

The Book of Revelation

Introduction

Basic Information

- The Book of Revelation was written by John the Apostle (1:1,4,9)
- He had been exiled to the Isle of Patmos
- It was written around the year A.D. 90 and was the last book of the Bible written.
- Revelation is about the “revealing” of Christ and His Eternal Kingdom.
- Rough Outline:
 - Prologue - 1:1-8
 - Vision of Christ - 1:9-20
 - The Seven Churches - Chapters 2-3
 - Tribulation and Millennial Kingdom - Chapters 4-20
 - Kingdom of Heaven - 21:1-22:5
 - Epilogue - 22:6-21

Methods for Interpreting Revelation

- Idealist - Revelation is an allegory about spiritual growth or good vs. evil.
- Historicist - Revelation describes an overview of human history.
- Preterist - Revelation describes events fulfilled in our past, either in the 1st Century or in the Roman Empire.
- Futurist - Revelation describes events that remain largely unfulfilled until future.
 - This is how I interpret it.

J. Dwight Pentecost’s Rules for Interpreting Prophecy from Things to Come

- Interpret literally.
- Interpret according to the harmony of prophecy.
- Observe the time relationships - “Mountain Peaks of Prophecy”.
 - “It is important to observe that the prophet may view widely separated events as continuous, or future things as either past or present”.
- Interpret prophecy Christologically.
- Interpret historically.
- Interpret grammatically.
- Interpret according to the law of double reference.
- Some prophecies can have more than one fulfillment, or fulfillment in multiple events.
- Interpret consistently.

The Book of Revelation

Chapter 1

Overview

- Theme – “A Vision of Christ the Coming King”
- Outline
 - Prologue - 1:1-3
 - Greetings - 1:4-8
 - Vision of Christ and Seven Candlesticks - 1:9-20

Notes

- vs. 1 – The message comes from God to Christ to an angel to John to us.
- vs. 2 - “Word of God” – It’s all about Christ, compare to John 1:1
- vs. 3 – Note the blessing on those that read and heed this book. It can be understood and applied to our lives!
- vs. 4 - Asia - present-day Turkey.
- vs. 4 - “Seven Spirits” - phrase will reappear 3x (3:1, 4:5, 5:6). Almost certainly refers to the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2-3).
- vs. 5-8 – this section is full of tremendous praise of Christ.
- vs. 8 - “Alpha and Omega” - the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Refers to Christ as complete (“from A to Z”) and eternal (“from beginning to end”)
- vs. 9 – Patmos is a Greek island about 60 miles southwest of Ephesus.
- vs. 10 – “Lord’s Day” - Sunday
- vs. 11 - We’ll focus on each of these cities in the coming chapters.
- vs. 12 – Seven separate candlesticks (lampstands) representing the seven churches of vs. 11 – Revelation 1:20, 2:5
- vs. 13 - “like unto the Son of Man” - this figure looks like Christ because He is Christ. John is seeing the familiar likeness now glorified.
- vs. 13 - similar to the garments of the High Priest in Exodus 28:4-8.
- vs. 14-16 – compare to Daniel 10:5-6, Matthew 17:2, Revelation 19:11-13
- vs. 16 - “two-edged sword” - see Hebrew 4:12.
- vs. 17 - “fell at his feet as dead” - the common reaction for a human encountering God’s glory (Ezekiel 1:28) or even an angel’s (Daniel 8:17)
- vs. 19 – an outline for the book – “things hast seen”, “things which are”, “things which shall be”
- vs. 20 - Christ interprets part of the vision for us:
 - seven stars - angels (lit. *messengers*, probably pastors).
 - Where these coming to meet John on Patmos?
 - seven candlesticks - churches in vs. 11.