

Approaching Revelation¹

Orienting our map - Where are we in the Bible?*

- Knowing where you are helps you understand where you are going.
- We are in the period after the cross but before the return of Christ

How do we interpret Revelation (especially prophecy)?

We have restraint, but not silence

- We need restraint because of bad teaching, disagreements
- However silence is not an option

We wrestle with the difficulty of language

- Difficulties with the meaning of “Literal Interpretation”²
 - In many instances words, but not sentences have literal meaning.
 - Context is essential for determining meaning
 - “Literal” interpretation is not literally “literal”
- 2 Types of Interpretation*
 - Literal/Plain/Flat interpretation - seeing the Bible as if it were written to me
 - Grammatical-Historical interpretation - Seeing what the text meant then and THEN applying it to us
- A good working rule for interpreting prophecy:³
A prophecy should be taken literally **unless**:
 - the passage contains obviously figurative language
 - the NT gives authority for interpreting them in other than a literal sense
 - a literal interpretation would produce a contradiction with truths, principles, or factual statements contained in non-symbolic passages

Key Principle: Clear scriptures interpret the confusing scriptures

- The NT explains the OT
 1. The NT is the infallible interpreter of the OT
 2. The OT prophets and writers spoke of the glories of the messianic age in terms of their own pre-messianic age⁴
 3. This is very important because there are limits to GH interpretation that require us to lean completely on the NT to guide us.
 - a) The reason: The Holy Spirit knows things we don't and can't know!

¹ I am making use of several works in this series. I lean most heavily on Vern Poythress, Kim Riddlebarger, Charles Hill and G.K. Beale.

² Poythress.

³ Floyd Hamilton quoted by Riddlebarger, 38.

⁴ Riddlebarger, 37.