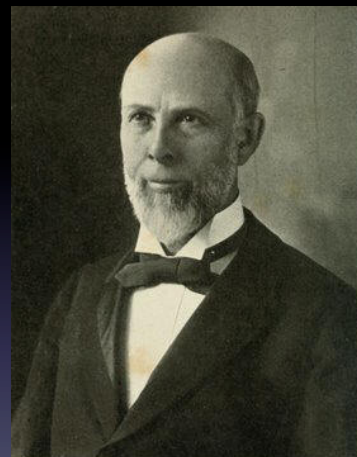
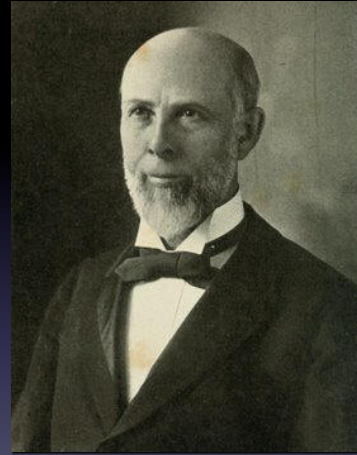


"We cannot believe that the sacred writers desired to be misunderstood. They did not write with a purpose to confuse and mislead their readers. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that the Scripture, given by divine inspiration, is of the nature of a puzzle designed to exercise the ingenuity of critics. It was given to make men wise unto salvation, and in great part it is so direct and simple in its teachings that a little child can understand its meaning.



Milton S. Terry
19th century theologian

It will be noticed at once that [the allegorical interpretation] is to disregard the common signification of words, and give wing to all manner of fanciful speculation. It does not draw out the legitimate meaning of an author's language, but foists into it whatever the whim or fancy of an interpreter may desire. As a system therefore, it puts itself beyond all well-defined principles and laws."



Milton S. Terry
19th century theologian

The 3 main interpretational views of prophecy – thus Revelation:

Preterist (Post-millennial) – this view sees Revelation as historical record rather than predictive prophecy.

Allegorical (A-millennial) – this view sees Revelation as an allegory of the timeless struggle between good and evil.

Futurist (Pre & mid - millennial) – this view sees Revelation as primarily predictive prophecy to be fulfilled in the very last days. It takes a literal approach to the Revelation.

For the most part, the early church viewed Revelation futuristically.

The futuristic view of Revelation decreased as the influence of the Catholic church increased.

Rev 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

It is the “revelation” (singular) of Jesus Christ.

The book of Revelation is not about prophecy – it’s about Jesus Christ!

Revelation = *apokalupsis*: the unveiling (used 18x in scripture)

Revelation is about the unveiling of Jesus to the world and the circumstances that surround that event.

1 Pet 1:7 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, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

Why study Revelation?

Those who neglect the study of Revelation deprive themselves of a great deal of biblical truth:

- It promises a blessing to all who read it – 1:3
- It stresses the inspiration of Scripture – 1:2
- Of its 404 verses, 278 allude to the inspired O.T.
- It reveals God the Father in all His glory and majesty
- It illustrates the depths of man's depravity – 16:9,11, 20:7-9
- It presents one of the clearest teachings of redemption in the entire Bible – 1:5
- It contains approx. 25% of the Bible's references to angels
- It explains the origin of demons and Lucifer's war with heaven – 12:7-9

- It warns the church of the dangers of sin & compromise – chaps. 2-3
- It teaches how to properly worship God – chaps. 4-5
- It affirms the full deity of Christ
- It pictures the return of Christ like no other biblical book – chap. 19
- It portrays Christ's ultimate triumph over Satan – 20:10
- It reveals the 1000-year earthly kingdom of Christ – chap. 20
- It describes the final judgment of the wicked & their ultimate doom – 20:11-15
- It reveals, like no other biblical passage, the glories of heaven, the New Jerusalem, & the eternal state of the redeemed – chaps. 21-22

"Much of the prophecy of the Bible deals with the distant future, including the Old Testament promises of the coming Messiah, the prophecies of Daniel concerning the future world empires, the body of truth relating to the coming kingdom on earth as well as countless other prophecies. If the events of chapters 4-19 are future, even from our viewpoint today, they teach the blessed truth of the ultimate supremacy of God and the triumph of righteousness. The immediate application of distant events is familiar in Scripture, as for instance 2 Peter 3:10-12, which speaks of the ultimate dissolution of the earth; nevertheless the succeeding passage makes an immediate application."



John F. Walvoord

Who wrote the Revelation?

The author identifies himself as “John” four times:

1:1 And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

1:4 John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:

1:9 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.

22:8 Now I, John, saw and heard these things.

Until the third century, the early church unanimously affirmed the apostle John, the son of Zebedee, as the author of Revelation (along with the 4th gospel & the epistles of John)

Early church fathers who believed the apostle John was the author:

- Justin Martyr (lived in Ephesus & was a disciple of Polycarp who was a disciple of John)
- Irenaeus (lived in Smyrna)
- Tertullian
- Origen
- Hippolytus
- Victorinus (author of the 3rd century commentary on the Revelation)

It wasn't until the second half of the 3rd century that Dionysius, the bishop of the church in Alexandria, & Eusebius raised a serious challenge to the apostle John's authorship of the Revelation.

When was the Revelation written?

Two main views:

- It was written during the reign of Nero in A.D. 68 or the reign of Domitian in A.D. 96.
- A.D. 68 is adopted by those who view the Revelation as history
- A.D. 96 is adopted by those who view the Revelation as future prophecy of the end times.

Early church fathers who believed the Revelation was written in A.D. 96:

Irenaeus

Clement of Alexandria

Origen

Victorinus

Eusebius

Jerome

Reasons for the A.D. 96 authorship:

- The persecution of the churches in chaps. 2-3 better fits the persecution of Domitian rather than Nero whose persecution of Christians was relatively confined to the city of Rome.
- The condition of the churches best fits with A.D. 96 since, during the earlier date (A.D. 68), the churches were relatively healthy as illustrated by Paul's letters.
- Paul never mentions the heretical sect of the Nicolaitans that John refers to in Revelation with little fanfare seeming to assume his readers would know exactly who he was talking about.

- In A.D. 60, the city of Laodicea was devastated by an earthquake and was in the process of being rebuilt during the remaining part of Nero's reign. Therefore it could hardly have been seen as "rich, wealthy, & having need of nothing" in A.D. 68.
- There is evidence that the church of Smyrna was not founded until after Paul's death in about A.D. 67. If so, it would have not had time to grow to a mature church & then decline by A.D. 68.
- John did not leave Palestine for Asia Minor until A.D. 66-70 therefore not giving him enough time to become a big enough problem to the Romans for Nero to exile him to the island of Patmos leading us to believe that it was Domitian who exiled him.

2 Pet 3:11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,