Overview

Much abused but little used, Revelation is one of the most fascinating books in the bible. Through an intensive study of the Greek text against its OT, Jewish, and Hellenistic background, we will seek to better understand the message of the Apocalypse in its first-century setting [Mission statement 1-2]. We will then seek for responsible applications of the text for our own day [MS 1-2].

Textbooks

Required
The Book of Revelation, G.K. Beale
The Revelation of St. John, G.B. Caird [if available; if not, you can substitute Grant Osborne’s Baker commentary]
The Theology of the Book of Revelation, Richard Bauckham
The Apocalyptic Imagination, J.J. Collins

Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greek Competency Quiz</td>
<td>2nd class meeting</td>
<td>0% (Pass/Fail)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>20-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. of Gk text of Rev. (see below)</td>
<td>Last day of class (no extensions)</td>
<td>15-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exegesis Paper</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>50-60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the Quizzes

The Greek Competency Quiz is required of every Greek exegesis class. You must pass this quiz to remain in the class. The quiz will be given the second class meeting and will consist of a translation passage from the New Testament with parsing and grammar questions. The remaining quiz is designed to ensure an active engagement with the Greek text, readings, and lectures. It will contain a translation section with related short-answer questions, and short-answer questions pertaining to reading and lecture material.

On the Exegesis Paper

Each student is required to produce an exegesis paper of 12-15 pages (1.5 spacing, 12 point type; appendix accepted for charts, diagrams, illustrations, etc.) based on a portion of the Greek text of Revelation. You may choose a passage from anywhere in the book. Generally the passage should range from 6-12 verses, but there may be exceptions. This is meant to be an intensive exploration of the Greek text, and as such it should display the full range of exegetical skills developed in Interpreting the New Testament. The format should be a brief introduction followed by a verse-by-verse discussion in the style of the Harper’s
New Testament Commentary series. (The Revelation text by Caird, required for this course, is actually from this series, although we are using a reprint edition.) Your interaction with the Greek text, however, should often be more detailed than in the Harper’s commentary.

Translation/Preparation
You are required to translate the entire Greek text of Revelation. At the end of the term you will be asked to submit a sheet stating what percentage of the translation you have completed.

1. No translation, no comments. Students who have not read the Greek text for the day with reasonable understanding are not permitted to ask questions or make comments in class (aside from e.g. “Could you move the overhead up?” or “Is the quiz next Monday?”). As noted in “What We Do and Why” (see below), there are comments that are not at all helpful, and this rule is intended to minimize such comments.

2. If you translate less than 50% of the required Greek text, you fail the class. There is simply no way a person should pass a Greek exegesis class when he or she has read less than half of the relevant material. This does not mean you have to parse every last word, but you do need to read the Greek with a reasonable level of understanding.

3. The less you do, the more it is worth. I don’t want to artificially inflate grades by giving a huge bonus to people who do what I consider the minimum reasonable amount of translation – namely 100% -- but I do want to discipline those who do considerably less. So if you do between 90-100% of the translation, it will be worth 15% of your final grade. If, however, you do between 80-90%, it will rise to 20%. Between 65-80% will be worth 25%, and between 50-65% will be worth 30%. For example: if you read 50% of the Greek, you will receive a 50 on the translation component, and that will be worth 30% of the final grade. This means you are essentially starting with a B, and you can only go down from there.

NOTE 1: If you wish to receive papers or quizzes back, you must include your box number on them. Material without box numbers will be retained in my office.

Note 2: NO WORK IS ACCEPTED BY EMAIL. Each paper must be handed in as a hard copy.

Note 3: Please refrain from putting the paper in an envelope unless absolutely necessary.

Schedule (subject to adjustment)
Jan 29
The One who Is and Was and Is To Come Rev. 1
Reading: Begin working with Beale and Caird

Jan 31
The One who Is and Was and Is To Come  Rev 1 (continued)
Reading: Bauckham, all

Feb 5
For the One who has Ears to Hear  Revelation 2-3

Feb 7
For the One who has Ears to Hear  Revelation 2-3 (continued)

Feb 12
The Heavenly Throne Room  Revelation 4-5

Feb 14
The Heavenly Throne Room  Revelation 4-5 (continued)

Feb 26
The Four Horsemen  Rev. 6

Feb 28
Warning Shots  Rev. 7-9

March 5
Warning Shots  Rev. 7-9 (continued)

March 7
Faithful Witness  Revelation 10-11

March 12
Faithful Witness  Revelation 10-11 (continued)
Reading: Collins, selected pages to be announced

March 14
The Woman, the Dragon, and the Beast  Revelation 12-14

March 19
The Woman, the Dragon, and the Beast  Revelation 12-14 (continued)

March 21
Quiz
The Woman, the Dragon, and the Beast  Revelation 12-14 (continued)

April 2
Judgment  Revelation 15-17

April 4
Judgment  Revelation 15-17 (continued)

April 9
Fallen, Fallen  Revelation 18-19
April 11
*The Millennium* Revelation 20

April 16
*The New Jerusalem* Rev. 21-22

April 18
*The New Jerusalem* Rev. 21-2 (continued)

April 23
*The New Jerusalem* Rev. 21-2 (continued)

April 25
*The New Jerusalem* Rev. 21-2 (continued)

April 30
*The New Jerusalem* Rev. 21-2 (continued)

May 2
*Koinonia Practicum*
Greek Exegesis Classes
12 Step Method

The Method and the Class

Those of you who have not had me for Interpreting the New Testament, or who have not had Dr Stuart for Old Testament, may not be familiar with the 12 Step Method for interpreting the Bible. Don’t panic: all of the New Testament faculty teach essentially the same methodology. It is simply the terminology that differs. Below I give a brief summary of Stuart’s 12 step method (with my own very minor adjustments) so that you will know what I am referring to during the course of the semester.

In Greek exegesis classes, I will expect you to think through all twelve steps as you prepare the texts we will be covering that day. Obviously this will involve consulting secondary sources on matters like historical background, but the bulk of the work will consist of you assessing for yourself the various exegetical issues that may arise. It is also important to remember that not all the steps will be equally relevant for every text. We may be speaking about a passage which has no significant textual variants but raises major theological issues. Or we may find a passage in which the meaning of a single word carries enormous weight in interpretation.

Generally speaking, in the early lectures of the term I try to do in-depth exegesis of the initial chapters of the book, explicitly invoking the various steps of the exegetical process (not necessarily in order). As the semester goes on, we tend to take a more synthetic approach, dealing with the major themes of the chapter or section, and dealing with particular exegetical problems as they arise. Often the discussion may focus on one exegetical skill with particular relevance for that text.

The reason I find the 12 step method so helpful is that it forces you to think through all the potentially relevant information for exegesis and application. The Bible is a very complex book, and a single favored approach can never do justice to its richness. We need to be open to a variety of questions that arise from the text and develop skills for addressing all of them. The 12 step method gives you a framework for asking and answering those questions.

The Method in Brief

The twelve step method can be broken down into five major categories. The various steps answer the questions:

- What is there? (Text, Translation, Lexical Data, Grammatical Data)
- What sort of thing is it? (Genre/Form)
- How is it set up? (Structure)
- How does it fit in? (Historical Context, Literary Context, Biblical Context, Secondary Literature)
- Where does it go? (Theology, Application)

Here is a little more detail on each of the steps, with the questions you will ask yourself as you work through a passage:

Text
Is the NA27 secure, or might the original have read differently? Do the variants highlight any interesting interpretive issues?
Translation
How are you going to put your Greek text into your target language? How can you capture nuances in the text without overtranslating?

Lexical Data
Speaking of translation, what do the words mean, anyway? Do any of them necessitate a thorough word study? How are the important words used in the OT?

Grammatical Data
Speaking of words, how do they fit together? What is intended by the various prepositions, nouns, verbs, articles, particles, etc.?

Genre/Form
What am I dealing with at the macro level (genre) – an epistle, an apocalypse, a gospel? How should that affect the way I interpret this passage? What am I dealing with at the micro-level (form) – a miracles story, a household code, a dream vision account? Can I compare with similar forms inside, or outside, the canon?

Structure
What does the X-ray of my passage look like? How does it flow? Is there an argument I need to follow? Any parallelism?

Historical Context
The passage was not written in a vacuum – how does the “outside world” affect my understanding of the text?

Literary Context
How does my passage fit with the surrounding material? With the book as a whole?

Biblical Context
How does my passage fit in with the OT? With the rest of the NT?

Theology
How does my passage fit in the flow of the bible’s story of the work of the creating and redeeming God? What contribution does it make to questions asked in systematic theology?

Secondary Literature
What have other people said about my passage? Do I need to alter any of my conclusions in light of their input?

Application
How does this text apply to those in my church community? How should it affect my own life? How would it relate to other church situations I am aware of around the world?