

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

The Revelation of St. John the Divine

THE PATMOS VISION

I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia....

And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

And in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.—*Revelation* 1:9-16.

When St. John says that he "was in the isle that is called Patmos," he gives a clue to the nature of his visions, for the word Patmos meant illumination, and in the times before Christ the expression "isle of Patmos" was used to refer to initiation. By means of his progress on the initiatory path, "the beloved Disciple" was able to be "in the Spirit," or in the state of consciousness required for seeing in the higher realms and functioning there in his invisible bodies.

In studying the Book of Revelation we find as one of its outstanding features that it is built around the mystic number seven. John had seven visions, in which he was given messages to

the seven churches; there are seven angels before the throne, having seven lamps of fire and seven trumpets; there are the seven candlesticks, the seven seals of the "book," and the seven thunders. The significance of this use of the number seven is indicated by the teachings of occult science that man is sevenfold, being a threefold Spirit that possesses a threefold body and the connecting link of mind. In man's bodies there are seven spiritual centers which, when awakened and developed, express the spiritual powers of the indwelling Spirit.

Since man is sevenfold, and since he is the "unit" of this particular field of evolution—to whom St. John's message would logically be directed—we may suppose that the message to be written in the "book" by John and sent "unto the seven churches" involves information concerning man himself. In other words, the seven churches are used in a symbolical way to refer to the seven centers in man which have to be unfolded in the process of spiritual development. Every human being is a God-in-the-making and will eventually attain his destiny of Godhood.

The description given of one who spoke to John with "a great voice," as of a trumpet," suggests a mighty Being of the archangelic life wave. The tremendous vibrations emanating from such a Being would constitute "a garment down to the foot," while the hair, "white as snow," and the eyes, "as a flame of fire," indicate the purity and spiritual power of such an exalted Being. The "sharp two-edged sword" suggests the positive-negative power of the Spirit unfolded to a very high degree,