

Revelation Introduction Review

David Rountree

1. There is one view and date for the writing of the book that focusses on the original audience of Revelation more than the rest.
2. So many of modern-day believers think the book of Revelation is all about the final return of Christ that they discount the preterist view quickly and don't even know there is a very conservative, classic partial-preterist view.

A Future or Past Revelation?

1. Daniel's prophecy was all about the future but Revelation begs for immediacy (Dan.12:4; Rev. 1:1, 3, 19; 2:16; 3:10; 6:10-11; 22:6, 7, 10, 12, 20).
2. The majority view (futurist view) that many have adopted today and made popular through novels, movies and television is that the book of Revelation was given to reveal our future—the "final generation's" future, just prior to the final return of Christ to earth.
3. In the nineteenth century, J.N. Darby invented the futurist view.
4. God did not create the conflict and confusion many of us have with the book of Revelation. Our God is not a God of confusion (1Cor.14:33).
5. God told the first audience to simply read the book aloud and they would get a blessing (Rev.1:3).
6. One view of interpreting Revelation stands out as much more consistent with the way the crucifixion generation audience approached the book.

Schools of Interpretation for the Book of Revelation
Futurist
Historicist
Spiritualist/Idealist/Cyclic/Eclecticist
Preterist

7. There are godly saints in each camp. They are not necessarily false teachers or heretics but they cannot all have the correct interpretation.

Review of Interpretive Schools

1. Futurist. Argue that the events in Revelation chapters 4-22 await future realization.
2. Historicist. Believe Revelation was given to reveal events that would become plain over the course of history.
3. Spiritualist/Idealist. Have the view that John's visions should be interpreted spiritually to bring about the most ideal conclusion consistent with the rest of scripture and historical events.
4. Partial-Preterist. Preterist are convinced that the bulk of Revelation and the Olivet discourse were fulfilled in AD 70.

Two things make the original audience unique:

1. **First**, they were first generation believers facing dreadful persecution as a people group from imperial Rome under Nero Caesar from AD 64 to AD68 (1:9; 6:2; 13:1-18; 17:1-13).
2. **Second**, they were the first believers of the New Covenant in Christ seeing God reject his Old Covenant people Israel along with their central city and temple to embrace his New Covenant bride. God promised to use the Roman empire to bring about this judgment destruction (Rev. 2-3; 1:7,8; 11; 17; 18; 22:20). **The book of Revelation addresses these unique events and only the preterist approach to Revelation puts the focus on these events.**

When evaluating all four views, here are some things to consider:

1. Being too casual about our interpretation of God's word is not appreciated by him (2Tim.2:15).
2. Our interpretations of the book of Revelation should not rely on our dreams or on the dreams of others (Jude 8; 1Tim.1:3-7).
3. The author of the book of Revelation is not a God of confusion (1Cor.14:33).

The date of writing Revelation matters: Was it before Jerusalem fell in AD 70 or after?

- 1) The King in 17:9-10 is discernably Nero not Domitian:
- 2) The city in 11:8 (and Matt. 27:53) is definitely a real place and not an assumed similar future place:
- 3) The Temple in 11:1-2 would have been one of the last places John and Jesus visited together:
- 4) An Expectation of "soon destruction" for an apostate church is a reasonable conclusion to the Bible (1:1, 3, 19; 2:16; 3:10; 6:10-11; 22:6, 7, 10, 12, 20):
- 5) The close audience configuration in 1:7 is consistent with the other 65 books of the Bible:

Summary of the book of Revelation:

The book of Revelation greatly comforted and encouraged the first century church who was facing terrible persecution from both the Jewish community and the Roman Empire of Nero Caesar from AD 54-AD 68 (1:7-8; 22:20; chaps 2-3; 11; 17-18); and it also officially transferred Christ's kingdom from Old Covenant Israel and Apostolic Christianity to the new and living way of Christ forever and ever (Acts 1:8; 2:14-36; 15:2; Matt. 24:1-34; Heb. 10:19-25; Rev. 11)!

Outline Consistent with a Pre-AD 70 Date

Destruction is soon coming upon Jerusalem and Israel (chapters 1-5)
Divorce is coming for God's Faithless Wife of Harlotry (chapters 6-19)
Deliverance and Glory for Christ's Bride the Church (chapters 20-22)