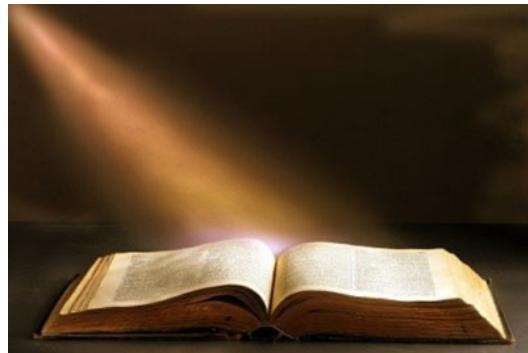


THE BASIC INTERPRETIVE APPROACHES TO REVELATION

Readers, hearers, and those who heed the Words of the Book of Revelation are promised a blessing.



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³ Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near."

We also are given a warning that we must not add to nor take away from the writing. (22:18-19)

¹⁸ I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. 19 And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll."

God gives a clear picture of the literal Interpretation of the book in this way and tells how he will fulfill His promises. As a result of choosing not to interpret the text literally and taking it allegorically, many readers have been unable to grasp the intended message written to them by God through John, the Revelator. There are four (4) basic interpretations of Revelation:

1. **The Preterist View** - belief that John was only referring to events of his own day (around 96 A.D.). The view assumes that Revelation is no different than any other example of apocalyptic literature from the period. According to this view the book is a tract on contemporary history written for the first century. This view holds that Revelation

deals with nothing more than Roman or Jewish persecution of the Christian Church during that period. This view is normally held by theological liberals that would normally reject the inspiration of Scripture. They even reject the possibility of predictive prophecy.

2. **The Historical (Historicist) View** - a view that suggests that the author was describing the major events that would take place during the history of the Church. In other words, that we can see these events as we look back at history. The problem with this interpretation, however, means that you have to juggle the historical events to fit the prophecy.
3. **The Idealist or Symbolic View** - is a variation of the church historical interpretation of Revelation. An Idealist agrees that Revelation describes and predicts persons and events throughout the New Testament era. They believe that the prophecies of Revelation portray events and patterns that are repeated over and over again throughout history. The Idealist also believes Revelation is relevant for God's people in every time and place, as pertinent to us today as it was to the first century believers (John's original audience).
4. **Futurist Interpretation** - which is the most believable and satisfactory to the premillennial Bible teachers as well as any fundamentalist who subscribes to the theory of dispensational premillennialism. This interpretation accepts the book of Revelation as prophecy that is primarily in the future (yet to be fulfilled); especially from chapter 4 to the last word in Revelation 22

Note: Information gathered from Dr. Christopher Cone's Book, *The Promises of God: A Bible Survey*, Exegetica Publishing, 2005. W. Graham Scroogie's Book, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*, Kregel Publishing.