

Revelation 1:9-19 - The Vision of the Glorified Jesus

Revision

v 1 **Revelation = apocalypse**... means to unveil that which is not understood.

Revelation is the unveiling of Jesus Christ in all His original glory as the One who was and is and is to come, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and the Lamb that had been slain. John was the disciple who was closest to Jesus, who was described multiple times as the disciple that Jesus loved, yet John still falls down as dead when He sees the glorified Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:16 AMP

Consequently, from now on we estimate *and* regard no one from a [purely] human point of view [in terms of natural standards of value]. [No] even though we once did estimate Christ from a human viewpoint *and* as a man, yet now [we have such knowledge of Him that] we know Him no longer [in terms of the flesh].

How is Jesus different now as He lives in Heaven, than He was on earth?

Well, when Jesus stepped out of Heaven and came down to earth as a man, He veiled or hid His glory, laid aside the independent use of His divine nature, took upon Himself a true human nature, and voluntarily limited Himself to live only by that human nature. He did all the miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit who dwelt in His human nature. That's why Jesus could say, "He who believes in me, the works that I do, he shall do also." It's the same Holy Spirit who dwelt in Jesus is the same Holy Spirit who dwells in us. We will do greater works, not qualitatively, but quantitatively, because we are more in number.

Now Jesus is as John, Peter and James saw Him on the mount of transfiguration:

Matthew 17:1-2, 5-8 NKJV

Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ² and He was transfigured before them. **His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.**

⁵ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" ⁶ **And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.** ⁷ **But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid."** ⁸ When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

While on earth Jesus glory was hidden or veiled, but no more. He is no longer laying aside the independent use of His divine nature, no longer veiling His power and His glory. Like John, when we see Jesus we will not see Him or regard Him as just a man, from a human point of view, but rather we will behold God the Son in all His majestic glory that is His because He is the eternal God, the Creator of all things, the one who holds all things together, and the sustainer of all life.

Revelation 1:9-20 NKJV

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. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, "I am the Alpha

and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, “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.”

¹² Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. ¹⁹ Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. ²⁰ 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.

John Describes His Suffering for the Sake of the Gospel

Revelation 1:9

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.

v **9 I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation:** Keep in mind that John is writing as a pastor of people who are being tortured, persecuted, and slaughtered. That is why he identifies himself as their brother and companion in difficulty. Still today, the effective pastor, parent, mentor or any brother and sister in Christ is one who realises we're all in this together—that we're all brothers and sisters, companions and fellow-pilgrims. We must be willing to share and be involved in each others lives in a healthy way, especially as it relates to discipleship, serving Christ and suffering for His name's sake.

v **9 I, John ... was on the island that is called Patmos:** Patmos was a rocky, desolate island about 10 miles long and 6 miles wide. It was a like an Alcatraz Island in the Roman Empire. It was used as a prison island and functioned as a jail without bars. The island was rich in marble, and most of the prisoners were forced labourers in marble quarries.

Historical facts:

The ancient Christian historian Eusebius says John was imprisoned at Patmos under the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian. Also, “According to Victorinus, John, though aged, was forced to labor in the mines located at Patmos. Early sources also indicated that about a.d. 96, at Domitian's death, John was allowed to return to Ephesus when the Emperor Nerva was in power.”

v **9 For the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ:**

v **9 For the Word of God:** John was not only a pastor but also a theologian. The Word and his witness for Christ caused him to be Banished to Patmos, but the Word also made him who he was. John is a giant of the faith because he was a man of the Word.

If we want to be men and women of God, if we want to be used by God, then we need to be people of the Word, studying it, obeying it, and being ready to suffer for it.

Three things we need to know about suffering for Christ:

1. It is to be expected:

2 Timothy 3:12 NKJV

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Jesus warned the Apostles in John 15:20, “If they persecute me, they will persecute you.” Jesus also gave the reason — the world hates us because it hates Him, so don’t take it personally. It’s not you the world hates, it’s God who lives in you.

2. Suffering for the sake of the Gospel brings great eternal reward.

It’s like being poor for three years while you go to university so you can get the job you want. You are willing to suffer for a while, because you judge that the benefits will be worth it in the long run.

Matthew 5:11-12 NLT

“God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. ¹² Be happy about it! Be very glad! **For a great reward awaits you in heaven.** And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

3. There is a purpose for suffering

Suffering results in the growing of our faith, which brings us much joy, both in this world and the next.

1 Peter 1:6-7 NKJV

In this you greatly rejoice, though now **for a little while**, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ **that the genuineness of your faith**, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

When we suffer, it never feels like “**for a little while.**” But it is in comparison to eternity. We are only given one chance to grow our faith. This life is our faith university. Do your best, and realise that faith school will soon be over. Understand that God doesn’t allow us to suffer because He’s sadistic and a psychopath, rather, He knows what is best for us, and will always be with us through the storms. We will see how we will be truly blessed if we embrace suffering for Christ in the next verses, because it’s in the storms and trials that we have the greatest revelation of who God is and experience much greater intimacy with Him. As we talked about previously, God, without exception, only reveals more of who He is to people as they are in the middle of a trial or difficult circumstances.

Revelation 1:10-11 NKJV

¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, “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.”

v 10 **I was in the Spirit:** The idea isn't simply that John was *walking in the Spirit*, but that he received unique revelation from the Holy Spirit. This was a unique spiritual experience for John, what some might call an *out of body experience*—though of course, without the occult, new age or spiritism that these experiences are associated with today. Paul also had an out of body experience where he saw heaven (2 Corinthians 12).

There are four references to John being **in the Spirit** in the Book of Revelation. First at Patmos (Revelation 1:10), then in heaven (Revelation 4:2), then in the wilderness (Revelation 17:3), and finally on the mountain of God (Revelation 21:10).

v 10 **On the Lord's Day:** When is **the Lord's Day**? Among the pagans of the Roman Empire, the first day of each month was called "Emperors Day" in honour of the Roman Emperor. Christians proclaimed their allegiance to Jesus by honouring the first day of the *week* as their own **Lord's Day**.

It's important that we realise that the early church met on the first day of the week, or Sunday, most likely because it was resurrection day. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. Sunday is also the 8th day, with 8 being the number for new beginnings.

Here is some scriptural evidence:

Acts 20:7 NKJV

Now on **the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread**, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

It seems clear that the early church met at least once a week, usually on the first day of the week or Sunday, to share communion together and to hear preaching/teaching. This would have been their regular meeting day.

1 Corinthians 16:2 NKJV

On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

This is further evidence that the early church had their main meeting on the first day of the week, as this was the day they gave money to the church.

Also, 2nd-century writers such as Justin Martyr attest to the widespread practice of Sunday worship (First Apology, chapter 67). So, according to the Bible and early church fathers, Sunday, the first day of the week was the day that the early church got together and 1) shared communion, 2) taught the word, and 3) gave money for the support of the church.

Now, what did this look like as far as Roman culture goes?

For the first three centuries of the church, there was, quote, "no expectation that on the Lord's Day one is to rest from one's labours". Roman slaves had to work on that day. So if you were a Christian living somewhere in the Roman empire, you would not have the day off. Things were not like they are today. Sunday was not a rest day. Therefore, the churches/house churches would have to meet together either early in the morning, or at night, outside of working hours. Sunday back then was a normal working day, but it was still the regular day when Christians got together and shared communion, taught the bible and collected their offerings.

So when did Sunday become a generally accepted day of rest? The first mention of Sunday rest was issued by the Roman Emperor Constantine, after he embraced christianity for most likely political and military reasons. This is his edict written in March 321 AD:

“On the venerable day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all the workshops be closed.”

So what actually happened, is that Constantine simply recognised that Sunday, the first day of the week or resurrection day, was the day the Christians met to take communion, teach and give, i.e. the day they met to worship together - much like our modern Sunday routine. Since Constantine was trying to please the Christians by making Christianity the state religion, he just made it easier for the Christians to have church on Sunday by giving everybody, the entire known world, Sunday off. But remember that for almost 300 years prior to this “rest on Sunday” edict, the church had been meeting to worship on Sunday, the first day of the week.

So there you go, that’s where the idea of Sunday as a rest day came from. But again, remember that Sunday as a day to meet together for the church was established long before Constantine’s edict to not work on Sundays.

v 10 **I heard behind me a loud voice:** The **loud voice** John heard was clear and striking as the sound of a **trumpet**. The **loud voice** belongs to the **Alpha and Omega**, the **First and the Last**, who is the beginning and the end of all things. Since Jesus introduced Himself with these titles in Revelation 1:8, we know this was the **loud voice** of Jesus.

The First and the Last is a title that belongs to the Lord, Yahweh or Jehovah, the God of Israel (Isaiah 41:4, 44:6, and 48:12). The title **Alpha and the Omega** has the same *idea* as **First and the Last**. This is one of the New Testament passages where Jesus *clearly* claimed to be God. We talked about this and went through the references last week.

But why repeat it here. It was already stated in verse 8. Well, when people are suffering, they need to know that God is in control, that He is sovereign. From a human perspective, if you were in an airliner along with 500 other people that was nosediving to earth, you would most likely be scared and panicking, and so you should... the plane is out of control, you are about to die fiery death.

But, if you paid to go on a joy flight with a stunt pilot in his personal plane, you would be ecstatic and enjoy the ride because you know that the pilot has everything under control, even if you were flying upside down with your head just a few metres from the trees. The point is that understanding and remembering that God is in control takes the fear out of life, because, no matter what the circumstances, we are safe in His hands. We know the plane of life won’t crash, no matter how bumpy and unusual the ride, because God is the pilot and His destination for us is Heaven.

v 11 **What you see, write in a book:** Here, John was commanded to write what he saw. He would be commanded to **write** eleven more times in the Book of Revelation.

v 11 **Send it to the seven churches which are in Asia:** John was commanded to write to **seven churches** in seven cities. Each of these churches is in the region of the Roman province of **Asia**. But these were not the *only* cities with churches in this region. Why were these specific **seven churches** chosen? Some suggest that it was because they are arranged in a roughly circular pattern. Others think it was because these were postal districts in the Roman province of Asia. Many believe **seven churches** were

chosen because in the Bible, the number **seven** often represents completeness. Therefore, these letters—and all of the Book of Revelation—are written and apply to *all* the individual churches throughout the entire church age, not *only* these **seven churches**. Again, these *seven churches* represent all true Christian churches to the end of the church age. Thus their message is for us today as well.

v 11 **What you see**: A reminder that Revelation is an eyewitness testimony. John was transported through time and was asked to write down what He saw. As we said previously, John was describing 21st century things using 1st century language. This will be a key to understanding the few symbols and descriptions that are not referenced in the Old Testament. Put yourself in John's shoes and think about what he could be seeing.

Revelation 1:12-13 NKJV

Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

v 12 **I turned to see the voice**: We can only imagine what went through John's mind as he **turned**. The voice he heard was probably not exactly the same sound as he remembered Jesus' voice to be (John described it *as of a trumpet*, Revelation 1:10). Yet he knew from the voice's self-description (*Alpha and Omega*) that it was Jesus. This was John's opportunity to see Jesus again, after knowing Him so well during the years of His earthly ministry.

At first, John didn't see Jesus. He **saw seven golden lampstands**. These were not candlesticks, they were not menorahs, but they were free standing oil lamp stands. The lamps were set *on* these **lampstands**.

There were **seven** separate **lampstands**. This is an image that *reminds* us of the *golden lampstand* that stood in the tabernacle and the temple (Exodus 25:31–37). Yet this is different. The Old Covenant lampstand was *one lampstand with seven lamps* on it. Here in the New Covenant, we see **seven lampstands**.

Here is an application for us today: The light doesn't come from the **lampstands**. The light comes from the oil lamps themselves. The stands merely make the light more visible. Therefore, the **lampstands** are a good picture of the church. We don't produce the light, we simply display it.

v 13 **And in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man**: Jesus was there in the midst of these lampstands, as the **Son of Man**.

Who is the "**Son of Man?**" This takes us back to:

Daniel 7:13–14 NKJV

"I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, One like the Son of Man,
Coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days,
And they brought Him near before Him.

¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,
That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.
His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom the one
Which shall not be destroyed.

Though the title **Son of Man** doesn't sound like an important title, but, in light of the Daniel passage, it's a very important title. It tells us that the **Son of Man** is the Messiah, the Lord of All, the Saviour of the world, and the One who will rule the world from Jerusalem when He returns.

Let's just pause for a second and wonder what would happen if John had chosen not to "**turn to see**," if he had not responded to God's voice. Can you imagine what he would have missed out on. There are many examples of people responding to God's calling on their lives, whether it be through angels or dreams or from God Himself, and they were all blessed by their choice to "turn and see," to respond to God's message. There was always new revelation about God. Think of the shepherds, Mary, Moses, Joseph, etc.

But there is a sad example of one group of people who did not "turn and see" and thus missed the Incarnation....

When the wise men arrived in Jerusalem and asked, "Where is Messiah to be born?" the Bible scholars (the religious leaders of the day) were quick to answer, "Bethlehem." You see, they knew Bible prophecy like the backs of their hands. They knew the obscure verses in Micah 5 that foretold the place of His birth; the portions of Daniel 9 that foretold the time of His birth; the passages in Isaiah that prophesied He would be born of a virgin and sojourn in Egypt. They were the Bible students, the pastors, the elders, the note-takers. These were people who, if we're not careful, we can be. They knew the Word—and yet they never made the five-mile walk from Jerusalem to Bethlehem in pursuit of a personal, real encounter with God. And we are vulnerable to the same mentality. We can read the bible academically. We can search out details, the meaning of words and debate doctrines—all the while missing the revelation of Jesus personally. Not so John. When he heard a voice, he didn't say, "I know the Bible. After all, I wrote a good part of it." No, he turned to see—and saw Jesus in the process. (Jon Courson)

Jesus is the ultimate example of one who lived His life "turning to see." Jesus said in John 5:19, "What I see the Father do, that I do,"—*nothing more, nothing less, nothing else*.

Jesus lived His whole life taking the time to "turn and see" what God the Father was saying to Him. Will we take the time to read the word everyday and spend time in prayer? Then will we respond to what He says to us? We will be blessed if we do.

v 13 **Clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band:** The clothing of Jesus indicates that He is a person of great dignity and authority. Long garments were only worn by those who didn't have to work much, so they were a picture of great status and authority. They also remind us of the high priest in the Old Testament. The **golden band** around **the chest** also reminds us of the garments of the high priest (Exodus 29:5).

It's interesting that one of the duties of the Old Testament priests was to tend the golden lampstand in the tabernacle. Every day they had to fill the oil, clean the soot, and trim the wicks. They had to closely inspect and care for the lamps so they would burn continually before the Lord. Here is Jesus, our High Priest, in the **midst of the seven lampstands**, carefully inspecting and caring for the lamps, helping them to always burn brightly before the Lord.

Jesus is our high priest. The book of Hebrews has much to say about Jesus being our high priest.

Revelation 1:14-16 NKJV

His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ 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.

v 14 **His head and hair were white like wool:** The **white** hair speaks of old age, and is therefore in that culture connected with the idea of great wisdom and timelessness. The phrase **white as snow** also emphasises the idea of purity (Isaiah 1:18). The white hair and head also connect Jesus with the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7:9, another reference to His deity.

v 14 **His eyes like a flame of fire:** **Fire** is often associated with judgment in the Scriptures (Matthew 5:22, 2 Peter 3:7). Jesus' eyes displayed the **fire** of searching, penetrating judgment.

v 15 **His feet were like fine brass:** Since **fire** is connected with judgment, these **feet like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace** speak of someone who has been through the fires of judgment and has come forth with a refined purity. Jesus has been through the "Refiner's Fire." Also, **Brass** is a metal connected with judgment and sacrifice. Israel's altar of sacrifice was made of brass (Exodus 27:1–6), and it was called the "brazen altar."

v 15 **His voice as the sound of many waters:** This means that Jesus' voice had the power and majesty of a mighty waterfall.

v 16 **He had in His right hand seven stars:** The **seven stars** speak of the leaders or representatives of the *seven churches* mentioned in Revelation 1:11 (Revelation 1:20 gives us the interpretation or meaning). The **stars** are securely in the hand of Jesus. Each pastor is in Jesus right hand. This is a great blessing, but also a great responsibility.

Since **seven** is the number of completion, we can say that "He's got the whole church in His hands." We'll come back to this next week.

v 16 **Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword:** This is a heavy **sword** (the ancient Greek word *rhomphaia*), used to kill and destroy. The idea of it coming **out of His mouth** is *not* that Jesus carries a sword in His teeth. The idea is that this **sword** is His word. His weapon—and ours also—is the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit .

Ephesians 6:17 NKJV

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

v 16 **His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength:** The glory of Jesus is so great, so shining, that it is hard to even look upon Him. Jesus has the same glory as in His transfiguration, when *His face shone like the sun* (Matthew 17:2).

Overall, everything in this vision speaks of strength, majesty, authority and righteousness. This Jesus that John saw is the *real* Jesus, the Jesus that lives and reigns in heaven today. He's no longer a babe in a manger, or still hanging on the cross. He is the God the Son in all His splendour and glory

Revelation 1:17-18 NKJV

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death

v 17 **When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead:** John was overwhelmed by this awesome vision, even though he was an apostle who knew Jesus on this earth. Even the three years John spent with Jesus on this earth did not really prepare him to see Jesus in His heavenly glory.

v 17 **He laid His right hand on me:** First, Jesus comforted John with a compassionate touch. Then Jesus gave John a command: **“Do not be afraid.”** John didn’t need to be **afraid**. Why? Because He was in the presence of Jesus. To me this is just so comforting. Yes, God’s power and strength and majesty is beyond what we can comprehend — yet Jesus is still gentle and lowly in heart.

Matthew 11:29-30 NKJV

Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, **for I am gentle and lowly in heart**, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Yes, God’s glory would kill us instantly in our sinful state. But God has declared us righteous or perfect in His sight. Therefore we are welcome, and when we see Him, we will hear the words, “It is I, do not be afraid.”

Jesus clearly identifies Himself to John with three titles.

In verse 18 Jesus clearly identifies Himself to John with three titles:

— Jesus is **the First and the Last**, the God of all eternity, Lord of eternity past and eternity future.

— Jesus is the one **who lives, and was dead, and is alive forevermore**. He has the credentials of resurrection, and lives to never die again. The victory that Jesus won over sin and death was a permanent victory. He didn’t rise from the dead just to die again. He is **alive forevermore**.

— Jesus is the one who has **the keys of Hades and of Death**. Some imagine that the devil is somehow the “lord of Hell.” Some imagine that the devil has authority or power to determine life or death. Clearly, they are wrong, for only *Jesus* holds **the keys of Hades and of Death**. We can trust that Jesus never lets the devil borrow **the keys**.

Also, the keys of hell and death are not to lock people up but to set people free. It is because Jesus has the keys of death and hades that when a believer dies today, they go straight to heaven. Before Jesus death and resurrection, those who died in faith went to Abraham’s bosom or Paradise, in the centre of the earth. But when Jesus rose again, He emptied Abraham’s bosom and they all went to heaven. Why? Because when Adam sinned, the title deed of the earth was transferred from man to Satan. That’s why Jesus had to buy it back at the price of His life. There are many parables that describe this:

Matthew 13:44 NKJV

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

The field is the world, and the people are the treasure. Jesus is the man who gives everything up to buy the field so that He can have access to the treasure. Before He bought the field, He didn't have access to the treasure. But after He bought the field, which represents the earth or world, He then had access to the treasure, the people, and could then take those who believe to heaven. For those who don't believe in Jesus for salvation, it isn't Satan stopping them from going to heaven, but their own choice. Jesus made the way possible for all people to come to Him. Satan has no power over us any more. The choice of heaven and hell is completely up to the individual.

The Divine Outline of the Book of Revelation

Revelation 1:19 NKJV

Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

v 19 **Write the things:** This second command to write gives us a structure to understand the Book of Revelation. John is commanded to **write** regarding the past, present, and future (looking from John's perspective).

v 19 **The things which you have seen:** This means that Jesus wanted John to write the things he had just **seen** in his vision of the glorious, heavenly Jesus — Chapter 1

v 19 **The things which are:** This means that Jesus wanted John to write about the things of his present day, the things regarding the *seven churches which are in Asia* — Chapters 2 and 3.

v 19 **The things which will take place after this:** This means that Jesus wanted John to write about the things that would happen after the things regarding the *seven churches*, the things of the last days — chapters 4-22.

Again, the Book of Revelation is arranged in this three-part structure:

- **The things which you have seen:** Revelation chapter 1 (vision of Jesus)
- **The things which are:** Revelation chapters 2 and 3 (church age)
- **The things which will take place after this:** Revelation 4 through 22 (Rapture, Tribulation, 1,000 yr Millennial reign, second coming, New heavens and earth)

Conclusion:

This was a spectacular vision, and many people wish they could have a spectacular vision like John had, but we *can* know the very same Jesus John saw. We can know His purity, His eternal wisdom, His searching judgment, His victory, His authority and His majesty. Each of these aspects of His nature are ours to know intimately. They are revealed to us especially in the book of revelation.

When we think of John's spectacular vision, we should remember where John was: imprisoned on Patmos. Jesus is often known most intimately in the midst of suffering and trials. Both John and Stephen (Acts 7:54–60) saw Jesus most clearly and gloriously in the context of suffering for the cause of Jesus.

Acts 7:54-56 NLT

The Jewish leaders were infuriated by Stephen's accusation, and they shook their fists at him in rage. ⁵⁵ But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed steadily into heaven and saw the glory of God, and he saw Jesus standing in the place of honour at God's right hand. ⁵⁶ And he told them, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing in the place of honour at God's right hand!"