

Our reading today starts, 'The revelation of Jesus Christ'. It is a book which explains what 'must soon take place' and is called a prophecy because it speaks of things that are still to be.

The book is addressed to seven churches which were located in what we now know as Turkey but John must have known his words would spread further and they are also written to believers everywhere.

Grace and peace is offered as a blessing by John in God's name. This God has no beginning and no end – he IS, he WAS and he IS TO COME. This blessing is from the Father, the seven spirits before the throne is often translated the sevenfold Spirit indicating attributes of the Holy Spirit, and also from Jesus who is called

The faithful witness – Jesus was obedient to his Father's will, even to death

Firstborn from the dead – he was not the first person to be brought back from death to life; there are other biblical examples of that. He is the most important though, hence firstborn is not chronology but position and authority. It is through his death and resurrection that we can have hope of resurrection.

Ruler of the Kings of the earth – the one who was despised and rejected was the only one who has true authority. Had he chosen he could have crushed his enemies but that was not his Father's will and so he took the place of a servant, rather than his rightful place as King.

We're told that he loves us and has freed us from sin by his blood – sacrifice

A kingdom – that's what the Jews had been after all along; to be part of a great kingdom. This kingdom is not limited to one place or one time, but is for all places, for all time, and we are part of that kingdom, serving as priests in it; offering our own sacrifices and leading others to the King.

One day Christ will come with the clouds and every eye will see him – believer and unbeliever, and everyone will know that he is

God. The soldiers and religious people who had him crucified, the crowd who called for his death, even those who today refuse to believe will know who he is. Along with great rejoicing there will be great mourning because for so many people it will be too late and they will be aware of pending judgement.

Jesus is called Alpha and Omega – beginning and end of everything.

John is writing this while exiled to a prison island. He understands what it is to suffer for Jesus and he reminds us that all who follow Jesus can expect some degree of opposition and persecution.

John receives this vision 'on the Lord's Day', by this point many were celebrating on Sunday rather than the Jewish Sabbath of Saturday. Even in prison John makes the effort to remember that day as special – many of us could learn that lesson and make sure we make every effort to be with God's people for worship.

He writes that he was 'in the Spirit' which means that he was open to Holy Spirit to speak to him as he was praying. We need to cultivate that same attitude and make sure we are ready to hear from God, because he still speaks.

¹³ There with the lampstands was someone who seemed to be the Son of Man.^[f] He was wearing a robe that reached down to his feet, and a gold cloth was wrapped around his chest. ¹⁴ His head and his hair were white as wool or snow, and his eyes looked like flames of fire. ¹⁵ His feet were glowing like bronze being heated in a furnace, and his voice sounded like the roar of a waterfall. ¹⁶ He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp double-edged sword was coming from his mouth. His face was shining as bright as the sun at noon.

The only response was to fall on his feet in worship and awe. That should be our response as well!

Video - His resurrection today

Jesus is known as the King of the Jews. He's the King of Israel. He's the King of righteousness. He's the King of the ages. He's the King of Heaven. He's the King of glory. He's the King of kings and He is the Lord of lords. He is wonderful counsellor, mighty God, everlasting Father and the Prince of peace. He is Alpha and Omega, the author and finisher of faith.

Nothing can hinder Him from pouring out His blessing. He is full of grace and truth, compassionate and merciful. He's God's Son. He's the sinner's Saviour. He's unique and unparalleled. He's unprecedented. He's supreme. He's the only one able to supply all our needs simultaneously. He supplies strength for the weak. He's available for the tempted and the tried. He sympathises and He saves. He's the Almighty God who guides and keeps his people. He heals the sick. He cleanses the lepers. He forgives sinners. He loves the unlovely. He delivers the captives. He defends the feeble. He blesses the young. He serves the unfortunate and he is the bridegroom coming back for the church.

His promise is sure. His goodness is limitless. His mercy is everlasting. His love never changes. His Word is enough. His grace is sufficient.. His yoke is easy and His burden is light., He's invincible, and He is irresistible.

His is the name above every name and to him all people will one day bow. It is to his name that we call for salvation and are forgiven and justified. It is in his name that we find life in all its fullness.

I want to tell you, that the heavens cannot contain Him, let alone me explain Him. You can't get Him out of your mind. You can't get Him off of your hands. You can't outlive Him and you can't live without Him.

The Pharisees couldn't stand Him, but they discovered they couldn't stop Him. Pilate couldn't find any fault in Him. Death

couldn't handle Him and the grave couldn't hold Him. He is the man of sorrows, familiar with suffering and he is the Lamb who looks as if he is slain.

He is the Root of David, Light of the world, Bread of life; the chosen one, cornerstone, deliverer, Emmanuel; the Good Shepherd, Lion of the tribe of Judah and light of the world. He is the way, the truth and the life. He is the image of invisible God, by whom and for whom everything is created. All the fullness of God dwells in him.