

The Alpha and Omega (1)

The theme of the book of the Revelation is stated in the opening verse; *“the Revelation of Jesus Christ”* (Rev. 1:1). From the description of the One who is like the Son of man, in the midst of the candlesticks (Rev. 1:13-18), to the bright and the morning star, who is coming soon (Rev. 22:16-20), it is essentially an unveiling of the Person, Power and Program of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The person, attributes and work of the Lord Jesus Christ are the central theme of all prophetic Scripture, and is no more evident anywhere as it is in this tremendous book. This book looks forward to the future and final consummation of all things, when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, where He shall reign for ever and ever (Rev. 11:15).

God’s eventual purpose is to dwell among His people. He gave instruction to Moses for the people of Israel saying, *“let them make me a sanctuary: that I may dwell among them”* (Ex. 25:8). This we see in its ultimate and glorious conclusion in the book of the Revelation, where we read, *“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God”* (Rev. 21:3).

Four times in the book of the Revelation, the Lord presents Himself to us in a declaration of the true essence of His Almighty Being as, *“the Alpha and Omega”* (1:8, 11; 21:6; 22:13). It is understood that these are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, and since the Greek language was in wide use at the time of the writing of the New Testament, these letters would be well known.

But what new and wondrous meaning they have, when they are used as a divine title of our Lord Jesus and spoken by Himself. They bring before us, not only the essence of His holy Person, but we shall see that they are associated with His grand prerogatives, purposes and program for this world.

As the *“Alpha and Omega”*, the Lord Jesus Christ encompasses time and eternity and exhausts the vocabularies of every known language. This title expresses His eternal nature and His ever-abiding presence. He is the brightness of God’s glory and the express image of His person, and, as such, is the last word to this world (Heb. 1:1-3)

John addressed his remarks to the seven churches in Asia, and bequeathed peace from the Lord Jesus, referring to Him as, *“him which is, and which was, and which is to come”* (Rev. 1:4). God revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush, proclaiming His holy Name, *“I am that I am”* (Ex. 3:14). This divine title, which expresses the ever existing one, was used by the Lord Jesus on a number of occasions, to refer to Himself (Jn. 8:58, 18:6).

The fact that the Lord Jesus is eternal is evident from Old Testament Scriptures as well. Micah prophesied concerning Him, *“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting”* (Mic. 5:2).

In the first of these occurrences of the *“Alpha and Omega”* (Rev. 1:8), the Lord Jesus also referred to Himself as *“the beginning and the ending”*. In using this phrase, He takes the language ascribed to the Lord, the King of Israel, *“I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God”* (Isa. 44:6; 48:12).

This marks the absolute and unquestionable deity of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He stands unparalleled, unequalled and unrivaled, distinct, unique and singular in majesty and might, in power and pre-eminence and in greatness and glory. He is the incomparable Christ.

In His address to the church of the Laodiceans, He referred to Himself as, *“the beginning of the creation of God”* (Rev. 3:17). Paul also wrote of Him in concerning creation, *“He is before all things, and by him all things consist”* (Col. 1:17).

Christ is the beginning of all things and all will have their ultimate conclusion and culmination in Him. The apostle Paul wrote of that future time, *“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power”* (1st Cor. 15:24).

Here now, for the second time, the Lord Jesus refers to Himself as, *“which is, and which was, and, which is to come”*, Although the phrase, *“which is to come”*, signifies His unending, eternal nature and essence, we could also appreciate the truth that He is coming again, as He has promised. At the close of the book of the Revelation, He stated emphatically, *“surely I come quickly”* (Rev. 22:20).

The Lord Jesus also referred to Himself as, *“the almighty”*. This is the name by which the Lord revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 17:1, 35:11; Ex. 6:3). In the Hebrew language, this name is the *“El Shaddai”*, which means, *“the all sufficient one”*.

The Lord Jesus is almighty in power and pre-eminence, as will be demonstrated throughout the course of events described and detailed in the book of Revelation. We will see also, that He is *“the all sufficient one”*, whether in relation to the seven churches, or to mankind generally; all may find in the *“Alpha and Omega”* every resource for every need and circumstance.

*Eternal, infinite Being,
Bathed in the fullness of light;
The ever present all seeing,
Sum of all power and might.*

*The Beginning and the Ending,
And the ever-present One;
Every virtue in Him blending,
The eternal august Son.*

*The Beginning of creation,
The mighty Jehovah, God;
He's the Author of salvation,
Through the merits of His blood.*

*Since redemption's works completed
Christ is risen from the dead;
In the throne of glory seated,
The church's glorious head.*

*O, triumphant consummation,
When to earth He comes as King;
All join in the Coronation,
And let all creation sing.*

Bernie Payne

