

THE DETAILS

A magnifying glass with a blue handle and a black frame is positioned over the word 'DETAILS'. Inside the lens, a red devil character with horns, a tail, and a pitchfork is visible, appearing to be part of the letter 'L'. The background is a light blue with faint, stylized mountain peaks.

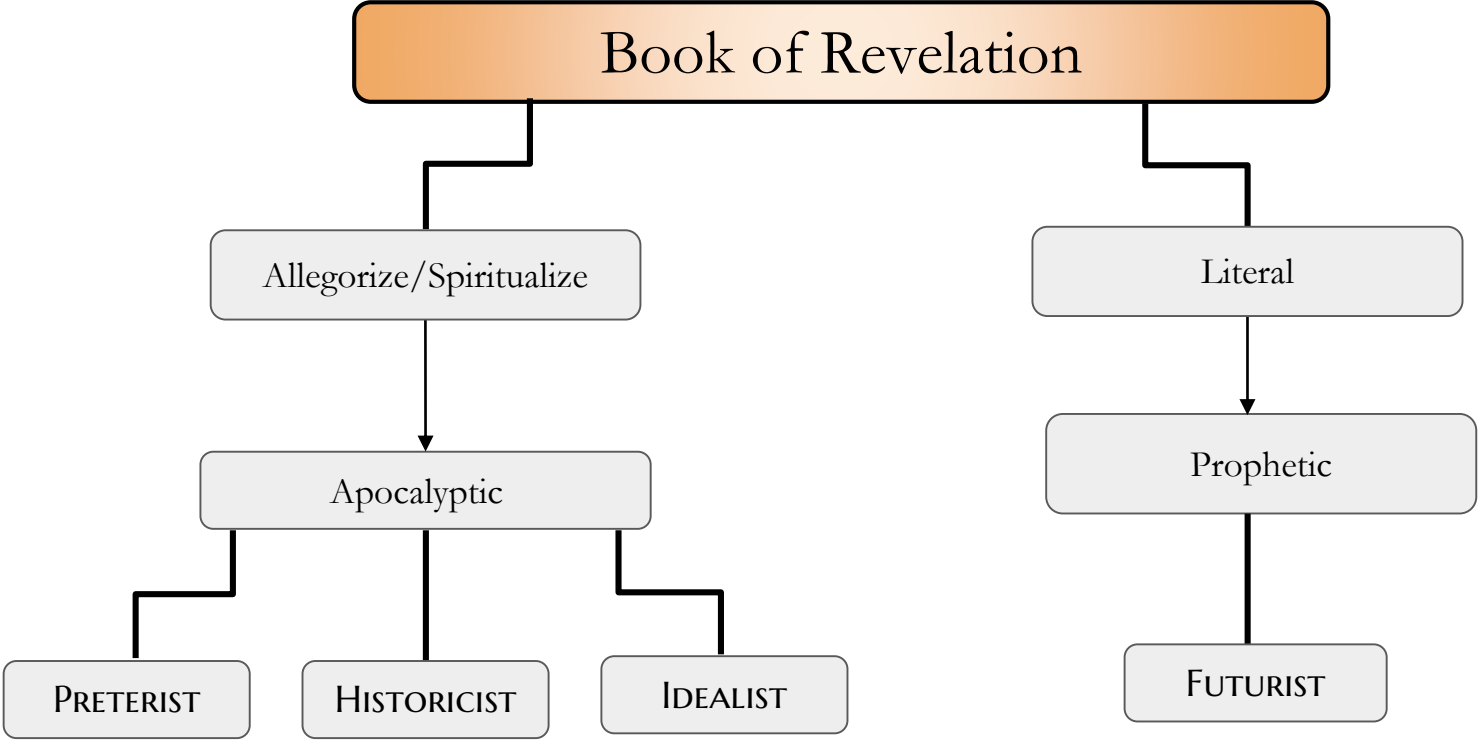
OBSERVING SPECIFIC DETAILS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Dr. Luther
Smith

Review From Last Session

- Discussed the difference between apocalyptic literature and prophetic literature.
- Although there are some similarities between the two genres the two are very different from one another.
- The explanatory approach does not change simply because the genre of the book, epistle changes.

How Our Method Affects Our Interpretation (explanation) of Revelation



Preterist Explanation of Revelation

Comes from the Latin word *praeter* meaning “past.”

This view has within it presuppositions that all (or some) of the events that took place in Revelation occurred within the period of time within time of the author. It places all of the events in the book of Revelation in the first century, and symbolically observes the conflict between the saints and Rome. Simply put, it looks at all of prophecy as *former* history.

Full Preterism: all of the prophecies have already been fulfilled. The Second Return of Christ is not observed as a physical return of Christ but a righteous judgment on the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem. They believe the resurrection of the dead is an ongoing, spiritual judgment throughout the ages and happens after each individual dies.

Partial Preterism: Holds that the destruction of Jerusalem, the Antichrist, the destruction of the temple and the sacrifices, and the Advent day of the Lord as a judgment coming was fulfilled in 70 A.D. The new creation comes in redemptive progression as Christ reigns from His throne in heaven and will return to usher in the New heavens and New earth (most amillennialist or postmillennialist hold to this view).



Historicist Explanation of Revelation

This view holds that the events that are described in the book of Revelation are intimately related to world events that can be related to the time of the writer to the end of the age. A person who holds to a historicist method of explanation must equate these images and symbols in the book of Revelation to world events.

“Historicism teaches that biblical predictions are being fulfilled throughout history and continue to be fulfilled today. The Book of Revelation is a pre-written history of the Church from the time of its writing to the future Second Advent of Christ, which shall usher in the new heaven and new earth.”

Historicism Research Foundation. Retrieved October 10, 2017 from <http://www.historicism.net/>



Idealist Explanation of Revelation

This view teaches that the symbols and events in the book of Revelation are not actual but in fact there is an idea that is communicated within these symbols and events themselves. It observes the “spiritual” meaning around the text itself.

“The idealist does not tie the events of apocalyptic literature to either historical or future events, but rather to spiritual truths. The text is not about swords and dragons, but about God’s word and Satan, it is not about rainbows and green fields, but about God’s promises and His mercy. The idealist searches for the spiritual meaning that the author intends upon conveying in the symbolism..”

J. Carter (2007). *An introduction to the interpretation of apocalyptic literature*.
Retrieved Oct. 10, 2017 from <http://www.biblicaltheology.com/Research/CarterJ08.pdf>



The Futurist Explanation of Revelation

The *futurist* explanation of the text observes the events in Revelation have not yet taken place. The images and symbolism in the Book of Revelation may be explained as literal and the events that are described in Revelation have not yet occurred.



Where The Battle is the Fiercest

Rev. 20:1-6

1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

4 Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.



Some of The Details Throughout Revelation

The specific number of fellow servants (Rev. 6:9-11)

A specific number from Israel (12,000 each) (Rev. 7:4-8)

An specific time of silence in heaven (Rev. 8:1-2)

The specific time for Apollyon (Rev. 9:10-11)

Specific number of the armies of horsemen (Rev. 9:16)

A specific time the nations will overtake Jerusalem (Rev. 11:2)

The exact time of death for the two witnesses (Rev. 11:9)

The specific number of people killed in an earthquake (Rev. 11:13)

The exact time the Antichrist would be given authority (Rev. 13:5)

The exact number of blood that was spilled in the war (Rev. 14:20)

A specific time for the judgment of Babylon to occur (Rev. 18:10)



Question

If the Millennium *is* symbolic, when did all of these other events before the Millennium (between Rev. 12-19) occur?

Another Question

If the Millennium *is* symbolic, then are these numbers symbolic, and *if* they are what do they mean?



Rev.13:1-8 NASB

1 And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. 2 And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. 3 I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain , and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; 4 they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" 5 There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.



Rev. 13:1-8

The Beast

Note: All views observe this is the Antichrist in some way shape or form.

For the Preterist: The **beast** refers to *the Roman Empire or the Roman Emperor at that time.*

For the Historicist: The **beast** is a *reference to the Roman papacy at that time.*

For the Idealist: The **beast** is a reference *to the persecuting power against the church.*

For the Futurist: The **beast** refers to an *actual person (i.e. the Antichrist).*



Rev. 20:1-6

The Millennium

Note: All views observe this is the Millennium in some way shape or form.

For the Preterist:

Amillennial/Postmillennial perspective
(symbolic)

For the Historicist: Amillennial
perspective (symbolic)

For the Idealist: Amillennial perspective
(symbolic)

For the Futurist: Premillennial
perspective (literal)



Rev. 8:1-2 NASB

1 When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.



Rev. 8:1-2

The Silence In Heaven

For the Preterist:

- (1) the destruction of Jerusalem
- (2) A.D. 312-337 (Constantine the Great)
- (3) the period following A.D. 70
- (4) the Millennium
- (5) the decree of Julian imposing silence on the Christians etc.



Rev. 8:1-2

The Silence In Heaven

For the Historicist: Signals the end of the Roman Empire from the East to the West.

For the Idealist: Connected the Day of Atonement with the entrance of the high priest in Heaven. Earth is preparing for what is about to take place.

For the Futurist: There is silence for an half an hour. There is a difference between *seal* judgments and *trumpet* judgments.



Rev. 11:9 NASB

1 Those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at [the two witnesses] dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb.



Rev. 11:9

Two Witnesses and their
deaths

For the Preterist: God's people living in exiles in the world.

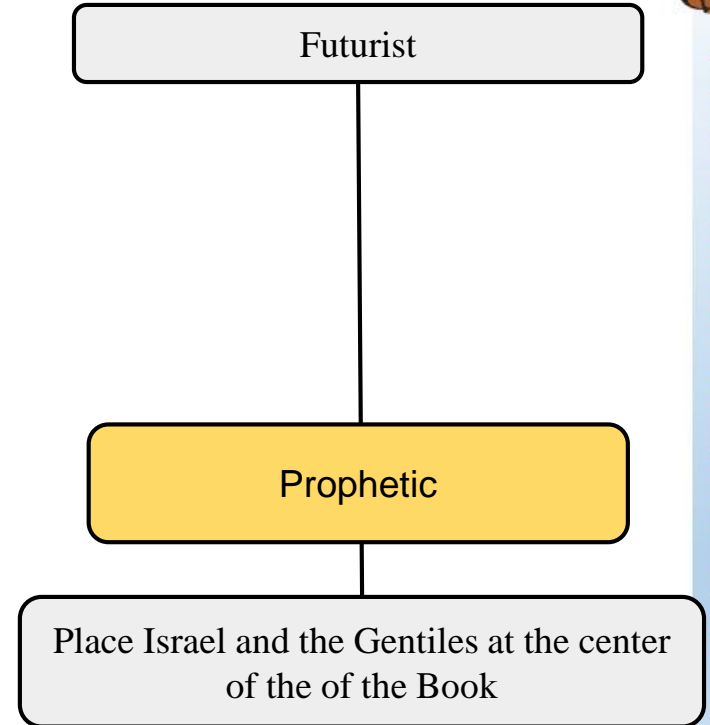
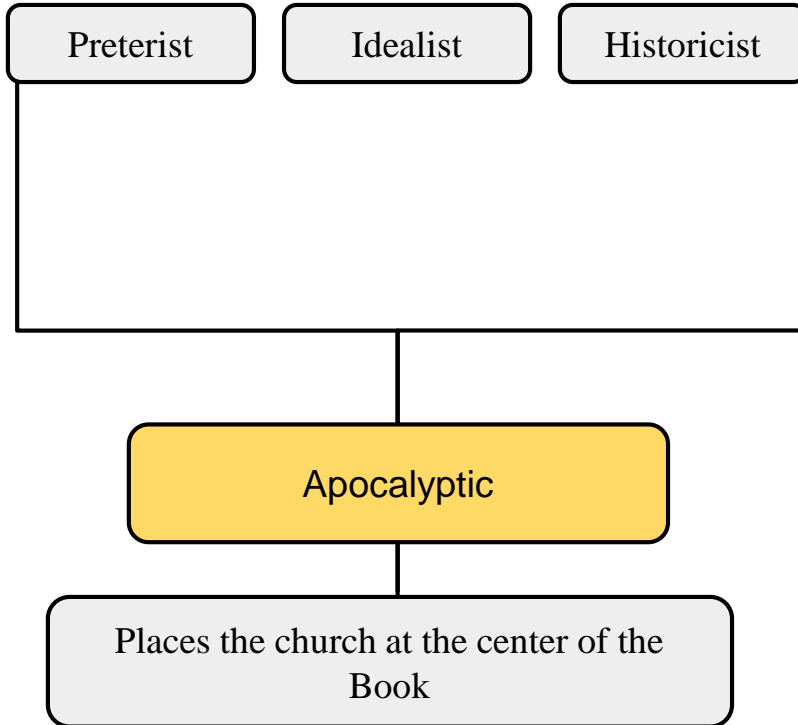
For the Historicist: The Two Testaments (Old and New).

For the Idealist: A period of time of fierce persecution for the world.

For the Futurist: The two witnesses are dead for three and half days. They are disrespected and disgraced.



What is the “common bond” for those who believe that Revelation is *Apocalyptic* literature?



Conclusion

There is no reason to interpret these verses any other way than observing these passages in their context and in the literal and plain sense, in a consistent manner.

Note: The Book of Revelation points back to A LOT of Old Testament passages (at least 500)! This is key to understanding the book of Revelation is understanding the culture and the references of Israel and the Gentiles in the Old Testament. This points to two truths:

1. These symbols were revealed to John the apostle due to his intimate understanding of Old Testament (spec. Israelite and Gentile) history.
2. It *cannot* be about the church because the church is a told as a *mystery* (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:3-9; Eph. 5:32). The plan of the church was not revealed in the Old Testament.
3. To place the church in the explanation of Revelation is to place an interpretive grid on Revelation itself. You would literally be forcing the church on Revelation when the church is not there (Recall 144,000 sealed referring to the Church?)!

