

**Welcome to Patmos**  
**Things Which You Have Seen**  
**Revelation 1:9 – 20**

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Starting now with verse 9, we enter the outline provided by John in Revelation 1:19. The first part of his outline, provided to him by Jesus Christ, is to “write the things which you have seen.”

Verse 9 with its introduction sets up the location where John is as he writes this. He gives the why and where for us.

Revelation 1:9

“I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.”  
(NASB95)

### **Patmos**

Today, Patmos is considered a Greek island, but it is closer to Turkey than Greece. Patmos, on their website, says this about the island.

The most northwestern of the Dodecanese Islands, the Municipality of Patmos belongs to the Regional Unit of Kalymnos and, according to the 2011 census, has 3,045 permanent residents. It comprises the island of Patmos (2,998 inhabitants), the island complex of Arkioi (44 inhabitants), the islet of Marathi (5 inhabitants), and uninhabited islets such as Hiliomodi, Tragonissi, Aghia Thekla and Ai-Yiorgis. The Municipality’s total area is 45.04km<sup>2</sup> (17.39 sq.mi.), of which 34.14km<sup>2</sup> (13.15 sq.mi.) correspond to the island of Patmos itself. (Patmos 2015)

There is no airport on Patmos, so if you want to go there, the nearest location with an airport is Samos or Kos, to get to Patmos, you would have to take a ferry or hire a boat. You have to want to go there to get there, not much different than in John’s day. For more current information on Patmos, they have a web site at <http://www.patmos.gr>.

John was exiled here.



(Bolen, Patmos Island north from Monastery of St. John 2012, Used with permission)

How did John wind up on Patmos? There are various traditions as to how he got there, and as with most traditions, they are interesting, but it is difficult to pin down to the real historicity of them. It appears that John was exiled there by the Roman Emperor Domitian, who ruled in Rome from 81 to 96 AD.

### **Eusebius**

Eusebius writes the following about how John wound up on Patmos:

DOMITIAN, having shown great cruelty toward many, and having unjustly put to death no small number of well-born and notable men at Rome, and having without cause exiled and confiscated the property of a great many other illustrious men, finally became a successor of Nero in his hatred and enmity toward God. He was in fact the second that stirred up a persecution against us, although his father Vespasian had undertaken nothing prejudicial to us.

#### **CHAPTER XVIII**

##### **The Apostle John and the Apocalypse**

IT is said that in this persecution the apostle and evangelist John, who was still alive, was condemned to dwell on the island of Patmos in consequence of his testimony to the divine word. (Eusebius of Caesaria 1890, 147-148)

From the introduction to the Acts of John: "Domitian, on his accession, persecuted the Jews. They accused the Christians in a letter to him: he accordingly persecuted the Christians. He heard of John's teaching in Ephesus and sent for him: his ascetic habits on the voyage impressed his captors. He was brought before Domitian, and made to drink poison, which did not hurt him: the dregs of it killed a criminal on whom it was tried: and John revived him; he also raised a girl who was slain by an unclean spirit. Domitian, who was much impressed, banished him to Patmos. Nerva recalled him." (James 1924, 228-229)

### **Tertullian**

How happy is its church, on which apostles poured forth all their doctrine along with their blood! where Peter endures a passion like his Lord's! where Paul wins his crown in a death like John's where the Apostle John was first plunged, unhurt, into boiling oil, and thence remitted to his island-exile! (Tertullian 1885, 260)

Whatever tradition you want to follow, the bottom line is this – John identifies himself as a brother with those who this letter is addressed to, and he identifies with them as a fellow partaker in three areas:

1. Tribulation
2. Kingdom
3. Perseverance

John identifies with those who make up the church, his humility is reflected in his word choice. When he says he is a fellow partaker, he is using the word *sugkoinonos*.

Συγκοινωνός – *sugkoinonos* – participant, partner, of business partners, generally of the thing in which one shares. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 952)

John has been and is going through the same things that those he is writing to are going through. He is truly a partner with those in the church and He identifies in tribulation and suffering. The word he chooses not only reflects that but also reflects a few other things that we as believers have to look out for

Θλίψει – *thlipsei* - trouble that inflicts distress, oppression, affliction, tribulation; Of distress that is brought about by outward circumstances. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 457)

This word comes from a root word, θλιβω (thilbow) to press or crowd close against, press upon, crowd someone, to cause something to be constricted or narrow, press together, compress, make narrow, to cause to be troubled, oppress, afflict. Pressing pressure. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 457)

John as well as the church has been under pressure. They have been squeezed by actual overt persecution. As believers, we also see this today as the culture begins to squeeze us and tries to mold us into itself.

Just as the church in Asia Minor has been going through suffering, simply because they are believers, so has John. From the gentile perspective, Nero is the one who began the persecution by blaming the Christians in Rome for the fire that he set. Domitian later picked up on the persecution. We shall see that the reasons for it may vary from city to city, but this was the approach Satan had opted for, to try and defeat what Jesus was doing in and through the church.

As they were being squeezed by persecution, and as we are in turn squeezed by persecution and the culture, we need to keep uppermost in mind what Jesus said in John 16:33 “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.” (NASB95)

Paul related the same message to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:12 when he said “Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” (NASB95)

Persecution, being squeezed is a promise for us as believers. It really should not come as a surprise to us. Just as the church was persecuted, squeezed, so too are believers today.

The one major thing we have to remember, and we will see this in Revelation over and over, we are at war. There are unseen forces who want us to fail. They miscalculated once in the past and lost where they thought they should have won. Paul discussed this in 1 Corinthians 2:7–8. He discussed in the form of the wisdom of God, which was not understood by the fallen ones who were busy conspiring to get Jesus killed. They did not know that was the plan because, as Paul put it, “but we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;” (NASB95)

Just as Satan and his minions worked to eliminate the possibility of there being a Messiah and failed; now they are working to limit our effectiveness as servants of Jesus and attack the church. They are also at war with God’s chosen people, the Jews. They want to eliminate the potential of there being anyone of Israel left to actually be around at the end of the age to pray for Messiah to come and save them at the end of the great tribulation.

Satan’s actions were overt in the time of John, working to have believers physically harmed. This still works in some areas of the world today, but for us in our culture, his tactics are more subtle. They could be as simple as undermining the teaching that takes place in churches.

Our perceptions about the work of Satan today has been studied recently. George Barna relates that “Perceptions about Satan are another point of theological murkiness for millions of Americans. Barely one-quarter of the public believes Satan is a living entity. A similar proportion believes Satan is merely a symbol of evil but not a living entity. The other half of the public is not sure what to make of the idea of the devil. Overall, Satan is not a being or a spiritual concept that most Americans take seriously.” (Barna 2016, Kindel Locations 308-311)

If Satan can keep us from thinking that he is even real, then we wind up discounting the things going on around us and fail to see the supernatural aspect of it. We are in a war and Satan does not want us to see it going on.

One more thing Satan wants to do is to keep us out of the Word of God. He wants us to be ignorant of what is in the Bible and would prefer for us to be totally silent and out of the marketplace of ideas rather than engaging the culture. He wants us to have his worldview as spouted via the media and our handheld devices. He does not want us to have a Biblical worldview. Francis Schaeffer pointed out this tension.

The Bible insists that we live in reality in a supernatural universe. But if we remove the objective reality of a supernatural universe in any area, this great reality of Christ the Bridegroom bringing forth fruit through us immediately falls to the floor, and all that Christianity is at such a point is a psychological and sociological aid, a mere tool. (Schaeffer 1982, 257)

True Bible-believing Christians not only affirm the authority of Scripture, but also live on biblical principles. Christians must affirm the doctrines of Scripture, and they must apply them. If we use as a smoke screen the fact that we are not conformed to the philosophy and theology of our day, thinking that then we are automatically free from the world's contamination, we still are not really Bible-believing Christians. (Schaeffer, No Little People 1982, 55)

How bad is the problem of Biblical illiteracy? Per George Barna, bad. "Biblical illiteracy is already high. The reduction in the amount of instruction adults— much less their children— are receiving is bound to leave us even more ill-informed about the substance of the Bible. Churches, of course, could begin to turn that situation around by strategically increasing people's exposure to biblical teaching. However, the trend in church life is to reduce rather than increase church programming and to expedite rather than prolong people's time spent engaging in church events." (Barna 2016, Kindle Locations 629-633)

Being squeezed, pressured, is very real today and the goal of the enemy is to keep believers from being armed with the word of God. No word of God, no Biblical worldview. If churches will not teach God's word, who will? Ministries are showing up that make use of the tools available to improve this, but again, it is the job of the church which is failing miserably.

Then John moves from the pressure, the tribulation to what we are looking forward to, the end of it and the inception of the kingdom of God here in earth. Of course, Satan is against that as well and has an active strategy against it from taking place. But John shows us in Revelation what will ultimately happen to Satan and his rebellion. Andrew Woods discusses this Satanic strategy.

"Thus, Satan has always worked in history to prevent the establishment of this coming Messianic kingdom (Rev. 12: 9 – 10). God has promised to bless the world through the nation of Israel (Gen. 12: 3) . Consequently, both the Scripture (Rom. 3: 2) and the Messiah (John 4 : 22 ; Rom . 9: 5) have already come to the world through the Jew. Yet, Israel is the gift that keeps on giving. Thus, the long - awaited kingdom will also come to the world through God's covenanted nation Israel (Isa. 2: 2 – 3; Zech. 14: 17) . Just as Satan sought to prevent Christ's First Advent (Rev. 12:1 – 5; Ps. 2:9), he will again try to prevent the coming kingdom by eradicating all the Jews (Rev. 12:1; Gen. 37:9 – 10 ) during the Tribulation period ( Rev. 12: 5 – 17) . The logic of this preemptive attack is that if there are no Jews left to accept the re - offer of the kingdom and call Christ back to the earth (Matt. 23:37 – 39) , then the kingdom will never come , thereby allowing Satan to continue on indefinitely as the world's unchallenged ruler." (Woods 2016, Kindle Locations 3062-3068)

As we see the present time of suffering and squeezing that the world offers, we look forward to the Kingdom, and in the interim period, as John says, we persevere, we hold out.

ὑπομονή - hupomone - the capacity to hold out or bear up in the face of difficulty, patience, endurance, fortitude, steadfastness, perseverance. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 1039)

Since the present is a time of suffering and the kingdom a period of future blessedness, believers must during the interim period exercise that kind of patient endurance which was exemplified by Jesus. (Mounce 1997, 54)

Another way to look at what is going on in John's life is also a way for us to look at what it is the Lord is doing in our life. If John had not been exiled to Patmos, then he would have missed out on what Jesus had for him and there would be no Revelation. Ohh. That means then that Paul was right when he called it in Romans 8:28 "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." (NASB95)

As we go through life as believers, when we see the tribulation come, events take place that we think are not in our best interests, remember, everything that takes place has run through the throne room.

Romans 8:31–32

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" (NASB95)

He has the eternal view in mind, our enemy, not so much

So we see that the devil really over-reached himself when Domitian banished John to the isle of Patmos; for if he had remained ministering the Word to the saints and preaching to the unsaved, he might not have been able to write the book of Revelation and we might not have the visions this book gives us. But there, shut off from all his service, on that lonely isle, the veil was rolled back, and he was enabled to give us this wonderful record of the unveiling of Jesus Christ. (Ironsides 1920, 20)

But under this confinement it was the apostle's comfort that he did not suffer as an evildoer but because of the testimony of Jesus, for bearing witness to Christ as Immanuel, the Saviour. " 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel'—which means, 'God with us' " (Matthew 1:23). This was a cause worth suffering for, and the Spirit of glory and of God rested on this persecuted apostle. (Henry 1999, 20)

The monastery itself, however, set on a hill opposite Mount Kastelli, is built over the foundations of an ancient temple to Artemis. An inscription found on the island speaks of a priestess of Artemis named Bera or Vera and a temple of Artemis on the island, which is here called "the most noble island of Leto's daughter," Leto being the mother of both Artemis and Apollo. (deSilva 2018, Patmos)



(Bolen, Patmos Monastery of St John from the north 2012, Used with permission)

### **On Patmos**

It was in fact inhabited by many families throughout the Hellenistic and the Roman periods, to judge from funerary monuments that have been discovered throughout the island. There is in fact no physical evidence of mines or a penal colony on Patmos, calling into question the traditional image of John having been exiled to Patmos in connection with being condemned to a mine or a particular prison. Rather it appears that he would have suffered relegation to an island as punishment, a form of exile, removing a dissident whom it was not convenient to execute for one reason or another. (deSilva 2018, Patmos)



(Bolen, Patmos village below Mount Elijah 2012, Used with Permission)



(Bolen, Patmos Skala harbor and acropolis from southeast 2012, Used with Permission)

Revelation 1:10 - 11

“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, saying, “Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”” (NASB95)



(Bolen, Patmos Holy Cave of the Apocalypse chapel 2012, Used with Permission)

So, John, on a Sunday while worshipping, has something extraordinary happen. If he was not in exile, he would not be quiet and worshipping but would be ministering to the church. On Patmos, he did minister, but he had the time to be quiet before the Lord.

Psalm 119:114

“You are my hiding place and my shield; I wait for Your word.” (NASB95)

John has quieted his heart and tradition tells us he has retreated to a cave to be alone with the Lord. Now there is a chapel in front of the cave. So, imagine this, John is worshiping and meditating on the Lord in a cave and he knows he is alone. There is no one else in the cave but then he hears, loudly and clearly, a voice that he has not heard in over 60 years, and the voice is behind him, in the back of the cave. That would be a bit disorienting to have happen and then on top of it all, the voice is talking to him telling him to write.

So, at this point, John has heard a voice and the voice is one he recognizes. He hears the voice of Jesus. He has not turned around yet. It is disorienting enough to think you are alone and then hear a clear strong voice behind you from a direction not expected, much less the voice of someone you have not physically heard talk in over 60 years.

John tells us what the voice is saying to him, and the voice hints, “John, I am going to take you on a trip.” Remember, John is in his late 70’s or early 80’s, he has walked with Jesus a long time

If the traditions are true, he has recently gone through a lot, oh, and he is also an eyewitness to the resurrection. This is not a young man and now he is going to be asked to be a witness again. He is being told to write a book of things he will see. He is to be an eyewitness of these events. This is the first of 12 specific commissions in the book where John is told to write and for someone who would be familiar with the Old Testament and the calling of prophets, this is not unusual.

This reproduces the Old Testament charge to the prophets (Isa 30:8; Jer 36:28) and emphasizes to the readers that these are not just John’s dreams—they are God-sent visions that must be followed. (Osborne 2016, 33)

This is the first instance where John used images to attempt to convey to his readers something of the profound reality he experienced. Such an experience cannot be fully contained within human images. The primary reference for a trumpet blast was Israel’s experience of God at Sinai in the establishment of the covenant (Exod 19:13, 16, 19; 20:18). The trumpet blast was also characteristic of the Day of Atonement (Lev 25:9), where Israel was brought once again into perfect covenant relationship with God. The trumpet blast also preceded important announcements (1 Sam 13:3; 2 Sam 20:1; 1 Kgs 1:34; 2 Kgs 9:13; Isa 18:3), and it would also herald the restoration of the kingdom to Israel (Isa 27:13; Zech 9:14). The image, therefore, would have evoked multiple resonances for those who knew the Old Testament Scriptures. (Mulholland Jr. 2011, 430)

Revelation 1:11

“...saying, “Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”” (NASB95)

Not every church that John is aware of in Asia Minor is named, only seven churches, and he knows all of them. The seven churches could be easily visited starting in Ephesus and then visited following the order listed without backtracking.

Revelation 1:12–16

“Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.” (NASB95)

So John, who entered into a cave to spend time with the Lord and meditating on Him and prayer hears a voice, one he had not heard in over 60 years and the voice was loud and clear. It had to be disorienting to John and in order to see and confirm what was going through his mind, he has to turn completely around.

How many times do we find ourselves spending time with the Lord, moving forward as we believe He has directed us, and as we spend quiet time with Him, we find ourselves at times being directed into a totally different direction? John is seeing Jesus as he has only seen Him once before, at Mount Hermon.

Matthew 17:1–2

“Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.” (NASB95)

John turns and he begins giving us an eyewitness account.

He sees seven golden lampstands.

The word used in the LXX implies same type of lampstand as in Exodus 25:31-40, a menorah with seven lamps.

Exodus 25:31

“Then you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand and its base and its shaft are to be made of hammered work; its cups, its bulbs and its flowers shall be of one piece with it.” (NASB95)

The Seven lampstands each have seven lamps, based on the word usage. This matches the seven spirits before the God’s throne in verse 4 showing that the churches are empowered with the Holy Spirit of God

He sees seven separate golden lampstands, one for each church and in the middle of them, the glorified Jesus Christ, the description all comes from the Old Testament and describes the Messiah in His role as King.

Daniel 7:13

“I was watching in the night visions, “And with the clouds of the sky one like a son of man was approaching. He went up to the Ancient of Days and was escorted before him.” (NET)

Daniel 10:5–6

“I looked up and saw a man clothed in linen; around his waist was a belt made of gold from Upaz. His body resembled yellow jasper, and his face had an appearance like lightning. His eyes were like blazing torches; his arms and feet had the gleam of polished bronze. His voice thundered forth like the sound of a large crowd.” (NET)

The garment reaching down to the feet is as distinctive of royal dignity as of sacerdotal functions, if not more so. The girdle might appear to be priestly; but it is gold, all gold, indicative of royalty; whilst the proper priestly girdle was not gold, but simply wrought and interwoven with gold. He also wields a sword, which is another mark of sovereignty and judicial power... (Seiss 1901, 74)

Part of Christ’s priestly role is to tend the lampstands. The OT priest would trim the lamps, remove the wick and old oil, refill the lamps with fresh oil, and relight those that had gone out. Likewise, Christ tends the ecclesial lampstands by commending, correcting, exhorting, and warning (see chs. 2–3) in order to secure the churches’ fitness for service as lightbearers in a dark world. (Beale 1999, 208-209)

The fact that Jesus is in the midst of the churches also shows the truth behind Matthew 28:19-20

Matthew 28:19–20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (NASB95)

Daniel 7:9

“While I was watching, thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His attire was white like snow; the hair of his head was like lamb’s wool. His throne was ablaze with fire and its wheels were all aflame.” (NET)

This is the same Jesus that Daniel saw, that John knew, and now John is seeing the same glorified Jesus that Daniel saw.

And about that voice.

Ezekiel 43:1–2

“Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing toward the east; and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory.” (NASB95)

We see in verse 16 that Christ is holding seven stars in His right hand, which He will explain for us in verse 20, and He is armed with a sword. This is not just any sword.

Isaiah 49:2

“He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; And He has also made Me a select arrow, He has hidden Me in His quiver.” (NASB95)

Isaiah 11:4

“But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.” (NASB95)

The sword will be used by Christ in judgement.

There are several words that could be used for sword, one is romphaia and another is machaira and then there is sica.

The μάχαιρα (machaira) was a short sword or a large knife, the usual weapon of the Greeks and the Romans; the ρομφαία (romphaia) was a great broadsword commonly used by other nations. (Custer 1975, 71)

A sica was used as a concealed weapon.

Jesus has a romphaia, He is coming to conquer.

And His face was just like John had seen once before.

Revelation 1:17–20

“When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. “Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things. “As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.” (NASB95)

John’s reaction is consistent with Daniel’s, he fell at His feet as a dead man.

Matthew 14:26–27

When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.” (NASB95)

John has heard that before,” do not be afraid.”

Just as He did with Daniel, He encourages John.

When Jesus says this to John, He gives John and us four reasons why we should not fear.

The first is simple, He is God, He is sovereign. He is the first and the last.

Isaiah 44:6

Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.” (NASB95)

Because He is sovereign, He is in full control of history and He is in full control of what He is about to reveal to John.

Remember, He loves John just as He loves us, He wants John to get this, but when confronted with the eternal living God, we are inadequate, and John reflects that.

He is not only telling John to do not fear, He is telling the church the same.

You and I were born for such a time as this. We are not to fear.

A second reason to not fear is because He is the living one, He rose from the dead. He is God and He lives. In fact, He is the living one, God for eternity, He became a man and died, yet He lives again having risen from the dead clearly demonstrating that He is the alpha and the omega.

It declares that in his essential nature Christ possesses life and therefore is to be understood in sharp contrast to the dead (or inanimate) gods of paganism. Even though he experienced death in the course of his earthly ministry, he is alive forever. (Mounce 1997, 61)

To top it all, another reason to not be afraid is because Christ now holds the keys of death and Hades. He has the power over that domain.

...through the victory of the resurrection Christ became king even over the realm of the dead in which he was formerly imprisoned. Now, not only is he no longer held in death’s bonds but he also holds sway over who is released and retained in that realm. (Beale 1999, 215)

That should handle about every fear that would ever exist.

We should not fear because:

- Jesus is God
- He is eternal yet became man and died for us then rose from the dead
- He has domain over the physical world, also the spiritual world, in fact He has domain over death

What is there to be afraid of then?

With His hand still on John, after reassuring Him, Jesus continues on with His commission of John as His prophet.

Revelation 1:19

“Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things.” (NASB95)

Jesus is saying, “John, do not fear, I am God. I own everything and control everything including death and the entire unseen realm. I want you to travel through time. You are seeing everything I want you to see and I want you to write about it. It will be scary, but do not fear.”

Verse 19 also forms the basis of our outline for the book.

Jesus then gives John insight to what he just saw.

Now we find out what the seven stars mean and the seven golden lampstands.

The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.

Some scholars say that is a euphemism for the pastor of the church, but in the book of Revelation the term angel shows up 74 times, and it is consistent in that the term is used of a member of the unseen realm, one who is an angel.

It could be that each church has a guardian angel or in some way an angel has some jurisdictional authority over what is going on.

As we have discussed the unseen realm as it pertains to the powers behind the thrones around the world, it may also be that there are powers behind the churches.

These angels are the angelic representatives of the seven congregations, who are ultimately answerable for the failures of their earthly charges. (Boxall 2006, 44)

Next week, the Ephesian church.

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