

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“Prisoner of the Lord’s Day”

Revelation 1:9-11

Introduction

1. God the Father gave this Book to His Son. He signified (sign-I-fied) it to His angel who related it to John who then gave it to us (v. 1).

2. Trinitarian teaching is clear (vv. 4, 5) and indications of the second coming of Christ (vv. 5b-8). With this introductory information, John adds information about himself.

3. Other biographical material is given about John. Peter was told about his old age (Jn 21:18, 19). At the same time what would happen to John was noted (Jn 21:20-23). John did not die at that time, but was given life until this Book was penned. It is the same John who writes here (v. 9). This sounds much like the O.T. prophet Daniel when he wrote (8:15; 9:3; 10:2).

4. In one sense, a prophetic utterance is supported by the fidelity of its witness. So, what about John? Here are some statements he makes:-

1. HIS DESIGNATIONS v. 9a (John’s condition)

Mark the four clearly noted:

a. Brother ()

This shows John has a filial bond with those whom he addresses. That this is a spiritual matter is obvious (cf. John 1:12, 13; 1 John 3:13, 14).

b. Companion ()

With the prefixed preposition, this strengthened term means a “partner along with.” The root is commonly rendered “fellowship” (1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:3). The partner is in “the” tribulation (). The definite article points to a definite character of trial and not to ordinary difficulties of the Christian life (Acts 14:22; John 16:33). The reference here is to the Neronian or Domitian periods of martyrdom. The latter is most likely the actual one. In no way is this reference to “the” Great Tribulation of the future civil and ecclesiastical powers (Rev. 6, 13; cf. 3:10).

c. Kingdom ()

There are four distinct aspects by which the kingdom is presented in the Word: 1) In responsibility as presented to the Jews, the King being rejected (Mt. 1-23). 2) In mystery among the Gentiles as set forth in Matthew 13. 3) in tribulation as seen in Revelation 6 - 19. 4) In power at the coming of Christ in glory (Mt. 25:31). Contextually, it appears that the latter is in view here.

d. Patience ()

This is to be the prevailing attitude throughout “tribulation” and “kingdom” prospects. John had not “lost patience.” The noun means to “stay under” the situation. It is a key to waiting for what God will yet do. Considering this Book, it was a reality in the life of John.

NOTE: The three words tribulation, kingdom, and patience are connected as indicated by one article in the Greek. Moreover, the whole is “in Jesus.” The Lord has His part in the matter. John’s “in Jesus” is equivalent to Paul’s “in Christ Jesus” (2 Cor. 5:17). The entire Christian life, whether in suffering, reigning, or waiting is in union with the life of the Son of God!

2. HIS ISOLATION v. 9b (John’s location)

a. The Place

Patmos is a rocky, sparsely populated island 10 by 6 miles in the Aegean Sea, south of Miletus. There is a grotto there portending to be “the grotto of the Apocalypse” in which John is supposed to have had his vision. John was the leader of the believers in Asia. He lived in Ephesus. He was banished by the decree of Emperor Domitian. This is what the world does with Christians. It cannot accept what does not conform to it.

b. The Purpose (reason)

The preposition “for” used here () is used with the accusative case and must be translated “on account of” or “because of.” Hence, on account of 1) the Word of God 2) the testimony of Jesus Christ, John had been banished. Because he had been faithful, he was punished. These two considerations will always incur the wrath and hostility of the godless world system.

3. HIS VISITATION vv. 10, 11 (John’s obligation)

a. In the Spirit

This truth has nothing to do with the contrary positions “in the flesh” or “in the Spirit” (Ro. 8:9). The verb, “was” really means “became” () and is used of our Lord (Jn 1:14). So John here came to be under the control of the Holy Spirit for revelation and inspiration. These two major doctrines lead to an inerrant Bible! John herewith professes the truth of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21).

b. On the Day

Specifically this is the “Lordish Day” (cf. Lord’s Supper, 1 Cor. 11:20). The reference is to the first day of the week and not to the “Day of the Lord” (Zech. 1:7; 14:1) as an eschatological reference. Two very important “Christian” events occurred on the first day: 1) the resurrection of Christ (Jn 20:1) and 2) Pentecost, the start of the Church (Acts 2:1; Lev. 23:16). Let it be known that the “Lord’s Day” (Sunday) is not a replacement for the Jewish “Sabbath.” The latter was a sign between God and Israel (Ex. 31:12-19; Num. 15:32; Ezek. 20:12). It is the one commandment of the decalogue (10 commandments) not repeated in the N.T. The early Church worshipped on the Lord’s Day not Sabbath (cf. Acts 20:1; 1 Cor. 16:1).

c. With the Trumpet

The trumpet signals a divine manifestation and authority (cf. Ex. 19:13, 16, 19; Num. 10:1 - 10; Lev. 15:9; 1 Chron. 16:6; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). The thought here is of the divine Lordship speaking to John. John turned to see the “voice” and this is in keeping with Christ as “the Word.” He is given three instructions: 1) see (), 2) write (), 3) send (). The first is an indicative present tense verb. The next two are aorist imperatives. Seven individual churches were to receive a message through John from the Lord.

Conclusion

The Lord is still speaking today. Not with the voice of a trumpet, but through the Sword of the Spirit -- the Bible. Ah, my friend, have you received His message of salvation? Christian friend, have you submitted to His Word fully? O, see, as John was told!