

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THREE NAMES OF GOD THE FATHER IN REVELATION 1:8

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

### NOTES ON VERSE 8

- this verse is spoken by God the Father.
- there are only two places in the Apocalypse where God the Father speaks—near the beginning and end of the Book (1:8; 21:5–8).
- God mentions three names or titles He is known by: “the Alpha and the Omega,” the One “who is and who was and who is to come,” and “the Almighty”.
- the meaning of “the Alpha and the Omega” (the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet) is interpreted near the end of the Book: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end” (21:6). We must ask, “The beginning and end of *what*?” It cannot refer to the existence of God: He is eternal and has no beginning or end. And it cannot refer to the new heavens and new earth: they have a beginning but no end (Rev. 22:5). Earth history, however, does have a beginning and an end. So I believe this title emphasizes the fact that God the Father is the beginning and end of linear time and all created things in this present heavens and earth. All the letters between *alpha* and *omega* (*beta* to *psi*) are sequential and must refer to the rest of earth history from creation (Gen. 1:1) to its destruction (2 Peter 3:7, 10–11).
- “who is and who was and who is to come” is a Greek paraphrase of the Hebrew personal name YAHWEH—“I AM” or “I AM WHO I AM” (Exod. 3:13–15). The emphasis of this name is circular time and independent existence—the eternity and transcendence of God the Father.
- “the Almighty (*Pantokrator*)” means “the All Powerful One” or “the Ruler of All Things.” This title emphasizes the omnipotence and sovereignty of God the Father. He is powerful enough to create, to destroy everything He creates, and to rule over every created thing from the creation of this present heavens and earth (Gen. 1:1) to the destruction of this present heavens and earth (2 Peter 3:7, 10–11). Anything God creates He owns by right of creation; and anything He owns He has the right to rule over.
- the attributes of God the Father that are implied by His names in verse 8—the Creator of linear time, earth history (including prophecy), and all created things, Who is Himself eternal and transcendent above all His creation, and has unlimited power to rule over all He creates—guarantees the fulfillment of the promises and prophecies of the Book of Revelation that were passed from the Father, to Jesus, to an angel, to the apostle John, and finally to us (1:1). In other words, this revelation comes from the Father (1:1) and the Father guarantees “the things which must shortly take place” (1:1) will take place (1:8). No higher authority can be appealed to.

### INVERTED PARALLELISM OF VERSE 8

**A** the Alpha and the Omega (τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὰ)

LINEAR TIME AND CREATION

**B** who is and who was and who is to come (ἡγῆ, YAHWEH)

CIRCULAR TIME AND ETERNITY OF GOD

**A'** the Almighty (ὁ παντοκράτωρ)

LINEAR TIME AND RULE OVER CREATION

C  
R  
E  
A  
T  
I  
O  
N

Point of Turning

R  
U  
L  
E

- in the *center* is the most important name—the personal name of God that emphasizes his eternity and transcendence. “This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations” (Exod. 3:15).
- the *point of turning* moves from creation (A) and the eternity and transcendence of God (B) to the infinite power of God to rule over his creation (A’).