
The Keys Holder
Revelation 1:17-18

The Keys Holder

- Exodus 20:18-19 NIV, 18 When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance 19 and said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die.”
  - God is doing His best to describe who he is to the Nation of Israel and it terrified them
  - Exodus 33:20 NIV, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.”

The Keys Holder

- Roman Emperor Domitian saw the aged Apostle John as threat to the Roman Empire and thought he canceled John by banishing him to the deserted island of Patmos
  - John’s persecution reflected what churches throughout the Roman Empire faced and some still face today
  - The Lord wanted them to know that he cared
  - He wanted them to know that he was at work and would prevail in the end

The Keys Holder

- The Lord commissioned John to write a message to the seven churches in Asia Minor
  - Before John could represent or speak for Christ, he needed to see Christ in his glory
  - Here is a lesson for all who would serve the Lord -
    - Wonder must come before work

The Keys Holder

- Revelation 1:12-16 NIV, 2 I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 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 chest. 14 The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. 15 His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

Revelation 1:17a NIV records John's response to this glorious Jesus: "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead."

- This is the response of the human to the divine
  - This is the response of the creature for its Creator
  - This is the response of the sinful to the Holy

Revelation 1:17a NIV records John's response to this glorious Jesus: "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead."

- John walked with Jesus for 3 ½ years, saw the miracles, witness the Transfiguration, saw Him many times after the resurrection but this was different
  - This was not the meek and lowly Jesus
  - The Lord Jesus Christ was terrifying and the glory of Christ overwhelmed John
  - Jesus did not rebuke John's worship, but reassured him with a touch and a word

Revelation 17b NIV, “Then he placed his right hand on me and said: “Do not be afraid.”

- With his hand of strength and favor, the Lord touched John and said, “Fear not”
  - This is a command that forbids action in progress
  - It is a cease-and-desist order - “Stop being fearful”
- Then Jesus tells John why he should not fear and it is because of the true identity of Jesus
  - The one who is the cause of John’s fear is the cure for his fear
  - There is no reason to fear if you know the true identity of Jesus

Revelation 17c-18 NIV, 17c I am the First and the Last. 18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

- Charles Simeon wrote: “A more glorious description of Jesus is not to be found in all the sacred writings.”
- Revelation 1:17-18 gives three reasons why those who know the true identity of Jesus have no reason to fear

Jesus is the Lord of Life

- Jesus dared to identity himself with the signature of God, “I am”
  - John 8:58 NIV says, “58 “Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!”
  - Jesus is the Lord of life, and He makes this claim two ways in the text

Jesus is the Lord of Life

- “I am the First and the Last”, This is a divine title
  - Isaiah 41:4 ESV, “I, the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am he.”
  - Isaiah 44:6 ESV, “I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.”
  - Isaiah 48:12 ESV, says, “I am he; I am the first, and I am the last.”

Jesus is the Lord of Life

- First and the Last describes deity in terms of time
  - No one comes before the first, No one comes after the last
  - Jesus sets the boundaries of creation, time, and history
- So what?
  - If Jesus is the first and the last, nothing in the middle can overthrow him
  - He is the God of the middle, He is God in real-time, He is God right now and is sufficient to meet every need in your life - Past, Present, and Future are in his hands

Jesus is the Lord of Life

- Vs. 18a, Jesus claims to be “the living one.”
  - John 5:26 NIV, “For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.”
  - Jesus does not just have life; he is life
  - The only way to God is through Christ
  - John 14:6 NIV, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Jesus is the Lord of Life

- John 14:6 NIV, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
  - Jesus is the answer to the big questions you should be asking
    - How can I be saved? “I am the way”
    - How can I be sure? “I am the truth”
    - How can I be satisfied? “I am the life”

Jesus is the Lord of Death

- Revelation 18b NIV, “I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever!”
  - The glorified Christ John saw at Patmos was the same Christ he knew from Galilee
  - The grammar bluntly states it as a historical and literal fact: “I became dead.”
  - In Vs. 17, John fell at the Lord’s feet “as though dead.”
  - John almost died; Jesus actually died

Jesus is the Lord of Death

- Revelation 18b NIV, “I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever!”
  - It is a mystery the mind cannot comprehend, and the tongue cannot explain, “The living one died!”
  - The Bible does not try to tell us how this happened, it focuses on why it happened
  - God is holy, We are sinful, God judges sin, We need a sin substitute

Jesus is the Lord of Death

- Revelation 18b NIV, "I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever!"
  - Jesus died on the cross as our sin substitute
    - ➢ Fulfilling the Old Testament Law completely and is uniquely qualified to stand as a High Priest between a Holy God and sinful mankind
  - 2nd Corinthians 5:21 NIV, "God made him who had no sin to be sin *(offering)* for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

Jesus is the Lord of Eternity

- Revelation 1:18c NIV, "And I hold the keys of death and Hades."
  - Death and Hades are used somewhat synonymously here
  - Jesus declares His absolute sovereignty and authority over physical death and the realm of the dead
    - ➢ Whatever happens after death
  - Luke 23:43 NIV, Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."
  - 2nd Corinthians 5:8 AMP, "prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord."

Jesus is the Lord of Eternity

- Revelation 1:18c NIV, "And I hold the keys of death and Hades."
  - Jesus is just stating a fact – we all will die, then what?
  - The terms here are used to define the inescapable facts of life, death, and eternity
    - Life is short
    - Death is near
    - Eternity is real

Jesus is the Lord of Eternity

- Revelation 1:18c NIV, "And I hold the keys of death and Hades."
  - We all must check out of this physical world one day
  - Death will claim the body, Hades will claim the soul
  - But Death and Hades cannot determine your eternal destiny
  - Jesus has or holds the keys to Death and Hades
  - Matthew 16:18 NIV, "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."
    - ➢ No gate can prevail against the church because Jesus is the sovereign Key-Holder

Jesus is the Lord of Eternity

- Revelation 1:18c NIV, "And I hold the keys of death and Hades."
  - In our culture, keys represent access
    - One who has keys is free to enter and exit
  - In scripture, keys represent authority
    - Jesus says, "I have the keys to Death and Hades"
    - Jesus exercises complete authority over the domain of Death and Hades or whatever follows
    - Jesus determines who gets eternally locked up and who gets eternally liberated

Jesus is the Lord of Eternity

- Revelation 1:18c NIV, “And I hold the keys of death and Hades.”
  - John 11:25-26 NIV, “25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; 26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

The Keys Holder

- Frequent travelers going from one city to another tell stories of arriving at a city and checking into a hotel room late at night
  - They try a key card only to discover it does not work because it belongs to the last hotel they stayed at
- Life without Christ is like trying to open new doors with old keycards
  - Only Jesus has the master key to life

The Keys Holder

- Revelation 1:3 NIV, Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.


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