

BIBLE CLASS REVELATION 1:8-12 ALPHA AND OMEGA

⁸ I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, says the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

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. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹ Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou see, 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. ¹² And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

⁸ "Mimi ni Alfa na Omega," asema Bwana Mungu Mwenye Uwezo, aliyeko, aliyekuwako na anayekuja. ⁹ Mimi ni Yohane, ndugu yenu; na kwa kuungana na Kristo nashiriki pamoja nanyi katika kustahimili mateso yanayowapata wale walio waUtawala wake. Mimi nilikuwa kisiwani Patmo kwa sababu ya kuhubiriujumbe wa Mungu na ukweli wa Yesu. ¹⁰ Basi, wakati mmoja, siku ya Bwana, nilikumbwa na Roho, nikasikia nyuma yangu sauti kubwa kama sauti ya tarumbeta. ¹¹ Nayo ilisema, "Andika katika kitabu yote unayoyaona, ukipeleke kwa makanisa haya saba: Efeso, Smurna, Pergamoni, Thuatira, Sarde, Filadelfia na Laodikea." ¹² Basi, nikageuka nimwone huyo aliyesema nami, nikaona vinara vya taa saba vya dhahabu, (Rev 1:8-12 SWA)

Dear brothers and sisters

When the Revelation was given to John the apostle in the isle of Patmos, the contents of the New Testament had been circulating for more than 40 years and John by now an old man who had been exiled to the Island of Patmos off the coast of Asia, known as Turkey today. John the author of the Gospel Record and letters of that name received an angelic vision concerning the Testimony of Jesus Christ and of all things that he saw. Before Jesus ascended into heaven he

had said to the eleven, as he was taking leave of them, “All power (*exousia*, right and authority) *is given* unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18). As Paul afterwards said concerning the resurrection, the Millennium and the perfect age beyond: “In Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ’s *at his coming*. Then (a thousand years afterwards—Rev. 20:4, 6) cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he says all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted *who did put all things under him*. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son himself be subject to Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all” (1 Cor. 15:22–28). The power and authority of our Lord Jesus is a derived power, on his own insistent testimony. “My Father is greater than I” and “greater than all”. “This commandment I have received of my Father.” So the Lord Jesus speaks. And it is in this sense we must understand his speaking of “God’s words” and bearing the title “the Almighty”. The original word for Almighty is *Pantokrator*, from *pas*, all, and *kratos*, power, might, force, dominion. It is frequently employed in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament scriptures to represent “The Lord *God of hosts or Armies*” (2 Sam. 5:10). When the Lord Jesus appears on earth he will be the head of the divine “multitude which no man can number”, though their symbolic number is “144,000” (Rev. 7:9; 14:1). These are the “armies” of God, the “all in all”, Alpha and Omega of the divine purpose upon earth.

The arrangement is found in the prophets “I the Lord the first, and with the last; I am he.” Here “first” is singular (“Christ the first fruits”) and “last” is plural (“afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming”). He is “the First to Zion” (Isa. 41:27) (*Rishon-le-Zion*) and when he comes again his multitudinous body will again be “the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb” (Rev. 14:4; 20:5, 6).

There is a connection between John's vision and that of Daniel

Revelation 1	Daniel
"One like unto a son of man" (v. 13, R.V.)	"One like unto a son of man" (7:13, R.V.)
"Clothed with a garment down to the foot" (v. 13)	"Whose garment was white as snow"; "clothed with linen" (10:5; 7:9)
"Girt about the paps with a golden girdle" (v. 13)	"Loins girded with the fine gold of Uphaz" (10:5)
"His head and his hairs were white like wool" (v. 14)	"The hair of his head like the pure wool" (7:13)
"His eyes were as a flame of fire" (v. 14)	"His eyes as lamps of fire" (10:6)
"His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in the fire" (v. 15)	"His feet like in colour to burnished brass" (10:6)
"His voice as the sound of many waters" (v. 15)	"The voice of his words like . . . a multitude" (10:6)
"His countenance as the sun shineth in his strength" (v. 16)	"His face as the appearance of lightning" (10:6)
"Behold, he cometh with clouds" (v. 7)	

Moreover, the vision of *the Ancient of Days* which displays some of the characteristics of the Son of man reveals a principle of divine manifestation which it would be fascinating to pursue. The Ancient of Days is eternal and yet coming: He "came" to give judgement to the saints of the most High (7:22): in the Apocalypse it is Jesus who "is coming" in power and great glory to be the judge. Therefore of

both, the Almighty and the Lord Jesus, it can be said that they are “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending”.

When John, careful student as he was of Daniel’s prophecy, beheld the “one like to a son of man” with the familiar appearance, was not his heart quickened in the expectation that he too would be granted his request to know of the things that would shortly come to pass? Was not he too a “man greatly beloved” like the prophet and had he not steadfastly set himself to understand (Daniel 9:23; 10:11, 19; John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 20, 24; Daniel 10:12; Revelation 5:4)? The divine messenger had undoubtedly “come for his words” also. The Lord had said of him, “If I will that he tarry till I come . . .” And the great voice, as of a trumpet, proclaimed the initiation of things shortly to come to pass which would issue in the events of “the last trumpet”. John’s symbolic death and resurrection (1:17–18) would surely teach him, as it had Daniel, that many of the events would take place after his decease, but the touch of the right hand of him that had “the keys of hell and of death” was the guarantee that he too would stand in his lot at the end of the days. As our study continues we will find further evidence to show, that as mainly conjecture or possibility is concerned, it does have has a solid Scriptural foundation.

Brother Roberts points out that the Lord Jesus Christ at the end of the millennium is to relinquish the position of absolute sovereignty, which he occupies on the earth during that period. It would seem as if, on the accomplishment of his mission in the complete redemption of the world, that God Himself is manifested (without a medium) as the only eternal Ruler. The idea can be understood in the light of Paul’s statement that “the head of every man is Christ, and *the head of Christ* is GOD.” During the thousand years, it is Christ’s headship that is the institution of the day: after that, it is the headship of the Father in some specially manifested form. The headship of the Father is the fact now, but it is in the background. The state of things upon the earth does not admit of its manifestation or even its recognition.

During the thousand years, the headship of the Father is a visible fact in the headship of Christ. But at the end of the thousand years, the headship of the Father is manifest directly.

It, therefore, seems that the change to take place then is more a change in the aspect of things as they appear to man, than as they exist in themselves. Though no longer the supreme ruler of the earth, Christ will continue in his position of peculiar preeminence as “Captain” of the “many sons” whom he will have been instrumental in “bringing to glory.” God will be “all in all.” He will be manifested as the power, and supporter, and constitutor of all, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and ending, the only self-Almighty one. He will no longer work by interposition. He will no longer deal with man *meditatively*: He will establish direct communication with His perfected children; and the world—freed from sin and death—will become a happy, loyal, glory-giving province in that already universal dominion which extends to the utmost bounds of space, reflecting the wisdom and the goodness of the Highest. The divine scheme of redemption will then have been consummated: and earth’s glorified inhabitants in holy thankfulness—exalted employment—and an eternity of unbroken happiness lying before them, will realise the perfection and glory and gladness of life as it is in God.

It will thus be seen that the kingdom of the thousand years is but a transitional period between the purely animal and purely spiritual ages. It will blend the elements of both. It will exhibit the perfection of the eternal ages in the Lord Jesus and the saints who will be immortal and incorruptible, and the imperfection of the human age in the mortal population who will constitute the subjects of their rule. Both will co-exist for a thousand years, and will constitute a state of things as superior to the present dispensation, as it will be inferior to the glory ages beyond. The Kingdom of God will lead us by a bridge of a thousand years from the age of sin, sadness, sorrow, apostasy, renunciation and death to the age of restoration to the bosom of the Deity, in righteousness and life eternal.

DHH