let's note again that the “stars” are in Jesus' right hand, and He stands in the midst of the lampstands. Given what these represent, how would you describe what Jesus wants us to understand about the relation of each of these – “stars” and “lampstands” – to His living presence in glory?
4. To what extent, and in what specific ways, does your church teach about the glory of the Lord and the commission we have from Him?
5. This initial vision will not continue, but it “sets John up” for even more powerful visions to come. Should Christians claim these visions for themselves? Should our thinking and lives be shaped by visions – or, at least, a vision – like this? Why or why not?

### *My Reflection*

Jesus dwells in the midst of His lampstands – you and me and all John's brothers and companions. He intends not merely to *reflect* His glory in us, but to *refract* His glory through us. What's the difference?

### *The Glory of God*

The stars in Jesus' hand and the lampstands in the midst of which He stands are radiant with the glory Jesus radiates on and through them. How would it be evident to people in a local community that the glory of God was present in the churches there?

### *Glory to Glory*

Do you think if you constructed a mental image of Jesus as He is revealed in Revelation 1 that this could be something you might “visit” throughout the day? Do you think doing so would affect the extent to which you are able to carry out the Lord's commission for you?

### *Memorize*

Recite Revelation 1.18, 19. Pray through these verses in the light of everything we've seen in Revelation 1. Plan to share your memory verse with someone today.

### *Closing Prayer*

I will extol You, my God, O King;  
And I will bless Your name forever and ever.  
Every day I will bless You,

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*Revelation 1*

And I will praise Your name forever and ever...  
The LORD preserves all who love Him,  
But all the wicked He will destroy.  
My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD,  
And all flesh shall bless His holy name  
Forever and ever.

Psalm 145.1, 2, 20, 21

*Revelation 1-3, The First Facet*  
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*Week 2: Questions for Reflection or Discussion*

1. T. M. mentioned three “patterns” introduced by John in Revelation 1. Review each of these. What significance can you attach to these at this time?
  
2. Revelation 1 is a noisy, blinding, terrifying, mind-boggling mystery of a chapter. Explain:
  
3. Revelation 1 introduces the book of Revelation. John is saying, “OK, listen up: This book is about Jesus. I want you to see Jesus, trust Jesus, follow Jesus, seek Jesus, look for Jesus, and don’t take your eyes of Jesus.” Why do we need this message, right at the beginning of this book?
  
4. What is the glory of God? How should we expect to know this glory? Where should we look to engage it? What should be the effect of glory on us?
  
5. What are the most important lessons you carry away from Revelation 1? Summarize them below:
  
6. How are you beginning to implement those lessons in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*For prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Thank you.