① TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

v.4 John, to the seven churches who are in Asia:
- These are seven Literal and historical churches
- Located in the Roman Province of Asia Minor
- including the ancient Kingdom of Pergamum (which fell to Rome in 133 B.C.) "Pergamos" - 2:12

★ There were several other churches in this area:
- Church at Troas - Acts 20:5
- Colossae - Col. 1:2
- Hierapolis - Col. 4:13
- The number "seven" could hardly have risen by chance
- This number is throughout the APOCALYPSE
- most Likely, the "seven" churches represent the fullness or completeness of the Church
- Remember, each church was to hear what Jesus said to the seven churches...

"He who has an ear, let him hear..." what the spirit says to the churches...
- This line is repeated seven times, each at the end of every church
- In the same way God is speaking to the fullness of the church

★ Also, God will give his complete and full wrath to God-forsaking nations/world
- The nations/world gets seven Seals, Trumpets, Bowls of wrath

★ Even in Leviticus, God says He will punish the Nations seven times if they DO NOT REPENT... Lev. 26: 18-28

- The origin of seven as completeness probably originates from Gen. 1 w/ the Days of the week
- Jesus will be a lamb w/ seven eyes and seven horns
- Later in the chapter, the seven churches will be called:
  The Seven Lampstands
  As the church is to be "the light of the world. A city set on a hill that cannot be hidden" Matt 5:14

★ The NEW Jerusalem... Rev. 21-22
- Just as Matt 5:14 says, the Churches/Lampstand in Rev. 1 represent ALL people of God

★ Also, these seven churches/lampstands fulfills the prophecy of Zech. 4
- I saw a lampstand of solid Gold (pure faith)
- on the stand were seven lamps
- seven pipes... one to each lamp
- and olive trees supply the lampstand

★ Then the seven rejoiced to see the plumb line in Zerub.'s hand

★ The NEW TEMPLE is BEING BUILT

★ Rev. 1 speaks of the Spiritually New Temple/Church of Jesus
- This letter is "TO" all Believers
  - the 1st century Church (Pret.)
  - The Last century Church (Fut.)
  - Both & All in Between (spirit.)

② WHO THE LETTER is FROM...

v.4 Grace to you and Peace...
χαρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη
- Favor, Kindness and inner peace
- The peace given is inner and spiritual between God & Believers
- This book speaks Eminent/Soon coming trials and tribulations
- Yet the Believer is favored w/ heavenly peace...

v.4 From Him who is AND who was AND who is To come
- this 3 fold address speaks of God / Yahweh
- This Description comes from Ex. 3:14 I Am who I Am AND Isaiah 41:4, 43:10, 44:6, 48:12 I Am the first and the Last NO God is before Me OR After Me
- incomparable sovereign LORD

v.4 and from the seven spirits who are before His throne
- The "seven" spirits probably refer to the fullness or complete Spirit
  - probably the Holy Spirit

★ interesting though...
the seven lamps are called the seven spirits of God in 4:5
- the church (Believers) are empowered by the Holy Spirit
7 lamps = 7 spirits

★ This would fall right in line w/ Zech 4:6
This new Temple will be not of might, nor of power, but by My Spirit!"
- Even more interestingly, "the seven eyes of the Lamb are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth" Rev. 5:6
  The seven eyes of Lamb = The seven churches = The seven spirits of GOD (All 3 are equal/interchang.)
- Even Zech. calls the 7 lamps as "the eyes of God" Zech. 4:10
- The entire True Church is filled w/ the fullness of the spirit of God and are also the eyes of Jesus
- It is also possible that Isaiah is being alluded to as well
- Isaiah 11 speaks of how the Messiah will be empowered by the seven fold spirit of God

"There shall come forth a Rod, from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots
The Spirit shall be upon Him x1
The Spirit of wisdom & understanding 2
The Spirit of counsel and might 2
The Spirit of knowledge and fear 2
Is. 11:1-2
- A ROD will come from His mouth - v.4
- Earth will be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea - v.9
- He will destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt and strike the 7 streams v.15
- and make a highway for the remnant of His people... v.16

③ AND FROM JESUS CHRIST

v.5 and from Jesus christ,
who will also be given a three-fold title (As God)

v.5 the faithful witness,
the firstborn from the dead,
& the ruler over the Kings of the earth
- First title:
  The faithful witness
  ὁ πιστος μαρτυς
  The Believing martyr OR The martyred Believer
- Jesus was faithful to God during persecution unto death
- Jesus overcame all temptation even during threatening persecution
- He is our example (Heb. 12)
- Now it is the believer's turn to believe unto martyrdom
- Jesus even gives an ex: Antipas
  "I know your works and where you dwell, where Satan's (adversary's) throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr (ὁ μαρτυς μαρτυς), who was killed among you, where Satan (Σατανᾶ - adversary) dwells" Rev 2:13
- Jesus is making it very clear: they are about to enter Tribulation and persecution
- Faithful obedience & "witnessing" brings persecution... As always

Jesus said, to which of the prophets (proclaimers) did you not kill?
Luke 11:47-51

Isaiah said of believers:
"You are My witnesses, says the Lord and My servant whom I have chosen... Is. 43:10
- Jesus also tells His disciples:
"When the Helper comes, whom I send to you... then you will also bear witness of Me..." John 15:26-27
- 2nd Title: Firstborn from the Dead, πρωτοτοκος εκ ὁ νεκρος

πρωτοτοκος: first or preeminent/prominence (Famous one)

★ God typically uses this word as prominence
Examples:
- Jacob was πρωτοτοκος (Firstborn & OR prominent?) Matt 1:2-3
  Answer: prominent... Jacob was the younger to Esau
- David was πρωτοτοκος - 1 Sam 16:6-13 (Firstborn OR prominent one?)
  Answer: prominent one, David was the seventh son of Jesse
- Judah the πρωτοτοκος 1 Chron. 5:2 (translation: firstborn OR prominent)
  Answer: prominent one, Judah was younger to Reuben
- Ps. 89:27 "I will make David My πρωτοτοκος... prominent one
  - Ps. 89 is clearly messianic, even the Rabbis agree messiah Reb.
  - Actually mentions all 3 titles too
- Col. 1:15 Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the πρωτοτοκος over all creation (FIRST created or Famous over all creation?)
  ANSWER: Famous/prominent One
  Micah 5:2 messiah is from eternity passed

★ In Rev. 1:5 Jesus is being held as the πρωτοτοκος... the Famous One who has beaten and conquered death
εκ νεκρος

- Jesus, the Famous one, who inaugurated the New Life/creation

3rd Title:... and to the ruler over the Kings of the earth
ὁ ἀρχων: ruler, commander natural & supernatural
- Jesus has all rule and reign, even over His enemies, both natural "Kings of the earth" and supernatural "powers & principalities, thrones and dominions, and every name that is named... all things are under His feet and He is head over all things..." Eph. 1:20-22
- These "defeated Kings of the Earth" phrase will be repeated 6:15, 17:2, 18:3,9, 19:19
- These Kings are defeated including the satanic spiritual realm behind them

★ The Revelation of who Jesus is Results in John bursting into a DOXOLOGY
A prayer of Praise
v. 5-8 Doxology (next week)