

The True Ruler of the World

Lesson #2: Revelation 1:4b-9

The world is at war with God. It has been for a long time. The battle over who's in charge is as old as creation itself. It began in heaven when Lucifer, then the son of the morning, the angel of light determined in his heart to overthrow God.

Describe the age-old battle to overthrow God.

Describe some of the ways this battle to overthrow God is manifesting itself in our day?

What problems did the 1st Century Church face?

- **The Roman historian** Tacitus describes Christians as “a class hated for their abominations.”
- **Politically**, Rome viewed Christians as disloyal because they refused to acknowledge Caesar as the supreme authority.
- **Religiously**, Christians were denounced as atheists because they rejected the Romans gods and worshiped an invisible God instead of idols.
- **Socially**, Christians were often despised, since many came from the lower classes of society.
- **To the affluent Romans**, Christians were seen as threat that undermined the cultural structure because they taught all people were equal which would initiate concerns of a slave revolt.

Therefore, Christianity was soon recognized as an illegal religion.

- **The first Christian persecution began** after July 19, AD 64 under the Roman Emperor Nero.

THIRTY YEARS LATER - 90AD

- The Roman Emperor Domitian and his family had a long history of Anti-Semitic and Anti-Christian sentiments.
- **What did Vespasian do? (Domitian's Father)**
- **What did Titus do? (Domitian's Brother)**
- **What did Domitian do?**

Our Text:

REVELATION 1:9:

"I John, who also am 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.**"

John was a companion (or sharer) in three things. What are they?

1. A companion in tribulation
2. A companion in the kingdom
3. A companion in the patience of Christ.

In John's case he was exiled as a common criminal to an island 10-miles off the coast of modern-day Turkey. According to the Roman historian Tacitus, this type of exile involved harsh exhausting labor under the watchful eye of a Roman guard. John no doubt had insufficient food and clothing and had to sleep on the bare ground. This must have been extremely difficult for 90-year-old man.

The reason for his imprisoned exile was two-fold (Rev. 1:9d) -

1. "For (*because of*) the Word of God and
2. "For (*because of*) the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Why would someone want to go through such a difficult situation?

1. Revelation 1:9 – “He as a companion in the kingdom of God.”
John was patiently waiting the Lord’s rule to come.
John understood that Jesus is the rightful heir to the throne of the world.
2. In Revelation 1:5 – John knew that Jesus is the prince of the kings of the earth.
3. In Revelation 1:4 – John knew that Jesus is the One “which was, and which is to come.”
4. John understood that Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.
 - a. Rev. 1:8
 - b. Rev. 1:11
 - c. Rev. 1:17b, 18

So, it is wonderful to see the true ruler sitting on the throne. Jesus, who is the Prince of the kings of earth.

John then is overcome with joy as he gives praise to Jesus.

1. Rev. 1:5b-6 – in this verse we learn three important truths

*“... Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,
⁶ And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

 - a. He loved us
 - b. He washed us from our sins in His own blood
 - c. He has made us kings and priests

He then reminds us of His return in Revelation 1:7

“Behold, he cometh with clouds”

1. Despite what the scoffers say – those who deny the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, and deny the truths of the Bible – We are repeatedly assured that Jesus will one day return. This truth appears in more than 500 verses throughout the Bible.

2. It has been estimated that one out of every 25 verses in the New Testament refers to the Second Coming.
 - a. Jesus repeatedly spoke of His return
 - b. He warned believers to be ready for it
 - c. The return of Jesus Christ is a central theme of the New Testament.
3. John refers to two Old Testament passages in this verse. Daniel 7 and Zechariah 12.

“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him”
– Revelation 1:7

- a. In the first verse - Daniel 7:13-14 Daniel says,

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. ¹⁴ And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

- b. The second Old Testament verse referred to is Zechariah 12:10

“... and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.” – Rev. 1:7b

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” – Zech 12:10

In this Zechariah passage we find the nation of Israel mourning in genuine repentance. This is referring to an event. Many will be saved in that day.

4. John divides those who will see the Second Coming into two groups.

“and every eye shall see him” – v. 1:7a

 - a. Those who pieced Him – the Jewish people

“they also which pierced him” v. 1:7b

b. The Gentiles

“And all kindreds (*tribe or nation*) of the earth shall wail because of him” – Rev. 1:7

This is a reference to the unbelieving Gentile nations. Many will mourn over Christ. Some related to their repentance and others for their failure to turn to him.

Revelation 7:9-10, 14 speaks of this

*“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, **of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;** ¹⁰ And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.. . ¹⁴ And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”*

- c. But the general mourning at the time of Christ’s return will not be a result of repentance but of despair, terror and grief. They will be mourning over their doom because they had rejected Christ.

Because Revelation 9:21 tells us that many people

“Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

Discussion how the truths in this passage can encourage the believer.

Discuss how a person becomes a new creature in Christ.