

revelation

SESSION #1 - INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE POINT OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION?

- **How do we sum it up in one sentence?**
- **HERE IT IS:** Revelation is ultimately about the Lord, Jesus Christ AND the majesty, the glory of the warrior lamb, King Jesus.

GENRE OF LITERATURE

1. **APOCALYPTIC:** involves descriptions of the end of the world and typically depicts grandiose, cataclysmic events.
2. **PROPHECY:** declare the divine will, to interpret the purposes of God
3. **LETTER:** correspondence from one individual to another or group.

ONE OF OUR FIRST CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES: WHEN?

1. **PRETERIST INTERPRETATION**
Revelation was fulfilled in the 1st centuries of Christianity. Some believe Revelation is prophesying the fall of Jerusalem in 68-72 AD or possibly of the fall of Rome in the 5th century.

2. HISTORISIST INTERPRETATION

This interpretation believes that Revelation is describing the last 500 years. Revelation is being fulfilled in terms of Western Christianity. This causes people to read the history of Western Christianity into the pages of Revelation. (*Protestant Reformation*)

3. FUTURIST INTERPRETATION

Revelation prophecy is largely unfulfilled. This interpretation believes that Chapters 4-22 are all prophecy waiting for us in the future. Some futurists believe these prophecies will come about literally and others believe not as literal.

4. IDEALIST INTERPRETATION

Revelation prophecy has been fulfilled symbolically throughout the history of the church. This interpretation believes this is a message of a symbolic battle between Satan and God. This is relevant for every age of the church. This will ultimately be finished with Christ over His church.

DATING OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION?

There are several differing opinions as to the date that the book of Revelation was written by John on the aisle of Patmos. The most prevalent view, (also the one that I hold) is that it was written around 90-95 AD.

For me, the most persuasive information to lead to this dating comes from the “forensic” data.

1. *John is writing to people who are experiencing (including himself) localized persecution. This does not fit with the severe persecution that was being experienced under Nero in 64-65 AD.*
2. *The church at Ephesus was founded around 52 AD. This church would have had to been around long enough to have “lost their first love” as described at the beginning of Revelation 2.*
3. *The church at Laodicea described a “rich” church. But this town and church were devastated by an earthquake in 60-61 AD that would have taken them much longer than three years to likely recover from. They would not have been “rich” in 64-65 AD.*
4. *Early writings from Irenaeus, held that John received visions during the reign of Domitian. (81-96 AD).*