

Revelation Lesson 18
Meeting the Glorified Christ: Part 5
The Authority of the High Priest

Revelation 1:16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

In our previous study last week, we looked at the Judgment of Christ, how He took our Judgment on the Cross; How He stands with His Own in their times of unjust judgment; and how He will pour out Judgment upon the World and unrighteous at a future time. Tonight, we will conclude our 5 part mini-series of Meeting the Glorified Christ. Well, there will be an epilogue next week when we see what happened to John and Daniel. Tonight however, we will observe three symbols of the Authority of Christ Jesus our High Priest, Saviour and Lord.

And he had in - The first word here is our old friend “and” which serves as a “bridge” or connection to the previous thought. Thus, what John describes as being seen in verse 15 (and in turn back to verse 14) is all connected together. So essentially the context here runs from Revelation 1:10-20. Hence John is connecting the sights, sounds and (soon) feelings into one train of thought.

John continues this train of thought after the word “and” with the word “he.” Normally when we find reference made to the Lord, we expect to find such references capitalized, but it is not done so here – with no disrespect meant. The rules of grammar can help here. “He” is a personal pronoun, not a proper noun, and should not be capitalized. God's name and **titles** (such as God, Lord, Saviour, etc.) are capitalized but “he” is not as this is not his Name or Title. Be that as it may, many of us today still capitalize He, Him, His when in reference to the Lord.

Furthermore, when one attempts to examine the Greek *Textus Receptus* underlying the King James Bible, we find that our English Words “he had” is one word in the Greek Language, thus another reasoning that the translators did not capitalize such a reference. I think this is a trivial issue, but thought to bring it up here, just in case someone wondered about it.

The next word in our section here is “had” which is (as stated before) one word in the Greek. We find the meaning brought out here in the English: The word “had” when connecting with “he” in this section is denoting the possession of something or someone. Specifically this is indicating that the emphasis is upon the external thing/object/person, rather than the individual by himself. Thus, this “*he had*” wording then is merely explaining that Christ had something/someone....

Next we find the word “in” points to the place where the something or someone that Christ possesses can be found and that is seen to be “inside” something.

his right hand – Here we find the “where” answer to the previous observation of the phrase: “And he had in...” What these objects or people are, they can be found within (enclosed) the Right Hand of Christ!

The position of the “right” has long been associated with strength, honour, position and authority. Thus this gives us our first clue as to the Authority of Christ our High Priest. The phrase “right hand” occurs 167 times in the Bible – of those times, it is found 7 times in Revelation and the 1st occurrence is found here in our text verse.

It is in Matthew 20:21 that we find the mother of James and John asking Jesus if He will allow her sons to sit at His right and left hand in the Kingdom. We find that both (in such a situation) are places of esteem, but specifically the right hand. This is where God the Father told Jesus Christ to sit until “His enemies” were made into “thy footstool.” The Right Hand of God's Throne is a position of honour. In the Old Testament, the Right Hand of God was seen as a place of strength, Refuge, Protection and Salvation. Later in the New Testament, we find “the right hand of fellowship” in Galatians 2:9 which some scholars think dates from the era of 2 Samuel 20:9. Regardless, the Right Hand still today is seen as a picture of strength and honour – and one may say Authoritative Power.

seven stars – Some wonder as to the meaning of the word “stars” here in the Text. But a careful reading of Revelation 1:20 defines what the 7 stars represent – the messengers or pastors of the 7 various churches. Again, we note this portion of what John is seeing is still a vision, but he is seeing the developments before his eyes. He is hearing the words and shortly will experience a feeling as to what is actually going on.

Now some Bible teachers like Oliver B. Greene inform their readers and listeners that the angels are those supernatural creatures (many times observed with wings – always 4 or 6 wings) while other learned men teach the opposite, that these “stars” are the 7 pastors (human males) of the 7 churches. This is the view that I myself believe that the Bible holds near and true to. To proclaim otherwise would mean (to me) that a contrary doctrine of churches having – what guardian angels? - would take shape and form. Be that as it may, Greene does pull out an interesting observation in his commentary: *The Revelation: A Verse-by-Verse Study* “*The responsibility of a star is to shine. The darker the night, the brighter the star. During this night of sin, while the Lord is absent from the earth, the assemblies are God's light-bearers. The local church should be a light on a hill, and the darker the night becomes, the brighter the church should shine for Jesus.*”

Think about it, Jesus states that you and I are what Jesus declared in Matthew 5:14 “*Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*” By myself, I can only shine forth so much light of Christ. But together with other believers we can become a lighthouse. Thus when John sees the seven “stars” he is seeing in this vision the pastors of those 7 Churches letting their own light shine. The church being the candlestick, helps light those around them. But this only happens if we obey the Lord – our High Priest – and stay in His Right Hand.

Dr. D. A. Waite says the following in His Commentary: *Revelation: Preaching Verse-by-Verse*: “Preachers should not get out of the right hand of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who are modernists, liberals, and unbelievers are out of His hand. They're not in His hand. He holds the hands of the preachers. A pastor must be in the right hand of the Son of God in order to stay straight, powerful, and right. It's a wonderful thing that in His right hand are the seven stars.”

That again shows us that it is the Lord Who picks a preacher/pastor. It is His authority to appoint such men over His work. Note Ephesians 4:11 “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;” The he mentioned there at the beginning is Christ (see verse 7). So I did not choose to become a preacher, I was called to be one. Likewise Christ (through His church) called me to Danielstown. Such errors are made when such an one is not IN THE HAND of the Saviour and submissive to His Authority.

Finally, don't equate the stars being in Jesus hands as being on the same level of our common salvation. What I mean be that is that once I am saved, I cannot escape “the grip of God” such is said in John 10:28-29 “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no

man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." While I may get out of God's will I cannot get unsaved. I am forever in His hands. However, while I am called to preach the Word of God and to Pastor, He is holding me as His servant in His hand. As he is holding me should I get so far out of line He has the authority to remove me as such.

But beware the Church that is not letting the light of Christ shine. The trouble is sometimes that when we as members of the body of Christ are supposed to serve as the "hands and feet" of the Lord, when we are all out of line, Christ's hands and feet are bound, be that as it may, He can remove the Spirit of blessing, power and anointing from such a Church or preacher. Why? Because ultimately it is His authority to do so. When these churches and preachers are set aside by the Lord and these same Churches and Pastors that are no longer "in His hands" appear or seem to be thriving, remember they are getting their power, etc. from the world, the flesh and Satan. Recall 2 Corinthians 11:15 "Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

and out of his mouth – Now John turns his attention to the Lord's mouth. He has looked at the Lord's hair, eyes, right hand and feet. He's heard and SEEN the Voice. Now the mouth comes into view. It is from His mouth that His most powerful weapon is wielded.

went a sharp twoedged sword: - There is only one sharp two-edged sword and that is the Bible, the Word of God. We find reference to this two-edged sword in many places in the Bible:

- Psalms 149:6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand; (We the saints – the saved – see verse 5 are to praise our Lord and hold forth our sword which is the Word of God.)
- Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: (again we see the Sword of the Spirit as our offensive weapon in all the Armour of God. That is what we hold to!) Jesus we see wields His Own sword.
- Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (The sword of God – His Word is sharper, quicker and more powerful than any sword or weapon on this earth. Greene states: The Lord God Almighty does not need any guided missiles, hydrogen bombs or jet bombers; He does not need the force known to man. All God need do is speak the Word – and His enemies melt in death "He uttered His voice , the earth melted." Psalm 46:6)
- Revelation 2:16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. (Christ uses that sword of Judgment against the wicked, apostates and us His children – why? To perform surgery and cut sin out of our lives – when we allow Him to!)
- Revelation 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.
- Revelation 19:21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. (These two verses show how Christ will fight – not us too! - during the Campaign of Armageddon. This Sword of God – His Own Word – will cause the deaths of those armies in carnage that will cause a 200 mile-long river of blood to flow. Preview of coming attractions!)

So, yes friend. The Word of God is THE MOST POWERFUL weapon in the universe! See the Authority that our High Priest wields? Such is the power of our Saviour!

and his countenance – This phrase takes us on a “zooming out” so to speak that takes us from the mouth of Christ to the “countenance” or face of our Lord. The face of the Lord was once marred so much that no-one could scarcely recognize Him. Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel all three use another word for face – which is visage. It is however in Isaiah 52:14 that the prophet speaks of the face of Christ when he was judged on the cross: “As many were astonished at thee; **his visage was so marred more than any man**, and his form more than the sons of men:” His face was marred due to the torture by the Romans and from the affects of being judged for our sins. He was spat upon and His beard was pulled off all according to Isaiah 50:6 “I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.”

Now John remembered that as he was present at the Cross. But he also remembered Jesus' face after He arose from the dead. There was another time John saw Jesus' face and it offered a preview of what he saw at that present moment. Surely at this time, he must have remembered the transfiguration in Matthew 17:2 and Luke 9:29. It is in Luke 9:29 that J. Vernon McGee states that: “*This verse does not mean that a light, as a spotlight, shone on Him, but that a light came from within His body and shone outwardly.*”

Such was the case now before the elderly John's eyes. Jesus' face shone. King David cried out for the Lord to let His face shine in Psalms 4:6 “There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the **light of thy countenance** upon us.” But what does that mean? We find two other clues both in Psalms 44 (of the Sons of Korah) and Psalms 89 (of Ethan the Ezrahite):

- Psalms 44:3 For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the **light of thy countenance**, because thou hadst a favour unto them.
- Psalms 89:15 Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the **light of thy countenance**.

So this “light of thy countenance” speaks of having the favour of God. But we noted previously that the Lord executes Judgment upon the unGodly – so how can a shining face be in favour towards them? It is His favour shining upon the saved while we view it so the lost man cannot withstand such light. Revelation 6:16 “*And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:*” Like so many cockroaches they run away: John 3:19 “*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*” But there is coming a day when they will have no place to hide as is stated in Revelation 20:11 “*And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.*”

So be sure you can look Jesus in the face upon that day, you can only do so if you are saved. For the Bible declares in John 1:18 “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” This is why, to have the Shekinah glory shine unencumbered would destroy a person. How so? Think about how John further describes this light:

was as the sun shineth in his strength. – Here we see one of many examples of the Sun being a symbol of Christ. John states that the light shining from Jesus' face was like when the “sun shineth in his strength.” By this statement, as an Amateur astronomer I understand that this symbolism is speaking of the sun's meridian or when the sun is at Noon.

The Sun as a symbol of Christ is seen throughout the Scriptures in 2 Peter 1:19 where He is called the Day Star (not the morning star!); in Psalm 19:4 as “the Sun” and in Malachi 4:2 as the “Sun of

Righteousness.” Christ is said to be “...the light of the world.” in John 8:12 and what else is the physical “light of the world” but the sun?

In viewing the Sun as symbolic of Christ look at the famous words of our Lord in Matthew 5:45 “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” If one accepts standard Astronomy and Science, then he or she will dismiss such words of our Lord as being literal because we've all been taught that the earth, not the sun does the moving.

If you take this approach, then you MUST change Jesus' illustration. Observe the rain. The rain is SENT. Look back at the sun. It RISES. If you make the Earth move instead of the Sun, then you must MAKE THE EARTH MOVE INTO A STATIONARY RAIN CLOUD. Why? Because the word “AND” links both illustrations together and the common factor in both is that each Moves towards both the Just (the saved) and the Unjust (the lost). Also, if the sun does not RISE – then the symbolism of the sun representing Jesus shows us an Unrisen Saviour!

No beloved, let the Bible say what it says, when Joshua states the SUN STOOD STILL (Joshua 10:13) it means the SUN STOOD STILL – not it looked like it did or felt like it did or the Earth slowed its rotation! Final point here – if you go back in Genesis 1, you observe that the HOLY GHOST moved upon the face of the deep (Gen. 1:2) in Psalms 104:2 (which is a Psalm of Creation) we read that the Lord is the One: “*Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:*” So God was clothed with Light – since there was evening and morning and the Holy Ghost was moving (and He was clothed with light) we can establish that the earth is not rotating (it NEVER SAYS SO IN THE BIBLE!) but the light source is moving. On Day 4 when the greater light (sun) and lesser light (moon) were created, the earth STILL does not move. But yet, man READS INTO THE BIBLE what seems right and in so doing destroys the beautiful picture of the Sun being a symbolic illustration of Christ.

The meaning of the sun shining in his strength again shows us a Sun at midday. What does that show? It eliminates the “casting of shadows” and thus shows that all is lit by the brightness of Christ's glory. Nothing is hid from Him!

The Sun at Noon is how Paul the Apostle – when he was lost as Saul of Tarsus – described meeting Christ (Who was in His Glorified state) in Acts 22:6 “*And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.*”

The Prophet Daniel however takes a different approach in his description in Daniel 10:6 “His body also was like the beryl, **and his face as the appearance of lightning**, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.” By such a statement he did not mean that Jesus' face flashed as lightning but had the “appearance” or brightness of lightning.

Lost sinners cannot withstand the Sword of the Word of God **or** the brightness of his coming nor will the Antichrist as Paul describes in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:”

So we see such Authority displayed yet again in this description of Christ being as bright as the sun in his strength. So is our Lord's glory for His strength is ceaseless, yea, He is ALL-POWERFUL! Such is the authority beloved of Jesus Christ – our High Priest.