

John's Vision of the Risen Christ (2nd Sunday of Easter, Year C)

Revelation 1:9-11, 12-13, 17-19

⁹ *I John, your brother, who share with you in Jesus the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.* ¹⁰ *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet* ¹¹ *saying, "Write what you see in a book 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.]"*

¹² *Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands,* ¹³ *and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his breast, [¹⁴ his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵ his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ in his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.]*

¹⁷ *When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead.* But he laid his right hand upon me, saying, "*Fear not, I am the first and the last,* ¹⁸ *and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.* ¹⁹ *Now write what you see, what is and what is to take place hereafter. [²⁰ 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.]* (Revelation 1:9-20)

1. Revelation: written while John imprisoned on "island of Patmos" (1:9)
2. Sunday: he is "in the Spirit" on "the Lord's day" = Sunday (1:10)
3. Seven Lampstands = seven branches of the *Menorah* (cf. Exod 25:31-40)
4. Son of Man = heavenly "one like a son of man" (cf. Dan 7:11-14)
5. Robe = priestly robe worn by the High Priest (cf. Exod 28:1-4)
6. Golden Sash = vestment worn by the High Priest (cf. Exod 28:1-4)
7. White Hair = white hair of the "Ancient of Days" (cf. Dan 7:9-10)
8. Divinity: "I am the first and the last" (1:17; cf. Rev 1:8)
9. Living: "I am alive for evermore" (1:18)
10. Christus Victor: "I have the keys of Death and Hades" (1:18; cf. Matt 16:13-18)

The Living Tradition

Bede: He says that he is 'like the Son of Man', because after overcoming death, [the Son of Man] ascended into heaven... [He says] "*First, because 'all things were made in him' [John 1:3]; last, because all things are restored in him... Not only, he says, have I overcome death by my resurrection, but I have dominion over death itself.* He shares this as well with the Church by breathing onto it the Holy Spirit, saying, "Whose sins you

shall forgive, they are forgiven, but whose sins you shall retain, they are retained” [John 20:23]. (Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*, 1:13; 1:17-18; trans. Faith Wallis)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (2nd Sunday of Easter, Year C)

1. What is the significance of the fact that John sees the vision recorded in the book of Revelation on a Sunday?

For Further Reading

1. Bede. *Commentary on Revelation*. Translated by Faith Wallis. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013.
2. Peter S. Williamson. *Revelation*. Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2015.