

Authorship

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The son of Zebedee, Apostle John is ascribed as the author of the book of revelation although there have been debates about the authorship of the same. The strong points which back the authorship of the book behind the apostle Paul according to Walverd (58-14), is first and foremost the fact that, in chapters (1: 22, 9, 8, 4) the writer therein calls himself John. The second point is that the author has spoken with a lot of prophetic authority as it has been portrayed in chapters (22: 6-14; 1: 3). From the reading, we also see the description of the writer as a Palestinian Jew, who like in the Old Testament is a very strong observer of the synagogue ritual, and a temple worshiper as was the practice in Targum.

The writer of the book after mentioning himself as John does not go ahead to give us more description about himself to mean that he is a well known person. The early church before Dionysius also had agreed as a group that the John was the author of the revelation. This was proved by Justin Martyr, Hippolytus, Irenaeus and Clement. In chapter (1: 9), as posited by Guthrie (2: 308-304), the writer explains that he was in Patmos in exile, this fact leads the fathers of the church to identify the writer of revelation as the apostle John.

The fathers of the church such as Clement claim that the apostle John had gone back to the island after Domitian's death. Father Irenaeus says that John had stayed on in Ephesus when he returned until Trajan's times. A big objection to the authorship has been put forward by Morris (102-112), who stated that the style of the writing does not match up with the apostle's authorship. This objection has however been defended and it is said that the difference in style may have been caused by the poetic nature of the book

which causes the solecisms. The apocalyptic work according Leon (87-34) is reflected widely in the book of revelation which may have contributed to a different style of writing.

The book was written while the writer was in prison, the equipments which may have helped him write in a scholarly style were not available. The writer in this book uses the approach of a prophet and not the one of an apostle. Those who support John's authorship argue that there was the aspect of emotional excitement that may have hindered the polishing of the book to match with the style of the apostle's writing. The language used here may have also been influenced by the visionary and divine oracles settings. Similarities between the Book of John and the Book of Revelation There is a lot of comparison between the writings of John the apostle and the apocalypse that is in the book of revelation.

Both the books have a tendency of using the word logo, as seen in (Rev 19-13: Jan 1-1.). Both the book of John and revelation use the 'lamb' image, 'observing the commandments' and the word 'true', we also have an invitation of them that are thirsty (Rev . 22: 27; John 10: 18), also an explanation Christ received the commandments availed by the father (Reek 2: 27, John 7: 37) Date of Authorship There are two contradicting views that have been put forward as to the dates of writing the book. The first view is that the book was written during Nero's reign in the first half century of the eighth decade. The second view is that the book was written in the 95-96 AD, during Domitian's reign.

The date of writing the book is not clearly evidenced but the appropriated era is the writing under the Domitian's reign. The reasons behind the appropriation of the book's writing date to the Domitian's reign is that, the Asian minor church has comprehensive history. The persecution of the Nero's time were also not as comprehensive as those of the Domitian's reign. According to Ryrie (125-78), the form of believing and acknowledging the beast in their religion practice may have been expressing the worship of the Emperor that was a common practice in the Domitians reign. Irenaeus also supports the view that the book was written in the Domitian regime because he expressed that the book had been written just a few years ago near their generation. Nero's myth is supported in the book of revelation (17: 18) on the issue of the beast, but again for this myth to get fully develop the date of the Domitian is very applicable. This therefore leaves the Domitian date of 95-96 AD as the best time to appropriate the writing of the book.

The Place of Writing and Recipient Patmos is stated as the place where the book was written by both the external and the internal evidence. Patmos is an island in the Asia Minor coast and it is quite far from Ephesus (Rev 1: 9). Rev chapter 1 to 3 gives the details concerning how the book was availed. The first destination for the revelation to be availed was in the places of worship around minor Asia. This may have been contributed by the roads which linked from the place of authorship and the order of display may have been according to the locations indicated in the map that is the near churches first. Major Theme of the Book The directly seen theme in the book of revelation is a need to accomplish the prophetic words which were earlier on in the Old Testament.

However Walvoord (106-89), explains that in the light of Chapter 2-3, the book's major theme should be seen as one that is meant to encourage and to comfort believers who were caught up in the situation of persecution and also suffering from the acts of the evil doers and they put hope to the faithful that they would one day get victory as Jesus had. The Chapter Criticized by the Scholarly Community In all the 66 books written in the bible, the book of Revelation attracts more controversial views on its interpretation, esoteric speculation, and misunderstanding than any other book in the bible.

Chrysostom as one of the scholars in the fourth century together with Eusebius were even hesitant to include the book of revelation in their writing. Martin Luther in his interpretation described the book as neither prophetic nor apostolic. Most of the scholars preferred sticking to the books which portrayed Christ in a very clear and pure way than this book which had a lot of difficult symbolic features this view was expressed by (Cohen 118-116). John Calvin for instance had commentaries on every book in the New Testament but left out the book of revelation due to its complexity. The interpretation of the book can be mystifying and this would make the book to be seen as calling people to nonviolence.

The book portrays the collapse of the beastly powers and a call for those who are holy and faithful to hold on to their faith. Revelation (13: 8-22), asks those who can hear to give an ear to what is said and that anyone who wants to be held in captivity shall get into it. Further, it states that if anyone kills by a sword, the same shall be done to them, and finishes by asking the faithful to endure. Revelation chapter (13: 8-12), seems to be overpowered by the

rest of the book which throughout portrays images of violence and the intervention of divine violence which comes up to defeat the evil. It therefore calls for one to have a good strategy in interpreting this verse to ensure that it matches up with the interpretation of the entire book.

Working hard to ensure a thorough-going and a perfect interpretation which is to be derived from the view of nonviolence is not an easy task.

Interpretation by various scholarly communities The liberal theology challenges the approach of the academic theology which is neutral and value objective. The recognition that all theology is almost all the time by definition engaged in rebuking and the evil doers and giving courage to the oppressed becomes the insight of the liberation theologies, including the feminist theory.

In the world of oppression and exploitation, the aspect of intellectual neutrality can not apply. According to the Thiessen, the book of revelation is not in literal meaning a revelation to John as it has been described by most people, but rather the revelation of Jesus Christ. The Thiessen view the genitive in the objective sense advanced by the liberal theology and they argue that it is a revelation that is availed to the world about Christ, the genitive on the subjective side advanced by the feminist theology claim that is a revelation of Christ himself. The genitive subjective side looks more appropriate.

The strong point of the objective genitive is that the revelation has more information which goes beyond what Jesus Christ himself experienced while on earth. For instance the contents which talk about the harlot, the two

witnesses, and the beast. Secondly, in Revelation (1: 1), there is a description about the revelation as that which had been given to Jesus Christ by the father, it would therefore be contradicting to say that the revelation is about Christ. The question put forward is why the son would be given a revelation about himself by his father? Therefore the latter argument on the subjective side carries more weight.