

Revelation Class 2

Introduction Continued

We have spoken of John Zebedee, Jesus' cousin writing Revelation, as the climax and pinnacle and capstone of the Bible and Biblical revelation, small r. I think John is aware that he is doing for the churches in Asia Minor in the 1st century, what Jesus did for him and the disciples after the resurrection in Luke 24:44ff. He is doing what he has been told, to write what he 'sees' Rev 1:11, but I think he is also aware that he is demonstrating the faithfulness of Yahweh from start to finish and calling His people to be faithful as well, trusting in the demonstrated faithfulness of the triune God. So the way he tells what he 'sees' is by consciously tying together the whole OT, to him the whole Bible, the Torah, The Naviim or Prophets, and the Psalms or Writings...as his praise to God by praying and praising God's words back to him and by creating a work of praise which will be read out loud in the assembly of the righteous.

John understands that what he is writing is the climax of Prophetic writings. Interpreters often debate whether the book of Revelation is a commentary on a particular prophet but a strong case can be made that Revelation is a commentary, Jesus' commentary on the whole prophetic corpus.

Zechariah

The so called 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse, is not to be understood as a reference to the Notre Dame backfield of yore...historic football reference...1924 so dubbed by Grantland Rice. Zech 6 is interpreted and applied in Rev 6

Mount of Olives splitting and the flow of the river from the throne restored Zech 14 commented on promised in Rev 22.

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Joshua, the High Priest and Zerubbabel as types of the One to come pictured in Zech 3,4 are depicted in fulfillment in Rev 19 and Rev 11 measuring the New Jerusalem.

The problem confronting Israel and the prophet Zechariah, is, What will Yahweh do with Jerusalem?

1:6 God punished Jerusalem

1:14 The Nations gathered to destroy Jerusalem and the people of God but Yahweh protects and delivers Jerusalem and the people of God

9 God sent his king to rescue Jerusalem

14 God makes rescued Jerusalem the city of the Great King from which He rules the nations, the curse is rolled back and the blessing of God restored...so some commentators believe that Zechariah is the foundational text behind the program of Revelation.

Isaiah

Isaiah anticipates the Suffering Servant as deliverer

New Creation

Restoration of Jerusalem

Ezekiel

Eat this book

Gog/Magog converging on Jerusalem

River flowing from the Temple/Throne

Restoration of Jerusalem

Daniel Prophecy, Apocalyptic, Wisdom

Beasts-Imagery

Son of Man conquering-Genesis 2nd Adam charged to have authority over beasts but forfeited his authority and Paradise was lost

Beastly Kingdoms rule over Israel

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Revelation is a Kaleidoscopic view of the OT

Like Impressionist or punctiliar art gives a spray of images seeking to convey understanding...in the case of the book of Revelation the present and future are viewed in light of OT revelation. The words of the prophets are calls to faithfulness amidst chaos and disorder...at the Macro level which is then mirrored in the micro level...that is the disorder that each life experiences...so that individual experiences of disorder are part of something much bigger...we 'see' things in the images or pictures that are painted but give only glimpses and insights.

There are rhythms to the book of Revelation: Overview and Outline

Rev 1 Patmos AD 90 or so under the Emperor Domitian

2,3 Messages to the Churches of Asia, Western Asia Minor...The whole is a letter.

4,5 Theological heart of Rev...John in Heaven in the 90's sees what Isaiah saw in Is chapter 6 and worships God as Creator in 4 and Jesus as Redeemer in chapter 5

Now the Problems start 6-16...it gets a bit wild...time is difficult, the nature of events is difficult. There are 3 sequences of 7...6-8 Seals; 8-11 Trumpets; 15,16 Bowls; 12-14 have a separate structure of War between the Woman and the Dragon.

In the series of 7 there is a structure of 6 units then an interlude and a 7th.

In chapters 12-20 we are introduced to the Satanic trinity, The Dragon and the two Beasts (Political) and (Propaganda). There is a chiasmic or X like structure

12 Dragon 18 Babylon Judged and Removed

13 Beast 19 Beast Judged and Removed

14 Babylon 20 Dragon Judged and Removed

NOW DRAW AN X ON YOUR NOTES LINKING 12 TO 20 AND 14 TO 18.

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Further, there is a structure of 17-22 A Tale of Two Cities God commands Adam to develop Creation according to God's design and direction but Babylon represents Creation developed not as God intended. We see the City of Man versus the City of God...Imagery of Present Reality...We live in a fallen and perverted world-But God will finally make things as they should be...At one level New Jerusalem is God's gift imposed from outside that will crush and replace the Old Order but at another level Rev 22:24 Kings of the earth will bring the glory and products of human culture into the Holy City. Rev 22 is a picture of the Future home of God's People but it is also an image of the People of God themselves. There will be radical discontinuity as well Radical Continuity...The Gift of God from Heaven to Earth but also the best of this world brought in purified and refined.

Question: Is Rev mostly about the Present or the Future or is it all jumbled up?

1:4 Grace to you and peace...like Paul's letters...the whole book is A Letter! The letters to the churches are to 7 particular churches in Asia...but like Paul's letters they have broader appeal and application...but to understand the letter and rightly apply it we must understand it in its context as written to real churches in real places at a real point in time, dealing with real situations...The whole thing is a letter to them...The Book is relevant to us because the story is not over...just like Paul's letters.

Bulgakov, "Things are transfigured and luminous by beauty; they become the revelation of their own abstract meaning. And this revelation of the beauty of the things of the earth is the work of art. The world, as it were, has been given to us, and has remained, as it were, covered by an outward shell through which art penetrates, as if foreseeing the coming transfiguration of the world."

Probably more than any other NT book the book of Revelation has shaped and influenced the Church's hymnody. A little noticing project for you is to pay attention to the words of our hymns and see if you can pick up Revelation references.