

Revelation

ILLUSTRATED

The word "Revelation" is rendered in a highly stylized, gothic-inspired font. The letters are three-dimensional and have a metallic, golden-yellow finish with a gradient of red and orange, giving them a glowing, fiery appearance. The letters are set against a dark, textured background. Below the main word, the word "ILLUSTRATED" is written in a bold, red, sans-serif font on a golden ribbon that curls and flows across the bottom of the main text.

Artwork by Pat Marvenko Smith ©1982, 1992
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Introduction: (Rev 1: 1 – 3)

- “Revelation” (apokalupsis) – means:
 - An uncovering, a laying bare, making naked
 - A disclosure of truth, instruction, concerning divine things before unknown. (Thayer p. 62)
- “Shortly come to pass” (ταχει– soon take place, quickly) – (22:10)
- Blessed (makarios – happy or congratulations), (Thayer p. 386) are those who read hear and keep what is written for the time is near (εγγυσ – at hand or in hand) (1: 3)

Obstacles to Study of Revelation

- Abused by those who find they can prove preconceived ideas by manipulating the figures.
 - This approach ignores a basic principle of interpretation: the obscure passage should be interpreted in the light of the clear passage(s).
- Even the sincere differ so drastically that many simply abandon the effort or approach the study with the defeatist mind-set “it cannot be understood.”
 - “Shall we abandon the effort?”
 - “Will we not still have differences of opinion?”
 - “Let him who is without his favorite speculation, cast the first stone.”

“What is in it for me?”

- Revelation contains seven beatitudes “to be congratulated” statements:
 1. Revelation 1:3
 2. Revelation 14:13
 3. Revelation 16:15
 4. Revelation 19:9
 5. Revelation 20:6
 6. Revelation 22:7
 7. Revelation 22:14

Major Methods of Interpretation

- Futurist Method
 - Events Around the End of the World
- Continuous Historical Method
 - Prediction of Religious and Political History
 - Catholic/Protestant Views
- Philosophy of History Method
 - Philosophical Principles
- Preterist Method
 - Destruction of Jerusalem
 - Fall of Rome
 - Historical Background Method

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

- Revelation is a document of prophecy
- Revelation is written in largely symbolic language
- Revelation is written in Old Testament style with New Testament application
- Revelation employs symbolic numerology

Symbolic Numerology

1 = unity; independent existence

2 = strengthening; redoubled courage/energy

3 = trinity; Divine completeness

4 = earth; world; cosmos;

5 + 2 = 10 = human completeness

3 + 4 = 7 = completeness through union of earth and heaven

3 + 4 = 12 = organized religion

$7/2 = 3\frac{1}{2}$ = incomplete; imperfect; aspirations unrealized

6 = falling short; failing; doom

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

- Revelation is a document of prophecy
- Revelation is written in largely symbolic language
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- Revelation employs symbolic numerology
- Revelation is Apocalyptic

Examples of Apocalyptic Literature

- Canonical

- Daniel
- Ezekiel
- Isaiah
- Joel

- Non-canonical

- The Book of Enoch
- The Assumption of Moses
- The Secrets of Enoch
- The Book of Baruch
- The Book of IV Ezra

Characteristics of Apocalyptic Literature

- Always possessed historical significance
- Generally of pseudonymous authorship
- Presentation of message through visions
- Contained a predictive element
- Use of symbols

History of Apocalyptic Literature

- Appeared between 210 B.C. and 200 A.D.
- Always pointed to a glorious day of release from darkened conditions of the fateful present political events
- Stressed the virtue of loyalty and stimulated faith by demonstration of certain overthrow of evil and victory for God
- Cryptic nature due to dangerous times