I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA

Rev 1:7-18

Key verse 1:8  “I am the alpha and the omega says the lord God, who is and who was and who is to come the almighty.”

Good morning my beloved.  I have not preached since christmas where I finished the sermon full of enthusiasm making the good confession “from the goodness of his mercies we have all received one blessing after another .!

Then I fell in my bed in agony for 5 months with my body weight pushing on my injured spine and chord.  I had been praying Lord make the environment for my house church.!!  Instead of giving me decorating ideas or renovation plans, God wanted to make the environment in my heart.  My patmos.  Praise God.  He puts us in our own Patmos, the place of the vision of Risen Christ Alpha and Omega, conqueror, victor and coming Judge of all the earth.  !!  This Jesus bids a person to come and die.  Come and let me live in you and through you !!  It is the way of Victory in Jesus !! May we find our place as though dead at the feet of Jesus “I am the Alpha and the Omega.”

It is the “revelation of Jesus Christ .!!   We can teach the Word and we must ! But the Revelation is to each person directly from God.  What a grace !! as it is written “they will all be taught by God.”  not so much taught but caught.!!  Now let's be whisked away in the Spirit on the Lord's day and catch the vision !!

Some scholars despise the book of Revelations saying it is an inscrutable mystery.  It was the last book to be canonised under hot debate.  Later, reformer Martin Luther said his spirit could not acquiesce to this book.  Never wrote 1 sermon on it.  John Calvin similarly held it in disdain.  However, to the early christians it was easy.  Satan, a great dragon will terrorise you and kill you but,,,, endure patiently by the blood of the lamb and the word of your testimony because in the end Jesus wins !!

It seems as if the words of this scroll have been sealed up from that time until these last days when they are once again unsealed for us upon whom the desire of ages is dawning.

     Vision 1   Behold , he is coming on the clouds

Rev 1:7 “Look, Behold, he is coming  with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples off the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be Amen.”

Song   Lion and lamb

Scripture and prophecy often include a vision of Jesus the messiah, the lamb who was slain and the lion of the tribe of Judah in the same breath.  It is a paradox beyond understanding in the carnal mind.  We see it In Issaiah 9  Jesus baby warrior King.  ‘“wonderful counsellor mighty God everlasting father prince of peace “

Behold, Look,,,Jesus came first as the lamb

Jn 1:29 “behold the lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the earth.”  When Jesus was on trial he stood before Caiaphas, the High priest who was Judging him for blasphemy, / claiming to be the messiah/ and so making himself equal to God.  Mth 26:63b-64  ”The high priest said to him “I charge you under oath by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ the Son of God.”   “Yes it is as you say,” Jesus replied, but I say to all of you ;in the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty one and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Look at  Rev 1:7 “Look, Behold, he is coming  with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples off the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be Amen.”

Now when it says “every eye shall see him, it means “every eye shall see him”  every eye from fallen Adam to Caiaphus to the last babe born in the great tribulation shall see him.  Your eye will see him, my eye will see him.   God is not the God of the dead but of the living, for to him all are alive .

This verse had its first fulfilment when Peter preached in the power of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and more than 3000 people were cut to the heart and saved.  Acts 2:23-24 “and you with the help of wicked man put him to death by nailing him to a tree but God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.”   The power of indestructible life.  The lambs fulfilment.   When he returns as the Lion, king of Kings and righteous Judge/ the tribes of Israel will once again mourn over him, whom  they have pierced.  Some say the Jews will see their true Messiah and repent !!  and all Israel will be saved !!  Some say that this time it will be too late and the mourning will be the dread of /hope gone forever/ and only impending doom.  One thing is sure, he is coming on the clouds.  In the old testament the shekinah glory of God rested on the Tabernacle Gods mobile home while Israel wandered in the wilderness.  Now Jesus will return in the Shekinah glory cloud !!  Let me tell you another secret: we will see Jesus also but with a different view.  A bird's eye view.  For the cloud is also a cloud of witnesses.  For when Jesus returns we will be with him !! Amen Now I charge you in Jesus name !!  Have another eye.  Eye of Spirit, eye of faith, then our sheep will also will say “sir, mam,  I would see Jesus. Amen And so we are tasked with one thing ,that they may see Jesus , Behold the lamb of God , behold the lion , while it is still today.  For “today is the acceptable day of salvation , and today means today.

So then who is this Jesus who is coming on clouds with great power and glory ?  Verse 8 “I AM the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is, and who was, the Almighty.”

What does it mean ;Alpha and Omega ?

Literally it means the first and last letters of the Greek Alphabet.  To me it is a banner over all the other I AM passages.  A-Z   means  Jesus is the Word of God.  Rev 19:13 ”he is dressed in a robe dipped in blood and his name is the Word of God,”  did you know Jesus' name is the Word of God ?  from A - Z in the bible we see history is his story.  No historian, even Arnold Toynbee who wrote “challenge and response” the rise and fall of human civilizations, can be either accurate or impartial when studying world history.  It is because human beings are limited to finite space and time.  They were not there in the beginning nor can they see the future.  His word is the first word “let there be light” and he gets the last word also “behold I have made all things new.”  All scripture contains Jesus and is written by Jesus or breathed by God.   Jesus is the creator God through whom all things are made.  Jesus walked with Adam in the garden in the cool of the day.  Jesus cursed the world at the fall, and changed it a second time by destroying it with a worldwide flood in Noahs time.   No green bible or environmental 10 commandments written by the Pope on recyclable paper can change the fact that he's coming to destroy it.  And Jesus is the one who will say at the end of this age “behold I have made all things new !! Amen

Jesus is the seed of the woman who crushes satans head, the covenant of Abraham of Noah and of Moses are signed in Jesus name !! and his name is the Word of God !! The righteous will live by his faithfulness.   Verse 8 “I AM the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is, and who was, the Almighty.”  Jesus is the Almighty.  Who can stand against him ?  I Am the Alpha and the Omega ,  He is coming to reveal ‘I AM” the first born from the dead and the ruler of all creation.  Ph 2”1-3  “every knee shall bow, every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of God the father,,Amen”

Behold Jesus ,the Great I Am.

Jesus Christ raised from the dead, descended from David,,the God of the bible.

Vision 2  One like a son of man

“I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the isle of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.”

“I John,,”   scholars argue about who wrote the book of revelations because it is quite a ragtag rough Greek text  smoothened in English.  They don't understand how the author could be the same as the eloquent John's gospel with its careful smooth prose.  Well I dare say it looks just like a ragged old man scribbling madly in shorthand while an angel shouting at him to write everything down from a frenetic vision.  Someone might say at least he could have done a few drafts and finished the copy.   What was the last thing the angel said to him in ch 22:18-19 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book : if anyone adds anything to them God will add to him the plagues described in this book.  And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and the holy city described in this book.  Small wonder he did not do much editing.  “I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus.  Here there is no Apostolic authority invoked as in other epistles.  This is because John didn't really write it but more it was dictated to him as a secretary or amanuensis.  John describes Christian life/ this side of glory/ in no uncertain terms/ suffering, kingdom, and patient endurance.  These things are common to all true brothers and sisters in Christ.  So then what was is the setting ? John ,,,was on the isle of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.  Patmos is an island in the Aegean sea.  The Romans used it for Political prisoners and dissidents.  It was like Alcatraz, inescapable.  Prisoners worked there chiselling granite blocks for construction.  Just as Jesus was crucified as a traitor to Rome so those who testified to the Gospel were seen as rebels preaching another kingdom.  They could remove John from society but they could not take the Kingdom from his heart.  And so as with our dear brother John, so with us.  We do not experience much repercussions for preaching the gospel, at worst we may be banned from campus but a time is coming and has now come when gospel preaching will be illegal.  It is already illegal to pray out loud in public in England.  Although large bands of terrorist support groups are welcomed and encouraged.  Chanting how they want to murder every jew alive “from the river to the sea.”  In Iran many are coming to Christ and many more martyrs.  In fact 2023 there were more christians martyred than any other year in history.  Be ready the time is coming  faster than you think.  We must galvanise ourselves now to be prepared to suffer and still keep testifying and overcoming.  Christian life is patient endurance.  However /because God's kingdom is manifesting marvellously in our lives and hearts we would never change it.  We welcome the opportunity to prove our faithfulness and devotion to Christ and his kingdom with Holy Boldness.  Look at verse 10  ”On the Lord's day I was in the Spirit and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet.”  On the Lord's day.  but first let me tell you a secret.  When it says the “Lord's day”  it does not mean sunday.  Or saturday.  It means the day that Caesar has prepared worship for himself to be performed by everyone in the Roman Empire by burning incense to Caesar, a self proclaimed God,,on penalty of death for those who refuse.  I'm sure on “the Lord's day” John the revelator was overwhelmed with concern for the churches he served, the 7 churches of Asia minor.  Knowing that martyrdom and death awaited the called chosen and faithful followers he called “little children” and “my beloved.”   “On the Lord's day” the real Lord of all is revealed to give strength to the church in this hour of horrible trial.  On the Lord's day I was in the Spirit.  In the Spirit John could be whisked away to God's kingdom no matter where he was suffering.  In the Holy Spirit we have a strange sense of peace and well being regardless of our circumstances.  It comes from the knowledge God is with us.  If we grieve the Holy Spirit away we feel kingdomless, and alone.  We quickly repent and restore our relationship with Jesus , that which we treasure most.   The Holy Spirit moves with the Word of God quickening within us the confirmation of Jesus Christ the Amen  and the sure hope of his coming Kingdom.  When the holy Spirit tells us a thing we must speak it forth in a loud voice like a trumpet.  When we testify the Holy spirit blows a trumpet voice into peoples ears making them listen as to one with authority.  The authority of the Word of God , the alpha and Omega.

What did the voice say to John in verse 10b-11 “a loud voice like a trumpet which said “write on a scroll what you see and send it to the 7 churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis Philadelphia and Laodicea.” The voice commanded me to write !!!   In UBF we write our testimonies and messages in the Spirit.  We share them with the churches.  Missionary Sarah often reminds me of things which I received in the Spirit which I wrote and shared.  I cannot deny it.  It is from the Spirit.  I wrote and shared.  It is not a human understanding we receive but revelation from Jesus.  We must earnestly pray “hold me to the revelation you have given Lord !!”  When the holy spirit tells us to preach the gospel to someone we must write and share right away.  Sensitive and ready to receive and obey the spirit's message.  Then we show God we can be trusted with important duties.  What was the message to the 7 churches ?  It was correcting, rebuking and encouraging to strengthen them for the coming trials.

Verse 12 “I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me.  And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man…..The lampstands are the church, light of the world, golden and precious.  Jesus is moving amongst them, moving in the church.  Moving to UBF Toronto and starting moving around at my house.  He is welcome. Welcome Jesus, come visit often ,,in fact just move in  !!

It's your house Lord.  The church in Ephesus was the biggest and richest but little Smyrnna might be where Jesus preferred to visit with its sincere group of dedicated suffering servants.    v 13b-17 “and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his waist.  His head and hair was white like wool, as white as snow and his eyes were like blazing fire.  His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the rushing of many waters.  In his right hand he held seven stars and out of his mouth came a sharp double edged sword . His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.  When I saw him I fell at his feet as though dead.”  I dont know about you but this guy,,,this Jesus,,,is the one I want fighting my battles for me.  He is our champion in the spiritual realm.  The glory, power and majesty of our mighty warrior King Jesus is revealed in this vision.   Jesus is Jehovah God,, he is a man of war.  He wants us to join the battle wielding his sword. His almighty power is what makes his authority absolute.  His blazing eyes of fire are ready to burn up every vestige of selfish self will within us so that we can share his authority as his obedient foot soldiers.  His white hoary frosted hair reminds us that he is wonderful counselor.  And the sharp double edges sword coming out of his mouth is the bible.  As it is written  “he will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth.”   Jesus is wearing the robe and sash of a Judge in antiquity.  Since his fiery eyes see everything he alone can Judge justly.  His booming voice sounds like Niagara falls.  He holds the churchs in his right hand and no one can snatch them out.  His face is so bright it is blinding like staring at the sun.  It is because he is the light of the world.  No need of the sunshine in heaven we are told ,,the light of the world is Jesus ,,the lamb is the light in the city of gold, the light of the world is Jesus.  What was Johns response when he saw the full glory of the risen Christ ?  v17 “when I saw him I fell to the ground as though dead.”

Vision 3  when I saw Him

V17 “when I saw him I fell at his feet as though dead.  Then he placed his right hand on me and said : Do not be afraid I am the first and the last.  I am the living one: I was dead and behold I am alive forever and ever.!! And I hold the keys of death and hades.”    -soon again shall we behold him hasten Lord the day , but twill still be that same Jesus as he went away.

-Jesus usurps Satan's Kingdom and holds the keys of death and Hades (through his death and resurrection).  -Ultimately death will be no more 1cor 15:54-58

“When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable and mortal with immortality then the saying that is written will come true, death has been swallowed up in victory, where O death is thy victory? where O death thy sting ?

-Jesus gives us his authority to do the Kingdom of God heralding assignment to preach his gospel to the nations Amen  In (mth 16:19/18:18) Jesus gave Peter the keys “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”  we can bind demons in Jesus name, we can preach powerfully with an authority greater than ourselves.

-authority is in the Word of God because it's God's word.

Jesus said what I shut no one can open (authority) and what I open no one can shut.  We must learn not to fight against Jesus but see his sovereign hand in opening and closes doors in our life as he guides us.

Let me ask you today ,,have you ever fallen down as though dead at the feet of the risen Christ ?  Have you ever seen how wretched you are before a holy almighty God ?  Has your sin ever been found out by his eyes of fire ?  Do you know what its like to abandon all hope in your self before this great Jehovah mighty warrior king ?  I want to invite you to join me now at his feet as though dead , and allow his authority to be manifested in you.  Lets pray

Jesus is coming soon, Amen come Lord Jesus !!!

Rev.19:11-16

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse whose rider is called faithful and true.  With justice he judges and makes war.  His eyes are like blazing fire and on his head are many crowns.  He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.  He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood and his name is the word of God.  The armies of heaven were following him riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen white and clean.  Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations.  He will rule them with an iron sceptor.  He treads the fury of the winepress of the wrath of God almighty.  On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”

-Rev 1:17b-18

 -soon again shall we behold him hasten Lord the day , but twill still be that same Jesus as he went away.