Descriptions of Jesus in Revelation: Part 2

Zanesville, OH | December 30, 2018 | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** Revelation 1:8-16

**Intro**:

* There are numerous instances in the scriptures where Jesus is given majestic descriptions both of His character and His appearance. We could look at instances in each book of the bible where that would be the case but perhaps none stand out more than the glorious descriptions of our Lord in the final book of the bible: **Revelation**. There are a variety of descriptions endowed to Him in this book that speak of His power, authority, glory and majesty. These descriptions include:

1. **The Alpha and the Omega** (Rev. 1:8, 17; 2:8; 21:6; 22:13; Jn. 1:1-3; Col. 1:16-17)
   1. It is true that it is the Almighty, God the Father, who is speaking in this verse. However, the terms used of Him here is repeatedly used of Jesus as well not only in this book but elsewhere in the Bible.
   2. The purpose of this phrase (Alpha and Omega) is to further emphasize what was said of Jesus is v. 4. He is the Sovereign ruler of all creation since He Himself was before all things and through Him everything exists. He is alive now and He will be there even at the end.
   3. The words used *“Alpha”* and *“Omega”* are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet respectively. Like the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet (Aleph and Tav), to emphasize the *“Alpha”* and *“Omega”* is to stress everything in between and not just the first and last letters (merism).
   4. This description of Jesus goes back to the OT where YHWH is described similarly in the book of Isaiah (41:4; 43:10; 44:4, 6; 48:12). Jesus is Himself YHWH and there was never a God like Him, there is no God like Him and there will never be another God besides Him!
   5. The point of this phrase (used repeatedly in the book) is not to stress God’s eternal nature per se, but rather it is *“stressing his timeless sovereignty for the encouragement of Asian Christians who are facing persecution for their faith”* (Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*). He is the beginning of all things, but He also controls their end. God is active in His creation and He has asserted His sovereign role throughout the course of human history.
2. **The Son of Man** (Rev. 1:12-16, 14:14; Dan. 3:24-27; 7:13-14; 10:4-6; Matt. 8:20; 9:6)
   1. The next description we observe of Jesus in Revelation is a powerful depiction of His active role in the church, power, character and appearance. The *“Son of Man”* description is not uncommon to believers as it was Jesus’ most favorite phrase used to refer to Himself.
   2. Perhaps even more important than that, the phrase draws our attention to Daniel 3, 7 and 10 in particular where we observe instances of a heavenly being endowed with power and might much like Jesus in Revelation.
   3. The phrase itself can be used to refer to mankind or man in general (Psa. 8:4; 144:3) but it is most often used of Jesus to speak of both His deity and humanity (Heb. 2:6-8). Thus, there is no doubt that the *“Son of Man”* here is Jesus the Christ.
   4. As John describes what he sees, we are told that there are various other descriptions of the *“Son of Man”* including:
      1. **One among seven golden lampstands** (1:12-13, 20)
         1. We are told that these golden lampstands are the seven churches. The lampstand imagery goes back to Ex. 25:31-40. Their purpose was to bring light in the tabernacle.
         2. The priests were the ones who would trim these lampstands so as to ensure the light was always at its optimum level and add oil (Ex. 27:20 30:7-8).
         3. By applying this image to Jesus, we see that He is “trimming” the churches and “adding oil” by correcting, commending, exhorting and warning them so as to ensure they are fit to shine their lights (Matt. 5:14-16). He is performing His priestly duty.
      2. **Clothed in a robe and golden sash** (1:13; 19:13)
         1. The clothing Jesus is described as wearing fits the description of what priests would typically wear (Ex. 28:4; 29:5). This is simply reaffirming that He is serving in a priestly role.
      3. **Head and hair like white wool** (Dan. 7:9; 1:14)
         1. This serves as a clear depiction of the complete purity of God and His wisdom.
      4. **Eyes like a flame of fire** (Dan. 7:9; 10:6; 1:14; 2:18; 19:12)
         1. This is an image of Jesus’ power to judge and that all should fear Him!
      5. **Feet like burnished bronze** (Dan. 10:6; 1:15; 2:18)
         1. The picture here is one of strength, stability and moral purity.
      6. **Voice like sound of many waters** (1:15; 14:2; 19:6)
         1. The voice of Jesus is awe-inspiring and fearful as that of rushing waters.
      7. **Holds seven stars in right hand** (1:16, 20; 2:1; 3:1)
         1. We are told later that these stars and angels. Jesus controls the myriads and myriads of angels (Matt. 26:53; Rev. 19:14).
      8. **Sharp two-edged sword out of His mouth** (Heb. 4:12; 1:16; 2:12, 16; 19:15)
         1. Jesus speaks the word of God and He Himself is the word of God (Jn. 1:13, 14). God’s word is sharper than any sword because it can pierce the soul.
      9. **Face like sun shining** (Matt. 17:2; 1:16; 4:3; 10:1)
         1. Jesus’ face shines brightly like the sun. His glory and His radiance as that which is perfect, holy and powerful is overwhelming!
   5. The point of this description of Jesus is to encourage the Christians to fear Him instead of man and to rely on Him even in the midst of agony and persecution. These descriptions of Jesus as the *“Son of Man”* give the believer more than enough reasons to hope.

**Sources:**

Beale, G. K. (1999). *The Book of Revelation: A commentary on the Greek text*. NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.

Mounce, R. H. (1977). *The Book of Revelation*. NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub.