

Introduction

Some claim that the words Alpha and Omega found in Revelation 1:8, 21:6 and 22:13 means that Christ is without beginning or end, but it does not say that. It says that Christ is the beginning and the end of something. Not only that, but a *beginning* is the origin of something and an *end* is the



termination of something. Since when does “always” have a beginning and what good is eternal life if it has an end?

Many Christians have the wrong concept of the word beginning in Scripture. Remember that God had no beginning and has always existed. The “Alpha” is the “first” letter of the Greek Alphabet and hence is the “beginning” of the Alphabet, and “Omega” is the “last” letter of the Greek Alphabet and hence is the “end” of the Alphabet.

So these terms are simply referring to the beginning and to the end of something, but what? Let's not read into anything or make assumptions but just look at what Scripture does say and what the use of these words meant to the Jews.

What does the Alpha and Omega Mean and Who is the Alpha and Omega?

Note that every single verse with a reference to the Alpha and Omega without fail follows a reference to the second coming of Christ and the “end” of this world. This is not a coincidence. Christ created this world and brought about its beginning, and He will be there in its end at His second coming and will bring about its destruction. Thus Christ is the *Alpha and Omega*, the *beginning and the end*, the *first and the last* as He states in Revelation 22:13. All three phrases mean the same thing. In [Revelation 1:17-18](#) we find, “I am **the first and the last**; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.” Who is the Alpha and Omega (*the first and the last*) that was dead and is alive for evermore? It is Christ.

[Revelation 1:7-8](#) “Behold, **he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him**, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. **8 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 21:1-6](#) “And **I saw a new heaven and a new earth**: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. ... **6 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. **7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.**”

[Revelation 22:12-14](#) “And, **behold, I come quickly**; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. **13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last**. **14 Blessed are they that do his**

commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. 15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”

Note also that the last two passages while speaking of the end immediately reveal that those who keep the Commandments get to eat of the tree of life, and that the sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters and liars perish. Note how Revelation 21:7 references Revelation 2:7 below, which in turn references Revelation 22:14 in regards to those who get to eat from the tree of life, which are those who keep the Commandments of God.

Revelation 2:7 “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

So we find a reference to the end of this world and the second coming of Christ *before* the words in question while directly *after* these words are two more things that happen directly after the end. That is too much evidence to be coincidental. And since we are at the end of the Bible and dealing with the end, then that is why these verses only refer to the “end.” So if the “end” is referring to the end of this world than the “beginning” obviously refers to the beginning of this world, which we find in the beginning of the Bible such as Genesis 1:1 and references to the first chapter of Genesis. So everything we have seen so far reveals that these verses are referring to the second coming of Christ and the end of this world where the faithful who kept the Commandments of God get to eat from the tree of life while others perish.

Note Clarke's Commentary on Revelation 1:8 and how these words were used and understood by the Jews. Did they see these words to mean that Christ has always existed and is God? This of course would also contradict Proverbs 8 that says Christ was brought forth and so would not be possible anyway.

Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible. Adam Clarke, LL.D., F.S.A., (1715-1832)

“This mode of speech is borrowed from the Jews, who express the whole compass of things by א aleph and ט tau, the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet; but as St. John was writing in Greek, he accommodates the whole to the Greek alphabet, of which Α alpha and Ω omega are the first and last letters. With the rabbins ט ועד א meeleph vead tau, “from aleph to tau,” expressed the whole of a matter, from the beginning to the end. So in Yalcut Rubeni, fol. 17, 4: Adam transgressed the whole law from aleph to tau; i.e., from the beginning to the end.

Ibid., fol. 48, 4: Abraham observed the law, from aleph to tau; i.e., he kept it entirely, from beginning to end.

Ibid., fol. 128, 3: When the holy blessed God pronounced a blessing on the Israelites, he did it from aleph to tau; i.e., he did it perfectly.”

So as the Jews understood on the meaning of these words, from the *beginning* and *first* book of the Bible to the *end* and *last* book of the Bible, Jesus encompasses all things. Thus the Jews who actually knew the meaning of these words disagree with the claim made by Trinitarians. The beginning and the end referred to in these passages is the beginning of this created world, while the end is the second coming of Christ and the end of this world, when a New Heaven and Earth are created. Christ brought about the beginning of this world and He also brings about its end. Barnes Commentary on Revelation 22:13 also confirms what Scripture reveals in this respect.

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible. Albert Barnes (1798-1870)

“The idea here is, that he will thus show that he is the first and the last - the beginning and the end. He originated the whole plan of salvation, and he will determine its close; he formed the world, and he will wind up its affairs.”

For Adventists: *“Christ says, “I am the true witness. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” — (E.G. White, 1SAT, 231.3)*

“even from Genesis to Revelation. Christ is the Alpha, the first link, and the Omega, the last link, of the gospel chain, which is welded in Revelation.” — (E.G. White, 10MR 171.1)

“He is the Author and Finisher of our faith, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” — (E.G. White, 1888, 783.2)

“And so the statement that He is the beginning or head of the creation of God means that in Him creation had its beginning; that, as He Himself says, He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Rev. 21:6; 22:13. He is the source whence all things have their origin.” — (E.J. Waggoner, CAHR, p. 20, 1890)

The author of Hebrews illustrates another way that Jesus is the Alpha and Omega. *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.” Hebrews 12:2.* Barnes Commentary relates this to the Alpha and Omega also.

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible. Albert Barnes (1798-1870)

“The author and finisher of our faith - The word “our” is not in the original here, and obscures the sense. The meaning is, he is the first and the last as an example of faith ... The word “author” - ἀρχηγόν archēgon - (marg. beginner) - means properly the source, or cause of anything; or one who makes a beginning. ... The phrase “the beginner of faith,” or the leader on of faith, would express the idea. He is at the head of all those who have furnished an example of confidence in God, for he was himself the most illustrious instance of it. ... The word “finisher” - τελειωτήν teleiōtēn - corresponds in meaning with the word “author.” It means that he is the completer as well as the beginner; the last as well as the first. ... “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last.” The word does not mean that he was the “finisher” of faith in the sense that he makes our faith complete or perfects it - whatever may be true about that - but that he occupies this elevated

position of being beyond comparison above all others. Alike in the commencement and the close, in the beginning of faith, and in its ending, he stands pre-eminent.”

Considering these verses in Revelation that state the beginning and the end are referring to the creating and beginning of this world, consider now Genesis 1:1, John 1:1-3 and Hebrews 1:10.

Genesis 1:1 “**In the beginning** God created the heavens and the earth.” [The Beginning]

Compare with:

Revelation 21:1 “I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for **the first heaven and the first earth were passed away;**” [The End]

John 1:1-3 **In the beginning** was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He [Jesus] was with God in the beginning. 3 **Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.**”

Hebrews 1:10 “And, You, Lord, **in the beginning** have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:”

So these verses do not reveal Christ to be without beginning but that He pre-existed before all things were created in the beginning of this world. The use of the word beginning in this respect is consistent throughout Scripture.

Why do some think the Alpha and the Omega is Christ and others think it is the Lord God almighty?

The confusion originates from Revelation 1:8 that even has theologians disagreeing with each other as they have missed something so simple. Please allow me to explain. Note that the three phrases “the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last” in Revelation 22:13 all mean the same thing. And so from Revelation 1:17-18 we know that the “first and the last” (Alpha and Omega) is Christ. “I am **the first and the last;** I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.”

For Adventists: Ellen White is also clear, “Christ says, “I am the true witness. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” — (E.G. White, 1SAT, 231.3)

Hence the phrase “I am Alpha and Omega” at the beginning of Revelation 1:8 refers to Christ, but the remainder of this verse refers to the Father. How do we know?

To begin with, Revelation 1:4-5 has the following salutation. “Grace and peace to you **from him who is, and who was, and who is to come** ... and from Jesus Christ.” So this salutation is from the Father (which is, and which was, and which is to come) and His Son (and from Jesus Christ.). So we know that the latter part of Revelation 1:8 which says “saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty” is referring to the Father while the phrase “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” is referring to Christ. This is where many get confused as they so easily read this verse incorrectly. They either apply the entire verse to the Lord God almighty or they apply it entirely to Christ.

Not that it really makes much difference to the meaning of this verse and what I am explaining, but those who do their research will find that the NIV for once actually has the most accurate rendering of this verse. We find the phrase “the beginning and the ending” was added in the KJV (which is not incorrect) and the word “God” was left out which would have made this verse a little clearer but it should still be obvious to any good Bible student.

Adam Clarke's Commentary in regards to the phrase “the beginning and the ending” says “This clause is wanting [missing] in almost every MS. and version of importance. It appears to have been added first as an explanatory note, and in process of time crept into the text. Griesbach has left it out of the text.” And in regards to the phrase “saith the Lord,” Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown Commentary says, “The oldest manuscripts read “the Lord God.” And Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible says, “Or, saith God, according to what is now regarded as the correct reading.”

Compare the KJV and the NIV.

Revelation 1:8 KJV “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 1:8 NIV “I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Comparing the following verses also reveals that the “**Lord God, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty**” refers to the Father beyond any doubt.

Revelation 1:4-5 “Grace be unto you, and peace, from **him which is, and which was, and which is to come [Father];** ... and from Jesus Christ **[Son],**”

Revelation 4:8 “Holy, holy, holy, **Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.**”

Revelation 11:17 “We give you thanks, O **Lord God Almighty, which are, and were, and are to come,**”

The expression “*which is*,” “*which was*,” “*which is to come*” indicates that the last clause (which is to come) is a substitute for the future tense of the verb and is the same as saying “*which will be*” which would have been less misunderstood. Because Some have assumed that this clause refers to the second coming of Christ. But it does not fit the context or the meaning of this phrase. This reference to the Father refers to His eternal nature and is saying that the same One who now continually exists has always existed and will always exist. The Twentieth Century New Testament more accurately reads, “*the Lord, the God who is, and who was, and who shall be,*” [Revelation 1:8](#)

Now verse 8 can be read one of two ways and most are inclined to read it the wrong way which creates a contradiction of Scripture. This is why people either apply the entire verse to the Lord God almighty or they apply it entirely to Christ. When you read it with the correct understanding there is no contradiction of Scripture anymore. Revelation 1:8 is just one of those verses that lost its clear meaning when it was translated from Greek to English. Please allow me to paraphrase this verse and you should then be able to see how it is supposed to be read and understood.

Note that Jesus is actually speaking the entire verse and He is saying, “*I am the Alpha and Omega,*” and my Father who is the Lord God, *which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty declares this.*”

With this correct understanding you should now be able to read Revelation 1:8 without seeing any apparent contradiction.

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Passage Verse

• **1 Corinthians 8:6** “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”

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• **1 John 2:22** “Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”

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