

now.

He describes himself as a brother in Christ to the seven churches he is addressing. He notes that both he and they suffer tribulation for their faith and proclamation of God's word and of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Finally, John gives his location as the isle of Patmos which is in the Aegean Sea about 60 miles southwest of Ephesus. Early church fathers indicate Patmos served as a Roman prison colony and labor camp.

[10] I was in the Spirit

You might call this an out-of-body experience.

on the Lord's day,

This likely refers to the first day of the week, the day Christ rose from the dead. That would fit nicely with the vision coming up of the glorified Christ described in verses 13 through 18.

and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

Notice John heard a **voice that sounded like a trumpet**. He did not hear a trumpet. Revelation is filled with similes. This is one of many examples.

*[11] Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last:
and, What [y]ou 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.*

Notice this is the second reference to the key phrase *I am Alpha and Omega*. Recall it occurs only in the book of Revelation where it appears in (v. 8, 11, 21:6; 22:13). The phrase *I am* consists of the same two Greek words used in Jesus' famous statement in John 8:58 where He spoke it to emphatically assert that He is God – the everliving one.

God instructed John to write down what he saw in a book and send it to these seven churches. Twelve times in the book of Revelation God repeats the instruction to John to write the things he sees. For now, we'll just proceed with that list to give a perspective of their locations. Their names derive from their associated cities. Their location in Asia actually narrows to a hundred mile radius in the western end of Asia Minor, commonly known today as Turkey.

Note too that the order of this listing of churches follows a clockwise and circular pattern.

[12] And I turned to see the voice that sp[o]ke with me.

John turned to see the person who spoke with a voice like a trumpet.

And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

There's that keyword *seven* again. The scripture explains the meaning of the *seven golden candlesticks* in verse 20 of our text today.

[13] And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man,

The phrase *Son of man* first refers to Jesus Christ in Daniel 7:13. Jesus frequently used this expression, as recorded in the the Gospels, to refer to Himself.

clothed with a [robe] down to the foot, and girt about the [chest] with a golden [sash].

[14] His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow;

White symbolizes purity.

and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

Fire symbolizes judgment.

*[15] And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace;
and his voice as the sound of many waters.*

Anyone who has heard the roar of Niagra Falls would understand this analogy.

We have other passages in the Bible with similar language:

Daniel 7

[9] ...the Ancient of days ...,

This refers to God the Father.

*whose garment was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like ... pure wool:
his throne was like the fiery flame,
and his wheels as burning fire.*

[10] A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him:...

Ezekiel 43

*[2] And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from ... the east:
and his voice was like a noise of many waters:
and the earth shined with his glory.*

Revelation 2

*[18] And ... These things sa[y] the Son of God,
who ha[s] ... eyes like ... a flame of fire,
and his feet are like fine brass;*

[16] And he had in his right hand seven stars:

The meaning of the stars also will be described in verse 20 of our text today.

and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword:

Here's another symbol. Clearly Jesus didn't have a literal sword in His mouth. Jesus speaks and indeed is the Word of God (John 1:1). The Bible describes that Word as a two-edged sword (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12).

and his countenance was as the sun shine[s] in i[t]s strength.

Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12) and will in the future light up heaven and earth (Revelation 21:23).

*[17] And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead.
And he laid his right hand upon me, saying []to me,
Fear not; I am the first and the last:
[18] I am he that live[s], and was dead;
and, behold, I am alive for evermore,
Amen;
and have the keys of hell and of death.*

Next comes a broad outline for the book of Revelation.

*[19] Write the things which [y]ou ha[ve] seen,
and the things which are,
and the things which shall be hereafter;*

Finally, He explains the mysteries of the stars and candlesticks.

[20] The mystery

This is the first of four references in the book of Revelation to the word *mystery*.

*of the seven stars which [y]ou saw[] in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks.
The seven stars are the angels [or messengers] of the seven churches:
and the seven candlesticks which [y]ou saw[] are the seven churches.*

So we see that these seven churches play a prominent role in the book of Revelation. We will explore that next time.

But before we go, let's consider the significance that body that Jesus has. After Jesus rose from the grave, He appeared and demonstrated it multiple times.

You may recall that Mary Magdalene first saw Jesus in His resurrected body.

John 20

*[15] Jesus sai[d] unto her, Woman, why [are you weeping]? whom [do you seek]?
She, supposing him to be the gardener, sai[d] unto him,
Sir, if [y]ou have [taken] him [from here], tell me where [y]ou ha[ve] laid him, and I will take
him away.*

*[16] Jesus sai[d] unto her, Mary.
She turned herself, and sai[d] unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.*

Mary was able to recognize Him.

On the Emmaus road He met a couple of His followers, walked with them, and taught them. They didn't recognize him, but it says:

Luke 24

*[30] And it came to pass, as he sat [down to eat] with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and
br[o]ke [it], and gave [it] to them.*

*[31] And their eyes were opened, and they knew him;
and he vanished out of their sight.*

Notice, with this body, He appeared as a physical man, cloaked His identity, taught followers from the God's word, broke bread, prayed, and revealed His identity. He also in an instant vanished from their sight.

A few verses down, Jesus appeared to his disciples in a locked room.

*[36] And as they thus sp[o]ke, Jesus ... stood in the midst of them, and sai[d] unto them, Peace
be unto you.*

[37] But they were terrified and [fearful], and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

*[38] And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled?
and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?*

*[39] Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit [does] not
[have] flesh and bones, as y[ou] see me have.*

This body that can pop into a locked room is able to materialize as having flesh and bones.

[40] And when he had spoken, he sh[o]wed them his hands and his feet.

*[41] And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered,
he said unto them, [Do you Have... any [food]?*

[42] And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.

[43] *And he took it, and [ate] before them.*

To seal the deal, Jesus in this new body ate food.

John 21

[1] *After these things Jesus sh[o]wed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; ...*

[9] *As soon then as they [His disciples out fishing] ... c[a]me to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.*

[10] *Jesus sai[d] unto them, Bring ... the fish which y[ou] have [just] caught.*

[12] *Jesus sai[d] unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples d[ared] ask him, Who ar[e] [y]ou? knowing that it was the Lord.*

[13] *Jesus then c[ame], and t[ook] bread, and g[ave it to] them, and fish likewise.*

[14] *This is now the third time that Jesus sh[o]wed himself to his disciples, after ... he [had] risen from the dead.*

Acts 1

[1] *The former treatise have I made [referring to the Gospel of Luke], O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,*

[2] *Until the day in which he was taken up, after ... he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:*

[3] *To whom also he sh[o]wed himself alive after his passion [that is, His death on the cross] by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:*

[9] *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up;*

and a cloud received him out of their sight.

[10] *And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;*

[11] *Which also said, Y[ou] men of Galilee, why [do you] stand gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which [was just] taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as y[ou] have seen him go into heaven.*

Application

We must admit that is some kind of body – better than a Cybertruck. But what about us? What kind of body will we receive at our resurrection?

I Corinthians 15

[35] *But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?*

[42] *So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:*

[43] *It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:*
[44] *It is sown a natural body; it is raised **a spiritual body**. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*
[45] *And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam [Jesus Christ] was made a [life giv]ing spirit.*

[49] *And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*

We're going to receive a body like Jesus has – wow!

[51] *Behold, I sh[o]w you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*
[52] *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump:*
*for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised **incorruptible**, and **we shall be changed**.*

Philippians 3

[20] *....the Lord Jesus Christ:*
[21] *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned **like unto his glorious body**,*

I John 3

[2] *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it do[es] not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, **we shall be like him**;*
for we shall see him as he is.

We who know the Lord have a wondrous future as we shed our aging, decaying, and limited physical bodies and exchange them for glorious, immortal, flawless, sleek, and futuristic spiritual ones.

Benediction

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen (Revelation 22:21).