



### **MARGINAL MEMBERS**

Every church or organization has marginal members, people who belong but who do not actively participate.

What are some of the reasons for their lack of interest?

How should the active members treat the less committed?

Why do group leaders feel responsible for the behavior of others? Should they be?

What really motivates people to become involved?

## **HEBREWS**

### **A SUPERIORITY COMPLEX FOR PILGRIMS**

The so-called epistle to the Hebrews is a theological treatise or collection of sermons with both Jewish and Greek characteristics. Like a rabbinical midrash, it uses:

- florilegia or lists of scriptural proof texts,
- the literary devices of inclusion and chiasm,
- arguments from the lesser to the greater, and
- typology or comparing of types and antitypes.

Like a Hellenistic epideictic oration, it uses:

- an elegant rhythmic literary Greek style,
- a variety of rhetorical embellishments and figures of speech,
- numerous standard metaphorical images, and
- a rich vocabulary, with over 150 words not found elsewhere in the New Testament.

Hebrews also reflects a Platonic viewpoint not unlike that of Philo of Alexandria. Some of its distinctive themes have near parallels in Stephen's speech in Acts 7 and in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

### **A TRACT FOR THE WEARY**

The author of Hebrews is unknown, although it does continue the Pauline theme of faith. It was probably written not much before 100 CE. But it is debatable whether it was intended for Jewish Christians whether in Palestine or in the Diaspora, or for Gentile believers in the Greco-Roman world. Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch and Rome have all been suggested as its location.

The appeals in this epistle were directed at second generation Christians who, because of internal fatigue and outside pressures, were in danger of abandoning and forfeiting their commitment to Christ. It took a creative and daring plan to frame an exhortation that could re-instill excitement in their faith life.

### **THE EXALTED SUFFERER**

Hebrews pictures Jesus as the heavenly high priest who offered himself, and whose sacrificial ministry is therefore superior to the Old Testament sacrificial system. It pictures the church as the wandering people of God on the way to their heavenly rest, and encourages them to remain faithful and to persevere in spite of any discouragements.

Modern readers may be struck by this curious combination: Exalted descriptions of the heavenly Christ are coupled with poignant reminders of Jesus' earthly suffering. Men and women today may still be encouraged by the knowledge that Jesus identified with our human condition, and in our day-to-day struggles we may be buoyed up by eternal hopes.

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A. *The Sonship of Jesus*

1. *Jesus' superiority over angels (1:1-14)*
2. *Exhortation to pay attention (2:1-4)*
3. *Jesus' suffering and subjection (2:5-18)*
4. *Jesus' superiority over Moses (3:1-6)*
5. *Exhortation to enter God's "rest" (3:7-4:13)*

B. *The High-Priesthood of Christ*

1. *Jesus' appointment as high priest (4:14-5:10)*
2. *Exhortation to study more deeply (5:11-6:12)*
3. *Melchizedek's superiority over the Levites (6:13-7:28)*
4. *The superiority of Christ's new covenant (8:1-13)*
5. *The superiority of Christ's sacrificial death (9:1-10:18)*
6. *Exhortation to endure (10:19-39)*

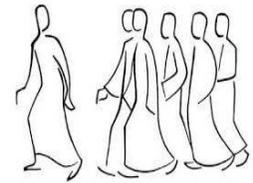
C. *The Faith of the Ancestors*

1. *Ancient examples of faith (11:1-40)*
2. *Exhortation to remain faithful (12:1-29)*

*Parenetic Injunctions (13:1-19)*

*Benediction and Postscript (13:20-21 & 13:22-25)*

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**SLANDER**

James’ frequent reminders about the destructive power of the tongue and the need for people to talk nicely to each other serve as a warning against slander.

How are people slandered today?

In our personal conversations, and in the public media?

Why is it hard to tell the truth consistently?

When is it necessary not to put the most favorable construction on someone else’s actions?

Where can we most effectively promote honesty and truth in speaking?

James is parenesis, a collection of instructions for Christian living. Although some themes are repeated within the epistle, there is no apparent plan or inner logic for the work as a whole. Both shorter sayings and longer treatises are frequently tied together by the use of catchwords. Its Old Testament examples connect it with early Jewish Christianity and the teachings of Jesus.

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*Salutation (1:1)*

- A. *Two Series of Sayings*
  - 1. *On enduring trials and temptations (1:2-18)*
  - 2. *On speaking, hearing, and doing (1:19-27)*
- B. *Three Treatises*
  - 3. *On not showing partiality (2:1-13)*
  - 4. *On faith without works (2:14-26)*
  - 5. *On controlling the tongue (3:1-12)*
- C. *Four Series of Sayings*
  - 6. *On avoiding contention (3:13-4:12)*
  - 7. *On the future of the rich (4:13-5:6)*
  - 8. *On practicing patience (5:7-11)*
  - 9. *On swearing and praying (5:12-18)*

*Conclusion: On restoring sinners (5:19-20)*

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**PRACTICABLE ETHICS**

The James named as the author is most obviously Jesus’ younger brother who emerged as a leader of the church in Jerusalem. If it was actually written by that James, this would be the oldest document in the New Testament, dating from well before 70 CE.

But the high quality of its Greek, its rhetorical style which includes the diatribe form and onomatopoeic word plays, the impression that the ministry of Paul lies in the past, and the fact that it was one of the last books to be canonized all suggest that this epistle is pseudonymous. In that case it would be dated anywhere between 80 and 130 CE, somewhere in the eastern Mediterranean world.

**FROM A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE**

Apparently James was written for churches which did not need further instruction in Christian doctrines as much as reminders to put their faith into loving practice. This would explain its emphasis on ethical admonitions and an almost complete lack of specifically Christological themes.

Jesus is named only twice (1:1 & 2:1); no mention is made of anything in his ministry. All of the examples—Abraham and Isaac, Rahab and the spies, the prophets, Job, and Elijah—are drawn from the Jewish Scriptures.

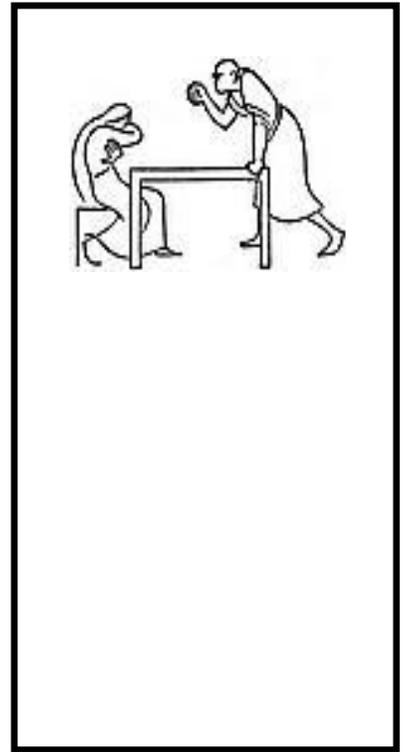
## **(UN) HOLY TALK**

James is written from the viewpoint of someone who identifies with poor people. It betrays a bias against rich people, who are the ones who take advantage of the poor. Its most frequent specific requirement is that Christian people learn to speak respectfully about and to each other, for sins of the tongue are the worst.

As contemporary readers, we can still appreciate James' realistic critique of our modern religious organizations, its implicit injunction to promote the welfare of the poor, and its frequent reminders that we need to watch how we talk about each other. Its enduring value lies in its practical suggestions for living out our faith.

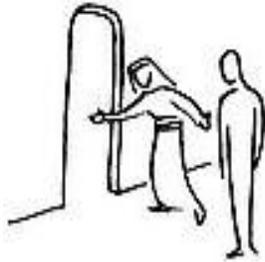
## **FAITH AND/OR WORKS**

The apparent contradiction between James 2:24 and Romans 3:28 has occasioned doubts about the value of this letter. The Pauline letters use the term "faith" to refer to a Christian's basic response to the gospel. Apparently in reaction to a perversion of that teaching, James uses the term "works" to describe the preferred response to Christian preaching and emphasizes the uselessness of merely "believing" without "practicing" our religion.



# 1 PETER

## HOLY HOSPITALITY IN A HOSTILE WORLD



### A PLACE CALLED HOME

1 Peter is a call for the church to be “a home for the homeless,” a place where people who feel like aliens or strangers in society can also experience a sense of belonging and worth.

How well do our families foster a sense of self-worth?

Do the growing number of single adults feel welcome in our churches?

Are we open toward outsiders and people who are not “our kind”?

How can our congregations practice a kind of “holy hospitality” to people who live in an often hostile environment?

The apostle Peter is named as the author of this letter, dictated to Silvanus or Silas from Rome, called “Babylon,” probably in the early 60s CE before the persecutions under Emperor Nero. However, its literary Greek style and consistent use of the Septuagint suggest that this letter is a pseudonymous work. Whether it was composed by Silvanus himself or by a later Petrine author, it may be dated around 95 CE during the reign of Domitian, or even as late as 110 under Trajan.

### FOR PEOPLE UNDER PRESSURE

In spite of its general sermon character, 1 Peter is a genuine letter addressed to Christians in Asia Minor. Although its Old Testament allusions give it a Jewish character, the letter’s recipients were new Gentile converts, only recently baptized. The purpose of 1 Peter was to encourage converts to remain firm in their new faith, not to give in to the pressures which they were experiencing, and to lead a distinctively Christian life style so their exemplary behavior would silence their opponents.

It would have served to unite the community in closer fellowship as they struggled to live in a seemingly hostile environment. This encouragement has a distinctively eschatological tone, and it is marked by the conviction that the death and resurrection of Christ have established a new situation in which, through baptism, Gentiles are now constituted as the elect people of God.

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#### *Salutation (1:1-2)*

#### A. *Part One*

1. *Blessing-Thanksgiving (1:3-12)*
2. *Exhortation to holy conduct... (1:13-2:3)*
3. *...as the elect people of God (2:4-10)*

#### B. *Part Two*

##### *Introduction: Exhortation to good behavior (2:11-12)*

1. *...as citizens (2:13-17)*
2. *...as domestic slaves (2:18-25)*
3. *...as wives (3:1-6)*
4. *...as husbands (3:7)*

##### *Conclusions (3:8-12)*

5. *Exhortation to endure suffering... (3:13-4:6)*
6. *...because the End is imminent (4:7-11)*

#### C. *Part Three*

1. *Exhortation to endure the “fiery trail” (4:12-19)*
2. *Exhortation to elders (5:1-4)*
3. *Miscellaneous exhortations (5:6-11)*

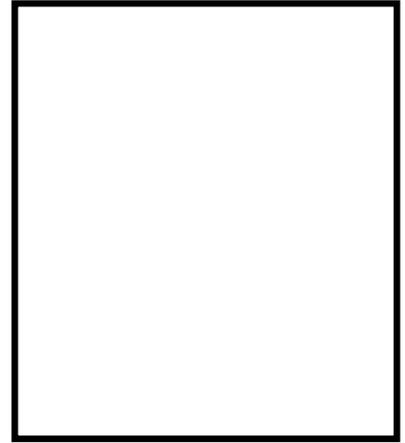
##### *Closing Greeting (5:12-14)*

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## **A CALL FOR REAL COMMITMENT**

The degree to which our religious commitment should affect the style of our living in the world is an issue which confronts contemporary men and women as much as it did ancient peoples. Some religious communities require that their adherents make a radical break from the rest of society. Others require hardly any noticeable changes at all.

We can learn to assess our own style of commitment to our faith or to our community by allowing ourselves to be critiqued by the comparatively moderate program offered in this epistle. On the positive side, we can also come to appreciate the high sense of self-esteem and self-worth which 1 Peter offers. For it contends that we are nothing less than a chosen people, God's elect.





## JUDE AND 2 PETER AGAINST LOOSE LIVING AND PREACHING

Jude and 2 Peter are two examples of late works directed against heresies which were threatening the integrity of the Christian community. Their similar purpose and the fact that almost all of Jude is contained in 2 Peter suggest that the former was a source for the latter.

### JUDE: WARNING AGAINST APOSTASY

The Epistle of Jude is ascribed to the obscure brother of Jesus and James, not to be confused with either of the disciples named Judas. If the ascription were genuine, Jude would be dated as early as 70-80 CE. However, this is unlikely because it refers to the establishment of the faith and the memory of the original apostles as items in the past. Thus Jude is pseudonymous and must be dated as late as 100 CE or even after.

The abundant use of Old Testament examples and extra-biblical traditions, including quotations from the *Assumption of Moses* and the *Apocalypse of Enoch*, indicates that Jude was intended for a Jewish Christian audience.

Its purpose was to warn against the loose morals of some Gnostic libertarians who had infiltrated the churches of Asia Minor or Syria. Whether the warnings were against people who could have been readily identified or whether they were of a more general character cannot be determined.

Like many anti-heretical writings from the second century, Jude tends to accuse the heretics of a whole catalog of false teachings and wicked morals. It puts the opposition in the worst possible light in order to make the orthodox position as secure as possible.

### TELEVANGELISTS

Some of the most public preachers today are those evangelists who use television to broadcast their messages and appeals to people in their homes.

Is their expression of the Gospel legitimate?

How can you decide?

Are their requests for financial support honest?

Should you send them a gift of money?

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#### *Salutation (vv. 1-2)*

#### JUDE

1. *Warning against ungodly infiltrators (vv. 3-4)*
2. *Reminder of God's punishment on evildoers (vv. 5-16)*
3. *Encouragement to remain faithful (vv. 17-23)*

#### *Doxology (vv. 24-25)*

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#### *Salutation (1:1-2)*

#### 2 PETER

- A. *About the Church and the Apostle*
  1. *Encouragement to remain faithful (1:3-11)*
  2. *Peter's authority, based on the Transfiguration (1:12-21)*
- B. *About False Teachers*
  1. *Warning against the heretics (2:1-3)*
  2. *Descriptions of heretics and their punishments (2:4-22)*
- C. *About the Second Coming of Christ*
  1. *Warnings against those who deny the Parousia (3:1-7)*
  2. *Assurances of the Parousia (3:8-13)*
  3. *Exhortation to remain faithful (3:14-16)*
  4. *Final exhortation and Doxology (3:17-18a, 18b)*

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## **2 PETER: A TESTAMENT AGAINST HERESY**

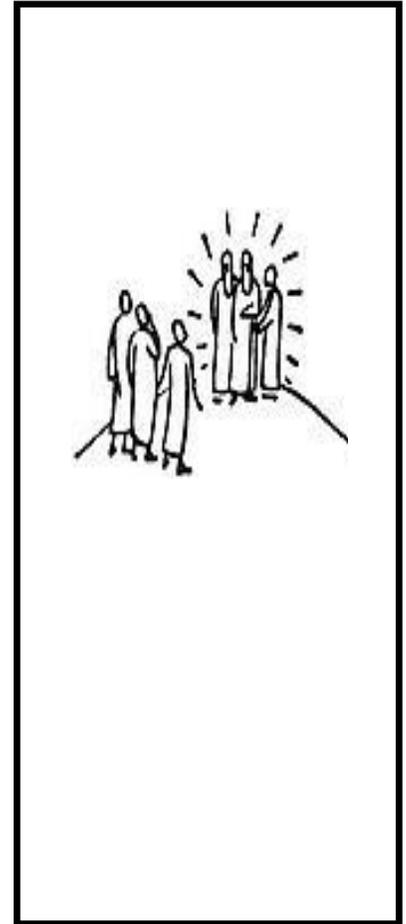
Although this letter is ascribed to Simon Peter, it is apparent that it was written long after the apostle's death. Its language is thoroughly Greek, not Palestinian. It treats the age of Paul and the apostles as in the distant past. Furthermore, it was admitted to the canon only at a late date, after much opposition. The pseudonymous author incorporated almost the entire letter of Jude into 2 Peter, especially in ch. 2. Therefore it must be dated after Jude, perhaps as late as 120-180 CE.

Both Paul and Peter saw the risen Christ, but only Peter witnessed the Transfiguration (2 Peter 1:16-18), so "Peter" was in a position to refute misguided descendants of Paul who apparently thought that good works were not a necessary part of Christian life.

The author recommends supplementing faith with the best of Stoic virtues, which were valued throughout Greco-Roman society. In addition, this letter warns against the heretics who denied the Parousia, the Second Coming of Christ. This false teaching was similar to that of the followers of Marcion, a Gnostic presbyter in Rome who died around 160 CE.

### **A BALANCED LIFE**

Modern readers may learn from these two letters how important it is to balance the content of our faith with the character of our living. What we believe shapes how we behave. Ultimately the virtues of love may be more valuable than niceties of doctrine.





All three of these epistles are anonymous. Church tradition has generally attributed them to the author of the fourth gospel, whether to John the Apostle or John the Elder. However, this is not certain; nor is it certain that all three of these epistles were written by the same person.

Nevertheless, if the Johannine gospel and epistles were not by the same author, it is apparent they are all products of the same school, which some have called “the community of the beloved disciple,” for they share much of the same style, language and thought. Thus these three epistles may have been written by later followers of the evangelist. If so, they should be dated sometime around 100 CE or even later.

### ENCOURAGEMENT TO REMAIN LOYAL

All three epistles share a similar purpose. They were written to established Christian communities to encourage them to remain faithful to the teachings of the apostles and to practice love and fellowship with other true believers.

They were also intended to warn against false teachers and interlopers who were basing their own beliefs on a peculiar interpretation of John's gospel. These “anti-Christ” seem to have been promoting the kind of Gnosticism or Docetism which was promulgated by the early heretic Cerinthus, who denied that the man Jesus was really the Son of God.

### LOVE

Love is the key virtue in biblical ethics. Because God loves us, we are enabled to love each other.

What is the precise meaning of such love?

Is it basically an emotion, a way of feeling?

Or does it have more to do with the way we treat people?

How does this kind of love relate to popular romantic love?

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**FIRST JOHN** has the characteristics of a general epistle or sermon, rather than a true letter. Yet it may have originally been intended for a specific group of churches. This epistle cannot be outlined in a clearly logical fashion, for the same few themes are repeated and amplified several times. Its content contains several pairs of opposites: light and darkness, truth and lying, love and hate, life and death, and the like.

*Prologue: The word of life (1:1-4)*

A. *The Main Themes of the Letter*

1. *Assurance that God forgives sins (1:5-10)*
2. *Encouragement to love one another (2:1-17)*
3. *Warning against false teachers (2:18-27)*

B. *Further Discussion of the Letter's Themes*

1. *Assurance that we are God's children (2:28-3:10)*
2. *Encouragement to keep the command to love (3:11-24)*
3. *Warning against false teachers (4:1-6)*
4. *Encouragement to love one another (4:7-12)*
5. *Assurance that we abide in God and God in us (4:13-18)*
6. *Encouragement to keep the command to love (4:19-5:5)*
7. *Assurance that God gives eternal life (5:6-13)*

*Epilogue: The confidence of knowing (5:14-21)*

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**SECOND JOHN** is the kind of general epistle which could have been given to just about any church—"the elect lady and her children"—to encourage faithfulness and to warn against heresy.

*Prescript & Greeting (vv. 1-3)*

1. *Encouragement to obey the command to love (vv. 4-6)*
2. *Warning against false teachers (vv. 7-11)*

*Closing (vv. 12-13)*

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**THIRD JOHN** is a letter of introduction for an itinerant missionary, Demetrius, to his intended host, Gaius. The unnamed Elder was encouraging Gaius to continue to support such missionaries as Demetrius and to oppose contentious people like Diotrephes, who rejected the authority of the Elder and his emissaries. Strangely, this fascinating glimpse into an early Christian quarrel never mentions Jesus!

*Prescript (v.1)*

*Introduction: health wish and thanksgiving (vv. 2, 3-4)*

1. *Commendation for Gaius (vv. 5-8)*
2. *Warning against Diotrephes (vv. 9-10)*
3. *Recommendation of Demetrius (vv. 11-12)*

*Closing & Blessing (vv. 13-14, 15)*

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## SEEDS OF CONFLICT

The Johannine epistles disclose some of the dynamics of the kind of conflict which can arise within a closely knit community, even though only one side of the story is presented here. Harsh epithets like "antichrist" and "lover-of-first-place" are bandied about; all sides appeal to the same foundational traditions; long-time leaders call for loyalty. The fact that the Elder's letters were retained and included within the canon of the church catholic indicates that his side "won," for history usually sides with the survivors.

As modern readers of these letters, we cannot only learn to spot the destructive effects of such conflict, but we can also learn to recognize that controversy is a part of life within community. Even the earliest Christian churches were not completely at peace with one another.

## LETTER WRITING

In the ancient world the arrival of a letter was nearly equivalent to the appearance of its author.

Do our letters today carry the same personal impact?

Should we write to each other more frequently?

Is a telephone call more, or less, effective than a written communication?

Will internet resources, such as Email, Facebook, twittering, and blogging, replace written correspondence?

If so, what effect will this have on our interpersonal relationships?

## REVELATION A PEAK AT THE END



### LIFE AFTER DEATH

The book of Revelation pictures the beginning of eternal life for God's people in heaven.

Do people today believe in a real heaven and a real hell?

What hopes can we affirm today for life after death?

Is there any compelling evidence to suggest that there is more in store for us than our present life on earth?

If so, is this hope only for God's people, or for all people?

John, the author of the book of Revelation, is otherwise unidentifiable and almost certainly not John the Apostle or the author of the fourth gospel. He wrote from Patmos, an island in the Aegean Sea, to seven churches in Asia Minor, where the imperial cult flourished.

The book was written near the end of the reign of Emperor Domitian, around 94-96 CE, though portions may have been composed as early as Nero's persecutions in 64.

The Apocalypse gives the impression that the Asian churches were entering a time of severe persecution. Alternatively, they may have been undergoing a period of complacency and dissatisfaction. In either case, Christians would have been tempted to desert the church and revert to their former pagan practices.

### AN APOCALYPTIC PERSPECTIVE

John opted to appropriate an apocalyptic view which sees reality from two directions, from the eternal perspective of heaven and from the time-bound perspective of earth. By drawing his readers' attention to the certain victory which Christ has won and will win, he hoped to encourage them to remain faithful to their Lord. Furthermore, by experiencing the powerful emotions which the symbols and myths of Revelation can provoke, the Christian community could undergo a healthy catharsis.

### A BIZARRE DRAMA

Revelation is nearly impossible to outline clearly because the same sequence of events—present troubles, penultimate judgment, and ultimate victory—are repeated time and again, and sometimes the sequences seem to overlap.

One option is to interpret it as a drama set on a Greek stage with Jewish temple furnishings. The seven scenes in each of the seven acts symbolically picture the situation of the world or the church either at the time of persecution and dissatisfaction, or right before the End Time, or immediately after the End.

Much of the symbolism in the book is based on the events and symbols of the Old Testament (especially Exodus, Ezekiel and Daniel), the later Jewish writings (such as 2 Esdras and 1 Enoch), and to a lesser extent the earlier New Testament writings (especially Matthew 24 and John). Within this scheme the Lamb represents the crucified yet victorious Christ; the Beast represents the brute force of the Roman Empire; and the Dragon represents Satan.

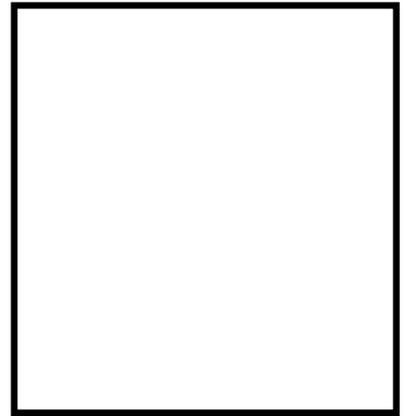
### AN EMOTIONAL CATHARSIS

The difficulty of coming to a clear understanding of Revelation is reflected in its controverted and late inclusion in the New Testament canon. Thus it might seem largely irrelevant for modern Christians. Today's church is nearly 2,000 years removed from the historical events which gave rise to this book. Its outmoded world view, its bizarre images, and its difficult symbols keep it out of reach for many of us. Furthermore, when interpreted too literally it usually seems to have a negative, fear-provoking message.

Yet the Apocalypse can still have a helpful, positive impact. It is necessary to look for the biblical background of its symbols and for the clues that anchor its story within the history of the Roman Empire at the end of the 1st century CE.

Then modern readers need to appreciate the emotional impact of its dramatic images and to accent the positive encouragement which these offer. Our emphasis should be on “how does it function?” not “what does it mean?”

In this way we can learn to identify the anti-Christian forces in modern society which compete for our ultimate allegiances, in order that we can continue to live responsibly in the present world as faithful citizens of the Kingdom of God.



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| <p><i>Title (1:1-2)</i>      <i>Beatitude (1:3)</i><br/><i>Salutation &amp; Greeting (1:4-5)</i><br/><i>Doxology (1:6)</i>      <i>Prologue (1:7-8)</i></p> <p>A. <i>Act One: Letters to Seven Churches</i><br/><i>Setting: the Gold Lampstands (1:9-20)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>the letter to Ephesus (2:1-7)</i></li><li>2. <i>the letter to Smyrna (2:8-11)</i></li><li>3. <i>the letter to Pergamum (2:12-17)</i></li><li>4. <i>the letter to Thyatira (2:18-29)</i></li><li>5. <i>the letter to Sardis (3:1-6)</i></li><li>6. <i>the letter to Philadelphia (3:7-13)</i></li><li>7. <i>the letter to Laodicea (3:14-22)</i></li></ol> <p>B. <i>Act Two: Opening Seven Seals</i><br/><i>Setting: the Heavenly Court (4:1-5:14)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>the white horse (6:1-2)</i></li><li>2. <i>the red horse (6:3-4)</i></li><li>3. <i>the black horse (6:5-6)</i><br/><i>the 144,000 (7:1-9)</i><br/><i>the great multitude (7:9-17)</i></li><li>4. <i>the yellow horse (6:7-8)</i></li><li>5. <i>the martyrs' prayer</i></li><li>6. <i>eschatological events (6:12-17)</i></li><li>7. <i>silence in heaven (8:1)</i></li></ol> <p>C. <i>Act Three: Sounding Seven Trumpets</i><br/><i>Setting: the Golden Altar (8:2-6)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>hail and fire (8:7)</i></li><li>2. <i>a mountain thrown in the sea (8:8-9)</i></li><li>3. <i>the falling star (8:10-11)</i></li><li>4. <i>darkness in heaven (8:12)</i></li><li>5. <i>1st Woe: locusts (8:13-9:12)</i></li><li>6. <i>2nd Woe: cavalry (9:13-21)</i><br/><i>the little scroll (10:1-11)</i><br/><i>the temple and two witnesses (11:1-14)</i></li><li>7. <i>3rd Woe: worship in heaven (11:15-18)</i></li></ol> | <p>D. <i>Act Four: Showing Seven Pageants</i><br/><i>Setting: the Ark of the Covenant (11:19)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>the woman and the dragon (12:1-17)</i></li><li>2. <i>the beast from the sea (13:1-10)</i></li><li>3. <i>the beast from the land (13:11-18)</i></li><li>4. <i>the lamb and 144,000 martyrs (14:1-5)</i></li><li>5. <i>the announcement of doom (14:6-13)</i></li><li>6. <i>the two harvests (14:14-20)</i></li><li>7. <i>the song of the lamb (15:1-4)</i></li></ol> <p>E. <i>Act Five: Pouring Out Seven Bowls</i><br/><i>Setting: the Tent of Witness (15:5-16:1)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>the plague on the earth (16:2)</i></li><li>2. <i>the plague on the sea (16:3)</i></li><li>3. <i>the plague on rivers and springs (16:4-7)</i></li><li>4. <i>the plague on the sun (16:8-9)</i></li><li>5. <i>the plague on the beast's throne (16:10-11)</i></li><li>6. <i>the plague on the Euphrates (16:12-16)</i></li><li>7. <i>the plague on the air (16:17-21)</i></li></ol> <p>F. <i>Act Six: Unfolding Seven Pageants</i><br/><i>Setting: the Angel (17:1-2)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>the woman on the beast (17:3-5)</i></li><li>2. <i>the beast and the woman at war (17:6-18)</i></li><li>3. <i>the final cosmic oratorio (18:1-19:10)</i></li><li>4. <i>the white horse (19:11-16)</i></li><li>5. <i>the angel in the sun (19:17-18)</i></li><li>6. <i>the final battle (19:19-21)</i></li><li>7. <i>the dragon cast in the abyss (20:1-3)</i></li></ol> <p>G. <i>Act Seven: Fulfilling God's Seven-fold Plan</i><br/><i>Setting: the Throne Room (20:4-10)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>the end of earth and heaven (20:11)</i></li><li>2. <i>the last judgment (20:12-15)</i></li><li>3. <i>the new heaven and earth (21:1)</i></li><li>4. <i>the new Jerusalem (21:2-8)</i></li><li>5. <i>the city's measurements (21:9-21)</i></li><li>6. <i>the city's illumination (21:22-27)</i></li><li>7. <i>the city's source of life (22:1-5)</i></li></ol> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Epilogue (22:6-20)</i>      <i>Benediction (22:21)</i></p> |
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