

Bible reading

Revelation 1

Revelation 1

¹ The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John,

² who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

³ Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

⁴ John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne,

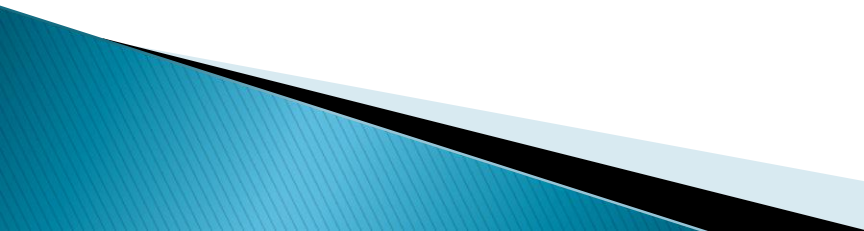
Revelation 1

⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,

⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

⁷ Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”



Revelation 1

⁹ I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

¹⁰ On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,

¹¹ which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

¹² I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands,

¹³ and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest.

Revelation 1

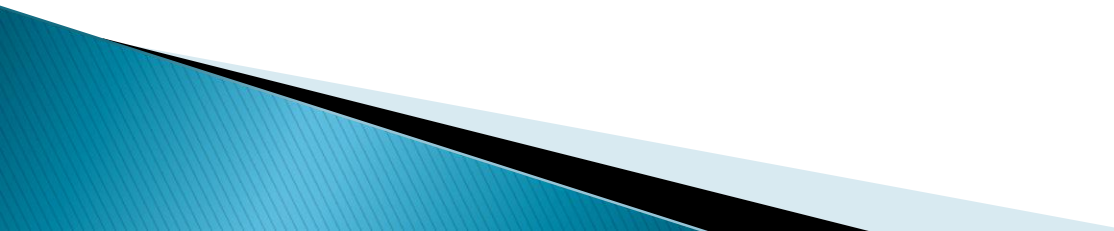
¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire.

¹⁵ His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters.

¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.

¹⁸ I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.



Revelation 1

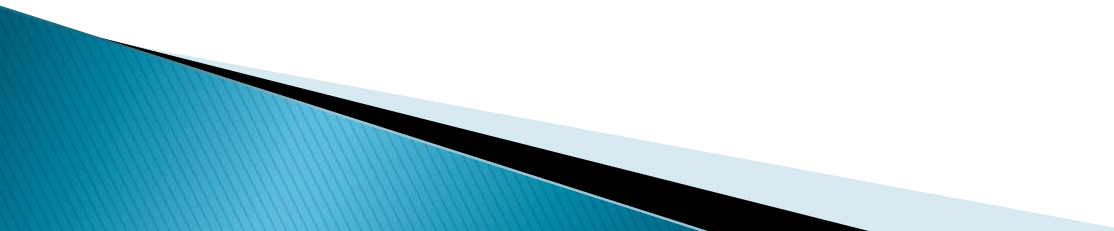
¹⁹ “Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.

²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

The 7 churches series: introduction

Elmer Arentsen
IBC Eindhoven
08-01-2012

The book of Revelation

- ▶ Most controversial book of the Bible
 - Pure prophetic
 - About Christ's glorious return
 - ▶ Written by the apostle John on Patmos
 - ▶ Written to the 7 churches of Asia
 - ▶ Describes Jesus' revelation
 - ▶ Includes a personal message for each of the churches
- 

The book of Revelation

¹⁹ “Write, therefore, what you have seen,
what is now
and what will take place later.”

- ▶ Divided in three parts
 - What is seen (chapter 1)
 - Vision of the Son of man
 - What is now (chapter 2–3)
 - Letters to the 7 churches
 - What will take place later (chapter 4–22)
 - Events happening in the end times

What is seen

- ▶ Jesus in His full glory
- ▶ A familiar vision
 - Similar as Daniel's 2600 years earlier
 - With an added mystery:
7 lampstands
7 stars in His right hand



What is seen

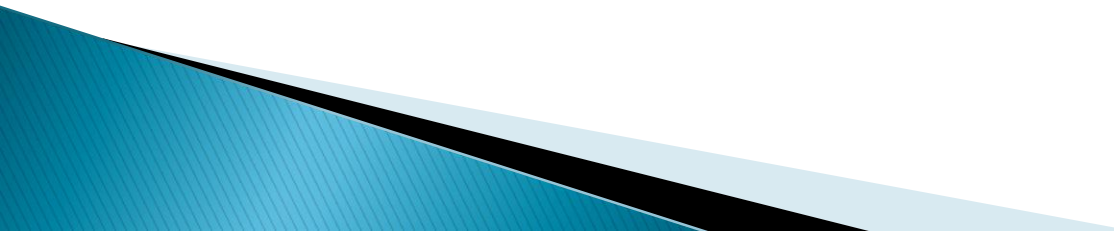
- ▶ The mystery
 - 7 lamp stands: the 7 churches
 - What are these churches?
 - 7 stars: the angels of the 7 churches
 - What are these angels?

The 7 churches

- ▶ Lampstand
 - Made from gold: holy to God
 - Not burning by themselves
 - Jesus walks among them
 - Jesus guides and protects its 'star'
- ▶ 7
 - means "completeness, fullness"
 - 7 churches are a representation of all churches



What are these churches

- ▶ Different layers:
 - Physical: the actual churches at that time
 - Spiritual: which church do I resemble?
 - Timeless: universal characteristics of churches
 - Prophetic: sequential church history
- 

The 7 angels

- ▶ Star
 - Source of light
 - Held in Jesus' right hand
 - Linked with the sun and the sword
- ▶ Angel or messenger



Ps 103:19–21: The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all.

²⁰ Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.

²¹ Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will.

Who are these angels

- ▶ Different opinions
 - the messengers that brought the letters
 - Real angels assigned to churches
 - Pastors or ministers of a church
 - The “spirit” of a church or church period
 - Those who spread the light of God in a church through their spiritual gifts
- ▶ People are called angels in the bible
 - Maleachi 2:7, Matthew 11:10

What is seen

- ▶ Back to the vision
 - The mystery is that the church period is revealed in God's plans.

This period is
what is now



What is now

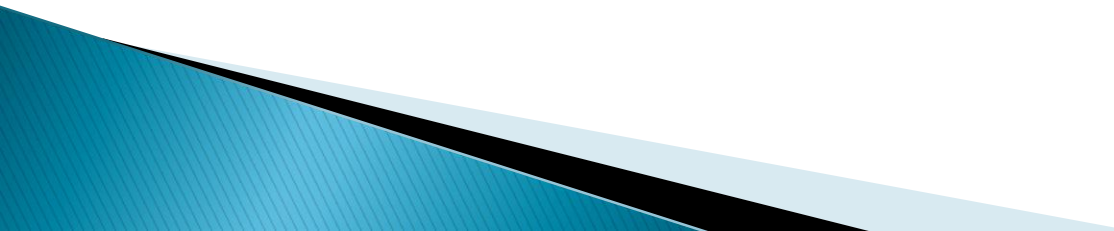
- ▶ 7 churches
- ▶ All in Asia Minor
- ▶ Key cities in the postal route of Asia Minor
- ▶ Each with their own character and flaw
- ▶ Each with their own message



What is now

- ▶ The letters to the 7 churches
 - Are written for them
 - Are written for us
 - As a person
 - As a church
 - As an assurance that God is in control through the ages of time

What is now

- ▶ All letters have the same structure
 1. Author (part of the vision)
 2. Strengths and/or weaknesses
 3. Action to take
 4. “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”
 5. Promise
- 

What is now

- ▶ We have a risen Lord
- ▶ He is mighty, reigning in heaven
- ▶ He is walking amongst His churches
- ▶ He has a message for us
- ▶ He still has the future in His hands

**Are we prepared to listen
To what He has to say to us
through the 7 churches?**