

The Lord Jesus: as He was and as He is.

SCRIPTURE READING¹

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last', and, 'What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea'.

Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And, having turned, I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters. He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, 'Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am the living one, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Hades and of Death'.

Many details of the description of the transcendent Lord may seem strange to us but we must bear in mind that the Book of Revelation is not only a book of imagery but is also littered with allusions to the Old Testament.² And nowhere is this truer than in the description of the 'one like a son of man' in our Scripture reading.

But, in spite of all the many references and allusions, there are no formal quotations from the Old Testament anywhere in the Book of the Revelation.³

INTRODUCTION

Recognition

In the Spirit⁴ on one Lord's day,⁵ John hears behind him a trumpet-like voice. As throughout the Book of Revelation, a 'loud' sound or voice clearly indicates the importance and solemnity of what is about to be spoken'.⁶

The voice instructs John to write in a book what he sees and to send it to seven churches in Asia.⁷

The description, 'a loud voice, as of a trumpet', is reminiscent of the way in which God had announced His presence to the people of Israel at Sinai: 'there were thunders and lightnings ... and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud'.⁸

Naturally, John turns to see the One speaking to him⁹ and sees a majestic figure 'in the midst' of seven golden lampstands.¹⁰

We know that, in the past, John had been quick to recognise the Lord Jesus, as witness his being the first to identify the Risen Lord when the Saviour showed Himself to the disciples on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias.¹¹

At Peter's suggestion, seven of the disciples had gone fishing¹² but that night had caught nothing. In the morning, 'Jesus stood on the shore' but, as John later noted, 'the disciples did not know that it was Jesus'. When the Lord called out, 'Children, have you any food?' they answered Him, 'No'. He told them, 'Cast the net on the right side of the boat'. This they did and were, John recalled, 'not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish'.¹³ It was then that John, 'the disciple whom Jesus loved', said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!'¹⁴

But it seems that on this occasion John fails to recognise that same Lord, until, that is, He identifies Himself unmistakably in verse 18,¹⁵ by referring to Himself as the One who had died but who was now 'alive forevermore'.

Many followers of Jesus had been privileged to 'see' the *risen* Lord.¹⁶ But' as far as we know, only three men were privileged to 'see' the *ascended, glorified* Lord, of which John was the last.¹⁷

Reflection

There are several indications in John's gospel that, together with others of our Lord's disciples, John would look back on things which they had previously seen and heard and reflect on their significance. For example:

(i) John tells us that, at the *commencement* of His public ministry, in response to the Jews' demand for a miraculous sign, 'Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up". Then said the Jews, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and will you¹⁸ raise it up in three days?" But He spoke of the temple of His body'.

'When therefore He was risen from the dead', John notes, '*His disciples remembered that He had said this to them*; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken'.¹⁹

(ii) Again, John records that, at the *close* of His public ministry,²⁰ 'many people who were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees,²¹ and went out to meet Him, crying out, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel who comes in the name of the Lord". And Jesus, when He had found a young ass, sat on it; as it is written, "Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt"'.²²

'These things', John notes, 'understood not His disciples at the first (that is, they failed to grasp the significance of these things): but when Jesus was glorified, then *remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him*'.²²

As He was and as He is

It seems clear, then, that John was rather fond of later looking back on those things which he had earlier seen and heard. And I believe it to be at least possible that John later reflected on what he sees and hears here in Revelation 1.

And I can't help wondering whether, if John did so, he thought about some of the fairly obvious contrasts between (i) the glory of the transcendent Lord which he sees now and (ii) the earlier experiences of that same Lord, who, as He Himself now points out to John, once 'became dead'.²³

Well do we bow in wonder, not only that:

- (i) *The rich one* became poor, 2 Cor. 8. 9;
- (ii) *The holy one* was made sin, 2 Cor. 5. 21;
- (iii) *The beloved one* was forsaken, Matt. 27. 46 with Eph. 1. 6.

but also that:

- (iv) *The living one* became dead, Rev. 1. 18.

And, as we shall find, that, in his Gospel, John records many events and features from the life and death of Jesus which provide us with a series of at least ten contrasts with his portrayal of the all-glorious Lord in Revelation 1.

It is, as I said, at least possible that John later came to ponder some or all of those contrasts ... contrasts between, we may well say, the Lord Jesus *as He is now* and the Lord Jesus *as He once was*.

OUTLINE

I begin by surveying the ground we shall cover in more detail below:

1. 'In the midst of the seven lampstands', v. 13.
2. 'Clothed with a garment down to the feet', v. 13.
3. 'Girded about the chest with a golden band', v. 13.
4. 'His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow', v. 14.

5. 'His eyes like a flame of fire', v. 14.
6. 'His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace', v. 15.
7. 'His voice as the sound of many waters ... out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword', vv. 15-16.
8. 'He had in His right hand seven stars', v. 16.
9. 'His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength', v. 16.
10. 'When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead', v. 17.

THE TEN CONTRASTS

1. 'In the midst of the seven lampstands', v. 13.

(a) John saw Him as He is.

'In the midst of the seven lampstands one like a son of man'.²⁴ The expression 'like a son of man' had been used over 600 years before by Daniel when relating his dream-vision of the throne of God.²⁵ There, he describes one 'like a son of man' – that is, in human appearance – who appeared before the Ancient of Days to receive everlasting dominion and a kingdom which should never be destroyed. The 'one like a son of man' seen by Daniel in his night dream/vision²⁶ stood in marked contrast to 'the four great beasts' which loomed large in that dream/vision.²⁷

The resplendent Person whom John sees in human appearance isn't *standing* (as John will see Him doing in chapter 5, as the little Lamb in the midst of the throne²⁸) but, according to the Lord's own words to the angel of the church at Ephesus, is *walking* in the midst of the seven golden lampstands'.²⁹

The Lord's movement among the lampstands indicates, of course, both His keen interest in each of the churches and His intimate knowledge of them – paving the way for the specific and relevant messages He has for each, with their differing emphases by way of commendation, warning and encouragement.

(b) I wonder whether the sight of one 'in the midst of the seven lampstands' now prompts John to remember the Lord Jesus as He once was?

Did John perhaps recall the time (*which he records in his Gospel*) when, 'bearing His cross', this One whom (as John noted) Pilate had presented to the Jews as '*the man*',³⁰ 'went out to a place called "The Place of a Skull", which is called in the Hebrew, 'Golgotha',³¹ where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on either side one, and Jesus *in the midst*'?³²

Perhaps John later reflected that the One he now sees walking 'in the midst' of His churches was the self-same One he had once seen³³ hanging 'in the midst' of two malefactors!

2. 'Clothed with a garment down to the feet', v. 13.

(a) John saw Him as He is.

'A garment down to the feet' certainly expressed high rank and dignity and may well suggest our Lord's offices both of High Priest³⁴ and of Ruler and Judge. I note that the word translated 'down to the feet' (not found elsewhere in the New Testament) is used in manuscripts of the Greek Old Testament to describe both the *priestly* garments of Aaron³⁵ and the *royal* robes of both Saul and Jonathan.³⁶

As far as our Lord's office of priest is concerned, it is possible that part of His priestly role is to tend the lampstands.³⁷

(b) 'Clothed with a garment down to the feet': I wonder, did this feature of the now transcendent Lord prompt John to remember the Lord Jesus as He once was?

Did John perhaps recall the time (*which he records in his Gospel*) when 'the soldiers, after they had crucified Jesus, took (removed) His *garments* and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also his coat (the shorter seamless tunic and undergarment)'?³⁸

Scholars are generally satisfied that, leaving aside the seamless inner tunic, the four pieces which the soldiers distributed and apportioned among themselves by casting lots,³⁹ consisted

of (i) His sandals, (ii) His outer cloak-like garment, (iii) His head-gear, and (iv) His girdle, which would each have been similar in value.⁴⁰

Our Lord had been wearing no robe of 'high rank and dignity' then. And what garments He did possess, even these men took from Him, because by law, an executed criminal forfeited all rights, even to his own garments, and Jesus' garments, therefore, automatically became the property of the soldiers on duty at the time.⁴¹

3. 'Girded about the chest with a golden band', v. 13.

(a) John saw Him as He is.

'Girded about the chest ('the breast') with a golden band ('sash' or 'belt')'. Certainly, a sash around the breast was not confined to the priesthood.⁴² But Flavius Josephus' (writing at about this time) tells us that the priest's sash was 'girded to the breast a little above the elbows'.⁴³

John informs us in his Gospel that he was known personally to the High Priest and that, as such, he had access to the High Priest's palace/court, to which he was also able to secure access for Peter.⁴⁴ I assume, therefore, that John was familiar with the High Priest's garments as described by Josephus. It is by no means impossible, therefore, that John interpreted both the Saviour's 'garment down to the feet' and the golden sash in terms of His priesthood.

We are told that the sash of Aaron was the work of an embroiderer.⁴⁵ And Josephus assures us that it was woven (along with purple, scarlet and blue⁴⁶) 'with a mixture of gold interwoven'.⁴⁷ If the priestly office of our Lord is in view here in Revelation 1, we can hardly miss the detail that the sash of our *Great* High Priest (who has passed, not through the successive compartments of an earthly tabernacle, but through the heavens themselves, now able to succour, sympathise and save His people)⁴⁸ is all gold!⁴⁹

(b) 'Girded about the breast with a golden sash'.⁵⁰ I wonder, did this feature of the now transcendent Lord prompt John to **remember the Lord Jesus as He once was?**

Did John perhaps recall the time (*which he records in his Gospel*) when, shortly before the Passover, Jesus 'rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded'?⁵¹

It has been rightly observed that 'His act of humility is ... simultaneously (i) a display of love (v. 1), (ii) a symbol of saving cleansing (vv. 6–9), and (iii) a model of Christian conduct (vv. 12–17)'.⁵²

And we can hardly miss the fact that Jesus manifested His love for His own by washing their feet⁵³ in much the same way as the 'woman of the city' had earlier manifested her love for Him by washing His feet.⁵⁴

John's observation that Jesus then 'took a towel, and girded Himself'⁵⁵ stands in deliberate contrast to what he had said in the verse immediately before: 'Jesus, knowing that the Father had given *all things into His hands*'.⁵⁶

Back in chapter 3, John had reported that 'the Father loves the Son (a fact to which John makes no less than seven references in his Gospel⁵⁷), and has *given all things into His hand*'.⁵⁸ But now, in His hands, John tells us, the Lord Jesus has not only 'all things' but also 'a towel'; the word translated 'towel' coming from the Latin term for a linen cloth, which, according to the Roman historian Suetonius, was carried by a slave.⁵⁹

Previously John the Baptist had acknowledged himself as being altogether unworthy to kneel and unloose the straps of the Lord's sandals, in all likelihood to remove them with a view to washing His feet.⁶⁰

In Scripture, it was normal for a person to wash his or her own feet.⁶¹ In New Testament days, however, the task was often performed by a slave, although, to the Jews of those days, feet-washing was regarded as such a menial and demeaning task that no Jewish slave could be required to wash the feet of his Jewish master. That duty was reserved for Gentile slaves.⁶²

John had been in the upper room and had had his feet washed by the Saviour.⁶³ Did he remember that the One he now sees *girded with a golden sash about His breast in glory* had once *girded Himself with a slave's towel about His loins in service*?

4. 'His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow', v. 14.

(a) John saw Him as He is.

'His head and hair were white like wool (possibly, 'His head, even His hair, was white like wool), as white as snow'.

Daniel had said of 'the Ancient of Days' Himself that 'the hair of His head was like pure wool'.⁶⁴ White hair was a characteristic of great age, and of the wisdom which long years and long experience brought. The whiteness of the hair of the 'one like a son of man' likely indicates both (i) the dignity of age (in this case, as in that of the Ancient of Days, the dignity of eternal existence⁶⁵) and (ii) great wisdom.⁶⁶

But, with an eye to the words of Isaiah, 'Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool',⁶⁷ I should not be surprised if the linking together of the whiteness of wool and snow here may also suggest our Lord's stainless purity and sinlessness. And I recall that it is John who is on record as having insisted that 'in Him is no sin'.⁶⁸

(b) 'His head, even His hair, was white like wool, as white as snow'. I wonder, did this feature of the now transcendent Lord prompt John to remember the Lord Jesus as He once was?

Did John perhaps recall the time (*which he recorded in his Gospel*) when 'the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns⁶⁹ (the emblem of the curse⁷⁰) and put it on *His head*'.⁷¹ His head certainly wasn't white that day; it was red ... red with drops of His own blood ... drops which, as C. H. Spurgeon expresses it, comprised the rubies set in His crown?⁷²

5. 'His eyes like a flame of fire', v. 14.

(a) John saw Him as He is.

'His eyes like a flame of fire', conveying something of His piercing, penetrating, all-seeing gaze – which accounts for His repeated 'I know', addressed to each of the churches among which He walks.⁷³

(b) 'His eyes like a flame of fire'. I wonder, did this feature of the now transcendent Lord prompt John to remember the Lord Jesus as He once was?

Did John perhaps recall, not so much the very many occasions when the Lord '*looked*' with tender compassion on multitudes and individuals,⁷⁴ but the time (*which he records in his Gospel*) when, as He approached the tomb of Lazarus, 'Jesus wept'?⁷⁵ Although the Lord Jesus didn't loudly weep and wail, neither did His eyes blaze with fire; they ran with real tears.

Or did John perhaps recall the later time (*which, again, he records in his Gospel*) when 'there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene', and how, 'when Jesus (with a look of love and consideration) saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved (saw, that is, himself, John) standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son"?'⁷⁶

John may well have reflected that the eyes which had met his that day at Golgotha carried no flame of fire. Anything but!

6. 'His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace', v. 15.

(a) John saw Him as He is.

'His feet⁷⁷ were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace'.⁷⁸ The single word translated 'fine brass' is not found anywhere in the Greek Bible outside the book of Revelation. It denotes bright shining bronze, spoken of here as 'refined in a furnace'.

I note that this particular feature of the transcendent Lord is referred to by Him when He addresses His letter to the church at Thyatira.⁷⁹ We know that Thyatira was a great trading

and manufacturing centre and that, among its many trade-guilds, there was at least one guild of bronze-workers.⁸⁰

Interestingly, inscriptions have also shown that another powerful guild there was that of the cloth dyers.⁸¹ So it is hardly surprising that Lydia, 'a seller of purple' (that is, of cloth dyed purple, worn by the wealthy), came from Thyatira.⁸²

Bronze is a relatively hard alloy, used to make weapons. And the description of the Lord's feet as burnished bronze points to the irresistible power and might with which He will finally trample and crush all His foes, when (in the language of chapter 19) 'He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God'.⁸³

(b) 'His feet were like burnished bronze'. I wonder, did this feature of the now transcendent Lord prompt John to **remember the Lord Jesus as He once was**?

Did John perhaps recall the time⁸⁴ (*which he records in his Gospel*) when our Lord was crucified,⁸⁵ and concerning which He had spoken prophetically: 'they pierced my hands and my feet'?⁸⁶

Did John perhaps remember the occasion when the risen Lord had appeared to the eleven (himself included) and had encouraged them to 'Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me and see'.⁸⁷

7. 'His voice as the sound of many waters ... out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword', vv. 15-16.

(a) John saw Him as He is.

'His voice as the sound of many waters ... out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword'. Perhaps the sound of the voice suggests to John the words of Ezekiel in chapter 43: 'Behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and *His voice was as the sound of many waters*'.⁸⁸

Nineteen years previously, Ezekiel had seen the glory of God depart from the temple and the city by way of the east.⁸⁹ Now, in vision, he sees 'the glory of the God of Israel' returning to the temple in Jerusalem and hears the thundering of God's voice. Small wonder that the prophet fell on his face,⁹⁰ just as he had three times earlier⁹¹ and as he would once again later.⁹²

Or perhaps the sound of our Lord's voice simply suggests to John the roar and thunder of the Aegean Sea crashing and pounding against the shore of Patmos,⁹³ a rocky and barren island, chosen as a penal settlement by the Romans.

The two-edged sword (the word indicating a 'long and heavy broadsword'⁹⁴) which issues from the Lord's mouth is that of which we read in chapter 19; 'out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations'.⁹⁵ Then the awesome Warrior King rides out of heaven to visit withering destruction on all His foes and 'with the breath of His lips' to 'slay the wicked'⁹⁶ 'and to consume the 'man of sin', 'the lawless one, ... with the breath of His mouth'.⁹⁷

(b) 'His voice as the sound of many waters ... out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword'. I wonder, did this double feature of the now transcendent Lord prompt John to **remember the Lord Jesus as He once was**

You and I might well contrast His majestic voice and destructive breath with the time in the synagogue of Nazareth when, initially at least, 'all bare Him witness, and wondered ('marvelled')', not at the thunder of His voice or the sharpness of a two-edged sword which 'proceeded out of His mouth', but 'at the words of grace which proceeded⁹⁸ out of His mouth'.⁹⁹

But did John perhaps recall the time (*which he records in his Gospel*) when Jesus 'gave Pilate no answer'?¹⁰⁰ Did John link our Lord's silence before the Governor with the prophecy of Isaiah, 'He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opens not His mouth'?¹⁰¹

Or did John perhaps recall how, at the cross, Jesus spoke so gently both to His own mother and to John himself?¹⁰² For neither he nor Mary had heard the deafening roar of many waters or felt the keen edge of the Lord's sharp two-edged sword then!

8. 'He had in His right hand seven stars', v. 16.

(a) John saw Him as He is.

'In His right hand seven stars', a picturesque image which expresses His sovereign control and authority over the angels of the seven churches.¹⁰³

It is interesting to compare the challenge which God had long before issued to Job; 'Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion? Can you bring out Mazzaroth in its season? Or can you guide the Great Bear with its cubs?'¹⁰⁴ No! Of course, Job could not. No man can control the stars.

Yet He – the 'one like a son of man' – holds the stars in His hand. And we are told plainly at the end of the chapter that the stars represent ('symbolise' if you like) 'the angels of the seven churches'.¹⁰⁵

(b) 'In His right hand seven stars'. I wonder, did this feature of the now transcendent Lord prompt John to remember the Lord Jesus as He once was?

Did John perhaps recall the incident, which he doubtless witnessed, when the soldiers thrust 'a reed in His right hand ... and...spat on Him, and took the reed and (repeatedly, the tense is) struck Him on the head'?¹⁰⁶

And did John perhaps think of the moment (*which he records in his Gospel*) when men 'crucified Him', when they pierced both of His hands?¹⁰⁷ For, as has been said, men gave Him, not only for His back the cross to bear and for His head the thorns to wear, but for His hands the nails to tear.

9. 'His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength', v. 16.

(a) John saw Him as He is.

'His countenance'¹⁰⁸ (His appearance,¹⁰⁹ His face,¹¹⁰ His visage) was like the sun¹¹¹ shining *in its strength*'. The brightness of His countenance is stressed by the addition of the words 'in its strength' to the mention of the sun; that is, when the sun is seen with no clouds or mist to obscure or diminish the intensity of its rays.

The exact expression is found in the Greek Old Testament only in the very closing words of the triumphal song of Deborah and Barak over Jabin, King of Canaan – 'let those who love Him be as the sun rises *in his strength*'.¹¹²

(b) 'His countenance – His visage – as the sun shines in its strength'. I wonder, did this feature of the now transcendent Lord prompt John to remember the Lord Jesus as He once was?

John had been one of only three favoured disciples on the so-called Mount of Transfiguration to be given a preview of the glory of His coming manifested kingdom,¹¹³ in which preview the Lord's 'face shone as the sun'.¹¹⁴

But did John rather recall (i) the time (*which he records in his Gospel*) when the High Priest's attendant (his 'officer', not 'servant/slave' as Malchus¹¹⁵) struck our Lord's face 'with the palm of his hand',¹¹⁶ and (ii) the time when the Governor's soldiers 'struck Him with their hands'?¹¹⁷

Did John recall the time when, in the moving language of Isaiah over 700 years before, 'His visage (His 'appearance', His 'countenance') was marred ('disfigured'¹¹⁸) more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men'?¹¹⁹ ... when the face which had been gloriously transfigured on the Mount was brutally disfigured during His Passion.

10. 'When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead', v. 17.

(a) John saw Him as He is.

'When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead',¹²⁰ overawed, overwhelmed by His all-surpassing glory. Just as Ezekiel¹²¹ and Saul of Tarsus¹²² before him, John's unrehearsed response was to fall prostrate to the ground in the presence of the all-glorious Lord.

I suspect that, when the Lord was on earth, few, if any, knew Him more intimately than the beloved disciple. But today there can be no suggestion of John 'handling the Word of life',¹²³ or of him reclining and pillowing his head on Jesus' bosom.¹²⁴

The apostle's place now is not on Jesus' *breast* but at His *feet!* And this not to clasp them as had the women who encountered the Risen Lord when they sped from both sepulchre and angel with fear and great joy,¹²⁵ but simply to fall there!

(b) As John thought back on his prostration before the now all-glorious Lord, I wonder, was John prompted to remember Him as He was?

Did John perhaps recall the occasion when the soldiers of the Governor, far from falling in awe and wonder before Him, 'bowed the knee before Him and *mocked* Him, sneering, "Hail, King of the Jews!"'¹²⁶ a scornful title picked up by John in *his* account of our Lord's trial?¹²⁷

It is now that John feels the touch of the Lord's hand: 'He laid His right hand on me',¹²⁸ the hand that, symbolically, held the seven stars.¹²⁹

Did John perhaps recall the occasion when he had felt the touch of that hand before?

On the holy mount, when Peter, James and he heard the voice come out of the cloud, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him', the three – as John now – 'fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus', we read, 'came and *touched* them and said, "Arise, and be not afraid"'.¹³⁰

Yes, John had felt the touch of that hand before ... but with this one, all-important, difference – this time, the hand outstretched to touch him *is nail-pierced!*¹³¹

CONCLUSION

Well, did the vision of the Lord Jesus *as He is* prompt John to remember Him *as He was*? In the end, I cannot pretend to be sure, but, as you will gather, I should not be at all surprised if it did.

We know that it was on 'the Lord's day' that John saw the transcendent Lord,¹³² and an early Christian document (the *Didaché*, the so-called 'Teaching of the Twelve Apostles' – written, in all likelihood, sometime around the time that John wrote the Book of Revelation¹³³) instructs believers: 'on the Lord's day gather yourselves together and break bread'.¹³⁴

I'm not claiming, of course, that, in the quarries of Patmos, John had just celebrated the Lord's Supper on that particular Lord's day, nor that he was about to do so.

But I have a suspicion that, as one of the privileged few who had been personally present when our Lord instituted the Remembrance Supper, it may well have been that John's heart and mind were focused just there. And, if that is so, it is by no means impossible that John would have made at least some of the connections I have suggested above.

And whether or not circumstances permit *us* on each Lord's day to 'eat of the bread and drink of the cup'¹³⁵ together physically, we have every reason to praise God

(i) that, courtesy of the inspired record which God has given us in the four Gospels, we are able to remember the Lord Jesus *as He was* when here 'in the world',¹³⁶ and

(ii) that we are able to look forward with confident and joyful anticipation to seeing Him one day *as He is*¹³⁷ ... to seeing Him, not then in what the apostle Paul calls 'the body of His flesh'¹³⁸ but in what he calls 'the body of His glory'.¹³⁹

Go on, say it, Mr Russell:

Backward look we, drawn to Calvary,
Musing while we sing;
Forward haste we to Thy coming,

Lord and King.¹⁴⁰

Notes

¹ Revelation 1. 10-18.

² 'From the list of "quotations from the Old Testament" with which the appendix to Westcott and Hort's second volume ends, it appears that of the 404 verses of the Apocalypse there are 278 which contain references to the Jewish Scriptures', H. B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, page cxxxv.

The United Bible Society's Greek New Testament lists over 500 Old Testament passages; so too does A. G. Fruchtenbaum, *Old Testament References in the Book of Revelation*.

³ This contrasts markedly with the Gospel according to John.

'The exact number of references to the Old Testament in John is debatable, for it is occasionally difficult to determine what is a reference and what is not. Some are direct citations; many are indisputably quotations or clear allusions; but in other instances, the language is general, or else is so indefinite that one cannot be sure of the exact source. In at least one case a text is attributed to Scripture which cannot be precisely located (John 7. 38) ... A survey discloses forty-seven references to the Old Testament. Three of these are positive citations, all taken from Isaiah; fifteen are quotations, fourteen of which can be readily identified, and one of which has not been located; eighteen are allusions that can be traced satisfactorily, though the text is not quoted verbatim. In addition, there are eleven general references which imply a background that cannot be assigned definitely', Merrill C. Tenney, *The Old Testament and the Fourth Gospel*, Bibliotheca Sacra 120 (Oct. 1963), page 301.

⁴ 'The phrase "in the Spirit" occurs four times in the Revelation (1. 10; 4. 2; 17. 3; 21. 10). On each occasion it refers to John's exercising his prophetic gift. God always initiates this activity; John does not prophesy at will. God is the primary actor behind John's Revelation', C. A. Davis, *Revelation (The College Press NIV commentary)*, on Rev. 1. 10.

'This statement puts an end to all speculation as to the motives and initiative of John himself in writing the book of Revelation. For John didn't *write* the book, he *recorded* it!', A. C. Garland, *A Testimony of Jesus Christ: A Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, page 184.

⁵ That is, on the first day of the week. See R. L. Thomas, *Revelation 1-7: An Exegetical Commentary*, pages 90-91.

⁶ '... (cf. 5. 2, 12; 6. 10; 7. 2, 10; 8. 13; 10. 3; 11. 12, 15; 12. 10; 14. 2, 15, 18; 16. 1, 17; 19. 1, 17)', R. L. Thomas, *ibid.*, page 91.

⁷ Rev. 1. 10-11. The order of the names of the seven cities indicates the route the messenger(s) would follow in delivering the Book of Revelation to its intended recipients. Many of the features recorded of the glorified Lord are later applied to the needs of the churches of Asia.

Including His words in verses 17-18, no less than seven of these details feed through into His addresses to six of the seven churches. (Only the message to Laodicea lacks any reference back to these features.) In detail:

(i) 'In the midst of the seven lampstands' – Ephesus, Rev. 2. 1.

(ii) 'His eyes like a flame of fire' – Thyatira, Rev. 2. 18.

(iii) 'His feet were like fine brass' – Thyatira, Rev. 2. 18.

(iv) 'In His right hand seven stars' – Ephesus, Rev. 2. 1, and Sardis, Rev. 3. 1.

(v) 'A sharp two-edged sword' – Pergamos, Rev. 2. 12.

(vi) 'I am He who lives, and was dead' – Smyrna, Rev. 2. 8.

(vii) 'I have the keys' – Philadelphia, Rev. 3. 7.

⁸ Exod. 19. 16; cf. v. 19. 'The loud voice, as of a trumpet' in Revelation 1 indicates that John is in the presence of God, hearing the voice of God speaking the words of God.

⁹ 'That John "sees the voice that was speaking" to him may be explained as a simple metonymy (the voice representing the person speaking)', G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation (The New International Greek Testament Commentary)*, on Rev. 1. 12.

Compare the occasion at Sinai when 'all the people saw ... the noise of the trumpet', Exod. 20. 18.

¹⁰ A brief study of the seven lampstands and the seven churches which they symbolise can be found in the Precious Seed magazine for 1995 (Volume 50 Issues 5-6). The relevant articles can be accessed at ...

https://preciousseed.org/article_detail.cfm?articleID=2522 and ...

https://preciousseed.org/article_detail.cfm?articleID=2529.

¹¹ John 21. 1-7.

¹² This return of the apostles to their trade is by no means inconsistent with certainty that their Lord was risen. Paul, even during the absorbing labour of his missions, supported himself by working at his trade.

¹³ Did Peter experience feelings of *déjà vu* at this point? See Luke 5. 3-6. For a profitable comparison of the accounts of the two miraculous catches of fish, see W. J. Sparrow Simpson, *'Our Lord's Resurrection'*, pages 29-34.

¹⁴ Peter didn't need to be told that twice!

¹⁵ For the expression One 'like a son of man', see note 24 below.

¹⁶ See, for example, 1 Cor. 15. 5-7.

¹⁷ Stephen, Acts 7. 55, and Saul/Paul, Acts 9. 17, 27, were the other two.

¹⁸ Emphatic in the Greek.

¹⁹ John 2. 18-22.

²⁰ 'The teaching in John 13-16 is, of course, of a private nature to the apostles', J. Heading, *'John (What the Bible Teaches)'*, page 221.

²¹ 'At Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, his followers spread palm branches on the ground (a national symbol of power and victory over oppressors during the Maccabean revolt) while crying out for "the King of Israel" to save them (John 12. 13)', David Briones, *'What is the Apocrypha'*; accessed at <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-apocrypha>.

²² John 12. 12-16.

²³ Rev. 1. 18, the literal translation of *'ἐγενόμην νεκρὸς'*.

²⁴ There is no definite article before the words, 'son of man'. John saw One 'like a son of man' – that is, in human appearance – **not** 'like the Son of man'.

²⁵ Dan 7. 13-14. 'This is a passage which Jesus had, in John's presence, applied to Himself some sixty-five years earlier (Mark 13. 26)', R. L. Thomas, *op. cit.*, page 98.

²⁶ Dan 7. 1-2.

²⁷ Dan 7. 3-12.

²⁸ Rev. 5. 6.

²⁹ Rev. 2. 1.

³⁰ John 19. 5.

³¹ The place called "The Place of a Skull" was one of four key 'places' in the Passion narrative:

(i) A place called Gethsemane, Mark 14. 32.

(ii) A place called Gabbatha, John 19. 13.

(iii) A place called Golgotha, John 19. 17.

(iv) 'The place where the Lord lay', Matt. 28. 6.

³² John 19. 17-18.

³³ As far as is known, John was the only apostle (or male disciple) who 'stood nearby' ('stood beside', *'παρίστημι'*) the cross of Jesus, John 19. 26.

³⁴ 'He wears the full-length high-priestly robe for which the same Greek word *podērēs* (lit. 'reaching to the feet') is used in the (Greek Old Testament) of Exod. 28. 4; 29. 5, together with the sash or 'girdle' for which Greek *zēnē*, as here, is used in the (Greek Old Testament) of Exod. 28: 4, 39', F. F. Bruce, *'Revelation (International Bible Commentary)'*, on Rev. 1. 13..

³⁵ Exod. 25. 7; 28. 4, 31; 28. 27; 29. 5; 35. 9.

³⁶ 1 Sam. 18. 4; 24. 4, 5, 11. The standard Greek Old Testament text (based on the Vaticanus codex) omits these references but they are found in the Alexandrian codex. 'The Apocalyptist generally availed himself of the Alexandrian version of the Old Testament', H. B. Swete, *op. cit.*, page 95.

³⁷ 'Christ tends the ecclesial lampstands by commending, correcting, exhorting, and warning (see chapters 2–3) in order to secure the churches' fitness for service as light-bearers in a dark world', G. K. Beale, *op. cit.*, on Rev. 1. 13-15.

³⁸ John 19. 23-24. In all likelihood by the toss of the same knuckle-bone dice, one of the four won himself the star prize, and, together with his other item, took away with him our Lord's inner tunic. In that this was both woven and seamless, it resembled that of Israel's High Priest but, unlike the garment worn then by Caiaphas and which during our Lord's so-called trial, in blatant disobedience to the Law of God, he (Caiaphas) had rent, our Lord's tunic had never been torn! See Matt. 26. 65 and John 19. 24; cf. Exod. 28. 32; Lev. 21. 10.

³⁹ Mark 15. 24.

⁴⁰ See A. Edersheim, '*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*', volume II, page 592.

⁴¹ 'By custom the clothes of an executed person were the property of his executioners, since they were viewed as "spoil"', G. R. Beasley-Murray, '*John (Word Biblical Commentary)*', page 347. 'The victim's clothes customarily became the perquisite of the executioners', D. A. Carson, '*Matthew (Expositor's Bible Commentary)*', on Matt. 27. 35. 'Normally the executioners of a criminal received his clothes following his death', Thomas Constable, '*Expository Notes*', on John 19. 23-24.

⁴² See, for example, Rev. 15. 6; cf. Dan 10. 5.

⁴³ 'This vestment reaches down to the feet, and sits close to the body; and has sleeves that are tied fast to the arms: it is girded to the breast a little above the elbows, by a girdle often going round ...', Flavius Josephus, '*Antiquities of the Jews*', Book 3, Chapter 7, Paragraph 2. High girding was another indication of high status: 'ποδήρης ... a long robe reaching to the feet, was an oriental mark of dignity ... denoting high rank or office such as that of Parthian kings or of the Jewish high priest who wore a purple one. High girding (with a belt?) was another mark of lofty position, usually reserved for Jewish priests', J. Moffatt, '*Revelation of St. John (The Expositor's Greek Testament)*', page 344 on Rev. 1. 13.

⁴⁴ John 18. 15-16.

⁴⁵ 'You shall skilfully weave the tunic of fine linen thread, you shall make the turban of fine linen, and you shall make the sash of woven work', Exod. 28. 39.

⁴⁶ 'They made ... a sash of fine woven linen with blue, purple, and scarlet thread, made by a weaver, as the Lord had commanded Moses', Exod. 39. 29.

⁴⁷ 'This also is a long robe, reaching to his feet, and is tied round with a girdle, embroidered with the same colours and flowers as the former, with a mixture of gold interwoven', Flavius Josephus, *op. cit.*, Book 3, Chapter 7, Paragraph 4.

⁴⁸ Heb. 4. 14-15 with Heb. 2. 18; 7. 25.

⁴⁹ Compare the 'man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with pure gold of Uphaz', Dan. 10. 5. But note the difference in the location of the girdle; in Daniel's vision the girdle is about the loins, but in Revelation 1 it is about the breast. I am inclined to regard the 'man' in Dan. 10. 5-6 as an angel. Cf. J. R. Baker, '*Daniel (What the Bible Teaches)*', on Dan. 10. 5-6.

⁵⁰ Rev. 1. 13.

⁵¹ John 13. 4-5.

⁵² D. A. Carson, '*The Gospel according to John*', pages 462–463.

⁵³ John 13. 1, 5, 12.

⁵⁴ Luke 7. 38, 47.

⁵⁵ John 13. 4.

⁵⁶ John 13. 3. Contrary to what many think, humility has nothing to do with feelings of low self-esteem.

⁵⁷ See John 3. 35; 5. 20; 10. 17; 15. 9; 17. 23, 24, 26.

⁵⁸ John 3. 35.

⁵⁹ 'Caligula ... was no whit more respectful or mild towards the senate, causing some who had held the highest offices to run in their togas for several miles beside his chariot and to wait on him at table, standing *napkin* in hand, either at the head of his couch, or at his feet', Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, *The Lives of the Caesars: The Life of Caligula*, Paragraph 26.

⁶⁰ John 1. 26-27.

⁶¹ See, for example, Gen. 18. 4; 19. 2: 24. 32; 43. 24; Judg. 19. 21.

⁶² 'This was a task normally reserved for the lowliest of menial servants. Peers did not wash one another's feet, except very rarely and as a mark of great love. Some Jews insisted that Jewish slaves should not be required to wash the feet of others; this job should be reserved for Gentile slaves, or for women and children and pupils (Mekhilta § 1 on Ex. 21:2)', D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John (Pillar New Testament Commentary)*, page 462.

'The washing of the master's feet was a menial task which was not required of the Jewish slave (in distinction from slaves of other nationalities; Mekhilta Exod. 21.2 (§ 1))', C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to John*, page 366.

When angels visited men, they were sometimes invited to wash their own feet, Gen. 18. 4; 19. 2. But they would never have dreamt of washing the feet of men!

⁶³ John 13. 12 suggests that most of the feet-washing was performed after Peter's over-ruled objection.

⁶⁴ Dan, 7. 9. 'What is said of the Ancient of days by Daniel is applied to the Son of man by John, the Ancient of days being the eternal God. John sees here that the Son of man is Himself the Ancient of days; as indeed Daniel shows Him coming as such', William Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of the Revelation*, page 20.

⁶⁵ 'The symbolism in this case pictures the eternal pre-existence of Christ', R. L. Thomas, *op. cit.*, page 101.

⁶⁶ 'Divine wisdom in absolute purity seems, in the main, the thought intended by the dazzling whiteness of the head and hair', Walter Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, page 44.

⁶⁷ Isa. 1. 18.

⁶⁸ 1 John 3. 5.

⁶⁹ 'The crown of thorns that the Roman soldiers wove and placed on Jesus' head probably came from a local date palm tree. Some Roman coins pictured various emperors wearing such crowns that appeared to radiate glory from their heads. However, the palm fronds when turned inward instead of outward on such crowns proved to be painful spikes'. Thomas Constable, *op. cit.*, on John 19. 2-3.

⁷⁰ 'Cursed is the ground for your sake ... thorns shall it bring forth for you', Gen. 3. 17-18.

⁷¹ John 19. 2.

⁷² 'Behold, my King is not without His crown —alas, a crown of thorns set with ruby drops of blood!' C. H. Spurgeon, *The Procession of Sorrow*, a sermon preached on 1st March 1863 at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The whole sermon is well worth reading; it can be accessed freely at ... <https://archive.spurgeon.org/sermons/0497.php>..

⁷³ Rev. 2. 2, 9, 13, 19; 3. 1, 8, 15.

⁷⁴ In the days of His flesh, the Lord often looked with *compassion* on multitudes and individuals. For example:

(i) 'when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with *compassion* for them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad (were distressed, harassed and were prostrate, helpless), like sheep having no shepherd, Matt. 9. 36;

(ii) 'when Jesus went out, He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with *compassion* for them, and healed their sick', Matt. 14. 14;

(iii) 'When the Lord saw her (the widow of Nain), He had *compassion* on her and said to her, "Do not weep"', Luke 7. 13.

At times, His own eyes filled with tears. We read that 'as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it [in a loud expression of grief], saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes"', Luke 19. 41-42. But 'the eyes that were full of tears as He gazed upon doomed Jerusalem now gleamed as a flame of fire', John Broadus, '*Sermons*', page 84.

⁷⁵ John 11. 35. Where the word used of Jesus is different to that used in the same passage to describe the loud wailing and lamentation of Mary and the Jews, John 11. 33-34. The word used of Jesus means properly 'to shed tears', W. E. Vine, '*Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*', article 'Weep, Weeping, A. 2 - *δακρῦω*'.

⁷⁶ John 19. 25-26.

⁷⁷ Clearly, the 'garment down to the foot', v. 13, permitted the feet still to be seen. 'They were no doubt bare; as were the feet of the Levitical priesthood minister in the sanctuary', R. C. Trench, '*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*', page 55.

⁷⁸ This 'suggests His moral purity and will become the basis for His demand that those among whom He walks must reflect this purity', C. K. Beale, *op. cit.*, on Rev. 1. 13-15.

⁷⁹ Rev. 2. 18.

⁸⁰ 'All that can be stated with certainty is that the city was a trading and manufacturing centre, that we know of an exceptionally large and varied series of trade guilds in it, and that among them occurred the bronze-smiths and modelers in bronze (either as two separate guilds or as one)' W. M. Ramsay, '*The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia*', page 248.

⁸¹ 'Thyatira ... was famous for its dyeing; and its guild of dyers is known from the inscriptions', W. M. Ramsay, '**St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen**', page 136. 'The waters of Thyatira are said to be so well adapted for dyeing that in no place can the scarlet cloth ... be so brilliantly or so permanently dyed as here', Merrill F. Unger, '*The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*', article 'Thyatira'.

⁸² Acts 16. 14.

⁸³ Rev. 19. 15. This clearly refers back to the words of Isaiah, 'I have trodden the winepress alone ... I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment', Isa. 63. 3.

⁸⁴ No doubt, His feet had been weary with His journey through Samaria, John 4. 6.

⁸⁵ John 19. 18; Rev. 11. 8.

⁸⁶ Psa. 22. 16.

Yet these are the feet that had sped to save,
That stood by the couch, the bier, and the grave,
That walked in might on the midnight sea,
That were weary on highways of Galilee,
That sought no rest between Mary's womb
And the cool, still night of the garden tomb;
And—sight that the sun refused to see—
They nailed those feet to the tree!

Anne Ross Cousin, '*What are these wounds?*', from the volume 'Immanuel's Land' (1876), page 26.

⁸⁷ Luke 24. 39.

⁸⁸ Ezek. 43. 2.

⁸⁹ Ezek. 10. 18-19; 11. 22-23.

⁹⁰ Ezek. 43. 3.

⁹¹ Ezek. 1. 28; 3. 23; 11. 13.

⁹² Ezek. 44. 4.

⁹³ 'John had before him as a reminder the endless pounding of the shores of Patmos by waves of the Aegean Sea', R. L. Thomas, *op. cit.*, page 102. See also G. R. Osborne, '*Revelation (Baker Exegetical Commentary)*', on Rev. 1. 15.

'Above the roar of the ... ceaseless beating of the boisterous waves is the thunderous voice of the Son of God', F. A. Tatford, '*The Final Encounter*', page 59.

'The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea', Psa. 93. 4.

⁹⁴ The word, *ρόμφαία*, is 'to be distinguished from the sacrificial knife or short stabbing sword', R. C. Trench, *op. cit.*, page 61. That is, this is not like the short sword or dagger drawn by Peter in Gethsemane, Matt. 26. 51-52. This is the 'sharp' sword of Rev. 2. 12; 19. 15, with which the Lord fights against His enemies. See the distinction made by W. E. Vine in his '*Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*', article 'Sword'.

⁹⁵ Rev. 19. 15.

'The Christians in Asia are to understand that Jesus will do battle in this manner not only against the evil nations (19. 15) but also against all those among the churches who compromise their faith (2. 16)', G. K. Beale, *op. cit.*, on Rev. 1. 13-15.

'The impenitent heretics in Pergamum were threatened with destruction by this sword (2. 16), and the defiant nations of the world later will be destroyed by the sharp sword', F. E. Tatford, *op. cit.*, page 60.

⁹⁶ Isa. 11. 4;

⁹⁷ 2 Thess. 2. 3, 8.

⁹⁸ The same Greek word: '*ἐκπορεύομαι*'.

⁹⁹ Luke 4. 22.

¹⁰⁰ John 19. 9; cf. 'the Governor marvelled greatly', Matt. 27. 14.

¹⁰¹ Isa. 53. 7.

¹⁰² John 19. 26-27.

¹⁰³ Cf. Rev. 2. 1 where a stronger word ("hold fast") replaces the word of 1. 16 ("hold").

¹⁰⁴ Job 38. 31-32.

¹⁰⁵ Rev. 1. 20.

In that the 'angels' are themselves symbolised by 'stars', Rev. 1. 20, they cannot themselves be symbols of something (or someone) else ... any more than the 'churches', which are symbolized by 'lampstands', are themselves symbols of anything else. The 'churches' are literal churches and it follows that the 'angels' are literal angels.

Nor is there any ground for translating the Greek word as 'messenger'. Out of 185 occurrences in the New Testament, the word is translated 'messenger' on only six occasions, and never in the writings of John.

In the Book of Revelation, all 68 other occurrences of the word unquestionably describe literal angels. This includes one occurrence in the letter to the church at Sardis, Rev. 3. 5.

John is 'in the Spirit' when he sees the events he is recording and has, therefore, no more difficulty writing to an angel (Rev. 2. 1, 8, 12 etc.) than he has in conversing with one (Rev. 17. 1; 19. 10; 22. 9-10).

True, we do not understand the relation between the angels and the churches. I note, for example, how the singular 'thy' and 'thee' of the King James Version (referring to the 'angel') merges into the plural 'you' and 'ye' (referring to the members of the church) in the letter to Thyatira, Rev. 2. 18-29. But then, neither do we understand (i) the relation between angels and the nations, Dan. 10. 13-21, nor (ii) the relation between angels and individual believers. Matt. 18. 10; Heb. 1. 13-14.

¹⁰⁶ Matt. 27. 29-30.

¹⁰⁷ John 19. 18 with Psa. 22. 16; Luke 24. 39-40.

- ¹⁰⁸ The Greek word 'ὄψις'.
- ¹⁰⁹ John 7. 24, and as often in the Greek Old Testament; e.g., Gen. 24. 16; Dan 1. 4.
- ¹¹⁰ John 11. 44.
- ¹¹¹ By way of contrast, the angels of the churches 'were represented as "stars" only, as being, of course, subordinate to the Lord as instruments of heavenly light', William Kelly, *op. cit.*, page 22.
- ¹¹² Judg. 5. 31.
- ¹¹³ On the Mount of Transfiguration, John had been shown an anticipatory glimpse of the glory to be witnessed in full at our Lord's second advent.
- ¹¹⁴ Matt 17. 2.
- ¹¹⁵ John 18. 10.
- ¹¹⁶ John 18. 22.
- ¹¹⁷ John 19. 3.
- ¹¹⁸ 'Disfigurement (of face)', *The New Brown, Driver, Briggs Lexicon* and *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, Volume 2, page 1127, number 5425. 'He experienced disfigurement', J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, on Isa. 52. 14.
- ¹¹⁹ Isa. 52. 14
- ¹²⁰ "As dead" shows that this is not an oriental prostration designed to show respect, but the physical effects of the tremendous vision', Leon Morris, *Revelation (Tyndale New Testament Commentary)*, on Rev. 1. 17.
- ¹²¹ Ezek. 1. 28; 3. 23; 11. 13; 43. 3; 44. 4.
- ¹²² Acts 22. 6-7; cf. Dan 8. 17; 10. 9.
- ¹²³ 1 John 1. 1.
- ¹²⁴ John 13. 23.
- ¹²⁵ Matt. 28. 9.
- ¹²⁶ Matt. 27. 27-29.
- ¹²⁷ John 19. 3.
- ¹²⁸ Rev. 1. 17.
- ¹²⁹ Rev. 1. 16. 'It was the right hand of the Son of man. The hand that, symbolically, had held the seven stars is laid upon the trembling seer', J. Allen, *Revelation (What the Bible Teaches)*, page 48.
 'We tend either (i) to think of the Mighty One in terms so majestic that there is a chasm between the divine Being and us, or (ii) to cut God down to size so that we may feel more comfortable in the divine presence.
 But here John presents us with an overpowering vision of Christ's majesty and might so brilliant that "His face was like the sun shining with full force" and yet this mighty Christ stoops to touch John and says, "Do not be afraid". This means not only "Do not be afraid of me" but also that, since Christ holds "the keys of Death and of Hades" and since Christ is with you, there is nothing, absolutely nothing, of which you should be afraid', C. G and J. L. González, *Revelation (Westminster Bible Companion)*, pages 18-19.
- ¹³⁰ Matt. 17. 5-7. Cf. 'Fear not', Rev. 1. 17.
- ¹³¹ John 20. 25-27.
- ¹³² Rev. 1. 10.

¹³³ 'Although in the past many English and American scholars tended to assign it to the late second century, most scholars now place it in the first century', *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, page 482.

¹³⁴ Didaché 14. 1.

¹³⁵ 1 Cor. 11. 28.

¹³⁶ John 1. 10.

¹³⁷ 1 John 3. 2.

¹³⁸ Col. 1. 22.

¹³⁹ Phil. 3. 21.

¹⁴⁰ From the hymn, 'Gathered, Lord, around Thy table', by Douglas Russell.