

Religion - theology of the book of revelations



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Religion - Theology of the book of revelations In the seventh chapter of Richard Bauckham's celebrated work *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, the author argues that Revelation has a unique place in the Christian canon of Scripture and it is the only work of Christian prophecy that forms part of the canon. According to him, Revelation's claim to be Christian prophecy should be comprehended in relation to its claim to continuity with the whole biblical tradition. Revelation as a prophecy, like biblical prophecy in general, should be realized as comprising three closely related elements. First of all, there is discernment of the modern situation by prophetic insight into God's nature and purpose, and the Revelation has dominant prophetic concern for exposing the truth of things. The second element of Revelation as a prophecy is prediction, which consists in seeing how God's ultimate purpose for the coming of his universal kingdom relates to the modern situation as it is perceived by the prophet. It is fundamental fact that the coming of God's kingdom takes place and prophecy as prediction reveals how the modern situation must change for the God's kingdom to come. "Thirdly, prophecy demands of its hearers an appropriate response to its perception of the truth of the contemporary world and its prediction of what the working out of God's purpose must mean for the contemporary world. It is the third element that ensures that the predictive element in biblical prophecy is not fatalistic." (Bauckham, 149) Therefore, Richard Bauckham offers an insight on the three closely related elements of Revelation as a prophecy in his *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* and he indicates how biblical prophecy can be relevant for both its original audience and later readers. According to him, biblical prophecy gives room for human freedom and it is relevant in the contemporary world, just as it was significant to the

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original readers.

In the final section of the chapter, the author offers a significant explanation of Revelation's relevance today and it becomes clear that the readers may find their own routes from engaging with Revelation's theology to contextualizing it in a contemporary situation. Bauckham lists eleven ways in which Revelation is relevant today, at the end of the chapter and these are essential ways in which one can realize the importance of Revelation in the contemporary world. The first of these eleven ways seems to be most fundamental today. Thus, the author maintains that one of the fundamental functions of Revelation is to purge and to refurbish the Christian imagination. " It tackles people's imaginative response to the world, which is at least deep and influential as their intellectual convictions. It recognizes the way a dominant culture, with its images and ideals, constructs the world for us, so that we perceive and respond to the world in its terms. Moreover, it unmask this dominant construction of the world as an ideology of the powerful which serves to maintain their power." (Bauckham, 159) Therefore, this explanation very well offers the most important function of Revelation in the contemporary world and it places biblical prophecy in connection to the modern world.

Work Cited

Bauckham, Richard. The theology of the book of Revelation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1993. P 149.