

# The Great High Priest in the Midst of the Golden Lampstands

(Revelation 1-3)

## *Introduction*

- I. **The Revelation of Jesus Christ** (Rev. 1:1-5)
  - A. Given by God to Jesus Christ (Jn. 15:15b; 17:7-8)
  - B. To His servant John and to all His servants
    - 1. Who bore witness to the word of God (see 1 Jn. 1:1-4)
    - 2. And to the testimony of Jesus
    - 3. And to all things that he saw:
      - a. Things which he has seen
      - b. Things which are (the condition of the seven churches)
      - c. Things which must shortly (quickly, soon) take place
  - C. Blessed is he who **reads** (Luke 4:16) and those who **hear** the words of this prophecy, and **keep** those things which are written in it
  - D. For the time is near
- II. **Greetings (Grace and Peace) Directly from the Triune God to the Churches**
  - A. From God the Father – Who is and Who was and Who is to come, the Almighty (Exod. 3:14 <LXX “I am the Being” hâyâh>; Rev. 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 19:6; 21:22)
  - B. From the seven Spirits Who are before His throne (Rev. 1: 4b; 4:5; 5:6; Zech. 3:9; 4:10; 2 Chr. 16:9a)
  - C. From Jesus Christ:

1. The faithful Witness (Rev. 3:14; Heb. 3:1-6; Ezek. 44:15; 48:11; 1 Cor. 4:2; Matt. 24:45-47; 25:21; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; Rev. 17:14; Luke 16:10; Jn. 18:37b; 1 Tim. 6:13b; 2 Cor. 1:20; cf. Is. 65:16 <Elohē'âmēn, "the God of Amen")
2. The Firstborn from the dead
3. The Ruler over the kings of the earth
4. The One Who loved us
  - a. Who washed us from our sins in His own blood
  - b. Who has made us kings and priests (or a kingdom of priests) to His God and Father, to Whom be glory and dominion forever and ever
5. The Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last (Rev. 1:8, 17; 2:8; 21:6; 22:13; Is. 41:4; 43:10; 44:6; 48:12)
6. The Resurrected and the Living One (Jn. 6:40; 11:25)
  - a. Who died and rose again, and lives forevermore
  - b. Who holds the keys of Hades and of death
7. Behold (imperative case), He is coming (Rev. 1:7)

### **III. Concerning the Aged Apostle John**

(Rev. 1:1-2, 9-10, 12-13, 17)

- A. Considered himself as our brother and companion
  1. In the suffering and kingdom (Acts 14:22; Phil. 1:29; 2 Th. 1:4-5; 1 Pet. 2:21)
  2. In the patience (endurance) of Jesus Christ
  3. In exile on the island of Patmos
- B. He was in spirit even in the most difficult situation

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## *The Visions*

### **IV. The Vision of the Son of Man as the Glorified Great High**

**Priest** (Rev. 1:12-18; Dan. 7:9; 10:6; Mt. 28:3)

- A. Walking in the midst of the golden lampstands
  - 1. The book of Hebrews reveals Christ as the Great High Priest in heaven interceding for us (Heb. 7:25; 1 Jn. 2:1-2)
  - 2. Revelation Ch. 1 reveals the Christ as the Great High Priest walking in the midst of the golden lampstands
- B. Clothed with a garment down to the feet girded with a golden girdle at the breast
  - 1. A priestly garment (Ex. 28)
  - 2. The breast signifies His love for the churches (Eph. 5:25b-27)
- C. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow (Col. 2:2-3; Ps. 147:5; Rom. 11:33; 16:27; Jude 1:25)
- D. His eyes like a flame of fire
- E. His feet like fine brass refined in a furnace (Ezek. 1:7; Rev. 10:1)
- F. His voice as the sound of many waters (Ezek. 43:2)
- G. He had seven stars in His right hand
- H. Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword (Heb. 4:12-13; Jer. 23:29)
- I. His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength
- J. The reaction of John: Fell at His feet as dead
- K. The answer of Jesus: Do not be afraid; [...] And I have the keys of Hades and of Death

### **V. The Mystery of the Seven Golden Lampstands**

- A. The golden lampstands are the churches (Rev. 1:12-13, 20; 2:1)
  - 1. In the holy place (Exod. 25:31-40) – referring to the Triune God as light
  - 2. In Zech. 4 – referring to Israel in the Old Covenant age

3. In Revelation – referring to the churches in the New Covenant age
  - B. Strictly according to the heavenly pattern (Ex. 25:40; 26:30; Num. 8:4; 1 Chr. 28:12-20; Heb. 8:5)
  - C. Hammered work out of a talent (ca. 94 lbs.) of pure gold (Ex. 25:31-39; 37:17-24; 39:42-43; 1 Chr. 28:19; Ezek. 43:11; Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5; Mt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22b-23; 3:18-19; Col. 2:9; 3:10-11) – no one but God could do this (Heb. 11:10)
  - D. The design – like an almond tree
    1. Almonds (אֶמְנוּנִים *shâqêd* – “the awakening one” because the almond tree was the first tree to awake from the sleep of winter and blossom) – signifying the resurrection life of Jesus Christ (see also Num. 17:8; Heb. 9:4)
    2. Note also the significance of the numbers describing the lampstand
    3. Wick trimmers and trays shall also be of pure gold – all the trimming of the lampstands must be done in a divine way
    4. Built with gold, silver, and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:12) – the Triune God

## **VI. The Mystery of the Seven Stars in His Right Hand**

- A. The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches (Hag. 1:13; Mal. 2:7; 3:1)
- B. Stars – being heavenly and not earthly (Dan. 12:3; Mal. 2:6-7)
- C. Leading and instructing the saints in the churches in the way of life, truth, and righteousness
- D. Being fully under the authority of Christ – held in His right hand, speaking only what Christ wants them to speak (Rom. 15:16; 2 Cor. 13:3; Mt. 10:20)

## *The Speaking of the Glorified Great High Priest to the Churches*

### **VII. To the Church in Ephesus (Rev. 2:1-7)**

- A. His commendations (vv. 2-3)
- B. His strong reproof, the call to repentance, and strong warning (vv. 4-5)
- C. What He hates – the deeds of the Nicolaitans (v. 6)
- D. The reward to him who overcomes (v. 7)

### **VIII. To the Church in Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11)**

- A. The tribulation – sufferings and persecution from the synagogues of Satan
- B. The Lord's commendation – poor with regards to worldly goods, but rich in God (Jam. 2:5; Lk. 12:15, 21)
- C. The Lord's encouragement and reward
  - 1. Fear not; be faithful unto death (martyrdom)
  - 2. Receiving a crown of life as a reward
  - 3. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death (1 Cor. 3:12-15; Mt. 25:1-13, 30; Rev. 12:1-6; 20:4, 6)

### **IX. To the Church in Pergamos (Rev. 2:12-17)**

- A. The golden lampstands have nothing to do with the world (2 Cor. 6:14-18; 7:1; 1 Jn. 5:19; 2:15-17; Jn. 12:31; 14:30)
- B. The Lord's strong reproof: against the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of Nicolaitans, which the Lord hates
- C. The call to repentance and to overcome (v. 16)
- D. Reward to him who overcomes (v. 17)
  - 1. To eat of the hidden manna
  - 2. To receive a white stone

### **X. To the Church in Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-29)**

- A. The Lord here is known as the One, who has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like fine brass

1. Eyes like a flame of fire against all religion and eye-worship
2. feet like fine brass against all mixture with the world (Ex 27:19)
- B. Many good works
- C. The Lord's reproof and warning: tolerating that woman Jezebel (v. 20-21) – that woman is Babylon (Rev. 17)
  1. Cast into a sickbed and great tribulation
  2. Her children will be killed – in the course of history and a total destruction in the coming future Rev. 17 and 18 (see 2 Kg. 10:6-27)
  3. Hold fast what you (the remnant) have
- D. In Thyatira are hidden the depths of Satan (v. 24)
- E. The reward to him who overcomes and keeps HIS works until the end (vv. 26-29)
  1. The morning star – the secret coming of the Lord before the great day of God's wrath to take the overcomers
  2. To rule over the nations

#### **XI. To the Church in Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6)**

- A. Having a name that she is alive, but is dead (v. 1)
  1. With time, many things (teaching and works) are dying
  2. Her works are not found perfect before God
- B. Only a few names (individuals) are worthy – walking with the Lord in white garments (vv. 4-5)
  1. His name will not be blotted out from the Book of Life
  2. The Lord will confess his name before His Father and His angels

#### **XII. To the Church in Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-13)**

- A. The description of the Lord
  1. He who is holy and true
  2. He who has the key of David (Is. 22:20-25)
- B. The church that the Lord loves (Rev. 3:9b)
  1. The Lord has given her an open door

2. She has kept His word and not denied His name
  3. She has kept His command to persevere
  4. The Lord will keep her from the hour of trial upon the whole world – the great day of God’s wrath (v. 10)
- C. The promise of His soon coming and the crown – they should hold fast what they have
- D. The reward to him who overcomes (v. 12)

**XIII. To the Church in Laodicea – the Lukewarm Church**

(Rev. 3:14-22)

- A. The description of the Lord (v. 14)
- B. The Lord threatened to vomit them out of His mouth (v. 16)
- C. The problem of the church in Laodicea (v. 17)
1. Pride
  2. Blindness to their poor condition
- D. The Lord’s counsel to Laodicea (v. 18)
1. Buy gold from Him
  2. And white garments
  3. And eye salve
- E. The Lord’s rebuking and chastening through His love (vv. 19-20)
- F. The reward to him who overcomes – to sit with Him on His throne (v. 21)