

Dating the book of

Revelation

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Dating the “Apocalypse” - The Revelation

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Dating The Revelation of John is of the utmost importance.

Not only will it tell us to whom it was directed, but it will also help us to interpret the vision accurately.

1. Was it before the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD?
2. Or was it like most popular theologians say in the time of the emperor Domitian who lived about 95 AD?

We know as a historical fact that the apostle John lived at least till 90AD.

These questions are of the utmost importance as we will see. The accurate interpretation of The Revelation and the understanding thereof is greatly dependent upon the time it was seen and written.

The date of the Revelation solves mysteries like the Mark of the Beast, Armageddon and the mysterious Harlot sitting on the Beast

We have to re-evaluate this very important issue concerning the date of the Vision.

The era of information has arrived and we do not have to accept every traditional teaching handed to us from the previous generations. If it violates or contradicts the written Word or goes against its principles we should reject it. In fact we should not accept any doctrine or teaching without proper and sound exegesis, critical evaluation and honest questioning. Today we have access to a well of information through the internet -the written information of known and credible Church fathers like Irenaeus Bishop of Lyons, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius, Polycarp and many more. These well respected church fathers give us valuable information concerning John the apostle and the date of the Revelation.

Besides these Church fathers there are well known and respected historians who wrote about the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, the early Christians (and) the Caesars and Emperors of Rome.

Men like Tacitus on “Nero”, Joachim Jeremias’s “Notes on Jerusalem”, Flavius Josephus: “The wars of the Jews,” and other respected historians provide us with sufficient external information to date the Revelation of John.

In this section we will be looking at:

- Hermeneutical principles of interpreting the Revelation;
- The importance of the date;
- The argument for a late date of Revelation. (90-95AD) -the time of Domitian;
- The external evidence of an early dating 68-69AD - the time of Nero;
- The internal witness by the author himself concerning the date of the Apocalypse (The Revelation)

We will also consider the following aspects:

- (i) The author;
- (ii) The Theme of Revelation;
- (iii) The meaning of certain expressions, like: “*quickly*”, “*at hand*”, “*swiftly*” and “*soon*”;
- (iv) Identifying the sixth King of Rev 17:3 & Rev. 6-13

When the Lord started to prepare me for the grace and mission I ‘m in today, one of the greatest challenges to me was the understanding of the Revelation that John saw on Patmos. I saw the blessing pronounced on those who took it to heart.

*“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.”*¹

The questions, that troubled me, and I am sure many others are:

1. To which generation is John addressing the Revelation?
2. What does “*quickly*” and “*soon*” mean? Rev 1:, Rev 22:
3. Is Revelation a chronologic sequence of events?
4. Is everything in the future, and if so, to whom is it future?
5. What does “*signify*” mean?

*“And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,”*²

¹ Rev 1:3

There are certain important principles that are vital if we want to understand the message of the Revelation. Let's look at a few of them.

How do we interpret all Scripture?

Hermeneutical principles for interpreting the Revelation of John.

1. The principle of Christ

The Word of God is the revelation about Himself. He reveals Himself to us in the history and lives of people and nations. Our preaching must be Christ-centred. Therefore we must search the Scriptures to find Him. Christ is the theme of the whole Bible.

2. Principle of Context:

Scripture must firstly be seen in its context. If taken out of context we can run into serious error.

We need to ask the following questions: Where, when, and to whom was it written?

These are of utmost importance. Authorship is another important principle, for it helps us to understand the message clearer.

Here is an Example:

We read for instance: "*you snakes and adders your father is the devil*"³

If we don't know the context, and who was speaking, to whom, and why, we cannot interpret it accurately.

In the above, the time frame is in the New Testament, and the setting is Jerusalem. Jesus is addressing the Pharisees and Sadducees and the religious leaders who want to kill him.

If the context is not established this Scripture will not be applied correctly.

² Rev1:1

³ John8:8

This Scripture cannot be used to prove that all people are snakes, adders and that the devil created man. The context must be known.

3. The third principle is: Scripture needs to be interpreted by Scripture:

Another very important principle to accurately interpret Scripture is to interpret Scripture with Scripture. In the Revelation of John it is especially important. For the Revelation cannot be understood without a thorough understanding of the whole Bible. Somebody said that Revelation is the one book in the Bible that has more references from the complete Bible than any other Book of the Bible.

All of the symbols used are well developed and understood by the first century Church who was mainly Jewish believers. We do not have to guess what the symbols meant; we just need to know the Bible.

4. The fourth Principle is the First mentioned principle:

When the interpretation is still not clear then we need to go to the place where it is first mentioned. This will give us a clearer meaning of the word or phrase.

5. The fifth Principle is the Apostolic interpretation of Scripture:

The apostles of the Lamb were with Him for almost four years. He showed them the application of the Law, the Prophets and Psalms.

Jesus also gave them the keys (revelation knowledge) of the Kingdom. He stayed another forty days after His resurrection and spoke concerning the Kingdom of God. ⁴

The early Church had no Bibles; they preached the revelation and mystery of Christ from the Old Testament writings. ⁵

6. Principle of Popularity, and Majority:

God has never called us to give a majority interpretation. The minority in Jerusalem said that Jesus was one of the prophets. The majority said: "*away with Him, Crucify Him.*"

⁴ (Acts 1:3

⁵ The apostles by the revelation of the Holy Spirit interpreted the Old Testament: Acts 2:17-21, 25-29,34 Acts 3:22-25 Acts 4:11 15 Act 13 and the list goes on..

The majority of the spies in the days of Joshua said the land cannot be taken. In fact, the majority in the Bible always opposed God's will.

In the days of Martin Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin the majority of the Church was against their interpretation of the Scriptures.

Even we today, should not interpret Scripture, by the popular view of the majority. It is not a matter of private interpretation:

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation," 2Pet 1:20

No tradition or power can stop the eternal Truth of Gods Word. Rome could not stop it, neither Nero, nor Communism.

When the Holy Spirit was poured out in Jerusalem it did not matter what the theologians of the day said about it or how they interpreted that day.

The Pentecostal truth was lost to most of the Church for nineteen centuries, and only a handful experienced it again a hundred years ago at Azusa Street, L.A. in the USA

The majority of theologians at that time rejected it because of their traditional views. All to no avail, for hundreds of millions all over the world have experienced this truth of The Word.

It always amazed me that the first Reformers could not see these truths.

7. Spiritual things must be compared with spiritual: (1Cor 2:13)

We must not look for natural beasts, numbers, and nations. These things stand for eternal spiritual principles and have spiritual application.

For example: When John spoke about the Lamb of God we are not expected to see a four- legged animal with wool. No, we must know the principle and spiritual application of the Lamb in God's Word.

1Co 2:13: "These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

The importance of the Date:

The date is very important to us. Although it doesn't change the content, it does clarify the interpretation. If the Revelation was seen by John after the fall of Jerusalem, many of the otherwise clear meaning will be left to distant future speculations and guessing, as we have seen over the last hundred years.

Many predictions about the end times have been made in the last 100 years. Many books have been written. Most of them now, after seventy years, are outdated and have proven to have serious flaws.

Many speculations about the Beast, the antichrist, the 666, the Great tribulation, Armageddon, the rebuilding of the Temple, the Rapture, The Mystery of Babylon the Great the mother of all harlots, and many other popular and sensational themes have been made because of the inaccurate dating of the Revelation.

In every new novel of these popular Doomsday writers about these, and many other themes, they seem to forget what they wrote in their previous books, and then hope all the people will also.

Unfortunately, many of those in the previous legitimate move of God (and there are many exceptions, thank God) have now become like those that opposed them, when God was moving in the Church of their day, to a more accurate position.

I am, in no way, suggesting that the Church has reached full maturity and perfection yet. Once God **has** re-establishes a specific truth in a specific season He brings on a new season - a "*Kairos*" time ⁶

God will not stop moving His people and changing His seasons until His ultimate plan is completed: "*the restoration of all things that the prophets declared since the beginning of creation.*" Acts 3:19

Eschatology, the study of end time events, will become more and more important in this season of God on the earth.

God's priority is the Kingdom and it should be ours also. One cannot understand nor advance His kingdom without seeing the finish as He sees it- "*the end from the beginning!*"⁷

⁶ (Opportune time, season)

If you do not know where you going, any road can take you there!

This is why Jesus could position Himself accurately. There was no doubt in His mind about the finish. He knew of the Cross from the beginning; He also knew of the joy set before Him after the cross. Therefore He despised the shame and endured the pain.⁸ He embraced God's eternal plan even if it meant that He had to die. He rejoiced in the end from the beginning. He knew of the resurrection and the ascension from the beginning. He spoke of it to His disciples. He rebuked Peter for trying to prevent God's plan for Him when Peter tried to suggested that the cross could be avoided in Matt 16:22⁹

He smiled at the storms of Galilee, walked through angry crowds in Nazareth and journeyed with purpose to Jerusalem: ¹⁰

Jesus never looked for an escape nor should we. But we must know the finish as He did.

Inaccuracy about the finish will affect our entire Christian walk and render us ineffective, resulting in futile activities. Wasting time on inaccurate prayers, fighting illegitimate battles.

The Argument for the late date of the Revelation:

90-95 AD the time of Domitian Emperor of Rome.

The statement of Irenaeus Bishop of Lyons:

Irenaeus Was born 130AD and lived until 202AD He lived for about 72 years. Many see him as the primary source of the early Church history. He wrote his great classic work *"The revelation of John"* between 180 and 190AD.¹¹ This work was originally written in Greek and he makes one specific statement of great importance about John and the Vision.

To put this statement in perspective we need to know the following about Irenaeus. He never spoke to John for John died before Irenaeus was born.

⁷ **Isa 46:10** Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done,

⁸ (Heb12:1-4

⁹ Mat 16:22 Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" Mat 16:23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

¹⁰ *From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."*

¹¹ (Arthur S. Peak (the revelation of John [London: Joseph Johnson 1919] pp. 721.)

Irenaeus wrote his classical works more than a hundred years after the fall of Jerusalem. In his statement he mentioned Domitian the Roman Emperor, who ruled during the time of 95AD.

The Roman Emperor, Domitian also died before Irenaeus wrote his letter.

What makes Irenaeus unique is the fact that he claims in his writings that he met Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who knew the apostles of the Lord.¹²

The question is: Why was Irenaeus's statement about John so important?

It is because his statement is the only evidence that might suggest a late date for the Revelation.

Years ago when I started to investigate the evidence for the late date of The Revelation I was surprised to find that all evidence centred on Irenaeus and one single statement he made. Let us now investigate his statement, for if it fails to produce evidence, then the whole late date theory fails and the consequences are enormous, as we shall see.

Here is the all important statement of Irenaeus in his writing "Against Heresies" (Book 5:30:3)

"We will not, however, incur the risk of pronouncing positively as to the name of antichrist: for if it were necessary that his name should be distinctly revealed in this present time, it would have been announced by him that beheld the apocalyptic... vision for that was seen not very long time ago since but almost in our day towards the end of Domitian's reign"¹³

In this particular statement Irenaeus deals with the identity of the 666 in Rev 13

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His original writings were in Greek, though today the entire writing only exists in Latin.

Thanks to Eusebius, the particular statement is preserved in the original Greek.¹⁴

¹² Against Heresies 3:3:4 The Ante-Nicene Fathers (10 vols) 1:416

¹³ ANF 1:559-560

¹⁴ Eusebius "Ecclesiastical history 3:18:3"

It was primarily Eusebius who was responsible for the interpretation of this statement of Irenaeus. There is no question to the integrity of the text of Irenaeus. All theologians are in agreement about it. It is however the interpretation of the text that has brought much criticism and questions from various notable scholars.

The main argument is about the Greek construct of the text:

What does the words: "*That was seen*" refer to?

Does it refer to **the Vision** that was seen or does it refer to **John that was seen**, not very long ago, almost in their day towards the end of Domitian's reign?

Who or what was seen, at the time of Emperor Domitian 96AD?

Many theologians in the past were lead by Eusebius's interpretation that it was the vision that was seen in the time of Domitian. Therefore they date the Revelation, 90-95 AD. That is after the fall of Jerusalem (70AD).

A notable scholar, Peake & Farrar wrote, that the first objection, that he is aware of, against the translation, came from JJ Wetstein in 1751 ¹⁵

Others who also objected to the translation of Eusebius were: E Bohmer, MJ Bovan, FJA Hort, S H Chase, Arthur JJ Scott, S Barnes, James M Macdonald, Henry Hammond, Edward C Selwyn, G Edmundson, to name only a few. ¹⁶

The main objections against Eusebius's interpretation of Irenaeus's statement as saying that, that John saw the Revelation at the end of Domitian's reign are the following.

¹⁵ Farrar, Early Days, p.408; Peake: Revelation p.73.

¹⁶ (Kenneth L Gentry, Junior. "Before Jerusalem fell" p.48 Citing JJ Wetstein: Novum Testament Graecum vol. 2 (1751) p.746

- a) The Greek construct of the text “*was seen*”
- b) The significance of the time reference “not a long time ago but almost in our own time during the end of Domitian’s reign. “
- c) The inconsistency and incompatibility with some of Irenaeus’s earlier more clear writings, especially in his Book 3. (Ecclesiastical history)

Of all these, the most important questions are: What is the subject of the verb “*was seen?*” Is it **the vision**, or is it **John** the one that saw the vision. ?

Those who vote for the late date say it was the Revelation that was seen at the end of Domitian’s reign. To be honest, this was the majority opinion for a long time because of Eusebius’s interpretation and translation.

Emperor Domitian / and the Great persecution of the Church

Imperial Worship

Another argument for a late date is the mention of Emperor Domitian who lived approximately 95AD.

Leon Morris a promoter for a late date of Revelation favours Domitian’s time for there are various references to Imperial worship in Revelation. He feels that Imperial worship could only have accrued during a later time, the time of Domitian.

John on Patmos/ Persecuting the Church:

The abandonment of John to the island of Patmos is also thought to have taken place during the time of Domitian because they were led to believe that the persecution of the Church under Domitian was the most severe and that Cesar Nero did not really persecute the Church.

Unfortunately these arguments do not stand against the overwhelming evidence in favour of an early dating of the Revelation of John.

Once we start investigating these arguments in the light of the overwhelming evidence of historians, from both the early Church fathers, and the secular writers, we will soon realise that the late date arguments is founded on shaky grounds.

Here are some of the problems of dating Revelation after the fall of Jerusalem (70AD).

The late date is not compatible with:

- The total absence of any mention of the disastrous fall of Jerusalem and the temple.
- much of the early history of the Church,
- the documented movements of John,
- the evidence about Nero who committed suicide in AD 69

The evidence for the early date of The Revelation: 68-69 AD (just before the fall of Jerusalem.)

Irenaeus's statement: "That was seen"

FJA Hort¹⁷ refers to Bovan who states that ,John is the subject of "was seen".

SH Chase agrees and says the translation should read:

"For the author of the Book was seen on earth, he lived and conversed with his disciples, not so long ago, but almost in our own generation. ¹⁸J Macdonald states very dramatically: "Irenaeus argues that it is the writer of the Apocalypse who lived so near to their own time" ¹⁹

Valuable additional citation by Eusebius:

Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, again quotes the statement of Irenaeus in "Against the Heresies" (5:30:30) but this time with more context.

¹⁷ MJ Bovan in *The Revue De Theologies et de Philosophies (Lausanne 1887)*

¹⁸Journal of Theological studies 8 (1907) : 431-432

¹⁹ S H Chase : "The Life and writings of St. John" (1877) p.170.

“As these things are so, and this number (of the beast) is found in all the approved and ancient copies, and those who saw John face to face confirm it and reason teaches us the number of the name of the beast, according to the mode of calculation among the Greeks, appears in the letters...”²⁰

Here Irenaeus is clear that it was John who was seen face to face.

What does “*ancient copies*” mean?

It is documented that John lived till about 98AD the time of Emperor Trajan. Domitian was murdered 96AD. This makes the statement “*ancient copies*” very important.

Keep in mind that Irenaeus says “*very recently almost in our time at the end of the reign of Domitian*”.

But when he talks about the identity of the beast in the 3 Book: Against Heresies, which was written before his 5 Book he says, “*its identity is in all approved ancient copies*”.

This surely must mean the following:

- In Book 5 Irenaeus says: “*recently almost in our time the time of the end of Domitian*” So he doesn’t see the presence of John as ancient but recently.
- But here in Book 3 he mentions there are, “*ancient copies*” very old, approved copies of The Revelation of John.
- This means that the original must have been even earlier than the copies and even much earlier than the ancient copies.
- If John saw the vision in 90 – 95. It was only three years old in Domitian’s time and cannot possibility have been described as “*approved ancient*” copies.

Nero Cesar 69 AD

Who was the cruel; King Nero or Domitian?

Everybody agrees that The Revelation was written in the time of a cruel persecution. The Question though is: Whose persecution, Nero 69AD or Domitian 96AD?

²⁰(Ecclesiastical history(5:8:5,6)

Although Domitian was cruel, the evidence is overwhelming that it was during the reign of Nero that John was exiled to Patmos and saw the vision. This was before 70 AD.

It is interesting that many notable, late-date theologians like HB Swete, RH Charles, James Moffat and JPM Sweet do not use this, Domitian-persecution, argument to prove their late dating at all.

Another notable scholar, Morris, concurs with Fuller, that there is not enough evidence of persecution during the Domitian rule.²¹

Many others agree with Moffat and Sweet.

David H van Daalen, another late date advocate, admits: *"We have no evidence that there was any persecution under Domitian"*²². Newman agrees²³

Nero Cesar:

Concerning the persecution by Nero Cesar the following writings are clear evidence that even if there were persecution by Domitian it does not compare at all to that under Nero.

Pliny, the Elder:

*"It was this mad man Nero that killed his own mother, his wife and hundreds of his closest friends" he lived during the reign of Nero, he wrote of the terrible persecution of the Christians by Nero*²⁴

²¹Morris, Revelation p.36

²² (A guide to the Revelation TEF Study Guide 20 (London: SPCK 1986) p.3

²³ Newman, "Fallacy," Passim

²⁴ Pliny The elder :Annals 15:14

Clement of Alexandria: was Elder of Alexandria from 189-215AD

His full name was Titus Flavius Clements and he lived (150-215AD).

He wrote:

*“John the apostle after the death of the **Tyrant**, he removed from the island of Patmos to Ephesus, he use to journey by request to the neighbouring districts of the gentiles in some places to appoint bishops in other to regulate whole churches, in other to set among the clergy some one man it may be of those indicated by the Spirit”* ²⁵

The Tyrant:

The Tyrant’s name is not mentioned by Clement. Could it be that it was obvious to his readers who it was; nevertheless we need to establish who it was. This absence of his identity was used by some of the promoters of the late date of The Revelation, i.e. during Domitian’s reign.

We will have to thoroughly investigate the evidence by exploring various reliable sources that will confirm the true identity of the Tyrant. If we can establish who the Tyrant was then we can conclude the time of the Revelation, for there is general consensus that it was during John’s exile to Patmos. ²⁶

Who is the Tyrant?

Emperor Domitian is not mentioned in this evidence. Clement mentioned the return from exile but not the name of the Tyrant that abandoned John. Could this writing be regarded as main evidence that it was during Domitian’s rule?

The one that best meets this title Tyrant is Nero as we shall see from the following evidence.

Pliny the Elder:

He was a contemporary of Nero and died in the eruption of Vesuvius 79 AD. He was a witness outside of Christianity. He describes Nero’s evil: *“the destroyer of the human race...”* *“.. The poison of the world...”*

²⁵ Titus Flavius Clemens: GW Butterworth Clement of Alexandria (London: Heinemann 1919pp 356ff

²⁶Rev 1: 9

Here follows a full a quotation:

“Marcus Agrippa is said to have been born in this manner (i.e. breach position), almost the solitary instance of a successful career among also born- although he too is deemed to have paid the penalty which irregular birth foretold, by a youth made unhappy by lameness, a lifetime passed amidst warfare and ever exposed to the approach of death, by the misfortune caused to the world by his whole progeny but especially due to his two daughters who became the mothers of the Emperors Gaius Caligula and Domitius Nero, the two firebrands of mankind.... Nero also who was emperor shortly before and whose rule showed him the enemy of mankind”²⁷

Apollonius of Tyana: Born 4 BC

Says: “Nero was commonly called Tyrant.” In my travels, which have been wider than ever man yet accomplished, I have seen many wild beasts of Arabia and India; but this beast that is commonly called Tyrant, I know not how many heads it has, nor if it be crooked of claw and armed with horrible fangs... And of the wild beasts you cannot say they were ever known to eat their own mothers, but Nero has gorged himself on this diet²⁸

Tacitus Roman historian AD 56-117: He wrote: “Histories” & “Nero”

“There is very strong evidence that Nero burned the city Rome and blamed it on the Christians. He then poured out tar over them and set them on fire to burn as torches in his garden.”²⁹

Tacitus and Suetonius make reference to the fact that those punished by Nero were members of that hated sect.

Suetonius mentions to Nero’s credit that the Christians were punished as members of a new and mischievous superstition” Tacitus speaks of the Christians as “detested”³⁰

²⁷ Pliny Natural History 7:45

²⁸ Philostratus: Life of Apollonius 4:8 cited in John A T Robinson, Re-dating the New Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster) 1976 P. 235, from J.S. Phillimore (Oxford 1912) 2:38

²⁹ Tacitus: “Nero”

³⁰ Tacitus : “Nero”

Within a few years Rome, Jerusalem, and the Christians went through terrible shakings. Rome was not only burned but was a devastated city. Jerusalem and the Temple destroyed and Christians in Rome burned on stakes and torn apart by wild animals.

Tacitus mentions “immense number” of Christians was hurried to trial under Nero ³¹

“He is morally evil, he was responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem since the Jewish wars began in his reign, and he claimed to be God” ³²

“One who has fifty as an initial will be commander, a terrible snake, breathing out grievous war, who will one day, lay his hands on his own family and slay them. And throw everything into confusion.....Declaring himself as God. Three princes will perish at each others hands.” ³³

Jewish evidence: Sibylline Oracles.

This Jew, in his Book 12, apparently AD235 writes about the Emperors that were unpopular. ³⁴

Nero is in his list but not Domitian. In fact he praises Domitian (vss.124-38) but in his writings about Nero he says:

“Terrible and frightful” “a terrible snake,” Making himself equal with God”

There is much other compelling external evidence that favours an early date but we will only mention one more for the purpose of this study.

“John chasing a young leader on a horse”

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that the next evidence confirms an early date rather than a late date.

³¹Annals 15:44

³²Tacitus: Ibid

³³Sibylline Oracles 5:28-35 OTP 1:393

³⁴Collins: “Sibylline Oracles” 12:79, 81, 86; OTP 1:447

Can a ninety year old man still ride full speed on horseback?

Clement of Alexandria tells us of the activities of the apostle John after he returned from exile by the Tyrant:

“The apostle John, followed a young leader who forsake the faith, with all his might, on horse back”³⁵

One must take in consideration if this happened in Domitian’s time; it was just a few years before John’s death. The apostle would have been over 90 years old. It would have been almost impossible for him to participate in such a youthful act, at this age.

There are much more evidence from the Church fathers and historians that could be argued here, but for now we rest our case concerning the external evidence.

I think if this compelling evidence was presented in any Court of Law, the verdict would be in favour of an AD 68-69 as the date of The Revelation.

If these external evidences for an early date have not completely convinced you then the internal evidence surely will. For the internal evidence, (that of the author himself and the content) is even more proof of the early date of the Vision of John i.e. pre- fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple.

The Internal evidence:

The author: John the apostle/the writer of the Gospel of John

Who is the author and when was it written?

The internal evidence is of the utmost importance, because it deals with the Scripture, Author and the message itself. I believe the main reason for misinterpreting the Revelation is the failure in the past to identify the author and the date.

³⁵Ibid : Clement of Alexandria “Who is the rich man that shall be saved?”

Although there were those who doubted the apostle John as author, most early Church fathers of the first and second century agree that the same apostle who wrote the Gospel also saw the Vision.

Although the use of Greek in the Gospel and the Revelation differs, the following must be considered.

The Vision was written before the Gospel. John like the other apostles was Hebrew speaking Jews and Greek was their secondary language. Their Greek bettered with time. The Gospel was written after the Gospel ³⁶

Milton S Terry says:

“The accurate interpretation is dependable on the identity of the author, time and place of the literature”

Blerkhof also points out that the Word of God originated in history and therefore can only be understood in its context ³⁷

In this Apostolic season, and very important time of reformation in the Church, we need to re-investigate the evidence and arguments handed to us by yesterdays theologians. We need the Author of all Scripture to open our eyes and our understanding.

Paul prays this prayer ³⁸

“..That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,”

For although men, in time and space, wrote the Word, we must never forget the Holy Spirit is the author.

*“For prophecy was not borne at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke being borne along by the Holy Spirit”.*³⁹

³⁶ Milton S Terry, Biblical Hermeneutics (Grand rapids: Zondervan, rep.1974) p.231

³⁷ Louis Blerkhof, Principles of Biblical interpretation (Grand Rapids: Baker, [1950] 1974),p. 113

³⁸ Eph 1 : 15-18

³⁹ 2Pe 1:21

To underline this truth the author writes in his introduction of the Revelation:

“A Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him to declare to His servants”⁴⁰

Rev1:1

“I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Rev 1:9

Let us now look at some of the major evidence from the Revelation itself.

Although there is abundant evidence for an early date from the Book itself, we will however only focus on the following five issues:

1. The Author;
2. The Theme of the Revelation
3. The expressions *“soon and quickly”*
4. The identity of the Sixth King in Rev 17
5. The reference to the Temple and Jerusalem

1. The Author: John the apostle

There are those, who dispute the authorship of John the Apostle:

K Gentry Junior, author of: (*“Before the fall of Jerusalem”*) states some of the arguments of those who doubt John as the author:

- I. The author claims to be a prophet not an apostle.*
- II. The author names himself contrary to John’s writings*
- III. There are no allusions to incidents in the Gospel and no claim to have known Christ personally.*
- IV. Some uncharacteristic statements are present in Revelation that is not in the Gospel e.g. In the Gospel of John God is, the Compassionate Father, but in Revelation He is the Majestic Creator. Christ The Saviour in The Gospel but in Revelation He is he Conqueror, etc..*

⁴⁰ Rev1: 1

V. *Linguistic Style: more developed Greek in The Gospel versus The Revelation*

VI. *Doubt among the Eastern Churches*⁴¹

The above arguments are interesting and one must be aware of them. However the early Church fathers, Irenaeus, Eusebius, Clement from Alexandria, Origen and the list goes on stated in no uncertain terms that John the apostle saw the Vision. Today most Notable Scholars agree that it was John the Apostle.

Some of the arguments that favour John the apostle as the writer of the Revelation the following:

- The apostle John, using Greek as a secondary language wrote the Revelation before he wrote his Gospel, as mentioned before.
- John is instructed to write as the angel instructs him. He therefore doesn't have the luxury to write as he pleases but as it is given and shown by the angel.

The revelation is "*the Revelation of Jesus the Christ is not the account of the physical Jesus the suffering Servant, but as the resurrected Christ*"

- The emphasis is not on the author but on the Christ.

John functions as a prophet, just like Paul the apostle who went into the third heaven and heard unspeakable things.

2. **The theme of Revelation:**

What is the Theme?

It is the Revelation of Jesus Christ and His coming on the clouds.

The theme of the Revelation is clearly stated in Rev 1:7

"Behold, He comes with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, and those who pierced Him will see Him, and all the tribes of the earth will wail because of Him., even so, Amen." NKJV

⁴¹ Kenneth L. Gentry, Junior: "Before Jerusalem Fell" p22 footnotes 16

“Look! He is coming in the clouds. Every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him. So be it! Amen.” ISV

The following scholars agree, on the theme being, *“the Lord coming with the clouds.”*

Düsterdieck: “vs. 7 is The principal theme”⁴² Weiss views it as “the motto of the whole book”⁴³ Many other agrees that 1vs:7 is the theme of Revelation⁴⁴. Donald W Richardson states of Rev. 1:7 *“The coming of the Lord is the dominant note of the book”*⁴⁵

This theme is constantly repeated to the seven Churches and throughout the whole Revelation.⁴⁶ Düsterdieck, Chilton, Donald W Richardsen and Russell agree that “the cloud coming” of the Lord is the theme of the Revelation.

T.D. Bernard in his lectures at Oxford states that the cloud coming of the Lord: “is the keynote of the whole”⁴⁷

This Theme runs through from the beginning to the end. Rev 1:7 to Rev 22:22

Why is the theme important?

I believe it will help to establish the date of the Revelation. The message must be before this “coming of the Lord with the clouds”. Therefore it is paramount to understand what is meant it.

What does Coming with the clouds mean?

Revelation is part of the Bible. It must be seen against the backdrop of the whole Bible.

⁴²Friedrich Düsterdieck, Critical and Exegetical handbook to the Revelation of John trans. Henrey E Jacobs (New York: Funk and Wagnalls,1886) pp. 28

⁴³ Bernard Weiss a Manuel of the introduction to the New Testament New York Funk and Wagnall 1889 p.71

⁴⁴ M S Terry, J Stuart TD Bernard

⁴⁵ Donald W Richardson The revelation of Jesus Christ: (1964 p.28)

⁴⁶ Rev 2:5, 16, 25 3:3, 11, 20 as well as Rev 16 : 15, 22: 7, 12, 20.

⁴⁷ Thomas Dehany Bernard: “Progress of the Doctrine in New Testament (Grand Rapids Eerdmans [1864,] 1949 p.213)

The Angel communicated to John in a particular way: "he signified *it*". These signals, and symbols that the angel uses to convey the Revelation are well established in the O.T. The coming of the Lord with clouds in the Old Testament always indicated Judgement. The following Scriptures will convincingly prove this statement.

*"And in the morning watch it happened that Jehovah looked to the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the army of the Egyptians. And He took off their chariot wheels, and made them go heavily, so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel, for Jehovah fights for them against the Egyptians."*⁴⁸

*"And, you say, what does God know? Can He judge through the dark cloud? Clouds are a covering to Him, so that He does not see; and He walks in the circuit of Heaven. Do you keep to the old way which wicked men have walked?"*⁴⁹

Also in Ps 18:9 – 11 : *"Coming with clouds in Judgement."*

*"Clouds and darkness are all around Him; righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne."*⁵⁰

His coming brings mourning to all the tribes and those who pierced Him.

Jesus in fact told them that there is judgement coming to that generation. He told them that the judgement of God will come because they did not know the hour of their visitation.

*"Behold, your house is left to you desolate."*⁵¹ Jesus told them the parable of the vineyard. He refers to the Prophet Isaiah in 5:7.

"Therefore when the lord of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers? They said to Him, Bad men! He will miserably destroy them and will rent out his vineyard to other vinedressers who will give him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus said to them, Did you never read in the Scriptures, "The stone which the builders rejected, this One has become the head of the corner; this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

⁴⁸ Ex. 14:24, 19:9, 16-19 Deut 4:11

⁴⁹ Job 22:13

⁵⁰ Ps 97:2

⁵¹ Mat 23:38

*Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing out its fruits.*⁵²

This cloud coming is not fulfilling of the return of the Lord that will take place at the fulfilment of human history. This coming is the sign of the Son of man in the heaven. It is really the sign that the Son now is in the heaven and rules from the throne of David.

This cloud coming is the coming in judgement over Jerusalem, the Temple and an evil religious generation.

Who will see and mourn about His coming?

The tribes of the land and those that pierced Him are mourning (Rev 1:7). This is the generation that crucified Him.

The Romans executed the crucifixion of Jesus but let there be no doubt it was the Jews that asked for it. They paid Judas 30 pieces of silver.⁵³ It was the Jewish religious leaders that chose Barrabbas.⁵⁴

Peter, Stephen, and the apostle Paul accuse the Jews for Jesus' death.

The word "*land or earth*" is the word: "γη," gé: Most often it is used for the geographical land of Israel. "*Tribes*" almost always refers to the tribes of Israel.⁵⁵

Therefore it is this generation that will see His return on the clouds and mourn for their judgement has come. One must remember there is grace available only for those who believe in Him. The breaking of God's Law has a curse attached to it. This curse is removed in Christ for those who believe in Him.

The destruction of Jerusalem happened exactly one generation after the ministry of Jesus the Christ. Jesus began preaching at the age of thirty and the destruction of Jerusalem was in 70AD, precisely forty years later - one generation.

⁵² Mat 21:40- 43

⁵³ Mat 27:9

⁵⁴ Mat 27:20

⁵⁵ Arndt & Gingrich, p. 156 Thayer pp. 114-115 G Abbott-Smith, *A manual Greek Lexicon of the N.T.* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1937) p. 91

The Revelation was written to the seven Churches in Asia, informing them about events that would take place shortly. The Church in tribulation must remain faithful and steadfast and overcome. Motivating and encouraging them while the Jews and Rome were trying to wipe out the apostles and the saints.⁵⁶

Taking this into consideration we must strongly favour an early date for the Revelation, that is, before the fall of Jerusalem and the Temple.

This brings us to the third internal witness for the date of Revelation:

3. The imminent expectation of the author throughout the Vision:

In the opening chapter of the Vision the following expressions are prominent:

- *“Things which must **shortly** come to pass.” Rev1:1*
- *“for the **time is near**” Rev 1:3*

These imminent expectations are not only in the introduction of the Vision but also in the warnings to the churches:

- *or else I will come to you **quickly** and will remove your lamp stand out of its place unless you repent. Rev 2: 5*
- *But if not I will come to you **quickly**, and will fight with them by the sword of My mouth. Rev 2:16*
- *Behold, I come **quickly**. Hold fast to that which you have, so that no one may take your crown. Rev 3:11*

At the end of the Revelation we find these warnings again about this imminent event.

“And he said to me, These sayings are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show to His servants the things

⁵⁶ Act 5:16-17, Act 5:33, Act 6:12, Act 7:52-59

- *which **must shortly be done***” Rev 22:6
- *“Behold, **I come quickly**. Blessed is he who keeps the Words of the prophecy of this Book”. Rev 22:7*
- *“And he said to me, Do not seal the Words of the prophecy of this Book; for **the time is at hand**. Rev 22:10*

Throughout the whole Revelation the angel keeps on telling John that the time is near:

The Greek words that are used by John to communicate these imminent events are:

1. **“τάχος”** tachos : *haste: - + quickly, + shortly, + speedily*⁵⁷
From the same as G5036; a brief space (of time), that is, (with G1722 prefixed) in.
2. **Ταχύ** tachy : *shortly, that is, without delay, soon,*⁵⁸
3. **εἰς ἄγγυς** eggus : *“at hand” “time is here”*⁵⁹

When you look at these expressions in Revelation and compare them with the same words used in the gospel of John, we understand that the author did not mean events that would take hundreds or even thousands of years to fulfil. These words mean exactly what is said;

*“As soon as she heard that, she arose **quickly**, and came unto him.”* John 11:29

It is clear that John the apostle was writing about the imminent events,

Kurt Aland says: the Greek word must be understood as coming not only soon some day but “immediately”⁶⁰

Lexicographers seem to universally agree with the translators as to the meaning of these words⁶¹

⁵⁷ Strong's: From the same as G5036; a *brief space* (of time), that is, (with G1722 prefixed) in *haste: - + quickly, + shortly, + speedily*. Rev 1: 1

⁵⁸ Strong's: Neuter singular of G5036 (as adverb) ;G5035 Rev 2 16 Rev 3; 11

⁵⁹ Strong's: from: *at hand, near, nigh (at hand, unto), ready*. G1451

⁶⁰ Kurt Aland : A History of Christianity vol1 From the beginning to the Threshold of the reformation trans. James L Schaaf (1985) p.88

These expressions of *quickly* and *shortly*, and *at hand*, were words that warned the Church of the events that would take place in their time. “*Not only in their generation but almost immediately*”. This is further evidence and confirmation of the early date of the Revelation, 68-69 AD.

4. The Identity of the Sixth King in Chapter 17: 3, 6-13

Who is the Woman that rides on the Beast?

And who is the Beast with seven horns?

Identifying the Beast and the sixth horn (king) out of the ten will help us to clearly establish the date of the Revelation.

Rev 17:3

*“So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast **which** was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.”*

Rev 17:5

“And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

The angel helps John with the interpretation:

Rev 17:9

“Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.”

One must remember that the angel has already shown John that this Woman is a “*mystery*”. You need wisdom and insight to identify her, it is not obvious. That is why John was amazed when he saw who she was and how much she looks like the True Bride.

⁶¹ W F Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, eds., *a Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* 4th ed. pp. 814-815

This Harlot Woman sits on a Beast. The prophet Daniel has already introduced and interpreted these Beasts for us. The Roman government is this fourth Beast of Daniel. It came after the Lion, the Bear, and the Leopard, and is a terrible combination.

*"It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns."*⁶²

*"Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a Beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name."*⁶³

This is identical to the description in the Revelation.

Look at the description by John:

"Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion." Rev 13:2

The seven heads are seven mountains. The seven mountains are clearly speaking about the City of Rome that was built on seven hills. All historians agree on this.

Here are the famous hills:

1. Palatine;
2. Aventine;
3. Caelian;
4. Esquiline;
5. Viminal;
6. Quirinal; and
7. Capitoline⁶⁴

The Harlot is Jerusalem !

⁶²Dan 7: 7 The fourth Beast had 10 horns

⁶³ Rev 13:1 -3

⁶⁴ William Smith, Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography vol. 2 (Boston: Little Brown, 1870) pp. 719- 721

This Harlot Woman is apostate Jerusalem, a religious system that played the harlot as Hosea the prophet said⁶⁵. She killed all the prophets and is guilty of the blood of the saints. She has also murdered her Messiah the heir of the Kingdom! She is about to be judged and to be cast like a burning mountain into the sea. - In one hour, 70 AD

Jesus said that Jerusalem will be destroyed and the Temple completely broken down because they killed all His prophets.⁶⁶

Jesus accused them as sons of murderers that will complete their father's guilt so that the judgement of God will come on that generation. Matt:24 When He stood at the cursed fig tree He said: *"If you say to this mountain, be cast into the sea"* He was referring to the Fig tree, Jerusalem.

*"Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. all the blood"*⁶⁷ NKJV

The Law demanded a harlot to be burned with fire *"She shall be burned with fire"*⁶⁸

Who is this Beast?

This Harlot Woman, The religious Jewish system sits on the Beast with seven heads. These seven Heads are mountains and it identifies the City Rome seated on seven Hills.⁶⁹ This Beast is the Roman Empire that has ten horns (Ten Kings or Emperors)

The angel says that there are Seven Kings who play a role in this Vision.

Rev 17:10 *"There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time."*

⁶⁵ Hosea 1: 1

⁶⁶ Mat 23: 38 Jesus NKJV

⁶⁷ Mat 23: 32-38 Jesus NKJV

⁶⁸ Lev 21:9

⁶⁹ Tacitus, Josephus, and other

If we can establish the identity and of these first seven horns which the angel says are Kings of Rome then we can also establish the date because at the time of this Revelation the fifth has fallen and the sixth one is now and will stay for a short while.

So the Sixth horn is the key for our understanding of the time placement for this Revelation ⁷⁰

Where do we start counting? Who was the first King? **Rev 13:1**

Some scholars (e.g., Düsterdieck, Bleek, Swete, Weigall, Morris start counting with Augustus, in that he was the first official emperor⁷¹

Another school discards the geographical placement, the Vision of Daniel and the present Roman Kingdom, and seeks to explain this as a future government in some distant future.

We should ask the question: Why would God send this Vision to the Seven Churches in Asia if it was of no significance or meaning to them?

Others take the stand that this was spiritual and should not be interpreted by any literal Kings or Kingdoms.

We need to interpret Revelation with wisdom and understanding with the help of the Holy Spirit and history. We need the Bible and history. We need the Bible and the Spirit for our hearts and history for our minds⁷²

Julius Caesar the first King of Rome:

Though it is true that the Roman Empire was officially established under Augustus, we must not forget the strong historical evidence that the Kings (horns) begins with Julius Caesar.

⁷⁰ Charles Cutler Torrey, *The Apocalypse of John* (New Heaven: Yale 1958) p. 60

⁷¹ Gentry : Before Jerusalem fall p. 152

⁷² Kelly Varner 1998 Durban South Africa ICC Fire Conference;

This evidence is well established by the contemporary Roman historians.

Tacitus writes in his *Annals 1: 1*⁷³ and his *Histories*⁷⁴ Here he says that Augustus took the reigns from Julius Caesar.

The Roman historian Suetonius (AD 70 -160) in his writings starts his counting of the Caesars with Julius Caesar⁷⁵ He also titles his first Book in the series "*Lives of the Twelve Caesars, "The Divine Julius"*

Dio Cassius, another historian (c. AD 150- 235) mention that Julius was called: *the father of his country*⁷⁶

Flavius Josephus AD 37-101

It is Flavius Josephus the Jewish historian and contemporary of the apostles who writes the most compelling evidence about the kings of Rome. He states that we should count from Julius Caesar.

His evidence is compelling for he did not only live in the time of the apostle John and the other apostles, but he was inside Jerusalem when the city was surrounded. He was previously called Josephus son of Matthias and a general of the Jewish army. When his army was attacked by the Romans at Galilee in July AD 67 they were defeated.

The other Jews committed suicide. Nobody really knows why he defected to the Romans. Many called him a traitor but under Emperor Flavius Vespasian, he became the most important extra biblical writer concerning the Wars of the Jews. He received honour from Titus and a new name from Emperor Flavius Vespasian. Josephus Son of Matthias now lived in Rome and was called Flavius Josephus.

He wrote for the Jews and for the Romans. His writings reflect the contemporary view of the time of John and must be considered the general viewpoint.

⁷³ Annals 1: 1 states : “ Neither Cinna nor Sulla created a lasting despotism: Pompey and Crassus quickly forfeited their power to Caesar, and Lepidus and Anthony their swords to Augustus, who, under the style of ‘Prince’ gathered beneath his empire a world outworn by civil broils.”

⁷⁴ Histories 1:1 notes: “After the battle of Actium, when the interests of the peace required that all power should be concentrated into the hands of one man....

⁷⁵ Suetonius, *Julius* 76

⁷⁶ Dio Cassius, Roman History 5.

In his Antiquities he calls Augustus the “*second*” and Tiberius the “*third*” emperor.⁷⁷ He also in some later work calls Gaius the “*fourth*”⁷⁸ In later chapters he calls Julius Caesar the “*first*” who transform the power of the people to himself⁷⁹

It was Julius Caesar who was popular among the Jews for he gave them legal status and many other privileges. It is recorded that the Jews lamented greatly his death⁸⁰

In 4 Ezra also sometimes called 2 Esdras; Chapter 11 Augustus is also called the second Emperor.

Theophilus of Antioch lived AD 115-181. He wrote “*Afterwards those who called emperors began in this order; Caius Julius... the Augustus*”⁸¹

It is also interesting that Cesar’s name was given to the later Emperors.

Here follows the list of the 10 Emperors (the Ten Horns)

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | Julius Caesar | (49 B.C. - 44 B.C.) |
| 2. | Augustus | (31 B.C. - 14 A.D.) |
| 3. | Tiberius | (14 B.C. - 37 A.D.) |
| 4. | Gaius known as Caligula | (37 A.D. - 41 A.D.) |
| 5. | Claudius | (41 A.D. - 54 A.D.) |
| 6. | Nero | (54 A.D. - 68 A.D.) |
| 7. | Galba | (68 A.D. - 69 A.D.) |
| 8. | Otho | (69 A.D.) |
| 9. | Vitellius | (69 A.D.) |
| 10. | Vespasian | (69 A.D. - 79 A.D.) |

⁷⁷ Flavius Josephus: Antiquities 18:2:2

⁷⁸ Flavius Josephus Antiquities 18: 6:10

⁷⁹ Flavius Josephus Antiquities 19: 1:11

⁸⁰ Suetonius: “Julius” 84

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 120 Theophilus to Antolycus

In Revelation 17: 10 the angel says: "*There are seven Kings (horns), five have fallen*": Julius Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius. That takes us to the time of Claudius A.D. 54 "*One is*" [Nero] and the other one "*has not come yet [Galba] and when he comes must remain for a little while*"

This is exactly what happened when Galba started his rule in 68 A.D. He only ruled from June 68 A.D. to January 69 A.D - only seven months. This establishes the date of the Revelation during the ruler of the Sixth Emperor of Rome, Nero.

This further explains the urgency of the Message and the repeated mention of worlds like: "*quickly, shortly, at hand, and swiftly.*"

This sixth king is also the key to the identity of the number of the beast "*the number of a man 666*" We will deal with this in the chapter on the antichrist.

5. The proof of the existence of Jerusalem and the Temple:

The reference to the city Jerusalem and the Temple in Revelation as still intact is a strong argument for a pre 70A.D. date.

Rev 11:1-2 "*Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.*"

But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months."

Competent scholars like Friedrich Düsterdieck, and Bleek agree that this evidence puts the date pre 70 A.D.

Torrey has also added his input by stating: "A most important passage, truly decisive in view of all the other evidence is the beginning (the first two verses) of chapter 11... this was written before 70 A.D, as all students of the Book agree"⁸²

My prayer is that serious students of the Word, who previous were of the opinion that The Revelation was written after the fall of Jerusalem and the temple, like me, will repent of this inaccuracy and adjust to a more accurate position.

⁸² Charles C Torrey The Apocalypse of John (New Heaven: Yale,1958) p. 87

The whole interpretation of The Revelation changes when you discover this truth.

For when The Vision was seen and written the events in it were future; the Destruction of Jerusalem, the terrible tribulation, The Lord coming in judgement over a covenantal breaking people. But for us in the twenty first century the Revelation is almost entirely past.

There are things that the Lord instructed John, to seal up, and not disclose because it was for the distant future. (The seven thunders Rev 10:4)

Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them."

Rev 10 : 4

I was wrong!

I was born and raised in a Pentecostal Denomination that holds to a view that the Revelation was written after Jerusalem's destruction and therefore interpreted Revelation as future events . I never questioned their doctrine and finished my Pentecostal Theological training in 1976. I immediately started preaching about "the End times". I invented plays about the Rapture, the Antichrist and those that are "left behind". Though very sincere I was wrong.

But it was my love for the Word of God and the Holy Spirit that made me a serious student of the Word. I would read 55 chapters a day (every month through the whole Bible) Fasted, on water alone, for thirty and then forty days.

God nor the Word change, but I changed as I humbled myself before the Lord. He opened my eyes and I saw a different view, God's view concerning the end. Because I knew nobody else of the same view, I thought I was in error and kept silent for many years.

I stopped preaching about the end.

Then in 1983 God touched me through late PD le Roux, a true apostle and father in the Lord. This man of God opened my eyes to revelation knowledge. After 10 years of fulltime ministry the picture became clearer and clearer. I still did not have the full picture yet but enough to humble myself and declare; "I was wrong"

In 1998 God connected me with a man of God in Richlands NC. Kelly Varner, he helped me put the pieces together. In a dream, one Saturday morning, in Jan 2000 God finally showed me that I

would be instrumental in bringing new insight concerning the fullness of time to this nation, South Africa and other nations of the world.

I threw away my books, my revelations, and my tape series on the end times; I repented before God and turned to a more excellent way.

And this is my prayer for those who are sincere about God. That everyone will discover the truth and the mystery of the kingdom of God!