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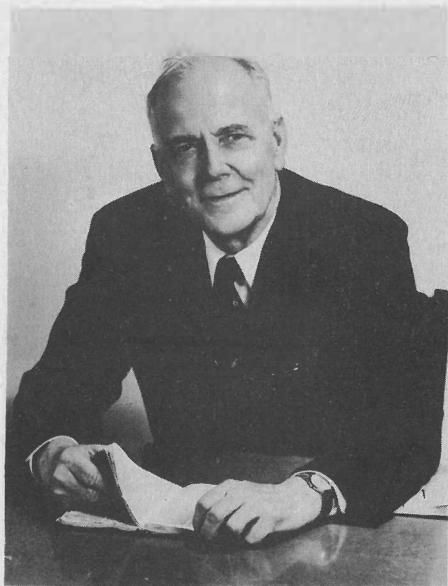
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STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Rev. 1:1-11, 19

THE BOOK OF THE CONSUMMATION OF ALL THINGS

The Word of God closes as it opens, only more gloriously. The Bible forms a complete circle. What begins in Genesis ends in Revelation.

Comparing these books, we find opening before us in Genesis a beautiful sinless Paradise; in the book of Revelation, a still more wonderful Paradise. In Genesis we have the account of the tree of life and how man was driven from it. No more is said about that tree until Revelation is reached. There man is invited to eat of the tree of life. In Genesis we have the statement, "In the beginning God . . ."; in Revelation, "God . . . will dwell" with His people. Genesis gives the story of the first heaven and the first earth; Revelation, the vision of the new heaven and the new earth. In Genesis the devil first appears on the scene of action; in Revelation he appears for the last time, and meets his final and awful doom. Genesis recounts the story of the entrance into the world of sin, sorrow, and suffering; Revelation pictures the end of these things. In Genesis we find the first death; in Revelation, the glorious promise, "There shall be no more death." In Genesis we read the first account of tears; in Revelation, of how all tears shall be wiped away by God Himself. Genesis tells us of the first Adam and of his dominion over the living creatures of the earth; Revelation, of the last Adam and His sovereign rule over all things. In Genesis we read of the first bride and how she became man's helpmeet; in Revelation we read of the bride of Christ, His church, and how she shall reign with Him. In Genesis we find the story of man's first rebellion, and of the beginning of Babel; in Revelation, the account of Babylon. and what is to be the end of that wicked

system which came into being when men gathered together after the flood and built the tower of Babel.

In Genesis we have the account of how the Word of God was interfered with, of how the Devil put doubts into man's mind, saying, "Hath God said . . .?" In the very beginning the devil attacked the Word of God. Through the ages men have asked that same question; and sad to say, even many ministers of our own generation are nothing but walking question marks in regard to the Word of God. After asking, "Hath God said . . .?" Satan added to and took away from the Word of God. In Revelation we read these words:

"If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Rev. 22:19).

In spite of that awful warning, men have gone blindly on, adding to and taking from the Word of God. All the turmoil and confusion in the world today have resulted from Satan's attack upon the eternal Word of God.

As Genesis is the book of the beginning of all things, so Revelation is the book of the consummation of all things.

"THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST"

As we enter upon the study of this last book of the Bible, let us carefully consider the title. We can better understand its message and its content if we understand its name. The Bible which I have in my hand calls this book "The Revelation of St. John the Divine," whereas the opening verse gives us the correct, the God-given title, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ."

Now we know that men have often given titles to the books of the Word of God which do not fully apply to the messages contained in them, and here we have an example of this very thing. Likewise, men have divided the books into chapters; sometimes according to logical divisions; sometimes in such a way as to divide portions which ought not to be divided. We are grateful for the convenience of chapter and verse divisions; they aid us immeasurably in locating pass-

ages. But we need to remember that it was not until John Wycliffe made the first English translation of the Bible in the fifteenth century A. D. that the Scriptures were divided into chapters. And it was still later, in the time of the Puritan Party, that the Geneva Bible first gave to the world verse divisions.

Therefore, in considering the title of a book, as well as in noting chapter and verse divisions, let us search the Scriptures themselves, remembering that the men who gave us these helps, devout and well-meaning though they were, did not claim to be infallible. The Scriptures themselves *are* infallible, inerrant, authoritative, and divine. And in them we find the God-given title of the book we are to study now—"The Revelation of Jesus Christ." While John was the chosen instrument of the Holy Spirit to write this book, yet he was only the human author through whom the Holy Spirit gave the message. He was, in effect, the pen which was used, the channel through whom the Revelation was given. Nor was John Divine. While he was a saint, in the same sense that we and all of God's children who believe in Christ are saints, yet most emphatically he was not divine.

Again, the title of the book is not in the plural—"Revelations." It is "*The Revelation of Jesus Christ.*" The opening words of the first chapter tell us that. It is "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."

You will remember that after the crucifixion of the Son of God, and after He had risen from the dead and had given to the disciples the great commission, He "led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven" (Luke 24:50-52). "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? *this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven*" (Acts 1:10, 11).

My friend, when that event takes place, it will be "*The Revelation of Jesus Christ,*" our Lord. He has never been seen by the world "as he is." He walked this old earth nineteen hundred years ago as a "man of sorrows, and acquainted

with grief." He wore the coarsest of material for clothing. His seamless garment was the kind worn by the peasants, the humble folk. He was not seen by the world in that glory which is essentially His. But while the world has seen the Son of God in humiliation, this same world will see Him once again—and in that day to come He will appear in the blaze of His uncreated glory.

That will be "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." Then every eye shall see Him. Then the events which are set before us in the book of Revelation will find their culmination, and the Lord Himself will return to the earth, actually, personally, visibly, bodily.

Let us note again the opening words of this book: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." When Jesus was upon the earth, He said, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. 24:36). Our Lord, as a Man, knew not the hour. When the Word of God speaks of "The Revelation" that God the Father gave to God the Son, of course, it has in view the Son of God as a Man. But let us ever remember that, as the eternal Son of God, our Lord Jesus was and is and ever shall be equal with the Father in all wisdom. Here is the Father making known to the Son of Man what He is going to do for Him in that day when the prophecy of the second Psalm shall be fulfilled: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion" (Psalm 2:6). So John, on the Isle of Patmos, writes: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." God the Father gives the revelation to His Son. The Son makes it known to John. John puts it into permanent form, in order that we, the servants of God, may read what the Father is going to do for the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, when all the world shall behold Him in His eternal glory.

THE PROMISE BLESSING

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:3).

No such special promise of blessing is attached to any other portion of God's Word, although, of course, blessing does follow the reading of all portions of the Holy Scriptures. But a special promise of blessing is given to those who read this last book of the Bible. Nor did God say, "Blessed is he that *understandeth*." He said, "Blessed is he that *readeth*." I think I know why. Perhaps it was because He foresaw that, as the end of the age drew near, men would neglect this last book of the Bible more than any other, vainly trying to excuse themselves by saying that it is too difficult to understand, that it is too full of symbols.

But that is not the real reason why many, even Christians, neglect this book. It is the devil who has turned thousands of people away from this portion of God's Word. Why? Do you think the devil desires us to read a book which tells how he himself is to be cast out of heaven, bound in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, and eventually cast into the lake of fire, to "be tormented day and night for ever and ever"? Do you suppose he wants men and women to read a book that tells what his punishment is to be? I think not. As you read in Revelation of his coming doom, you are not surprised that he has persuaded many people not to read the book at all.

Again, there is yet another reason why Satan has persuaded people not to read this last portion of the Bible, and that reason is this: Revelation tells us of the coming glory of that self-humbled One, the Son of God. It is the book which tells us that He will return as *King of kings and Lord of lords*; and that one day He will take the sceptre in His hand, to rule from sea to sea over a purified and Satan-delivered earth. It is no wonder the devil has tried to persuade people that it is useless to try to understand this book. But God foresaw all this; therefore, He opened its message with a promise of blessing for those who read it. Then read it, my friend; hear it; believe it; and God says your soul will be blessed.

I once heard Dr. L. W. Munhall, now with the Lord, say that he read it once every six weeks, for he wanted the promised blessing. Is it any wonder he was used of God to lead hundreds of never-dying souls to Christ?

Now it is true that the book of Revelation is a book of symbols. Then someone will ask, "And who will interpret

these symbols?" Our answer is that every symbol used in Revelation is explained by some other portion of the Word of God. Therefore, we are not left to lean upon our own understanding and wisdom in regard to the meaning of these symbols. Other passages from the Holy Scriptures show us that the Spirit of God has given us the key that unlocks and makes known to us the meaning of the symbols which set forth the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory. Therefore, those who neglect it are without excuse.

THE GREETING TO THE CHURCHES

"John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1:4, 5).

The greeting, "Grace be unto you, and peace," is really not from John; he is only the messenger; it is from the three Persons in the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The words, "the seven Spirits which are before his throne," represent the Holy Spirit in His fulness, as presented in Isaiah 11:2: "The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him (the promised Redeemer), the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Seven is the number that speaks of completion; and these seven descriptive terms give to our finite minds some conception of the eternal power and deity of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.

"The seven churches which are in Asia" are particularly mentioned in John's greeting, and are named in Rev. 1:11. Of course, there were other churches in those days, but we shall see later why these particular seven were mentioned. We shall see how they not only represent the church from the beginning to the end of this age, but how they set forth also the seven periods of church history from apostolic times to the rapture of the church. Here again "seven" speaks of completion.

In verse 5 our Lord is called "the faithful witness," reminding us of His earthly life; "the first begotten of the

dead," referring to His resurrection; and "the prince of the kings of the earth," pointing on to His coming glory, when all men everywhere shall honor Him as King of kings and Lord of lords. And in these three significant names given to Him, we have outlined His whole Person and work, as our Prophet, Priest, and King. What a world of meaning is bound up in this threefold description of our blessed Lord!

When His triumph over the grave and His coming glory are referred to in these names of victory, all heaven bursts forth in a doxology of praise:

"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

Thus you see at the very beginning that God's Spirit gives us a little picture of "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." "Behold, he cometh with clouds"; that is, clouds of saints—the Old Testament saints, the apostles, all New Testament believers on the Lord Jesus, each in his own order.

"And every eye shall see him." If only the earth's millions would look up today, and behold Him by faith! But they are too busy with material things to look at the Christ of God. It will not be so when He returns in glory. "Every eye shall see him." All the tribes of the land shall wail because of Him; that is, Israel, restored to the land of Palestine, shall recognize the crucified Lord Jesus as their Messiah and Deliverer. Jews and Gentiles, those who have accepted Him and those who have rejected Him, shall behold Him in that coming day.

Some years ago, as I was walking down a busy street in Chicago, I noticed that everyone around me was looking up. I, too, looked up, and saw a tiny speck in the sky. It was an aeroplane, in the early days of aviation. As I stood there, watching the throngs of people looking up—some with careworn faces; some carefree and gay—I thought of that moment when "every eye" shall behold the glorified Lord Jesus, those who shall have rejected Him and those who shall have

looked eagerly for His "appearing." The Jews in recent years going back to their own land by the thousands; the Gentile nations, now torn by war and strife and greed; the Lord's redeemed people—"every eye shall see him."

For the redeemed it will be a time of rejoicing. That is why John's response to this heavenly doxology was the prayer, "Even so, Amen." My friend, is that the response of your heart? Will it be a day of joy for you when our Lord is revealed from heaven with all His holy angels? Your attitude now toward the Christ of Calvary will determine your destiny throughout the endless ages. "What think ye of Jesus which is called Christ?" He always was and is and ever shall be the eternal God, who said to John on the Isle of Patmos: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending . . . the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8).

THE EXILED APOSTLE'S DIVINE COMMISSION

From verses 9-11 of this first chapter of Revelation we learn the circumstances under which the book was written. The aged apostle was exiled to a lonely island where God gave him the vision and commissioned him to write it "in a book." Listen to his words:

"I John, who am also your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).

Patmos is a rocky, barren island in the Aegean Sea. John had been banished there by the Roman Emperor. Why? He gives the reason himself: "For the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." The emperor could banish him from the presence of earthly friends, but he could not separate him from the fellowship of God. There he was, a lonely man, treading the sands of the seashore, far from home and human friends; but during this exile God gave him the wonderful vision which is outlined in this closing book of His Holy Word.

My Christian friend, are you suffering affliction "for the

word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ"? If so, you are in good company.

What fellowship John had with his crucified and risen Lord! What fellowship he had with the triune God, for he writes further:

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea" (Rev. 1:10, 11).

"The communion of the Holy Ghost" was the fellowship which John knew, for he was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day." But what did he mean by "the Lord's day"? Some Bible students believe he referred to the first day of the week, because on that day Christ rose from the dead. Other students of the Word of God believe that John referred to "the day of the Lord," repeatedly mentioned by the Old Testament prophets as that day, yet future, which will begin with the great tribulation and culminate in the return of Christ in glory.

Three "days" are clearly set forth in Scripture: "The day of Christ," at which time the church will be translated (I Cor. 1:8); "the day of the Lord," when He will be revealed on earth as the King of kings and Lord of lords (Acts 2:20); and "the day of God," which will usher in the new heaven and the new earth (II Peter 3:12). (Other references verify this explanation of terms.)

Even if John in Rev. 1:10 referred to the first day of the week, as well he may have done; yet the fact remains that the vision God gave to him projected him into the future, even unto "the day of the Lord," when He will be revealed from heaven with all His holy angels.

That will be a solemn day, a time of terrible judgment. Many times the prophets sounded a warning concerning it, even as Malachi wrote saying:

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly,

shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. 4:1).

Of that time of judgment Peter spoke, when on the day of Pentecost he quoted the words of the Lord to the prophet Joel, saying:

"And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:19-21).

Thus God has faithfully warned all men to "flee from the wrath to come"; and to John "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" was given, in order to put fear into the hearts of the unsaved. But there is cause also for praise from the hearts of the redeemed as they read of the terrible judgment to come upon a godless world, and realize that from this they have been saved; for the church will be translated before the great tribulation begins to run its course.

Now if John, on the Isle of Patmos, was projected into "the day of the Lord," how, then, could he write of this present church age, as he does in chapters two and three? In verses 10 and 12 of chapter one we find our answer: "I . . . heard *behind* me a great voice . . . and *being turned*, I saw . . ." First, he looked forward into "the day of the Lord"; then he turned back, as it were, and saw this church age in panorama, before looking forward again into the future at things which will surely come to pass.

And this brings us to the consideration of the key verse of the book, which plainly declares that the vision John saw was in three distinct parts.

THE THREEFOLD VISION

The risen Lord Himself gave John the correct division of this prophecy when He said in Rev. 1:19, "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." Without this God-given

outline of Revelation, we cannot grasp the meaning of the message. Let us look at it briefly just here, then keep it in mind throughout this series of studies:

1. "*The things which thou hast seen*"—these are things of Rev. 1:12-20, the vision of the risen Lord and His High-Priestly work, which He is now doing for us at the right hand of the Father.

2. "*The things which are*" follow in chapters two and three, and form the second division of the book. Seven is the number that speaks of completion, and the messages of the risen Lord to the seven churches in Asia outline the history of the professing church from Pentecost till the rapture.

3. "*The things which shall be hereafter*" are portrayed in chapters 4-22, and give us the third and last division of Revelation. They describe the events which will take place after the church has been caught away to be with Christ: the revelation of the Antichrist, the great tribulation period, the return of Christ in glory, His millennial reign on earth—even unto the eternal state.

This is the God-given outline of the book of Revelation, and it is fundamental to the understanding of this prophecy. In our next lesson we shall consider the vision of the glorified Son of Man and His present ministry for the church, symbolized by the seven golden candlesticks. In the following study we shall see how the messages to the seven churches present a comprehensive outline of all church history, "the things which are" in this age of grace. And beginning with chapter four we shall follow the detailed description which the Holy Spirit gives us of "the things which shall be hereafter"—after the church is caught up, forever to be with the Lord.

May the Spirit of the living Christ quicken our hearts and give us "wisdom from above," that we may read and hear and keep "the words of this prophecy" concerning "the Revelation of Jesus Christ," our glorified and coming Lord!

Part I

“THE THINGS WHICH THOU HAST SEEN”

Rev. 1:12-18, 20

Chapter II

THE VISION OF THE RISEN CHRIST

Rev. 1:12-18, 20

Keeping in mind the threefold division of Revelation, as set forth by the risen Lord Himself in Rev. 1:19, let us consider today the first of these divisions, comprising 1:12-18, 20. The glorified Lord Jesus spoke to John on the Isle of Patmos and gave him a glimpse of Himself and His resurrection ministry on behalf of His church. Then He said to His servant, John, "Write the things which thou hast seen" (1:19). And this is our lesson for today—the study of the picture of the glorified Son of Man "in the midst" of His people, His blood-bought church.

THE SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

First let us read again the entire passage, noting particularly that the seven candlesticks are symbolic of the seven churches. The Lord Himself said so in verse 20. Any good map of Bible lands will show the location of these seven churches in Asia, known to us today as Asia Minor. As we saw in our last lesson, and as we shall see in some detail when we consider chapters two and three, these were seven local churches, in which existing conditions foreshadowed the seven periods of church history, from Pentecost to the rapture. Therefore, the message of the risen Christ to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea is a message to all local churches of this present age. It is a message to the whole church, which is the body of Christ.

The seven "angels" or "messengers," symbolized by the seven stars in the right hand of the glorified Christ, may well

represent any of His witnesses, who are kept in the hollow of His hand, as well as the actual messengers who bore these words to the seven churches in Asia in the day of John. The "seven stars" represent individual believers; the candlesticks, the church as a whole.

Now let us look again at the picture. The inspired writer describes it in unmistakable words: "I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man" (verses 12, 13).

Before we look closely at the description of our glorified Lord, the most complete in all the Word of God, let us consider His relationship to His church. The Holy Spirit records the vision in this order; and having seen the truth presented in verses 12 and 13, we shall better understand the description which follows, portraying our Great High Priest in the glory, ministering to His own.

We have seen that the seven golden candlesticks represent the church. They were not like the seven-branched candlestick in the Jewish tabernacle and Solomon's temple, which was beaten out of one piece of pure gold. Those in the vision which God gave to John were individual lampstands, arranged in a circle, "*in the midst*" of which stood the Son of God. What a true picture of the relationship of Christ to His church! "Where two or three are gathered together in my name," He said to His disciples, "there am I *in the midst* of them" (Matt. 18:20).

Have you sometimes wondered what our Lord is doing in heaven now? He has been there as the risen Son of Man for about eighteen centuries. What is He doing there? What does He look like as He appears in the presence of the Father? What is His ministry? You have here in this first chapter of Revelation the answer to all these questions, a portrait of the Son of God as He is now in glory. And what a ministry He is rendering there! Standing in the midst of the candlesticks, which represent the local churches, He is watching them shine, even as He makes possible their light in a sin-darkened world.

And the church—what is her ministry? The mission of the church in this world has been outlined by the Son of God: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in

heaven" (Matt. 5:16). That is the reason why the candlestick is such an apt symbol of the church. When the Lord Jesus was upon earth, He said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). And again, He said to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14). Our business, as Christians, is to let a lost world see the Light which "hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 4:6).

The business of the church in the world is not to amuse people, not to give concerts, not to put a man in office, not to elect a president. The business of the church is to shine and reflect the light of the Son of God for darkened men and women to see. If your testimony is not honoring to the Lord, if mine is not, then we are failing to carry out His great plan for our lives. The lampstands were made to burn. What do your friends and loved ones think of your profession of faith? If your office force should see you this afternoon, coming to the Church of the Open Door with a Bible under your arm, would they say, "I did not know you were religiously inclined"? Would they think that of you?

The Son of God in the glory is exercising His High-Priestly work in our behalf, in order that under every circumstance we may be able to shine for Him in this dark world of sin. The redemptive work of Christ is finished. That work was done on Calvary; and nothing can be added to it. But the risen Lord is occupied with His Great High-Priestly ministry of intercession for His blood-bought children. The Holy Spirit is in the world, convincing men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8). But the Son of God is in the presence of the Father, ministering to all those who have been washed in His blood. Consequently, John sees Him, as the Great High Priest, standing in the midst of the candlesticks, watching them burn, ministering unto them, that their light may shine brightly.

The story is told of a little kitchen girl, whose duty it was to polish the silver. Georgia Willis was her name. One day, as she rubbed a knife vigorously, she was singing the chorus familiar to us all:

"Jesus bids us shine
With a clear, pure light,

Like a little candle
 Burning in the night;
 In this world of darkness
 We must shine,
 You in your small corner,
 And I in mine."

"What do you rub at them knives forever for?" Mary said. Mary was the cook.

"Because they are in my corner," Georgia said brightly. "You in your small corner, you know, 'and I in mine.' I'll do the best I can—that's all I can do."

"I wouldn't waste my strength," said Mary. "I know no one will notice."

"Jesus will," said Georgia, and then she sang again—

"You in your small corner,
 And I in mine."

"This steak is in my corner, I suppose," said Mary to herself. "If that child must do what she can, I s'pose I must. If He knows about knives it's likely He does about steak," and she broiled it beautifully.

"Mary, the steak was very nicely done today," said Miss Emma.

"That's all along of Georgia," said Mary, with a pleased, red face, and then she told about the knives.

Miss Emma was ironing ruffles; she was tired and warm. "Helen will not care whether they are fluted nicely or not," she said, "I'll hurry over them"; but after she heard about the knives she did her best.

"How beautifully my dress is done," Helen said, and Emma, laughing, answered, "That is owing to Georgia"; then she told about the knives.

"No," said Helen to her friend who urged, "I really cannot go with you this evening. I am going to prayer meeting; my corner is there."

"Your corner! What do you mean?" Then Helen told about the knives.

"Well," said the friend, "If you will not go with me, perhaps I will go with you," and they went to the prayer meeting.

"You helped us ever so much with the singing this evening"—that was what their pastor said to them as they were going home—"I was afraid you wouldn't be there."

"It was owing to our Georgia," said Helen. "She seemed to think she must do what she could, if it were only knives." Then she told him the story.

"I believe I will go in here again," said the minister, stopping before a poor little house. "I said yesterday there was no use, but I must do what I can." In the house a sick man was lying. Again and again the minister had called, but the man would not listen to him.

"Tonight," he said, "I have come to tell you a little story." Then he told him about Georgia Willis, about her knives and her little corner, and her "doing what she could." The sick man wiped the tears from his eyes and said, "I'll find my corner, too; I'll try to shine for Him." The sick man was Georgia's father. Jesus, looking down at her that day, said, "She has done what she could," and He gave the blessing.

"I believe I won't go to walk," said Helen, hesitatingly. "I'll finish that dress of mother's; I suppose I can if I think so."

"Why, child, are you here sewing?" her mother said; "I thought you had gone to walk."

"No, ma'am; this dress seemed to be in my corner, so I thought I would finish it."

"In your corner," her mother repeated in surprise; and then Helen told about the knives. The door bell rang, and the mother went thoughtfully to receive her pastor. "I suppose I could give more," she said to herself as she slowly took out the ten dollars that she had laid aside for missions. "If that poor child in the kitchen is trying to do what she can, I wonder if I am! I'll make it twenty-five."

And Georgia's guardian angel said to another angel, "Georgia Willis gave twenty-five dollars to our dear people in India today."

"Twenty-five dollars," said the other angel, "Why I thought she was poor!"

"Oh, well, she is, but her Father in heaven isn't, you know. She did what she could, and He did the rest."

But Georgia knew nothing about all this, and the next morning she brightened her knives and sang cheerily:

"In the world is darkness,
So we must shine,
You in your small corner,
And I in mine."

Our Great High Priest, standing in the midst of His redeemed children, trims the candlesticks, as it were, to make them shine for His glory. He does not exact great deeds, but He does want to see a consistent Christian life in His blood-bought child. And nothing is too small for His notice. Even "a cup of cold water" given in His name shall not lose its reward.

THE GLORIFIED SON OF MAN

Now let us read again verses 13-18, a marvelous portrait of our risen Lord. On the mount of transfiguration Peter, James, and John caught a glimpse of His eternal glory. In His High-Priestly Prayer, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, Christ spoke of the glory which He had with the Father "before the world was." Repeatedly He referred to it in His teachings. And in His post-resurrection ministry His disciples saw Him in His glorified body. They saw Him ascend into heaven in power and majesty and glory. But in Rev. 1:13-18 we read the most detailed and graphic description of Him, "whom having not seen," we "love." We cannot read it too often. And every detail speaks eloquently of His present ministry for us, His redeemed children. Let us note the picture carefully:

His Dress. "I saw . . . one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle" (Rev. 1:12, 13). When Jesus was upon the earth, He served. Before He went to the cross, He took water in a basin and washed His disciples' feet. When He came to Peter, Peter objected; but the Lord told him that what He did then, that disciple knew not, but should know hereafter. He was saying, in effect, "You do not understand it now, Peter; but this is just a picture of what I am going to do for you when I go back into the presence of the Father."

John beheld the risen Lord wearing the priestly robe and the golden girdle—a reminder of His eternal deity. For gold

speaks of the deity of His Person. I am so glad there is a "Man in the Glory" who is also God, and that He is living for me! When my light flickers and fails to burn, He feeds it, that I may give a good testimony for Him. And for nearly two thousand years He has been interceding for His church. What a ministry! "He ever liveth to make intercession" for His bride (Heb. 7:25).

His Hair. "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow" (Rev. 1:14). This description of the Lord is like that of Daniel 7:9-13, particularly verse 9: "And the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool." Who is the "Ancient of day"? He is none other than the Jehovah of the Old Testament. In other words, the God of the Old Testament became a Man nearly two thousand years ago, "God . . . manifest in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16). His "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

The description of the hair of the glorified Son of Man, as John saw Him in the midst of the candlesticks, is another reminder of His eternal deity.

His Eyes. "His eyes were as a flame of fire" (Rev. 1:14). When the Son of God was upon this earth, John saw His eyes filled with tears—when He was at the grave of Lazarus, when He yearned over Jerusalem. But now he sees the risen Christ, and His eyes are like a flame of fire. They penetrate into the deepest depths of the soul; they see everything in your life and mine. We cannot hide hypocrisy from Him. He knows it when our lamps are burning brightly, and He knows it when our love is growing cold.

His Feet. "His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace" (Rev. 1:15). Brass represents judgment. The altar in connection with the Jewish tabernacle, upon which sacrifices were placed, was made of brass. The feet of the Son of God likened unto brass speak of the day when He shall put His enemies and every evil power, even death itself, beneath His feet.

His Voice. "And his voice as the sound of many waters" (Rev. 1:15). Perhaps you have heard the roar of the sea as, at times, it has been lashed by the winds in their fury. The voice of the Son of God is likened unto that. Then again, there are times when the water is not so stormy, when the sound of running waters is like music to the ear. Today the

voice of Jesus is speaking to the world. All the power of His wonderful voice is now being exercised in the saving of men. At some time in the future, in response to the voice of the Son of God, all that are in the graves will come forth, some to everlasting life and others to everlasting condemnation. (See John 5:25-29.) When "the Revelation of Jesus Christ" takes place, His Word shall be like a sharp two-edged sword proceeding out of His mouth, with which His enemies shall be slain. My friend, have you heeded the voice of the Son of God, as today He speaks in mercy? These are His wonderful words: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life" (John 5:24).

His Hands. "And he had in his right hand seven stars" (Rev. 1:16). In Daniel 12:3 we read: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Moreover, the risen Lord said to John that "the seven stars are the angels (or messengers) of the seven churches" (Rev. 1:20). When we remember that the saints are kept in the hollow of His hand, this vision which John saw becomes very precious to us. On earth the Saviour said, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:29).

His Countenance. "His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (Rev. 1:16). Through His prophet God spoke to us many years ago, saying, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (Mal. 4:2). That is the way Israel is going to see Him when He returns to the earth at the close of the tribulation period. The whole world will then behold His glory.

"THE FIRST AND THE LAST"

"And when I saw him," John wrote further, "I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell (or 'Hades') and of death" (Rev. 1:17, 18).

What a marvelous reassurance John received! Like John,

if we in this present body of humiliation were ushered into the shining presence of the Son of God, we too should fall as dead men. But when we remember His reassuring words, "Fear not," we take courage. Do you know what takes away all fear from our hearts as we think of the day when we shall stand in the presence of that One whose eyes are "as a flame of fire"? It is not the thought of our own good deeds, for they shall seem as nothing in our sight in the presence of the Holy One of God. It is His own "Fear not" that shall enable us to stand before Him. He did not tell John that he had been a good man and had nothing to fear because of what he had done for Him. But He did say, "Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore."

Truly, when I think of the flaming throne of God, and of the fact that one day I am going to stand in His presence, who is thrice holy, before whom even the sinless angels veil their faces, I should tremble with fear, but for Calvary! When I remember that He who "was dead" and is "alive for evermore" died that my sin, which would unfit me for His presence, might be washed away, then I have no fear. He has the keys of Hades and of the grave. And because He lives, I too shall live! "He holds the keys of all unknown, and I am glad!"

My friend, if you live a life that is dedicated to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is absolutely impossible for you to go out of this world through the door of death until His hand puts the key in the lock, and opens that door. And when the Son of God returns to take away His church, the dead in Christ shall rise. He will take those keys and open every grave in every cemetery that contains the dust of the saints. It matters not to me where I am buried—or what they do with my body, if the Lord carries. They may embalm or bury me—I care not; for when He puts in the key and comes for His own, I shall arise! And so shall all those who love His appearing, all His redeemed ones.

"HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL"

When "the Revelation of Jesus Christ" takes place, when this sin-sick, war-weary world beholds the Prince of Peace,

then men and angels will acknowledge Him in the fulness of His Person as eternal God and perfect Man. Then He will be known in His true character, set forth for us, a little here and a little there, in the names by which He is called. Let us take a backward glance over this first chapter of Revelation to see a few of the many names ascribed to our Lord and Saviour, our Prophet, Priest, and King:

"Jesus" (verses 1, 2, 5, 9). This beautiful name means "Saviour." To Joseph the angel of the Lord said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:2).

"Christ" (verses 1, 2, 5, 9). This is the Greek name for the Hebrew "Messiah," Israel's promised Lord. You will note also that these two names are linked together four times in this chapter; for Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah of Israel—eternal God.

"The Faithful Witness" (verse 5)—faithful in His earthly ministry, as our Prophet from heaven, declaring the will of the Triune God.

"The First Begotten of the Dead" (verse 5)—none other than the risen Lord, our Great High Priest!

"The Prince of the Kings of the Earth" (verse 5)—King of kings and Lord of lords.

"The One Who Loved Us, and Washed Us from Our Sins in His Own Blood" (verse 5). He is the Lamb of Calvary, our Redeemer.

The One Who "Cometh with Clouds" (verse 7)—our coming King.

The One Who Was "Pierced" for us on the cross (verse 7).

"Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last" (verses 8, 11, 17). These are names that can apply only to the eternal God.

"The Lord" (verse 8)—Jehovah, "the self-existent One who reveals Himself." Moreover, He is "the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come"—another way of saying that He is eternal God.

"The Almighty" (verse 8)—omnipotent God.

"The Son of Man" (verse 13)—the God-Man, our perfect Priest.

"He That Liveth, and Was Dead" and "Is Alive for Evermore" (verse 18)—our crucified and risen Lord Jesus.

As we add to these the references to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, already mentioned in this lesson, we see a graphic picture of what "the Revelation of Jesus Christ" will be; for "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). When we see Him coming in glory, we shall be reminded of Calvary—note how often throughout the book He is called "The Lamb," or "The Lamb that was slain." We shall be reminded of Calvary and of the empty tomb. "This same Jesus" who died for us is the eternal God who will be revealed in power and great glory when He comes again to reign.

"Behold, he cometh with clouds." My friend, have you, by faith, beheld the vision of the Son of God, crucified, risen, interceding for His own, and coming again in glory? "What will you do with Jesus which is called Christ?" Upon your answer to this question rests your destiny—for time and for eternity.

