

## 2. Christ Is the Beginning and the End

In our last topic, we saw that we want to show our physical and spiritual children by our example how to bring glory to Christ in all that they say and do. We also saw that all dominion belongs to Christ. In this topic, we will see that Christ is the One who is the Beginning and the End.

In Revelation 1:7-8, we read, “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the End,*’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’” As we read these verses we see that they are talking about the Second Coming of Christ to rule on this earth. This is not the rapture of the church which will happen at the end of the church age which concludes at the end of chapter three. The Christians will see Christ at that time. That time will happen very suddenly but only involve the Christians. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 says, “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

In contrast, this verse says that Christ is coming in the clouds and every eye will see Him. This time is described in Revelation 19:11-13, where we read: “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.” Then, Zechariah 14:3-5 adds, “Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, *making* a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, *and* all the saints with You.” Here, we see that the saints will come with Christ.

We see that when Christ comes and every eye sees Him, all of the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Revelation 19:20-21 says, “Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.” The nations will mourn because this will be a time of judgment for them.

This will be the time when Christ will establish His rule on earth as described in Revelation 20:3-9. Daniel 7:13-14 also speaks about this time. Those verses say, “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, *One* like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion *is*

an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom *the one* which shall not be destroyed.” In Revelation 20, we see that Christ will rule on earth for a thousand years. However, in Daniel, we see that the rule on earth will be the beginning of an eternal kingdom.

Christ is called the Alpha and Omega. Alpha is the first letter in the Greek alphabet in which the New Testament was originally written. Omega is the last letter in the Greek alphabet. Then, we see that Christ is called the Beginning and the End. Christ is the One who is and who was and who is to come. In Exodus 3:14, we read, “And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” Christ repeatedly calls Himself “I AM” in the book of John. These verses point out the fact that Christ has always existed. John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The fact that Christ will have an eternal kingdom shows that He will always exist. The title “Almighty” is used ten times in the New Testament; nine of those times are in Revelation. Revelation 11:17 says, “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned.” As a result, we see that all of these titles are given to Christ.

John goes on to tell us that Christ is the One who told Him to write this book. Revelation 1:9-11 says, “I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,’ and, ‘What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.” We see that John was told to write to the seven churches that were in Asia. Revelation 1:19 says, “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.” This verse actually gives an outline of the book of Revelation as well as telling John to write. Chapter 1 is about the things that he was going to see. Chapters 2 and 3 talk about the churches – the things that are. Chapters 4 through 22 talk about the things which will happen in the future after the churches (all Christians) are taken to heaven.

John uses two words to describe himself to the churches. First, John describes himself as a brother. Second, John describes himself as a companion. The word translated “companion” means *a joint partner or someone who participates with others in anything*. During the time John wrote this letter, the churches were experiencing much opposition and persecution from the Roman government. As a result, we see that John spoke about being a brother and companion in tribulation. John was on the island of Patmos and that name means *my killing*. This was an island that was rocky and barren and about ten miles long and six miles wide at the widest point. The Roman government used it as a place to dump prisoners because they felt that none would be able to escape from the island. As a result, this meant that John had been a prisoner of the Roman government and they had dumped him off on the island and left him to eventually die.

The Romans had dumped John on that island for two reasons. First, they dumped him there because he was teaching the Word of God. Instead of the Roman plan being carried out, we see

that God was going to carry out His plan. Revelation 1:19 says, “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.” Here, we see that John was going to write what would become the final book of the Bible while he was on that island. Second, the Romans dumped John on this island because of His testimony about Jesus Christ. In the following verses, we will see that John received information that would add to his testimony about Christ. We will see that John had the opportunity to see Christ in all of His glory.

Romans 8:28-29 says, “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” The Romans thought that they could make John suffer on this bare rocky island. He probably did experience physical suffering. However, God chose this time of suffering on this island to give all Christians the opportunity to learn about the things that are going to happen in the future. The things that John learned helped him to become more conformed to the image of Christ and have helped millions of Christians since that time become more conformed to His image.

We see that John said that He was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day. The Lord’s Day is Sunday. It is the day that Christians all over the world gather together to remember the death and resurrection of the Lord. Acts 20:7 says, “Now on the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.” Then, 1 Corinthians 16:2 adds, “On the first *day* of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.” In both of these verses, we see that Sunday had become the day that the Christians gathered together to remember the death and resurrection of the Lord.

Even though John may not have had any other humans with him on this day, He was not alone but was able to enjoy fellowship with Christ because He was walking in the Spirit. The promise given to Joshua, in Joshua 1:5, is also given to all Christians in Hebrews 13:5, where we read: “*Let your conduct be* without covetousness; *be* content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’” John was not alone. Christ spoke to John with a loud voice and told him to write a book (scroll) and send it to the seven churches in Asia. John was to write this book and the Lord would make sure it got off the island to the seven churches in Asia. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand what John wrote so that they can teach others about the things that are going to happen in the future. The Lord will use them to share what John wrote just as He used John to write the book. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children understand the book of Revelation.