

Hope in a Hopeless Time

Session 5: December 1, 2019 (Revelation)

1. Criticism (cf. Wilfrid J. Harrington, O.P., *Revelation*, 2008)
 - a. Author
 - i. John (the Revelator), at the end of the first Christian century, on the island of Patmos [known for its psychedelic plants]
 - ii. Perhaps a Palestinian Paul follower (theme of anti-Christ and the end of time)
 - iii. NOT the Disciple John nor the Johannian Community
 - iv. “Johannian” Literature: late first Christian century, after the major persecution
 1. Gospel of John (gospel)
 2. I, II, and III John (epistles)
 3. Revelation (apocalypse)
 - b. Audience
 - i. [Historical] Non-Persecuted Asiatic Christians in the Roman Empire
 - ii. [Apocalyptic] Persecuted Christians in the Roman Empire
 - iii. [Global/Futurist] All Christians awaiting Christ’s Return
 - c. Style
 - i. Epistle
 1. “To the seven churches of Asia . . .”
 2. Pauline structure
 3. Oral tradition: written to be read aloud
 - ii. Apocalypse
 1. Author is familiar with Ezekiel and Daniel
 2. Otherworldly Journey Apocalypse
 - d. Messages
 - i. The follow things will take place before Christ’s return.
 - ii. Resist the influence of the anti-Christ.
 - iii. Evil will come to an end, and God’s Kingdom will be established on Earth.
 - e. Interpretive Frameworks
 - i. Idealist/Non-Historical: no actual historical effort, expresses ideals and eternal principles for Christian thought [like standard Johannian literature]
 - ii. World-Historical/Church-Historical: outlines the actual order of world history up to the time of its writing [*ex eventu* prophecy; cf. Daniel] and its relationship to the history of Christianity → can still be used for modern church history [although dangerous]
 - iii. End-Historical/Futurist: Revelation describes the literal end of the world and the establishment of a new Jerusalem [has been used in damaging ways]
 - iv. Contemporary-Historical/Preterist: Only accounts for John’s world, and the text has no implications for the present day → “completely in the past” (preterite)

2. Outline of the Book of Revelation

- a. Prologue (Ch. 1)
- b. Epistle to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Chs. 2-3)
 - i. Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamem, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea
 - ii. "Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches!" (3:22)
- c. Seven Visions (Chs. 4-22)
 - i. Throne Vision (Chs. 4-5)
 - ii. The Seven Seals (Chs. 6-7)
 - iii. The Seven Trumpets (Chs. 8-11)
 - iv. The Triumph over Evil (Chs. 12-14)
 - v. The Seven Bowls of Wrath (Chs. 15-19)
 - vi. Armageddon and Judgment Day (Chs. 19-20)
 - vii. The New Jerusalem (Chs. 21-22)
- d. Epilogue (Ch. 22)

3. Today's Recommended Chapters

- a. The Throne Vision (Chs. 4-5)
 - i. The Four Living Creatures (The Four Gospels)
 - ii. Doxologies
 - 1. 4:8: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come!"
 - 2. 4:11: "Worthy are you, our Lord and God to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things; by your will they were created and came into being!"
 - 3. 5:12: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches, wisdom and might, honor and glory and blessing!"
 - 4. 5:13: "Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto Him who sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb!" (cf. Handel, *Messiah*)
- b. Judgment Day (Ch. 20)
 - i. The Resurrection of the Righteous
 - ii. The Millennium
 - iii. The Resurrection of the Wicked
 - iv. Judgment
 - v. The Second Death and the Lake of Fire
- c. The New Jerusalem (Ch. 21-22)
 - i. The Waters of Life
 - ii. The Trees of Life
 - iii. No More Night

THANK YOU FOR ENGAGING IN THIS SERIES