

In this lesson John the Seer addresses seven representative churches in Asia Minor with a hymn of praise to Christ, the first born from the dead and now ruler of all. The resurrected Jesus frees disciples from their sins and makes them a kingdom of priests serving his God and Father, the One who is and was and is to come. Hear now these words from the book of Revelation.

John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia:

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father - to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

“Look, he is coming with the clouds,”
and “every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him”;
and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.”

So shall it be! Amen.

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Our Gospel presents two appearances of the risen Lord to his disciples. The first takes place on the very evening of the day of his resurrection. The disciples are gathered in fear, but Jesus brings them peace, gives them their mission, and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. A week later, Thomas, who had been absent when Jesus first appeared and who doubted his resurrection, now knows Jesus by his wounds and worships him as his Lord and God. Future disciples will not have Jesus' physical presence, but they will be blessed in their belief. Hear now these words from the gospel of John.

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

This is the word of the Lord. **May the reading and the hearing of your work inform our mind, comfort our souls and guide our feet.**