

TO THE CONQUERORS

SEPTEMBER 27, 2026 / CLASS 3 / STUDENT HANDOUT

Revelation 1:1-8 - Who is really in charge?

The passage at a glance

- Revelation 1:1-3: revelation, hearing, keeping, and nearness.
- Revelation 1:4-5a: greeting and Jesus' royal titles.
- Revelation 1:5b-6: praise for love, deliverance, kingdom, and priesthood.
- Revelation 1:7: the pierced King's coming vindication.
- Revelation 1:8: the Lord God's declaration.

Part I. The classroom argument

1. The churches receiving this letter

- John is on Patmos because of the word of God and the witness of Jesus. (1:9)
- Christians in Smyrna face poverty, slander, and imprisonment. (2:9-10)
- Antipas, a faithful witness in Pergamum, has already been killed. (2:13)

These are churches facing real opposition. John writes to them about their King, their standing, and the judgment approaching their world.

David and Saul: 1 Samuel 16:1-13; 24:16-22. God had chosen David while Saul still commanded the army. David's anointing gave his people a reason for allegiance while they were being pursued.

2. A message to hear and keep

Revelation 1:1-3.

God gives the revelation through Jesus Christ. John bears witness, and the churches hear and keep it because the time is near. These words call for a faithful response in the circumstances they are living through.

3. Jesus already rules over their rulers

Revelation 1:4-6.

"the ruler of the kings of the earth"; "made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father".

Grace and peace come from the Father, the Holy Spirit in the fullness of His work, and Jesus Christ. Jesus is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of earthly kings. His resurrection and royal authority give these churches reason for confidence under opposition.

Psalm 89 supplies the royal background: God's promised Davidic king is firstborn and highest among earthly kings. The passage references and the biblical evidence for the seven spirits appear in the extra material.

4. His people share in His rule

Exodus 19:1-6.

"a kingdom of priests and a holy nation".

God delivered Israel, brought them to Himself, and gave them the calling of a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Revelation 1:5-6 celebrates that same movement in Christ: He loves His people, freed them by His blood, and made them a kingdom and priests to His Father.

Revelation 5:8-10; Revelation 2:26-28.

Revelation 3:21.

"sit with Me on My throne".

The churches' prayers are before God. Jesus promises the conquerors authority over the nations and a place on His throne. He gives these threatened people a share in His rule.

Their opponents could threaten and imprison them. Those opponents were beneath their King, and the churches were His royal priesthood. Their prayers and faithful service mattered in His government of the world. They could hear and keep His message, pray, and remain faithful within the threat. Their present identity and promised authority gave them reason to reassess both the regime and themselves.

The coming judgment vindicates the King and the people He has already made His own.

5. The pierced King will be vindicated

The man who was pierced in Zechariah

Zechariah 12:10.

"Him Whom they have pierced".

What happens to the man they pierced?

Daniel 7:9-14.

Revelation 1:7.

"all the tribes of the earth".

Daniel describes the heavenly court's judgment and the Son of Man receiving dominion, glory, and a kingdom. Revelation joins that royal cloud-coming to the pierced Jesus. The rejected King confronts His opponents with the authority He already possesses.

"Earth" or "land." The Greek word γῆ can mean either. Zechariah places the man who was pierced and the mourning in the setting of David's house, Jerusalem, and the families of the land (Zechariah 12:10-14). Matthew connects the mourning and cloud-coming with the judgment announced to that generation (Matthew 24:30, 34). These connections establish the Israel-directed setting of Revelation's announcement. The course translation retains "earth."

Zechariah's larger passage includes grace, supplication, and cleansing. Revelation announces primarily judicial grief as those implicated in rejecting their King face His vindication. The Zechariah and Matthew references and their connections are in the extra material.

6. The Almighty guarantees the outcome

Revelation 1:8.

The Father declares Himself Alpha and Omega, the One Who is, was, and is coming, the Almighty. His sovereignty guarantees the announcement. The threatened churches receive a reason for confidence in their King and their own royal and priestly standing.

We belong to the same royal priesthood and receive the same promises from Jesus. Our prayers, worship, and witness participate in His government of the world. We face His enemies as people called to share His rule.

Jesus is already running the world, even when it looks like His enemies are in charge.

Part II. Extra outline material

These references and explanations supply further evidence for the argument and connections for continued study.

1. Abraham's promise reaches its fulfillment in Christ

God's promise to Abraham embraces the nations. Hosea recalls Israel as the son called from Egypt; Matthew applies that calling to Jesus. Paul identifies Christ as the promised offspring and those who belong to Christ as Abraham's offspring and heirs. Jesus embodies Israel's

calling, and His people share His identity and inheritance.

Genesis 22:15-18; Hosea 11:1-4; Matthew 2:13-15; Galatians 3:16-29.

2. God preserves His people through the covenant transition

Paul distinguishes descent from Israel from belonging to Israel, then describes one olive tree with branches broken off through unbelief and others grafted in through faith. God's enduring promise and the consequences of covenant unfaithfulness appear together. Ethnic Israelites belong within the multinational people gathered under Israel's king.

Romans 9:6-8; Romans 11:17-29.

3. Covenant blood brings a people into God's presence

The covenant is read, the people respond, sacrifices are offered, and blood is applied. Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the elders then approach God and eat and drink. This develops the covenant setting of Revelation's people freed by Christ's blood and made priests to His Father.

Exodus 24:1-11.

4. The priestly people worship and proclaim

Isaiah joins liberty, restoration, priestly identity, and everlasting covenant. Peter describes people built together into a spiritual house, offering sacrifices through Jesus Christ and proclaiming the excellencies of the One Who called them into His light. Their service grows from the mercy and identity they have received.

Isaiah 61:1-9; 1 Peter 2:4-10.

5. The Spirit equips the Messiah and accomplishes God's work

Isaiah describes the Spirit resting on the Davidic shoot. Zechariah joins priestly cleansing, the Branch, and the stone with seven eyes. These passages complement the lamps, eyes, and Spirit study in section 8 below.

Isaiah 11:1-3; Zechariah 3:1-10; Revelation 3:1.

6. The Lord governs history from beginning to end

Isaiah's first-and-last declarations concern the LORD's unique deity, His rule over history, His ability to declare what will happen, and His faithfulness to His people. Revelation's Alpha-and-Omega declaration belongs within this biblical account.

Isaiah 41:4; Isaiah 44:6-8; Isaiah 48:12-16.

7. The cloud-coming and the man who was pierced

Daniel's interpretation connects judgment on the oppressive power with the saints receiving the kingdom. Isaiah presents the LORD coming on a cloud against Egypt in historical judgment. John's Gospel identifies Jesus as the man who was pierced through the event at the cross. These passages develop the identities and actions in Revelation 1:7.

Daniel 7:15-28; Isaiah 19:1-4; John 19:31-37.

8. The greeting comes from the Father, the Spirit, and Jesus Christ

Exodus 3 places God's self-identification within Israel's deliverance. Revelation's description of the One Who is, was, and is coming joins His enduring identity with His approaching action.

Exodus 3:13-15.

Revelation identifies the seven lamps and the Lamb's seven eyes with the seven spirits. Zechariah connects the eyes ranging through the earth with God's declaration that His work is accomplished by His Spirit. Together these passages explain the Spirit's fullness and activity in the greeting.

Revelation 4:5; Revelation 5:6; Zechariah 4:1-10.

9. The Davidic promise explains Jesus' royal titles

Psalms 89 joins God's choice of David, anointing, victory over enemies, sonship, firstborn status, and supremacy over earthly kings. Revelation applies firstborn and ruler together to the risen Jesus. The royal promise reaches its fulfillment in the Son of David.

Psalms 89:19-29.

10. The mourning families and the Jerusalem judgment

Zechariah locates the mourning among the families of the land and surrounds it with grace, supplication, and cleansing. Matthew brings together the mourning, cloud-coming, and the nearness of the announced events. These passages supply the fuller context for Revelation 1:7 and its use of "all the tribes of the earth."

Zechariah 12:10-14; Zechariah 13:1; Matthew 24:29-35.