



AND GOD SAID WHAT?

The Book of Revelation

Session 9

The Direction of Intention

My God, give me the grace to perform this action with you and through love for you. In advance, I offer to you all the good that I will do and accept all the difficulty I may meet therein.

Saint Francis de Sales, pray for us.

Our Lady of Good Counsel, pray for us.

“We know that the apocalyptic images of the eschatological discourse about the end of all things should be interpreted in light of their intense symbolism. It is not language that should be taken literally.” *Pope John Paul II*



“The Book of Revelation should not be read as a frightening or enigmatic warning, but as an essentially encouraging vision of Christ's definitive victory over evil.”

Pope Benedict XVI



THE BOOK OF REVELATION

ℵ Revelation may be defined as the communication of some truth by God to a rational creature through means which are beyond the ordinary course of nature.

... Back to the beginning...Session 1: What is God revealing about God's self in the Book of Genesis? In Revelation?

ℵ What is the Literary Style?

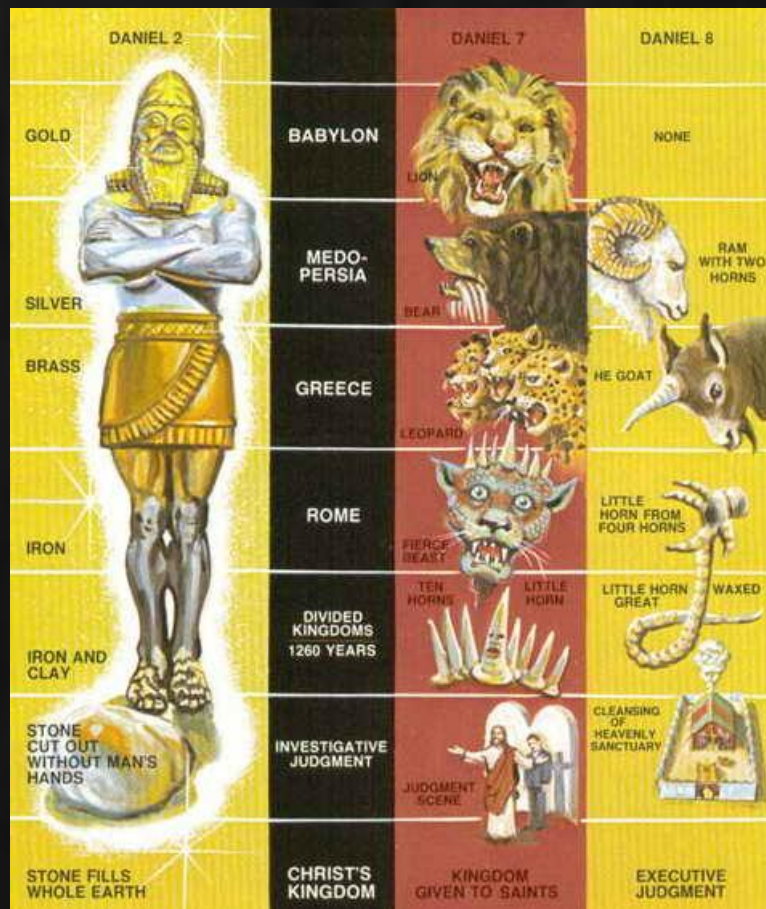
... Apocalyptic is a Greek word meaning "revelation", "an unveiling or unfolding of things not previously known and which could not be known apart from the unveiling."

... As a genre, apocalyptic literature details the authors' visions of the end times as revealed by a heavenly messenger or Angel.

... The apocalyptic literature of Judaism and Christianity embraces a considerable period, from the centuries following the exile down to the close of the middle ages.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Imagery from the Book of Daniel



Other Apocalyptic Books in the Bible

... The Book of Daniel, Isaiah 24-27; 33; 34-35, Jeremiah 33:14-26, Ezekiel 38-39, Joel 3:9-17, Zechariah 12-14

... Matthew 24, Luke 21 -The Sheep and the Goats, Mark 13, Thessalonians 2, Book of Revelation

Apocalyptic Themes

... Old Testament: Post-Exile Period – God will restore his people

... New Testament: The End of the World, the Second Coming of Christ, Final Judgment, God will restore creation .

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

ℵ The Purpose of Apocalyptic Literature

... Past, Present or Future?

- ... to comfort and console the readers by reminding them of God's divine rule over history.
- ... to exhort its readers to live in light of the supernatural truths revealed
- ... given the glimpse of the glories of heaven and the horrors of judgment so that we can live today in the pursuit of faithfulness, mercy, and justice.



THE BOOK OF REVELATION

✧ Why the use of symbolic language?

... **The Social Setting** – In both the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation the intended audience was facing persecution.

... **The Language** that was used would be readily understood by the intended audience but not by the authorities.



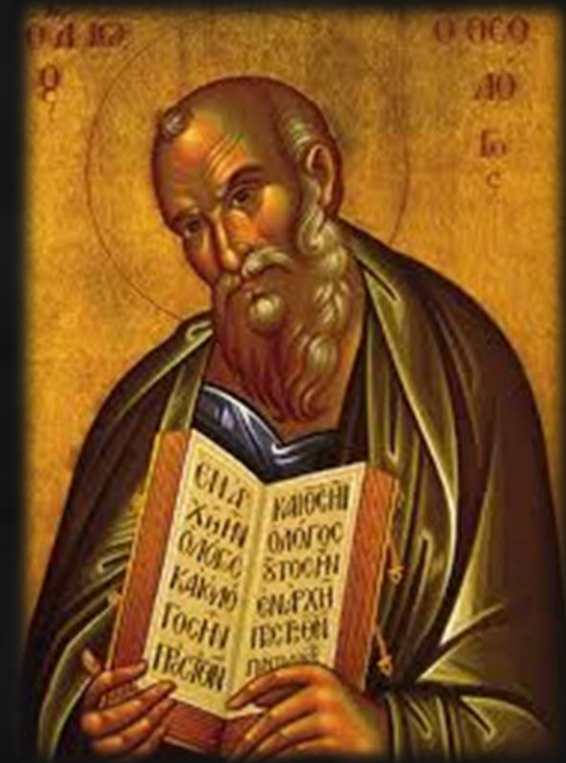
THE BOOK OF REVELATION

✧ Date of Composition

- ... According to early tradition, this book was composed near the end of Domitian's reign, around the year 95 AD.
- ... Others contend for an earlier date, 68 or 69 AD, in the reign of Nero or shortly thereafter.

✧ Authorship

- ... Early views - Justin Martyr (c. 100–165 AD) credits authorship to St. John the Apostle
- ... Traditional Views: St. John, author of the 4th Gospel and the Letters of St. John
- ... Modern View: Some question – but still most agree the high likelihood that the author is St. John



THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Four Basic Ways to Interpret The Book of Revelation

✂ 1. THE PRETERIST OR CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL VIEW

... Favored by liberals. Revelation is not about future events. It only speaks about events in the past.

✂ 2. THE FUTURIST VIEW

... Favored by Fundamentalists. Revelation is solely about some future time of tribulation. Often called *Millennialists*.

✂ 3. THE HISTORICIST OR CONTINUOUS HISTORICAL VIEW

... Favored by most mainline Christians. In this view, Revelation is seen as predicting the major events and movements of Christian history throughout the first and second comings of Christ. Individual symbols and signs within the Book are specifically identified with personalities, places, and events in Christian history providing a chronological sequence of prophecies which are being continuously and successively fulfilled from the days of John the Revelator until the Last Day. The difficulty with these specific identifications is that they cannot be validated in the text and often tend to focus the applications of the text to persons and events contemporary to the interpreter.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Four Basic Ways to Interpret The Book of Revelation

✧ 4. THE IDEALIST OR SYMBOLIC VIEW

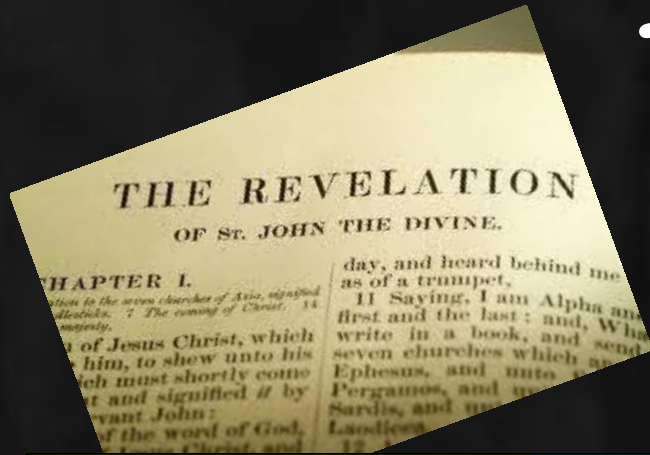
... A variation of the Historicist viewpoint. A combination of previous views. of the Preterist and Historicist View. Revelation is primarily about the past but also speaks to us today about how we are to prepare ourselves for the Second Coming of Christ.

✧ When reading or listening to someone speak about the Book of Revelation – Ask yourself...what view is being presented!



THE BOOK OF REVELATION

✧ Composition: 7 Visions



... Introduction: The Revelation of Jesus Christ to be given to those who believe

... The Seven Churches: Seven Letters

✧ Warning and encouragement

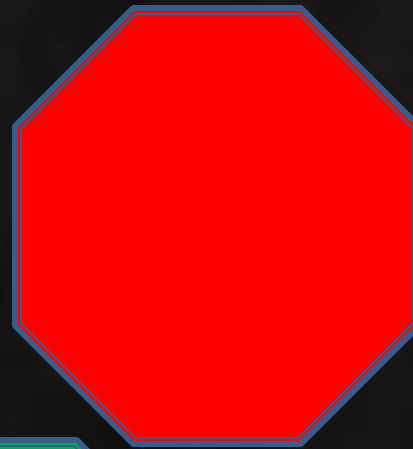
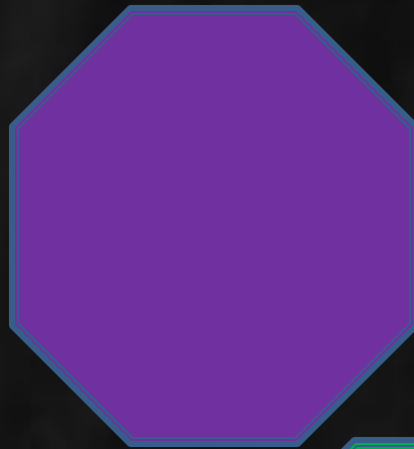
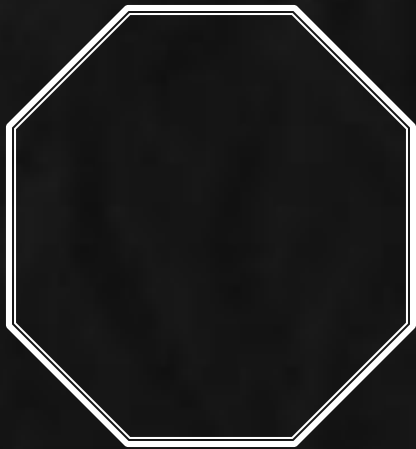
✧ John would have had intimate knowledge of each of these churches.

... Followed by six visions of the “End Times”



SYMBOLS AND REVELATION

⌘ Investing of outward things or actions with an inner meaning



THE BOOK OF REVELATION

☞ A Woman clothed in the sun with the moon under her feet and a crown of 12 stars on her head?

... Who is the woman?

... The Church?

... Israel?

... Eve?

... The Virgin Mary?

☞ Catholic understanding views this image as that of Mary and the references to Christ's birth in the Gospel of Matthew.

☞ Also views the Woman as the Church



THE BOOK OF REVELATION

☞ The Anti-Christ

- ... The One (or more) opposed to Christ and the Kingdom
- ... Used to refer to a single person and a group or nation
- ... Anyone that leads a disciple away from the Kingdom
- ... A specific person???
- ... Early Christians had many definitions
- ... Term appears in Judaism, Christianity and Islam
- ... BE -AWARE OF THE MEDIA!



THE BOOK OF REVELATION

⚡ What does this really mean?

⚡ *“Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.”*

... There is no definitive answer and it does not good to guess

... The closest and most wildly held understanding

⚡ Caesar NERO based on the numeric equivalent of the name in Greek, than language of the Fourth Gospel and Revelation

⚡ 666 – The imperfect number

⚡ 777 – The perfect number

