

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

REVELATION 1:1-20

Let me begin this morning with an observation: **The New Testament ends with a revelation, whereas the Old Testament concludes with a nightmare...**

Zedekiah was the last king of the nation Judah. 2 Kings 25 tells his story. He sinned against God and angered the enemy God raised up against him. The Babylonian army became God's tool of judgment.

When the invaders breached the walls of Jerusalem, Zedekiah escaped, but He didn't get far. The king was captured near Jericho and chained in bronze fetters.

The king's captors wanted to humiliate their defeated foe, so in Zedekiah's presence, the Babylonians executed his sons. And with that horrific scene indelibly stamped in his mind, they took a hot poker and plucked out Zedekiah's eyes. So that the last lingering image carved into the Jewish king's psyche - *the last sight he saw* - was the bloody slaughter of his own boys. This is the kind of trauma from which you never recover!

Now think of the Apostle John. He's an old man doing hard time on a rock island. As the last living disciple, he's the only person left eligible to add to the sacred Scripture. Thus, before he closes his eyes for the last time, God communicates to him **a revelation**.

And it moves John - emotionally and physically. He writes what he sees and then sends it to the churches. God intends

for his *Revelation* to be the last lingering image burned into the collective psyche of His Church.

King Zedekiah never shook his nightmare, and God wants the Church to never take its eyes off John's Revelation. Its purpose is to shape our souls forever.

The Greek word translated "*revelation*" is the term "*apocalypse*." In our culture, it's become synonymous with *cataclysm, destruction, impending doom*. But to the Greeks, it meant simply "*an unveiling or an uncovering*."

Imagine walking into an Art Gallery and a sculpture by a famous artist lies under a canvas. At the appropriate moment, the curator rips off the fabric revealing the beauty and genius of the sculptor's work.

This is "*The Revelation...*" Jesus Christ is alive and well, but we don't see His excellence for He's hidden behind a heavy canvass that separates the spiritual realm from the tangible world. Yet in "*Revelation*", John rips away the veil. He reveals Jesus in all His splendor!

I like how Paul Mellow translates the opening words of verse 1, "*The Official Portrait of Jesus Christ...*"

When a US president leaves office, an official oil painting is commissioned. The tradition began in 1796. Several artists tried to paint George Washington, but it was Gilbert Stuart who painted the classic portrait...

And when it comes to Jesus' *Official Portrait*, God got it right the first try as He called on John to be the artist.

Before we're done, John will paint a whole array of provocative details... We'll talk about *falling stars, and beasts, and hailstones, and plagues, and marks, and the whore of Babylon* - **and we can get sidetracked!**

It's important to remember the theme of this book.

It's "*the Revelation of Jesus Christ.*" This book is not about *Antichrist*, but *Jesus Christ*. One author says, "The theme of the book isn't 6-6-6, it's "holy, holy, holy!"

The point of Revelation is not just the *unleashing of judgment* it's the *unveiling of Jesus!* This is what God wants to be permanently burned into our perspective.

John writes of "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants - things which must shortly take place." In other words, "here's what's next... here's what's coming up on God's agenda..."

Understand what John had already seen. He was Jesus' cousin - Mary's nephew. Jesus and John grew up together. John was there when Jesus began His ministry. He saw Him walk on water, multiply lunch, heal a blind man, supernaturally locate a school of fish.

John writes in another place, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life..."

John witnessed **the first revelation** of Jesus. The eternal Son of God - *as God* and *with God* before time began - took on flesh and blood. Jesus revealed the Almighty's humble side. He came to serve and save.

And John **was there** when the Roman executioners nailed Jesus to a piece of wood... He **was there** three days later when news came that the grave was empty.

For forty days, John **was there** and spent time with the risen Christ... And John **was there** on the Mount of Olives when Jesus, the victorious Lord, ascended to heaven and to glory. Yes, John **was there** for it all!

And John did exactly what he was told. He and his fellow disciples went into all the world to tell people what they'd seen and heard and touched and handled.

But now John is alone. The other disciples are dead. Jesus has been gone for sixty years. And John wonders what's next. *What's next for him... and for Christianity?*

Jesus had come preaching, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John was there when Jesus launched this kingdom, but now it's running headlong into the kingdoms of man. Christians were being attacked by the empire of Rome. The Emperor had crucified Peter and beheaded Paul, and others were on the chopping block. *What's next for God's besieged kingdom?*

The Apostle needs a new revelation - a fresh vision. John knew Jesus was no longer a bloody corpse. His sacrificial work was finished. He's risen and ascended.

*But what's next? The answer is this **Revelation!***

"And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw." Notice,

Jesus “*sent and signified*” this message. “*Signified*” means “to express by signs.”

This word has led some Bible teachers to see this book as a message encoded with signs and symbols.

When John received this prophecy, he was a prisoner of Rome. The Romans weren't too fond of manifestos that predicted the coming of kings and kingdoms that threatened to usurp Roman rule. Thus, to avoid censorship, John's letter employed signs and symbols.

You could call this book a “cryptogram - a coded message.” Its symbolism enabled it to slip past Roman security, yet still be understood by Christian readers.

And what better code to use than **OT symbols**...

This is why the key to interpreting Revelation is to familiarize yourself with Hebrew idioms and imagery.

Of this book's 404 verses, 70% or 278 verses quote OT references. The Revelation has 360 OT inferences.

It's been said, “The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself.” That's especially true with Revelation.

Verse 3 attaches a special promise to this book.

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.” Any attempt to read and obey this book will be met with a blessing.

Though parts of Revelation are tough to interpret, God will reward a sincere effort. He wants *this book especially* to be etched in our hearts. ***It's what's next.***

John continues his introduction, “John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace...”

Here’s the common NT greeting, “*grace and peace.*”

But not only does John greet these churches, so does the Triune God who writes through him...

For the Revelation is “From Him who is and who was and who is to come...” Understand, our Father God doesn’t just have lots of time. He dwells outside of time. He occupies the past, the present, and the future.

Our God sees the end from the beginning.

Think of it, God “*was*” - He is the God of history. In fact, “*history*” is “*His Story...*” But God also “*is*” - He is ever in the moment. Psalm 46:1 calls Him as “*a very present help in trouble...*” And God also “*is to come*” - His presence, purpose, and power fill up our future...

A central theme of Revelation is the second *coming* of Christ, but God is always coming... *To a troubled marriage He comes... to a heart-broken teenager He comes... to a depressed housewife He comes... to an out-of-work dad He comes... to a believer struggling with doubt God comes... to the rebel on the run He comes...* This is God’s favorite posture, *He’s coming!*

But John also brings greetings from the Holy Spirit. “From the seven Spirits who are before His throne...”

Admittedly, this is difficult terminology. We know from the rest of Scripture there is only one Holy Spirit. He’s an individual, not seven different Spirits... This seems to be a reference to the seven-fold ministry of the Spirit.

Isaiah 11:2 tells us how the Spirit empowered Jesus, **“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.”** This is also how the Holy Spirit works through us, **the Church** - *He supplies wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and the fear of the LORD.*

And last, but not least, the readers of Revelation are greeted **“from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness...”**

In all that Jesus did and said, He represented His Father. Jesus is the faithful witness - **the truth-teller.**

Jesus is also **“the firstborn from the dead.”** Jesus’ human body was the first to undergo the metamorphosis...

Paul describes resurrection - **“this corruptible (body) must put on incorruption, and this mortal (body) must put on immortality...”** Jesus was first to escape decay. Now His resurrection is the hope of all His followers.

Jesus is the *truth-teller*, the *grave-robber*, and the *ultimate ruler*... For John calls Him **“the ruler over the kings of the earth.”** This was important to believers in Asia. At the time, Christianity was an oppressed minority. Rome viewed the Church as a public enemy.

Yet the Revelation received by John and passed on to the churches was so convincing that those who read it knew it was only a matter of time before the rulers of this world bowed before Jesus. He will ultimately reign.

Jesus is the *truth-teller, grave-robber, ultimate ruler*. And He's also the *soul-lover* **and** the *sin-washer*...

For John writes in verses 5-6, **"To Him who loved us..."** He loved us then, and He loves us now...

So much so, He **"washed us from our sins in His own blood..."** Jesus didn't offer a proxy. It wasn't the blood of a lamb - it was His own! He paid for you personally.

And He's **"made us kings and priests to His God and Father..."** Jesus is the *glory-sharer* and *priest-maker*.

Our destiny is to rule with Jesus. He will end the long-running revolt of Satan. Once and for all Jesus will strip the devil of his authority, and then award it to us.

And He'll make us priests! There'll be a priestly caste in heaven. For all eternity, the followers of Jesus will enjoy unrivaled access and close proximity to God.

It's interesting like the Holy Spirit, Jesus also has seven functions... He's the *truth-teller*, and *grave-robber*, and *ultimate-ruler*, and *soul-lover*, and *sin-washer*, and *glory-sharer*, and *priest maker*...

And how should we respond? John shouts it out, **"To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."**

Praise Him! Shout **"Amen."** It means, **"I agree!"** John was moved by the truth of not just what Jesus did *but of who He is today!* Let's also be moved by the truth!

For one truth is certain, Jesus is not done moving. John writes in verse 7, **"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him."** Jesus is coming back to this Earth!

Technically, there are two second comings of Jesus. In 1 Thessalonians 4, Jesus comes “in the clouds” for His Church. The lost world won’t know what hit them.

But here He comes “with clouds, and every eye will see Him...” This is an in-your-face encounter. Jesus will return to settle scores, exact justice, and judge evil.

We’ll talk more about this later... but Jesus comes “in the clouds” at the rapture. He’ll surprise the world and take His Church. Then He comes “with clouds” on the final day. He’ll touch down on the Mount of Olives to end man’s rebellion and establish a political kingdom.

And notice the addendum to verse 7, “every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him.” This refers to Zechariah 12:10 and the Jews. It’s a prophetic irony.

In the end, the Jews will realize their mistake! *They crucified their Savior; they wounded their Healer!*

Since Jesus ascended to heaven, He’s been sitting at God’s right hand. He finished His work of salvation, and His Spirit has been busy gathering His Church.

But once the Church is caught up, God’s wrath will come down. A Christ-rejecting world will be punished.

People today mock the idea, but in that day, they won’t escape. Vance Havner wrote, “Some of us get laughed at by the swivel-chair experts in eschatology, but when God splits the skies and the stars fall, and the moon turns to blood, and men cry for rocks and mountains to fall on them, it’s going to

be pretty hard for some of us to keep from saying, “*I told you so.*”

Jesus came to Earth the first time to **pardon**, but He comes a second time to **punish**. The Lamb of God that was laid on the altar is also the Lion who will roar!

It’s a jungle out there! Because of man’s rebellion, the world we live in is full of dangerous predators...

But Jesus is **King of the Jungle!** He’ll return to prove His superiority. And it’ll be an “*I told you so*” kind of day.” Today, the world scoffs, “**If He’s alive, where is He?**” On that day, every eye will see Him... *only then, it’ll be too late.* This is why John writes, **And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.** They’ll **mourn**, but they were **warned!** *And never took heed.*

For many people, history will have an unhappy ending. John sighs himself, verse 7, “**Even so, Amen.**”

And here Jesus interjects, “**I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,**” says the Lord...”

“**Alpha**” and “**Omega**” are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. Jesus is saying “**I’m the A to Z.**” He’s the beginning, and end, *and all that’s in between.*

Then Jesus takes the title that was earlier attributed to the Father... He’s the One “**who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.**” Obviously, Jesus is making the claim to be God. He’s equal to the Father.

They hold the same exalted name and traits.

Verse 9, “I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Around 90 AD, a second wave of persecution targeted the Church. The Emperor Domitian followed in Nero's footsteps. John was arrested and sentenced to be boiled in hot oil. *Yet God Himself intervened.*

John miraculously survived the ordeal. So since he couldn't kill him, Domitian banished John to Patmos.

Patmos is an island in the Aegean Sea. It's 10 miles long by 6 miles wide - 15 miles off the coast of Turkey.

It's barren, rocky, and desolate. In the first century, it held a penal colony where Roman prisoners were sent to do hard labor. Patmos was the first century Alcatraz.

Realize, John is now 90-plus years old. He's frail and feeble and is scarred over most of his body - souvenirs he picked up from his brush with death in the boiling oil. **Now he's pounding a hammer in a rock quarry.**

And John was not the only believer suffering under this Roman reign of terror. All across the empire, Christians were being persecuted for *“the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.”* Surely, it made John think.

Remember to this point, all John had seen was the first revelation of Jesus. The Infinite became an infant. The Son of God came to Earth through the lowest door. Jesus was God but laid aside the perks of deity.

In fact, Jesus came as a servant. He could've thrown His weight around and intimidated us into compliance. Instead, Jesus overwhelmed us with His grace. His mercy and tenderness disarmed us and slipped past our defenses. Our hearts were won by His love. And to bear our punishment, Jesus made Himself defenseless. He laid bare His back to take our stripes.

But John now has some stripes of his own! Ever seen a burn victim? Imagine, John covered with scars.

He's thankful Jesus won His heart, *but who's going to win this war?* John is in fight - a battle is raging. Good and evil - God and Satan - are slugging it out.

It's a jungle out there... John believed in Jesus, but He needed more than *a Servant to model - or even a Savior to rely on.* For John to endure His hardships, He and His friends needed the hope of a conquering King.

John and the persecuted Church needed *a second Revelation* - the unveiling of an exalted, glorified Christ. **They need a Savior who's also a heavy-weight champ.**

It reminds me of the middle-age woman with the incurable disease. She checked into the hospital, thinking her days were numbered. But that night, she had a vision. An angel told her she'd live another thirty years. She was so excited. She thought, **"If I'm going to live for three more decades I should do so in style."**

So while she was in the hospital she had a face-lift, liposuction, and a tummy-tuck. After she left, she was crossing the street and got hit by a truck. *She died!*

When she got to heaven, the lady saw the angel who had visited her. “You told me I’d live thirty more years.” The angel replied, “*Yea, but I didn’t recognize you!*”

And I’m afraid this is most people’s problem with Jesus. They’ve so confused His first revelation that there’s no way they would recognize the Lord as He is today!

Over the years, artists have painted some pathetic portraits of Jesus! They’ve depicted Him as weak and frail... He glows in the dark... He wears pearly-white robes, and takes a sissified posture... He uses curlers in his hair and looks suspiciously effeminate...

It’s tragic! We’ve mistaken the guy who got angry at the Jewish hierarchy - Who made a whip with His own hands, overturned tables, and bounced crooked priests from the Temple... as a ***gentle Jesus meek and mild!***

The real Jesus was a Jewish carpenter. He was a man’s man - a blue-collar guy. Jesus was no stranger to hard-work. He pounded nails before the days of power tools. Jesus was a carpenter who liked to fish.

Yet if Christians today have confused what Jesus was like when He lived among us, they have no clue as to what He’s like today and how He’ll appear when the world sees Him again. This is why we need a **second revelation!** Jesus is still a man, but now a glorified man. He’s the man all men were meant to be!

Jesus’ humility was temporary. Now He’s back on heaven’s throne with the authority He won on Earth.

Realize, the Person we serve and follow no longer walks on water - *that's kid's stuff*. Today, He rides on clouds. He rules in heaven, and commands an army, and doles out justice, as well as mercy. This is the Revelation John received on Patmos and sends to the seven churches. *What's next?...* It's a glorified Christ.

John remembers the day this revelation came to him. Verse 10, *"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day..."*

It was Sunday! Already, the early church was living in the wake of Jesus' resurrection. The Jews held services on the Sabbath, the last day of the week, but Christians met on the first day of the week - the day Jesus rose. *Sundays were treated like a mini-Easter!*

The first Church preached the cross but didn't leave Jesus there - *Jesus rose to reign!* After this Revelation, they all knew to live in the light of the Exalted Christ.

John was *"in the Spirit."* He was dialed in - logged on. He was worshipping and communing with God...

When he *"heard behind (him) a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last..."* At His first revelation, Jesus launched God's kingdom spiritually, but He'll also bring it to Earth with all its glory. He's the *beginning and end!*

And this shapes our duty as Christians... We're part of this spiritual kingdom that's still serving and saving, and we're called to help. But we'll endure persecution and resist temptation only **if we know what's next!**

Ultimately, all wrongs will be righted. Good will triumph. God's people win in the end! **The triumphant Christ is next - this is the theme of John's Revelation!**

Then Jesus said to John... "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." This isn't an exhaustive list of the churches in first century Asia.

There were more. But Jesus chose these seven churches for a reason - *that we'll talk about next week.*

And here the plot thickens, verse 12, "Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midsts of the seven lampstands One like the Son of man..."

John describes Jesus, but before we read of Him, note where He is - "*in the midst of the lampstands.*"

Later, we learn the seven lampstands, or the seven-branch Menorah, is a symbol for the seven churches.

In the OT Temple, the priest was in charge of lighting and tending to the Menorah. Likewise, the Church is the NT Temple, and Jesus is our Priest. Thus, He works among the churches to keep us filled with the oil of the Holy Spirit. This keeps our light shining bright.

But notice how this revelation relates to God's plan. *This is what's next, Jesus is hanging out in His Church!*

This is why I'm always saying if you love Jesus you'll love His Church. *The Church is where the action is!*

Where is Jesus working in the world today? *In His Church*. He doesn't promise you'll find Him at the Rotary Club, or the Little League, or PTA, or a political action committee, or whatever else you're involved in.

Jesus prefers to work in and through His Church. He told His disciples, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

John sees Jesus. He's still a man. "*Son of man*" speaks of His humanity. But John recognizes Him as only "*like the Son of man*." His visage was different.

The Revelation He now sees doesn't stack up to the Jesus He heard, saw, and His hands handled. This is the *Warrior and Ruler* - not just *Servant and Sacrifice*.

John is about to portray **the King of the Jungle!**

And he starts with what Jesus wears to work... He's "**clothed with a garment down to the feet.**" Commoners and peasants wore knee-length robes. Only a king's robe drug the ground. Jesus is now *King of all kings*.

He's "**girded about the chest with a golden band.**"

He's king *and priest!* The OT priests wore a golden breastplate. As priest, Jesus intercedes for His Church.

Understood, a separation of church and state existed in Israel. The king was never a priest. But Jesus abolishes "**the separation clause.**" He rules on God's throne, **and** He works in God's Temple, the Church!

Verse 14, “His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.” Years ago, I had an album cover that tried to replicate this portrait of Jesus. And the result was grotesque. It was *almost sacrilegious*.

Don't try to envision this portrait literally. Remember Revelation was encoded with OT idioms and images...

For starters, Jesus' white hair isn't a bleach job - or gray-hair. It speaks of His moral and spiritual purity.

And His eyes aren't bloodshot. “Like a flame of fire...” speaks of their searing scrutiny and search-ability.

Jesus doesn't *look past you as if you don't matter*. He cares about you deeply... He doesn't *look at you as if He's sizing you up to figure you out*. He knows you perfectly... And He doesn't *look to you as if He needs anything from you*. Jesus is sufficient in and of Himself.

But Jesus does ***looks through you!***

His stare penetrates and uncovers the real you. You can't hide sin, or play the hypocrite under His gaze.

Jesus' brass feet doesn't mean He has a lead foot.

Brass is a mixture of iron and copper. Iron is strong, but it rusts. Copper keeps its shine, but it bends. Brass is a mixture

of both strength *and* endurance. When Jesus puts His foot down, He means it - it's emphatic.

And the voice of Jesus is like the "*sound of many waters*" - literally a waterfall. I'll never forget standing at the bottom of Niagara Falls. You can scream into the ear of the person next to you, but it doesn't register.

Jesus had spoken to John while on Earth. For sixty years John had heard "*the still small voice*" - the quiet whispers of the Holy Spirit - but now this is different!

The Lion roars... Jesus' voice is like a waterfall. It drowns out all other voices. Today we're surrounded by competing opinions - the media blares with *talk shows, and pundits, blogs and spin*. But when Jesus speaks, He muffles all other influences. He gets our attention.

And in His right hand, Jesus holds seven stars.

Verse 20 explains... "*The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.*" The "*lampstands*" are churches. Jesus said we are "*the light of the world*"...

"*Stars*" are the angels. The Greek word translated "*angel*" means "*messenger.*" It could be every church has a guardian angel. *I'm sure our guy works overtime.*

But the term "*angels*" could also refer to "*pastors.*" Not to say that your pastor is an angel - *not hardly* - but pastors are the messengers of Jesus to His church.

Either way, whether “*stars*” are “*angels*” or “*pastors*” the point is they’re both in the Lord’s “*right hand.*”

This is the hand that speaks of authority, which means any authority vested in the Church comes from Jesus... All pastors are accountable to that right hand!

And what’s up with Jesus’ breath! Verse 16 tells us, “**Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword...**”

Even people with just a little bit of Bible under their belt recognize this imagery. **The two-edged sword is the Scripture itself. It’s sharp and incisive - cuts coming and going. It opens us up, lays us bear, fillets our pride.**

Today, Jesus works powerfully through His Word.

Finally, John describes Jesus’ overall countenance. It “**was like the sun shining in its strength.**” Eyeballing the glorified Christ is like looking directly into the sun.

His glory blinds us to every other interest!

John writes, “**And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.**” On Earth, Jesus and John hung out. They were friendly. They went fishing. Now, John sees Jesus and His knees wobble. He hits the deck. The glorified Christ takes His breath away. John is speechless.

President Obama used to play basketball with his aides, and I’m sure they had fun. But trust me, nobody hacked the president. If he was on a break-away, you let him have the basket. You didn’t risk injuring the Commander and Chief. Even if he’s your pal, you treat a President differently. And the same is true of Jesus!

At His first coming, we learned Jesus wants to be our friend, our Savior. But this second Revelation reminds us that He's not just a friend. Jesus is not your "Homeboy" or "the Guy Upstairs." Jesus deserves and expects our respect. John collapsed at His feet and worshipped!

But notice Jesus' reply to John. It's beautiful. "But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen." Jesus comforts John. His clothes, hair, eyes, feet, mouth are different than at His first revelation. But the one thing that hasn't changed is Jesus' heart...

That's when He says, "And I have the keys of Hades and of Death." If you're concerned about heaven and hell and what happens after you die, *Jesus is the go-to-guy!* Buddha, Mohammed, and Oprah have no say in the matter. Jesus has the keys to *Afterlife* and *End of life*.

He alone decides *when you die, and where you go.*

John closes the chapter with a helpful outline for the book of Revelation. The angel says to him, "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this."

"The things which you have seen" is chapter 1. It's the vision John received of the risen, glorified Christ.

"The things which are" is chapters 2-3 - Jesus' seven letters to the seven churches. John was living in the Church-age. And it has lasted now some 2000 years.

Then the rest of the book, **"The things which will take place after this..."** are chapters 4-22. Once the Church is *caught away*, then sweeping judgments will *pave the way* for the ultimate triumph of King Jesus!

What's next in God's plan? **Jesus is next!**

Jesus in all His glory is next in God's plan. Jesus is the A to Z - the beginning and the end. Let this second revelation burn into your heart. Look to the glorified Christ and you'll find what you need for victory today!