

1. Review:

- **Preterist** - Our approach to this study is called *Preterist*. We ask, “What would the first listener to John’s letter have thought given their knowledge of their own historical and cultural context?”
- **Idealist** - A second aspect of this study may be categorized as *idealist as we look for the timeless principles that exist throughout history that have* to do with the nature of humanity and the continual conflict between good and evil.
- **Jewish Apocalyptic** - Revelation falls into the literary tradition of Jewish Apocalyptic writing (Isaiah 24-27 or Daniel 7). Apocalypse means “to reveal, revealing,” where the nature of reality is presented. This literature ultimately concerns “end times” or the “end of the age” and judgment.
- **Symbolic Language to Express Divine Truths** - The difficulty for us with an interpretation of Revelation is that the visions are highly symbolic and, therefore, require first-century knowledge of the symbols.

2. Who are the “Beast from the Sea” and the Beast from the Earth?”

Symbol	John’s Historical Context
- Dragon of Chaos	- Devil (Rev. 12:9)
- Beast from the Sea	- Rome
- Beast from the Land	- Cities or leaders of Asia Minor / Ephesus - those who enforce the worship of Rome

3. Evidence from Ephesus:

- Temple of the *Sebastoi*¹ – *Sebastoi* means ‘venerated ones.’ Vespasian, Titus, Domitian.
 - Dedicated and built by the leading cities and benefactors of Asia Minor
- 2nd worship site to Domitian at Ephesus
 - A gymnasium/bath complex built at the harbor was dedicated to Domitian²
 - Domitian held the “Ephesus Games” like the Olympic games.
 - The gymnasium was to reflect the Zeus gymnasium at Mt. Olympus.
- A gymnasium is a place to train the body and the mind.
- Under whose authority is all knowledge kept - Domitian.

While John is in Ephesus, the *Sebastoi* and the gymnasium are being built and dedicated to Domitian.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_of_the_Sebastoi

² Friesen, Steven. “Ephesus: Key to a Vision in Revelation,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 19, no. 3 (1993): 24–27, 31–34, 36–37.

4. Symbols:

Water (sea)	Gen. 1:2 – chaotic waters/abyss (enemy of God)
Dragon (of chaos)	Sea monster / the chaos just beyond the order (enemy of God)
Leviathan	Coiled serpent of chaos (Isaiah 27:1)
Cosmic level	Devil or Satan (see Rev. 12)
Historicized	Assyria, Babylon, Rome (enemy of God)

- Dragon of Chaos: *anything* that turns God’s created order on its head.

“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil” Isaiah 5:20

5. Revelation 13 and Daniel 7:

Daniel 7	Revelation 13
- ‘churning sea’ and ‘beast from the sea’ (7:3)	- Dragon on the shore of sea/beast (13:1)
- beast like a leopard (7:6)	- leopard (13:2)
- ‘given authority to rule’ (7:6)	- dragon gave beast authority (13:2)
- ‘ten horns’ (7:7)	- ‘ten horns’ (13:1)
- ‘mouth spoke boastfully’ (7:8)	- ‘mouth spoke blasphemies (13:5)
- Court with Ancient of days (God) (7:9)	
- ‘one like the son of man’ (7:13)	
- Son of man ‘given authority’ (7:14)	
- the court will sit in judgment (7:26)	
- everlasting kingdom (7:28)	

6. Revelation 13 ‘Beast out of the Earth’ (Rev. 13:11-18) -

- Received authority from the first beast (13:12)
- Made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast
- The ‘beast of the earth’ is going to help Rome maintain order and give credence to the sanctioned worship and the Roman system of maintaining order (*Piety, War, Victory, Peace*)

7. **Aphrodisias** - a city dedicated to the goddess Aphrodite³

- Located over the mountain from Laodicea
- Famous for its sculpture school

8. the city decided to build a *Sebastion* - a temple honoring the Caesars and their deity.

- Panels line the walkway to the temple.
- The panels tell the story of the Imperial Cult by mixing them with the Greek gods.
- Depicting the brutality of the Roman Empire
 - Claudius over Britannia
 - Claudius ruling *Oikoumene* – all creation
 - *Oikoumene*⁴ (where we get ecumenical) means “all creation.”
 - Rev. 13:8 and 13:12
- *Gemma Augustea*⁵

9. **Roman peace comes at the expense of someone else!**

Kingdom of God	Kingdom of Rome (man)
- Covenant	- Piety
- nonviolence	- War
- Justice	- Victory
- Peace	- Peace

Marked by forgiveness and love	Marked by power
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Paul starts his letters, “*Grace* and Peace to you.”

10. **Final Judgment for Domitian:**

- His own people assassinated Domitian in 96 AD.
- After his death, his name was declared *Damnatio Memoriae* – “condemnation of memory.”
- All inscriptions of his name were removed.

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aphrodisias>

⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecumene>

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gemma_Augustea