

*Almighty God – the One Who is, Who was, and Who is to Come”*

Revelation 1:4-5; 8

4) John: To the seven churches in Asia. Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, 5) and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead and the ruler of the kings of the earth...8) “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “the one who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Revelation = *apokalupsis* > Apocalypse = “an unveiling”

Revelation unveils the identity and character of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. In 1:4-5, all three of the persons of the Triune God are mentioned. In these next three sermons from Revelation we will “unveil” the identity and character of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Remember, one of the purposes of Revelation is a message of encouragement and hope. No matter your personal circumstance or the world’s turmoil, remember these three affirmations – “shout-outs” about God:

1. Revelation’s first “shout-out” about God = God is in Control – *“the one who is, who was, and is to come”* (1:4,8) This affirmation reveals two doctrinal implications: eternity and sovereignty. God is eternal = a timeless state of being – no end. God is sovereign = supreme power and authority, no one greater. God is who He has been. John is reminded so that he can reflect on the God who has already revealed Himself in the Scripture, which for John was the Old Testament.  
In Genesis, He is the breath of life and Jehovah-Jireh, the God who provides.  
In Exodus, He is the Passover Lamb and Jehovah-Rapha, the God who heals.  
In Leviticus, He is Jehovah-M’Kaddesh, the God who sanctifies and makes holy.  
In Numbers, the fire by night.  
In Deuteronomy, He is Israel’s Guide and El Elyon, the Most High.  
In Joshua, He is salvation’s choice.  
In Judges, He is Israel’s guard and Jehovah-Shalom, the Lord our peace.  
In Ruth, the Kinsman-redeemer.  
In 1st and 2nd Samuel, He is our trusted Prophet.  
In Kings and Chronicles, God is sovereign.  
In Ezra, the true and faithful Scribe.  
In Nehemiah, the re-builder of walls and of lives.  
In Esther, our courage.  
In Job, the timeless Redeemer.  
In Psalms, He’s our morning song and Jehovah-Rohi, the Lord our Shepherd.  
In Proverbs, our wisdom.  
In Ecclesiastes, He is time and seasons.  
In Song of Solomon, the lover’s dream.  
In Isaiah, He is Jehovah-Sabaoth, the Lord of Hosts.  
In Jeremiah, the weeping prophet.  
In Lamentations, the cry for Israel.  
In Ezekiel, He call us from sin and He’s Jehovah-Shammah, the Lord is There.

In Daniel, He's the stranger in the fire.  
 In Hosea, forever Faithful.  
 In Joel, He is the Spirit's power.  
 In Amos, the strong arm that carries us.  
 In Obadiah, He's the Lord our Savior.  
 In Jonah, the great missionary.  
 In Micah, He is the promise of peace.  
 In Nahum, our strength and our shield.  
 In Habakkuk and Zephaniah, He brings revival.  
 In Haggai, He restores that which was lost.  
 In Zechariah, He is our fountain.  
 In Malachi, He's the Son of righteousness, rising with healing in His wings.  
 That's who God was – He's **always** been in control. That's who God is – He's **still** in control! The one who was, who is, and who is to come.

2. Revelation's second "shout-out" about God = God is More Powerful than all other gods – *"the Almighty"*. The second reference to the God "who is, who was, and is to come" adds the descriptor – "the Almighty." This is John's favorite term for God in Revelation – nine references, seven times as "God the Almighty" and two times "God Almighty." Almighty = *pantokrator* = ruler over all. The Christians of the first century would have been encouraged to hear this term for God, because the Roman emperors referred to themselves as *autokrator* = "one who rules by himself." Revelation reveals that God is more powerful than all competing rulers – all of them, everywhere, and therefore, God is more powerful than all other human authorities and all other pagan gods. We call this in theological terms = the omnipotence of God. God is omnipresent = all over where. God is omniscient = all knowing. God is omnipotent = all powerful. Revelation not only declares that God is all powerful and in charge, but He is revealed in picture language. Of all the symbols in Revelation, the one that magnifies all others is the throne of God. Referenced 40 times in Revelation, it is always God's throne and it the center of all heavenly activity. The picture of God seated on His throne does not literally define God as one sitting in heaven in a giant chair. The throne image anchors everything else – God is king over all rival and authority over all competing rulers. (Read Revelation 4:1-11 – 12 of the 40 "throne" references. We'll discuss this chapter in more detail in a future sermon on "worship.") Kingdoms arise and kingdoms demise, but God remains seated on His throne forever. No one ever has and ever will unseat or remove God from His throne.
  
3. Revelation's third "shout-out" about God = God will Defeat Evil once and for all – *"I am the Alpha and the Omega"*. *Alpha* = the first letter of the Greek alphabet; *Omega* = the last letter of the Greek alphabet. Alpha points to the beginning – *"in the beginning God."* (Genesis 1:1) Omega closes the book. In Revelation 21:6, John heard God's voice, *"Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end'"* In Revelation 22:13, John heard the voice of the Lamb of God, Jesus, the

Risen Christ, *“Then he said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.’”* In Isaiah 44:6 the prophet exalted God, *“I am the first and I am the last. There is no God but me. Who, like me, can announce the future?”* The implied answer – No one! No one but the Alpha and the Omega can remain in power from the beginning to the end. No one but One who declared Himself as Beginning and the End can finish what He starts. In theological terms, this is the Immutability of God. To say that God is immutable means that God never changes – his attributes and actions remain the same. God is today who He was in the beginning and who He will be in the end. And in the end, God will defeat evil once and for all. God must judge and will judge evil and the Evil One, Satan. Evil cannot win, because God is holy and righteous. To allow evil to win would refute, disavow, and negate all that God is and has been.

Conclusion:

1. Revelation “shouts loudly” that God is only true center of life. Life is too hard and fragile for us to be our own true center.
2. When life and the world seem and appear out of control – remember that God is still in control.
3. What God initiated in Genesis with the creation, God will finish in Revelation with a new creation. Spoiler alert – God wins! “He rules, He reigns, upon His throne!”