

Alpha & Omega

Introduction:

One might dream of retiring early on some Mediterranean island, soaking up the sun, fishing for your dinner, and writing letters to loved ones back home—but not when you're forced into early retirement. A new law has outlawed Christianity, and the seven churches John pastored have been caught in the crossfire. John himself had been exiled to Patmos, a small rock off the coast of Turkey. There, God revealed Himself to John as “the Alpha and the Omega”—the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet. God *was* there before the beginning, God *is* with us now, and God *will be* there beyond the end of days.

John wrote down this revelation as a letter to his seven churches. The genre of this letter is “apocalyptic”—from which we get our word “apocalypse.” Many people today equate this word with world-ending catastrophe, but the word “apocalypse” actually means “revealing” or “unveiling.” Throughout Revelation, God pulls back the veil to give John a heavenly perspective of reality. As you read Revelation, imagine what it would be like to see what John sees and hear what John hears.

Read Your Bible

- Revelation 1
- John 1:1-5

Apply God's Word to Your Life:

1. After reading chapter one, what are your first impressions of the book of Revelation?
2. According to Revelation 1:1-2 and 1:4-5, *from* whom is Revelation?
3. Where do you see the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) in Revelation 1?
4. *To* whom is Revelation?
5. What promises for us do you see in Revelation 1?
6. Compare the seven spirits of Revelation 1:4 with the seven spirits of Isaiah 11:2. What might be the connection between these verses?
7. What does it mean that God is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last?

Reflecting on the text:

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

Pray

Gracious God, Alpha and Omega, You have always been with me. You were there before my first breath, and You will be there after my last breath. Give me the recognition to see You hand at work in my life, from my earliest memories to my final moments of this life. Give me gratitude always for You. In the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.