

THE REVELATION PARADOX

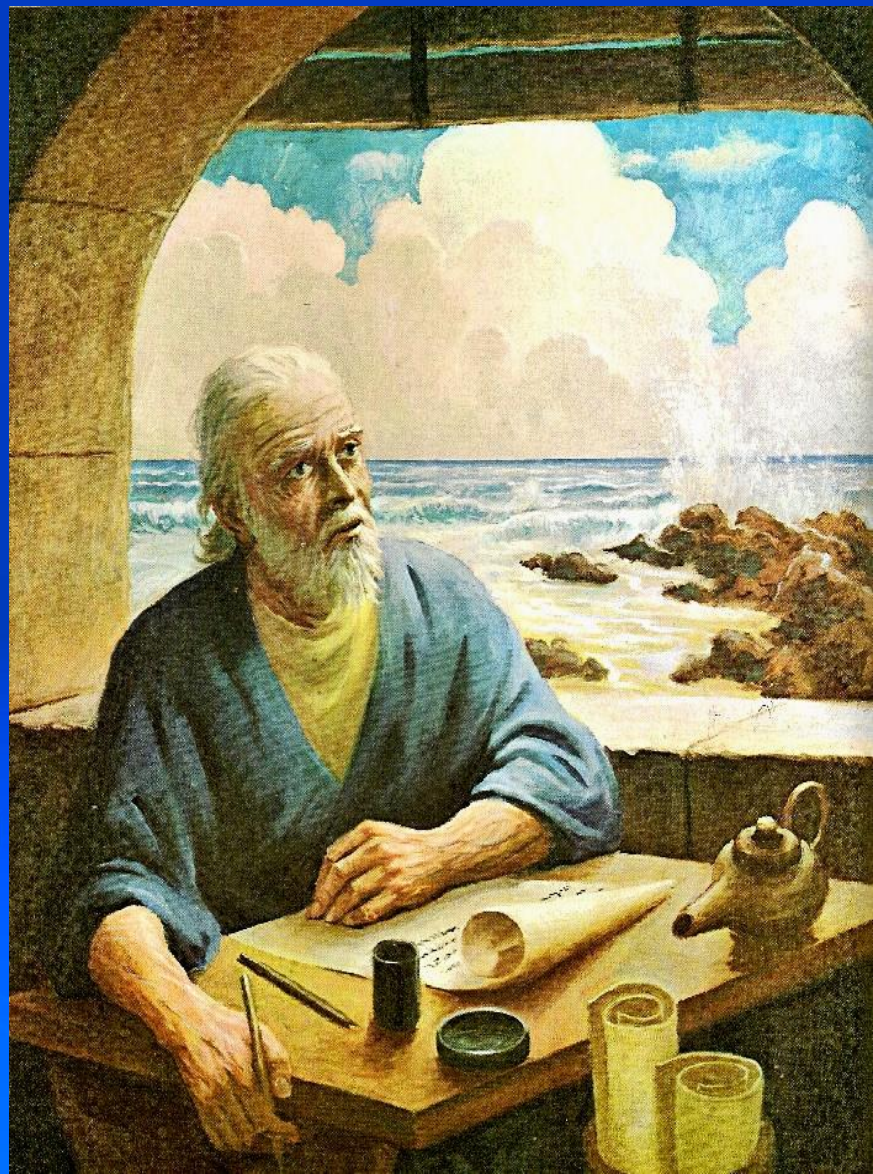
**The Best of Times
The Worst of Times**



- For John's time? Or far into the future?
- Our approach to studying Revelation:
- 1) Where did John get his ideas from?
- 2) Why he chose the symbols and language he did?
- 3) What were his sources?

WHICH JOHN?

- Only a first name; no family name is given
- Consensus of Bible scholars is he is John the Apostle
- Irenaeus a disciple of Polycarp; Polycarp a student of John and says John wrote Revelation
- Other early 2nd and 3rd century Church Fathers agree
- Although Paul known as Apostle to the Gentiles, John was also well known to believing Diaspora congregations





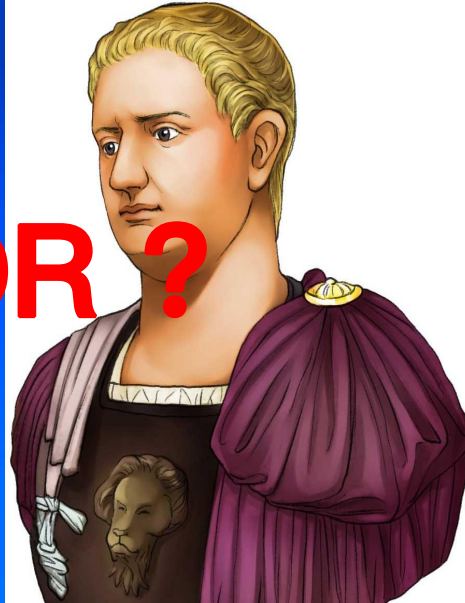
IMPORTANCE OF “WHEN?”

- 1st century believing congregations were synagogues
- Ekklesia = assembly
NOT “church”
- Revelation written before or after Temple destroyed in 70 A.D.?
- Polycarp says
Revelation written during the reign of Domitian

NERO



DOMITIAN



OR ?

EMPEROR WORSHIP



- Domitian demanded Christians worship him
- Gentiles now controlled the Messianic movement
- Gentile Believers denied they were part of a sect of Judaism, and therefore were NOT Jews
- The exemption that Roman Emperors had given to Jews did not apply to gentile Believers, but it did to Jewish Believers !

ISLAND OF PATMOS



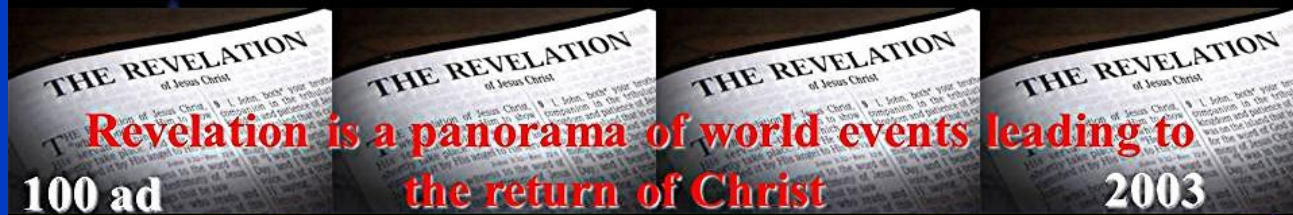
- After Temple destroyed, the Jews were devastated and afraid
- Jewish writers began disguising writings against Rome by referring to it as "Babylon"
- Therefore, Revelation written around 90 A.D.
- John exiled to Patmos for preaching God's Word and the Gospel
- NO New Testament until 3rd century
- New Testament writers ONLY had the Old Testament

4 APPROACHES TO REVELATION



- Most modern scholars see NO connection to the OT
- Preterist = things happening in the past
- Revelation, then, revolves around the Temple destruction in 70 A.D. so John wrote about 64-65 A.D.
- Babylon refers to Israel, and Israel is the persecutor of “the church”
- God is through with Israel, and has replaced Israel with the gentile church

HISTORICIST



The Historicist view of Revelation attempts to map the events described in the book to historical events, providing a panorama of the history of the Church from the days of John to the end of time.

- “The Church” for Historicists is the Western Church
- Signs and Symbols of Revelation then apply ONLY to the Western Church
- Current events seen as prophecy fulfilled
- In WWI many “Historicist” Christians committed suicide, left their communities, stopped having babies



- Futurist view says Revelation is about a time long after John (and still future to us)
- The visions are to be taken literally and chronologically
- The visions and their content will happen in the same order that John received them and recorded them
- Beale says: "In short, (for them) the Bible is interpreted by modern events first....."
- Revelation ONLY relevant to Believers in the actual end time

The Idealist View

REVELATION

A SYMBOL OF THE BATTLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL

THIS AGE

Those holding this view
do not expect any of
Revelation's prophecies
to ever be fulfilled.



- Entirely symbolic and allegory
- Seals, bowls, and trumpets emblematic of various church ages
- Favored by Higher Critics because it discounts the supernatural and the prophetic
- Each view has something to offer, but none represent the entire truth

UNDERSTANDING THE BOOK OF REVELATION

- 1) Revelation is Divine truth
- 2) It is real and the events are actual
- 3) Revelation does not stand alone; it is fully dependent on the Old Testament
- 4) The miracles and Divine power behind them are real
- 5) We are receiving Revelation fifth-handed
- God > Christ > Angels > John > Us



THE PROPHETS

OBADIAH
HABAKKUK
MALACHI
ZEPHANIAH
JEREMIAH
JOEL
AMOS
HAGGAI
MICAH
ISAIAH
EZRA
DANIEL
HOSEA
JONAH
ZECHARIAH
NATHAN
JEREMIAH
EZEKIEL

The key to Revelation

- Allusion = meant to call something to mind without expressing it directly
- Chapters and verses didn't exist until the 16th century so a short reference to a section of Scripture was used
- Revelation is largely God showing John how the OT prophecies fit together
- Revelation is the ONLY book of the Bible that promises a blessing for those who read and study it!!