Introduction to Revelation

**In Revelation, Jesus is portrayed** as the great High Priest.a  He is seen walking among the seven churches.b   He holds the seven spirits of God in his hand.c  He says, "Whoever has ears, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."d   He is also seen as the Lambe -- and the Lionf -- as Lord of lords -- and the King of kings.g

He ministers to every need of his churchh -- he rebukes any wrong-doing,i he speaks encouraging words to his people,j he provides abundant blessings for them,k and to those he loves he gives eternal life.l

We catch glimpses of the templem and of what is going on inside.  We see the High Priest,n and we see his priests,o we see seven golden lampstands,p the altar,q a messenger with a golden censer standing at the golden altar of incense,r we see the ark of his covenant,s and we see the ministry that is being carried out in this most holy place.t

We see the Holy City, the New Jerusalemu -- and in contrast, we see Babylon the Great.v  One is a beautiful and holy city, the other a fallen domain.

Of Babylon, it is said, "Come out of her, my people,w so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues."  For "Fallen! Fallen is 'Babylon the Great!'  She has become a dwelling place for demons."x

Of Jerusalem, it is said, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them.  They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.   He will wipe every tear from their eyes.   There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."   He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"  Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."y

And we learn much more -- we discover the contrast between 'the mark of the beast,'z and the 'seal of God,'aa we acknowledge the contrast between 'the great dragon who was cast down,'bb and 'the Lamb who was worshiped.'cc

The Book of Revelation offers many blessings -- seven in all.dd  The first proclaims, "Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it, and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near." (Rev 1:3)

With this blessing, let us begin.

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This footnote shows the relevant verses in Revelation.

**a** 1:13, 18 \_ **b** 1:20--2:1 \_ **c** 3:1 \_ **d** 3:22 \_ **e** 5:6 \_ **f** 5:5 \_ **g** 17:14, 19:16 \_ **h** 2:1--2 \_ **i** 2:4 \_ **j** 3:5 \_ **k** 1:5-6 \_ **l** 21:3--4, 22:3—5 \_ **m** 11:1, 15:8, 16:17 \_ **n** 1:12--13, 18 \_ **o** 1:6, 5:10, 20:6 \_ **p** 1:12--13 \_ **q** 6:9, 11:1 \_ **r** 8:3—4 \_ **s** 11:19 \_ **t** 1:12--20, 8:3--5, 15:8 \_ **u** 21:10—11 \_ **v** 17:5 \_ **w** 18:4--8 \_ **x** 18:2 \_ **y** 21:3-5 \_ **z** 13:15—17 \_ **aa** 7:2--3 \_ **bb** 12:9, 20:1-2, 20:10 \_ **cc** 5:11—12 \_ **dd** 1:3, 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7, 22:14.

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