

Revelation 1:9-16 The Vision of the Glorified Son

9 *I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, 11saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."*

12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 13and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 14His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15His 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. 16In 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 shining in its strength.

We had an interesting situation and comparison of 2 world views playing out in front of our eyes this week. The Moslems have murdered innocent Americans . . . again . . . supposedly in retaliation to blasphemy against ullah and his prophet mohammed.

What interests me and makes this pertinent to our first verse tonight is this;

ullah apparently has no arm of power except human hate and madness. blasphemy against ullah causes human society to unravel, to become it's most debased. Chaos. Riots. Murders. Lies. Deep hatred. Wars. The list goes on. ullah has no power to do anything beyond what insane humans can concoct . . . in his name. in his name.

Our God in comparison says He is not the author of confusion.

1 Cor. 14:33 states; *For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.* Therefore, draw this conclusion, **please!** God is **not** ullah. Ullah is **not** God!

Dis-order does not come from God. AND **He** says, *vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay!* Romans 12:19

He doesn't need us to go fight His holy war. He'll do it, in His time and in His way! That's what this book we're studying is about!

But in stark contrast to the muslims, our God tells us to turn the other cheek. The hatred, the attacks are against Him, and He tells us to take it, and take it, and take it.

If we are christians, we are "*fellow partakers in the tribulation*"

We don't retaliate. We don't have a Holy War to defend our deity. We wait for Him! But until that day, we take it, and take it some more.

That is the difference between christians and muslims..... and between the Christian God and the muslim god

Vs. 9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day,

We'll look at some of the words, but first, I want to look at this whole, and ask this question; Was John's experience different than ours?

We all claim a common identity with John, right? We're christians. Believers. Part of a common group that is distinct. You wouldn't be in this Bible study otherwise, right?

But if we could turn back the clock to 96AD and both step into John's circle, or John stepped into ours . . . would he be at home with us? Would we be at home with him, and his?

These words don't resonate.

Your first reaction might be of course they don't. This is the apostle John! Super saint. He's rock star saint, and I'm ordinary saint.

Really?

John starts with a very inclusive greeting. This doesn't sound like Rock Star Saint talk.

I, John, your brother and fellow partaker

your brother. John, my brother. It isn't because christians lacked other descriptors that they began almost immediately to call each other brother. A brother is the closest of human bonds.

Peter was talking to Jesus and he said, what about us, we've left everything to follow you, and Jesus told him he'd have more brother's than he could count.

So John is just a brother. He isn't a rock star.

Then he says, and fellow partaker...

'fellow' is common. It's the word of common experience. Team members. Equals and comrades. Peers.

But here we are fellows because we are 'partakers', and here is where the road gets bumpier and makes me ask, are we fellows with John? Does this sound like us?

John will give us 3 things that are all common to the peer's that he is writing this letter to. And remember, he's just the amanuensis. The letter is really from Jesus. That just increases the gravity. We are fellow partakers in;

Tribulation,
Kingdom,

Perseverance . . . which are in Jesus.

I'm going to look at those in a more logical order.

These are common to all people who are "in Jesus"

Kingdom. Authority. We have left Satan's kingdom and authority. Our sin is forgiven, 'in Jesus', and we have transferred into Jesus' kingdom. Jesus authority. We should, without reservation, be comfortable saying, with John, we are the slaves of Jesus.

If we are partakers of the Holy Spirit, indwelt, made alive in Christ, then we have been bought with a price, and are under His authority.

We're fellow partaker's in the Kingdom. We all have the same King.

Tribulation. Trouble. Is that only local? Can we say that it was just John's bad luck to be in a place and time where tribulation was the result, and we, are not.

You can argue that there is a local aspect to this. We'll see that Smyrna had a lot more of it than Laodicea.

But you can argue with Paul to Timothy that anyone who is living Godly in Christ Jesus will see tribulation.

2Tim. 3:12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

That's also a good fit in the seven churches. We'll see that the finest church had the most trouble, and the worst church was "rich". (but spiritually bankrupt)

If we are living Godly lives that expose the world, we will have trouble. Jesus said it, and there's no reason to think it's not as true today as it was then.

Trouble, tribulation, followed Paul around wherever he went. It was

local to Paul. There's a rebuke to us veiled in there. And John's tribulation was local to him.

As long as Satan has a hold on this world, anyone who is Godly can expect trouble. It's like gravity. It's a natural law.

Perseverance follows close behind tribulation.

If they lined up all of the people who claim to be evangelicals in the USA and decreed that you either renounce any statement that might lead anyone to believe that gay marriage is wrong, or you lose your property and go to prison . . . give me a percentage of the people that would remain in line.

Those would be the ones who persevered. 2%? 7%? more? less? Do you think that can't happen?

Paul talks about this. What was Paul's experience? Ppn, 3: *7But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, 10that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

Are we missing something? That I may know Him, and the Power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering . . .

Paul talks about the christian experience in 3 phrases;

that I may know Him. Most of us would concur. We want to know the Lord. Intimately.

and the power of His resurrection . Fewer of us have experienced

anything like what Paul is talking about here. At that conference I went to in April, there were 2 speakers that resonated, vibrated with God's power. The Holy Spirit was present, and the power was palpable.

Those of us who have been in a room like that, long for that. It's as close to God as I've been on earth...

and the fellowship of His sufferings...each of these grows by a magnitude. This is a fellowship far beyond our trivial experience. When the world persecutes us because it hates us because we belong to Him, there is a fellowship with the saviour that we haven't known yet.

Paul did. John did. Perhaps some of us will. Radical christianity, when we're suffering because of Jesus. Maybe some of us will know this before we die.

This is what Paul is talking about when he says in Romans 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.*

So how do the sufferings compare to the glory! Is it worth it!?? That's why this chapter is here. We get a glimpse of the glory . . . to encourage us to embrace the suffering.

My point in all of this is; there is a radical christian experience beyond our trivial one we know if we'll embrace godliness and tribulation with perseverance

9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Patmos was a prison island. You put nuisances that you didn't want to execute . . . on Patmos. John was there because of just such an example as I gave above. *because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus*

He wouldn't shut-up about Jesus, and it cost him his property, and his freedom.

He was an old man by this time. Perhaps in his 80's. Lose every comfort?? Endure the loneliness of an island solitary confinement? What a glorious trade off. Look at what he got instead!

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day,

I don't think this was any different than Paul's command to *be being kept filled with the Holy Spirit.* in Eph. 5:18

I think he was spirit filled and in a state of real worship . . . on the Lord's day.

and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, 11 saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

"a loud voice" We'll hear this over and over in Revelation. Like a trumpet. This is a piercing voice.

Write in a book what you see. But so many times, what John see's doesn't have any thing to compare to. This is a difficult task. We'll see that in these next verses. There are no words to adequately describe the Glory of the Son of God that John saw.

12Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 13and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 14His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15His 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. 16In 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 shining in its strength.

There has been much written about these seven golden lampstands.

Most of the old commentators see this as some sort of menorah simply because that's an image from the old testament that they have to work with.

12 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 son of man,

I don't see this description that way at all. My mind, because of modern maps, and Google Earth computer simulation sees Jesus standing in the midst of these seven churches as if the lampstands rose up out of the land mass and formed an oblong circle. *13 and in the middle*

Revelation 2:1 *"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, **the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands**, says this:*

I see Jesus walking among His churches, tending, for lack of a better example, like a person in their garden.

We'll see that every letter to every church draws from this description of the Glorified Son. And each image is pertinent to the church He will be addressing.

Is He still walking among His churches? Does He still hold the stars in His right hand?

Vs. 13 and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash.

like a son of man. Turn with me to Daniel's prophecy. Daniel 7:13,14

*13 I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of the sky **one like a son of man** (כבר אנש [kibar 'anash]), and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an*

everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. WEB

Jesus favorite reference for himself was "Son of man". He used it over and over, and it looks back to this prophecy in Daniel. This is the end of all things. Jesus takes back this world from Satan and reigns forever.

Within that understanding of final things, it should be exciting to see the churches, the lampstands, already possessed by the Son of Man.

At the end of the book Jesus will wage war with His enemies and take back this earth, but we are already His possession. That's a good place!

clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash

This is important. This is the robe of a priest. Workers who were more active would gird themselves around the waist. A priest's vestments were more stately. Being gird around the chest meant one who moved about his business in a majestic stately manner.

But, priests don't walk among their subjects. Kings do! This is a king who is a priest. After the order of Melchizedek.

In God's economy those 2 offices were always seperated. Remember when King Uzziah became proud and burnt incense in a censor in the temple . . like a priest? God struck him with leprosy.

Kings are kings and priests are priests . . until we get to this King who is a priest! Jesus is both King of everything, and our Priest unto His God.

Vs. 14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire.

Perfect purity. White is purity. But more than that, this is the picture of the ancient of days. This is also perfect knowledge. He knows everything. He has been alive forever. From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God!

His eyes are like a flame of fire. Piercing. There is nothing hidden from these eyes. He knows all. He is omniscient.

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.

Feet are power. Voice is authority.

Have you ever seen molten metal? Those of us who work in the trades have seen bronze when it is liquid. It has a glow that is beautiful. That's the picture here. Molten bronze, these feet that are coming to trample their enemies.

In the ancient world, feet symbolized power. A king's throne was elevated so that prostrated criminals, enemies were beneath his feet. In theory, and perhaps in practice, he could step off of his throne and crush the neck of an enemy with his feet.

These feet are glowing in their strength. In Matt. 22:44 we have this famous quote; *'The Lord said to my Lord, sit on my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet?'*

Jesus is going to crush His enemies in the winepress of the fierce wrath of God with these feet.

His voice was like the sound of many waters

Ever stood underneath a huge waterfall. The noise of the power of the water is awe inspiring. That was the voice John heard. Here is authority. Omnipotence! This voice that spoke the worlds into place, will also speak them out of place. Who can argue with this voice.

16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword;

Make no mistake. This king ~ priest is a warrior. He has come to make war, and His weapon is the Word of God.

Our minds go immediately to Hebrews 4:12 *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

His word created the worlds. His word will judge His enemies.

Notice where the church is when He makes war with His sword. *16In His right hand He held seven stars...* That's us! If we're obedient to His word, we are safe in his right hand. The seven stars are the minister's of the seven lampstands. We'll see that in verse 20.

But before you feel too safe, consider this; Those who are in opposition to the word of God, even in the church, are subject to judgement BY the word of God!

Rev. 2:12 *“And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write:
The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this:*

16‘Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.

We'll study that in depth in a few weeks. But simply to consider, even though the church is in a safe place, symbolically, in His right hand, if we oppose Him, we're subject to the same judgement as His enemies.

How important then is it to study this book!??

Rev. 16b *and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.*

This is the real Jesus. Omnipotent. Omnipresent. Omniscient. All knowing, All powerful, Ever-present, Glorified. Walking among His churches.

I started this study tonight questioning a comparison of John's experience to the modern evangelical movement's experience.

Is this *our* Jesus. Do we have a Jesus that we would face down persecution and loss of property . . . to keep.

Call me a pessimist, but I fear not. I see a lazy flabby church with a little tiny Jesus. A nice Jesus who understands their sins and looks the other way sort of like a dad who smiles and says, well, 'boys will be boys'

Look down through history and see all of the different things Satan has tried in order to decimate the church. Ours is the most frightening of anything seen. Ease. Satisfaction. Slumber.

Have we slipped? Where is the hunger for the Word of God? The desire to know more of this Jesus, no matter what the cost? Has the church slipped?

I'll leave you with this thought. Something that Jesus said;

However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?

Luke 18:8b