

The last book of the Bible is called the Revelation of St. John. It is also sometimes called the Apocalypse. The Apocalypse means an unveiling. Revelation is the only Apocalypse in the NT. The outstanding Apocalypse in the OT is the book of Daniel. In the later days of OT times there were many apocalypses written. These of course were uninspired books, but they are a type of literature that was common in those difficult days. Apocalypse means an unveiling, an opening up of the curtain to show what is important but not otherwise known. The Apocalypse looks in two directions. It looks to the future and it looks to the present. People in difficult days facing very difficult circumstances desire to know what is ahead, but what is ahead is even more closely related to the question of what really is at present. What is the meaning of life? What are the great forces that control our existence? What is life about anyway? These two questions: What is ahead? and ~~what~~ what is really back of everything now? are questions that no human being can fully answer. God has revealed certain important facts about them. The Revelation of St. John was written in a time when the church was beginning to suffer great persecution. Paul had been exiled to the ~~island~~ John <sup>John</sup> Isle of Patmose. Some of his friends had been killed. = others had been tortured or mutilated. What was the future? God gave John a revelation, an unveiling, an understanding of some of the important factors that are back of everything that faces us now, something of what is God and some ~~of~~ idea of what God is going to do in the future. In the second and third chapters of John there are letters to seven churches in the province of Asia. These letters deal with problems in those churches in John's day. They also give examples of situations that have been found in churches here and there throughout the Christian world ever since. They unveil something of the the true situation in these churches which might not be clear to the casual observer, and show God's attitude toward these problems.

Then, in chapter 4, after the Lord has said, "He