

Rev 25-09-17b

We're prosecuting our study of the revelation of Jesus Christ here. We're in chapter 1 and we are Intentionally not anticipating a lot of what is going to be in this book In terms many times when you come to Revelation in the introduction people will say here's a list of 25 things that are all in sets of seven and we're looking a little bit forward just to help us understand the seven spirits or the appearance of the lampstands and so on but Think about this We are all about application right when we finish each of these Sessions each of these mornings and evenings where we're looking at this book We should come away With a message from the Lord Jesus that in some way Encourages us to be better servants to be more faithful to be overcomers and to qualify for present and future blessing reward inheritance and opportunity Those things come to us through the Word of God and the Spirit of God. We know this.

This is the Word of God on Steroids these are epistles not written by Paul Peter John or Jude But by the Lord Jesus himself, they are upcoming but imagine put yourself in the place of the churches in Ephesus and Smyrna and Pergamos and Thyatira and Sardis and The Philadelphians and the Laodiceans They are the recipients of this They don't have the whole book that they can page back and forth and go to chapter 19 to understand something in chapter 1 Imagine that you're sitting in the congregation let's just pretend we're in Ephesus the first church to receive this letter and This is how it opens This is what they have heard at the point that someone stands up to read John's book John's record of what he saw What would you come away with at this point? What should we now be carrying in our souls? Because of these 10 or 12 lessons we've had on chapter 1 Has it changed us has it made an impression on us as the Word of God? From God the Father what freight what content what effect and Benefit should this have on us? What's the impression you're left with even if you didn't go word by word I Would like to suggest a couple of things that we should already find circulating in our souls having seen these first 12 or 13 verses The first is Look at the divine presence power and Authority that is reflected in this introduction Paul will begin a letter and say grace you in peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ Almost as a pattern almost as a formula it is true, and it's welcome, but he doesn't spend 20 verses Emphasizing God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ before he gets to the content of his missive This book does Why is that important in? Every generation and never more so than in our day. There is a direct pernicious vicious emphatic attack on The existence of God on The identity of the Lord Jesus Christ as The second person of the Trinity who became flesh and dwelt among us who is the Word of God who is the way the truth and the life Who brought us grace and truth? many of these things coming from John chapter 1 Who is the expression of God's love in John chapter 3? These things are attacked and of course you don't even have to bother Attacking or defending on the ground of the Holy Spirit if there is really no God the Father and there really is no God the Son God the Holy Spirit is right out this is intentional this is devilish it is Satanic it is demonic because on the Presence and the power and the glory the character of God the Father everything rests the integrity and the authority of Scripture the witness and power of the Holy Spirit the work of the Lord Jesus Christ as an expression of God's love as our atonement as our redemption

reconciliation and propitiation Everything that we believe everything that defines us is Built on the solid rock of Jesus Christ the Son of God John's Gospel these Seven signs are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God and that Believing you might have life through his name So do you notice? That here in the Revelation This is all about God He sent it. He signified it.

He transmitted it He sends greetings of grace and peace in His own name and what is his name? I like the idea. It's not original to me. Although I think when we covered Exodus I took this position Can't remember all the positions I've taken across the years, but I will say this now Think of the Ten Commandments in Exodus chapter 20 Thou shalt have no other gods before me Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain and We tend to associate this with language don't curse don't Have the name of our Savior as an expletive or as as an some way of Emphasizing your shock and dismay don't don't use the name of God in a tacky way I don't think that's what it means We Have taken the name of our God we have taken the name of Jesus Christ.

We are Christians we are Christians we claim Jesus Christ as our Savior we have taken his name If that doesn't mean much to us and we live like the world we think like the world We talk like the world we act like the world We've taken that name which ought to sanctify us and set us apart we've done it to no purpose and That commandment holds Don't take the name don't claim the identity don't say God is my Heavenly Father and Yeshua is my Savior and And You live a life of vanity you live a life that is purposeless and and doesn't count you're not redeeming the time You're not preparing for the future look at this chapter we are intimately connected to God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ and Look at what is done for us look at the glory of God the power of God the accomplishments of God and he has Condescended to save us and Not just to give us life, but to create for us a kingdom, which is absolutely coming and Has made us priests Through the Lord Jesus Christ We bear that name and look at the emphasis in these verses this whole first chapter Does nothing but point to the glory and power of the deity that has saved us So with that in mind John turns in verse 12 to see the voice it's kind of a a Catchy thing to say can you see a voice? This is a figure of speech metonymy of the adjunct to see what the voice is coming from You can't see a sound Unless you've got equipment see the voice that spoke with me having turned. I saw the lampstands first You would imagine from the language here that they are arranged in a circle They might even be arranged as they are geographically in what is now southern Turkey southwestern Turkey and They're in this some of them are a little further than others You have Ephesus then you go north and To Smyrna, and then you you turn a corner Pergamos comes down and so on But he sees the lampstands and in the midst of the seven lampstands verse 13 one like the son of man Clothed with a garment down to the feet girded about the chest with a golden band His head and hair are white like wool as white as snow and his eyes like a flame of fire This is Old Testament language for purity and for judgment purity and judgment the whiteness Whiter than it can be made with a fuller soap white as snow and Eyes like a flame of fire There is nothing they cannot penetrate there is nothing they cannot Find the truth of fire speaks of

judgment Old Testament and new and what he sees he judges what we're going to see and You can put this down as a broad outline. And again, I'm not doing much by way of anticipating what's coming except as it helps us decipher the symbolism the metaphors but in broad outline This book is going to show us the Lord Jesus in this chapter as judge He is a judge this band of rank around his chest his Complete righteousness qualifies him to judge Judgment Has been assigned to the Lord Jesus by the Father all authority in heaven and on earth and authority judges In broad outline chapter 1 introduces and Emphasizes the Lord Jesus as Judge we're not looking at at His blood is mentioned He released us from our sins But this release is a judicial act his blood was the agency by which he released us from our sins So he is Jesus Christ as judge if you want it just a three-line outline of Revelation chapter 1 Jesus Christ as judge Chapters 2 through 5 give us Jesus Christ as judge of the church Judge of the church you see it especially in chapters 2 and 3 but it extends through the heavenly scenes in chapters 4 and 5 2 chapters of the church on earth 2 chapters of the church in heaven is how I'm going to Present it there are various understandings.

I'm giving you mine for obvious reasons So 2 chapters of the church on earth 2 chapters of the church in heaven chapter 2 3 4 & 5 beginning in chapter 6 with the breaking of the seals and Extending all the way through pretty much the end of the book, but especially through chapter 19 The Lord Jesus as judge of the world judgment begins with the house of God we're told in another place Acts is laid at the root of the trees judgment begins with the house of God so the Lord Jesus is The righteous judge he is going to judge his body his church And he is going to judge the world and pretty much in that order broad outline so now let's enumerate these number one One like the Son of Man Clothes with a garment down to his feet Girt about the chest with a golden band His head and hair are white like wool White as snow his eyes are like a flame of fire His feet are like fine brass as if refined in a furnace His voice is as the sound of many waters, we are going to see this multiple times in scripture And he holds in his right hand the seven stars and out of his mouth goes a sharp two-edged sword His countenance is like the Sun shining in its strength Many things to look at here And we're going to see these unfold because he is going to introduce himself in these terms when he starts addressing each of the seven churches So if you add these up you wind up with Ten attributes in total Some of them are his appearance the ones related to his appearance There are seven of those and three of them are things that he is Doing in terms of holding the stars Issuing the sword and so on All of these speak of righteousness and judgment The sharp two-edged sword that is mentioned here. This is not the Makaira the short battle sword This is the two-handed chop somebody in half or behead them sword. This is the big sword His feet like fine brass we saw this in a previous revelation study fine brass fine brass is polished and it reflects and So the fire of judgment from his eyes to his feet from top to bottom beginning and ending it is Judgment the fire of judgment In his right hand he holds the seven stars He's going to explain these when we get a little further down the sharp two-edged sword you will see artistic depictions of A sword actually coming out of his mouth if I were to do an artistic rendering I would put the sword in front of him his The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God and this is a representation of his Speaking what he says is going to pronounce judgment and sentence This is the sword that

was used to execute criminals to put an end to lives and This is going to be done by him speaking.

He doesn't have this sword in his hand All he has to do is speak and this goes back to his restored Appearance of deity. This is something a power that God has God will speak from the throne room and All of these things are going to take place in this book Again what do we take away from this? This is our God. This is our father and this is his son the Lord Jesus Christ to whom we are Intimately connected we belong to him.

We are his possession and We are held in his hands never to be moved never to be separated never to be lost Especially when we move in the direction of growth service obedience function Seizing these opportunities and making the most of them and being overcomers as we'll see in these next couple of chapters His countenance is like the Sun shining in his strength. Do you notice? everything is at the limit of the human capacity to observe his voice is like a trumpet Hit the sound of many waters His appearance is so shiny you can hardly bear to look at it This has been Dialed down So that John can hear it at all or look at it at all. It is beyond the material It's beyond human comprehension.

And so it is given in these Representative terms as we will see in chapter 4. No one has seen God at any time, but there was a representation For Moses and the elders of Israel on Mount Sinai that was like a welding mask I Used an old-fashioned smoke glass welding mask for decades and I finally got one of the new ones that you can see through like clear glass and as soon as you spark your torch and as soon as you as soon as you Not your torch as soon as you get a spark and you start your flow your your flux welding it it electronically goes extremely dark and in order to look at the deity of the Father and the deity of the Son it has to be Seen through a glass darkly or it would overwhelm us That's what this is Notice he is holding in his right hand seven stars You don't John does not at first see the stars if you go back He sees the lampstands one like the Son of Man clothed with a garment girded about the chest head and hair white Eyes like a flame of fire feet like fine brass as if her firing in a furnace Voices the sound of many waters had in his right hand seven stars Out of his mouth goes the sword countenance like the sun shining in his strength verse 17 when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead again, this so overwhelms John That he falls to the ground This is the same thing that takes place In Matthew chapter 17 verses 6 and 7 keep your place here and just turn back quickly to Matthew The same John is present on this occasion and you wonder if he when he can manage to gather his wits Has a sense of deja vu Matthew 17 verse 6 when the disciples Heard the voice from the cloud saying this is my beloved son in whom I am. Well pleased hear him When the disciples heard it they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid But Jesus came and touched them and said arise and do not be afraid Notice the description in verse 2 when Jesus is transfigured before them his face shone like the Sun His clothes became as white as the light Moses and Elijah on each side this is a less wattage Picture of the glorified Jesus John Gets the full blast here in chapter 1 of the Revelation So he fell at his feet as dead, but he laid his right hand on me Saying do not be afraid I am the first and the last I Am he who lives and was dead and behold I'm alive forevermore Do you see a repeat of the pattern we saw earlier is was

and is to come I? Am he who lives? Presently I was dead in the past now God the Father is and was Always was in eternity past and is to come The Lord Jesus there is a slight difference. He is he lives.

He's present. He was dead and He will be alive forevermore Amen and I have the keys of Hades and of death What do you think about this? I? have the keys of Hades and of death why two different things What's the difference in other words between death and Hades There is a school of thought that says that Hades is the abode of the ones who have died and have not yet been judged and gone to their fate, so It is the the realm Coincident with Sheol of the Old Testament There is a basic distinction here that is important remembering again. We're using and understanding figurative language death in the Greek it's Thanatos This is the point at which we exit life, and we're not here anymore.

That's death so it is you could think of death as an exit door You walk through the exit door and those who are alive on the earth don't interact with you anymore That is death Who determines the length of our life as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ He doesn't say I'm going to get these keys. He says I have the keys of Hades and of death Hades and that's a transliteration from the Greek this is The afterlife in whatever sense we are going to understand it Hades is not on earth We are alive And then we walk through the door of death and whatever happens after that is in the Old Testament referred to as Sheol and in the New Testament as Hades Sheol in the Septuagint is translated with the word Hades Which was a Greek? Concept But it is what you might think of as the fate of the dead Hades is where your fate is going to be determined. There are some who are in Hades As the rich man in Luke chapter 16 he it says he is in Sheol he is in Hades when he looks up and has this conversation with Abraham who has Lazarus the beggar in his bosom But it says there that the rich man He's in Hades and he says I am tormented in this flame.

This is his fate after death so death is the the act or experience of leaving this life at What time and in what way does that happen? The Lord Jesus is in control of that He has the key and he determines when for each individual one of us we leave this life via death the Lord Jesus has that key as the firstborn from the dead death death could not hold him and He is now in control of when and how we die. He has that key he also as the judge is in charge of Judgment after death broadly and generally referred to as Hades What is going to happen? after death and He has the keys. He has the authority.

He has the power to open a door and to shut a door We'll see more of this as we move forward. I Behold I am alive forevermore. Amen.

It is true Assuredly so I have the keys of Hades and of death you worry about Judgment now and particularly in the future what's going to happen after death the Lord Jesus has got it this should give us a wonderful sense of peace and assurance The Lord Jesus Loves us gave his life for us He is more closely connected to us than any other human beings in all of history past or future and It is he who will determine When we pass through the portals of death and what our

judgment will be thereafter This is going to become manifest in the next couple of chapters But once again emphasis on divine sovereignty divine power divine righteousness divine control over our lives our death and what happens after death and to the extent that we are comfortable and connected and Joyfully celebrating our relationship with God. This is a wonderful assurance. This is a great set of facts If God before us who can be against us, why should I fear what man can do unto me? there's been a lot of fear here over the last week or so with Violent events taking place and many of them aimed at those who are Christian or conservative and people starting to look around and say do I need to be more careful in what I say or how I Hold the name of God in the name of the Lord Jesus am I going to sort of camouflage myself and go into defilade and Try to not be noticed we have zero fear we have boldness Because God is our Heavenly Father.

The Lord Jesus is our Savior and look at this Lord Jesus He is not the humble rabbi traveling the dusty villages of Galilee or Judea He is the risen and ascended Lord. This is our advocate This is our Savior who not only delivers us from bondage to sin and grants to us eternal life, but is our advocate before the throne and who Will not suffer us to be moved He has the keys of death. He has the keys that pertain to judgment in the future So we have not been given a spirit of fear but of power and of love and of sober thought self-control sound mind So verse 19 you need to add a word at the beginning of verse 19 Therefore Because I Am the first and last because I am he who lives and was dead and behold.

I'm alive forevermore. Look I'm not going to die again I'm here for the infinite future I Have the keys of Hades and of death therefore, right? The message is Centered on the identity the character the person of Jesus Christ this word therefore is there for a reason and It's sad that it fell out of the King James Therefore write the things which you have seen and the things which are and the things which will take place after this notice the connection between verse 19 and verse 18 I Have me who lives so write the things which are We serve a living Lord. He is present.

He is engaged. He is going to say seven times in the next two chapters I know your works. I'm paying attention.

I'm alive. I'm watching. I've got the eyes that burn like fire I've got the feet that reflect the fires of judgment.

I've got the white robe. I've got the judgmental badge of authority around my chest I've got the double-edged sword that renders judgment based on what I see. He doesn't fire that sword blindly therefore Because of who he is Write the things which you have seen The things which are and the things which will take place after this he who was dead Who was the first guy to enter the tomb on that Sunday morning? John is the first one that entered into the tomb and saw that the Lord Jesus wasn't there Write the things which you have seen Not real sure when John wrote his gospel but I would like to think that was in close proximity to this and When Jesus said write the things you've seen John said I'll do it and here comes the gospel So Write the things which you have seen and the things which are this is The status of the seven

churches in that day at that time and the things which will take place after this Which are about to be revealed to him Now we get some explanation in verse 20 didn't think I could do it.

Did you? Verse 20 the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand. What is a mystery? This is a mystery that is heretofore Unrevealed and would not be understood if it were not explained remember the study we did in the books of Timothy and Titus about Paul as the steward of the mystery of the church the mystery of the inclusion of the Gentiles that was a truth that was heretofore unrevealed and Could not be understood if it was not explained So God Explains it to the Lord Jesus who explains it to Paul who explains it to the church churches The mystery of the seven stars if we didn't have an explanation we would be speculating what are these seven stars How could we possibly know there's not Old Testament References that could help us Triangulate and decode the seven stars. So Jesus says I'll explain the mystery.

How many times did Jesus give parables and Everything he said after the rejection became formal in Israel He said he only spoke to them in parables and without a parable. He didn't say anything but privately to his disciples he Explained the mystery to you. It is given to understand the mysteries of the kingdom to those outside Everything is parables.

They see it, but they don't perceive it They hear it, but they don't understand seeing and hearing you see it with Moses on Sinai You see it with John here on Patmos seeing and hearing you can see it and you can hear it But you're not going to understand it without the grace of God Revealing the mystery. This is the revelation. This book is open.

Daniel was sealed So the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand and the seven golden lampstands the seven stars are the angels the messengers of the seven churches and The seven lampstands line out which you saw that's not there Just line it out the seven lampstands are the seven churches The seven lampstands are the seven churches which you saw rub it out. It's not there Now How do I know that these are not? Angels Stars represent angels you see this the stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy at creation in the Old Testament You have this Association of angels and stars. Why aren't this is why Jesus says this is a mystery You can't figure these stars out by looking at your Old Testament.

That's one clue. The second one is to the angel of the Church of Ephesus right in the next verse Angels are not yet And we have no clue that they ever will be subordinate to human beings there is a chain of custody and John is going to write to the messenger of the church John is an apostle there is a pastor and then there is the church proper The stars are distinguished from the lampstand because not just anybody in the group can be the pastor You're not all pastors. We can all be priests.

We can all receive a kingdom. We can all be overcomers There's a lot of things we can do together. The whole body fitly joined together can bless Itself by that which every joint supplies it can be built up and edified we can do the one another's we can sing Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

There's a lot of things we can do together. But when it comes to communicating the message there is one star per church and it's not an angel as in Celestial being it is the pastor and the Apostle Communicates to the pastor you see the model with Paul and Timothy and Titus you see it Elsewhere in in the New Testament and you see it here so angel here is messenger context tells you this is the pastor teacher if you will in these Jesus is not subordinating a heavenly angel to an earthly apostle John you write these letters to these Angels Who are represented as stars notice the lampstands are not held in Jesus hand What is holding something in your hand represent power authority once again judgment? There is a higher Standard there is double blessing and there is also double discipline for pastors who fail It is not something to undertake lightly It took me a year to get over that hurdle because it's a very sobering thought you're going to be an angel a messenger that is held in the hand of the Lord Jesus himself and Will be judged accordingly or blessed accordingly depending on faithfulness. I Want you to notice finally as we now come to the threshold of chapter 2 What do you not see We've emphasized as this first chapter does the chain of custody from the father to the son to the angel to the apostle to the messenger for each church and The messenger is now going to deliver these messages.

We find in chapter 2 and 3. What do you not see I? Could ask this another way. Why are we a Bible Church? When I was raised Baptist my whole family was Baptist back to 1811 and earlier Why are we not Baptists? Why are we not Methodist? Why are we not Presbyterians or name your denomination? do you see any distance any daylight between the Lord Jesus who holds the messenger of the church in his hand is There a denomination. Is there a structure? Is there some order of bishops and Cardinals? Is there some? Higher level of oversight are these churches aggregated? They are not They are accountable through their pastor Directly to the Lord Jesus.

There is nobody else in that chain of custody chain of command Denominations and I work for one By God's grace, you know, it's not a perfect world, but I am here to tell you from the Word of God There is no biblical basis for denominations whatsoever quite the reverse we'll see this when we get to the Nicolaitans But this brings us now to chapter 2 and Jesus Christ commands John Right to the angel of the church at Ephesus This is going to be so helpful to us Every one of these churches bears on us individually and collectively in Wonderful ways soon to be seen, but we'll close here in a word of prayer Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for imparting it to us Ensuring that the chain of custody is sound that we can trust this message It is from you it is through the Lord Jesus Christ. It has the apostolic witness to Assure us of its truth.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will minister it to our hearts help us to bear the fruit of the Spirit love joy and peace and the other attributes as a result of reflecting and meditating on this Wonderful introductory chapter we ask it in Jesus name. Amen