

The Revelation of Revelation

In my introduction to this book I made the following comment:

“The student of eschatology is presently confronted with a multitude of end-time theories: pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation, post-tribulation, pre-millennial, post-millennial, a-millennial, futurist, historicist, full or partial preterist, hyper-literal or allegorical interpretations and the list goes on . . . With variations within each particular school of thought we probably find that there are over a hundred different scenarios offered up as truth, if not more. Therefore, if you happen to align yourself with any one of the eschatological viewpoints, you will automatically find yourself in disagreement with over ninety percent of the Christian Community. This ought not to be.”

All through the writing of this study I have been totally focused on presenting the prophecies that can be readily understood from the plain reading. In the beginning I presented the Twelve Rules for **Handling God’s Word and have been diligently holding fast to those principles. My motivation was and** is to extract from the Scriptures what God has actually said rather than give an interpretation which would really only be my opinion. In so doing I discovered that the Word of God was constantly pulling down the private interpretations of man, including some that I had taken on myself.

It is acknowledged that most end-time Bible teachers are genuinely attempting to make biblical sense out of the symbolism found in the Book of Revelation. But the very fact that there are sooooo many different ideas floating around brings us to the inevitable conclusion that they cannot all be correct. And I am loathe to add yet another opinion to the plethora of prophetic pontifications. Yet the Book of Revelation by its very nature demands to be understood.

Along with many others, I observed that although there are countless interpretations of the various visions found in the writings of John of Patmos, they can all be arranged into seven basic perspectives from which the various interpretations spring forth and they are: The Idealist; The Historicist; The Preterist; The Futurist; The Literalist; The Universalist and The Doctrinalist. The Idealist, Historicist, Preterist, and the Futurist are the more commonly known viewpoints. If you type Four Views of Revelation into your browser, you will find many books and articles attempting to explain these different approaches to the Apocalypse, usually but not always favouring one view over the others. Some of these books have invited writers of the different persuasions to present their point of view.

The Literalist, Universalist and Doctrinalist viewpoints are minority views possibly not heard of by many, but I have included them in order to completely cover all the known variations of perspective that are used to interpret this most controversial book. The following is a brief summary of each of the different views that the eschatology pundits have put forth:

The Idealist Viewpoint

Basic Premise: The Book of Revelation is a non-historical and non-prophetic drama about spiritual realities. This method of interpretation has its origins among the ancient theologians of Alexandria, who spiritualised and allegorised much of the Bible to the extent that the many historical events were not treated literally at all but as symbolic stories from which we may learn.

The Historicist Viewpoint

Basic Premise: The Book of Revelation is a prophetic picture of the church history from the time of its writing to the end of the age. Historicists believe the events in Revelation are symbolic of historical events throughout the church age and they usually interpret Mystery Babylon and the Beast as being the apostate church with the Papacy as the Antichrist. Many also interpret the letters to the seven churches as descriptive of seven eras of church history.

The Preterist Viewpoint

Basic Premise: The Book of Revelation is primarily prophetic of the imminent events that were to happen in 70AD with the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple, though some accept the last chapters as pertaining to the end of the age. With both Full and Partial Preterists there is some dispute, with Full Preterists insisting Revelation 19 was only spiritual and also occurred in 70AD. They typically interpret the millennium as being a symbolic number only and that it represents the church age. (Preterist: from the Latin *praeter* meaning 'past')

The Futurist Viewpoint

Basic Premise: The Book of Revelation is primarily prophecy about the final days leading to the end of the world. Apart from those who hold a historical view of the letters to the seven churches, the Futurists believe the prophecies of Revelation are yet to come. They generally believe in a literal thousand year reign of Jesus Christ who will return to rule in His physical resurrected body from Jerusalem. They also believe in **a rapture of believers before a seven year tribulation that comes before Jesus' millennial rule**, though some believe the rapture is after that tribulation or in the midst of it. Thus we have Pre-tribulation, Mid-tribulation and Post-tribulation end-time theorists among those who hold to the Futurist point of view.

The Literalist Viewpoint

Basic Premise: The Book of Revelation is fully prophetic and is to be taken literally all the way through, even those portions that seem clearly symbolic. It is somewhat similar to the Futurist viewpoint, but attempts to overcome the vagaries of interpretation by taking the plain meaning to its fullest extent. Often denigrated as being hyper-literal by its detractors.

The Universalist Viewpoint

Basic Premise: All of the above views of the Book of Revelation are legitimate. In the Universalist mind-set, there is no contradiction between Idealist, Historicist, Preterist, Futurist, or Literalist. This viewpoint assumes that the Apocalypse has multiple fulfillment of each of its prophecies and can also be taken completely literally whilst still having an allegorical meaning. In this view God has performed a miracle by giving a five in one prophecy. This viewpoint is thought by its detractors to be the result of a worldly post-modern concept coming into the church expressed in the following phrase: What is true for you is true for you and what is true for me is true for me. In other words, whatever you make of it is okay.

The Doctrinalist Viewpoint

Basic Premise: The Book of Revelation cannot be understood without a comprehensive understanding of the Gospel AND a thorough appreciation of the prophecies of the Apostles and the Prophets. The Doctrinalist subjects the Apocalypse and its various interpretations to the scrutiny of that which has already been revealed in plain language from the Word of God and rejects that which cannot be substantiated from the rest of the Bible. The Doctrinalist therefore advocates understanding Revelation from the frame work of all that has been written in the Scriptures before it came into being.

The Apocalypse of John of Patmos is so saturated with symbolism that it has provoked many authors to present hundreds of pages pulling these various views of Revelation apart and assembling plausible proofs of support for their own preferred viewpoint, only to find that others have attacked their ideas with equal plausibility. At different times throughout history the different views have all had their day of being more prominent than the others. Presently the Futurist view seems to be riding high, though in early church times the Idealist was more prominent. During the Reformation, the Historicist perspective rose to prominence, and after the prognostics of the Historicist views at that time failed to manifest, along came the Preterists and later the Futurists, though both of them claim support from early church times. Little is known of the origins of the Literalists, the Universalists or the Doctrinalists, whose views I stumbled upon in the course of my research.

However, for me to properly address this subject is more than can be accomplished in a small chapter. The subject is huge, and it has become obvious that it will require me to present my discoveries in another book. Besides, it really is another subject and somewhat off topic from this present study. However, those of you who have apprehended the reality of the Kingdom of Judah, the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of God will be well prepared to receive what I have discovered about the writings of John of Patmos. The title of this chapter you are presently reading will be the title of my up and coming publication. If you have been enlightened with The Lion and The Unicorn on the Road to Zion, you will certainly enjoy The Revelation of Revelation. Look for more details in this Appendix under Recommended Reading.

In my treatise I will be presenting a more complete overview of each of the seven different viewpoints and their various pros and cons along with some very interesting historical and archaeological discoveries, including some astounding information about the number 666 and the name of the beast (exposed by ancient documents), all now made available online for all to see. This study also brings into question most contemporary eschatological theories and actually overturned a number of my own beliefs about the end times.

Whilst I will be giving each of the different viewpoints their due consideration, I will be giving particular attention to the Doctrinalist Viewpoint. Their basic premise caught my attention as their exegesis methodology aligns with the Twelve Rules for Handling **God's Word that I presented in my** introduction. The Doctrinalist approach to the Book of Revelation advocates using Scripture as the **ONLY** interpreter. I have found this to be the key that unlocks the door to the truth behind this mysterious book. No more Scriptureless interpretations. (Scriptureless: not yet found in English dictionaries) (: -)

The Revelation of Revelation will allow you to finally build a spiritual understanding of the Apocalypse that destroys the eschatological confusion, builds faith and confidence in the promises of God, and does not require you to jettison your intelligence, although it may require an unexpected paradigm shift. In the meantime, leave Revelation alone. Without a revelation, it is not a revelation. And look forward to reading The Revelation of Revelation. Amen.

Love, joy and peace to you in Jesus Mighty Name.