



Rev 1:9-18
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**Deadhead: the Suffering, Sovereignty
& Spin-outs of Jesus**

Jun 20, AD2021
NCCC

1. Intro: 'Deadhead' defn; familiarity breeds contempt (*or intimacy!*); discomfort with actual Jesus v 'Jesus/es' we've made; (see *'The Jesus I Never Knew'* by Philip Yancey)
2. V9 'John, your brother and companion'
 - a. 'servant of the Lord' (1Ch 6:49, 2Ch 24:9, Neh 10:29, Dan 9:11)
 - b. Uncommon humility; and see 1 Pet 5:1-11
 - c. Servant leadership in our day (see *'Spiritual Leadership'* by J.Oswald Sanders; *'Lead Like Jesus'* by Ken Blanchard)
3. 'suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Christ Jesus' (themes of Revelation, and life in Christ, whether we like it or not.)
 - a. The redemptive, sanctifying and typical role of suffering in the life of the Jesus-follower (Jn 16:33, Rom 5:2b-5, Jas 1:2-4, Rom 8:17, 2Tim 2:12)
 - b. Endurance is "the spiritual alchemy which transmutes suffering into royal dignity" (*'The Revelation of St John'* by RH Charles)
 - c. "If you're not living on the edge, you're taking up too much room!"
 - d. 'Taking up our cross daily' (Lk 9:23-26)
4. 'island of Patmos' (now part of Greece, in the Aegean sea, just South of modern-day Turkey)
 - a. Historical context – persecution under Roman emperor Domitian (AD81-95); life of the early church
 - b. Personal anguish for John the 'apostle of love' (Jn 13:23-5, 19:26-7, 20:1-10, 21:20-23), now exiled because of his revolutionary 'testimony' (lit. as 'witness' or 'martyr')
5. V10 'in the Spirit' – literal or figurative (or both?), and either way, beyond words.
 - a. Schools of interpretation: preterist, futurist, historicist, idealist.
 - b. Essential purpose of eschatological / apocalyptic Scripture – "We can take heart as we understand John's vision of hope: Christ will return to rescue His people and settle accounts with all who defy Him" (*'Revelation'* by M. Robert Mulholland Jnr; also see *'And the Lamb Wins: Why the End of the World is Really Good News'* by Simon Ponsonby)
 - c. How 'real' were the visions in Revelation? (A: depends what you mean?!)
6. V11 'send it to the seven churches' (by whom? On a preaching tour – geographic route)
 - a. Cyclical letter, pastoral motivation, real needs.
 - b. IE the Bible is transcendent and practical, at the same time.
7. V12 'seven golden lampstands' (V20 "the seven lampstands are the seven churches")
 - a. Giving light to the world; symbol of perfection; (menorah?)
 - b. Jn 1:5 – 'the light shines in the darkness...'

8. V13 'son of man' (see Dan 7:13-14, "His dominion is an everlasting dominion..."; and Jn 1:51, 3:14, 5:27, 6:27, 9:39); who is both the Lion *and* the Lamb! (Rev 5:5-6)
 - a. 'robe reaching down to his feet with a golden sash' (priest see Ex 28:4)
 - b. V14 'hair...white like wool' – wisdom and divine nature (see Dan 7:9 same imagery for 'the Ancient of Days'; Jesus on Mt of transfiguration Matt 17:2)
 - c. 'eyes...like blazing fire' – He who sees right through us with righteousness and judgement (Dan 10:6 and 1 Cor 3:12-14); He's the only One who can always say "I know..." (Rev 2:2, 9, 13, 19, 3:1, 8,15). Ok, er, yikes!
 - d. V15 'feet...like bronze glowing' – impending judgement against all evil and injustice that He will smash underfoot (see 1 Cor 15:25)
 - e. 'voice...like rushing waters' (Ps 29:1-4; Ez 43:2); awe-inspiring / terrifying.
 - f. V16 'His right hand held 7 stars' (V20 'angels of the seven churches' – literally)
 - g. 'out of his mouth was a sharp, double edged sword' (Heb 4:12-13)
 - h. 'face...like the sun' (Dan 12:3)
9. V17 'I fell at His feet as though dead' (not unusual: Is 6:5, Ez 1:28, Dan 7:28)
10. 'Do not be afraid' (Ps 27:1)
 - a. Yeah right! (But then, 'perfect love drives out fear' 1Jn 4:18; and see 2Tim 1:7)
11. 'I am the First and the Last' (V8 'Alpha and Omega', and see Is 46:9-10)
12. V18 'I was dead, and now look, alive for ever and ever!' (1 Cor 15 – the power of the resurrection!); Jesus died "once for all" (Heb 10); cf the dead gods of paganism.
13. 'I hold the keys of death and Hades' (which will themselves be destroyed Rev 20:11-15) – *ergo* Jesus is the only one who can free us from bondage to satan and death. (1Jn 4:1-6)

FOR THE BRAVE OF HEART

- Is it good marketing that the Bible promises suffering? (Why do we hide it then?)
- 'If Jesus is Lord AT all, He's Lord OF all.' With a friend discuss the sovereignty of Jesus, and whether it makes you mad, sad or glad. Don't lie as it'll come out, eventually.
- Are you jazzed, or uncomfy, with a Jesus who confounds your expectations? When was the last time that happened to you?
- How are you going to live differently this week in light of who Jesus is? (Tell a mate so they can hold you accountable, otherwise it likely won't amount to much right?! =)