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**COMMENTARIES**


Originally published in 1884, Alford's work represents the historicist position by a distinguished English exegete.


Takes the preterist position.


Takes an idealist position (though he sees ancient Rome in view, and even a future manifestation of the world system in the end-times). However, this work is very up-to-date, well-researched, and a gold-mine of information about Revelation. Employs significant effort to take into account OT allusions and quotations.


This work is by a professor of New Testament interpretation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (Louisville, KY). He was previously principal of Spurgeon's College in London (1958-72). He writes from the preterist-futurist camp. He regards the main purpose of the book as picturing the triumph of Christ and the major events of the book from chapters 4 through 18 to be a description of the endtime preceding the second coming of Christ. However, he does spiritualize the thousand-year reign of Christ and intimates that it begins with His first coming. He also spiritualizes the 144,000 as the church (church = new Israel). Reviewed in *BibSac* (Jan 1982): 82.


More than half of this volume (416 pp.) is dedicated to introductory matters dealing with such topics as the eschatological hope of the Bible, apocalyptic literature, the purpose of the book, etc. Somewhat dated (Beckwith: 1843-1936). The approach is basically preterist-futurist, and amillennial. Helpful with the Greek text.

A short work by a good scholar who takes the preterist-futurist view.


Although premillennial and pre-trib., Bullinger has some unique opinions. For instance, he believes that the seven churches of Rev 2–3 are seven, literal, Jewish churches or assemblies yet to come.


Takes the preterist approach, suggesting an imminent historical view. Critical scholar.


A technical work which is helpful with the Greek text. Preterist approach.


Premillennial. Helpful for an exposition of the book from a man who loves to preach.


This is a very helpful work, in which the editor has sought to inform the reader of various interpretative approaches. For ch 4–19, the commentary appears in four columns, representing four distinctive approaches (historicist, preterist, futurist, and the spiritual). For ch 20–22, the commentary appears in three columns, representing the three primary millennial viewpoints.


The author is conservative and amillennial, but his approach is "idealist." Spiritualizes extensively.


Hort was a genius of the Greek text. Unfortunately his work only covers chapters 1–3.


Written at a more popular level, Hughes takes more of a "idealist" approach and concentrates on principles for every age. Amillennial in his eschatology.


This is an excellent work by a graduate of Dallas Seminary. He is premillennial, but not as strict
on many details as others. For instance, he says that the 1000 year reign of Rev 20 will be an earthly reign of Christ, but the actual length is open to discussion. This work is well researched and documented. The work is basically futurist, though he gives careful attention to the historical side as well. The author states, "This commentary will pay close attention to the historical situation of first-century Christianity in its Judeo-Greco-Roman world setting . . . . On the other hand, we believe that John is describing the final judgment and the physical, bodily return of Christ to the world" (410). He is given to excessive symbolism, however, which diminishes his work (e.g., 42 months are not literal; the beast of Rev 13 is not an individual; the two witnesses represent the church).


Lindsey is famous as a popular writer (author of The Late Great Planet Earth), who holds to a premillennial and dispensational eschatology. Much of his work is quite helpful and trustworthy, although in his attempt to appeal to a modern generation he can at times go too far in "translating" the imagery (locusts of ch. 9 are "Cobra helicopters").


Lenski is a conservative Lutheran exegete, but amillennial in his eschatology. He argues that the 1000 reign is symbolical, and is going on now. To escape the problem of Satan's binding during this period, he tries to argue that the "binding" means that Satan shall not prevent the heralding of the gospel to all the nations (575).


Originally published in the early 1900's, this work concentrates on exegetical insights from the Greek text. Somewhat vague regarding the flow of the book.


Morris's approach seems to be a combination of the idealist and preterist schools. Amillennial. Commentary is somewhat brief, but helpful exegetical comments.


Mounce's approach is preterist-futurist, but not dispensational. Regarding the rapture, he is a post-tribulationist; hazy on the millennium. He states, "In short, John taught a literal millennium, but its essential meaning may be realized in something other than a temporal fulfillment" (359). The greatest use of this book will be found in its excellent use of and acquaintance with a wide scope

Osborne essentially takes a futurist position about Revelation, though not always taking the details so literally. He understands the Beast as the Antichrist, and Babylon (the harlot) as the empire of the Beast. He takes a modified premillennial position (there is a millennium, but it may not be literally 1000 years in length). At 869 pages, this is a gold-mine of information.


Premillennial, dispensational and pre-tribulational, by a former esteemed professor of Dallas Seminary (authored the *Ryrie Study Bible*). The book is very short (127 pp.), but helpful for getting a grip on the book.


A British scholar of the past century (1835-1917). He defends the unity of the book, and is preterist in approach (though he believes the Roman Caesar is also a type of the future Antichrist). Though somewhat dated, this is still one of the better volumes for help with the Greek text. Swete became Regius professor of divinity at Cambridge in 1890 and wrote the 1st edition of his commentary on Revelation in 1906.


Tenney (of Wheaton college fame) writes from a dispensational-futurist viewpoint. This work is brief on surveying Revelation itself, but contains some excellent discussions on topics such as the structure of Revelation, the Christology, the chronological approach, etc. Good!


This two-volume set on Revelation represents a careful exegesis of the text from a premillennial eschatology. Excellent notes from the Greek (and presented in readable fashion for the serious lay person) and abundant interaction with the literature on Revelation. This may be the best English commentary on Revelation (as a professor at The Master’s Seminary, however, his view on Lordship Salvation tends to detract from the book's value--notice how this affects his interpretation of Rev 2–3). Highly recommended!


Claims to follow a "canonical-critical approach" to the interpretation of the book. A more recent work, but weak in interpretation (for instance, views the beast of Rev 13 as "a universal symbol for secular power and cultural idols, with historical counterparts in every age" (168).


Though not as full a treatment as his single volume commentary (see below), this is more recent.
Comments are succinct, but extremely helpful. This is a good starting point!


Walvoord (formerly President of Dallas Seminary) is probably the foremost scholar on biblical prophecy. He is clearly dispensational, premillennial, and strongly pre-trib. This work is very understandable, and possibly the best treatment in English. Unfortunately, being written in the 60's, it lacks interaction with the many newer commentaries that have appeared since its release.

**SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKS**


Helpful for identifying OT parallels to the book of Revelation.


Each contributor takes a different view of eschatology. Beasley-Murray speaks for the premillennial view, Hobbs for the amillennial view, and Robbins emphasizes an approach that views Revelation as apocalyptic. The book emerged from a conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention.


A good defense of the pre-tribulation rapture view.


An Excellent presentation of the primary eschatological concerns. Premillennial. Highly recommended.


An excellent presentation of differing views on the millennium. An advocate of each of the major millennial views presents his case, and this is followed by a response from the other presenters.


This book contains a collection of articles by noted evangelical scholars (e.g., Walter Kaiser, Kenneth Barker, S. Lewis Johnson, Harold Hoehner, etc.) who write to present the evidence for a premillennial approach to the Bible. Premillennialism does not rest upon John's reference to "1000 years," but is the consistent teaching of Scripture. Highly recommended!


This is an excellent source for researching the background matters to Revelation, such as date and authorship. Cf. Guthrie.


Four scholars interact, each presenting his own view of the millennium, followed by rebuttal from the others. Covers dispensational premill., nondispens. premil., amillennial, and postmillennial.


Dyer carefully documents the long history of Babylon and the modern day movement to rebuild ancient Babylon (in present day Iraq). This is particularly relevant to a study of Rev 17-18.


Though not a commentary, this book by one of the foremost Christian leaders of our time is quite helpful. Dr. Graham certainly has a finger on the pulse of world events, and writes to warn people that a time of judgment and catastrophe is soon headed our way. His book emphasizes the four horsemen of Rev 6 who will bring disaster to the world. By pointing out current conditions, Dr. Graham illustrates that these predictions are not that far-fetched. He takes a futuristic view of Revelation, in which the Second Coming will be preceded by a period of judgment. His illustrations and pleas for people to turn to Christ contribute to making this an excellent book for reading.


A helpful work surveying the differing millennial positions, but not as beneficial or up-to-date as Darrell Bock (ed., *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond*).


A careful and thorough defense of the post-tribulational view of the rapture. Gundry has been answered by Walvoord's book, *The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation*.


Does an exhaustive study of the seven churches and concludes with a Domitianic date for the book. Very helpful background data.


A conservative amillennial approach to eschatology.


Irving is famous for his booklets that help the student to do his own inductive Bible study. He is a master of chart-making! This booklet gives assignments and asks questions for one to do his own study of the book. Jensen himself takes a futuristic approach to the book, and is premillennial, but this is not forced upon the reader. This is an excellent study booklet, and is highly recommended!

Dr. Karleen (who holds a PhD in Linguistics of Ancient Greek) demonstrates why Rosenthal's Pre-Wrath view of the rapture is biblically defective.


A very up-to-date defense of the pretribulational rapture. Well-researched, yet readable. Dr. LaHaye now serves as chairman of the steering committee for the "Pre-Trib Research Center," a group of evangelical scholars who are aligning themselves to make a concerted defense for the pretribulational rapture of the church (% Family Life Seminars, P. O. Box 2700, Washington, D.C. 20013-2700). Recommended!


This is an excellent book (and easy to read) to guide the average lay person through the maze of different views on eschatology. Each view is carefully explained and fairly treated. This book is highly recommended!


Michaels's book is an attempt to grapple with the hermeneutics of the genre found in Revelation. He has discussions on numerous topics, from literary structure to conceptions of the millennium. He is fuzzy on his view of eschatology, although he recognizes that the millennium of Rev 20 cannot simply be spiritualized away. Reacts against dispensationalism.


Very helpful for understand current viewpoints about Revelation. Pate himself attempts to articulate what he considers to be a "Progressive Dispensationalist" view. Kenneth Gentry defends the Preterist view, Sam Hamstra the Idealist view, and Robert Thomas the classical dispensationalist view.


A thorough and classic study of biblical eschatology according to an esteemed professor at Dallas Seminary. Dispensational, pre-trib, and premillennial. Responds to many of the views current up to the 1950's.


Helpful for understanding recent attempts to rebuild the temple. The author believes that the Ark of the Covenant is actually buried beneath the Dome of the Rock. Reviewed in *BibSac* (Apr 1996).

A classic study on Revelation 2-3, but obviously dated somewhat. Primary sources included *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, Royal Geographical Society Supplementary Papers 4 (London: John Murray, 1890); and *The Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1895). See the work by Hemer for an important updating.


This is one of the more helpful books dealing with the rapture debate. Three views of the rapture are presented (each by one of its own adherents), and in each case the other scholars interact with the presentation. This appeared before Rosenthal's view of a pre-wrath rapture. Highly recommended!


Rosenthal's book attempts to articulate a new (and novel) view that the rapture of the church will occur approximately two-thirds of the way through the Tribulation. In other words, believers will go through most of the Tribulation, but will be raptured before the part identified as "God's wrath" occurs.


A very tedious study of the rapture debate by one who carefully defends the pre-trib view. At the end of his book, he presents a survey of the leading books on the subject (nearly 20!) in which he summarizes the thrust of the book and gives some interaction.


Another defense of the pre-tribulational rapture. Since the author died in 1959, this work will not have interaction with more recent studies.


This is an attempt to bring together the biblical prophecies related to the tribulation period before the Second Coming of Christ. He attempts to demonstrate that history is moving closer to the period when these things will be fulfilled, and particularly how the world oil crisis will serve as a catalyst to focus world events on the Middle East. Very enlightening without being overly sensational. Recommended.


Walvoord (the world's premiere defender of the pre-trib rapture) writes this book primarily to answer Gundry's arguments for a post-trib rapture. Highly recommended!


In this book, Dr. Walvoord tries to summarize and explain all the prophecies of Scripture. Pp.
517-646 are given to a treatment of Revelation. In two appendices at the end of the book, he lists all the prophecies of the Bible and when they will be fulfilled.


A helpful updating of a classic defense of the pre-tribulational rapture. Recommended!


**JOURNAL ARTICLES AND PERIODICALS**

*BibSac* = *Bibliotheca Sacra* (journal of Dallas Seminary)

*JETS* = *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*


Aune, David E. "The From and Function of the Proclamations to the Seven Churches (Revelation 2—3)." *NTS* 36:2 (Apr 1990): 182-204.


Boyer argues, “The letters to the seven churches in Revelation 2–3 outline the course of Church History from the first advent of Christ to his second advent.” Cf. R. Thomas.

Tries to argue that the seven churches represent seven different periods of church history (this theory is not very accepted today). See the article by Robert Thomas.


A very thought-provoking article dealing with the order and arrangement of judgments in Rev. Davis defends the "successive-final" viewpoint in which the seals are general followed by the trumpets, and the trumpets in turn by the bowls. However, the 7th judgment in each series is parallel to the others, and occurs just prior to the 2nd Coming. Hence, 6:12-17, for example, occurs just prior to the 2nd Coming and after the first six trumpets. Helpful, but not entirely convincing.

Deer, Donald S. "Whose Faith/Loyalty in Revelation 2.13 and 14:12?" *BT* 38:3 (July 1987): 328-32.


Attempts (unsuccessfully) to refute the doctrine of the millennium. He concludes, “In short, the “millennial reign” of Revelation 20:1–6 is eternal life intensified: the reign of Christ and His saints is a piece of realized soteriology. Nothing could have been more relevant for John’s readers to know, because contrary to what appears to be true, the throne room scene of Revelation 20 assures suffering Christians that those who have gone before actually “reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:17).” He is still left with the dilemma of how Satan can accurately be said to be bound at this time.

Geyser, Albert. "The Twelve Tribes in Revelation: Judean and Judeo Christian Apocalypticism." *NTS*


An attempt to argue that the "new creation" in Rev 21 is not a new creation but only a renewal of the present heaven-earth system. In other words, the creation we presently enjoy is the creation we will have for eternity. Hence, Christians should take a stronger stance on environmentalism. Not convincing, despite attempts to deal exegetically with the theological problems confronting this view in Rev 21:1 and 2 Pet 3.


Attempts to argue that the resurrection in Rev 20:4-6 relates to the soul, not to the body (i.e., not a physical resurrection). Also holds that the thousand-year reign is in heaven (taking place now!) and not on earth. Hence, the passage depicts disembodied souls reigning with Christ.


A review of Mounce's commentary on Revelation.


A spiritualizing approach to the temple references in Revelation. Weak exegetically.


MacLeod, David J. "The Fourth 'Last Thing': The Millennial Kingdom of Christ (Rev. 20:4-6); Part 5 of 8 Parts of 'Expositional Studies of the Seven 'Last Things' in the Book of Revelation.' *BibSac* 157:625 (Jan-Mar 2000): 44-67.

MacLeod, David J. "The Fifth 'Last Thing': The Release of Satan and Man's Final Rebellion (Rev. 20:4-6); Part 6 of 8 Parts of 'Expositional Studies of the Seven 'Last Things' in the Book of Revelation.' *BibSac* 157:626 (Apr-Jun 2000): 200-214.


McLean concludes, “The Revelation manifests six major sections for the whole book: 1) Prologue, chap. 1; 2) Letters to the Seven Churches, chaps. 2–3; 3) God’s Wrath and Great Tribulation, chaps. 4–19; 4) Millenial Kingdom of God, chap. 20; 5) New Jerusalem, chaps.
21:1–22:5; and 6) Epilogue, chap. 22:6–21.” The author also shows how this refutes the pre-wrath view of the rapture held by Rosenthal.


Page attempts to compare the various paragraphs of Rev 20 with Pauline eschatology. From this he concludes, “...it is possible to see a close correspondence between Revelation 20 and some of the major features of Paul’s eschatological teaching. Indeed, an especially close agreement between them emerges if one equates the millennium of Revelation 20 with the period between the first and second advents of Christ and the coming to life of v. 4 with the new birth. Insofar as the relevance of this to the debate about the millennium is concerned, it lends not inconsiderable support to the classic Augustinian position.”


“Revelation’s picture of spiritual war offers a significant way of engaging in critical interaction with modern culture.”


Argues that Christ is now ruling over His church, but will not rule on the throne of David until the Second Coming.


Showers shows the weaknesses and failures of this point of view (held by both Marv Rosenthal and Robert Van Kampen). See review in *BibSac* (Jan-Mar 2003, p 112).


Argues against the view that Rev 1:19 presents a three-fold outline for the book.


The author argues that the Antichrist in Dan 11:36-45 is distinct from both the King of the North and the King of the South. Furthermore, the King of the North does not represent Russia, but will probably emerge from what was once the Seleucid empire (consistent with the use of the term in Dan 11).


A careful study of Ezekiel 38–39, in which the author takes note of the New Covenant terminology. In contrast to most premillennialists, the author does not equate the invader with Russia nor does he place the event in the Tribulation. Rather, the invasion should be equated with
that mentioned in Rev 20.


Defends the general premillennial interpretation of Rev 20.


Rejects the view that the seven churches represent seven periods of church history. Instead, they provide examples and lessons for churches throughout the interadvent period.


Argues persuasively against the position of Kenneth Gentry that Revelation was written in the sixties of the 1st century AD.


Defends the *recapitulation view* of chapter 20 (e.g., ch 20 does not follow ch 19 chronologically). Thus, the events of ch 20:1-6 are not after the 2nd Coming (e.g., during the Millennium), but descriptive of the present age.


Concludes that the beast is both a latter-day development of the Roman Empire and the Antichrist who will head it up.


Offers a good summary of the various views. Concludes: “The preferred interpretation is that the first horseman of Revelation 6:2 represents the Antichrist or else a trend or movement of which he would certainly be the chief example.”


Interprets the reward promise for all believers, rather than restricting it to some.


Deals with the promises for overcomers in Rev 2–3, but tends to see them for all believers rather than restricting them to those who are faithful.


Understands the promise to all believers. He states, “The tree in the eternal city will be a literal, physical tree intended by God to depict the fullness of eternal life and to teach eternally the lesson that the life God gives is the source of fruit, and fruit is the very product of that life (Rev. 22:2). The healing leaves on the tree will minister to or serve the saints as they serve God. The eating from the tree is an enjoyment of life in its grandest realization and it depicts eternal life in the New Jerusalem.”


Read the Book of Revelation online. Scripture chapters and verses with full summary, commentary meaning, and concordances for Bible study. This summary of the book of Revelation provides information about the title, author(s), date of writing, chronology, theme, theology, outline, a brief overview, and the chapters of the Book of Revelation. Author. Four times the author identifies himself as John (1:1,4,9; 22:8). From as early as Justin Martyr in the second century a.d. it has been held that this John was the apostle, the son of Zebedee (see Mt 10:2). The book itself reveals that the author was a Jew, well versed in Scripture, a church leader who was. The book of Revelation was written to seven churches as both encouragement and challenge. An apocalyptic letter, it relies on visions, symbols, and Old Testament references to reveal the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise given to Abraham in Genesis. Read Scripture Part I. A final word. The book is not a secret code that allows believers to decipher the timeline of Jesus's return. Instead, it shows that every human kingdom eventually becomes Babylon and must be resisted. Jesus, the slain Lamb who died for the sins of the world, will return one day as King with His followers to pro