

Revelation 1:12-20 - The Living One

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Introduction - Jesus is unveiled as the Living One with all authority and the One Who offers encouragement to His servants. Christians should glorify and take comfort in the Risen Savior and be His light bearers to the world.

v12-16 - The Resurrected Lord - John sees Jesus in the midst of seven golden lampstands, representing the seven churches (v20). He appears like the Son of Man (Dan 7:9-14; Mark 9:2-3) and shares attributes (white hair and clothing) with His Father, the Ancient of Days. By Jesus the world was created (Col 1:16), and He is the agent ushering in the new creation. John is left undone like Daniel (Dan 10:5-9). Jesus wears a long robe like that of a priest and a sash like a judge.¹ His eyes are like flames of fire: He knows all things, the beginning and the end, and examines the heart and mind (Jer 17:10). His feet like bronze typify judgement (Exo 27:1). His voice, which calmed the sea and spoke the world into existence, is like the roar of waters (Ez 1:24). It is Christ we serve and who we ultimately aim to please (1Co 4:1-5). His strong right hand holds seven stars, representing the messengers of the seven churches (v20; Ex 15:6, Ps 60:5). The two-edged sword, a long and heavy sword,¹ from His mouth will be used to strike down the nations (Heb 4:12; Reb 19:15; Is 49:2). His face shone like the Sun. While Jesus came as the suffering servant, He has now entered glory (Is 53; Is 61:1-3; Lu 24:26).

v17-20 - Jesus' encouragement and instruction - Jesus put His hand on John to comfort him. He is high and exalted but with the lowly of heart (Is 57:14-16). He is not a God of fear (1Jo 4:18; Co 3:14). He's the first and the last, the eternal One. He is the Living One, the Resurrection and the life (Jhn 11:25; Gen 2:7), Who provides us a second birth and spiritual life (John 4:14; John 6:51; 10:28; Rev 21:6). His words to John express His omnipotence and power over death and the resurrection. He is the King of Kings (Rev 19:16). Jesus died, yet He is resurrected and holds the keys of death. He permits death at the time He has decided (Psalm 139:16; Heb 2:14-15; 1Th 4:13). Outlining the contents/chapters of Revelation, Jesus tells John to write the things he's seen (1), the things which are (2-3), and the things which will take place after these things (4-22) (4:1). Jesus holds the messengers (leaders or angels) of each church in His hand - they answer to Him (Jo 10:28-29). The churches are the lampstands in the presence of God (Matt 5:14-16).

So, what? Now, what? Jesus and the Father are One. God is worthy of praise and glory. He has revealed future events through Revelation yet challenges us to listen, trust, and obey Him. May we be good lampstands and shine His light in the world. May our wicks be trimmed and our oil overflowing. May His Holy Spirit dwell within us and clean out any impurity within us. May we be pleasing in Your sight, Lord!

For reflection:

- How does this vision help us to fear and obey the Lord rather than man?
- Do we comfort those we love and serve? When troubled, do we come to Him and allow Him to comfort us?
- Do I pray with an awareness of God's immense power, glory, and invitation to His throne (Heb 4:16)?
- What is the Christian perspective on death in light of these verses?
- Are we successful in bearing the light of the Spirit to the world as a lamp (v20)? Why or why not?

How do people interpret the book of Revelation? While Scripture best supports a futuristic approach (past biblical prophecies fulfilled in literal ways, plain reading of Rev 1:19), there have been four main interpretative approaches:

1. Allegorical - does not refer to actual events but describes a timeless battle of God's victory over evil.
2. Preterist - described Jerusalem's destruction and was fulfilled in 70AD.
3. Historicist - description of church history until Jesus' return.
4. Futurist - Chapters 4-22 describe future events yet to pass. Most literal approach.

¹ *Revelation: The John Walvoord Prophecy Commentaries*. John F. Walvoord. 45-46.