

The Book of Revelation

Session 3: Prologue and Letters to the Seven Churches

1. Prologue

- a. Primary message of Revelation: “Behold, he is coming...”
(Revelation 1:7)
- b. Compare with Daniel 7:13-14
- c. Compare with Zechariah 12:10

2. First Vision: Revelation 1:9-20

- a. “Lord’s Day” (1:10)
- b. What do the various symbols depicting Christ tell you about Him?
- c. What do the phrases “the Alpha and the Omega” (1:8) and “the first and the last” (1:17) indicate about Jesus? (Compare to Isaiah 41:4, 44:6, and 48:12.)
- d. “Secret meaning” (1:20): Greek *mysterion* means “mystery.”
- e. Why are the seven lampstands an appropriate symbol for the Church?

3. Letters to the Seven Churches (Revelation 2-3): A good examination of conscience for all Christians

4. Letter to the church in Ephesus (**Revelation 2:1-7**)
 - a. *Angelos* (2:1): Greek meaning “angel” or “messenger”

 - b. How can Jesus’s praise and critique be true at the same time for a Christian community? What is the consequence for them if they fail to repent and change their ways?

 - c. “Victor” (2:7): Who is the victor? Why is this word used? (Compare with Romans 8:37 and surrounding verses.)

5. Letter to the church in Smyrna (**Revelation 2:8-11**): What does this letter say about suffering and richness?

6. Letter to the church in Thyatira (**Revelation 2:20-23**)
 - a. Figure of Jezebel (Compare with 1 Kings 19:1–2, 21:1–14 and 2 Kings 9:22, 30–34.)

 - b. Remember for comparison with other female figures in later chapters.

7. Letter to the church in Philadelphia: **Revelation 3:11** is another good summary of the book’s primary message.

8. Letter to the church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22)

- a. “Lukewarm” (3:16): Perhaps an allusion to nearby Hierapolis, famous for its hot springs. The water would have been lukewarm by the time it reached Laodicea.
 - b. “Spit” (3:16): Greek *eméō* (root for English word “emetic”), literally meaning “vomit”
 - c. Critique of 3:17: Which church is the opposite of the church in Laodicea? What lesson can we draw from this comparison?
 - d. Advice of 3:18: What does the risen Christ offer?
 - e. What sort of letter would Christ send the church on Daniel Island?
9. Reading for next week: Revelation 4-9 (God and the Lamb in heaven, the seven seals, and six of the seven trumpets)