

Is Revelation Pertinent to the Christian Walk?

As previously stated, the early church was reluctant to add Revelation to the canon of scripture, which may account for the late date of authorship.¹ The bizarre imagery was met with suspicion and doubt. Unfortunately, this apathy towards the book still exists in today's church. Many believe that it adds little value to the Christian walk. The church's unwillingness to study and embrace this marvelous book has given others opportunity to promote a plethora of false doctrines and idiotic notions.

Revelation's first verse states, "The revelation—or *revealing*—of Jesus Christ..." Anyone who doesn't believe the book to have much spiritual value is frankly not concerned with the revealing of our Lord and Savior. This unfortunate attitude is the result of getting bogged down in the symbolism and academics rather than focus on the book's central truths.

The first chapter promises, "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it." (Rev 1:3) The last chapter warns that "if anyone takes away from the words of the book of *this* prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in *this* book." (Rev 22:19) While some have supposed "this prophecy" and "this book" to be the bible, the context clearly identifies it as John's Revelation.

What you get out of studying Revelation depends on your approach. If you get all the historical data right—identifying Roman emperors, historical places, etc., you won't get much spiritual benefit from it. If you seek the underlying truths and principles, you'll gain a rich appreciation for God's wisdom and guidance.

¹ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, III, 25; A certain doubt attached to (Revelation) for a time in sections of the Greek and Syrian churches. It is not found in the Peshitta, and a citation from it in Ephraim the Syrian (circa 373) seems not to be genuine. Cyril of Jerusalem (circa 386 AD) omits it from his list, and it is unmentioned by the Antiochian writers (Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret). The Canon attributed to the Council of Laodicea (circa 360 AD) does not name it, but it is doubtful whether this document is not of later date (compare Westcott; also Bousset, *Die Offenb. Joh.*, 28). On the other hand, the book is acknowledged by Methodius, Pamphilus, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril Alex., Epiphanius, etc. —*International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*