

Revelation Chapter 1

1) The Revelation of Jesus Christ

a) God gave the message to Jesus, who in turn, gave it to John (1:1)

- i) John simply wrote down what he saw and heard
 - (1) Not borrowed from pagan or other sources, but given by God.
 - (2) Rev. 1:11 --- Write what you see in a book ...
 - (3) Rev. 1:19 --- Write therefore the things that you have seen
- ii) To show His servants (δοῦλος - bond-servant, someone who belongs to another)
 - (1) Believers willingly submit to the authority of Jesus
 - (2) 1 Cor. 6:19-20 --- you were bought with a price
 - (3) 1 Cor. 7:23 --- you were bought with a price
- iii) The things that must soon take place
 - (1) Τάχει (tachei) – in quickness
 - (a) tachometer – a measure of speed
 - (2) Rev. 6:9-11 --- how long?
 - (a) little – μικρόν (mikron) – one millionth of a meter (0.0000393700787 inches)
 - (i) John 16:16 – a little while
 - (b) longer – χρόνον (chronon) – time
- iv) A chain of revelation
 - (1) God gave the message to Jesus (1:1)
 - (2) Jesus sent his angel to John (1:1)
 - (a) The angel made it known to John
 - (i) ἐσήμανεν (esēmanen) - signify, indicate, give a sign, make known
- v) Exodus 3:1-12
 - (1) The angel of the Lord appeared to Moses (3:2)
 - (2) I have seen the affliction of my people (3:7)
 - (3) I have heard their cry (3:7)
 - (4) I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians (3:8)

b) John's statement of authenticity(1:2)

- i) bore witness to the word of God
 - (1) ἐμαρτύρησεν (emartyrēsen) - witness, bear witness, give evidence, testify, give a good report
- ii) to the testimony of Jesus Christ
 - (1) μαρτυρίαν (martyrian) - witness, evidence, testimony
- iii) even to all that he saw
 - (1) The word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ refer to *“all that he saw”*

(a) Chapters 4 through 19 consist of visions that John saw and things that he heard.

c) Blessed ... (1:3)

i) is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy

(1) The oral reading of Scripture in the assembly was a usual practice

(a) Not all could read

(b) Not all had copies

(c) Luke 4:16-ff --- Jesus read aloud in the synagogue

(d) 1 Timothy 4:13 --- devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture

(2) prophecy – it proceeds from God, as stated in 1:1 and attested to in 1:2.

(a) It is not to be taken lightly

(b) The usage here is that the words of this prophecy were to be kept (obeyed) – not as a prediction of the future.

ii) are those who hear

(1) ἀκούοντες (akouontes) - hear, listen, comprehend by hearing

(2) Romans 10:16-17 – hearing, comprehending, believing, acting in faith

iii) Who keep what is written

(1) τηροῦντες (tērountes) - keep, guard, observe, watch over

(2) Exodus 15:26 – diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your God

(3) Revelation 2:10 - Be faithful unto death, ...

iv) for the time is near

(1) καιρὸς (kairos) - fitting season, opportunity, time

(2) ἐγγύς (engys) - near (in place or time)

(3) Mark 1:15 - “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand;

(4) John 6:4 - Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand.

(5) John’s assurance is that the blessing from God was for them, soon, not thousands of years into the future.

2) The Introduction to the Letter (1:4-7)

a) John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

- i) Standard form for letters in John's day
 - (1) Identify the sender
 - (2) Identify the recipients
 - (3) Salutation
- ii) Why these seven?
 - (1) Possible emphasis of the number "7" in the book.
 - (2) Located on roads that circled the interior of the province.
 - (3) Emperor worship was very popular in Asia.
 - (4) God knew the need was great in this area.
 - (a) Revelation 2:13 – "I know where you dwell ..." (Pergamum)
 - (b) Exodus 3:7 – "I know their sufferings"

b) Grace to you and peace (1:4)

- i) Used often by N. T. writers - Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; Gal. 1:3; Philemon 3; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:2; 2 John 3
- ii) Grace – unmerited favor
- iii) Peace – result of God's work in our lives
 - (1) Phil. 4:4-7 – the peace of God
- iv) from him who is and who was and who is to come (1:4)
 - (1) Exodus 3:13-15 – What is His name?
 - (2) The same "I AM" who delivered Israel from Egypt.
 - (3) The same "I AM" who was not intimidated by Pharaoh would not be intimidated by Caesar.
 - (4) The same "I AM" can deliver them (and us).
 - (5) The same "I AM" is still in control.
- v) and from the seven spirits who are before his throne (1:4)
 - (1) Rev. 3:1; Rev. 4:5; Rev. 5:6
 - (2) Inferior spirits are not normally grouped with the Father and the Son in Scripture
 - (3) If the meaning is not "the Holy Spirit", then the Holy Spirit is notably absent from Revelation.
 - (4) Seven indicates "sacred completeness" or "perfection".
 - (5) Before His throne – ready to do the will of God.
- vi) and from Jesus Christ ... (1:5)
 - (1) This completes the three – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
 - (2) The Son is mentioned last, probably because the rest of the chapter is about him.
 - (3) the faithful witness,

- (a) John 3:31-36 – bears witness to what he has seen and heard
- (b) John 18:37 – to bear witness to the truth
- (4) the firstborn of the dead,
 - (a) Rom. 6:9 – will never die again
 - (b) 1 Cor. 15:20 – firstfruits
 - (c) Col. 1:18 – firstborn from the dead; preeminent.
 - (d) Rev. 1:17-18 – alive forevermore
- (5) the ruler of kings on earth
 - (a) Caesar may have thought he ruled the world.
 - (b) The real ruler was soon going to demonstrate his dominion.
 - (c) 1 Tim. 6:15 - the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords
 - (d) 1 Cor. 15:20-28
 - (e) Col. 1:13
- c) In praise of Jesus Christ (1:5b-7)**
 - i) He loves us – present tense
 - (1) Rom. 8:38-39 – nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord
 - ii) He freed us from our sins by his blood – aorist tense (one-time action in the past)
 - (1) Eph. 1:7 – redemption through his blood
 - (2) 1 Pet. 1:18-19 – ransomed ... with the precious blood of Christ
 - iii) Made us a kingdom
 - (1) ἐποίησεν (epoiēsen) – made, constructed
 - (2) Col. 1:13 – transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son
 - (a) Μετέστησεν (metestēsen) - moved out of its place, transferred
 - iv) Priests to his God and Father
 - (1) Exodus 19:5-6 - you shall be to me a kingdom of priests
 - (2) 1 Pet. 2:5 - to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices
 - (3) Heb. 13:15 - let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God
 - (4) Rom. 12:2 - present your bodies as a living sacrifice
 - (5) Engaged in holy service to God
 - v) to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
 - (1) Dan. 7:13-14 - his dominion is an everlasting dominion
 - vi) The Coming One
 - (1) Jesus is:
 - (a) The Faithful One - the faithful witness
 - (b) The Risen One - the firstborn of the dead

- (c) The Ruling One - the ruler of kings on earth
 - (d) The Glorious One - to him be glory and dominion forever and ever
 - (2) Now John depicts him as The Coming One
 - (a) Much comfort to Christians who eagerly long for His coming.
 - (b) Coming with the clouds
 - (i) Matt. 24:30 - then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory
 - (ii) Matt. 26:64 - from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven
 - (iii) Mark 13:26 - then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory
 - (iv) Acts 1:9-11 - a cloud took him out of their sight; will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven
 - (c) Every eye will see him
 - (i) His coming will not be secret, as some teach that it was in 1914.
 - (d) even those who pierced him
 - (i) John 19:34-37
 - 1. Zechariah 12:10
 - (ii) Those who actively participated in crucifying Jesus may be intended.
 - (iii) All in sin may be intended
 - 1. Isaiah 53:4-6 – the Lord has laid Him the iniquity of us all
 - (iv) Some eagerly long for his return
 - 1. Phil. 3:20-21; 2 Tim 4:8; Heb. 9:27-28; 2 Pet. 3:11-13
 - (e) all tribes of the earth will wail (mourn) on account of him
 - (i) Sins may be remembered
 - (ii) Apprehension of guilt and wrath may evoke mourning
 - (iii) Apathy → acknowledgement → grief
 - (f) Even so. Amen.
 - (i) Even so – Greek (ναί)
 - (ii) Amen – Hebrew (אָמֵן)
- d) Divine Interruption (1:8)
 - i) God – the Alpha and the Omega (first and last letters of Greek alphabet).
 - (1) Jesus describes himself in the same way in Rev. 22:13
 - ii) God – Him who is, who was, who is to come
 - (1) Identified as God in 1:4.
 - iii) God – says the Lord God

iv) the Almighty – God is in control, though it may appear the Caesar and Satan are winning; take comfort in the Almighty.

(1) Isaiah 46:8-10; 40:9-31

v) God’s seal of authenticity – you can stake your life on the promises that have been made, for I have spoken.

3) Vision of the Son of Man (1:9-20)

a) I, John, your brother

i) Does not remind readers of his apostleship or authority

b) and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus

i) The tribulation that had come upon them was shared by John - partner

(1) Originally “pressure” – pressure of events = persecution

ii) The kingdom – they were persecuted because they were in the kingdom of Jesus, and their loyalty was to Jesus the King of Kings, not to Domitian.

iii) Patient endurance – perseverance

(1) Needed to remain steadfast

(2) Matt. 24:9-14 - the one who endures to the end will be saved

(3) 2 Tim. 2:11-13 - if we endure, we will also reign with him;

iv) In Jesus

(1) Shared burdens are lighter; being “in Jesus” helps.

(2) Rom. 16:3 - my fellow workers in Christ Jesus

(3) 1 Cor. 1:2 - to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together ...

(4) Gal. 3:26-28 - in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

c) was on the island called Patmos

i) ἐγενόμην (egenomēn) - came to be, was, became, came about, happened.

(1) Some think “was” indicates John was no longer on Patmos but had returned to Ephesus to write what he saw and heard on Patmos.

(2) The more literal translation is “came to be”.

(3) Otherwise, the passage says nothing about whether John was still on Patmos or not.

(4) Patmos was a Roman prison colony, a place of exile.

ii) on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus

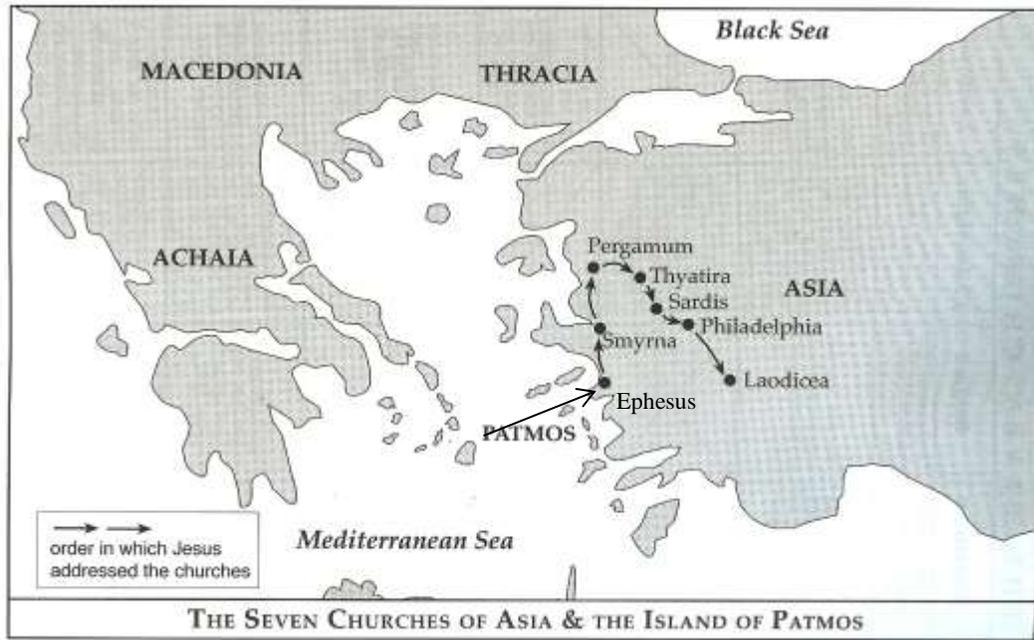
(1) In the introduction, I mentioned that there was a church on Patmos which met in Myron’s house.

(2) Traditional views say Patmos was a barren rock, unfit for anything except a Roman prison colony.

- (3) However, Patmos was a major stopping point for shipping between Rome and Ephesus or Smyrna.
- (4) Internal evidence in the introduction places the time of the Revelation in the reign of Vespasian, 69 to 79 AD; my view is that it was closer to 79 AD.
- (5) “On account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” does not necessary equate to imprisonment. John went there voluntarily to preach, and the church began in Myron’s house.
- (6) He was taken there by the Romans to silence his preaching of the word of God and his testimony of Jesus in 94 or 95 AD, by Domitian.
 - (a) By that time, Domitian was 1 or 2 years away from being murdered.
 - (b) It does not seem sensible to write words of comfort when the worst period of persecution of Christians was nearing an end.
 - (c) Besides, Rev. 17:10b states “the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while”, referring to Titus (79 to 81 AD).
- d) I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day (1:10)
 - i) in the Spirit (1:10)
 - (1) Rev. 4:1-2 – in the Spirit
 - (a) John saw a door standing open in heaven and was invited – “Come up here ...”
 - (b) 2 Cor. 12:1-4 – Paul (or someone Paul knew) had a similar experience and stated that he could not tell whether he was in the body or out of the body.
 - (c) Rev. 1:10 could be understood as “I was worshipping in the Spirit”.
 - (i) John 4:24 - God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth
 - 1. Such an understanding would agree with Jesus’s statement which John recorded in his gospel.
 - (d) However, what John was about to hear and see (at a minimum) indicates that John was thoroughly receptive to it, whether in the body or out of the body.
 - ii) Lord’s day (1:10)
 - (1) κυριακῆ̄ (kyriakē) - of the Lord, special to the Lord, belonging to the Lord
 - (2) 1 Cor. 11:20 - the Lord’s supper
 - (a) Only other N. T. occurrence.
 - (b) The first day of the week
 - (c) The day on which Jesus rose from the dead
 - (d) Acts 20:7 - On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread
 - (3) 7th Day Adventist

- (a) Had its roots in the Millerite movement of the 1830s and 1840s.
 - (i) When Christ did not return on October 22, 1844 as predicted by William Miller, there was Great Disappointment.
 - (ii) From those who were bitterly disappointed, the Adventist group began.
- (b) Ellen G. White was a co-founder of the Adventist movement and is regarded as a prophet by the Adventist group.
 - (i) She wrote of a vision she had that was published in 1851.
 1. "In the ark was the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of stone, which folded together like a book. Jesus opened them, and I saw the Ten Commandments written on them with the finger of God. On one table were Four and on the other six. The four on the first table shone brighter than the other six. But the fourth, the Sabbath commandment, shone above them all; for the Sabbath was set apart to be kept in honor of God's holy name. The holy Sabbath looked glorious, a halo of glory was all around it. I saw that the Sabbath commandment was not nailed to the cross. If it was, the other nine commandments were; and we are at liberty to break them all as well as to break the fourth. I saw that God had not changed the Sabbath, for he never changes. But the pope had changed it from the seventh day to the first day of the week; for he was to change times and laws." [*Early Writings of Ellen G. White*, page 33].
 - (ii) No mention seems to be made of what the New Testament says about the day when Christians met. In naming the pope as the culprit, she alludes to Daniel 7:23-27.
 - (c) A misunderstanding of Mark 2:28 also appears to be involved in the development of their doctrine.
- iii) I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet (1:10)
 - (1) Simile – like
 - (a) Fights like a lion
 - (b) Kicks like a mule
 - (2) Metaphor
 - (a) John is a lion
 - (b) John is a mule
 - (3) Trumpets were used to get attention or introduce important events.
 - (4) The voice got John's attention – he turned to see in verse 12.
 - (5) When we read down to 1:13 and 1:17-18 it is clear that the voice is that of Jesus.
- iv) Write what you see in a book (1:11)

- (1) Writing it in a book makes it possible to get the message to a much larger number of Christians..
 - (2) Now the voice Rome had thought to silence will speak through writing.
- v) send it to the seven churches (1:11)



- (1) Ephesus had been John's home congregation since shortly before 70 AD.
 - (2) John would have known all these churches and they would have known John.
 - (3) By the time Revelation was written, Jerusalem had been destroyed, and the province of Asia was where the church was strongest.
 - (4) Possibly typical of churches in that day – and now.
 - (5) This area is where Roman persecution was to be the most fierce.
 - (6) The order specified by Jesus is the order of a circular route covering the interior of the province of Asia.
- vi) Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me (1:12)
- (1) I saw seven golden lampstands
 - (a) Seven separate lampstands
 - (b) The seven churches (1:20)
 - (2) in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man (1:13)
 - (a) Dan. 7:13
 - (i) Dan. 7:15, 28 – Daniel was anxious, troubled
 - (b) Rev. 1:17 – John fell at his feet as though dead
 - (c) Rev. 1:17-18 – Jesus is the one standing in the midst of the churches
 - (d) The churches may have thought they would be abandoned, but Jesus stands in their midst.
 - (3) clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest.

- (a) The garments of royalty.
- (b) Some may see a similarity to the garments of the Hebrew high priests.
 - (i) Ex. 28:4
 - (ii) Lev. 16:4
- (c) Jesus is our high priest
 - (i) Heb. 4:14-16
 - (ii) Heb. 8:1-2
 - (iii) Heb. 9:11-12
 - (iv) Heb. 10:19-22
- (4) The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. (1:14)
 - (a) Is. 1:18 – purity, holiness
 - (b) Dan. 7:9 – Ancient of Days, wisdom
- (5) His eyes were like a flame of fire, (1:14)
 - (a) Dan. 10:6
 - (b) Psalm 139:1-4
 - (c) Heb. 4:13
 - (d) The image of someone who sees what is happening.
- (6) his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace (1:15)
 - (a) bronze – alloy of copper and tin
 - (b) burnish – to make smooth and shiny by rubbing or polishing
 - (c) bronze known for strength and endurance
 - (d) metal refined in a furnace may glow white-hot, very bright
 - (e) Dan. 10:6
- (7) his voice was like the roar of many waters (1:15)
 - (a) ocean waves pounding on rocks; a waterfall
 - (b) powerful, majestic – to be heeded
 - (c) Ezek. 43:2
 - (d) Dan. 10:6
- (8) In his right hand he held seven stars (1:16)
 - (a) Right hand – the hand of power
 - (b) Seven stars – identified as the angels of the seven churches in 1:20
 - (c) In the rest of Revelation, angel always refers to a heavenly messenger.
 - (i) That may be the case in 1:20, or they may have been earthly messengers chosen to deliver the letters to the seven churches – representatives of the churches.

(d) Without knowing for certain who or what the stars may be, we know that they represented the churches and, therefore, the individual members of those churches.

(i) The “one” who conquerors – Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21

(e) Domitian coin of infant son

(i) Seated on the earth, holding the universe in his hands



(ii)

(9) from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword (1:16)

(a) Eph. 6:17 – the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

(b) Heb 4:12 – the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword

(c) Rev. 2:16 - war against them with the sword of my mouth

(d) Rev. 19:15 - From his mouth comes a sharp sword

(e) Rev. 19:21 - the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him

...

(10) his face was like the sun shining in full strength. (1:16)

(a) Matt. 17:2 - his face shone like the sun

(11) The vision as a whole (1:12-16)

(a) Jesus in the midst of the churches (1:13)

(i) Matt. 18:20 - where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them

(b) Jesus is King (1:13) - Clothed with garments of royalty

(c) Jesus is purity, wisdom (1:14) - hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow

(d) Jesus sees (and knows) (1:14) - His eyes were like a flame of fire

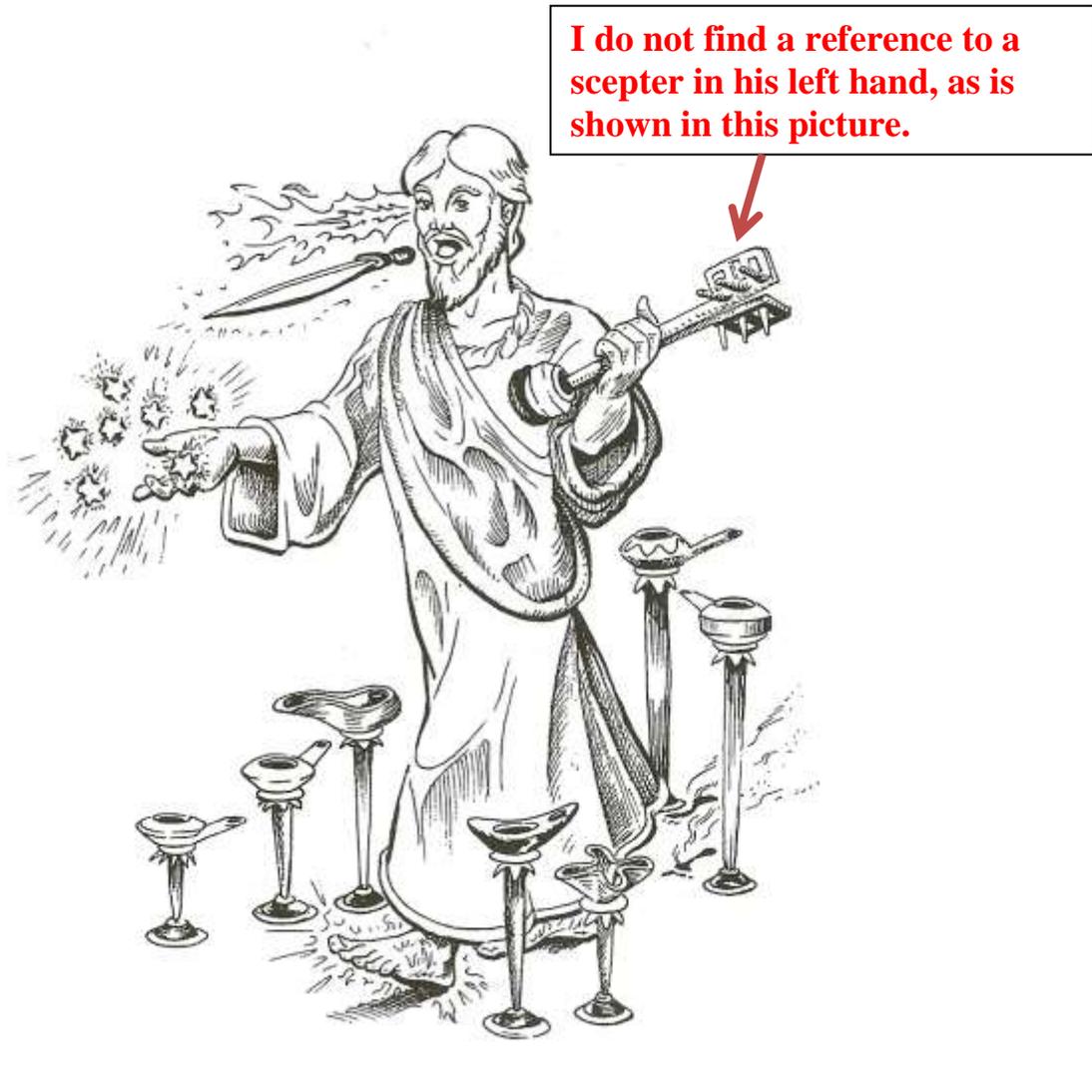
(i) Jesus knows will be discussed in chapter 2.

(e) Jesus has strength and power (1:15-16)

(i) Feet like burnished bronze – strong

(ii) Holds the stars in his right hand

- (f) Jesus protects and defends (1:17)
 - (i) Prepared to punish with feet, sword
 - (ii) Prepared to protect with his powerful right hand



vii) John's Reaction

- (1) Fell at his feet as though dead (1:17)
 - (a) Is. 6:5 – Woe is me!
 - (b) Dan. 8:17 – I was frightened and fell on my face
 - (c) Matt. 17:6 - they fell on their faces and were terrified
 - (d) Matt. 17:7 - But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Rise, and have no fear.”
 - (e) Acts 26:14 - when we had all fallen to the ground ...
- (2) But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, (1:17)
 - (a) John had felt the touch before (Matt. 17:7)

- (b) No reason to fear.
 - (c) I existed before the present forces of persecution (Roman empire)
 - (d) I will still exist after they no longer existed.
 - (e) Rev. 22:13 - I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”
- (3) the living one (1:18)
- (a) A designation reserved for deity
 - (b) Joshua 3:10 - “Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you
 - (c) Hosea 1:10 - it shall be said to them, “Children of the living God.”
- (4) I died, and behold I am alive forevermore (1:18)
- (a) The basics of the gospel: death, burial, resurrection
- (5) I have the keys of Death and Hades. (1:18)
- (a) He controls the realm of death
 - (b) He has the power to release the spirits of those who died in faith
 - (i) Death would not destroy them
 - (ii) Hades could not hold them
 - (c) He also has the power to cast unbelievers into the realm of death and Hades
- (6) Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. (1:19)
- (a) An expansion of John’s commission to record the Revelation.
 - (i) “Write what you see in a book (1:10)
 - (b) Cannot tell the true state of affairs by simply looking at things as they are now.
 - (c) Must see what will come afterward to know the outcome.
- (7) Explanation of some things seen (1:20)
- (a) Stars – angels of the seven churches
 - (b) Lampstands – the seven churches