

Revelation

When was the Book of Revelation Written?

the word of God and
of Jesus Christ. ³Bless-
ed who reads the words
and blessed are
and take to heart
it.

¹I, John, your brother and com-
panion in the suffering and king-
dom and patient endurance that are
ours in Jesus, was on the island of
Patmos because of the word.

To the
2

Two Main Dates for the Composition of Revelation

1. Neronic Date (Early Date) AD 65

2. Domitianic Date (Late Date) AD 95

**Traditional date of the church
for 1,900 years**

Revelation

**Why is the Date of
Revelation So
Important?**

revelation of Jesus Omega," says the Lord God
He made
angel to
sides to eve
the word of
Jesus Chri
no reads the words
and blessed are
and take to heart
it have
dom and patient endurance that are
ours in Jesus, was on the island of
Patmos because of the
To the
2



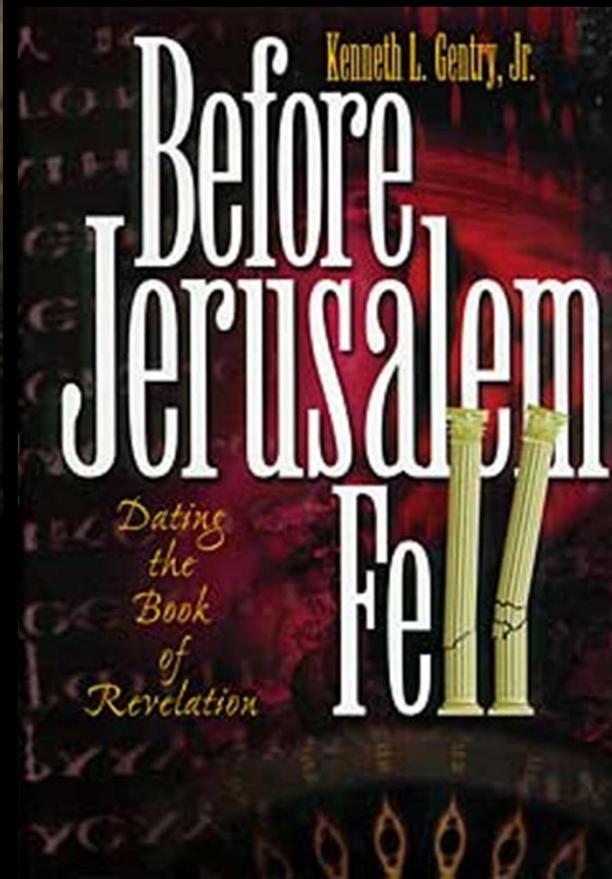


**THE GREAT
TRIBULATION**
PAST OR FUTURE?



The Evangelists Debate the Question

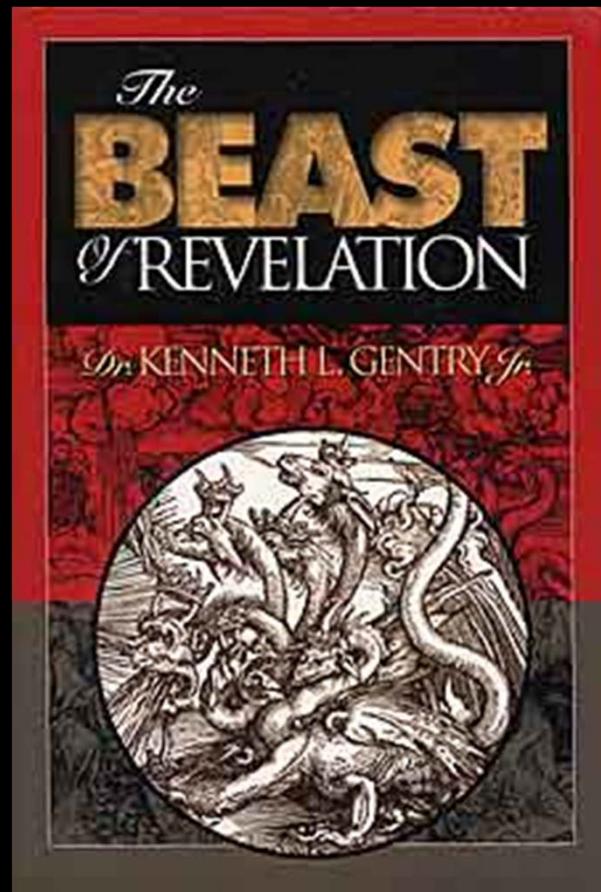
Thomas Ice
Kenneth Gentry



Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr.

**Before
Jerusalem
Falls**

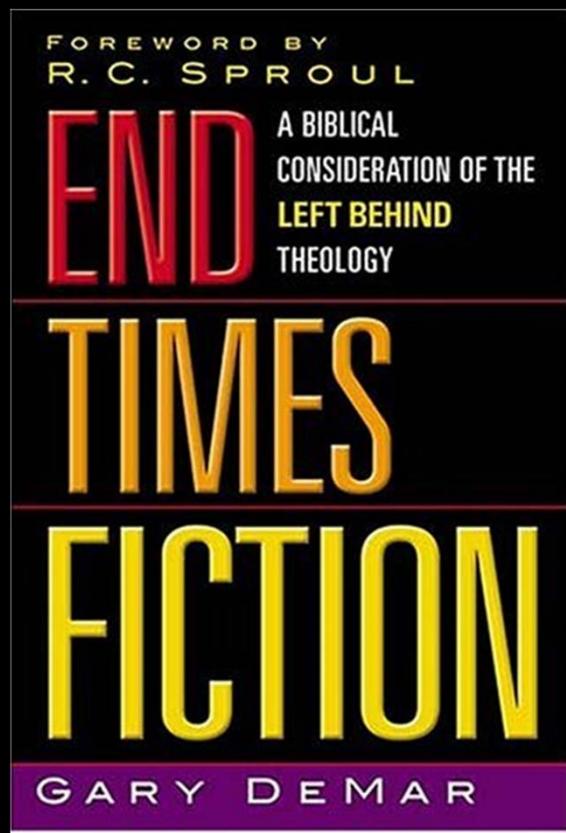
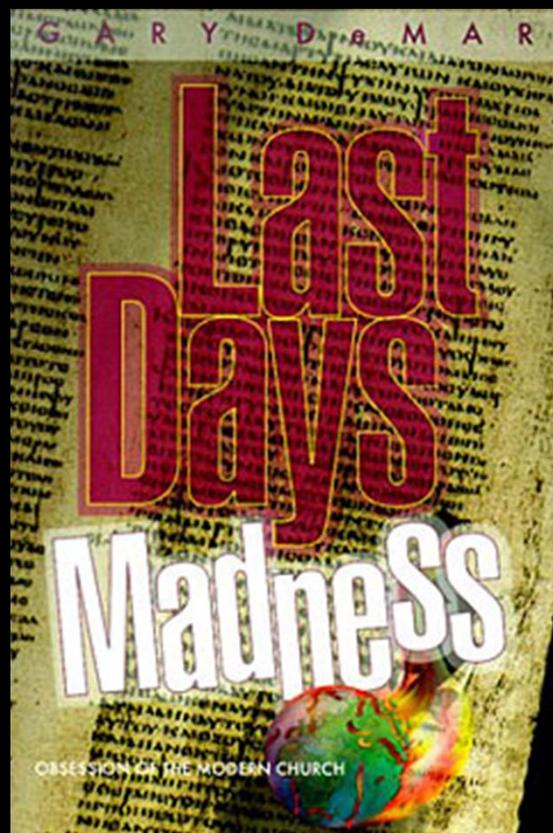
*Dating
the
Book
of
Revelation*



The
BEAST
of REVELATION

Dr. KENNETH L. GENTRY, Jr.





R. C. SPROUL



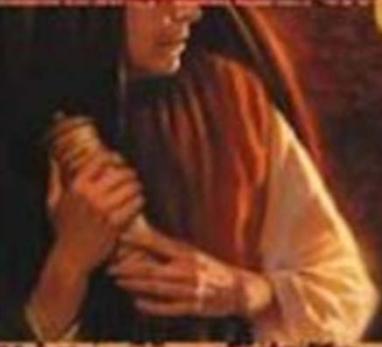
THE
LAST DAYS
ACCORDING TO
JESUS

When Did Jesus Say He Would Return?



THE LAST DISCIPLE

Hidden inside the last words he wrote is a prophecy so explosive ...
It has the power to destroy anyone who discovers its truth.



HANK • HANEGRAAFF
SIGMUND • BROUWER



Hank Hanegraaff

***The Bible
Answer Man***



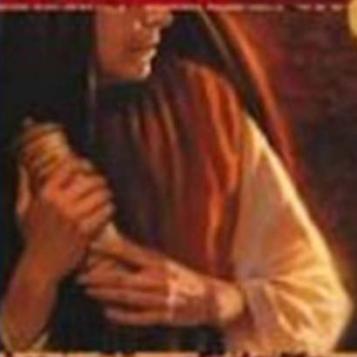
Hank Hanegraaff

President of the Christian
Research Institute

**“My prayer is that the Church would experience a *paradigm shift* toward a better understanding of Bible prophecy, and nothing would please me more than to have a part in making it happen”
(*Equip*, Sept. 2005, p. 4).**

THE LAST DISCIPLE

Hidden inside the lost words he wrote is a prophecy so explosive ...
It has the power to destroy anyone who uncovers its truth.



HANK • HANEGRAAFF
SIGMUND • BROUWER

Hanegraaff believes that most of the Book of Revelation (chapters 4–19) was fulfilled through events relating to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He believes that the Beast of Revelation 13 (Antichrist) was Nero. These events have already been fulfilled in the past. Thus, Revelation had to be written in the mid-60s.

The *only* one of the four major views of Revelation that is date-dependent is preterism.

If Revelation was written in AD 65, futurism is still a viable interpretive option. However, if Revelation was written after AD 70, then Revelation 1-19 cannot be a prophecy about the events of AD 70 as preterists maintain.

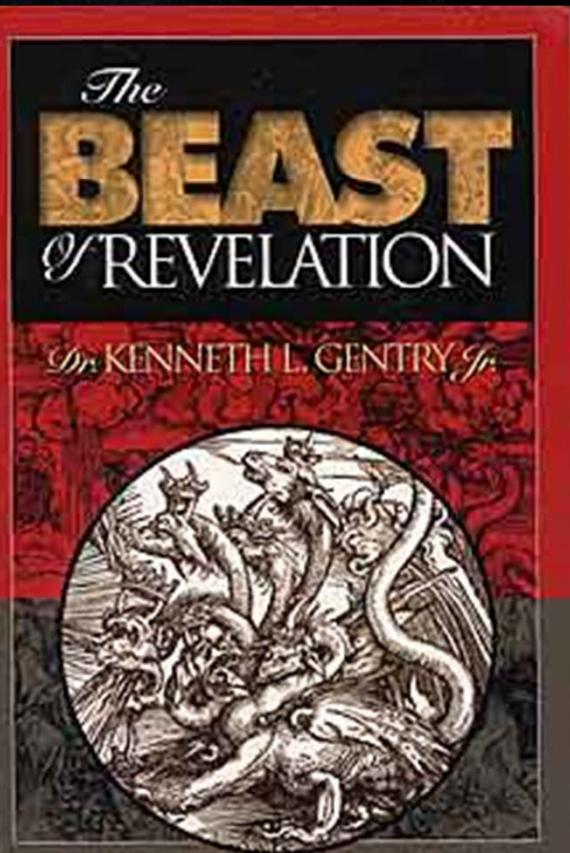
R. C. SPROUL



THE
LAST DAYS
ACCORDING TO
JESUS

“If the book was written after A.D. 70, then its contents manifestly do not refer to events surrounding the fall of Jerusalem.”

When Did Jesus Say He Would Return?



“If the late-date of around A.D. 95-96 is accepted, a wholly different situation would prevail. The events in the mid and late 60s of the first century would be *absolutely excluded* as possible fulfillments.”

The preterist interpretation of Revelation is totally dependent on the AD 65 date. Preterists have hitched their entire eschatological wagon to the AD 65 date.

Futurism is not based on any particular date of Revelation. It is true that most futurists hold the AD 95 date, but this is simply because they believe it is the correct date, not because the view itself is dependent on that date.

One consequence of the traditional AD 95 date, or any date after AD 70, is that it is fatal to preterism.

Francis Gumerlock (*The Early Church and the End of the World*, p. 126)

“Futurists, on the other hand, generally believe that the book of Revelation contains prophecies, the majority of which will be fulfilled near the end of the world. While a date of Revelation is not crucial to their interpretation of the book, it is important in their polemic against preterism.”

Richard Mayhue:

“Significantly, a futurist would not have to change his eschatological thinking if a pre-AD 70 date for the writing were to be established. However, the preterist position is eliminated from consideration if the late date of ca. AD 95 can be validated.”

If preterists are correct about the date of Revelation, then futurism can still be true. There are futurists who hold to the early date of Revelation (Zane Hodges).

If Revelation was written in AD 95, then the preterist view of Revelation 1–19 never even gets off the ground.

Revelation cannot be prophesying events about Nero and the fall of Jerusalem if it was written after those events occurred. The entire preterist position hangs precariously on the mid-sixties date of Revelation. Any date after AD 70, actually June, AD 68, is fatal for this view.

This is *the* essential *problem* for the preterist position. They have constructed their entire eschatological framework on a point—the AD 65 date of Revelation—that at best is improbable and at worst is untenable. That is why they have to defend the mid-sixties date so vigorously and cannot give an inch. If they do, their entire view falls apart.

Burden of Proof Early-date advocates have the burden of proof since the AD 95 date is the accepted, traditional date. As partial preterist R. C. Sproul admits, “The burden for preterists then is to demonstrate that Revelation was written before A.D. 70.” (*The Last Days According to Jesus*, p. 140)

Two Lines of Evidence for Dating NT Books

1. External Evidence

2. Internal Evidence

**The Main
Arguments for
the AD 65 Date**

Hanegraaff, *The Last Sacrifice*, 343-44

“In summary, from all the reasons we are well justified in believing that the book of Revelation was not written twenty-five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, three tower above the rest.”

Mr. Hanegraaf's 3 TOWERS for the AD 65 Date

- 1. No mention of the destruction of Jerusalem.**
- 2. No mention of the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem in Matthew 24.**
- 3. John mentions the Jewish Temple as intact when he writes (Rev. 11:1-2).**

****Note:** 2 out of 3 of Mr. Hanegraaff's towers are arguments from silence.

Answers to the First Tower

1. No mention of the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Two answers:

First, the audience for Revelation was Gentile believers in Asia Minor in AD 95. The destruction of the temple was a Jewish event, 800 miles away, and 25 years in the past. It was remote from the original audience ethnically, geographically, and historically.

Second, Revelation is not a “history,” it is a “prophecy” according to **Rev. 1:3** and **22:7, 10**. It deals with the future, not the past. John was taken in a vision to the future and told repeatedly to write down what he saw. The words “*and I saw*” occur about 44x in Revelation. The destruction of Jerusalem, 25 years in the past, was not part of the vision of the future he received.

In **Rev. 1:19**, John is instructed by Christ Himself, “*Write therefore the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall take place after these things.”*”

Answer to the Second Tower

2. No mention of the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem

“As the student of the New Testament well knows, New Testament writers were quick to highlight fulfilled prophecy. The phrase ‘This was to fulfill what was spoken of by the prophets’ permeates the pages of Scripture and demonstrates conclusively that the Bible is divine rather than human in origin. Thus, it is inconceivable that Jesus would make an apocalyptic prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple and that John would fail to mention that the prophecy was fulfilled one generation later just as Jesus predicted it.” (AC, 156).

The problem with Mr. Hanegraaff's statement here is that the book of Revelation never does this with any prophecy. Revelation does not contain the formula "*this is to fulfill what was spoken of by the prophet.*" Not once.

There are hundreds of allusions to OT prophecies in Revelation, but no fulfillment formulas.

Answer to the Third Tower

3. John mentions the Jewish Temple as intact at the time he wrote.

It is true that John mentions a temple in Rev 11:1-2, but this does not mean it had to be standing at the time he wrote. Daniel (538 BC) and Ezekiel (573 BC) both mention literal temples that were not standing at the time they wrote (Dan 9; Ezek 40-43). John followed this same OT pattern and described an end-time temple.

Mr. Hanegraaff says that, “Revelation is a virtual recapitulation of Ezekiel” (AC, 121-22).

These are Mr. Hanegraaff’s “3 Towers” for the AD 65 date.

2 Other Internal Arguments for AD 65:

1. Timing terms “soon” “near” (at hand)

Strategic Location of the “Timing” Terms

Beginning of Rev.

tachos (1:1)

eggus (1:3)

End of Rev.

tachos (22:6)

tachus (22:7, 12, 20)

eggus (22:10)

These terms serve as “bookends” or an *inclusio* to all the material in Revelation. So, whatever meaning one gives to these terms must account for all the material in the entire book.

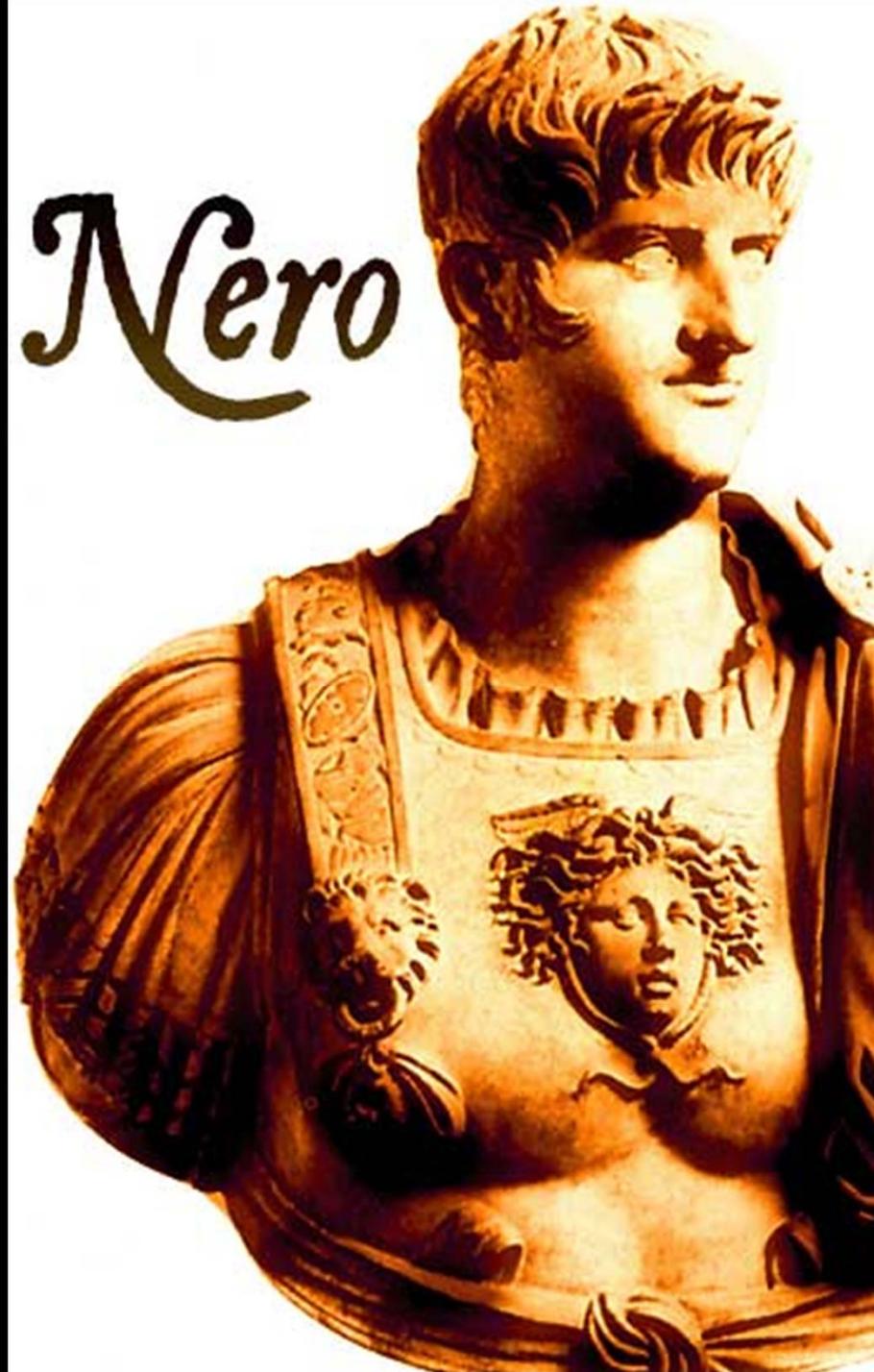


**Was Nero
the Beast
of
Rev 13?**

**Lucius Domitius
Ahenobarbus
(A.D. 37-68)**

**Adoptive name Nero
was given when he
was adopted by the
Emperor Claudius**

Nero



Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus

A.D. 54-68



GREEK**HEBREW**

1	A, α	Alpha (A)	1	א	Aleph (A, E)	A
2	B, β	Beta (B)	2	ב	Beth (B, V)	B
3	Γ, γ	Gamma (G)	3	ג	Gimel (G)	G
4	Δ, δ	Delta (D)	4	ד	Daleth (D)	D
5	E, ε	Epsilon (E)	5	ה	He [Heh] (E, A)	H
6	Ϝ, ϝ	Digamma (V, W)	6	ו	Vau (O, U, V, W)	V
7	Z, ζ	Zeta (Z)	7	ז	Zayin (Z)	Z
8	H, η	Eta (Ē)	8	ח	Cheth (Ch)	Ch
9	Θ, θ	Theta (Th)	9	ט	Teth (T)	T
10	I, ι	Iota (I)	10	י	Yod (I, J, Y)	I
20	K, κ	Kappa (K)	20	כ	Kaph (K, Kh)	K
30	Λ, λ	Lambda (L)	30	ל	Lamed (L)	L
40	M, μ	Mu (M)	40	מ	Mem (M)	M
50	N, ν	Nu (N)	50	נ	Nun (N)	N
60	Ξ, ξ	Xi (X)	60	ס	Samekh (S)	S
70	Ο, ο	Omicron (O)	70	ע	A'ayin (A'a, O)	O
80	Π, π	Pi (P)	80	פ	Pe (P, Ph)	Ph
90	Ϟ	Coph (Q)	90	צ	Tzaddi (Tz)	Tz
100	Ρ, ρ	Rho (R)	100	ק	Qoph (Q)	Q
200	Σ, σ, Ϻ	Sigma (S)	200	ר	Resh (R)	R
300	Τ, τ	Tau (T)	300	ש	Shin (Sh, S)	Sh
400	Υ, υ	Upsilon (Y, U)	400	ת	Tau (Th, T)	Th
500	Φ, φ	Phi (Ph)	500	ך	Kaph-final (K, Kh)	K
600	Χ, χ	Chi (Ch)	600	ם	Mem-final (M)	M
700	Ψ, ψ	Psi (Ps)	700	ן	Nun-final (N)	N
800	Ω, ω	Omega (Ō)	800	ף	Pe-final (P, Ph)	Ph
900	Ϻ	Sanpi	900	ץ	Tzaddi-final (Tz)	Tz

Gematria

נ=50 ר=200 ו=6 נ=50 ק=100 ם=60 ר=200

thus:

קסר גרון = 666

Problems:

-Nero was never associated with the beast of Rev. 13 until at least the 5th century. The early church consistently applied Rev. 13 to a future, final Antichrist (Irenaeus, Andreas, Victorinus and Primasius).

-must use name and title (Rev 13 refers only to the name)

-must use a defective spelling

-must use Hebrew (language of the audience was Greek)

-who is the second beast/false prophet in Rev 13:11-18

-Nero did not fulfill the prophecies of Rev 13 (second beast, image with life, mark for buying and selling)

**The External
Evidence for the
Traditional AD 95
Date of Revelation**



The first witness for the late date— Hegesippus (AD 150)

- **ca. 110-180 A.D.**
- **Wrote *Memoirs* (5 treatises)**
- **Hegesippus is one of the key sources that Eusebius, the father of church history, used to formulate his opinion that John was banished to Patmos under Domitian who was the Roman emperor from AD 81-96.**

“Exhibit A” for the Late Date – Irenaeus



- 120-202 A.D.
- Bishop of Lyon, southern France
- Born and raised in Smyrna
- Discipled by Polycarp
- Polycarp was a disciple of John
- Wrote *Against Heresies* in AD 180

Date of the Book of Revelation

“We will not, however, incur the risk of pronouncing positively as to the name of the Antichrist; for if it were necessary that his name should be distinctly revealed in this present time, it would have been announced by him who beheld the apocalyptic vision. For that was seen no very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian’s reign.”

Irenaeus Against Heresies 5.30.3

3 Objections to the Testimony of Irenaeus

Objection #1 Irenaeus was ambiguous.

“First, it is instructive to note that the late dating for Revelation is largely dependent on a single—and markedly ambiguous—sentence in the writings of Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons. This sentence can be taken to mean that either John or that John’s apocalyptic vision was seen toward the end of Domitian’s reign.”

(Hanegraaff, *The Last Sacrifice*, 342)

2 Answers to this Objection

1. The statement simply **is not** ambiguous.

it would have been announced by him who beheld the apocalyptic vision. For that was seen no very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian's reign."

If this statement said "*Nero's reign*" at the end, Mr. Hanegraaff would be using it as the "slam dunk" for his view.

2. The first person we know of to suggest that this statement was ambiguous was Johann Jacob Wettstein in 1752. No Greek speaker for 1,650 years ever questioned that this statement referred to when John saw the apocalyptic vision.

J. Ritchie Smith, writing in 1888, said,

“It is a sufficient answer to all these forced interpretations, that the early church always understood the words of Irenaeus in their plain and obvious meaning, nor would any other have been suggested if his testimony had not been a stumbling-block in the way of modern exposition.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 45 (1888): 299

Objection #2 Irenaeus was mistaken.

Mr. Hanegraaff loves to point out how Irenaeus made one error in his writings concerning the chronology of Jesus' ministry.

-The error about Jesus' ministry was an interpretive mistake from John 8, the date of Revelation is a historical fact.

- No one was in a better position to know the date of Revelation than Irenaeus.

- Irenaeus was very specific about the date of Revelation. He narrowed it down to a period "at the end of the reign of Domitian." This gives even more credibility and confidence to his testimony.

Philip Schaff, in his classic work *History of the Christian Church*, says:

“Irenaeus is the leading representative of Catholic Christianity in the last quarter of the second century, the champion of orthodoxy against Gnostic heresy. . . . He united a learned Greek education and philosophical penetration with practical wisdom and moderation. He is neither very original nor brilliant, but eminently sound and judicious. . . . His position gives him additional weight, for he is linked by two long lives, that of his teacher and grand teacher, to the fountain–head of Christianity”

Objection #3 Irenaeus was simply paroted by others after him.

The problem here is that you cannot have it both ways. If Irenaeus was so ambiguous and even mistaken about the date of Revelation why did everyone after him follow his lead.

Moreover, while it is true that Irenaeus is a key source for the dating of Revelation, many key historical facts can be traced back to a single source. Every tradition has a beginning point. This is inherent in the nature of historical evidence. And what more reliable source could we have than Irenaeus, who knew Polycarp and grew up in Smyrna?

Origen (ca. 185-254)

“The King of the Romans, as tradition teaches, condemned John, who bore testimony, on account of the word of truth, to the isle of Patmos.”

(Commentary on Matthew, 16.6)

E. W. Hengstenberg:

“Origen is silent respecting the name, because he was generally known, and the blank was easily supplied from the tradition to which he refers.”

Victorinus (d. AD 304)

Author of the earliest known Latin commentary on Revelation. The first great exegete of the Western church.

As a commentator on Revelation, we can assume that he took a great interest in when the book was written.

“when John said these things he was in the island of Patmos, condemned to the labor of the mines by Caesar Domitian. There, therefore, he saw the Apocalypse.”

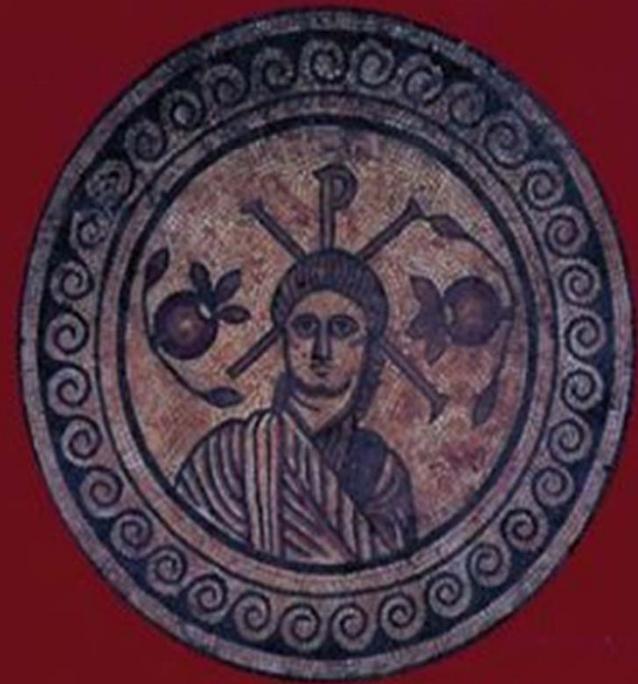
“The time must be understood in which the written Apocalypse was published, since then reigned Caesar Domitian.”



- **Eusebius Pamphili**
- **A.D. 260-340**
- **Bishop of Caesarea**
- **“Father of Church History”**
- ***Ecclesiastical History***

Eusebius'
**ECCLESIASTICAL
HISTORY**

Complete and Unabridged • New Updated Version



Translated by C. F. Cruse

Ecclesiastical History 3.20.10

“But after Domitian had reigned fifteen years and Nerva succeeded to the empire . . . It was at this time that the apostle John returned from his banishment in the island and took up his abode in Ephesus, according to an ancient Christian tradition.”

Ecclesiastical History 3.23.1-2

“At that time the apostle and evangelist John, the one whom Jesus loved, was still living in Asia and governing the churches of that region, having returned after the death of Domitian from his exile on the island. And that he was still alive at that time may be established by the testimony of two witnesses. They should be trustworthy who have maintained the orthodoxy of the Church; and such indeed were Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria.”



Jerome **(ca. 331-420)**

**At the direction of Pope
Damascus, he translated
the Bible into Latin
(the Vulgate).**

Against Jovinianum (A.D. 393)

Jerome wrote that John was “a prophet, for he saw in the island of Patmos, to which he had been banished by the Emperor Domitian as a martyr for the Lord, an Apocalypse containing boundless mysteries of the future.”

Lives of Illustrious Men

“In the fourteenth year then after Nero, Domitian having raised a second persecution, he was banished to the island of Patmos, and wrote the Apocalypse, on which Justin Martyr and Irenaeus afterwards wrote commentaries.”

A.D. 95 DATE

Hegesippus (ca. 150)

Irenaeus (180)

Clement of Alexandria (150-215)

Tertullian (160-220)

Origen (185-253)

Dio Cassius (150-235)

Victorinus (ca. 300)

Eusebius (260-340)

Jerome (340-419)

Sulpicius Severus (ca. 400)

Orosius (ca. 400)

Primasius (ca. 540)

Andreas of Cappadocia (ca. 600)

The Acts of John (ca. 650)

Venerable Bede (ca. 700)

A.D. 65 DATE

**Syriac Version of
the N.T.** (508 and 616)

Arethas (ca. 850-900)

The late date has an overwhelming line of support from some of the greatest, most reliable names in church history. These witnesses come from different and widespread geographical regions of the church.

Modern scholars also attest the strength of the external witnesses for the AD 95 date.

Philip Schaff, who dates Revelation in AD 68-69, admits that the external evidence points to the late date for Revelation. “The prevailing, we may say the only distinct tradition, beginning with so respectable a witness as Irenaeus, about 170, assigns the exile to the end of the reign of Domitian, who ruled from 81 to 96.”

William Hendriksen, an amillennial/idealist, says flatly, “One cannot find a single really cogent argument in support of the earlier date. The arguments produced are based on late and unreliable testimonies.”

F. J. A. Hort, one of the most eminent supporters for an AD 68-69 date, calls the external evidence for the AD 95 date “undoubtedly weighty.”

Hort concludes, “It is the prevalent tradition, and goes back to an author likely to be the recipient of a true tradition on the matter . . . If external evidence alone could decide, there would be a clear preponderance for Domitian.”

One stubborn question remains for Mr. Hanegraaff and other early-date advocates. If the AD 65 date for Revelation is correct, this means it had a running thirty-year head start on the late date. If this were true, why was it not the overwhelming view in the early church? Why did it take 400 years for it to appear?

The early date would have enjoyed every advantage to establish itself as the accepted date by the church fathers. Yet, the opposite is true. The AD 95 date became the accepted, dominant date from the middle of the 2nd century until the 21st century. Why?

Because it is the date when Revelation was written by John on the island of Patmos.

Internal Evidence for the A.D. 95 Date

- 1. According to church tradition, John did not come to Asia until the middle to late AD 60s (F. F. Bruce, *New Testament History*, 375-76).**

Robert Thomas notes,

“A Neronian dating would hardly allow time for him to have settled in Asia, to have replaced Paul as the respected leader of the Asian churches, and then to have been exiled to Patmos before Nero’s death in A.D. 68.” (Thomas, *Revelation 1-7*, 22)

2. There's **no mention** of Paul or his work in Asia in the letters to the 7 churches. If Revelation was written in the mid-sixties there would have been an overlap of the letters from Paul (1 and 2 Timothy) and John. The absence of any mention of Paul is inexplicable.

3. The **severe spiritual decline** of 5 of the 7 churches would require an extended period of time, not a few years.

EPHESUS has lost its first love.

PERGAMUM has Nicolaitan error.

THYTIRA has fallen into “the deep things of Satan.”

SARDIS is “dead.”

LAODICEA is so rich and arrogant that the Lord wants to vomit them out of His mouth.

The situation is so bad the Lord threatens to come and remove the churches. **This fits the AD 95 date.**

4. Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, (died in AD 155/56) said that the church of Smyrna did not exist at the time of Paul's ministry, yet Rev 2:8-11 indicates that the church there had been suffering persecution for some time when John wrote to them.

“But I have not observed or heard of any such things among you, in whose midst the blessed Paul labored, and who were his letters of recommendation in the beginning. For he boasts about you in all the churches—those alone, that is, which at that time had come to know the Lord, for we had not yet come to know him.”
(Polycarp, Letter to the Philippians 11.3).

5. Laodicea suffered a devastating earthquake in AD 60. The rebuilding of the city spanned a period of 30 years.

Colin Hemer, The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting, 194.

“Apart from the large Hadrianic building, probably a gymnasium, most of the principal edifices whose ruins survive appear to date from the period of earthquake reconstruction.”

- **Stadium amphitheater (AD 79)**

- **Syrian gate—great triple gate and towers (AD 88-90).**

These gates and towers are considered to have marked the culmination of the rebuilding.

6. Revelation 1:9 says that John was exiled to the island of Patmos when he received the apocalypse. There is no evidence that Nero banished Christians as Christians. Yet, we know Domitian banished Flavia Domitilla to an island (Pandeteria) for her faith in Christ in AD 95.

Also, why would Nero execute Paul and Peter and banish John? The different sentences argue for different emperors.

7. Revelation 2:13 says that Antipas of Pergamum was martyred for his faith in Christ. Tradition records that Antipas was roasted alive in AD 92 in a brazen bull-shaped altar.



AD 65

External Evidence: No clear support until AD 508—400 years after Revelation was written.

Internal Evidence: All can be answered successfully

AD 95

External Evidence: A solid line of support beginning in AD 150 from the luminaries of the early church. Men that Mr. Hanegraaff relies on for other information.

Internal Evidence: 7 arguments that strongly suggest and in some cases require the late date.

CONCLUSION: The traditional AD 95 date stands, thus, eliminating preterism as a legitimate interpretive view of Revelation.

4. I agree with Mr. Hanegraaff that there was no empire-wide, systematic persecution under Domitian either. However, there is historical evidence that Christians were martyred in the area near Asia in AD 92 during Domitian's reign.

Pliny's letter to Trajan and Trajan's letter back to Pliny (AD 112). Pliny was the governor of Bithynia, the province just north of Asia. Trajan was the Roman emperor (AD 98-117)

In his letter Pliny notes that some believers were killed 20 years earlier after trials before the Roman authorities. Twenty years earlier was AD 92 during the reign of Domitian.

The letter of Pliny to Trajan is hard evidence that Christians were persecuted and executed as an official act of the empire in AD 92 under Domitian. No such evidence exists during Nero's reign.

So, again the evidence points toward the AD 95 date of Revelation.

In the Afterword to his fiction book *The Last Disciple*, Mr. Hanegraaff makes this charitable, irenic statement concerning the authors of the Left Behind series:

“The point here is not to call into question the orthodoxy of the Left Behind authors. . . . we adhere to the Christian maxim: ‘In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity.’ We must debate this issue, but we need not divide over it.”

In *The Apocalypse Code*, he says concerning the dispensational view of Ezekiel 40-43, “the implications of this theology are as **bizarre as they are **blasphemous**” (p. 63). He repeats the same charge on p. 64 and on p. 269n86.**

He also calls dispensationalism a “pseudoeschatology.”

This sounds like pretty divisive language to me.

Many respected scholars hold that there will be a temple and animal sacrifices in the millennial kingdom: Norman Geisler, John MacArthur, and Darrell Bock to mention a few. This does not prove this view is correct, but it should cause Mr. Hanegraaff to rethink his “blasphemous” label.

3. Mr. Hanegraaff's questions about a millennial temple and animal sacrifices have been ably answered by Thomas Ice, Jerry Hullinger, Randall Price, John Whitcomb, and Arnold Fruchtenbaum (all of whom I mention in my dissertation). Mr. Hanegraaff either chooses to remain ignorant of what has been written on this issue or continues to knowingly misrepresent it.

4. Is it blasphemous to believe that a Temple and sacrifices will once again exist in the millennial kingdom as Mr. Hanegraaff says?

John Schmitt (Messiah's Coming Temple: Ezekiel's Prophetic Vision of the Future Temple, p. 181)

“Ezekiel himself believed it was a reality and the future home of the Messiah. Then, it become not heresy to believe that a Temple and sacrifices will exist; rather, it is almost a heresy not to believe this, especially because it is part of God's infallible Word. The burden is on us to determine how it fits—not is reality.”

Jerry Hullinger, “Two Atonement Realms: Reconciling Sacrifice in Ezekiel and Hebrews,” *Journal of Dispensational Theology* (March 2007)

Hullinger discusses the Day of Atonement as the background for Hebrews 9-10 and concludes,

“The blood of Christ achieved what the blood of animals never could nor was intended to achieve, namely, internal cleansing resulting in salvation and access. It is obvious from the truths presented in Hebrews that the animal offerings of the Old Testament and offering of Christ were instituted for different purposes, each efficacious on its own restrictive level. When these two atonement realms are grasped, the integrity of Ezekiel’s prophecy is maintained, as well as the unique and precious nature of our Lord’s sacrifice.”

“This is why it is fitting for sacrifices to be renewed in the Kingdom. Their temporal function of dealing with ceremonial defilement will once again be needed due to God’s physical presence. This, therefore, is not a step backward because that realm of cleansing once more becomes relevant. Their renewal has nothing to do with encroaching on the realm of Christ’s sacrifice.”

The temple in Ezek 40-43 is a new covenant temple (Jer. 31) not a reversion to the old covenant.

5. My call to Mr. Hanegraaff on this issue is for him to stop the strident “blasphemy” language. Instead of trying to demonize dispensationalism as “blasphemous,” why not read what dispensationalists are actually saying and thoughtfully interact with the sizeable scholarship that is attempting to take both Ezekiel and Hebrews seriously.

The rebuilding of Laodicea spanned 30 years.

Colin Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting*, 194.

“Apart from the large Hadrianic building, probably a gymnasium, most of the principal edifices whose ruins survive appear to date from the period of earthquake reconstruction.”

- Stadium amphitheater (AD 79)**
- Syrian gate—great triple gate and towers (AD 88-90). These gates and towers are considered to have marked the culmination of the rebuilding.**

French (Quebec) archaeological report on the excavations at Laodicea says that the citizens of Laodicea honored the Flavian rulers for their benevolence in rebuilding the city. The Flavian rulers were Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. This is further proof that the rebuilding efforts spanned 30 years.

CONCLUSION

We began this debate by noting that Mr. Hanegraaff's entire eschatological scheme stands or falls based on his ability to prove that Revelation was written in AD 65. He must prove this fact by a preponderance of the evidence for his view of the book of Revelation to even get out of the starting gate. The burden of proof rests squarely on him to overthrow the traditional AD 95.

Has he met this burden by a preponderance of the evidence? **NO**

He has no clear external witnesses for his view until over 400 years after Revelation was written, and his first witness is a superscription in a Syriac version of the NT.

Mr. Hanegraaff's three "towers" from the internal evidence are easily brought down

- 1. No mention of the destruction of Jerusalem**
- 2. No mention of the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem**
- 3. John mentions the Jewish Temple.**

****Note again: 2 out of 3 of Mr. Hanegraaff's towers are arguments from silence.**

There are **clear** reasons why the AD 95 date of Revelation has been the accepted, traditional, dominant date in the Church for over 1,900 years. It is no accident.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE:

The external evidence for the AD 95 date is overwhelming. Mr. Hanegraaff may try to argue that it is irrelevant, or that all these giants of the early church were mistaken.

But let's be honest. If Mr. Hanegraaff had Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, Victorinus, Eusebius, Jerome, and Primasius making statements in favor of the AD 65 date of Revelation—or even had one such witness—he would be using them, and declaring the early date of Revelation as an open and shut case.



Irenaeus

- **Born and raised in Smyrna**
- **Discipled by Polycarp**
- **Polycarp was a disciple of John**
- **Wrote *Against Heresies* in AD 180**

There is no one in the early church in a better position to know when Revelation was written than Irenaeus.

Moreover, as we have seen, Mr. Hanegraaff consistently uses witnesses such as Irenaeus and Eusebius to prove the historical accuracy of the NT and other events in early church history such as who wrote Revelation, and the deaths of Peter and James.

It is blatantly inconsistent to criticize and question the credibility of the very same witnesses that you use in almost all of your other books to support the historical accuracy of the NT.

Date of the Book of Revelation

the apocalyptic vision.
For that was seen no very long time since,
but almost in our day, towards the end of
Domitian's reign."

A.D. 95 DATE

Hegesippus (ca. 150)

Irenaeus (180)

Clement of Alexandria (150-215)

Tertullian (160-220)

Origen (185-253)

Dio Cassius (150-235)

Victorinus (ca. 300)

Eusebius (260-340)

Jerome (340-419)

Sulpicius Severus (ca. 400)

Orosius (ca. 400)

Primasius (ca. 540)

Andreas of Cappadocia (ca. 600)

The Acts of John (ca. 650)

Venerable Bede (ca. 700)

A.D. 65 DATE

**Syriac Version of
the N.T.** (508 and 616)

Arethas (ca. 850-900)

INTERNAL EVIDENCE for the Traditional AD 95 Date

- 1. John did not arrive in Asia until the mid to late AD 60s.**
- 2. No overlap of the ministry of John and Paul in Asia.**
- 3. The severe spiritual decline of 5 of the 7 churches.**
- 4. The church of Smyrna, according to Polycarp, did not even come into existence until after AD 62.**
- 5. The Lycus Valley earthquake of AD 60 and Laodicea.**
- 6. Domitian banished Christians (Rev 1:9).**
- 7. Antipas of Pergamum was martyred in AD 92 (Rev 2:13).**

Why would someone base his entire eschatology—his interpretation of the book of Revelation—on a historical fact that at the very best is improbable and at worst is untenable. A view that requires him to dismiss the clear statements of some of the weightiest witnesses in the early church. And explain away clear internal indicators that point to a time for Revelation much later than AD 65.

Why build your entire eschatological system on the sandy foundation of a view that has been the **minority view of the church for 1,900 years? And is still the minority view today.**

I urge Mr. Hanegraaff to adopt a view of the book of Revelation that is not dependent on this cracked foundation.

Mr. Hanegraaff has failed to meet the burden of proof for the AD 65 date of Revelation. The preponderance of the external and internal evidence favors the traditional AD 95 date.

Therefore, the traditional AD 95 date of Revelation stands firm, and Mr. Hanegraaff's eschatological scheme falls.



**Was Nero
the Beast
of
Rev 13?**

Another Common Early Date Argument is Author Relevance

1. This argument cuts both ways. If the prophecies in Rev. were fulfilled entirely or in large part in AD 65-70, the what application does it have to later generations?

2. What about OT prophecies?

Genesis 3:15

Daniel

Isaiah 7; 53 Micah 5:2

Under this view any prophecy not fulfilled within the lifetime of the original audience has no relevance.

3. Shortest shelf life in history. How much applied to early audience in Asia Minor?

GREEK**HEBREW**

1	A, α	Alpha (A)	1	א	Aleph (A, E)	A
2	B, β	Beta (B)	2	ב	Beth (B, V)	B
3	Γ, γ	Gamma (G)	3	ג	Gimel (G)	G
4	Δ, δ	Delta (D)	4	ד	Daleth (D)	D
5	E, ε	Epsilon (E)	5	ה	He [Heh] (E, A)	H
6	Ϝ, ϝ	Digamma (V, W)	6	ו	Vau (O, U, V, W)	V
7	Z, ζ	Zeta (Z)	7	ז	Zayin (Z)	Z
8	H, η	Eta (Ē)	8	ח	Cheth (Ch)	Ch
9	Θ, θ	Theta (Th)	9	ט	Teth (T)	T
10	I, ι	Iota (I)	10	י	Yod (I, J, Y)	I
20	K, κ	Kappa (K)	20	כ	Kaph (K, Kh)	K
30	Λ, λ	Lambda (L)	30	ל	Lamed (L)	L
40	M, μ	Mu (M)	40	מ	Mem (M)	M
50	N, ν	Nu (N)	50	נ	Nun (N)	N
60	Ξ, ξ	Xi (X)	60	ס	Samekh (S)	S
70	Ο, ο	Omicron (O)	70	ע	A'ayin (A'a, O)	O
80	Π, π	Pi (P)	80	פ	Pe (P, Ph)	Ph
90	Ϟ	Coph (Q)	90	צ	Tzaddi (Tz)	Tz
100	Ρ, ρ	Rho (R)	100	ק	Qoph (Q)	Q
200	Σ, σ, Ϻ	Sigma (S)	200	ר	Resh (R)	R
300	Τ, τ	Tau (T)	300	ש	Shin (Sh, S)	Sh
400	Υ, υ	Upsilon (Y, U)	400	ת	Tau (Th, T)	Th
500	Φ, φ	Phi (Ph)	500	ך	Kaph-final (K, Kh)	K
600	Χ, χ	Chi (Ch)	600	ם	Mem-final (M)	M
700	Ψ, ψ	Psi (Ps)	700	ן	Nun-final (N)	N
800	Ω, ω	Omega (Ō)	800	ף	Pe-final (P, Ph)	Ph
900	Ϻ	Sanpi	900	ץ	Tzaddi-final (Tz)	Tz

המנהל הכללי של המבחן

המנהל הכללי של המבחן

II. The Problems with the Preterist View



Problem #1 Church History

The early church consistently applied Rev 13 to a future, final Antichrist (Irenaeus, Andreas, Primasius, and Victorinus).

“We will not, however, incur the risk of pronouncing positively as to the name of the Antichrist; for if it were necessary that his name should be distinctly revealed in this present time, it would have been announced by him who beheld the apocalyptic vision. For that was seen no very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian’s reign.”

Irenaeus Against Heresies 5.30.3

Problem #2 The Second Beast in Rev 13

Preterists (J. Stuart Russell and Kenneth Gentry) maintain that Gessius Florus, the Roman governor or procurator of Judea under Nero, was the Beast from the earth.

However, they provide no evidence that he ever performed any of the miracles attributed to the second beast in Rev 13 (image of beast, life to the image, forced the mark of the beast upon the populace, executed those who refused to take it, or performed great signs and wonders). If Gessius Florus had done anything even close to what is prophesied in Rev 13 certainly Josephus would have recorded these astounding, stupendous feats.

The False Prophet



“And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.”

REV. 13:12

Problem #3 No Literal Fulfillment by Nero

Preterists take the reference to 666 as the literal gematria value of Nero's name and title, and the 42 months as the literal time span when Nero persecuted Christians in Rome.

However, they are not able to successfully point to literal fulfillments of the other prophecies of Rev 13. This chapter states that the beast will rule the world for 42 months, that all who dwell on the earth will worship him, that he will be killed and come back to life, and that all the people on the earth must take his mark on their right hand or forehead to engage in any commerce. These things were not literally fulfilled in Nero's reign from A.D. 54-68.

“If John had indeed written in A.D. 95, it seems incredible that he would make no mention of the most apocalyptic event in Jewish history—the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple at the hands of Titus. Imagine writing about the future of terrorism in the United States today and leaving out any reference to the events of September 11, 2001. Or, suppose you stumbled across an unpublished manuscript about the future of anti-Semitism in Europe that never mentioned the Holocaust—you would conclude it had been written prior to WWII. Furthermore, Christ prophesied the destruction of the Temple. Would John fail to mention the prophecy’s fulfillment?”

Hanegraaff, *The Bible Answer Man* (April 18, 2007)

“John, had he written late, would have alluded back to what happened with respect to the fall of Jerusalem and the Temple. Now, a lot of people say, ‘Look, there is no relevance whatsoever to believers.’ I heard a man named Mark Hitchcock say that the temple fall has no relevance to a Gentile audience. My goodness, that’s like saying the resurrection has no relevance to Gentile believers.”