

Jesus' Authority Established

Covenant documents begin with a preamble declaring the sovereignty of the one from whom the missive is sent. In this section of The Revelation the Lord Jesus Christ is presented as the ruler of the universe, actually equal with the Ancient of Days even as he is the Son of Man who received a kingdom.

Chapter One

1. This is the message making it known that Jesus Christ is the goal and fulfillment of God's purpose in creation. Jesus fulfills all of God's promises to Israel and is the reigning king of the universe. This is the message God the Father gave to Jesus, the mediator, so his servants would understand he is the victorious one. It is given to prepare them for the events surrounding the realization of Jesus' lordship; for the end of the old covenant age and the events associated with the transition from the old to the new will take place very soon. The status of Jesus was presented in symbolic language by an angel to Christ's servant, John.

2. John testified about the word of God and of the witness of Jesus Christ. He made sure to disclose everything he saw, both the events that are currently taking place and the events that will soon happen.

3. May God's blessing rest upon the ones who read this prophecy to others. And may God's blessing rest upon those who take heed to the prophecy and obey the things written in this letter; for the time of their fulfillment is near.

Apocalypse

4. I am John and I am delivering this written prophecy to the seven churches in Asia. Grace and peace to you from God the Father, the eternal one and from the all seeing, all knowing, everywhere present Holy Spirit - present even at the throne of God.

5. Also, grace and peace to you from Jesus Christ who works to enforce God's law and its execution. He is the first one of the new age of Man, the age of the Son of Man; the first to rise from the dead in the new covenant age. He rules over the religious leaders, those who claim to be in charge. He is the one who loves us and has washed us clean from our sins by his own blood.

6. The rule and authority of Jesus Christ is primarily revealed in the lives of his followers, those who accept him as the Christ, who are commissioned to lead others into the knowledge of who Jesus is and thus toward a relationship with God the Father. To Jesus Christ we ascribe glory and power for all eternity. Amen!

7. See! Jesus has fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel by ascending in the clouds to receive a kingdom there at God's throne! When those who are responsible for Jesus' crucifixion understand that He is the Son of Man in Daniel's prophecy, they will be grief stricken just as Jesus said they would be. Indeed all the tribes of Israel will suffer the judgment of Jesus Christ. Yes, amen!

8. "I am the first and the last, eternal and infinite, abounding with life," says the Lord God. "Nothing is outside my jurisdiction. I am the eternal origin and consummation of all things, ruling everything everywhere."

9. I, John, am brother to every follower of Jesus Christ. I have a part with you in the tribulation we are about to suffer. I also have a part in the rule of God in Christ over all aspects of creation and a part in the endurance supplied by Jesus. When this disclosure of Jesus' status came to me I was on the island of Patmos. I was there because I preached the word of God about Jesus.

10. I was worshiping on the eighth day - that is to say, the first day of the week, which is the Lord's day because it is the day of the week he rose and so signifies a new creation and new covenant. Suddenly, I

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heard a roaring trumpet-like voice behind me.

11. The voice said, "Write down what you see and publish a book. Send that book to the seven churches that are representative of the entire Church. Send the book to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

12. Naturally, I turned around to see who was speaking to me in the roaring trumpet-like voice and in so doing I saw seven lamp-stands made of pure gold.

13. Standing in the middle of them was one like the Son of Man in Daniel's prophecy yet looking something like the Ancient of Days in Daniel's prophecy as well. He was wearing a long robe with a golden sash across his chest.

14. His hair, indeed his entire head was like bright clean wool, bright as fresh snow. His eyes burned like flames of fire.

15. His feet had the radiance of molten metal and his voice was like the sea when it roars.

16. He held seven stars in his right hand and a sharp double edged sword came out of his mouth. And his face - it shone like the sun at high noon on a bright, clear day!

17. It takes a while to describe this, but when I saw him I took it in all at once and fainted dead away! However, he put his right hand on my shoulder in a friendly way and said, "There is nothing for you to be afraid of. Every eventuality is under my control.

18. "Death could not hold me - see, I am alive and will live eternally. Amen! Moreover, I have complete control over death and the old covenant place of the dead, called hades.

19. "Now then, write down the things you have seen so far, along with the things you are about to see.

20. "Also, the Gospel significance of the seven stars you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lamp-stands is this; the seven stars represent the leaders of the seven churches (and thereby all the leaders in the entire Church) and the seven lights in the lamp-stand represent the seven churches (and thereby the entire Church)."