

December 4-10, 2023

Revelation 1–5

“GLORY, AND POWER, BE UNTO THE LAMB FOR EVER”

Summary: *Revelation 1. Christ chooses some as kings and priests unto God—Christ will come again—John sees the risen Lord.*

Revelation 2. He who overcomes will gain eternal life, avoid the second death, inherit the celestial kingdom, and rule many kingdoms.

Revelation 3. He who overcomes will retain his name in the book of life, reach godhood, and be with Jesus as He is with the Father.

Revelation 4. John sees the celestial earth, the throne of God, and all created things worshipping the Lord.

Revelation 5. John sees the book sealed with seven seals, and he sees those people redeemed out of every nation—He hears every creature praising God and the Lamb.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

Where in the scriptures did some see God face to face?

Moses saw God

face-to-face after he spoke to the Lord in the burning bush but before he went to free the children of Israel from Egypt (see **Moses 1:1–2, 17, 25–26, 42; see also Exodus 3:1–10**). Among the most famous lines written by the Apostle Paul, we have, “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face” (**1 Corinthians 13:12**). Like Moses and several other Apostles and Prophets, John sees the risen Lord “And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore . . .” (**Revelation 1:17-18**) To emphasize the reality of God and sense His anthropomorphic description, consider the following scriptures: “I have **seen** God face to face,” (**Genesis. 32:30**) “Lord will come down in the **sight** of all the people,” (**Exodus. 19:11**) “charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to **gaze**”

(**Exodus 19:21**) “nobles of the children of Israel . . . **saw** God,” (**Exodus. 24:11**) “Lord **spake** unto Moses **face to face**,” (**Exodus. 33:11**) “With him will I **speak** mouth to mouth,” (**Numbers 12:8**) “Moses, whom the Lord knew **face to face**,” (**Deuteronomy. 34:10**) “We shall surely die, because we have **seen** God,” (**Judges 13:22**) “Lord . . . had **appeared** unto him twice,” (**1 Kings. 11:9**) “in my flesh shall I **see** God,” (**Job 19:26**) (**Moses 5:10**) “mine eyes have **seen** . . . the Lord,” (**Isaiah 6:5**). Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall **see** God,” (**Matthew 5:8**) (**3 Nephi 12:8**) “Father . . . to whomsoever the Son will **reveal** him,” (**Matthew 11:27**) “not leave you comfortless: I will **come** to you,” (**John 14:18**) “I will love him, and will **manifest** myself to him,” (**John 14:21**) “I **see** . . . the Son of man standing on the right hand,” (**Acts 7:56**) “holiness, without which no man shall **see** the Lord,” (**Hebrews 12:14**) “we shall be like him; for we shall **see** him as he is, (**1 John 3:2**) “they shall **see** his face,” (**Revelation 22:4**) “Jacob, also has **seen** him as I have **seen**,” (**2 Nephi. 11:3**) “I have **seen** my Redeemer,” (**Alma 19:13**) “redeemed . . . therefore ye are brought back into my

presence,” (Ether 3:13) “hear my voice, and shall see me,” (Doctrine and Covenants 35:21), (50:45) “Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes,” (Doctrine and Covenants 58:3) “we saw him, even on the right hand of God,” (Doctrine and Covenants 76:23) “he grants this privilege of seeing,” (Doctrine and Covenants 76:117) “sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God,” (Doctrine and Covenants 84:23) “sanctify yourselves ... that you shall see him,” (Doctrine and Covenants 88:68) “shall see my face and know that I am,” (Doctrine and Covenants 93:1) “pure in heart ... shall see God,” (Doctrine and Covenants 97:16) “We saw the Lord standing upon the ... pulpit,” (Doctrine and Covenants 110:2) “appearing of the Father and the Son ... is a personal appearance,” (Doctrine and Covenants 130:3) “he saw God face to face, and he talked with him,” (Moses 1:2) “no man can behold all my glory, and afterwards remain in the flesh,” (Moses 1:5) “eyes have beheld God ... my spiritual eyes,” (Moses 1:11) “fear came on all them ... for he walked with God,” (Moses 6:39) “I saw the Lord; and he stood before my face,” (Moses 7:4) “Enoch beheld the Son of Man ascend,” (Moses 7:59) “Abraham, talked with the Lord, face to face,” (Abraham 3:11) “I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description,” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17).

To the House of Israel, what does it mean to be inscribed in the Book of Life?

For the Jews, during the *Aseret Yemei Teshuva* (10 days of repentance) between *Rosh Hashanah* (biblical New Year) and *Yom Kippur* (day of atonement), many Jews say, “*G’mar Chatimah Tovah*” — may you be inscribed in the Book of Life. Traditionally, people who observe *Yom Kippur* neither eat nor drink for 25 hours, with the exception of children and those for whom fasting is dangerous. It is the

result of fasting and repenting that you are inscribed in the “Book of Life.” For members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; the Book of Life is the total of a person’s thoughts and actions—the record of his life. However, the scriptures also indicate that a heavenly record is kept of the faithful, including their names and accounts of their righteous deeds. “The Lord will blot sinners out of his book,” (Exodus. 32:33) “He that overcomes will not be blotted out of the book of life,” (Revelation 3:5) “Another book was opened, which is the book of life,” (Revelation 20:12) (Doctrine and Covenants 128:6–7) .”The names of the righteous shall be written in the book of life,” (Alma 5:58). “Your prayers are recorded in the book of the names of the sanctified” (Doctrine and Covenants 88:2)

How do many scriptures testify that all created things worship the Lord?

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” (Psalm 19:1) “All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name.” (Psalm 66:4) “Let all things praise the Lord: men and angels, the heavenly bodies, the elements and the earth, and all things thereon.” (Psalm 148 – Preamble) “Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.” (Nehemiah 9:6) “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” (Revelation 4:11)

What images can I sense by the number “Seven?”

“The number seven occurs throughout the book of Revelation. For example, John wrote to seven branches of the Church

(see Revelation 2–3). He saw a book with seven seals (see Revelation 5), seven trumpets announced judgments upon the earth (see Revelation 8–9; 11), and seven vials of wrath were poured upon the earth (see Revelation 16). The Hebrew word for the number seven, *Sheva*, is a word that represents the idea of fulness or perfection and may be part of the symbolism in John's account of his vision. His writing to seven churches may be a symbolic way of speaking to the whole Church." (<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/manual/new-testament-student-study-guide/the-revelation-of-saint-john-the-divine/revelation-5-7?lang=eng>) The restoration teaches us about the seven seals that symbolize one thousand years each of history. The Apostle John experienced symbolized events to occur during each of those millennia. (see Doctrine and Covenants 77:67) "Seven" has been a meaningful symbol throughout biblical and Jewish history. "God showed Moses the prototype of the *menorah* (Temple candelabra) when He handed down the *Torah* (first five Bible books) on Mount Sinai: from the central shaft of the *menorah* six branches, three on either side, curved upwards, making seven branches in all; it was carved from one solid piece of gold. It was a sacred object to be used only in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple, and no imitation was permitted. The special candle holder used on *Hanukkah* (dedication of the Jerusalem Temple by the Maccabees – 164 BCE) is a *Hanukkiyyah* and not a *menorah* --- it has eight branches." "The original menorah was 18 handbreadths high and burned in the Tabernacle as a perpetual light. When Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem, he placed ten golden *menorot* inside it, probably in addition to the *menorah* of Moses. Both these and the original menorah were destroyed completely when the First Temple was desecrated in 586 B.C.E. The returning Babylonian exiles rebuilt the Temple in

516 B.C.E. and, following the custom of the Tabernacle, made a single *menorah* according to the descriptions of **Exodus (25:31-- 40 and 37:17--24)**. In 169 B.C.E. it was removed by Antiochus Epiphanes (the king in the Hanukkah story); Judah Maccabee replaced it after the cleansing of the Temple. With the final destruction of the Temple by the Romans under Titus in 70 C.E., the *menorah* was seized and probably carried in the triumphal procession through Rome. There is no definite information as to the fate of the *menorah* after this time, but it is certain that it did not exist later than 1204." "After the victory of Titus, the symbol of the *menorah* was preserved by the Jewish people. During the Middle Ages it was used to illuminate manuscripts. *Kabbalists* (Jewish mystics) took it as a representation of the *sefirot* (emanations of God). Today the menorah remains a familiar symbol. One appears on Marc Chagall's stained-glass windows in Jerusalem; the Ghetto memorial in Warsaw embodies two large *menorot* and the large carved *menorah* of Benno Elkan stands outside the Knesset building." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

What additional imagery do Jews sense in "seven?"

The fact that the *menorah* had seven branches may be symbolic of order. The number seven is a prime number in mathematics. The message to the seven churches was to assist their unity and order. It was to keep them "connected." "The idea of orderliness is also conveyed by a fascinating use of numbers, especially the number seven. The first verse of Genesis in the Hebrew text contains seven words; the second verse, 14. The word *Elohim* (God) is mentioned 7 x 5 (35) times; "earth" 7 x 3 (21) times; "good" seven times. The section on the seventh day consists of 7 x 5 (35) words and the term "seventh day" is mentioned in each of three seven-word phrases. Just

as the text is careful to use the proper word in its proper place, so God has been careful to form the proper creation, putting it in its proper place at exactly the appropriate time. Therefore, creation is judged as being "very good," and all of God's creatures live in peace."

(*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

What was Moses' experience with "sevens?"

"Aware that he was soon to die, Moses made an impassioned plea to the Jews to keep the covenant that God had made with them. This is recorded towards the end of *Devarim* (Deuteronomy). He commands the priests to read the *Torah* publicly every seven years." "The formal rules of mourning as described below are observed for seven close relatives: wife (or husband), father, mother, son, daughter, brother and sister." "Joseph was one such interpreter; he explained Pharaoh's dreams of the fat and thin cows as symbolizing seven years of plenty followed by seven years of hunger (*Genesis 41*)." "Two of the festivals, *Passover* and *Sukkot*, have what are known as intermediate days (*hol ha-mo'ed*, literally, the weekdays of the festival). Both of these festivals last for seven days (eight outside Israel) and only the first and the last day (the first two days and the last two days outside Israel) are full festivals." "*Halakhic* (Jewish legal) requirements of the marriage ceremony include: the *huppah* (canopy); the giving of the ring by the groom to the bride in the presence of two valid witnesses; the *ketubbah* (marriage contract); *yihud*, a brief period of seclusion following the ceremony; and *sheva berakhot*, the seven blessings which combine the hopes of the young couple with the prayers and aspirations of the Jewish people. Differences in detail of foods, dress, procedures etc. which attend the joyful occasion vary as widely as the communities from which the participants come. The shattered glass, recalling the

destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, is a custom which is widely, but not universally, practiced. Some oriental Jews have a relative cutting paper during the ceremony, to ward off evil spirits. Some *Ashkenazi* brides make seven circuits around the groom to create a mystical ring which is presumed to serve the same purpose." "The Bible (*Deuteronomy 8:8*) mentions seven kinds of produce found in *Erez* (land of) Israel: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, dates, and olives. Out of these products came wine, a variety of types of honey, and olive oil, as well as raisins and varieties of fresh and dried fruit. Nuts and apples were also common in biblical Israel." "Rabbinic interpretation limited the first fruit offering to seven species growing in *Erez* Israel, produce which included not only necessities but delicacies as well: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olive oil and date honey." "In the Book of *Ezekiel (38--39)* there is described a vision of the End of Days in which a war of God against "Gog, of the land of *Magog*, the chief prince of *Meshech* and *Tubal*" is predicted. Gog, it is prophesied, will lead a host from the furthest north against Israel, but Gog will die in the land of Israel and for seven years the Israelites will use the weapons of the enemy for fuel."

(*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) The recovery of Israel during these seven years may be an echo of Moses making his impassioned plea to keep the covenant that God had made with them, commanding the priests to read the *Torah* publicly for seven years. There is a Jewish custom of "Seven Weeks of Comfort" that follow the "Three Weeks of Affliction." More than two-thousand years ago, after the destruction and loss of the Holy Temple, seven weeks were used to emphasize comfort by establishing a dialogue with God as Jews healed and grew through their losses and experiences. (See <https://www.meaningfullife.com/seven-weeks-comfort>)

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