

The SCROLL
of REVELATION
given to the
Apostle JOHN

explained by
a servant of God

PART ONE:
Foreword
Introduction
The Things Which John Saw
(1:1-20)
January, 2003

THE SCROLL of REVELATION

Foreword:

“Many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of” Revelation. In borrowing these words from brother Luke (Luke 1:1) I express my own thought about explaining yet again the mysteries of the Bible’s last book. But it “seems good to me also to write an orderly account” of this book (Luke 1:3) . The thoughts have been there for many years, and it seems I can no longer keep all of this inside.

I was taught to love the Bible and honor it exclusively, by my original church group. I loved the Book so much that I found in it things that group had not found and was asked for that reason to leave its leadership. In several groups since then, I have had the knack of discovering things in the Book that the church leadership was ignoring or even denying.

In all of this, **I have learned not to follow men** unless they follow Christ and His Word. I have learned to allow the Spirit of God to speak what He desires, always careful to compare the revelation with the good things I have been taught for over forty years. I recommend this process of learning for all believers

Though I speak of listening to God, please be aware that I am **not claiming** that the following document is “inspired” in the Biblical sense only that there is a desire throughout for a consistency of faith, a strict obedience to the Sacred Text. I trust you will know that, dear reader, and be led of the Spirit to discern the Truth of what I have said.

I present these words as one , like Paul, who has **“received grace”** both from the Church and the Spirit, to understand the Word of God, and to do and say, not what others do and say, but that which is given exclusively to me. Such is the uniqueness, I believe, of every true child of God.

A servant of God

January, 2003

Some Opening Thoughts

The enigma. The wondrous conclusion to Holy Scriptures has puzzled, yea baffled earnest believers for many centuries. It still is enigmatic. Yet some have found it is also approachable, with prayer and much persistence. Though I make no claim to inspiration for my current discoveries, and I will gladly suffer the word of correction from brothers able to do such with love, still I trust that the following organization of thoughts will cause some to be able to “get a handle” on the subject matter of the Apostle. From that starting point, perhaps a few will be able to delve deeper.

My reader may recall that the book of Daniel was **similarly sealed** at one time, but unsealed, in the Spirit, in our day. Such a giant as Henry Halley of the famed *Halley's Bible Handbook* seemed to throw up his hands in despair in trying to figure out the closing chapters of Daniel. Quite a few seem to understand Daniel well today. So too it is with the Apocalypse. More and more persons will unlock the unfolding of events as those events become so obvious, because at hand, around us. (Recall though, that in Revelation 22:10, the statement is made that this book is *not* to be “sealed”. Therefore anyone who wants to know the contents of this book is allowed to do so, for “God is no respecter of persons.”)

On reading Revelation. Now, the Book of Revelation presents a severe challenge to one who desires to read a work from start to finish, and feel he has “got somewhere.” Try it as one might, there's no place to “get” except chapter 22 by that method. Of course there are exceptions to the chronological problem: The first five chapters are “in order.” Towards the end of the book it would seem safe to assume that chapters 17-22 are, too. In between is a true chaos of times and places that will take repeated journeys to overcome.

The framework. There is actually an outline for the Book of Revelation given in the first chapter, verse 19. The three divisions of the book are said to be:

- 1) the things which John saw,
- 2) the things which “are”, that is, in John's day, and
- 3) the things which will take place after this.

The **emphasis** of my research and sharing with you is the latter section, by far the largest portion of John's writing, and the most difficult to deal with. Nevertheless, by way of introduction, and to clear up a potential problem or two along the way, we will look briefly at the first two parts also.

1. The things which John saw (1:1-20)

Address of origin (1: 1-2) John receives this document from an angel. Even when Jesus appears to be speaking, the angel is delivering the message. Knowing just this one fact will make much of the reading in the beginning and especially at the very end of the Book, much smoother. For example, in 22:6-8, John falls down to worship an angel. And why not? The angel has been saying things like, “I am coming quickly!” Only Jesus should say that! But the mystery is abated in 22:6 where the angel himself explains, “The Lord God of the holy prophets *sent His angel ...*” That means the Lord God is not the angel himself.

The **cultists** love going to these passages to “prove” that Jesus is nothing more or less than an angel, and definitely not Divine, since he refuses worship from John. But here in the

very first verses of Revelation is the solution to that heresy. As in chapter 22, the statement is made that Jesus sent and signified it by *His angel*.

Many want to take the “**angel of the Lord**” passages of the Old Testament and make them work here, believing firmly that that Old Covenant appearance of this angel was indeed Jesus. Since we are never told who that angel is, and since he does indeed seem to say some things that are very Divine-sounding, it makes some sense to “go there” for the interpretation.

My personal feeling is that such diversions may be dangerous, and that we should not mix the two concepts, viz the eternal Son, and the doctrine of angels.

A cursory study of the appearances of “the angel of the Lord” leads people to the same conclusion that John was brought to, but erroneously: **This must be Jesus!** In Genesis 16:7-14, **Hagar** sees him and believes so much that he is God that she names a well, “One Who lives and sees me”. But in a later confrontation of these two, Genesis 21:17, it is clear that God and the Angel are separate. **Abraham’s** hearing of the Angel is that of one receiving a simple message from God, the role indeed of messengers. But with **Jacob**, one would think that God Himself is speaking when the Angel reportedly says, “I am God.” (Genesis 31:11). In Genesis 48:16 Jacob seems to be referring to God as “the Angel who redeemed me.”

In Exodus (3:2) **Moses** has a similar experience to Jacob, where the angel seems to be introducing himself as God. In Numbers God’s anger against **Balaam** is manifested through the same Angel of the Lord. (22:22 ff) In Judges 2:1 the Angel again calls himself God. But later in that book (6:20) we are told that **Gideon** saw the Angel, and the point is made that he did not die. Before Christ was born of a virgin, could anyone look upon God and live? With **Samson’s** family the clear distinction between God and the Angel of God is made. (Judges 13:3)

When **David** saw the angel, he spoke to the Lord, II Samuel 24:16. **Daniel** was aware likewise of the difference when he said, “God has sent His angel.” (6:22) And the prophet **Zechariah** is admonished by an angel, who begins, “Thus saith the Lord.” Now, this phrase is missing in most of the Angel’s appearances, but in my opinion, it is implied in all.

In the **New Testament**, the definite article of the KJV has been changed to the indefinite, underscoring the fact that the translators are convinced that angelic appearances are to be kept separate from Divinity. Only in Acts 12:11 is it clear that a particular angel is being referenced, and in this case it is equally clear that he is not God.

The point I believe Scripture makes is this: There is a magnificent Being known as THE messenger of the Lord, perhaps Gabriel, perhaps Michael, perhaps one we have never met by name in the Biblical record. He is God’s special envoy sent on the most urgent of Kingdom business. His presence and power are so great as to make everyone from the unlearned Hagar to the beloved Apostle John, wise with years of knowledge of the Lord, think he/she is in the presence of God Himself. But attempt worship, and the rebuke will come swiftly, “Don’t do that!” No, in comparison to Divinity, he is merely a servant, like John. A servant of God and a servant of the prophets, and a servant of all obedient to the Word. Worship, says the angel of the Lord, is reserved for God only! (22:9)

Now, lest we get caught up too early in religious controversy, let us meditate awhile on just **how incredibly important** the Book of Revelation must be to have been thus sent down the “chain of command” to us. The Father passes it to the Son. The Son passes it to the Angel of the Lord, “His Angel”. The Angel is then the spokesman throughout the Book, assisted by other angels, and all copied diligently by John. John bears witness to this word, and passes it to

us. Those who are His sheep and hear His Voice, because of His Spirit living in us, pass it on and pass it on and... How very MUCH He wants us to have this message!

The blessing. (1:3) The instructions regarding this 66th Book of the Bible cannot be taken lightly. Read! Hear! Keep! We know the Spirit would not tell us to do something that would bear no fruit in our lives or that was impossible to do. Away with the idea that Revelation is “beyond us” , that the things of the future will somehow “work out” and need not concern us now. We are commanded to grasp this Book and let it change our lives. For the erstwhile, it will mean much meditation, prayer, re-reading, comparing, investigating. But what a joy, what a dividend is reaped!

A word about method: There are so many Bible-land happenings going on right now, that the common temptation is to grab something from the news that looks “promising” and try to make it apply to Revelation. I strongly counsel against this method. Let the Word speak first. Paint the picture in your mind that God is painting. Then even casual glances at the news will be clearly “in” or “out” of the thinking process. For example, an American or Russian antichrist will suddenly sound “lame” to a person who has discovered who the man of sin really is.

For the time is near. Words like these have always caused believers a bit of concern. It sounds like Jesus must come in the first century. Indeed, the first believers thought that. Certainly God had not enlightened too many people in those days about the time of His coming. Yet, the words were there. Peter (II Peter 3) said that many will come in the last days scoffing at our long wait. The warnings of Jesus in Mark and Luke mention men going on LONG journeys. The clues were there. It will be a LONG time!

Yet John is told in the same first century that **the time was *engus*** , near, or perhaps more truly the meaning of the word “At hand.” Regardless of how we think we understand this book, we must constantly live under the caution that His coming draws near. We do not always see things as He sees them . Our understanding is darkened at times. He is near. Be ready. For some , He will come in death this very day. Be ready. Antichrists abound, and mean that Christ is somewhere at hand. Are you sure He will not come today? Hold on to every word of this Book. But be prepared to wait awhile too!

Regarding the doctrine of Imminence. “Jesus could come at any time.” I know what the people who say this mean, but we must take objection to that statement as it stands. In fact, Heaven has a day circled on the Heavenly Calendar when Jesus must come. That is to say, GOD knows when Jesus is coming. It is not random. It is clear. Jesus cannot come at just “any” time, but only on the day He has appointed. Acts 17:31 states, “...He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world...”

So the problem is not that there is uncertainty in Heaven, but that ***we are uncertain***. The question then is, just how far is that uncertainty to extend? When the disciples asked Jesus, “What shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” (Matthew 24:3) why did Jesus even suggest a time frame? Why did He answer such a thing at all, if we are not to know *something* ? Why not say, as we hear commonly today, “Don’t worry about it! It will all pan out. I’ll come when I come.” That was not His approach. Jesus for all time laid out a clear description of a particular generation, a season, if you will, when He will come, so that those believers living in that generation will know it is time! All others of all time,

not totally certain of what He was saying, since the time was not ready, have been commanded to *watch*, and be ready. Of course, the coming of Jesus at a man's death is reason enough for any person, any time, to be on guard against foolish behavior.

The importance of **knowing a particular season** is confirmed by our dear brother, the apostle Paul, in I Thessalonians 5. First he says (verse 2) that Jesus is coming as "a thief in the night." This is the concept that has been passed on to godly people as their own norm for looking for Jesus to come! But moving even one more verse leads us to : "For when THEY say, 'Peace and Safety', then comes sudden destruction upon THEM..." Who are they and them? The world! The unbelievers! The ungodly! Verse 4 insists, "YOU are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake YOU as a thief!"

That means we can and should know the **general time of His coming**, especially if we are living in the last generation. That generation is described further by Paul in II Thessalonians 2:3. In words that could not be more clear, Paul demands that that Day WILL NOT COME unless there is a noticeable world-wide apostasy AND the revealing of the man of sin (see later in this book). Oh my! Jesus could come at any moment? Yes, in death. Yes, theoretically to those who walk in darkness and have not read the words of the apostles. But in fact? NO! He must come when Paul says He must come, and that is AFTER the great apostasy, and AFTER antichrist.

Now are we **absolutely sure** that antichrist and apostasy have not come? I'll let you be the judge of that as the unfolding of Revelation continues. But consider this: The man or woman who is seeking God with all the heart about the coming of Jesus will see the plan unfold clearly and will indeed be watching when He comes. The ungodly "carnal" Christian, if there be such a thing, will be loudly proclaiming His love for a Jesus who might come just any time, and for him the coming will be a surprise, for that person has never dug deeply into God's Word to find the truth. I am saying that more light is revealed to those who seek, and those who do not seek will be still in darkness and fulfill their own prophecies about how "we can never really know."

The only thing that has been denied to us is **the very day on the calendar and the very hour on the clock** when Jesus will come. Let us be diligent though to comprehend with all the saints what are the *times and seasons* God has revealed to us .

A word about the **specific teachings of Jesus** on this matter. In Mark 13:32-37, all are admonished to watch, for "you do not know when the time is." Even if Bible prophecy is a muddle to us, we are to be diligently living for Jesus, ready for Him at any moment. But as we grow in grace, we grow in understanding, and as He sees He can trust us with more knowledge about His coming, He gives us that light. For some, the knowing that Jesus will not come until after antichrist arrives would be a signal to let down and let up. These babes need to grow awhile before these other truths can sink in. In Luke 21:34-36, Jesus tells people to watch and pray all the time, to be worthy to escape the horrible judgment that will come on the Day of His return. This is not to be taken lightly. Again, if prophecy makes no sense to you, and you are not sure of the validity of any of the books out there, and the Scriptures are not yet clear, just WATCH and PRAY. You will miss nothing! BUT, ask for more grace as the days go by to slowly get a hold of the hope of the calling of God. It can bring sunshine to a dark day, and downright overwhelming floods of joy when it is discovered even more.

Greeting . (1:4-5a) Did ever a Book pronounce blessing and greeting from such a com-

pany? Though John mentions his own name, the true greetings come from Heaven, namely:

1. **From God!** Now, this is the God “Who is and was and Who is to come.” Eternal. In the following pages we will also meet the beast “who was and is not and yet is, but who goes to perdition.” The contrast between Christ and antichrist, God and anti-God, in Revelation is an ongoing theme.

2. From the **seven Spirits!** Isaiah (11:2) sees the Branch, Jesus, to be imbued with 7 manifestations of the Spirit of the Lord. No other allusion to this phenomenon is mentioned in Scripture except for the mention of the various fruits and gifts given us by the one and “selfsame” Spirit (I Corinthians 12:11). God is not divided seven ways here, but is seen as manifested in all His fullness. It is a concept that will take aeons to behold, and then, of course, we will still not grasp it. Or,

[If this interpretation does not satisfy the text or its reader, perhaps giving a small “s” to “spirits” and remembering that **angels are spirits**, (Hebrews 1:14) might help. Chapter 8, verse two, mentions seven angels who stand before God. It is the last of these angels that ushers in the return of Christ and the beginning of the Kingdom life here. Since these spirits are not called the Holy Spirits of God, I would think we are on safe ground here. Important to remember is that when God has not spoken clearly on a matter, we are not required to be dogmatic about it. I offer these two explanations for our perusal and prayer, not as musts for our faith. (see more at 5:6)]

3. **From the “firstborn from the dead”.** Here and in Colossians 1:18, this phrase suggests that Jesus has led the way, not that He is the first ever to be raised. John himself remembers well the day Lazarus came forth from the tomb. He has shown us what our own resurrection shall be as we follow Him. Later we will see the “beast” being the pattern of the resurrected damned. Yes, there were resurrections throughout the Old Testament and in Jesus’ day. But Jesus is the “first”, that is the number one Person, over the Church. His Body is a new creation. Glorified. None other has arisen like this, nor shall any one until that Day that He returns and the graves are opened, and we are changed in a moment.

4. **From the Ruler over the kings of the earth.** This also is Jesus. We do not see that rule right now (Hebrews 2:8-9), but believe that all earthly rulers who submit to him shall have his blessing. Then one day the governments of this world shall become the governments of Jesus, the Christ of God. (Revelation 11:15)

Dedication. (1:5b-6) So we are greeted and blessed from Heaven. In return John gives his response for what Jesus did to make all this possible. In so doing He “dedicates” the book and all its readers to Jesus. In the process he mentions the priesthood of the believers, a mark that sets the true church of Christ apart from that church which divides priests from people. How much blood has been spilled over faith in this principle? And how many in our day of compromise are turning the doctrine loose?

Behold He comes! (1:7-8) Here the message begins. A preview and summary of the Scroll to come is interjected here. It whets our appetite for what shall be the theme of all: Christ will come! He will come with clouds, not as we hear today, in our imagination or collected awareness. He will come in the same way He left, according to the angel of Acts 1:11. Christ will judge! And this Christ is God Almighty! He calls Himself the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, here, words similar to the one Who speaks later in the chapter who is “like the Son of Man”. Here is a clear indication of the Deity of Jesus, another theme of the Book. (See also

22:13)

Setting of the vision. (1:9,10) John here repeats what he said in verse 2, that the reason for his present confinement by the Emperor Domitian in the mid 90's A.D. is "the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ." In saying this he relates himself to the suffering church found later in the Book, martyred for that same reason. (6:9, 12:11, 12:17). *Let's keep this in mind.* John was suffering *persecution* during the reign of a man I believe to be one of the seven heads of the "beast." (more on this later) He was not exempt because of his status in Christ. Nor was this punishment from Heaven to a lukewarm saint. This treatment of the people of God is the norm, and has been since there was such a people.

Roman persecution "Patmos" is a small rocky island to which Roman prisoners were banished. It was ten miles by six miles, and just off the southwest coast of what is now Turkey. Domitian, in his hatred for Jews, allowed that hatred to spill over to anything and anyone linked to that religion. In behaving this way he proved himself to be one in a series of Satanically inspired men who have wielded enormous power in the world, hated Jews, and therefore blasphemed God and earned themselves a place as antichrist. John, as the last surviving apostle, a Jew and a Christian, would be an especially desirable target in this regard.

John was "in the Spirit" . Those who desire God's best and wish to hear the Word of God whispered to us must join John in that Holy Place. The secrets of Heaven are not revealed to those caught up with worldly pursuits, but to those hungry for what only Christ can give. Let us be filled with the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, and always be in a place where God can reveal to us more of Himself.

"The Lord's Day". From the Day of Pentecost, there seems to have been a signal to the Church that the first day of the week was a time for the believers to get together and celebrate the Lord who was raised on that day, and this they did. Whether this "cancelled" the 7th day Sabbath, the day of rest, has been a bone of contention among us through the centuries. It is my sense of Scripture that early Jewish Christians kept the Sabbath rest, and still met on the first day. These are not mutually exclusive activities. It is inconceivable to me now that well-trained Jews would abandon the seventh day rest and start resting on the first day. It seems that it was not until Constantine's later edicts (after 300 A.D.) that the "day of the Sun" became an Empire-wide holiday. I have yet to find one passage in Scripture, or one incident in history, giving justification to the "cancellation" of a day that has been with us since the creation of the world.

The Voice, the Message. (1:10-11) At first, John is commanded only to write what he sees, namely , this vision. In Verse 19, the content is expanded to include the messages to the 7 churches and the scroll of the future. The Voice itself is of the Lord, and has the awakening quality of a ram's horn. We must for the moment exclude from our thinking the sounds of modern trumpets, and think in terms of the startling cry of the Hebrew instrument. The Message is the same as in verse 8, letting us know the same Person is talking.

Address of destination further defined: Seven church fellowships in "Asia." Today we think of "Asia" as the largest land mass on earth. The name means "eastern" and the idea truly encompasses that portion of today's world. Not so in John's day. Nor is it "Asia Minor" of which we speak, that country roughly equal to modern Turkey. No, this is actually, per *Nelson's Bible Dictionary*, 1986, a small Roman province, nearly equal in boundaries to the earlier Kingdom called Pergamos. This territory became independent during inter-Testamental times from the Seleucids, with the help of Rome. Rome then created a province and made Pergamos its

capital. Thus, “Satan’s seat” was at Pergamos. (more later) Nelson also mentions that these seven cities are along two main north-south roads of the old province, beginning with Ephesus, the largest city, and ending with Laodicea.

Let us not forget that the letters sent were real letters, that the people receiving the letters were real people, and that these people lived in real cities.

The candlesticks (1:12, 20) What John sees first upon turning around is a vision of the seven churches, represented, according to Jesus, by seven golden “lampstands” called “candlesticks” in other versions. The seven churches then, and all churches with them, are seen as potential bearers of Light. It is important to keep this in mind when thinking of the vision of our own “local” assembly. The church is to be a light “on a hill”, a beacon for the community to see, a place where Jesus’ true character can be manifest in word and life.

It is **not merely coincidental** that the lamp-stand of the Jewish Temple, aka the “menorah” (Exodus 25:31-40) had seven individual lamps on it, seven lights representing the fullness of God’s character, but manifested through His people on earth. Such is the character of these seven churches that they represent all the strong and weak points of the Christian people of all times. There is not a church in existence to this day that cannot draw instruction from one or more of these letters, even feeling it is being addressed personally to them! Such is the living nature of these correspondences. One need look no further to discern some “mystical” meaning, some supposed “church ages”. All seven churches are in every age known to man.

One like the Son of Man. (1:13-15) Ezekiel saw such a Man (Ezekiel 1:26) And Ezekiel more than any other Bible man except Jesus, is also referred to as “Son of Man” by the Lord. What does it mean? A representative of mankind that pleases God? A true man among men? Daniel wears the title in Daniel 8:17, but also sees “one like the Son of Man” coming with the clouds (Daniel 7:13). Notice that in Daniel, in Revelation, and in all the Gospel references to Jesus as being the Son of Man, the definite article is used, separating Jesus from the others who may seem to have the same title. (Luke 7:33-34, 9:58, Mark 8:31, 14:21, all refer to *The Son of Man.*) Stephen calls upon that Son as He dies (Acts 7:56).

So **how** is Jesus the Son of Man? The prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 9:6) talks of a Son to be born who will also be the Everlasting Father. It is “Unto US” that this Son will be born! He is OUR Son, born of a virgin. The Son of God indeed. But mankind’s Child also. Our purest, our finest, our “favorite Son”.

Now this is **not the first time** that John has seen the glorified Christ. He, his brother James, and of course Peter once trekked to the top of a hill with Jesus and there Christ was transfigured before them. John has also seen the risen Lord, even to the point of His ascension into the Heavens. But this vision is different somehow. This is glory that is beyond anything John has ever seen. And it has the same effect on John that it did on Daniel 700 years earlier. In fact, there are many similarities to point out between these 2 men and their visions.

Both **Daniel and John** are being held by the State when their visions occur. Both men are quite elderly. Yet both men had a vibrant relationship with God from their youth. Both have overcome evil for many years, and been a blessing to many. Both are told the future. But it is the vision of Christ in His glory that is their finest moment. Let’s look at the Man they saw, and compare notes. (see chart, next page)

Jesus commissions and comforts John. (1:16-20) The stars in his hands (v 16, 20) are said to be the “angels” of the seven churches. Now, the Book of Revelation is *filled* with an-

“THE SON OF MAN”	
JOHN: Revelation 1	DANIEL: Daniel 7, 10
13: One like the Son of Man	10:5: a certain Man
13: clothed with a garment down to the feet	10:5: clothed in linen 7:9 His garment was white as snow
13: girded about the chest with a golden band	10:5: whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz
14: His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow	7:9 The hair of His head was like pure wool
14: His eyes like a flame of fire	10:6: His eyes like torches of fire 10:6: His face like the appearance of lightning
15: His feet were like fine brass as if refined in a furnace	10:6: His arms and feet like burnished bronze in color
15: His voice as the sound of many waters	10:6: The sound of His words like the voice of a multitude

gels, from that special angel known as “His angel” in verse 1 above to the angels of the seals, trumpets, and bowls, to the angels guarding the pit, and even to fallen angels. Knowing this, we believe that the Spirit would not seek to confuse us here by having “angel” suddenly mean “pastor” or “Preacher”. I believe it is always safe to stick with what is written. *angellos* is nearly always translated “angel” in the New Testament. Only in the translating of Malachi’s prophecy regarding John the Baptist (Matthew 11:10) does it ever refer to anything but angelic messengers.

You say, wait! That would mean that each of the seven letters to follow are written by John **first to an angel**? And the angel then speaks to the church? That could well be. Just like the entire book came to John through the ministry of angels. Angels take their orders from God. And God here is speaking to them through a Spirit-filled human, while they deliver the message from God’s mouth to John.

It was angels who communicated the coming destruction of **Sodom**, Genesis 19:1. They met **Jacob** in 32:1. I have documented the very busy life of the “angel of the Lord” above, and how He communicated often the word of the Lord to God’s men. Angels were active in **Jesus’** life and in the lives of the men of **Acts**. **Paul** mentions his catching up to glory, where we are sure he was ministered to by angels. The Book of Revelation then just follows suit and is likewise an angelic book. Here we are given the details of a specific message they are given to pass along to the Church. The job of a messenger, after all, is to pass on messages. They pass the message on to John, he writes it, and they take it on to the churches.

See again verse 1, “[Jesus] sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John.” The seven messages to the churches come first from God, through Christ, then John is directed to **write the message to the specific angels** watching over particular congregations. How the an-

gels enable the particular saints involved to hear the message of the Spirit, is not given us, and it seems we get a little too curious when we want to go beyond what is written. Enough to be content with the network of angels protecting God's people individually and corporately. Enough to know that the Law (Gal 3:19) and probably the entire Bible was communicated in some way through the ministry of angels. Enough to believe that we are encompassed about with an innumerable company of angels, yes and by the grace of God one day we shall judge those angels that fell.

For the record, also, John was the "Pastor" of the Ephesian Church, and would not be writing a letter to himself! (2:1) And, never are leaders of the church (always spoken of in the plural by the way) called "messengers" in the writings of John or any of the other epistles.

Comfort. (1:17-20) John's counterpart Daniel had similar problems with the Vision of his day: (Daniel 10:8) "...no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength..." As for John, he falls at Jesus' feet "as a dead man". Who can comprehend the glory He saw and felt at that moment?

Jesus simply tells him to be unafraid, and then further identifies Himself. There's the secret! Not strengthening ourselves, but knowing Who Jesus is, that is how we recover from our bouts with fear. When we know we are in His will, we can face whatever we need to face.

Here is a clear definition of His Deity for those who need one, such as the cultists who continue to prey on God's people. This One Who died and rose is the First and Last. He has the keys of Death. He is eternal. What need we more witness? He is God Almighty!