① DISPUTED AUTHORSHIP

- who wrote the Book of Revelation?
- answer: John
  - 5 x the writer says his name is John (1:1, 4, 9, 21:2, 22:8)

★ Concern: which John, who is this John? (very common name)
- Is it the Apostle John...
  - maybe, maybe NOT
- info against the Apostle John:
  - the Greek style of writing is nothing like the Gospel or letters
  - The Gospel and the letters (1, 2, 3 John) are sophisticated, smooth, advanced
  - Revelation has irregular forms/(case endings), is choppy, and has many solecisms (vs. 100 solecisms)
- example of solecism:
  - You is rude... instead of You are rude
- It's almost as if the writer did not know Greek
  - some believe it may have been originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic, then translated into Greek

★ Also, in all of John's known writings, he never uses his name
- John seems to even go out of his way to not mention his name
  - Even referring to his mom at the cross as "another woman w/ Mary"
- There is other evidence against John, but for the sake of time - above are at least two concerns worth mentioning

AUTHORSHIP

- Evidence for the authorship being the Apostle John
  - the Apostle John was sent to the Island of Patmos

"I, John, ... was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and testimony of Jesus" 1:9

- This posts the Apostle at the place and time the book was written
- Regarding the Greek style of writing
  - it is very possible that due to his condition, confines, or limitations
    - Paul uses an amanuensis in Galatians (6:11)
    - Paul then signed the letter w/ his own hand

★ that he dictated the visions to an amanuensis
- the amanuensis may have not been as fluent in Greek as John
- the amanuensis would write down John's visions in his own style
- another linkage to the apostle John is certain Key words found only in Revelation and John's gospel

Examples include:
- ὁ λογος = John 1:1, 1 John 1:1, 1 John 5:7, Rev. 19:13 (λογος = Jesus)
- The "Lamb of God" title
- "overcomings" "νικῶ"
  - John 16:33, 1 John 2:13-14, 4:4, Rev. 11:7, 13:7, and 17:14
- Satan thrown out of heaven
- So, the book sounds like John, but maybe not written by John

② Authority, Date Written/accepted, Style/Genre, TITLE

Does the authorship matter?
- Yes, as only apostles or those sent out by Jesus had authority for their writings to be canonized
  - Luke was probably sent out w/ Paul by the church - Acts 12
  - A division occurred among the apostles in Acts 15
  - Paul and Silas are "sent" - Mark/Barnabas the other
  - ★ Mark was probably one of the 70...also for many noted - Mk 14
  - Hebrews made it in strictly on content (and the date written was circa 65 AD...still 1st cent)
  - other authors writings did not qualify & Barnabas, Polycarp, Ignatius of Antioch, Clement of Alexander, etc.
- ★ Also, some writings could not be proven as the actual Apostles
  - Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Judas, et
- hence there are Jewish apocrapha (Book of Enoch, Tobit, Maccabees, etc)
  - these are good Literature, but the Jews were NOT 100% confident of the writings OR authorship
- ★ Same issue w/ the N.T. church
  - church was NOT 100% confident on authorship and/OR content
  - As a result, there are christian "apocrapha books" (just like there are Jewish apocrapha books)
- If the apostle John wrote the Book of Revelation
  - then we can be confident it is inspired and properly included in canon (canon: genuine, meets criteria)
- Date Revelation was written compared to the date it was accepted/canonized:
- There are two possible dates the book could have been written
  - the date has a huge effect on the choice one has for interpretation
    - option #1 is that the Letter was written around 65 AD
      - under the reign of Nero
      - this allows for the interpretation of preterist to be valid
    - option #2 is that the letter was written around 95 AD
      - this date would exclude interpreting Revelation under preterism (more on this later under 4 views)
- The book circulated christian communities for centuries
  - It was read for hundreds of years
  - Irenaeus, Tertulian, Clement of Alexander, and Origen all accepted it
- ★ Jerome, in the 4th century (396 AD) decided to add it to canon

"The apocalypse of John has many secrets and hidden meanings, it is beyond all praise..." Letter of Jerome 53:9, 1966

- The letter itself is apocalyptic
  - meaning it deals w/ future events that are "unveiled" using hidden symbols, allegories, or metaphors
    - filled w/ hyperbolic literature
  - The first verse literally says (the "unveiling")
    "The Revelation (ἀποκαλυψις)... things that must soon take place symbolized (σημαινω) through an angel to John..." Rev. 1:1
- The Title
  - Is simply the first verse
    "The Revelation (ἀποκαλυψις) of Jesus"
    - Catholics keep the Greek: Apocalypse (style)
    - other titles have been used throughout the centuries

③ APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

- apocalyptic literature is a genre of prophetical writings
- Revelation claims to be
  - an ἀποκαλυψις "unveiling", uncovering, or "revelation"
  - through σημαινω "symbols that signify"
  - of a προφητεία prophecy (a declaration/proclamation of God)
- This book is a heightened form of prophecy
- Full of hyperbolic literature, metaphors, and symbols

Examples include:
- Jesus is described as a Lamb w/ 7 eyes and 7 horns (NOT Literal, Jesus never actually had these physical traits)
- Devil is a serpent or dragon sometimes w/ 7 heads and 10 horns
- Demons will be locusts, other dangerous animals
  - these locusts will eat men (Again, not literal, as locusts eat plants)
- A harlot called Babylon
- A Bride as a city and also called the Lambs wife
- Another evil city called Sodom and Egypt
- There will be several earthquakes, stars, moon, & sun will fall several times
- heavens will roll up like scrolls

★ All this in ch 6!

LITERATURE

- Stars will fall to earth (can't be literal as stars are much bigger than earth and would engulf it)
- some stars will have "Keys"
- Rivers, like the Euphrates, will dry up
- Stars will bow down (sometimes these events symbolize and signify something that has already happened - ch. 12)
- Two witnesses killed, then 3 days later come back to life
- Rivers will turn to blood
- Blood will rise to a horse's bridle

★ Numbers are hugely important/symbolic
- 3... 1/3 (minority)... 2/3 majority
- 7 completeness
  - 7 eyes, 7 stars, 7 candlesticks, 7 heads, 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 bowls, 7 beatitudes/blessings, and w/o a doubt 7 overall sections to the Book/letter
- 10 "worldly"
  - 10 days of tribulation, 10 horns, 1,000 year Kingdom (multiples of 10)
- 12 "order"
  - 12 gates, 12 levels, 144,000 people, 24 Elders, 12 stars, 144 cubits (multiples of 12)
- Reading this book/letter literally is very dangerous exegesis of apocalyptic lit

★ So, how can the reader best interpret this book?
Answer: There are 4 main methods

④ 4 METHODS OF INTERPRETATION

1) Preterist: all events have been fulfilled (latin "PAST")
- events were fulfilled in AD 70
- of the destruction of the Temple
- the official end of the O.T
- The Messianic Kingdom has ended
- The 2nd coming has been fulfilled as a spiritual coming of Judgment - Is. 19:1
- Revelation speaks of this "soon" coming event

"Do not seal up the words of this prophecy" 22:10
- these words "Do not seal up" come from Daniel who was told to seal up the words of the prophecy" Daniel 8:26

★ This prophecy was fulfilled 600 yrs later because if Daniel = 600 yrs, then Daniel's seal = 1,200

"These things will come upon this generation" Matt 24
"These things must shortly take place" 1:1
"The time is near" 1:3 "coming quickly" 22:7
- with these clear verses, the events must have been already fulfilled
- Can't be over 2,000 yrs later
- obviously, the Dot Revelation was written would confirm or entirely nullify this interpretation (Book was written in 65 AD OR 95 AD)

2) THE HISTORICIST VIEW
- Revelation is a sequence of history/events throughout time... A timeline view
- Starting w/ the birth of Jesus to the 2nd physical coming of Christ
- the 7 churches are an overview of how the church behaved, in sequential order throughout history

Example... each "church" is an "age":
1. Ephesus - apostolic age
2. Smyrna - persecution of the church until 313 AD
3. Pergamus - compromised church until 500 AD
4. Thyatira - rise of the Papacy (antichrist) to the Reformation (16th century) (Age of the Fall of Rome)
5. Sardise - age of the Reformation Protestant reforms by Martin Luther (1517-1648)
6. Philadelphia - the age of evangelism
7. Laodicea - Liberal church age in "present" day

- 7 seals are a breakdown of the Fall of the Roman Empire (500 AD)
- 7 trumpets are the Fall of the Eastern Roman Empire to the Islamists (650 AD)
- The rise of the Papacy is the Beast from the Sea (anti-Christ)

7 bowls are the French Revolution - which ended in 1799

★ AND still NO physical 2nd coming
- this is when this view kind of Died out

★ So the "futurist" view was born around this time
- Revelation says the beast rules for 1,260 days
- So the Historicist view come up w/ a day for a year rule

(Ezekiel on his side one for every year, as punishment for Israel & Judah)

★ So papacy will last 1,260 years

★ However, this would have ended the Roman Papacy around 1800 (500 + 1,260) BUT The Papacy still exists in 2023

3) The Futurist view
- this view became popular around 1850 and even more recently
- It came as a result of the then popular view, the historicist
- When the Historicist view fell, some groups began to think that the events must be literal

★ AND since Literal, it must be future since these events have not happened yet
- blood to horses bridle
- two witnesses killed
- locust like horses
- 100 pound hailstones
- mark of the Beast
- Euphrates dried up
- 1/3 of land destroyed
- 1,000 year reign

★ All of these events (and more) are looked at as literal

★ Within this view, and only within this view is:
- premillenial & Post-millenial view/debate of the Kingdom (Debate w/in this view reg. ch. 20)
- Pretrib, mid-trib, Post-trib rapture view/debate (Debate w/in this view reg. ch. 4:1 "μετα ταυτα" and the 2nd church. However, this saying "after these things" occurs in 4:1, 7:1, 15:5, 18:1, and 19:1)
- This view believes the church is currently in ch. 2-3 only

★ All other views have the rapture at Jesus' coming AND

★ only this view has a literal 1,000 year Kingdom
- All the prophecies of ch. 4-19 will happen in a 7 year span
  - there is NO mention of a 7 year span in Revelation (NOT EVEN ONCE)

★ This idea comes from combining this view w/ a prophecy from Daniel 9
- Ch. 20 is a literal Kingdom
- ch. 21-22 is a literal view of the New heaven and Earth (NO sea, 1400 cubits square, 12 gates, 12 levels, etc)

- Church Synagogue, John MacArthur, Left Behind movies have made this view popular

4) The Spiritualist/Idealist View:
- The events in Revelation are symbolic representations of what every Generation faces
- Every generation can read Revelation and it will apply to the Reader
  - Preterist view = 2,000 yrs ago & NOT applicable
  - Historicist view = only parts of the book are applicable to the generation of that "time"
  - Futurist view = only ch. 2-3 apply to the reader, ch. 4-19 would apply to a future generation

★ With every other view, the Book is either NOT relevant or only parts are relevant TO the Reader

⑤ 4 VIEWS CONTINUED:

- The spiritualist view is sometimes called the idealist view because
  - Revelation describes fundamental ideas/ideals believers face
- There are 7 "cuts" w/in Rev
- The King and His church 1-3
- The seven seals 4-7
- The seven trumpets 8-11
- The SIGNS (?) 12-14
- The seven Bowls 15-16
- The Fall of Babylon 17-19
- The King and His church 20-22
  - Nice inclusio
  - The Seals, Trumpets, bowls match each other (almost precisely)
    - Especially the Trumpets & Bowls
  - Ch. 11 and 19 mirror each other
  - Satan "cast out" in Jn 12 & Rev. 12
  - Satan "bound" in Matt 12 and Rev. 20

★ point is, it would be hard to argue Rev. 12 and 20 as future
- when the Gospels say they occured
- The Tribulation is now - Rev. 1:9
- The Kingdom is now - Rev. 19 (they are concurrent to one another)
- The New Heaven and New earth have begun now... New creation
- This view began around 200 AD