

Revelation 1:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

Analysis

The Trinitarian greeting reflects the eternal, unchanging nature of God. 'Which is, and which was, and which is to come' echoes Exodus 3:14 ('I AM'), affirming God's self-existence and sovereignty over all time. The 'seven Spirits' likely represents the Holy Spirit in His fullness (Isaiah 11:2 lists seven aspects), with seven symbolizing completeness. This Trinitarian structure—Father, Spirit, Son (v. 5)—grounds the church's peace in the eternal counsel of the Godhead, not temporal circumstances. Grace and peace flow from divine sovereignty, a cornerstone of Reformed soteriology.

Historical Context

The seven churches in Asia Minor (modern Turkey) represented actual congregations facing real persecution. The explicit Trinitarian greeting countered both Jewish rejection of Christ's divinity and Roman emperor worship. By invoking the eternal God, John challenged Caesar's temporal claims to deity.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God's eternal existence ('which is, and which was, and which is to come') provide stability in your changing circumstances?
2. What comfort does the Trinitarian source of grace and peace offer when facing spiritual opposition?

Interlinear Text

Ἰωάννης	τοῦ	έπτα	ἐκκλησίαις	τοῦ	ἐν	τοῦ		
John	him which	the seven	churches	him which	are in	him which		
G2491	G3588	G2033	G1577	G3588	G1722	G3588		
Ἀσία·	χάρις	ὑμῖν	καὶ	εἰρήνη	ἀπὸ	τοῦ	τοῦ	
Asia	Grace	be unto you	and	peace	from	him which	him which	
G773	G5485	G5213	G2532	G1515	G575	G3588	G3588	
ὧν	καὶ	τοῦ	ἥν	καὶ	τοῦ	ἐρχόμενος	καὶ	ἀπὸ
G5607	and	him which	is	and	him which	to come	and	from
G2532	G3588	G2258	G2532	G3588	G2064	G2532	G575	
τοῦ	έπτα	πνευμάτων	ἃ	ἐστιν	ἐνώπιον	τοῦ		
him which	the seven	Spirits	which	are	before	him which		
G3588	G2033	G4151	G3739	G2076	G1799	G3588		
θρόνου	αὐτοῦ							
throne	his							
G2362	G846							

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 11:2 (Spirit): And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

Psalms 90:2 (Parallel theme): Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

John 1:1 (Parallel theme): In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Hebrews 13:8 (Parallel theme): Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Revelation 4:5 (Spirit): And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Revelation 5:6 (Spirit): And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Revelation 1:8 (Parallel theme): I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Revelation 3:1 (Spirit): And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

James 1:17 (Parallel theme): Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Zechariah 4:10 (Parallel theme): For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.