

PICTURES OF JESUS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION - PART 2

JESUS, THE RISEN LORD!

By: Dr. Derek Morris

- Preaching passage : Revelation 1:9-18.
- Subject : Who is the heavenly being that comes to the Apostle John at the beginning of the book of Revelation to reveal the things which must shortly come to pass?
- Complement : Jesus, the Risen Lord.
- Exegetical idea : The heavenly being who comes to the Apostle John at the beginning of the book of Revelation to reveal the things which must shortly come to pass is Jesus the risen Lord.
- Homiletical idea : Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope!
- Purpose : To help my hearers to understand that the resurrection of Jesus from the dead brings us hope in two ways:
- (i) Jesus is truly the Son of God, Savior and Lord
 - (ii) His resurrection assures us that in Him we too have conquered death!

INTRODUCTION

We continue our journey looking to “THE PICTURES OF JESUS” from the book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible which is also called the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It is the Revelation by Jesus Christ to His servant John concerning things that must soon take place. But it is also a Revelation about Jesus Christ.

On this special Sabbath day of fasting and prayer, we are going to examine one more picture of Jesus in the book of Revelation: “**JESUS, THE RISEN LORD!**”

I invite you to open your Bible to the last book of the Bible, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, and we are going to begin reading in chapter 1: 9.

REVELATION 1: 9 - A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PATMOS

The island of Patmos was not a vacation resort in the Mediterranean! Patmos was a prison island; an Alcatraz of the ancient world. Patmos is located in the eastern part of the Aegean Sea, between Greece and Asia Minor, or modern Turkey.

The island of Patmos is about 150 miles due east of Athens; about 60 miles southeast of Ephesus. It is a rocky, treeless island that was used as a rock quarry, and a prison.

As an old man, the apostle John had been banished to the island of Patmos because of his testimony about Jesus. I pray to God that we will also have such a powerful testimony about Jesus-Christ that someone will want to shut us down, or ship us out, or silence our speaking.

I'm not looking for persecution. I'm not looking for trouble. But I am praying that the truth about Jesus will be proclaimed with such Holy Spirit power that our own lives, our families, our communities will be shaken! That's the kind of testimony about Jesus that the apostle John gave and he ended up on the isle of Patmos!

REVELATION 1: 10 – THE LORD’S DAY

Let's continue reading in Revelation 1:10.

Some Christians see this expression “the Lord's Day” as a reference to Sunday, the first day of the week. They use this text to support the idea that Christians should worship on Sunday rather than on the Sabbath, in harmony with the 4th commandment.

First, let me point out that this verse is not speaking of which day we should keep holy as a day of worship. It's identifying the day of John's vision.

Second, this is the only place in the New Testament where this specific expression “The Lord's day” is used. And nowhere in Scripture is the Lord's Day identified as Sunday, the first day of the week. Not one text. Not one. It is true that some church fathers in the 2nd century and following use the term “the Lord's day” in reference to the first day of the week. But it seems dangerous to interpret Scripture by later history. For Scripture had also warned of a coming apostasy away from the truth of God's Word. So just because some church fathers in later years used the expression “the Lord's day” in reference to Sunday, doesn't prove that the apostle John had that intention.

Let me repeat what I said earlier: there is not one text in Scripture where the Lord's Day is identified as Sunday, the first day of the week. And this particular

text says nothing about changing the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday, the first day of the week.

The day that is clearly identified in Scripture as the Lord's Day is the Sabbath day, the seventh day of the week. Right in the 4th commandment, the LORD our God declared, *"the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.... Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."* And Jesus claimed, in Mark 2:28, to be LORD of the Sabbath day.

"Sunday as the Lord's day is very unlikely because it cannot be supported either by biblical or extra-biblical evidence. Stronger evidence favors the 7th day Sabbath as the Lord's day. On the other hand, the eschatological character of the book as a whole is also in favor of the eschatological day of the Lord. (1:7) ...The book of Revelation was composed with the perspective of the eschatological day of the Lord and the events leading up to it. However, considering the central role that the Sabbath, the 7th day of the week, itself would play in those eschatological events, as it will be seen, it is not unreasonable to see a double meaning in John's enigmatic phrase. In other words, John may have wanted his readers to know that the vision came to him on the Lord's day (the Sabbath) because the vision was about "the day of the Lord" (end-time judgement), in which the Sabbath would be an important focus." (Ranko Stafanovic, Commentary on the book of Revelation, 2nd Edition, pg 96)

REVELATION 1: 11-17 – THE GLORIOUS BEING

Let's continue to read from Revelation chapter 1, now in verse 11-17.

Right there we have a clue regarding the identity of this glorious being. Later in the book of Revelation, John falls at the feet of an angel. And notice the angel's response recorded in Revelation 19:10; and the angel says...

Now go back to Revelation 1:17, where the apostle John has just fallen at the feet of this glorious being. How does this glorious being respond?

Revelation 1:17-18.... Who is this glorious being revealed in Revelation chapter 1? It's not an angel.

This is none other than Jesus, the risen Lord! Notice, "I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever!" Here, in the first chapter of the book of Revelation, we find a picture of Jesus, the risen Lord!

Does the apostle John recognize Jesus? After all, John knew Him well. John was the disciple whom Jesus loved. John doesn't tell us if he recognized Jesus or not. One thing is certain. John had never seen Jesus in all of His glory. Even the glory revealed on the mount of Transfiguration didn't compare to the glory of the risen Lord! Notice that Jesus stretched out His right hand and touched John. Why is that important?

Why does John record that it was Jesus' right hand?

Because that was the hand of favor. That was the hand of blessing.

"Fear not, the Lord, had declared, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand!" Isaiah 41: 10

THE IMPLICATION OF THE PICTURE OF JESUS AS THE RISEN LORD:

Why is this picture of Jesus, the Risen Lord, so important?

1. HE IS WHO HE CLAIMED TO BE – THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD, OUR SAVIOR

Because Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope! Simply dying on a cross didn't prove anything. Many people have been put to death on a cross.

Simply saying that He was the Messiah didn't prove anything. Many people have claimed to be the Messiah.

But Jesus, after He had laid down His life for our sins and was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, and after Jesus had rested in the tomb on the Sabbath day, just as God had rested on the Sabbath day after the work of creation was completed, on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, Jesus rose up from that grave.

Jesus conquered death! *"Oh death, where is now your sting? Oh grave, where your victory is now!"*

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead gives us confidence that Jesus is indeed the One that He claimed to be—the Messiah, the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

Ah, but you might say, "Other people have been raised from the dead! Even during the ministry of Jesus, Lazarus was raised from the dead, and the widow of Nain's son, and Jairus' daughter. They were raised from the dead, and many more, and their resurrections didn't prove that they were the Messiah.

How does the resurrection of Jesus give us confidence that He was the Messiah?

Because Jesus predicted that He would rise from the dead, and He even predicted when He would rise from the dead.

Early in His earthly ministry, Jesus gave a startling prophecy. The same apostle John who recorded the Revelation of Jesus Christ also recorded these words of Jesus, found in the Gospel of John, chapter 2:19. Near the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus gave another prophesy concerning His impending death and resurrection - Mark 10:32-34.

Did you notice the expression "Son of Man" used in that passage? That is a term that is used in reference to Messiah. And that expression is also found in the picture of Jesus in Revelation chapter 1.

Jesus, the Messiah, not only died for our sins, according to the Scripture, but He rose from the dead, a victor over death and the grave, just as He had predicted! This picture of Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope because we can be certain that He is who He claimed to be: the Messiah, the Son of God and our Savior.

2. BY FAITH IN HIM, WE HAVE CONQUERED DEATH

But there is a second reason why this picture of Jesus in the book of Revelation is so important. Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope because He is who He claimed to be—the Messiah, the Son of God and our Savior.

But secondly, Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope, because by faith in Him, we too have conquered death!

Go back with me to the picture of Jesus in Revelation chapter 1 – 1: 18

What does Jesus, the risen Lord, have in his hand?

The keys of death and Hades. Death and the grave.

Why is Jesus, the risen Lord, holding the keys of death and the grave?

Because Jesus has conquered death. Jesus has conquered the grave. Not just for Himself, but for all of us. Jesus has conquered death for you and for me.

How do I know that Jesus, the risen Lord, has conquered death and the grave for me?

Go back with me to one of the most well-known sayings of Jesus, also recorded by the apostle John in John 3:16. Now listen to the words of Jesus in John 6:39-40 and again in John 10:27-28. No one can snatch us out of His hand. Not even death!

Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope!

He gives us hope because His resurrection from the dead confirms that He is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God, our Savior. And Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope because, by faith in Him, we too have conquered death and the grave. We too, as followers of Jesus, saved by His grace, can boldly declare, "O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?"

Why? Because Jesus, the risen Christ has the keys! That's why Jesus, the risen Christ gives us hope!

TESTIMONY OF CARL

Carl needed that hope more than ever. He had just received a message from back home. There had been a tragic accident. His oldest daughter Mindy had been enjoying a relaxing Sabbath afternoon with some friends on a river in Washington State. Later that same afternoon, as Mindy and a friend were floating across the river, they were caught in a strong current. That strong current dragged them into some dangerous rapids. Mindy's friend was found down river, clinging to a rock. She had some bumps and bruises, and she was seriously shaken up, but she had survived the fierceness of the rapids. Mindy was not so fortunate. Her body was found floating face down in the river about a mile down stream. She had been underwater for about 15 minutes. Although a pulse was revived, Mindy remained unconscious, struggling to breathe with first one and then two collapsed lungs. Mindy's life was in the balance.

When her father Carl heard the tragic news, he was seven thousand miles away. He felt so afraid and so helpless. Carl just wanted to be there by his daughter's side to tell her how much he loved her. The promises of Scripture that he had shared with others didn't seem to comfort him. But Carl was led to the story of Jairus. It's recorded in Matthew 9, Mark 5, and Luke 8. You might want to read the story later today. Jairus' daughter was also at the point of death. Her life was also in the balance. Carl sensed the anguish that must have been in Jairus' heart as he tried to get to Jesus. Carl resonated with Jairus' desperate cry: "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so she will be healed and live." Carl also felt Jairus' anguish of trying to make it home through all of the crowds. It took Carl nearly 48 hours to get home, only to discover that his daughter Mindy had been pronounced dead a few hours earlier.

The words that Jesus spoke to Jairus sounded in Carl's ears. "Do not fear. Only believe." Do not fear. Jesus, the risen Christ, has conquered death and the grave. Only believe. All who have faith in Jesus have eternal life and He will raise them up on the last day. Brothers and sisters, Jesus, the Risen Christ, has the keys of death and the grave! He has the keys!

Carl's testimony is recorded in the November 23, 2006, issue of the Adventist Review. Carl ends his testimony with these words: "There is only one aspect of Jairus's story that I cannot yet identify with—the joy that he experienced when his daughter was restored to him. As hard and painful as my daughter's death is, I

promised her that I would continue that journey that I began with Jesus.... One day, very soon, I too will know Jairus's joy as my little daughter is restored to me on resurrection morning." ("My Journey With Jairus" in Adventist Review, November 23, 2006, p. 12)

CONCLUSION

That's the hope that we find in Jesus!

Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope by His resurrection from the dead that He is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God, and our Savior.

And Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope because by faith in Him, we too have conquered death and the grave!

And there is going to be a whole lot of joy on that great getting up morning. When the dead in Christ rise from their dusty graves, there's going to be a whole lot of joy.

We can trust the words of Jesus, the risen Christ. He promised:

"I will raise them up at the last day."

Carl and his wife Carol, along with their other children, are going to be looking for Mindy on the resurrection day.

And you have some loved ones that you are going to be looking for too, don't you?

What a day of rejoicing that will be.

Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope. He has the keys of death and the grave.

And because He lives, we too shall live. Because He lives, we can face tomorrow. Because He lives, all fear is gone. Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope.

If you have never trusted Jesus as your Savior, if you have never let Him forgive your sins and save you, I invite you to make that commitment today.

Let the risen Christ fill your life with peace. Let the risen Christ fill your life with joy. Let the risen Christ fill your life with hope!

What a beautiful picture of Jesus from the book of Revelation. Jesus, the risen Lord, gives us hope!