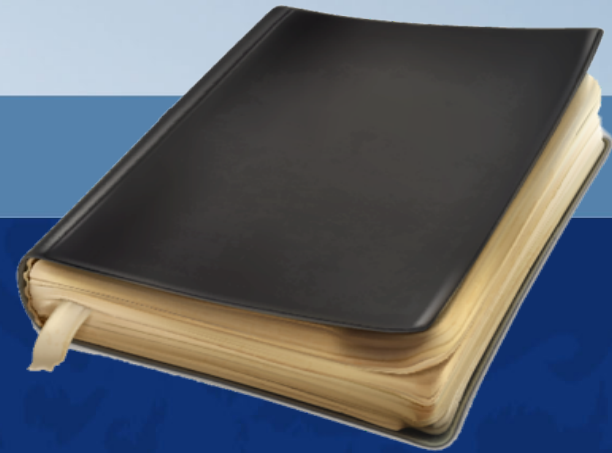


REVELATION MADE RELEVANT!

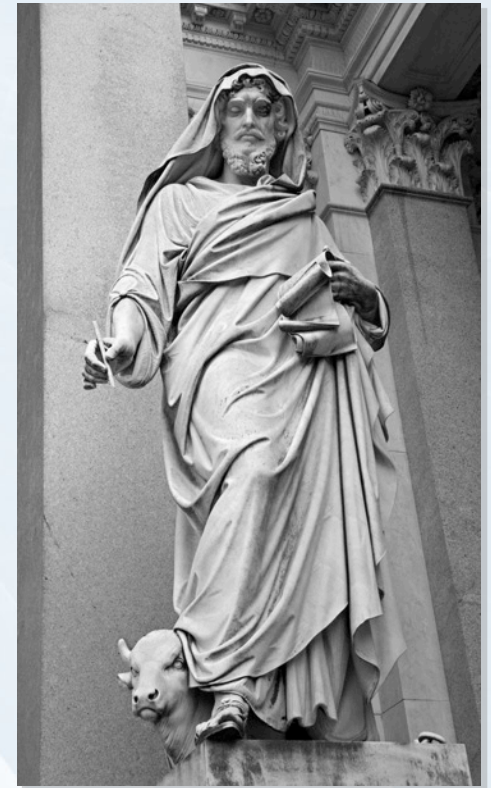
Friday Night Bible Study with Fr. Ward



Introduction

Author

- the early well documented tradition among the church fathers was that John the beloved apostle, the author of the Gospel of John and the three letters of John, wrote Revelation



Apostle John

Introduction

Audience

- Revelation describes the vision that the apostle John had while on the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea.
- First sent to the seven churches on Asia Minor or the western part of modern day Turkey. Since these churches were located by widely traveled roads that connected them, Revelation was meant to be a circular letter.
- Its use spread throughout the Roman Empire until it was universally recognized as God's Word.



Island of Patmos today





Introduction

Audience

- Revelation describes the vision that the apostle John had while on the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea.
- Its message was to give hope to first century Christians who were or would be going through persecution. Ultimately, however, its purpose was to give hope and insight to believers of all ages of the future plan of salvation for our world and the unseen spiritual realities that pervade our natural world.



Island of Patmos today

Introduction

Date

- The content of Revelation suggests it was written during a time of severe persecution.
- There are two possible periods when Christians suffered persecution under the Roman Empire:
 - The reign of Emperor Nero (AD 54–68)
 - The reign of Emperor Domitian (AD 81–96)

Introduction

Purpose

- It first served to encourage and challenge believers living in Asia Minor during a time of persecution. The Church not only faced persecution but false teachers, the temptations of immorality, idolatry, and spiritual complacency both within the Church and society! It eventually became accepted as God's Word for the Church for all ages.
- Revelation is meant to instruct, guide, comfort, and reassure Christians in their spiritual journey and point the world to the coming Day of the Lord and Return of the King!

Introduction

Revelation: An Outline

- **Prologue (1:1–3)**
- 1. *Seven Messages to Seven Churches (1:4–3:22)*
- 2. *Seven Seals (4:1–8:5)*
- 3. *Seven Trumpets (8:2–11:19)*
- 4. *Seven Symbolic Histories (12:1–14:20)*
- 5. *Seven Bowls (15:1–16:21)*
- 6. *Seven Messages of Judgment (17:1–19:10)*
- 7. *Seven Visions (19:11–22:5)*
- **Epilogue (22:6–21)**



FOUR VIEWS ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Preterist, Historicist, Futurist, Idealist



Four Interpretive Views

1. PRETERIST

- Think “PRE” or before/early on! **Preterists** see Revelation as prophecy that was fulfilled primarily in **the first century AD**.
- **Partial Preterists** understand most of Revelation as prophecy fulfilled in the first century AD, though the final chapters describe future events at the end of time.
- **Full Preterists** contend that the return of Jesus described in Revelation 19 was spiritual and occurred in AD 70. This would be an unorthodox view and contrary to the Apostle’s and Nicene Creed.



Four Interpretive Views

2. HISTORICIST

- Think “History!” - **Historicists** see Revelation as prophecy about church history from the time of John to the end of the world.
- Revelation is like a history textbook for the past, present, and future.
- The events in Revelation are symbolic descriptions of historical events throughout church history culminating in the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of God’s Kingdom.



Four Interpretive Views

3. FUTURIST

- Think “Future!” **Futurists** see Revelation as prophecy primarily about the future end of the world.
- In the futurist view, all Revelation after chapter 3 is yet to occur. Those who believe in the pre-tribulation rapture believe the rapture occurs *before* chapter 4.
- Revelation is a prophecy that describes the end of time and the years leading immediately to the end (tribulation period).
- Some futurists understand the Seven Churches similarly to the historicist view: *the churches represent eras in church history.*



Four Interpretive Views

4. IDEALIST

- Can you say, “Drama?” **Idealists** see Revelation as a non-historical and non-prophetic drama about spiritual realities.
- The images, visions, and dreams are symbolic expressions of struggles between good and evil throughout time.
- They represent the struggle between the kingdom of God and the powers of evil.
- This view originated among ancient Alexandrian theologians who frequently spiritualized and allegorized biblical texts.
- It’s an allegory for all times and places.



Introduction

Revelation 1:1-2:

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His bond-servants what must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

—Revelation 1:1–2

Introduction

Revelation 1:3:

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.”

Revelation 1:3

Greeting and Doxology

Revelation 1:4-6:

***“John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, 5and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood— 6and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”*”**

Greeting and Doxology

Revelation 1:7-8:

“7BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen.

8“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Major Themes – God’s Eternal Attributes

- 1. He Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come (1:4)**
- 2. “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, who was and who is to come.” (1:8)**
- 3. Him who lives for ever and ever. (4:10)**
- 4. Christ’s Words in Rev. 1:17, 18 and Rev. 21:6; 22:13**

Major Themes – Christ Is Lord & Savior

- **Christ is Ruler of the kings of the earth Rev. 17:14; 19:11-22.**
- **He who released us from our sins by His blood (1:5)**
- **Rev. 5:9, 7:14; 12:11; 22:14**

Major Themes - Worship

- **Doxologies of Praise to God**
- **To Him be glory and power forever and ever (1:6)**
- **Rev. 4:11; 5:12-13; 7:10,12**
- **Rev. 15:2-3**
- **Rev. 19:1-7**

Major Themes – 2ND Coming

- **He is Coming with the Clouds (1:7)**
- **Rev. 2:25 – “Hold on...until I come.”**
- **Rev. 3:3/16:15 – “I will come like a thief”**
- **Rev. 3:11/22:7, 12 – “I am coming soon!” Hold onto what you have. My reward is with Me.**
- **Rev. 20:20 – “Yes, I am coming soon.” “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”**

Setting of the Prophecy

Revelation 1:9-12:

9 “I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, 11 saying, “Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”

on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

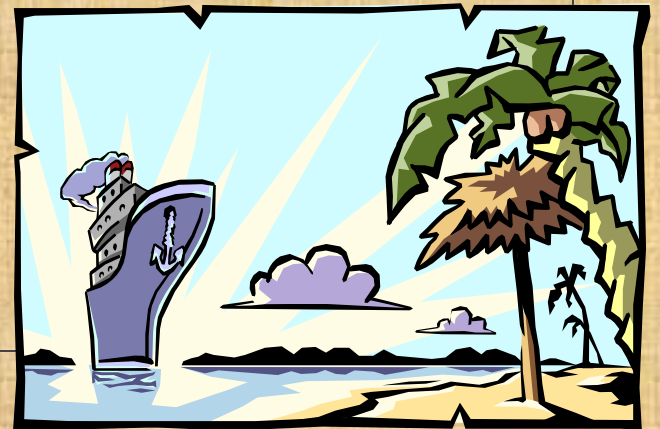
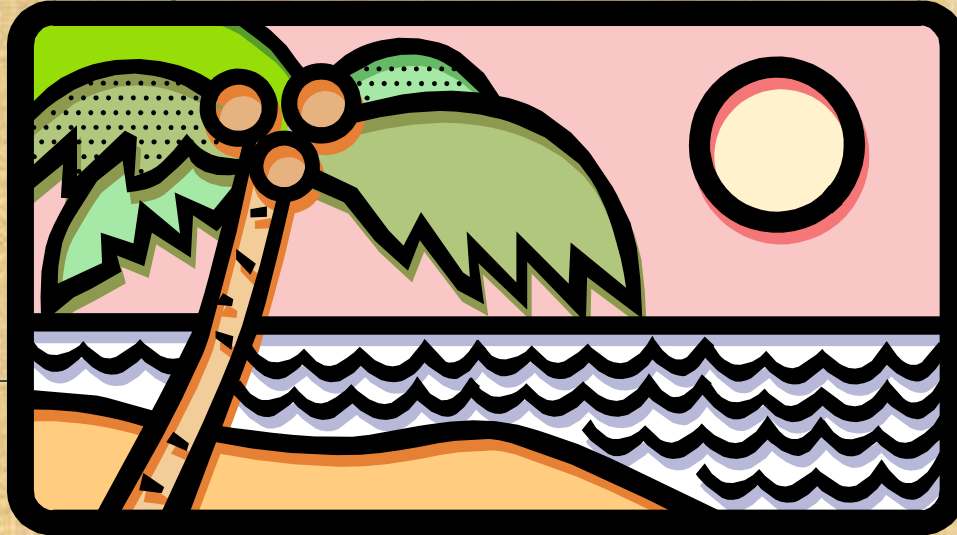


☞ A pleasure cruise, right?

- ☞ There “on account of” preaching the word
- Usually exile involved banishment to an island
 - Islands “full of exiles” during Domitian’s reign
 - Cyclades and Sporades for banishing political prisoners
 - Patmos was in Sporades; Pliny mentions as a place of exile

Not a barren island...

- ☞ Had its own Greek gymnasium
- ☞ its own temple and cult of Artemis
- ☞ Allowed visitors
- ☞ Only 40-50 miles SW of Ephesus



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Among the Lampstands (1:11-12)

- ☞ “And I saw”: typical language for visions
 - Ezek 1:1: the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God...
 - also Ezek 23:13; Dan 8:7; 1 En. 17:3-8; etc.
- ☞ 7-branched lampstand (menorah): most common symbol of Israel and Jewish faith, including in Asia Minor
 - it was used by Samaritans and others who considered themselves Israel’s true heirs

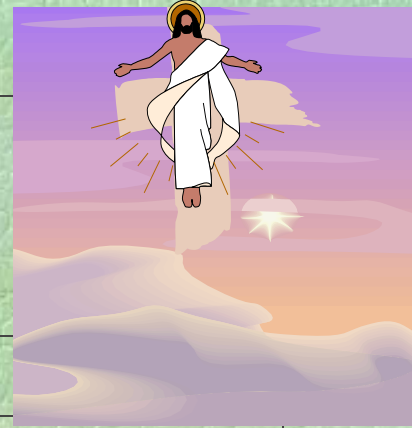
Vision of the Son of Man

Revelation 1:13-16:

12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 13 and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15 His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. 16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.



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"THOU SHALT NOT STEAL" EXODUS 20:15



Title: from Dan 7:13-14

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was **one like a son of man**, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.

He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Vision of the Son of Man

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"THOU SHALT NOT STEAL" EXODUS 20:15

Daniel 7:9-10: GOD as Ancient of Days

- ☞ Hair like wool, white snow (1:14)
- ☞ *As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool.*
- ☞ *His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.*



Vision of the Son of Man

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☞ Bronze limbs may also recall Ezek 1:7:

- their feet were like those of a calf and gleamed like burnished bronze.

☞ Glowing metal can also depict **God's** glory, Ezek 1:27:

- I saw that from what appeared to be his waist up he looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire, and that from there down he looked like fire; and brilliant light surrounded him

Revelation

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Voice like many waters (1:15; cf. 19:6)



- ☞ Maybe like “sound of multitude” in Dan 10:6
- ☞ but closer is God’s own voice as many waters, Ezek 1:24; 43:2 (cf. 4 Ezra 6:17):

- When the creatures moved, I heard the sound of their wings, like the roar of rushing waters, like the voice of the Almighty, like the tumult of an army. When they stood still, they lowered their wings.
- and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory.





GOODSALT.COM
"THOU SHALT NOT STEAL" EXODUS 20:15

Revelation

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REV. 1:17-20

Revelation 1:17-20:

17*“When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. 19”Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things. 20“As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”*

First and Last (1:17)

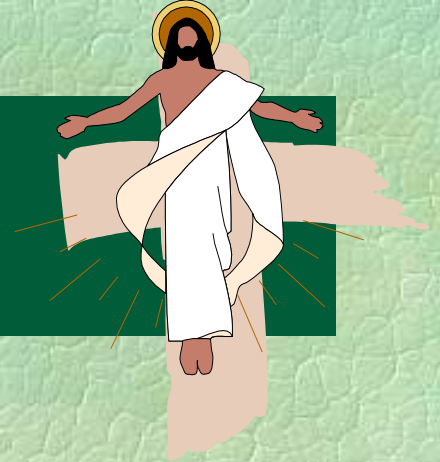
- ☞ *"Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last"*
- ☞ Equivalent to Alpha and Omega (1:8)
- ☞ Jesus says these words again in Rev. 22:12-13
- ☞ Based on Is 44:6: *"Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and His Redeemer, the LORD of Hosts: I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me."*

Revelation

Revelation 1:17-20:

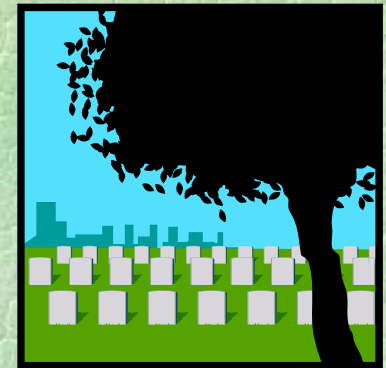
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Triumph over death (1:18)



☞ “Living One”

- title for God in Jewish literature
- here, for Jesus



☞ already participating in eschatological resurrection (see 1:5)

Revelation

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Keys of death and Hades

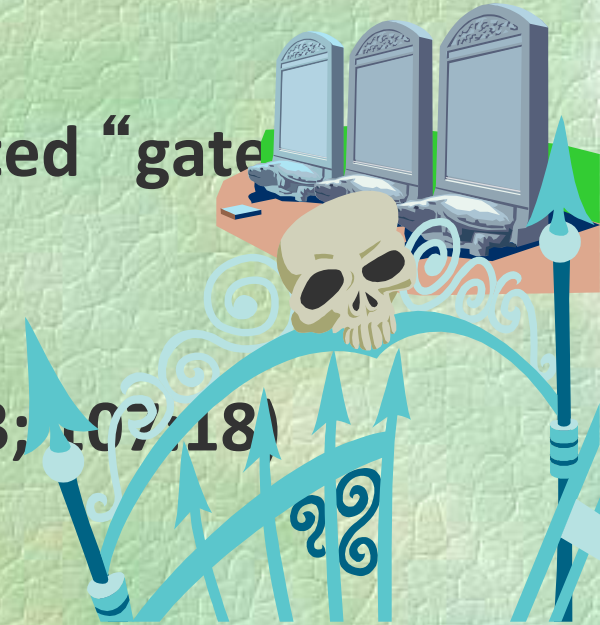


- ☞ In an ancient palace, usually just one pair of keys
- ☞ the one who held them was an important official
- ☞ Rev. 3:7-8: [I' m the one] who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open... See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut.

Similar Greek expressions

☞ Greek:

- “coming to gates of Hades” = dying
- “gates of Sheol” in Hebrew translated “gate of Hades” in Greek (Septuagint)
- “gates of Sheol” (Is 38:10)
- “gates of death” (Job 38:17; Ps 9:13; Eccl 9:18)



☞ Deities of underworld (Hades, Pluto, Anubis) held keys to underworld

☞ but in Judaism, only GOD: “You have the authority over life and death, and you lead down to the gates of Hades and bring up from there” (Wisd. 16:13)

☞ Jesus is DIVINE

☞ So what if the emperor, a mortal himself, threatened them with death?



Revelation

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