

# Jesus Reigns With Us

Revelation 1:4-18 <sup>4</sup> John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, <sup>5</sup> and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, <sup>6</sup> and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> "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." <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, <sup>11</sup> 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." <sup>12</sup> Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup> and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. <sup>14</sup> His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; <sup>15</sup> His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; <sup>16</sup> He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. <sup>17</sup> And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. <sup>18</sup> "I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

## Why does the book of Revelations matter?

The book of Revelation is one that can be confusing. For example, just in our reading today "the Alpha and the Omega" is that a reference to the Father or to the Son? Or this reference to the seven spirits, what does that mean?

Verse, one also tells us that the purpose of Revelations is to "show his servants – things which must shortly take place." Which many take to mean that the book is mainly about future events. Although that isn't really what the verse says.

These two things combined mean that people often take one of two attitudes towards the book of Revelation. They either mostly ignore it as something to come and not relevant to my life. Or they treat it like a crystal globe seeking the future in it. The problem with crystal globe is they mostly just show your own reflection.

Yet the real value of the book of Revelations is not in what it says about the future but what it says about the present.

There are some passages that are confusing and some that are yet to come but there is much that is plain and simple and is edifying for us here and now. Consider the following verse.

**Revelation 1:5 from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,**

What does this passage teach us? It teaches us that Jesus lives, that our sins are washed away, that we are kings with Jesus even right now.

The real purpose of the book of Revelations is to remove the veil from our eyes, to show us the truth that Jesus lives and reigns with us now. Why does the book of Revelations matter? Why spend a few weeks now during the Easter season studying it? Because it reveals Jesus in the glory that is His now and the power with which He rules over us. It reveals the truth of our current lives.

After Isaac was born to Abraham. Sarah was jealous of Hagar and Ishmael. Hagar and Ishmael were sent away and Hagar thought they were going to die of thirst there in the wilderness> Hagar thought that God had abandoned her and her son. God appeared to Hagar and promised to be with her. He opened her eyes to see that there was a well of water right there.

We are often convinced that spiritually, emotionally, mentally we are dying of “thirst.” The book of Revelation opens our eyes to see that the living and risen Savior is with us and that there is a well of living water right there.

### **Jesus is Coming**

Moses asked God, “what shall I say your name is?”

God replied, “I am who I am.”

This name “I Am” in Hebrew is pronounced either Jehovah or possibly Jahweh.

The Jewish rabbis translated this name into Greek as “O WN” the one who is. They even expanded it a bit to be “the one who is and who was and who will be.” Thus, emphasizing the abiding unchanging nature of God.

Jesus claimed this name for Himself when he said, “before Abraham was I am”

The book of Hebrews makes reference to this name as well and ascribes it to Jesus when it says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” Hebrews 13:8

The book of Revelation begins with this same name, emphasizing the God who does not change. Except it is not quite the same name.

Look again at verse four. We would expect “the one who is and was and will be.” We would expect a repetition of the verb “to be” a third time in the future tense. That is what we would expect. That is what the book Hebrews does. That is how the name Jehovah was often explained. But it is not what is revealed here in the book of Revelation. The third verb is neither the right verb nor the right tense. Instead of the future tense of to be, it is the present tense of to come. Instead of the one who will be, we have the one who is coming.

This third verb, the one who is coming is a title which belongs to Christ.

In the vision that Daniel receives in Daniel chapter seven one like the Son of Man who *is coming* on the clouds of heaven approaches the Ancient of Days.

When Jesus enters Jerusalem on Palm Sunday the crowds greet Him quoting Psalm 118 proclaiming, “Blessed is he who *is coming* in the name of the Lord.”

When John the Baptist is locked in prison, he sends men to ask Jesus, “Are you the one who *is coming*?”

When Lazarus is dead and in the grave Martha confess, “You are the Christ the Son of God who *is coming* into the world.”

This phrase is a title for the Messiah which expresses the faith and certainty that the God who does not change will fulfill his promise and the Messiah which Jehweh promised not only will come, but is coming, that is, He is already on the way.

This first title that John gives to Jesus than is a proclamation that Jesus is both Jaweh, the one and only God, and the Messiah. Jesus is Jehovah the God who does not change and because He does not change, He who is coming, has come and has died and has arisen, and is alive forevermore.

**The coming of Christ is not simply a future certainty, but it is a present reality.**

When you are at a restaurant with your friends and Josh is late again, someone might say “Where is Josh?”

Someone else might respond “He is coming.”

Then you have to sit and wait for Josh while other people get to eat.

In this example the “coming” is a promise of things to come but not present.

However, if it is pouring outside, someone might say, “the rain is really coming down.”

Here the coming is not only a future even but also a present reality. The rain is coming down right now.

The coming of Christ is like the pouring of the rain. It is a present reality in which Jesus pours out his blessings in our hearts.

**Hosea 6:3 He will come to us like the rain**

**Revelation 1:9 I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,**

John says there are three things which describe our present reality.

The first is obvious to us. We live in the tribulation. This is what the Psalms call “the valley of the shadow of death.” The insecurity, the worry, the daily struggle, the disappointments, the sicknesses, the weakness, the fears, the death. All of this is part of this tribulation. This is seen and felt and observed easily.

The second is the part that is not obvious to us, that we also live in the kingdom of Jesus. This is where we need the book of Revelation, to open our eyes to see that His kingdom which is coming is also present with us now.

**Psa 27:1** A Psalm of David. The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?

Such bible passages were not written for the full light of day, but for the deep darkness of night. Such passages remind us that even while we endure tribulation we are also kings and queens in the kingdom of God our Father. We reign with Jesus.

Therefore, the third part of our reality is we wait with patience and with endurance. Being washed in his blood, being strengthened by His word, we endure.

It would be impossible for us to endure and remain patient waiting for the full coming of Christ unless we were already a part of His kingdom. Without His present coming, that is His blessings, we would not endure.

But now we reign with Him and wait for Him even while we suffer.

Why does Revelation matter to me? Because I need my eyes opened to see His kingdom.

**Jesus reigns among us, we are kings and priests to God our Father. Amen**