

Tendencies in Interpreting Revelation

	Preterist	Historicist	Futurist
Literal	Futurist		
Figurative		Idealist	Preterist

Further Structural Considerations for Revelation

Seals	Trumpets	Bowls
(Prep for Judgment)	(Warning for Judgment)	(Judgment Itself)
Military Conquest 6:1-2	Earth Burned 8:7	Earth: Sores 16:2
Civil Strife 6:3-4	Sea to Blood 8:8-9	Sea to Blood 16:3
Famine 6:5-6	Fresh Waters Bitter 8:10-11	Fresh Waters Blood 16:4-7
Death 6:7-8	Sun et al Struck 8:12	Sun: Intense Heat 16:8-9
Souls Under Altar 6:9-11	Fallen Star, Abyss 9:1-12	Throne of Beast Darkened 16:10-11
Cosmic Cataclysm 6:12-17	Army Across Euphrates 9:13-21	Euphrates Dries, Kings Gather 16:12-16
Parenthesis 7:1-17	Parenthesis: Witnesses 10:1-11:14	N/A N/A
Silence 8:1	Reign of God 11:15-19	Judgment of Babylon 16:17-21

HINTS AT RECAPITULATION IN REVELATION

Passages mid-book that look pretty final:

Rev 6:12-17, esp. v. 17 (6th Seal) — “Fall on us ... for the great day of their (God & the Lamb) wrath has come”

Rev 11:5-18 (7th Trumpet) — the time for the dead to be judged, the rewarding of the saints, the opening of the heavenly Temple

NB: The beast comes from the abyss — does he come from there before Satan is bound there (20:1-4)? or does he come out with him (20:7)?

Rev 14:14-20, esp. vv. 14,15,18 — One sitting on a cloud “like a son of man” reaps the earth

Rev 16: 17-21, esp. v. 17 — “It is done”

Mention of *the* battle (*ὁ πόλεμος, ho polemos*) at:

16:14	Battle of Armageddon — “the war of the great day of God, the Almighty” (between the 6th & 7th Bowls)
19:19	The Beast et al. against Christ and his army
20:8	The Dragon + Gog & Magog against the saints & the beloved city

The place of Gog & Magog in the flow of Ezekiel:

Ezk 34-37	New Covenant
Ezk 38-39	Final Rebellion & Judgment (Gog & Magog)
Ezk 40-48	Final Temple

Interim Millennium Creates Problem:

Prep. of the Bride in ch. 19 — Appearance of the Bride suspended until ch. 21 (vv. 2,9-10)

The only ones who rule during the millennium are those who had been beheaded during the tribulation of the Beast (20:5)

**WHERE'S THE SECOND COMING IN REV?
HENDRIKSEN'S SEVENFOLD CLIMAX**

- 1. Promise & warning of Christ's coming — e.g., 1:7, but throughout chs. 1-3**

NB: Undifferentiated as to whether "millennial" or "new heavens/new earth"

— e.g., Rule with rod of iron (2:26-27) alongside enjoying the tree of Life in Paradise (2:7)

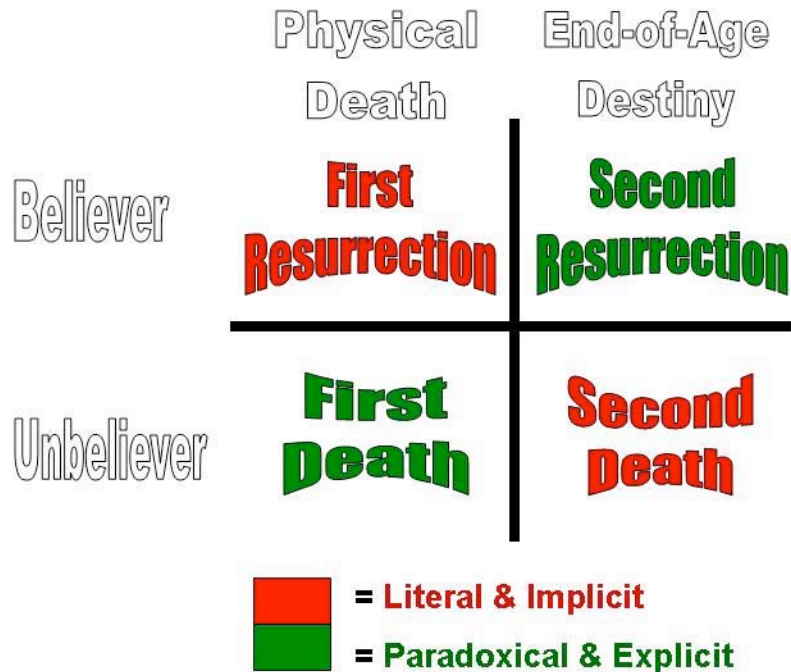
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|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 2. Seals | 6:12-17; 7:9-17 |
| 3. Trumpets | 11:15,18 |
| 4. Woman vs. Dragon | 14:14,15,18 |
| 5. Bowls | 16:17,20 |
| 6. Babylon's Fall | 19:11ff |
| 7. Devil's Doom | 20:10 |



Resurrection in Revelation 20

What is the "First Resurrection?"

- **Majority View:** Believers' Resurrection at Beginning of Future Millennium
- **Meredith Kline:** Martyrs' Physical Deaths
- **Norman Shepherd:** Believers' Regeneration
- **Philip Hughes:** Christ's Resurrection



ELEMENTS OF A KIDDIAN ESCHATOLOGY

The Circumscription of Satan

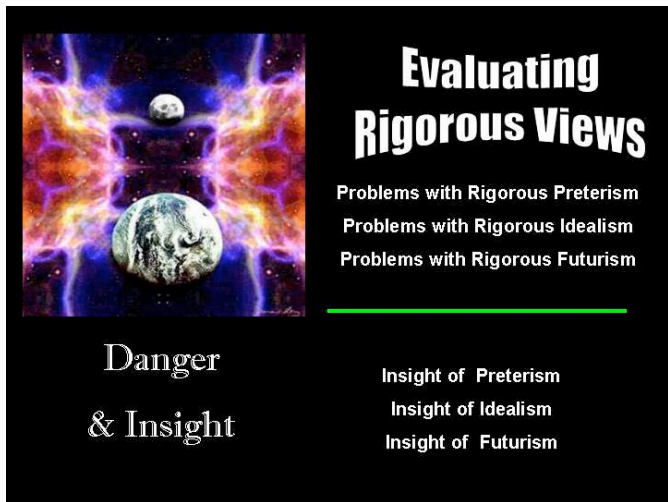
NT Source	Present Dominion of Christ	Circumscription of Satan
The Synoptics	All Authority Has Been Given to Me	Exorcism & the Strong Man Bound
John's Gospel	Son of Man Lifted Up	Ruler of this World Cast Out
John's Epistles	Son of Man Appeared	...to Destroy the Works of the Devil (3:8)
John's Revelation	Revelation 5, etc.	Devil Cast Down from Heaven; Bound in the Abyss
Paul's Letters & Acts	Col 1:12-20 Eph 1:20-23 Acts 2:30-36 Acts 13:33,34	Christ has Disarmed, Made Public Display of, and Triumphed over "Rulers & Authorities" (Col. 2:15) / "The Restrainer" Placed over the Man of Lawlessness (2 Th. 2:6,7)

The Circumscription of Satan

NT Source	Point of Circumscription	Present Evil Aeonic Force
The Synoptics	...Disciples of All the Nations...; The Gospel must 1st Be Preached	
John's Gospel	I will Draw all Men to Myself	
John's Epistles		The Spirit of Antichrist (4:3); Presence of Antichrists (2:18; 2jn 7)
John's Revelation	...He Should not Deceive the Nations any Longer, Until... (20:3)	The Dragon Persecutes the Woman on the Earth (12:13)
Paul's Letters & Acts	Gentiles Being Turned from the Authority of Satan to God (Acts 26:18); The Wisdom of God Is Made Known through the Church to the "Rulers & Authorities" in the Heavens (Eph 3:10; Col 1:27)	The Mystery of Lawlessness Already at Work (2 Th 2:7); This Present Darkness (Eph 6:10)

The Circumscription of Satan

NT Source	Future Incarnation of Evil	Final Explosion of Evil
The Synoptics	The Abomination of Desolation Standing in the Holy Place (Mt 24:15)	A Tribulation Greater than Any Known to Humankind (Mt 24:21)
John's Gospel		
John's Epistles	The Antichrist is Coming (2:18)	
John's Revelation	Rev 13's Beast from the Sea A Parody of Christ	Satan Released; Gathering of Armies of Man for the War Against the Saints
Paul's Letters & Acts	The Man of Lawlessness will be Revealed "In His Time" - A Parody of Christ	"The Restrainer" Taken Away; The Apostasy (2Th 2:3,6,7)



Problems with rigorous preterism:

- ☞ Overly dependent on pre- AD 70 dating of Rev
- ☞ Not a clear reason for addressing this letter to Christians in Asia Minor rather than Jerusalem
- ☞ Not all the details (some important) fit — e.g., the Roman War is *not* against the Lamb and his people; Nero did not in fact die and return to life
- ☞ For preterists ἡ γῆ always = the land of Palestine (though I find the case for that understanding at 1:7 to be persuasive)

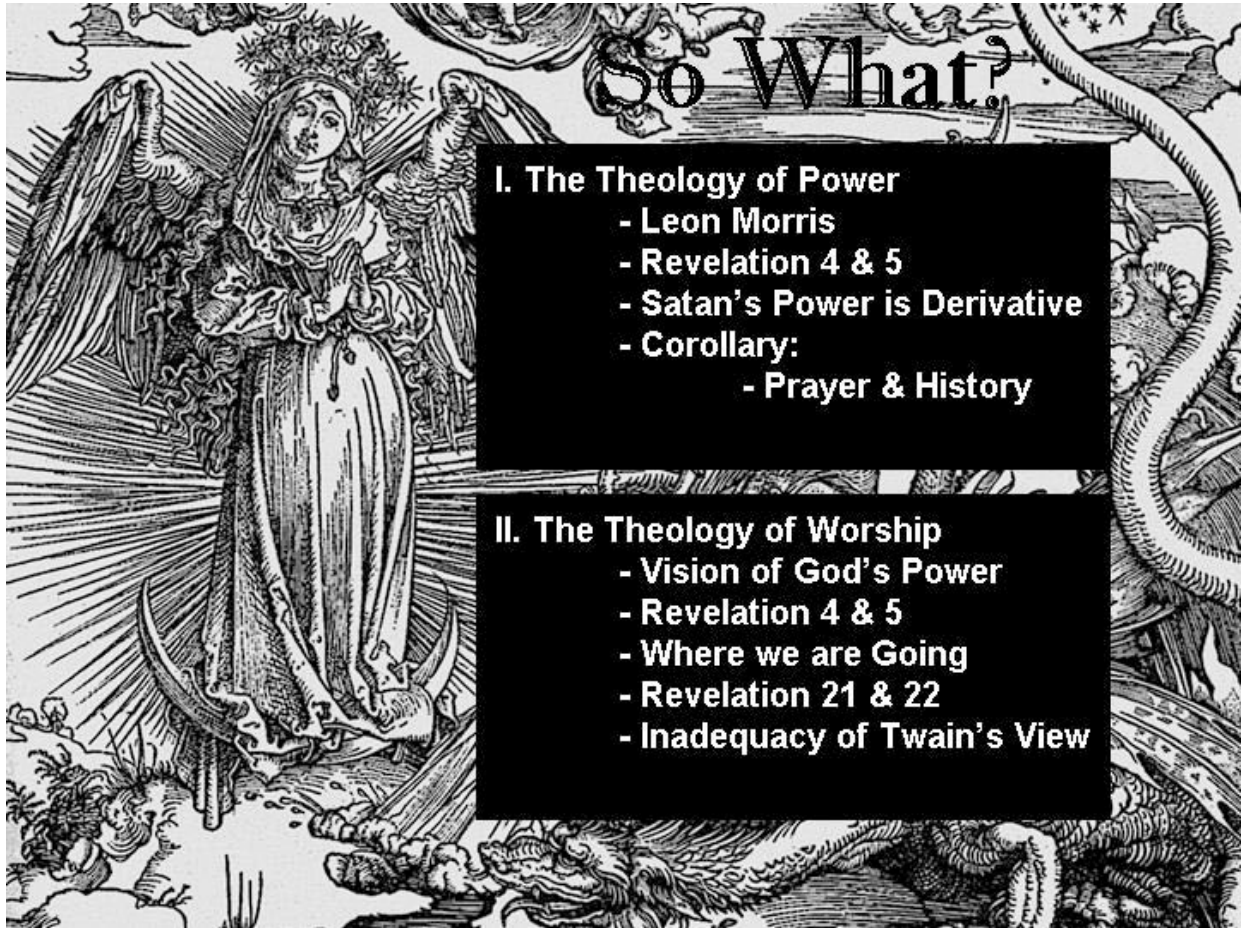
- ☞ Babylon may or may not always = Jerusalem
- ☞ Getting the 3.5 yrs, 42 mos, 1260 days to be exhausted by the Jewish War, esp. since Luke begins the time of the Gentiles *after* the fall of Jerusalem
- ☞ Overly dependent on conclusions for which Josephus our only source
- ☞ Failure to see AD 70 as part of closure of the 1st Coming; events united more with that than with the 2nd Coming. The end of the beginning rather than the beginning of the end — see R. Gaffin, “Theonomy & Eschatology,” pp. 204-205

Problems with rigorous idealism:

- ☞ The book of Revelation is not about timeless, static principles; but a build up to a final cataclysmic confrontation — have to read more with an eye to Augustine’s vision of the City of God vs. the City of Man
- ☞ One of the lessons that Reformed exegetes who tend toward an idealist interpretation of Revelation (Hendriksen has this drift) need to take to heart is that, according to 1 John, there is a spirit of antichrist that emerged in the first century (1Jn 4:3) — Paul’s term for it is “the mystery of lawlessness” (2Th) — which Ridderbos argues was a Satanic kneejerk reaction to his own humiliation at the coming of Christ (cf. Rev 12). Eventually, the spirit of antichrist or the mystery of lawlessness will issue into an “explosion of evil” (Ridderbos’ well chosen term), when *the* antichrist (1Jn 2:18) or *the* man of lawlessness (2Th) comes, i.e., when the restrainer is removed (2Th) and Satan is loosed (Rev 20). Paul calls this explosion of evil “the apostasy” (2Th) — John refers to it as “the little season” during which Satan re-deceives the nations and gathers the armies of man against God’s people. The point that Reformed exegetes do not always appreciate is that 1 John says that “even now (i.e., beginning in the first century) many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour” (2:18). Evil will finally be incarnated in *the* antichrist, in *the* man of lawlessness; but even before then there are figures that anticipate him, and if you will, point toward him.

Problems with rigorous futurism:

- ☞ De-eschatologizing of the present age — diminishing of the victory already won
- ☞ That the tribulation is entirely futuristic, in view of the fact that John himself is already a partaker of “the affliction and kingdom and endurance” (1:9), and in view of the fact that he is on the isle of Patmos because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus.
- ☞ Two future comings of the Lord is problematic





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