

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #109

1/21/09

“The Lord's Final Words: Part 6”

Revelation 22:13

Revelation 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

“Alpha and Omega,” the exclusive supreme sovereign over all things

At the very first of His self-revelation to John (1:8,11) Jesus had identified Himself as the **“Alpha and Omega.”** Here, once again, as He presents His last words to man, He uses the same rich analogy as a way to emphasize some of His basic attributes and to comfort and reassure the recipients that, as **“the blessed and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords”** (1 Timothy 6:15), He is in charge and in control of all the events unfolding.

In the introduction of His self-revelation, as presented in Chapter One, Jesus used these same words to focus the readers' attention upon the fact that He is (1) **“Beginning and the ending,”** and (2) **“The first and the last.”** Elaborating upon this underlying truth, He further explained to John what this meant and to let him know that, with the impending unfolding of events, both wonderful and awful, John and the recipients had no need to fear: **“I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely”** (1:17-18). At that point, Jesus' self-description was surely to bring comfort and assurance to the believers *before* He began His description of the both wonderful and awfully fearful events which He will bring about on this earth. His use of these same descriptive terms here in His farewell message surely has the same purpose; however, now it is at the conclusion of all things relating to this earth and just following His reminder that He is **“coming quickly”** to move all things from time into eternity, a dimension of being that, aside from the brief description given by our Lord, is unknown to man.

This temporal — material — spatial world is the only thing man has known. No man, other than the God-Man, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, has any real personal knowledge of anything except that which is a part of this world. Certainly no man has any real, personal, first-hand knowledge of those things which are a part of eternity. However, our Lord, **“the Alpha and Omega,”** is there and He has full and complete knowledge of all things in eternity. He is sovereign over all that is there even as He is in total control over all events here in this world. He is there as Sovereign. To reassure ourselves of His sovereignty over all things, let us, for a moment, review some of what is embodied in His identification as **“the Alpha and the Omega,”** as He uses the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet.

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JESUS IS CREATOR AND CONTROLLER OF ALL THINGS.

John 1:3 tells us *“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”* Colossians 1:16-17 further elaborates upon this. Everything, specifically including things not a part of this material — temporal world, are included in an all-inclusive group of things which are created by our Lord: *“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”*

Pay attention to the specifics listed in the above verse. We are told that, not only is He the **Creator**, but that He is the **Controller**, the one Who holds everything together in its functional place as well as determining its purpose for being. Nothing, whether it is here in this world, or in the invisible spirit world, is even allowed to exist that is not from His hand and under His control. Nothing! No exceptions! Romans 11:36 sums it all up in an even briefer statement: *“For OF him, and THROUGH him, and TO him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.”*

He was before time. He has been in time. He is after time (Romans 11:36). The Jesus we know in time is the same Jesus we will know in eternity, after time. What we know about life after time is dependent upon what He reveals to us about that future dimension into which we shall all enter. Therefore, as well as being **Creator**, and **Controller**, we also look to Him as:

REVELATOR

He is the One, the only One, Who can tell us about life beyond this temporal — material — spatial dimension of existence. He explains all that we need to know to function successfully in this life as well as all we need to know and can comprehend concerning life in eternity. This is true even while we have many questions about things in eternity which He does not seem to answer. Such does not indicate that He does not know, but, for some reason, has not chosen to give us that information.

It may be that no words or concepts exist in man's mind or language that relate to things of eternity, that we of this earthly dimension simply do not have the ability to grasp facts and truths related to eternity. It may also be true that we, as a general rule, have not accepted and acted upon what He has revealed. Sometimes it seems that both of these reasons may be affecting our lack of understanding. However, our willingness to recognize, accept

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and live submissively under His sovereignty as **Creator** enables us to also recognize and function under Him as **Controller** of this world and all things pertaining to it. This in turn enables us to better accept and comprehend, within our limitations, what He tells us about eternity. In order for this to be true for us it is imperative that we recognize and submit to Him as **Revelator**, the revealer of truth in all instances and in all matters.

For instance, as Controller, He exercises His control over His creation by two means: **1) Structured functioning laws**, which man often calls “**laws of nature**,” which appear to function without His particular direction under His sovereignty and **2) Direct intervention** when and where He desires to insert Himself into the activities of this world and supercede the “laws of nature” according to His supernatural authority.

First, consider His actions as Controller in regard to “laws of nature.” When He created this world, and all that is within it, He created it so that the individual parts of it were mature. He did this in such an organized, structured way that man can, by scientific observations, learn about their structures and functions. Adam was a mature man and the trees and other objects in the Garden of Eden were not developed from seeds, but were created as mature. As far as we know from His revelation to us, all of the other animals and plants were likewise mature when He put them into the Garden, but He did create most of them so that there could be continuity and reproduction of “*like kinds*.” Inanimate objects, such as the various planets in our universe being discovered today, were also surely placed there by the Creator so that man could later discover them. That man today, by scientific observation, can study the functioning of these planets and consistently draw dependable conclusions from his observations, and make predictions about their future activity, is strong evidence to the reliability of the **Creator's** organization of His universe. The manner in which the **Creator** has so intricately structured even the tiniest parts of nature and set it to functioning in such a reliably consistent way makes it possible for man to observe the functioning of “**nature**” and project with confidence what it will do in the future. Because the Lord is in control makes it possible for scientists to accurately calculate the movements and positions of planets far out into the universe and launch rocket ships that land on their target. Many, many other examples could be given in regard to the truth of what He has told us in such places as Colossians 1:17 that “*by him all things consist*,” that is, are ordered and controlled in their functioning. These “laws of nature” seem to operate without His intervention, but, since He created these laws as the **Controller** and is not subject unto them, He can interrupt them whenever He so chooses.

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Lesson #109

1/21/09

“The Lord's Final Words: Part 6”

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He has made *“the sun stand still”* (Joshua 10:13; Hebrews 3:11), a star to appear over Bethlehem and by-passed the normal laws of reproduction and growth to provide sufficient fish to feed more than 5,000 (John 6:1-13).

Not only is He **Controller** over what we observe in this world, but He is also **“Alpha and Omega,” Controller** over what is yonder in the world of eternity. It's as if He says; *“You've seen what I can do here in this life. Trust me because I'm also the Controller over eternity.”*

In another area, men struggle with the presence of evil in our world, asking questions about how and why such could exist if our Lord is the Creator, Originator and Controller of all things. While a satisfactory understanding is difficult to acquire, man could comprehend more than he usually does if he would accept our Lord's Words to be from Him, factually and literally true in all respects, and to be reliably sufficient information upon which man can choose to act in faith and obedience.

To have a being who could willingly respond to Him in love, gratitude, and service, faithfully fulfilling his assignment as a steward-manager of His creation, our Lord created man with a will and the ability to make decisions. Apart from that ability, man could not choose to fellowship with his **Creator** or to faithfully serve as His steward-manager (1 Corinthians 4:1-2). By placing the *“tree of the knowledge of good and evil”* (Genesis 2:17) in the Garden of Eden and allowing man to choose whether he would obey or disobey his **Creator**, the **Creator** made man's will a very powerful facet of his being. A simple reading of the passage also tells us, that at that same instance, God also instituted **“the law of cause and effect.”** **Man was enabled to exercise his will, but the Lord determined “the effects” of whatever man chose.** *If a man chose obedience*, he would reap the predetermined result of joy, peace, fulfillment and fellowship with his **Creator**. *If man chose to disobey* His **Creator** and rebel against Him, the Lord predetermined that the results would include separation from His **Creator**, chaos, pain, war, and atrophy. Such a choice, which was the one Adam made, allowed Satan to make him a slave and reproduce his nature in him. Such a choice determined that man would increasingly become separated from His **Creator**, and reaping the final and absolute fruit of that separation, which is eternal separation from his **Creator** as he is cast into the *“lake of fire burning with brimstone,” “a place prepared for the devil and his angels”* (Matthew 25:41).

However, even as the Creator, at times overrules His **“laws of nature”** in order to accomplish His will, He also has instituted a new law intended to interrupt the **“law of cause and effect”** by which man destines himself to eternal separation from his **Creator** by providing another law, to give sinful

Revelation
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Lesson #109

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man an opportunity to recover from the effects of his disobedience. It is the only way that man can recover from his disobedience, his rebellion against his **Creator** and his separation from God. It is called the plan of redemption and is explained in Romans 8:1-3: *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”* **This new law is only possible because Jesus is the Creator and Controller of all of this universe**, including the sinners who inhabit it. Because of this He not only loves the sinner, but has instituted this plan of recovery and redemption to give each sinner an opportunity to submit to Him and His work and establish fellowship with Him.

As **“Alpha and Omega,”** He is more than **Creator** and **Controller**, He is also **Revelator**. He reveals not only the truth about this world to us, but He also reveals the truth about eternity to us. Those who are willing to accept Him as the Revelator of truth about this world have an easier time accepting the truth He gives to us about eternity. Those who accept the truth He reveals to us learn that it is only by faith that they can “please Him” (Hebrews 11:1), that such is only made possible by His grace (Ephesians 2:8-9) which enables them to have restored fellowship with Him.

Those who accept Him as **Creator, Controller** and **Revelator** will know that this restored relationship with the **Creator**, is evidenced outwardly by the restored ones choosing to submit to His sovereignty over them and obey what He tells them to do.

The **“Omega”** portion of His name indicates that, in addition to being **Creator, Controller and Revelator**, our Lord is also the **Terminator**. He brings everything to a “terminus,” a point of conclusion, after which it no longer exists. As one part of the termination, He requires an accounting from each thing in His creation to which He has given a will, enabling that one to choose his own destiny which continues after the termination of this universe. The next verses describe some aspects by which He terminates this universe and determines how individuals enter eternity.