

## *Everything Made Right* “Introduction to Interpretations”

### *Schools of Interpretation*

**Preterist View**—Revelation is only and entirely related to the situation found in the first-century church.

**Historicist View**—Revelation is an inspired forecast of the whole of human history.

**Futurist View**—apart from the early chapters, Revelation is exclusively concerned with events at the end of time.

**Idealist View**—Revelation is theological poetry devoted to principles of divine action, not historical events.

**Combination View**—Revelation is connected to a specific historical moment while recognizing the future unfolding of history according to God’s nature and purpose.

### *Millennial Positions*

**Historical Premillennialism**—believes that Christ’s second coming will establish an earthly reign described in Revelation 20 as a period of 1000 years. Also anticipates a great tribulation immediately prior to the millennium.

**Dispensational Premillennialism**—practices a rigidly literal interpretation of biblical prophecy, distinguishing sharply between God’s dealings with Israel and His dealings with the church.

**Amillennialism**—views Christ’s return as imminent and does not look for a transitional period in which Christ reigns for 1000 years. The millennium is a symbol of the era between the cross and the end of the age. Prophecy is generally interpreted less literally.

**Postmillennialism**—sees Revelation as the description of the church’s success in transforming the world by advancing the kingdom. Christ’s second coming is the crowning moment of the church’s victory over evil.

### *Tribulational Views*

**Pre-tribulationalism** places the rapture of the church *before* the great tribulation.

**Post-tribulationalism** places the rapture of the church *after* the great tribulation.

## ***Historical Context***

**Authorship**—despite dramatic differences in grammatical style and Greek vocabulary between Revelation and the other writings of the Apostle John, the authorship of the “son of Zebedee” is *generally* affirmed.

**Date**—universal persecution, extensive congregational development, and the sequence of kings mentioned (17:10) seem to indicate a date of writing from A.D. 90-95.

## ***Brief Outline***

- Prologue (1:1-8)
- Vision of Christ Among the Churches (1:9-3:22)
- Vision of Sequence of Judgments (4:1-16:21)
- Vision of Christ’s Return (17:1-21:8)
- Vision of Heavenly Jerusalem (21:9-22:5)
- Epilogue (22:6-21)

## ***Presuppositions***

- 1) John, the beloved disciple, is the author with a late first century date.
- 2) Churches in the region surrounding Ephesus were the original recipients.
- 3) Symbols are powerful only when they are obvious.
- 4) Like prophecy, meaning must be relevant both to the original reader and for future events. Discovering one level of meaning does not preclude another level; therefore, I reject the preterist and futurist viewpoints.
- 5) Scripture interprets Scripture: Revelation cannot be understood in isolation from the remainder of the Bible.
- 6) Revelation must be studied and interpreted with a spirit of humility and submission to the Holy Spirit.
- 7) Intended to inspire hope and renew a passion for holiness, Revelation is not intended as a timetable of eschatological events. In fact, John is clearly limited in what he is allowed to reveal (cf. 10:4).

***Everything Made Right***  
**“Historical Context”**  
**Revelation 1:4-8**

***Recipients of Revelation***

All the churches of Asia as represented by the seven churches mentioned in Revelation 1:11. They were suffering persecution for a variety of reasons:

1. Christianity was an illegal religion.
2. Christianity aspired to universality.
3. Christianity was an exclusive religion.
4. Believers were accused of all manner of evils.
5. Christians refused to go to war.
6. Christians were chiefly poor and outcast.
7. Refusing compromise, Christians were seen as fanatics.
8. Christians refused to worship the Emperor.

***Conditions in the Roman Empire***

Conquest and Commerce (Rev. 18:11-14)

Moral Depravity (Romans 1)

False Religions

## ***Abiding Truths of Revelation***

1. Majesty of God and the centrality of Jesus
2. Reality and power of evil
3. Truth regarding Antichrist
4. Role of the church in spiritual warfare
5. Suffering in the world vs. fellowship with Christ in glory
6. History as linear and meaningful
7. Strong emphasis on worship
8. Strong emphasis on judgment, separation of true from false
9. Implications for Christian political/social action
10. Assurance of Kingdom triumph

## ***Prologue: Revelation 1:4-8***

Greetings from the Triune God (vv.4, 5a)

Doxology of Praise (vv.5b, 6)

Affirmation of Christ's Return (v.7)

Affirmation of God's Power (v.8)



***Everything Made Right***  
**“Church Letters”**  
***Revelation 2:1-17***

*Just as the Sermon on the Mount calls the believer to continually examine his motives, John records that the Living Lord regularly examines the motives of congregations. His assessments are always perfectly on target; therefore, churches should listen well and change.*

***Letter to Ephesus (2:1-7)***

- **Commendation (vv.1-3)**
- **Complaint (v.4)**
- **Command (vv.5-7)**

***Letter to Smyrna (2:8-11)***

- **Pastor (v.8a)**
- **People (vv.8b-10b)**
- **Promise (vv.10c, 11)**

***Letter to Pergamum (2:12-17)***

- **Commendation (vv.12, 13)**
- **Complaint (vv.14, 15)**
- **Command (vv.16, 17)**

***Everything Made Right***  
**“Church Letters, part 2”**  
*Revelation 2:12-3:6*

*The downward spiral, beginning with the Ephesian church’s loss of its first love for Jesus and continuing with Pergamum’s worldliness and Thyatira’s toleration of sin, reaches a new low at Sardis. Jesus here declares the hope and plan of revival to a sinning church.*

***Letter to Pergamum (2:12-17)***

- **Commendation (2:12, 13)**
- **Complaint (2:14, 15)**
- **Command (2:16, 17)**

***Letter to Thyatira (2:18-29)***

- **Commendation (2:18, 19)**
- **Complaint (2:20-23)**
- **Comfort (2:24-29)**

***Letter to Sardis (3:1-6)***

- **Complaint (3:1)**
- **Charge (3:2, 3)**
- **Commendation (3:4-6)**

9-30-15

***Everything Made Right***  
**“Church Letters, part 3”**  
**Revelation 3**

*The letters to the churches of Asia continue to reveal the accurate assessment of each congregation by the ever-present Lord. He is careful in His judgments, precise in His requirements, and loving in the hope He offers. The only question left is whether these congregations have “ears to hear.”*

***Letter to Sardis (3:1-6)***

- **Complaint (v.1)**
- **Charge (vv.2, 3)**
- **Commendation (vv.4-6)**

***Letter to Philadelphia (3:7-13)***

- **Postmark (v.7)**
- **Praise (vv.8, 10)**
- **Promises (vv.8-13)**

***Letter to Laodicea (3:14-22)***

- **Problem: Spiritual Lethargy (vv. 14-16)**
- **Product: Self-Sufficiency (vv.17, 18)**
- **Promise: Divine Discipline (vv.19-22)**

10-7-15

***Everything Made Right***  
**“Church Letters, part 4”**  
**Revelation 3:14-22; Hebrews 12:1-3**

*Identified as the “Amen,” Jesus speaks to this final church as the indisputable witness of their condition. His glory is not at all reflected in this congregation, and He is disgusted by their pride. In the same way that He examined the churches of Revelation, Jesus still examines His churches today. Even now, His complaints must be answered with repentance and His commendations are something to be desired. What does Jesus say to Evergreen?*

***Letter to Laodicea (3:14-22)***

**Problem: Spiritual Lethargy (Rev. 3:14-16)**

**Product: Self-Sufficiency (Rev. 3:17, 18)**

**Promise: Divine Discipline (Rev. 3:19-22)**

***Letter to Evergreen (Heb. 12:1-3)***

**“Run Your Race” (Heb. 12:1)**

**“Fix Your Eyes” (Heb. 12:2, 3)**

10-21-15

***Everything Made Right***  
**“The Worth of Worship”**  
**Revelation 4**

*Worship is the most common visible expression of Christianity; yet it is the spiritual discipline done most poorly most often. Worship has eternal value. It proclaims that God is worthy above all others. John's vision of worship in heaven inspires believers to glorify God more intentionally.*

**1. Worship's Vision (4:1-6a)**

- **Sovereignty**
- **Eternity**
- **Activity**

**2. Worship's Submission (4:6b-10)**

- **Submission**
- **Abdication**

**3. Worship's Expression (4:11)**

- **Glory**
- **Honor**
- **Power**

10-28-15

***Everything Made Right***  
**“A Question of Worthiness”**  
**Revelation 5**

*The vision of the heavenly court continues in Revelation 5 as John observes the divine purpose behind history, including the imponderable questions of evil and persecution. He discovers that the destiny of mankind is ultimately found in the personal majesty of Jesus Christ.*

**1. Historical Dilemma (vv.1-4)**

- **Mystery of History**
  
  
- **Problem of Worthiness**

**2. Heavenly Drama (vv.5-8)**

**3. Holy Declaration (vv.9-14)**

- **Believer’s Song of Redemption**
  
  
- **Angel’s Song of Praise**
  
  
- **Creation’s Song of Worship**

***Everything Made Right***  
***“Glimpses of Rapture”***

11-4-15  
+  
11-18-15

*The book of Revelation speaks of the Rapture of the Church by implication only. But the Bible as a whole provides a great deal of material on the subject, even while not answering every possible question. The challenge is to hold to the truth given, while resisting the temptation to overstate what we know.*

**1. The Promise (John 14:1-6)**

**2. The Picture (1Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-58)**

**3. The Prophecy (Daniel 9:20-27)**

**4. The Population (Revelation 19:19-20:6)**

12-2-15

***Everything Made Right***  
**“The Tribulation Stage Set”**  
**Romans 9-11**

*Why is the Church absent from the Great Tribulation? Does the coming turmoil have a purpose beyond the mere punishment of sin and rebellion? What is the place of Israel in all this? Can we grasp the future historical and spiritual context of Revelation’s images and events?*

## **1. Old Testament Prophecy**

- **Malachi 3:1-6; 4:1-3**
- **Isaiah 2:5-22; 59:12-21**
- **Ezekiel 20:33-38**
- **Zephaniah 1:14-18**
- **Jeremiah 31:31-34**
- **Zechariah 12:10**

## **2. New Testament Affirmation**

- **Paul’s Heartbeat Expressed (Romans 9:1-5)**
- **Israel’s Rejection Explained (Romans 10:1-4, 8b-13)**
- **Israel’s Rejection Not Absolute (Romans 11:1-10)**
- **Israel’s Rejection Not Arbitrary (Romans 11:11-24)**
- **Israel’s Rejection Not Accidental (Romans 11:25-32)**

1-6-16

***Everything Made Right***  
**“Judgment Begins”**  
**Revelation 6**

*As the Lamb of God opens each of the seals of the heavenly scroll, an historical judgment is revealed. These judgments involve the typical forces of history which characterize broken creation and sinful humanity, yet presented here with unprecedented intensity. These seals are the “birth pains” mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 24 and Mark 13.*

**Seal #1: White Horse of Conquest (vv.1, 2)**

**Seal #2: Red Horse of War (vv.3, 4)**

**Seal #3: Black Horse of Famine (vv.5, 6)**

**Seal #4: Pale Horse of Plague (vv.7, 8)**

**Seal #5: Martyred Saints/Persecution (vv.9-11)**

**Seal #6: Cosmic Disturbances (vv.12-17)**

1-13-16

***Everything Made Right***  
**“The Kingdom Completed”**  
Revelation 7

*Just like a football team that always looks to the end zone, a church will only advance the kingdom of God today when she maintains a clear vision of the kingdom completed in eternity. Evergreen is not ultimately motivated by buildings or programs. We do what we do because we see the future!*

**1. Guarantee of the Kingdom: Jewish Election (vv.1-8)**

**2. Gift of the Kingdom: Gentile Inclusion (vv.9-14)**

**3. Glory of the Kingdom: Complete Redemption (vv.15-17)**

1-20-16

***Everything Made Right***  
**“Seventh Seal, Six Trumpets”**  
**Revelation 8-9**

*The content of the seventh seal is fleshed out in the judgments of the seven angels with trumpets. As the Day of the Lord approaches, the final crisis of creation history becomes more intense. Literally, all hell breaks loose. But the people of God are reassured about the final outcome. Hallelujah!*

**Seventh Seal: Suspense in Heaven (8:1-5)**

**Trumpets #1-4: Judgments on Nature (8:6-12)**

**Trumpet #5: Demonic Oppression (8:13-9:12)**

**Trumpet #6: Eastern Invasion (9:13-19)**

**Interlude: Human Rebellion (9:20, 21)**

1-27-16

***Everything Made Right***  
**“Divine Secrets, Faithful Men”**  
**Revelation 10:1-11:14**

*The announcement of the trumpets is now interrupted with another interlude. The final assault of judgment is broken by the insertion of vital information the readers need. In an especially difficult passage to interpret, John speaks of divine and human proclamations, the martyrdom of two witnesses, and the temporary triumph of evil.*

**1. Global Judgment Announced (10:1-11)**

**2. Mysterious Witnesses (11:1-6)**

**3. Satanic Rage (11:7-10)**

**4. Divine Vindication (11:11-14)**



2-17-16

***Everything Made Right***  
***“The Unholy Trinity”***  
**Revelation 13**

*The two beasts of this chapter, the first primarily political and the second more essentially religious, together define the agenda for Satan’s (the Dragon) final attempt at frustrating the redemptive plans of Almighty God. The historical triumph of humanism and authoritarianism is seen in the most pervasive, profound, and global idolatry and blasphemy in creation history. This is the last gasp of evil.*

**1. Beast Out of the Sea (vv.1-10)**

**2. Beast Out of the Land (vv.11-18)**

*Everything Made Right*  
**“Glimpses of the Future”**  
Revelation 14

2-24-16

*The depressing view from the valley (12-13) is now countered by the majestic view from the mountain. The Lamb is again among His chosen people and the future is disclosed with divine certainty. The world will be made right: God wins! This vision strengthens believers as the unveiling of the Tribulation continues.*

## **1. Tribulation Saints**

- **Corporate Destiny (vv.1-5)**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Individual Hope (vv.12, 13)**

## **2. Worldly Unbelievers**

- **Corporate Destiny (vv.6-8)**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Individual Torment (vv.9-11)**

## **3. Harvest and Wrath**

- **Harvest of the Earth (vv.14-16)**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Winepress of Wrath (vv.17-20)**

3-2-16

## ***Everything Made Right***

### **“Harvest and Plagues”**

**Revelation 14:14-15:8**

*The saints are sealed and the last opportunity of the Gospel has passed. Judgment is imminent and unavoidable on the earth. Yet in the midst of unfolding wrath, a vision of the worship of the faithful redeems the moment. Such a vision allows believers to survive the brokenness of the world in every generation, even ours.*

#### **1. Harvest and Wrath (14:14-20)**

- **Harvest of the Earth**

- **Winepress of Wrath**

#### **2. Worship and Praise (15:2-4)**

#### **3. Seven Plagues (15:1, 5-8)**

3-9-16

***Everything Made Right***  
**“Bowl Judgments”**  
**Revelation 16**

*Divine retribution was revealed by the seal judgments, announced by the trumpet judgments, and now, it is finally executed by the bowl judgments. There is no more mention of “thirds” or portions. The stress here is on the finality and completeness of God’s wrath. Yet the saints are still safe and sound. Hallelujah!*

**1. Bowls #1-4: Nature Undone (vv.1-9)**

**2. Bowl #5: Throne of the Beast (vv.10, 11)**

**3. Bowl #6: Preparation for Armageddon (vv.12-16)**

**4. Bowl #7: Demonic Rebellion Answered (vv.17-21)**

3-17-16

***Everything Made Right***  
**“The Fall of Babylon”**  
**Revelation 17-18**

*These chapters form one continuous drama displaying the judgment of Babylon. The woman of chapter 17 and the city of chapter 18 are ultimately the same entity. These passages serve as an extended appendix to the seventh bowl judgment (16:19) where these events were first mentioned.*

**1. Babylon in Her Glory (17:1-6)**

**2. Babylon’s Doom Explained (17:7-18)**

**3. Babylon’s Fall Announced (18:1-3)**

**4. Warning to God’s People (18:4, 5)**

**5. Cry of Vengeance, Call for Rejoicing (18:6-8, 20)**

**6. Final Laments from Earth (18:9-19,21-24)**

4-6-16

***Everything Made Right***  
**“Rebellion Answered”**  
**Revelation 17-18**

*With the destruction of the global religious system in chapter 17, attention now turns to the remaining political and economic bases of rebellion against Almighty God and the Lamb. The essence of sinful humanity’s nature is displayed in this final attempt to create a self-sufficient world order apart from God. However, God answers human rebellion with finality.*

- 1. Babylon in Her Glory (17:1-6)**
- 2. Babylon’s Doom Explained (17:7-18)**
- 3. Babylon’s Fall Announced (18:1-3)**

**4. Warning to God’s People (18:4, 5)**

**5. Cry of Vengeance, Call for Rejoicing (18:6-8, 20)**

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***Everything Made Right***  
**“Celebrating the Wedding”**  
**Revelation 19:1-10**

*The Bible lists many reasons for giving thanks to God. He is praised for His perfect attributes, His mighty works, and His blessings on His people. But of all the things God is to be praised for, perhaps the least expected is for His destruction of the wicked. Yet, this theme is also included in heaven’s worship.*

**Heavenly Worship Celebrates...**

- 1. Because Salvation is Completed (v.1)**
- 2. Because Justice is Displayed (v.2)**
- 3. Because Rebellion is Ended (v.3)**
- 4. Because God is in Control (vv.4-6)**
- 5. Because the Marriage of the Lamb is Accomplished (vv.7-10)**

*Everything Made Right*  
**“Final Confrontation”**  
Revelation 19:11-21

4-20-16

*The great victory has been won. The power of evil has been broken. There remains only the final ordering things—putting the wicked away permanently and introducing the righteous to the Millennial Kingdom. The King has come!*

## **1. Triumph of the Christ**

- **Authority Proclaimed (vv.11-13)**
- **Justice Vindicated (vv.14, 15)**
- **Identity Announced (v.16)**

## **2. Demise of the Beast**

- **Historical Moment (vv.17, 18)**
- **Timeless Encounter (v. 19)**
- **Eternal Settlement (vv.20, 21)**

4-27-16

***Everything Made Right***  
**“Cosmic Victory!”**  
**Revelation 20**

*For all the debate and controversy in contemporary theological circles, it is surprising to learn that the millennial kingdom is spoken of by John in only this chapter of the Revelation. Elaborate eschatological systems have been put forth by some teachers, while others virtually ignore these verses. How can we properly understand the millennium?*

**1. The Binding of Satan (vv.1-3)**

**2. Reward and the Millennial Kingdom (vv.4-6)**

**3. The Devil’s Final Doom (vv.7-10)**

**4. The Judge and the White Throne (vv.11-15)**



5-11-16

***Everything Made Right***  
**“The Final Word”**  
**Revelation 22:6-21**

*The pageant is over, and the final curtain has been drawn. All that remains is the necessity of impressing upon the readers' minds the lasting importance of this message. Now the Redeemer steps in front of the curtain to issue His final words.*

**1. Words of Confirmation (vv.6, 8, 16)**

- **Angelic Testimony**
- **Prophetic Testimony**
- **Divine Testimony**

**2. Words of Warning (vv.8-11, 14-15, 18-19)**

- **Proper Worship**
- **Permanent Choices**
- **Private Obedience**

**3. Words of Invitation (v.17)**

- **Evangelistic Offer**
- **Response to the Offer**

**4. Words of Promise (vv.7, 12-13, 20-21)**

- **Present Happiness**
- **Perpetual Honor**
- **Personal Hope**