

NEW THRU 30 HISTORY

History: Revelation

Author: John the apostle.

When was the book of Revelation written, where was it composed and who was it written to?: John writes from Patmos, an island 40 miles southwest of Ephesus in the Aegean Sea, while in exile around the years 81-96 AD. John's primary audience are the seven churches in the Roman province of Asia (modern day Turkey), which are individually addressed at the first part of the book.

Purpose of the book: Revelation was written to provide encouragement for Christians who were living during a great time of persecution. John's vision encourages believers to remain faithful and gives them hope that despite their present circumstances, Christ and those who follow him will eventually claim victory.

How does the book of Revelation fit into the Jewish Culture of the New Testament?: Revelation fits into the genre of Jewish apocalyptic literature. This genre is known for its heavy use of symbolism and was used as propaganda against enemy governments. Writers of apocalyptic literature would use imagery and language that outsiders would not understand so that if the book fell into the wrong hands, the reader would not know that the book was actually speaking against them.

Interesting notes about the book of Revelation:

- Revelation is not all about the future. Revelation 4-5 depicts heaven as it is right now.
- Much of the book is a polemic against Caesar and the Roman Empire. Caesar claimed to be a living son of the gods and was persecuting the church. Jesus is the living Son of God, who will eventually vindicate the church.
- The events of the book are not strictly chronological. Much of it is ordered according to literary repetition and rhythm.
- The vision of the end of the world is not of us going up to heaven, but heaven coming down to earth.

Main Takeaways from the book of Revelation:

- In times of chaos, God is still on his throne and in control. There is no panic in heaven. No matter what the state of the world is right now, God and his purposes will ultimately triumph.
- God's certain victory should fill believers with hope and motivate them to remain faithful in their commitment and their purity to the end.