

# Epistles of John

## • Authorship

### ▶ Summary observations

- \* Show mutual connections among themselves (though 1 John different in form)
  - ~ 1 John not a letter, but both 2-3 John true letters, both from "the elder"
  - ~ All show similar themes, ideas, wording, controversy, opponents
- \* Show mutual connections to the Gospel of John
  - ~ Common themes, especially the longer 1 John
  - ~ Common external tradition (but Papias obscures with two "Johns" in Ephesus)
- \* Show mutual setting in life: all literature from same community over time

1

## Common Themes

- life
- light
- truth
- abiding
- God's Son
- world as hostile
- laying down life
- new commandment
- Father/Son relationship
- salvation as "knowing" God

2

# Epistles of John

## • Authorship

### ▶ Summary observations

- \* Show mutual connections among themselves (though 1 John different in form)
  - ~ 1 John not a letter, but both 2-3 John true letters, both from "the elder"
  - ~ All show similar themes, ideas, wording, controversy, opponents
- \* Show mutual connections to the Gospel of John
  - ~ Common themes, especially the longer 1 John
  - ~ Common external tradition (but Papias obscures with two "Johns" in Ephesus)
- \* Show mutual setting in life: all literature from same community over time

3

# Epistles of John

## • Date and Origin

### ▶ Gospel connection infers post Gospel

- \* Gospel usually considered later 1st. cent.
- \* Anywhere AD 80-100, mid-90s likely
- \* Concoords with theory that heresy opposed is proto-gnostic, Docetic variety

### ▶ Irenaeus tradition infers Ephesus context

## • Destination and Setting

- ▶ 1 John: unspecified, 2 John: "Elect Lady," 3 John: Gaius
- ▶ Ephesian house churches connected to author and his leadership

4

### Irenaeus on John the Apostle

“When I was a boy in Asia Minor, I knew you at Polycarp’s house . . . I can describe the very place in which the blessed Polycarp used to sit and discourse . . . , and how he recounted his close association with John and with the rest of those who had seen the Lord.”

- Irenaeus, *Letter to Florinus*
- Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 5.20.4-5

- Date and
- ▷ Gospel
- \* Gos
- \* Any
- \* Con
- ▷ Irenae
- Destinatio
- ▷ I John
- ▷ Ephesian house churches connected to author and his leadership

5

## Epistles of John

### • Occasion

- ▷ Traumatic schism of community (1 John 2:19): “they went out from us”
  - \* False prophets within the community, heretical doctrine, ruptured unity, communion
  - \* Heresy distorts teachings of GJohn (ascertained by “mirror reading” assertions)
    - ~False Christology of Word made flesh (denial of salvific death)
    - ~False ethics of libertinism (inspired by matter/spirit dualism)
    - ~False pneumatology of new teachings (inadequate testing of “spirits” of prophecy)
- ▷ Disturbances of proselytizing missionaries (2-3 John)

6

## Epistles of John

### • Occ

#### Mirror-Reading Assertions

1. “If we say . . .”
2. “Those who deny . . .”

Such statements reveal the assertions of the heretical teachers about the person of Christ, Christian ethics, and the Spirit.

- ~False pneumatology of new teachings (inadequate testing of “spirits” of prophecy)
- ▷ Disturbances of proselytizing missionaries (2-3 John)

7

### Gnosticism

Second-century Gnostic belief systems already were developing by the late first century. There was a salvation by knowledge. They were dualistic: the material world was evil, the spiritual world was good. Therefore, the Christ Revealer/Redeemer could not possibly have been manifested in evil flesh. He only “seemed” to be flesh. (“Docetic” comes from the Greek word for “seem,” “appear.”) Instead, the Word secretly inhabited the body of Jesus of Nazareth only long enough to reveal the saving words that could awaken and free the entombed divine spark in each human. He departed Jesus just before the crucifixion. Divine insight into one’s heavenly origin allows the spirit’s release from the prison of the material body to return to heaven. Thus, ethical behavior is immaterial to salvation.

### Three Main Errors

1. Christological Denials
  - a. Jesus as Christ, or the Father and Son (2:22-23)
  - b. Jesus as Christ come in the flesh (4:1-3)
2. Ethical Claims
  - a. Sinlessness (1:8, 10)
  - b. Intimacy with God without ethical walk (1:6; 2:4, 6)
  - c. Loving God but not some believers (2:9; 4:20)
3. Spirit Claims
  - a. Deeper spiritual insight
  - b. Knowing God, being in the light
  - c. Special prophetic insight, Spirit anointing (2:20, 27; 4:1)

9

### Johannine Response

1. Christological Corrections
  - a. Jesus is the Christ come in the flesh (2:22)
  - b. Rejection of material/spiritual dualism (4:2)
2. Ethical Corrections
  - a. God is light = God is holy = moral demands (1:5; 2:7-11)
  - b. God is love = reflecting Jesus' love to all (4:8; 3:10-24; 4:16-5:5; 3:16-18)
3. Spirit Corrections
  - a. All believers have knowledge, but the fundamental test is ethical (2:3, 20, 27)
  - b. All believers have the Spirit, but the fundamental test is corporate (4:1-6)

10

## Epistles of John

### Purpose

- ▶ 1 John: polemical and pastoral response to recent church split
  - \* Polemical: combat heresy, expose Docetic error, challenge libertine ethics
  - \* Pastoral: calm, stabilize traumatized Johannine communities
    - ~ Reaffirm fundamental Johannine beliefs in Gospel (God/Christ, ethics)
    - ~ Reassure security in God's love despite heretics success attracting adherents
- ▶ 2 John: heresy continues to grow, elder losing ground in some communities
  - \* Restate warning against heretics by echoing 1 John
  - \* Urge rejection of proselytizing, heretical missionaries
  - \* Reinforce Johannine community identity

11

## Epistles of John

### Purpose

- ▶ 3 John: authority crisis, power struggle
  - \* Diotrephes unilaterally has seized control to reject *all* outside representatives
    - ~ Even rejects the elder's representatives
    - ~ Excommunicates any who disagree
    - ~ Serious threat to the Johannine community future
  - \* Threefold purpose in response to these new developments in satellite churches
    - ~ Condemn the unprecedented actions of Diotrephes
    - ~ Commend and introduce elder's representative Demetrius
    - ~ Encourage Gaius to establish a new Johannine house church in area as patron

12

# Epistles of John

## ● Purpose

### ▶ 3 John: authority crisis, power struggle

- \* Diotrephes unilaterally has seized control to reject *all* outside representatives

- ~ Even rejects the elder's representative

- ~ Excommunicates

- ~ Serious

Not explicit, but seems to be the whole point of sending Demetrius as an appointed representative of the entire church to shore up the elder's authority in the areas orbiting Diotrephes's influence.

- \* Threefold purpose

- ~ Condemn the unprecedented actions of Diotrephes

- ~ Commend and introduce elder's representative Demetrius

- ~ Encourage Gaius to establish a new Johannine house church in area as patron

13

# 1 John

## ● Circular Broadside (Structure Imitates GJohn)

### ▶ Prologue (1:1-4): Word of eternal life revealed in flesh (imitating GJohn prologue)

### ▶ Part I: God is Light (1:5-3:10)

- \* Walking in the light is fellowship with God, otherwise, one lives in darkness

- \* Fellowship with God is keeping God's commands (cf. Farewell Discourses, GJohn)

- ~ Acknowledge sin, affirm love, avoid antichrist false teachings

- ~ Discern the times (parousia), depend on Spirit anointing, determine to love

14

# 1 John

## ● Circular Broadside (Structure Imitates GJohn)

### ▶ Part 2: God is Love (3:11-5:12)

- \* Keeping commands is believing apostolic gospel of God's Son incarnate

- ~ Command to believe in Jesus (John 3:16)

- ~ Command to love one another (John 13:34)

- \* The Spirit as witness to Jesus (John 15:26)

- ~ Indwells the believer

- ~ Confirms the apostolic gospel

### ▶ Epilogue (5:13-21): statement of purpose (imitating GJohn)

15

# 1 John

## ● Circular Broadside (Structure Imitates GJohn)

### ▶ Epilogue (5:13-21): statement of purpose (imitating GJohn) and what "we know"

- \* Purpose: write to believers to know "you have eternal life" (cf. John 20:31)

- \* "We know": born of God, does not sin, evil one cannot touch (5:18)

- \* "We know": children of God under God's dominion, not evil one (5:19)

- \* "We know": Son of God has come, we abide in him (5:20)

- \* Conclusion: He is true God, eternal life (similar to GJohn)

16

# 1 John

- Circular letter
  - ▶ Epilog
  - \* Pur
  - \* "We
  - \* "We
  - \* "We know": Son of God has come, we abide in him (5:20)
  - \* Conclusion: He is true God, eternal life (similar to GJohn)
- About The Last Verse of 1 John:  
KH completely ignore the astoundingly odd, almost out of place, last verse of 1 John: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21). Note carefully that idolatry was not mentioned once anywhere in 1 John. Why idolatry here in this prominent position of this writing? How is this a "conclusion"? Lots of questions here, but KH are mysteriously silent.
- know" 31)

17

# 2 John

- Letter
- ▶ Opening (1-2): "elder" to "the elect lady" with expansion of love and truth
- ▶ Greeting (3): grace, mercy, peace, "in truth and love" for a second time
- ▶ Thanksgiving: absent
- ▶ Body (4-11)
  - \* Expression of joy (4): walking in truth (true to Johannine traditions of elder)
  - \* Warning about deceivers (5-11): antichrists (denying incarnation), avoid hospitality
- ▶ Closing (12-13): plans to visit, "children of you elect sister" send greetings

18

# 2 John

- Letter
- ▶ Opening (1-2): "elder" to "the elect lady" with expansion of love and truth
- ▶ Greeting (3): grace, mercy, peace, "in truth and love" for a second time
- ▶ Thanksgiving: absent
- ▶ Body (4-11)
  - \* Expression of joy (4): walking in truth (true to Johannine traditions of elder)
  - \* Warning about deceivers (5-11): antichrists (denying incarnation), avoid hospitality
- ▶ Closing (12-13): plans to visit, "children of you elect sister" send greetings

Unwittingly will offer inroads into the community for heresy

19

# 3 John

- Letter
- ▶ Opening (1): "elder" to "beloved Gaius" with expansion of love and truth
- ▶ Greeting (2): health wish substitution, including for soul
- ▶ Thanksgiving: absent
- ▶ Body (3-12)
  - \* Expression of joy (3): walking in truth (true to Johannine traditions of elder)
  - \* Hospitality commendation (5-8): supporting elder's representatives
  - \* Problem of Diotrephes (9-10): rejects authority, slanderous, inhospitable, expelling
  - \* Do not imitate (11): he does evil, has not seen God, but you continue hospitality
  - \* Demetrius commendation (12): implicit request for hospitality

20

## 3 John

Body/soul unity in health wish formulation is implicit challenge to heretic dualism

### Letter

- ▶ Opening (1): “elder” to “beloved Gaius” with expansion of love and truth
- ▶ Greeting (2): health wish substitution, including for soul
- ▶ Thanksgiving: absent
- ▶ Body (3–12)
  - \* Expression of joy (3): walking in truth (true to Johannine traditions of elder)
  - \* Hospitality commendation (5–8): supporting elder’s representatives
  - \* Problem of Diotrephes (9–10): rejects authority, slanderous, inhospitable, expelling
  - \* Do not imitate (11): he does evil, has not seen God, but you continue hospitality
  - \* Demetrius commendation (12): implicit request for hospitality

21

## 3 John

### Letter

- ▶ Opening (1): “elder” to “beloved Gaius” with expansion of love and truth
- ▶ Greeting (2): health wish substitution, including for soul
- ▶ Thanksgiving: absent
- ▶ Body (3–12)
  - \* Expression of joy (3): walking in truth (true to Johannine traditions of elder)
  - \* Hospitality commendation (5–8): supporting elder’s representatives
  - \* Problem of Diotrephes (9–10): rejects authority, slanderous, inhospitable, expelling
  - \* Do not imitate (11): he does evil, has not seen God, but you continue hospitality
  - \* Demetrius commendation (12): implicit request for hospitality

22

## 3 John

### Letter

- ▶ Body (3–12)—continued
  - \* Demetrius commendation (12): implicit hospitality request for elder’s representative
- ▶ Closing (13–15)
  - \* Planned visit (13–14): perhaps to follow up on Demetrius’s representative work
  - \* Peace benediction (15): followed by generic greetings

23

## 3 John

### Letter

Also, perhaps in a showdown at the OK Corral to confront Diotrephes publicly before the church

- ▶ Body (3–12)
  - \* Demetrius commendation (12): implicit hospitality request for elder’s representative
- ▶ Closing (13–15)
  - \* Planned visit (13–14): perhaps to follow up on Demetrius’s representative work
  - \* Peace benediction (15): followed by generic greetings

24

# Epistles of John

## ● Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, occasion, destination (“elect lady,” “children” as metaphorical?)
- ▶ Genre of 1 John (Not a letter, but what? “Introduction” to GJohn? Circular?)
- ▶ Nature of heresy: proto-gnostic tendencies, similar to 2nd cent. Doceticism
- ▶ Diotrephes (role/ actions): Official leader? Rogue layperson? Issuing edicts?
- ▶ Antichrist teaching (see next unit, “Theological Themes”)

## ● Theological Themes

- ▶ Christology: how heresy uses same texts, language, but entirely different results
- ▶ Problem of hospitality: first-century cultural norms providing opportunity for heresy
- ▶ Problem of fluid structure: inherited leadership by common consent, not office

25

# Epistles of John

## ● Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, occasion, destination (“elect lady,” “children” as metaphorical?)
- ▶ Genre of 1 John (Not a letter, but what? “Introduction” to GJohn? Circular?)
- ▶ Nature of heresy: proto-gnostic tendencies, similar to 2nd cent. Doceticism
- ▶ Diotrephes (role/ actions): Official leader? Rogue layperson? Issuing edicts?
- ▶ Antichrist teaching (see next unit, “Theological Themes”)

Fake incarnation, non-salvific death, libertine ethics, abused pneumatic emphasis

## ● Theological Themes

- ▶ Christology: how heresy uses same texts, language, but entirely different results
- ▶ Problem of hospitality: first-century cultural norms providing opportunity for heresy
- ▶ Problem of fluid structure: inherited leadership by common consent, not office

26

# Epistles of John

## ● Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, occasion, destination (“elect lady,” “children” as metaphorical?)
- ▶ Genre of 1 John (Not a letter, but what? “Introduction” to GJohn? Circular?)
- ▶ Nature of heresy: proto-gnostic tendencies, similar to 2nd cent. Doceticism
- ▶ Diotrephes (role/ actions): Official leader? Rogue layperson? Issuing edicts?
- ▶ Antichrist teaching (see next unit, “Theological Themes”)

“They had no way to control the divisions, and tragically the Johannine community soon disappeared from the scene of Christianity” (KH: 498)

## ● Theological Themes

- ▶ Christology: how heresy uses same texts, language, but entirely different results
- ▶ Problem of hospitality: first-century cultural norms providing opportunity for heresy
- ▶ Problem of fluid structure: inherited leadership by common consent, not office

27

## Church Hierarchy

“The style of church pictured by the Johannine Gospel and letters—a community of brothers and sisters, apparently without any hierarchy of leaders apart from the benevolent figure of the now aged John himself—might have seemed a romantic ideal, impractical in the face of forces which threatened the church’s existence.”

“. . . the kind of situation which made the emerging pattern of ‘elder-bishops’ or ‘monarchial episcopate’ attractive” [and became dominant only a few decades later by the time of Ignatius of Antioch].

—Stephen Travis, *ExNT*, p. 301

- ▶ Problem of fluid structure: inherited leadership by common consent, not office

28

# Epistles of John

## Theological Themes

### Problem of antichrist teaching

#### Crucial characteristics

- ~ "you have heard": exclusively for John's own community
- ~ "last hour": distinctly from John's unique eschatology
- ~ "even now": particularly in John's present experience (realized now, not future)
- ~ "many antichrists": manifestly multiple, not individual (an idea, not one person)
- ~ "who is the liar": explicitly a false teaching (christological heresy)
- ~ "they went out from us": specifically the Johannine secessionists

- \* Not Jesus's messianic pretenders, Paul's man of lawlessness, Revelation's beast

29

# Epistles of John

## Theological Themes

### Problem of antichrist teaching

#### Crucial characteristics

- ~ "you have heard": exclusively for John's own community
- ~ "last hour": distinctly from John's unique eschatology
- ~ "even now": particularly in John's present experience (realized now, not future)
- ~ "many antichrists": manifestly multiple, not individual (an idea, not one person)
- ~ "who is the liar": explicitly a false teaching (christological heresy)
- ~ "they went out from us": specifically the Johannine secessionists

Cf. Matt 24:5, 24; 2 Thess 2:3; Rev 13:1

- \* Not Jesus's messianic pretenders, Paul's man of lawlessness, Revelation's beast

30

# James

## Authorship

### General profile

- \* Self-designation (1:1): "Jacob" = James, but as "servant," not apostle
- \* Strong Jewish background
- \* Apparent authority

### Evidence for James, brother of Jesus

- \* Some external evidence (church fathers, but evidence divided)
- \* Simple self-designation, Jewish flavor, semitic syntax
- \* Primitive nature of worshipping community ("synagogue")
- \* Compatible with Jesus's teachings

31

eight "James" in NT, but brother of Jesus strongest candidate

## Authorship

### General profile

- \* Self-designation (1:1): "Jacob" = James, but as "servant," not apostle
- \* Strong Jewish background
- \* Apparent authority

### Evidence for James, brother of Jesus

- \* Some external evidence (church fathers, but evidence divided)
- \* Simple self-designation, Jewish flavor, semitic syntax
- \* Primitive nature of worshipping community ("synagogue")
- \* Compatible with Jesus's teachings

32



# James

## • Authorship

- ▶ Evidence against James, brother of Jesus
  - \* Excellent Greek (uneducated Galilean)—but use of a secretary?
  - \* No mention of Jesus's life outside of 1:1, 2:1—but teachings clearly in background
  - \* No mention of Jewish ritual (faith purely ethical)—but squares with Jesus's teaching
  - \* Contradicts Paul on faith/works—supposed contradictions overworked
  - \* External evidence divided (content problem)—but loss of Jewish voice post AD 70
- ▶ Pseudonymous: default view of majority of NT scholars

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## • Authorship

### ▶ Evidence

	James	Matthew	Luke
Joy when faith is tested	1:2	5:11–12	6:23
The call to perfection/maturity	1:4	5:48	
Asking and receiving	1:5, 17; 4:2–3	7:7–11	11:9–13
Endurance leads to salvation	1:12	10:22; 24:13	
Anger wipes out righteousness	1:20	5:22 (with 5:20)	
Be doers of the word	1:22–23	7:24, 26	6:47, 49
The poor inherit God's kingdom	2:5	5:3, 5	6:20
* The law of liberty, love of neighbour	2:10–12	22:36–40	10:25–28
* The merciless will be judged	2:13	7:1	
* Practical care for the poor	2:14–16	25:34–35	
* The fruit of good works	3:12	7:16–18	6:43–44
* Warning against divided loyalties	4:4	6:24	16:13
Purity of heart	4:8	5:8	
* Humility and exaltation	4:10	23:12	14:11; 18:14
▶ Ps The dangers of wealth	5:1–3	6:19–21	12:33–34
The prophets' example	5:10	5:11–12	6:23
Oaths forbidden	5:12	5:33–37	17:3
Restoring a sinner	5:19–20	18:15	

ound teaching  
AD 70

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# James

## • Brief Biography

- ▶ During ministry of Jesus
  - \* Jacob, half-brother
  - \* Complicit in family skepticism of Jesus (Mark 3:21)
  - \* Resurrection appearance belief (1 Cor 15:7)
- ▶ During ministry of early church
  - \* Accompanied Eleven before Pentecost (Acts 1:14)
  - \* Became premier Jerusalem church leader (Acts 12:17; 15:1–21)
  - \* Martyred AD 62 by high priest Ananus (Josephus *Ant.* 20.9.1)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# James

## • Date: Assuming James, 40s–60s

- ▶ Agricultural reference is Judean (“early”/“late” rains only in Judea)
- ▶ No ritual controversy may suggest even before Jerusalem Conference (Acts 15)
- ▶ “Twelve tribes” may suggest pre-gentile controversy
- ▶ No doctrinal debate (before heresy has developed)
- ▶ Primitive discipline, organizational structures
- ▶ Still meeting in the synagogue (“For if one comes into your assembly [*synagoge*]”)
- ▶ Pre-war economic conditions
- ▶ “shortly after the death of James by a disciple” (KH: 503) is a moot point

James 2:2

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# James

- Origin: Unknown, Jerusalem likely if James
  - ▶ Before death (AD 62): by James in Jerusalem
  - ▶ After death: depends on sequence, authorship assumptions
    - \* Soon: disciple, Jerusalem, before Jewish War, AD 66
    - \* Later: disciple, Antioch, after Jewish War
    - \* Pseudonymous: anything will do

37

# James

- Destination
  - ▶ Parsing two key words: "twelve tribes," "dispersion"
    - \* Literal or metaphorical?
    - \* Possibilities: Jews ethnically, Jewish believers, all believers
    - \* Internal evidence
      - ~ Synagogue worship, Law applicable
      - ~ Phrasing, such as "Abraham our father"
      - ~ Merchants, rich farmer issues (signals of pre-war social/economic conditions)
  - ▶ Ralph P. Martin's hypothesis (Word commentary)

38

# James

- Destination
  - ▶ Parsing
    - Martin's Conjecture:  
Jewish believers associated with the apostle James's Jerusalem ministry become post-war refugees to Antioch where they work to collect and publish their martyred leader's teaching, hence, the "dispersion" address—the post-war reality for all Jerusalem believers.
  - \* Literal
  - \* Possibilities
  - \* Internal evidence
    - ~ Synagogue worship, Law applicable
    - ~ Phrasing, such as "Abraham our father"
    - ~ Merchants, rich farmer issues (signals of pre-war social/economic conditions)
  - ▶ Ralph P. Martin's hypothesis (Word commentary)

39

# James

- Occasion and Purpose
  - ▶ Occasion: ambiguous (general nature of material, vague sense of persecution)
  - ▶ Purpose
    - \* Strengthen faith
    - \* Admonish Christian behavior
- Genre: Unknown
  - ▶ Only first verse imitates letter opening, the rest abandons the genre, not even a closing
  - ▶ Text has no clear structure, except reoccurring motifs
    - \* Riches, practical faith, wisdom
    - \* Words: gossip, swearing, speaking well, prayer, etc.

40

# James

## Outline: Circular, Recapitulation

- ▶ Opening (1:1): James, "servant" to "twelve tribes of the dispersion"
- ▶ Theme introductions (1:2-27)
  - \* Set one (1:2-11): profitable suffering, God as giver of all gifts, rich and poor contrast
  - \* Set two (1:12-27): endurance, doers of the word, true religion (concern for poor)
- ▶ Body (2:1-5:18): circulates around these themes, practical advice, wisdom bits
- ▶ Central message: friendship with world is enmity with God
- ▶ Final word: restore those who have wandered from the truth (5:19-20)

# James

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, destination, origin
- ▶ Genre: entirely indistinct
  - \* Parenesis: 50% of verses have imperative verbs = general exhortation (Dibelius)
  - \* Wisdom: similar to OT, God's gift, perseverance in trials, brief proverbs
  - \* Epistle: first verse only, nothing else; recipients so general as to defy delivery
- ▶ Theology of faith and works: hence, canonical problems
  - \* James 2:4-26 versus Rom 3:28; Eph 2:8-9
  - \* Solution: superficial problem; recognize a matter of semantics

# James

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship
- ▶ Genre: entirely indistinct
  - \* Parenesis: 50% of verses have imperative verbs = general exhortation (Dibelius)
  - \* Wisdom: similar to OT, God's gift, perseverance in trials, brief proverbs
  - \* Epistle: first verse only, nothing else; recipients so general as to defy delivery
- ▶ Theology of faith and works: hence, canonical problems
  - \* James 2:4-26 versus Rom 3:28; Eph 2:8-9
  - \* Solution: superficial problem; recognize a matter of semantics

	<i>Context</i>	<i>Faith</i>	<i>Works</i>
<i>Paul</i>	defense of gospel	internal relationship	earning salvation
<i>James</i>	defense of sanctification	external confession	showing salvation

# James

## Theological Themes

- ▶ Proper suffering attitude: inevitable, honorable, sustainable
- ▶ Positive social witness: appropriate obedience, exemplary lives, diligent social codes

# 1 Peter

## • Authorship

- ▶ For Petrine authorship
  - \* Self-designation (1:1)
  - \* Unanimous external tradition (church fathers)
  - \* "Mark, my son" (5:13) compatible with church tradition
  - \* Apparent eyewitness (1:8; 2:20-25; 5:1)
  - \* Strong Jewish perspective
  - \* Compares favorably with Petrine speeches in Acts

45

# 1 Peter

## • Authorship

- ▶ Against Petrine authorship
  - \* External tradition is late (Irenaeus, 180)
  - \* Excellent Greek
  - \* Historical issues
    - ~ No evidence of concrete knowledge of Jesus
    - ~ No known connection to the addressees
    - ~ Nature of persecution as civil suggests later date
    - ~ Canonical acceptance was late

46

# 1 Peter

## • Authorship

- ▶ Against Petrine authorship—continued
  - \* Theological issues
    - ~ Strong Pauline echoes show more dependence on Paul, not Peter
    - ~ Doctrinal concerns evoke a later era of church history
- ▶ Authorship proposals
  - \* Amanuensis: issue of the role of "through Silvanus" (5:12)
  - \* Pseudonymity: but why would a Paulinist use a Petrine pseudonym?
  - \* Petrine: but with some unknown factor explaining the Greek

47

Especially, for example, Paul's favorite "in Christ" formulation (3:16; 5:10, 14). Yet, presence of Silvanus and Mark, both connected to Paul's ministry, could account for the Paulinisms

## • Authorship

- ▶ Against Petrine authorship—continued
  - \* Theological issues
    - ~ Strong Pauline echoes show more dependence on Paul, not Peter
    - ~ Doctrinal concerns evoke a later era of church history
- ▶ Authorship proposals
  - \* Amanuensis: issue of the role of "through Silvanus" (5:12)
  - \* Pseudonymity: but why would a Paulinist use a Petrine pseudonym?
  - \* Petrine: but with some unknown factor explaining the Greek

48

# 1 Peter

## Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30), brother Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15-19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64 by church tradition (1 Clement 5.1-7)

49

Acts 15:14; 2 Pet 1:1

# 1 Peter

## Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30), brother Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15-19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64 by church tradition (1 Clement 5.1-7)

50

Greek for Symeon; Gospels

# Peter

## Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30), brother Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15-19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64 by church tradition (1 Clement 5.1-7)

51

Aramaic word for rock; John 1:42; Pauline

## Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30), brother Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15-19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64 by church tradition (1 Clement 5.1-7)

52

Greek word for rock into English

#### Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30), brother Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15-19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64 by church tradition (1 Clement 5.1-7)

53

## 1 Peter

#### Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30), brother Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15-19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64 by church tradition (1 Clement 5.1-7)

Gal 2

54

## 1 Peter

#### Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30), brother Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15-19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64 by church tradition (1 Clement 5.1-7)

1 Cor 1:12

55

## 1 Peter

#### Date: Early and Late Options

- ▶ Early (before death, pre-AD 64)
  - \* Disputed nature of persecution and early eschatology (imminence)?
  - \* Church order more primitive, even synagogal?
  - \* Call for state loyalty: more probable before fire of Rome, AD 64
  - \* Fits natural reading of "former letter" in 2 Pet 3:1

56

# 1 Peter

## Date: Early and Late Options

- ▶ Late (long after death, ca. AD 90–95)
  - \* Missing in Muratorian Canon (but evidence fragmentary)
  - \* Absence of any Judaizing controversy
  - \* Geographical spread of Christianity seems much later (1:1)
  - \* “Babylon” cipher for Rome suggests post AD 70
  - \* Disputed nature of persecution (if civil, official, then late)

57

# 1 Peter

## Destination

- ▶ Unusual designation
  - \* Broad geographical range: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia
  - \* Delivery would take many months, require significant expense
- ▶ Social makeup
  - \* Jewish elements: use of OT, use of terms (“diaspora,” “our forefathers,” 1:18)
  - \* Gentile elements: use of Greek name, “Peter” (1:1), references to former immoral life

58



## Destination

- ▶ Unusual designation
  - \* Broad geographical range: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia
  - \* Delivery would take many months, require significant expense
- ▶ Social makeup
  - \* Jewish elements: use of OT, use of terms (“diaspora,” “our forefathers,” 1:18)
  - \* Gentile elements: use of Greek name, “Peter” (1:1), references to former immoral life

59

# 1 Peter

## Destination

- ▶ Unusual designation
  - \* Broad geographical range: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia
  - \* Delivery would take many months, require significant expense Cf. 1:14, 18; 2:9–10; 3:5–6; 4:3
- ▶ Social makeup
  - \* Jewish elements: use of OT, use of terms (“diaspora,” “our forefathers,” 1:18)
  - \* Gentile elements: use of Greek name, “Peter” (1:1), references to former immoral life

60

# 1 Peter

## ● Occasion and Purpose

### ▷ Occasion

- \* Knowledge of sufferings, practical courage, faithfulness
- \* Silvanus may be traveling through area?

### ▷ Purpose

- \* Strengthen faith, unify believers ("household of faith" idea)
- \* Encourage faithfulness in persecution and positive engagement with society

61

# 1 Peter

## ● Letter

▷ Opening (1:1-2a): Peter, apostle, to exiles of dispersion in Pontus, etc.

▷ Greeting (1:2b): grace and peace

▷ Thanksgiving: absent

▷ Body (1:3-5:11)

\* Living life well (1:3-4:19)

~ Life from God (1:3-2:10)

- ◆ New birth, living hope, in heaven, present suffering, prophetic salvation, live holy
- ◆ Time of your exile, ransomed, precious blood, born anew, imperishable
- ◆ Avoid vice, living stones, spiritual house, stone of stumbling, chosen people

62

# 1 Peter

## ● Letter

▷ Opening (1:1-2a): Peter, apostle, to exiles of dispersion in Pontus, etc.

▷ Greeting (1:2b): grace and peace

▷ Thanksgiving: absent

▷ Body (1:3-5:11)

\* Living life well (1:3-4:19)

~ Life from God (1:3-2:10)

Quoting Isa 28:16; 8:14; Ps 118:22

- ◆ New birth, living hope, in heaven, present suffering, prophetic salvation, live holy
- ◆ Time of your exile, ransomed, precious blood, born anew, imperishable
- ◆ Avoid vice, living stones, spiritual house, stone of stumbling, chosen people

63

# 1 Peter

## ● Letter

▷ Body (1:3-5:11)

\* Living life well (1:3-4:19)—continued

~ Life in society (2:11-3:12)

- ◆ Live commendable lives, submit to authority, Christ's example
- ◆ Household code: slaves, wives, husbands, exemplary society models
- ◆ Love one another, repay evil with blessing, scriptural warrant
- ~ Life under trials (3:13-4:19): "even if you should suffer" (potential, not realized?)
  - ◆ Give reason for hope, Christ's example, proclamation to spirits
  - ◆ Live unlike pagans, end is near, love deeply, use spiritual gifts, fiery ordeal

64



# 1 Peter

## Letter

### Body (1:3-5:11)

#### \* Living life well (1:3-4:19)—continued

##### ~ Life in society (2:11-3:12)

- ◆ Live commendable lives, submit to authority, Christ's example
  - ◆ Household code: slaves, wives, husbands, exemplary society models
  - ◆ Love one another, repay evil with blessing, scriptural warrant
- ~ Life under trials (3:13-4:19): "even if you should suffer" (potential, not realized?)
- ◆ Give reason for hope, Christ's example, proclamation to spirits
  - ◆ Live unlike pagans, end is near, love deeply, use spiritual gifts, fiery ordeal

Ps 34:12-16

65

# 1 Peter

## Letter

### Body (1:3-5:11)

#### \* Living life well (1:3-4:19)—continued

##### ~ Life in society (2:11-3:12)

- ◆ Live commendable lives
  - ◆ Household code: slaves, wives, husbands, exemplary society models
  - ◆ Love one another, repay evil with blessing, scriptural warrant
- ~ Life under trials (3:13-4:19): "even if you should suffer" (potential, not realized?)
- ◆ Give reason for hope, Christ's example, proclamation to spirits
  - ◆ Live unlike pagans, end is near, love deeply, use spiritual gifts, fiery ordeal

Current persecution? Suffering for Christ is an honor, judgment begins in the household of God; Prov 11:31

66

# 1 Peter

## Letter

### Body (1:3-5:11)

#### \* Exhortations (5:1-11)

- ~ Word to the older (5:1-4): be shepherds, not unwilling, not mercenary, not lording
- ~ Word to the younger (5:5-9): humility, spiritual alertness, global sufferings
- ~ Word to all (5:10-11): doxology, God of grace, sustainer through persecution

### ▶ Closing (5:12-14)

- \* "through Silvanus": role unclear (author? secretary? deliverer?)
- \* Greetings: "she who is in Babylon," "my son Mark," kiss of love
- \* Peace benediction

67

# 1 Peter

## Letter

### Body (1:3-5:11)

#### \* Exhortations (5:1-11)

- ~ Word to the older (5:1-4): be shepherds, not unwilling, not mercenary, not lording
- ~ Word to the younger (5:5-9): humility, spiritual alertness, global sufferings
- ~ Word to all (5:10-11): doxology, God of grace, sustainer through persecution

### ▶ Closing (5:12-14)

- \* "through Silvanus": role unclear (author? secretary? deliverer?)
- \* Greetings: "she who is in Babylon," "my son Mark," kiss of love
- \* Peace benediction

Devil like a "roaring lion"

68

# 1 Peter

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, destination
- ▶ Pauline echoes
- ▶ Preaching to "spirits in prison" (3:18-19; cf. 4:6)
- ▶ Nature of persecution: potential or present? (1:3-4:11 vs. 4:12-19; 5:9-10)
  - \* Dramatically different contexts = integrity/unity issues?
  - \* Is 1:3-4:11 (persecution only potential) an earlier baptismal homily worked in?
  - \* Suggested contexts: general antagonism, Nero, Domitian, Trajan
- ▶ Church and Israel: replacement, inclusion, two covenants, two religions?

69

"descent into hell" (which, in fact, the text explicitly does *not* say) is a 2nd cent. reading canonized by 4th cent. Apostles Creed that modern scholars seriously challenge on pure exegetical grounds

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, destination
- ▶ Pauline echoes
- ▶ Preaching to "spirits in prison" (3:18-19; cf. 4:6)
- ▶ Nature of persecution: potential or present? (1:3-4:11 vs. 4:12-19; 5:9-10)
  - \* Dramatically different contexts = integrity/unity issues?
  - \* Is 1:3-4:11 (persecution only potential) an earlier baptismal homily worked in?
  - \* Suggested contexts: general antagonism, Nero, Domitian, Trajan
- ▶ Church and Israel: replacement, inclusion, two covenants, two religions?

70

# 1 Peter

## Critical Issues

Texts: 1:6; 2:11-12; 3:13-17; 4:4, 12-19; 5:9-10

- ▶ Pauline echoes
- ▶ Preaching to "spirits in prison" (3:18-19; cf. 4:6)
- ▶ Nature of persecution: potential or present? (1:3-4:11 vs. 4:12-19; 5:9-10)
  - \* Dramatically different contexts = integrity/unity issues?
  - \* Is 1:3-4:11 (persecution only potential) an earlier baptismal homily worked in?
  - \* Suggested contexts: general antagonism, Nero, Domitian, Trajan
- ▶ Church and Israel: replacement, inclusion, two covenants, two religions?

71

# 1 Peter

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, destination
- ▶ Pauline echoes
- ▶ Preaching to "spirits in prison" (3:18-19; cf. 4:6)
- ▶ Nature of persecution: potential or present? (1:3-4:11 vs. 4:12-19; 5:9-10)
  - \* Dramatically different contexts = integrity/unity issues?
  - \* Is 1:3-4:11 (persecution only potential) an earlier baptismal homily worked in?
  - \* Suggested contexts: general antagonism, Nero, Domitian, Trajan
- ▶ Church and Israel: replacement, inclusion, two covenants, two religions?

But seems official in 4:12

72

# 1 Peter

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, destination
- ▶ Pauline echoes
- ▶ Preaching to "spirits in prison" (2:1-2)
- ▶ Nature of persecution: potential (4:12-19; 5:9-10)
  - \* Dramatically different contexts = integrity/unity issues?
  - \* Is 1:3-4:11 (persecution only potential) an earlier baptismal homily worked in?
  - \* Suggested contexts: general antagonism, Nero, Domitian, Trajan
- ▶ Church and Israel: replacement, inclusion, two covenants, two religions?

But his confined to Rome only

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# 1 Peter

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, destination
- ▶ Pauline echoes
- ▶ Preaching to "spirits in prison" (2:1-2)
- ▶ Nature of persecution: potential (4:12-19; 5:9-10)
  - \* Dramatically different contexts = integrity/unity issues?
  - \* Is 1:3-4:11 (persecution only potential) an earlier baptismal homily worked in?
  - \* Suggested contexts: general antagonism, Nero, Domitian, Trajan
- ▶ Church and Israel: replacement, inclusion, two covenants, two religions?

But his not in all provinces addressed

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# 1 Peter

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, destination
- ▶ Pauline echoes
- ▶ Preaching to "spirits in prison" (2:1-2)
- ▶ Nature of persecution: potential (4:12-19; 5:9-10)
  - \* Dramatically different contexts = integrity/unity issues?
  - \* Is 1:3-4:11 (persecution only potential) an earlier baptismal homily worked in?
  - \* Suggested contexts: general antagonism, Nero, Domitian, Trajan
- ▶ Church and Israel: replacement, inclusion, two covenants, two religions?

Expression of "wrongdoers" (2:12) is like Pliny's letter, and bearing name Christian (4:12) is a crime for Pliny

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Could be a baptismal homily for initiates into the faith

## Theological Themes

- ▶ Proper suffering attitude: inevitable, honorable, sustainable
- ▶ Positive social witness: appropriate obedience, exemplary lives, diligent social codes

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## 2 Peter

### • Authorship

- ▶ Against Petrine authorship
  - \* Substantial language/style differences with 1 Peter
  - \* Use of Greek philosophical traditions versus conservative Galilean fisherman
  - \* Feel of “early catholicism” as well as Paul’s letters being collected
  - \* Total literary dependence on letter of Jude: thoughts, sequence, even wording
  - \* Canonical process weakest
  - \* Use of “testament” genre betrays literary artifice, pseudonymity
  - \* Predictable, unintended shifts of future, present tenses give away writer’s setting

77

## 2 Peter

### • Authorship

- ▶ For Petrine authorship
  - \* Style differences are secretarial
  - \* Greek philosophical ideas more common than allowed (cf. Philo, Josephus)
  - \* “Our ancestors” = Jewish forefathers, not apostles
  - \* Paul’s letters not necessarily a full collection yet
  - \* Use of sources not a sin (compare Synoptics, Eph/Col), hence, Jude
  - \* Canonical process weak, but stronger than any excluded, so not true argument
  - \* Not all “testaments” were pseudonymous

78

## 2 Peter

### • Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30), brother Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15–19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64 by church tradition (1 Clement 5.1–7)

79

Acts 15:14; 2 Pet 1:1

## 2 Peter

### • Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30), brother Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15–19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64 by church tradition (1 Clement 5.1–7)

80

## 2 Peter

### Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30) <sup>Gal 2</sup> sister Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15-19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64 by church tradition (c. *Clement* 5.1-7)

81

## 2 Peter

### Brief Biography

- ▶ Name variations: Symeon, Simon, Cephas, Peter
- ▶ Family: son of Jonah (Matt 16:17), married (Mark 1:30) <sup>1 Cor 1:12</sup> sister Andrew (Mark 1:16)
- ▶ Disciple: always first in lists, spokesman, denier of Jesus, restored (John 21:15-19)
- ▶ Apostle: early Jerusalem church leader, missionary to Jews, Antioch, Corinth
- ▶ Death: martyred in Rome, AD 64, according to church tradition (c. *Clement* 5.1-7)

82

## 2 Peter

### Date: Depends on Authorship Conclusions

- ▶ Petrine (before death, pre-AD 64): late, perhaps Rome, before fire of Rome, AD 64
- ▶ Petrine disciple (AD 80-90): pseudonymous, post war, preserve Petrine traditions
- ▶ Non-Petrine (AD 100-115): pseudonymous, later generation, later church issues

### Occasion and Purpose

- ▶ Heresy and skepticism have arisen in the church, but different than Jude's context
- ▶ Purpose: to combat libertine heresy and answer second coming critics
- ▶ Thesis: true knowledge of God affirms the apostolic tradition, including belief in the parousia, and concern for ethical living

83

## 2 Peter

### Outline

- ▶ Opening (1:1): Simon Peter, servant and apostle, to those of faith
- ▶ Greeting (1:2): grace and peace (no thanksgiving section)
- ▶ Body (1:3-3:16)
  - \* True knowledge transforms (1:3-21)
    - ~ His divine power: given all knowledge needed for godly life (1:3-4)
    - ~ His divine nature: inspires all qualities of godly living (1:5-11)
    - ~ Peter's expected death as reason for reminding (1:12-15)
    - ~ Second coming truth anticipated in Transfiguration (1:16-18)
    - ~ Second coming truth anticipated in sure prophecy (1:19-21)

84

## 2 Peter

### Outline

- ▶ Body (1:3-3:16)
  - \* False knowledge corrupts (2:1-22)
    - ~ False prophets threaten God's people (2:1-3): yet, God will judge
    - ~ Examples of God's judgment (2:4-10): angels, flood, Sodom/Gomorrah
    - ~ Corrupt character of current false prophets (2:11-22): derived from Jude
  - \* Second Coming truth (3:1-18)
    - ~ Scoffers threaten God's truth (3:1-10): but delay only reveals God's patience
    - ~ Renew efforts to remain spotless (3:11-16): coming destruction, Paul's testimony
- ▶ Conclusion (3:17-18): forewarned, avoid apostasy, doxology

85

## 2 Peter

### Outline

- ▶ Body (1:3-3:16)
  - \* False knowledge corrupts (2:1-22)
    - ~ False prophets threaten God's people (2:1-3): yet, God will judge
    - ~ Examples of Destruction by fire, then new heavens, new earth, Sodom/Gomorrah
    - ~ Corrupt character of current false prophets (2:11-22): derived from Jude
  - \* Second Coming truth (3:1-18)
    - ~ Scoffers threaten God's truth (3:1-10): but delay only reveals God's patience
    - ~ Renew efforts to remain spotless (3:11-16): coming destruction, Paul's testimony
- ▶ Conclusion (3:17-18): forewarned, avoid apostasy, doxology

86

## 2 Peter

### Critical Issues

- ▶ Authorship, date, origin, destination
- ▶ Genre: unclear, mixed
  - \* Opens like a letter, but neither body or conclusion (doxology) like a letter
  - \* Faint similarities to Jewish "testament" genre
    - ~ Announce impending death (cf. 1:12-15)
    - ~ Summarize ethical teaching (cf. 1:3-21)
    - ~ Reveal future events (cf. 2:1-3; 3:1-4)
- ▶ Identity of false teachers: unknown, but false teaching induces immorality

87

## 2 Peter

### Critical Issues

- ▶ Literary relationship to Jude: copying or using common tradition (oral or written)
  - \* Extremely close wording: following ideas, phrasing, sometimes even word-for-word
  - \* Extremely close order: following exact same sequence (only one minor exception)
  - \* Majority opinion: 2 Peter copied Jude (not vice versa)
    - ~ Length logic: why even write if result wound up almost nothing original for Jude?
    - ~ Incorporation logic: why would Jude use so little of the source?
    - ~ Redactional logic: specific changes easier to explain if 2 Peter using Jude

88

## 2 Peter

Inversion of coupled phrases in Jude 11-12, 2 Pet 2:15, 13

### Critical Issues

- ▶ Literary relationship to Jude: copying or using common tradition (oral or written)
  - \* Extremely close wording: following ideas, phrasing, sometimes even word-for-word
  - \* Extremely close order: following exact same sequence (only one minor exception)
  - \* Majority opinion: 2 Peter copied Jude (not vice versa)
    - ~ Length logic: why even write if result wound up almost nothing original for Jude?
    - ~ Incorporation logic: why would Jude use so little of the source?
    - ~ Redactional logic: specific changes easier to explain if 2 Peter using Jude

89

	Jude (NRSV)	2 Peter (NRSV)
4	people who long ago were designated for this condemnation . . . licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ	2:1 deny the Master who bought them 2:2 licentious ways 2:3 condemnation, pronounced against them long ago
6	the angels . . . he has kept in eternal chains in deepest darkness for the judgement	2:4 the angels . . . cast them into hell and committed them to chains of deepest darkness to be kept until the judgement
7	Sodom and Gomorrah . . . an example	2:6 Sodom and Gomorrah . . . an example
8	defile the flesh, reject authority, and slander the glorious ones	2:10 indulge their flesh in depraved lust, and who despise authority . . . slander the glorious ones
9	the archangel Michael . . . did not dare to bring a condemnation of slander against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"	2:11 angels . . . do not bring against them a slanderous judgement from the Lord
10	these people slander whatever they do not understand . . . like irrational animals	2:12 these people . . . like irrational animals . . . slander what they do not understand
11	abandon themselves to Balaam's error for the sake of gain	2:15 following the road of Balaam . . . who loved the wages of doing wrong
12	blemishes on your love-feasts, while they feast with you without fear, feeding themselves	2:13 blemishes, revelling in their dissipation while they feast with you
12	waterless clouds carried along by the winds	2:17 waterless springs and mists driven by a storm
13	for whom the deepest darkness has been reserved	2:17 for them the deepest darkness has been reserved
16	they indulge their own lusts; they are bombastic in speech	2:18 they speak bombastic nonsense . . . licentious desires
17	beloved, remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ	3:1 beloved . . . 3:2 remember the words spoken in the past . . . the commandment of the Lord and Saviour spoken through your apostles
18	"In the last time there will be scoffers indulging their own ungodly lusts"	3:3 in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts

### Critical Issues

- ▶ Literary relationship to Jude: copying or using common tradition (oral or written)
  - \* Extremely close wording: following ideas, phrasing, sometimes even word-for-word (only one minor exception)
  - \* Majority opinion: 2 Peter copied Jude (not vice versa)
    - ~ Length logic: why even write if result wound up almost nothing original for Jude?
    - ~ Incorporation logic: why would Jude use so little of the source?
    - ~ Redactional logic: specific changes easier to explain if 2 Peter using Jude

90

## 2 Peter

### Critical Issues

- ▶ Literary relationship to Jude: copying or using common tradition (oral or written)
  - \* Extremely close wording: following ideas, phrasing, sometimes even word-for-word (only one minor exception)
  - \* Majority opinion: 2 Peter copied Jude (not vice versa)
    - ~ Length logic: why even write if result wound up almost nothing original for Jude?
    - ~ Incorporation logic: why would Jude use so little of the source?
    - ~ Redactional logic: specific changes easier to explain if 2 Peter using Jude

91

## 2 Peter

### Theological Themes

- ▶ Cruciality of apostolic tradition for spiritual health of church
- ▶ Cruciality of Second Coming of Jesus to apostolic tradition
- ▶ Inspiration of Scripture supports authority of apostolic tradition

92

## Jude

### • Authorship

#### ▶ Against Jude authorship

- \* Perspective: seemingly backward perspective on apostolic era
  - ~ Faith once-for-all entrusted (v. 3)
  - ~ Apostolic predictions (v. 17)
- \* Early catholicism: Catholic style reference to “the faith” like a fixed body of doctrine
- \* Excellent Greek: wide breadth of vocabulary and subtle use of rhetorical nuances

93

## Jude

### • Authorship

#### ▶ For Jude authorship

- \* Perspective: natural reminders of what all personally learned from the apostles
- \* Catholicism: primitive church elements unquestionably present
  - ~ Vivid expectation of return of Jesus
  - ~ No hint of church officers or hierarchy
  - ~ “Faith” used no differently than Paul himself about his “gospel” (cf. Gal 1:23)
- \* Greek: cannot presume on unknown specific facts of person or production
- \* Content: thoughts, arguments, ideas consistent with early, Judean, Jewish leader

94

## Jude

### • Authorship

#### ▶ For Jude authorship

- \* Perspective: natural reminders of what all personally learned from the apostles
- \* Catholicism: primitive church elements unquestionably present
  - ~ Vivid expectation of return of Jesus
  - ~ No hint of church officers or hierarchy
  - ~ “Faith” used no differently than Paul himself about his “gospel” (cf. Gal 1:23)
- \* Greek: cannot presume on unknown specific facts of person or production
- \* Content: thoughts, arguments, ideas consistent with early, Judean, Jewish leader

Adept use of Scripture, wide familiarity with Jewish literature, evident Jewish eschatological framework

95

## Jude

### • Brief Biography

#### ▶ “Brother of James” designation

- \* Straightforward, non-pretentious, both names apparently well-known to community
- \* Likely famous brother of Jesus, leader of Jerusalem church in Acts
  - ~ Another brother of Jesus (Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3)
  - ~ Post-resurrection faith (Matt 12:46; Mark 3:31; Luke 5:19)
  - ~ Apparently did not obtain same status, leadership that James did
- \* Possible itinerant, diaspora ministry (1 Cor 9:5, “Lord’s brothers,” plural)
- \* Possible his grandsons were threatened by Domitian’s court

96



# Jude

## Brief Biography

### ▶ "Brother of James" designation

- \* Straightforward, non-pretentious, leadership and pious reputation in Jerusalem well known to Josephus (*Ant.* 20.9.1)
- \* Likely famous brother of Jesus, leader of church in Acts
  - ~ Another brother of Jesus (Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3)
  - ~ Post-resurrection faith (Matt 12:46; Mark 3:31; Luke 5:19)
  - ~ Apparently did not obtain same stature, leadership that James did
- \* Possible itinerant, diaspora ministry (1 Cor 9:5, "Lord's brothers," plural)
- \* Possible his grandsons were threatened by Domitian's court

97

# Jude

## Brief Biography

### ▶ "Brother of James" designation

- \* Straightforward, non-pretentious, both names apparently well-known to community
- \* Likely famous brother of Jesus, leader of church in Acts
  - ~ Another brother of Jesus (Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3)
  - ~ Post-resurrection faith (Matt 12:46; Mark 3:31; Luke 5:19)
  - ~ Apparently did not obtain same stature, leadership that James did
- \* Possible itinerant, diaspora ministry (1 Cor 9:5, "Lord's brothers," plural)
- \* Possible his grandsons were threatened by Domitian's court

98

# Jude

## Brief Biography

### ▶ Impact of First Jewish War on Jerusalem Church

- \* Main leadership lost just prior to war (James martyred AD 62)
- \* War aftermath causes dissolution, disappearance of Judean Christianity
- \* Jude the person and the letter subsequently fell into obscurity
- ▶ Voice of Jewish Christianity went silent, traditions become "foreign" to church fathers
  - \* No leadership, community, teachings, emphases preserved for later church
  - \* No contribution to canonical or theological discussions in the Catholic church
    - ~ Canonical indecision: questions about "Jewishness" of writings (James, Jude)
    - ~ Theological myopia: loss of adequate reflection on the Israel of God

99

# Jude

## Date: Depends on Authorship Conclusions

- ▶ Jude: then likely pre war
- ▶ Pseudonymous: anyone's guess

## Occasion and Purpose

- ▶ Heresy has arisen with defective eschatology
- ▶ Purpose: to expose false teachers and their superficial spirituality

100

# Jude

## Outline

- ▶ Opening (1): Jude, servant, brother of James, to those called, loved, kept
- ▶ Greeting (2): mercy, peace, love (no thanksgiving section)
- ▶ Body (3-23)
  - \* Introduction (3-4)
    - ~ Interrupted writing plans to contend for the faith
    - ~ Imposters have slipped in, ungodly, perverting grace into immorality, denying Jesus
  - \* Polemical midrash (5-23): uses Scripture and other writings
- ▶ Closing (24-25): doxology

101

# Jude

## Outline

- ▶ Opening (1): Jude, servant, brother of James, to those called, loved, kept
- ▶ Greeting (2): mercy, peace, love (no thanksgiving section)
- ▶ Body (3-23)
  - \* Introduction (3-4)
    - ~ Interrupted writing plans to contend for the faith
    - ~ Imposters have slipped in, ungodly, perverting grace into immorality, denying Jesus
  - \* Polemical midrash (5-23): uses Scripture and other writings
- ▶ Closing (24-25): doxology

Sounds quite like Paul's diatribe in Rom 6

102

# Jude

## Outline

- ▶ Opening (1): Jude, servant, brother of James, to those called, loved, kept
- ▶ Greeting (2): mercy, peace, love (no thanksgiving section)
- ▶ Body (3-23)
  - \* Introduction (3-4)
    - ~ Interrupted writing plans to contend for the faith
    - ~ Imposters have slipped in, ungodly, perverting grace into immorality, denying Jesus
  - \* Polemical midrash (5-23): uses Scripture and other writings
- ▶ Closing (24-25): doxology

Give text, then application. Uses biblical examples of judgment, including the Israelites in the desert, angels, Sodom/Gomorrah, Cain, Balaam, Korah

103

# Jude

## Outline

- ▶ Opening (1): Jude, servant, brother of James, to those called, loved, kept
- ▶ Greeting (2): mercy, peace, love (no thanksgiving section)
- ▶ Body (3-23)
  - \* Introduction (3-4)
    - ~ Interrupted writing plans to contend for the faith
    - ~ Imposters have slipped in, ungodly, perverting grace into immorality, denying Jesus
  - \* Polemical midrash (5-23): uses Scripture and other writings
- ▶ Closing (24-25): doxology

Alludes to *Assumption of Moses* and quotes *1 Enoch* 1:9: "See, the Lord is coming with ten thousands of his holy ones."

104

**Jude**

Text	Application
vv. 5-7	vv. 8-10
v. 11	vv. 12-13
vv. 14-15	v. 16
vv. 17-18	v. 19

- Outline
  - ▶ Opening (1): Jude
  - ▶ Greeting (2): n
  - ▶ Body (3-23)
    - \* Introduction
    - ~ Interrupte
    - ~ Imposters
    - \* Polemical m
  - ▶ Closing (24-25): doxology

105

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Jude**

Jude 24-25:

“To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.”

- Outline
  - ▶ Opening (1): Jude
  - ▶ Greeting (2): n
  - ▶ Body (3-23)
    - \* Introduction
    - ~ Interrupte
    - ~ Imposters
    - \* Polemical midrash (5-23): uses Scripture and other writings
  - ▶ Closing (24-25): doxology

106

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Jude**

- Critical Issues
  - ▶ Authorship, date, origin, destination
  - ▶ Genre: mixed epistle/midrash
    - \* Midrashic pattern: state precept (text, example, point), give application
    - \* Similar to expository sermon style
    - \* Purpose: to expose false teachers and their superficial spirituality
  - ▶ Literary relationship to 2 Pet: copying or using common tradition (oral or written)

107

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Jude**

- Critical Issues
  - ▶ Identity of false teachers: unknown, but false teaching induces immorality
    - \* Advocate sexual license
    - \* Claim divine inspiration (“dreamers”)
    - \* Slander angels: How?
      - ~ Despising Law? (Jewish tradition: Law given by angels on Mt. Sinai)
      - ~ Claiming superiority over angels
    - \* Abuse fellowship meals (indulgent)
    - \* Provoke division among believers
    - \* Devoid of Spirit

108

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Jude

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Literary relationship to 2 Peter: copying or using common tradition (oral or written)
  - \* Extremely close wording: following ideas, phrasing, sometimes even word-for word
  - \* Extremely close order: following exact same sequence (only one minor exception)
  - \* Majority opinion: 2 Peter copied Jude (not vice versa)
    - ~ Length logic: why even write if result wound up almost nothing original for Jude?
    - ~ Incorporation logic: why would Jude use so little of the source?
    - ~ Redactional logic: specific changes easier to explain if 2 Peter using Jude
- ▶ Quoting non-canonical literature: issue *not* the same as Paul quoting Greek poet Aratus in Acts 17:28 (contra KH). Jude is quoting as authoritative warrant.

109

# Jude

Inversion of coupled phrases in Jude 11-12, 2 Pet 2:15, 13

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Literary relationship to Jude: copying or using common tradition (oral or written)
  - \* Extremely close wording: following ideas, phrasing, sometimes even word-for word
  - \* Extremely close order: following exact same sequence (only one minor exception)
  - \* Majority opinion: 2 Peter copied Jude (not vice versa)
    - ~ Length logic: why even write if result wound up almost nothing original for Jude?
    - ~ Incorporation logic: why would Jude use so little of the source?
    - ~ Redactional logic: specific changes easier to explain if 2 Peter using Jude
- ▶ Quoting non-canonical literature: issue *not* the same as Paul quoting Greek poet Aratus in Acts 17:28 (contra KH). Jude is quoting as authoritative warrant.

110

	Jude (NRSV)	2 Peter (NRSV)
4	people who long ago were designated for this condemnation . . . licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ	2:1 deny the Master who bought them 2:2 licentious ways 2:3 condemnation, pronounced against them long ago
6	the angels . . . he has kept in eternal chains in deepest darkness for the judgement	2:4 the angels . . . cast them into hell and committed them to chains of deepest darkness to be kept until the judgement
7	Sodom and Gomorrah . . . an example	2:6 Sodom and Gomorrah . . . an example
8	defile the flesh, reject authority, and slander the glorious ones	2:10 indulge their flesh in depraved lust, and who despise authority . . . slander the glorious ones
9	the archangel Michael . . . did not dare to bring a condemnation of slander against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"	2:11 angels . . . do not bring against them a slanderous judgement from the Lord
10	these people slander whatever they do not understand . . . like irrational animals	2:12 these people . . . like irrational animals . . . slander what they do not understand
11	abandon themselves to Balaam's error for the sake of gain	2:15 following the road of Balaam . . . who loved the wages of doing wrong
12	blemishes on your love-feasts, while they feast with you without fear, feeding themselves	2:13 blemishes, revelling in their dissipation while they feast with you
12	waterless clouds carried along by the winds	2:17 waterless springs and mists driven by a storm
13	for whom the deepest darkness has been reserved	2:17 for them the deepest darkness has been reserved
16	they indulge their own lusts; they are bombastic in speech	2:18 they speak bombastic nonsense . . . licentious desires
17	beloved, remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ	3:1 beloved . . . 3:2 remember the words spoken in the past . . . the commandment of the Lord and Saviour spoken through your apostles
18	"In the last time there will be scoffers indulging their own ungodly lusts"	3:3 in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts

## Critical Issue

- ▶ Literary relationship to Jude: copying or using common tradition (oral or written)
  - \* Extremely close wording: following ideas, phrasing, sometimes even word-for word
  - \* Extremely close order: following exact same sequence (only one minor exception)
  - \* Majority opinion: 2 Peter copied Jude (not vice versa)
    - ~ Length logic: why even write if result wound up almost nothing original for Jude?
    - ~ Incorporation logic: why would Jude use so little of the source?
    - ~ Redactional logic: specific changes easier to explain if 2 Peter using Jude
- ▶ Quoting non-canonical literature: issue *not* the same as Paul quoting Greek poet Aratus in Acts 17:28 (contra KH). Jude is quoting as authoritative warrant.

111

# Jude

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Literary relationship to Jude: copying or using common tradition (oral or written)
  - \* Extremely close wording: following ideas, phrasing, sometimes even word-for word
  - \* Extremely close order: following exact same sequence (only one minor exception)
  - \* Majority opinion: 2 Peter copied Jude (not vice versa)
    - ~ Length logic: why even write if result wound up almost nothing original for Jude?
    - ~ Incorporation logic: why would Jude use so little of the source?
    - ~ Redactional logic: specific changes easier to explain if 2 Peter using Jude
- ▶ Quoting non-canonical literature: issue *not* the same as Paul quoting Greek poet Aratus in Acts 17:28 (contra KH). Jude is quoting as authoritative warrant.

112

## Jude

- Cr... "Neither Jude nor Luke's Paul is trying to give them an authoritative status" (KH: 510). Very misleading. True for Paul, but absolutely *not true* for Jude. Jude *most certainly* is quoting 1 Enoch 1:9 as authoritative warrant for his point. This bothered the church fathers greatly. Otherwise, Jude's canonical status never would have been debated in the first place!
- \* In... (the versa)
- ~ Length... sound up almost nothing original for Jude?
- ~ Incorporation logic: why would Jude use so little of the source?
- ~ Redactional logic: specific changes easier to explain if 2 Peter using Jude
- ▶ Quoting non-canonical literature: issue *not* the same as Paul quoting Greek poet Aratus in Acts 17:28 (contra KH). Jude is quoting as authoritative warrant.

113

## Jude

- Theological Themes
  - ▶ Cruciality of apostolic tradition for spiritual health of church
  - ▶ God's just judgment in time and at the end of time
  - ▶ Truth and behavior inextricably connected

114

## Revelation

- Authorship
  - ▶ For Johannine authorship (apostle John: Gospel, Epistles, Rev)
  - \* External evidence (church fathers)
    - ~ Western church
      - ◆ Justin Martyr (150-155) first to ascribe to apostle (*Dial.* 81.4)
      - ◆ unanimous in West into 3rd cent. until Dionysius
    - ~ Eastern church: solid rejection for *six centuries*
  - \* Internal evidence (minor at best)
    - ~ a few vocabulary words, ideas (victorious Christ, Lamb, *Logos*)
    - ~ Western church's association of apostle John in Ephesus post Jewish war

115

- Authorship
  - ▶ For...
    - \* E...
      - Eastern Church: problems for centuries
        - Book from the beginning considered obscure, radical, and dangerous
        - Fears consummated in the East by 2nd cent. Montanus heresy in Asia Minor
        - Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem (d. 386), completely rejected the book, refused as not inspired nor authoritative, and forbade its use even for just private, devotional reading (*Cat. Lect.* 4.36)
        - Eusebius acknowledged the book's serious problem for acceptance in the Eastern church (*HE* 3.25.2-4)
        - Revelation was not even included in any Eastern *translation* of the New Testament until the 7th cent. AD 616 "Harc lensis" Syriac edition by bishop Thomas of Harqel
        - Begrudgingly accepted into Eastern canon in 692, *six centuries after written*, under Western church pressure
    - ~ Western church's association of apostle John in Ephesus post Jewish war

116



Observations of Dionysius (persuasive taken cumulatively):

- explicit self-reference to the author's own name, even multiple times, as in Rev, never occurs in *any* of the other literature ascribed to the apostle John
- "beloved disciple" beloved self-reference of the apostle in the Gospel completely absent in Rev
- constant eyewitness claim by the apostle in both Gospel and epistles completely absent in Rev
- name "John" extremely common in later Christian generations, so objectively could be anyone respected and considered a leader in the seven churches
- numerous ideas, words, even word arrangements in Rev totally alien to the apostle's way of thinking and expressing himself in Gospel or epistles
- entire categories of words and phrases well known to be theologically crucial to the apostle from both Gospel and epistles missing entirely in Rev
- extraordinarily contrasting symbolic thought-world of Rev versus that of Gospel and epistles, with zero allusions to visions or dream states by author
- constant and frequent barbarism, solecism, vulgarism of Greek of Rev has hardly an example in all of Gospel or epistles

121

## Revelation

### • Authorship

#### ▶ Against Johannine authorship (apostle John: Gospel, Epistles, Rev)

##### \* Internal evidence

- ~ Author named, but without any connections (cf. James, Jude, epistles, etc.)
- ~ Huge grammar / style differences, as noted by Dionysius
- ~ Radically different eschatologies (thoroughly apocalyptic vs. non-apocalyptic)
- ~ Thoroughly different worldviews
- ~ Apostles treated as a past generation
- ~ New Jerusalem imagery: apostolic foundation treat apostles as fixed group

122

## Revelation

### • Authorship

#### ▶ Against Johannine authorship

##### \* Internal evidence

- ~ Author named, but without any connections (cf. James, Jude, epistles, etc.)
- ~ Huge grammar / style differences, as noted by Dionysius
- ~ Radically different eschatologies (thoroughly apocalyptic vs. non-apocalyptic)
- ~ Thoroughly different worldviews
- ~ Apostles treated as a past generation
- ~ New Jerusalem imagery: apostolic foundation treat apostles as fixed group

Like claiming the worldview of a radical ISIS fighter is the same as the worldview of a conservative Iowa farmer

123

## Revelation

### • Authorship

#### ▶ Summary

- \* Language arguments of Dionysius are decisive
- \* Radically different eschatology, worldviews (apocalyptic vs. non-apocalyptic)
- \* Apostles treated as a past generation, even in imagery of New Jerusalem
- \* East never could have dared rejected if apostle John actually thought the author

▶ Conclusion (Stevens): "John," a well known, authoritative leader among the seven churches of Asia, was an otherwise unknown prophet with almost sectarian views that proved difficult to integrate into the NT and caused serious problems for the church.

124

Trying to lessen the weight of Dionysius's carefully considered arguments—he had no dog in the fight, and was one of the few church fathers at the time who actually still knew Greek—by claiming “the evidence one way or the other is equivocal” is not an objective analysis but reveals more the pressure presuppositions exert on rational logic.

● **Authorship**

▶ **Summary**

- \* Language arguments of Dionysius are decisive
  - \* Radically different eschatology, worldviews (apocalyptic vs. non-apocalyptic)
  - \* Apostles treated as a past generation, even in imagery of New Jerusalem
  - \* East never could have dared rejected if apostle John actually thought the author
- ▶ **Conclusion (Stevens):** “John,” a well known, authoritative leader among the seven churches of Asia, was an otherwise unknown prophet with almost sectarian views that proved difficult to integrate into the NT and caused serious problems for the church.

## Revelation

● **Authorship**

▶ **Summary**

- \* Language arguments of Dionysius are decisive
  - \* Radically different eschatology, worldviews (apocalyptic vs. non-apocalyptic)
  - \* Apostles treated as a past generation, even in imagery of New Jerusalem
  - \* East never could have dared rejected if apostle John actually thought the author
- ▶ **Conclusion (Stevens):** “John,” a well known, authoritative leader among the seven churches of Asia, was an otherwise unknown prophet with almost sectarian views that proved difficult to integrate into the NT and caused serious problems for the church.

## Revelation

● **Date: Nero (56–68) or Domitian (81–96)**

▶ **Nero (54–68)**

- \* External evidence (church fathers): very little
- \* Internal evidence
  - ~ Temple argument (11:1–2): supposedly still standing
  - ~ Kings list argument (17:10): five fallen kings, one is, one is to come, etc.
  - ~ Gematria 666 argument (13:18): Nero solution, but problems

Kings List (Rev 17:10): Arbitrary Decisions

● **Date: Nero**

▶ **Nero**

- \* External evidence
- \* Internal evidence
  - ~ When to start counting:
    - ~ Caesar: as progenitor of imperial family line, but not an actual emperor
    - ~ Augustus: as founder of Roman empire and emperor when Jesus was born
    - ~ Tiberius: as emperor when Jesus was crucified
    - ~ Caligula: as emperor first ordering statue erected in Jerusalem temple
    - ~ Nero: as emperor of first Christian persecution
    - ~ Galba: as first emperor of Roman civil war
  - ~ How to count Roman civil war period (five emperors in 13 months):
    - ~ June 68–July 69: Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian
    - ~ Count civil war emperors as individuals (Galba, Otho, Vitellius)
    - ~ Count civil war emperors together as one representative group
    - ~ Ignore civil war emperors entirely



Julius Caesar (44 B.C.)	1	1	1						
Augustus (27-A.D. 14)	2	2	2	1	1				
Tiberius (14-37)	3	3	2	2	1				
Caligula (37-41)	4	4	3	3	2	1	1		
Claudius (41-54)	5	5	3	4	4	3	2	2	
Nero (54-68)	6	6	5	5	4	3	3	1	
Galba (68)	7	6	5	4	2	1			
Otho (69)	8	7	6	5	3	2			
Vitellius (69)		8	7	6	4	3			
Vespasian (69-79)	7	4	6	8	7	4	5	4	
Titus (79-81)	8	5	7	8	5	6	5		
Domitian (81-96)	6	8	6	7	6				

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

First, solution works only if one assumes the author without saying so means Nero's *Greek* name be written in *Hebrew* letters; second, even if "Neron Caesar" in Hebrew = 666, unclear is whether the author means Nero literally, as in during his actual reign, or Nero figuratively, as in a later ruler acting in a Nero-like way persecuting Christians, such as Domitian, perhaps taking advantage of the *Nero redivivus* legend that haunted Rome after Nero's suicide.

- \* External evidence
  - ~ Temple argument (11:1-2): supposing still standing
  - ~ Kings list argument (17:10): five fallen kings, one is to come, etc.
  - ~ Gematria 666 argument (13:18): Nero solution, but problems

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Revelation

- Date: Nero (56-68) or Domitian (81-96)
  - ▷ Domitian (81-96)
    - \* External evidence: strong
      - ~ Irenaeus (180): "end of Domitian's reign"
      - ~ Churches at Smyrna, Thyatira not even founded till after Nero's reign
    - \* Internal evidence
      - ~ persecution context is clear, whether real or perceived
      - ~ Kings list argument (17:10): meaning too ambiguous to contribute
      - ~ Use of "Babylon" as cipher for Rome as post AD 70, but arguable
      - ~ Historical conditions in Seven Letters fits Asia Minor, 90s

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Revelation

- Date: Nero (56-68)
  - ▷ Domitian (81-96)
    - \* External evidence: strong
      - ~ Irenaeus (180): "end of Domitian's reign"
      - ~ Churches at Smyrna, Thyatira not even founded till after Nero's reign
    - \* Internal evidence
      - ~ persecution context is clear, whether real or perceived
      - ~ Kings list argument (17:10): meaning too ambiguous to contribute
      - ~ Use of "Babylon" as cipher for Rome as post AD 70, but arguable
      - ~ Historical conditions in Seven Letters fits Asia Minor, 90s

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Revelation

## • Date: Nero (56–68) or Domitian (81–96)

### ▶ Domitian (81–96)

#### \* Exile

Cf. 1:9; 2:10, 13; 3:10; 6:9–11; 17:6; 18:24

~ Churches at Smyrna, Pergamum not even founded till after Nero's reign

#### \* Internal evidence

~ persecution context is clear, whether real or perceived

~ Kings list argument (17:10): meaning too ambiguous to contribute

~ Use of "Babylon" as cipher for Rome as post AD 70, but arguable

~ Historical conditions in Seven Letters fits Asia Minor, 90s

133

# Revelation

## • Origin

### ▶ Origin of vision: "island of Patmos" (1:9)

#### \* Residence reason unclear: "because of the word of God"

~ Non-volitional? (imprisonment, exile)

~ Volitional? (itinerary, intentional plans, mission)

#### \* Historical setting clear: Patmos in Roman history

~ Patmos never used as a Roman penal colony

~ Patmos never had a Roman mining operation

134

# Revelation

## • Origin

Tradition of forced exile and imprisonment is late patristic imagination with no historical foundation.

#### \* Residence reason unclear: "because of the word of God"

~ Non-volitional? (imprisonment, exile)

~ Volitional? (itinerary, intentional plans, mission)

#### \* Historical setting clear: Patmos in Roman history

~ Patmos never used as a Roman penal colony

~ Patmos never had a Roman mining operation

135

# Revelation

## • Origin

### ▶ Origin of writing: "was on the island" (1:9)

#### \* Greek is clear: island residence is now *past tense* to time of composition

#### \* Patmos is scene of vision, but somewhere else is scene of composition

#### \* Composition imagined as in a cave during the vision with no resources is false

136

## Mosaic of John and Scribe, Patmos Cave



### Origin

- ▶ Origin
- \* Gre
- \* Pat
- \* Co

alse

137

## Revelation

### Occasion and Purpose

#### ▶ Occasion

- \* False teachers within the churches urging compromise with culture
- \* Persecution challenging believer's confession, witness (cf. Antipas, 2:13)
- \* Support of Roman imperial cult and policy by provincial elites in Asia Minor
  - ~ Religious observance as political loyalty (emperor patron of peace, prosperity)
  - ~ Great support for imperial cult in Asia Minor
  - ~ Subversion of pagan myth for empire propaganda (e.g., Python myth)
    - ◆ Emperor claimed to be Apollo (particularly Domitian)
    - ◆ Subduer of chaos forces on empire's borders as in mythology

138



### Occasion

#### ▶ Occas

- \* Fals
- \* Per
- \* Sup
- ~ R
- ~ Gr
- ~ Su
- ◆
- ◆ Subduer of chaos forces on empire's borders as in mythology

139



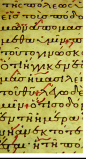




## Revelation


### Occasion and Purpose


#### ▶ Purpose



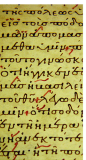




- \* To reject imperial cult worship and circumvent its corrupting influence on belief and behavior in churches of Asia Minor
  - \* To encourage faithful witness and obedience in Asia Minor and claim the final victory is God's
- ▶ Message: God's judgment calls unbelievers to repent and believers to faithful witness in resisting compromise with idolatrous Babylon.

140

REVELATION						
EPISTLE	APOCALYPSE/PROPHECY					EPISTLE
Judgment	Judgment Ecclesial	Judgment Global	J/Victory	Judgment	Judgment	Judgment
Prologue	Vision	Judgment	Vision	Judgment	Vision	Epilogue
Jesus/John Revelation (1:1–8)	Vision of Son/Man (1:9–20)	Judgment Oracles (2–3)	Vision of Throne (4–5)	Judgment Cycle (6–20)	Vision of Heaven (21–22)	Jesus/John Revelation (22:6–21)
						

REVELATION				
EPISTLE	APOCALYPSE/PROPHECY			EPISTLE
Judgment	Judgment Ecclesial	Judgment Global	J/Victory	Judgment
Prologue	<p>Prologue (1:1–8):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apocalypse “of Jesus Christ”: “of” = (1) from Jesus and (2) about Jesus</li> <li>• sets up the literary <i>inclusio</i> of a letter genre for entire work</li> <li>• indicates liturgical purpose to be read in worship to call to obedience</li> <li>• establishes gospel categories of interpretation (“by his blood”)</li> <li>• harnesses all eschatological imagery to incarnation truths</li> <li>• reveals faithful witness as essence of “victory” language</li> <li>• addressed to seven churches of Asia Minor = “seven” = all churches of all time</li> </ul>			
Jesus/John Revelation (1:1–8)				
				

REVELATION				
EPISTLE	APOCALYPSE/PROPHECY			EPISTLE
Judgment	Judgment Ecclesial	Judgment Global	J/Victory	Judgment
Prologue	<p>Vision of Son of Man (1:9–20)—Foundation for Judgment of Seven Churches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apocalypse “of Jesus Christ”: Jesus revealed as Ancient of Days, Son of Man</li> <li>• Son of Man as Daniel’s Ancient of Days judge but Gospels’ suffering servant</li> <li>• identity—who he is: Son of Man, defines discipleship profile, faithful witness</li> <li>• presence—where he is: among the lampstands = risen, judging the churches</li> <li>• function—how he is clothed: fulfilling OT offices of priest and king</li> <li>• perfection—what he looks like: sevenfold features = how perfectly he fulfills his identity, presence, and functions</li> <li>• “sword out of his mouth” = war of words, cruciality of confession, truth, witness, battle with Rome is spiritual warfare</li> </ul>			
Jesus/John Revelation (1:1–8)				
				

REVELATION						
EPISTLE	APOCALYPSE/PROPHECY					EPISTLE
Judgment	Judgment Ecclesial	Judgment Global	J/Victory	Judgment	Judgment	Judgment
Prologue	Vision	Judgment	Vision	Judgment	Vision	Epilogue
Jesus/John Revelation (1:1–8)	Vision of Son/Man (1:9–20)	Judgment Oracles (2–3)	Vision of Throne (4–5)	Judgment Cycle (6–20)	Vision of Heaven (21–22)	Jesus/John Revelation (22:6–21)
						











### Apocalypse Genre—Literary Features

Narratives, often pseudonymous, describing visions involving a journey to some other dimension of time and/or space regularly mediated by an angelic interpreter couched in highly symbolic language. Beasts are empires and their rulers, white is victory and purity, crowns are victory, eyes are knowledge, horns are power, four is earth of north, south, east, and west, twelve is the zodiac, Israel, the apostles, seven is the weekly cycle of life on a lunar calendar, hence, also perfection, six is imperfection, three is divine, ten is human due to ten fingers and ten toes. The story is theodicy: God will bring all creation and history to its divinely intended consummation by his sovereign power on behalf of vindicating his persecuted people.

#### Critical Genre

Apocalyptic Genre  
1. Symbolic. Apocalyptic language is highly symbolic. Zoomorphic techniques produce effect. Symbolic issues in Roman real.  
2. Innovative. Text by the original contexts. The applications as always are christological in focus and gospel in meaning.

Zoomorphism: animal forms for human realities



## Revelation

#### Critical Issues

Genre: complex mix of three (apocalypse, prophecy, epistle)

#### Apocalyptic Genre: Two Interpretive Corollaries

1. Symbolic. Apocalyptic language is highly symbolic.

2. Symbolic Example: No first-century reader when told that the seven heads of the beast on which the woman sits are "seven hills" (17:9), would think other than the seven hills of Rome. The woman is Rome, evil city of an evil empire.

3. Innovative Example: In a zoomorphic mode, Daniel 7 envisions four beasts representing four empires. John uses Daniel's imagery, but combines all four beasts into one composite lion-bear-leopard-ten horns beast (13:1-2).

4. Always are christological in focus and gospel in meaning.



Zoomorphism: animal forms for human realities

## Revelation

#### Critical Issues

Genre: complex mix of three (apocalypse, prophecy, epistle)

#### Apocalyptic Genre: Two Interpretive Corollaries

1. Symbolic. Apocalyptic language is highly symbolic.

2. Symbolic Example: No first-century reader when told that the seven heads of the beast on which the woman sits are "seven hills" (17:9), would think other than the seven hills of Rome. The woman is Rome, evil city of an evil empire.

3. Innovative Example: In a zoomorphic mode, Daniel 7 envisions four beasts representing four empires. John uses Daniel's imagery, but combines all four beasts into one composite lion-bear-leopard-ten horns beast (13:1-2).

4. Always are christological in focus and gospel in meaning.



Zoomorphism: animal forms for human realities

## Revelation

#### Critical Issues

Genre: complex mix of three (apocalypse, prophecy, epistle)

\* Apocalypse (1:1): (1) symbolic language and (2) innovative use of traditions

\* Prophecy (1:3): (3) call to faithful obedience and (4) concord with rest of NT

# Revelation

## Critical Issues

► Genre: complex mix of three (apocalypse

\* Apocalypse (1:1): (1) symbolic language

*Prophecy Genre: Two Interpretive Corollaries*

3. *Obedience.* The burden of prophecy is not tomorrow but today. Prophets speak to their own audiences in their own time seeking obedience to God now. Any future component to prophecy is simply a preview of the outcome of today's judgment.

4. *Concord.* The picture of Jesus drawn from Revelation must square with the picture of Jesus in the Gospels. The gospel is the lens through which all apocalyptic imagery must be refracted, including the nature of evil, how evil is defeated, and the mission of the church.

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called

**FAITHFUL & TRUE.**

Revelation 19:11



# Revelation

## Critical Issues

► Genre: complex mix of three (apocalypse

\* Apocalypse (1:1): (1) symbolic language

*Prophecy Genre: Two Interpretive Corollaries*

3. *Obedience.* The burden of prophecy is not tomorrow

4. *Obedience Example:* In the letter to the first-century church in Pergamum, John calls those tolerating the heretical teaching of the Nicolaitans to repent. Otherwise, Jesus could be expected soon to bring judgment on the church.

4. *Concord.* The picture of Jesus drawn from Revelation

5. *Concord Example:* Christ, the rider on the white horse in Rev 19, "makes war" and scavenger birds gorge themselves. But what kind of war really is this? M-1 tanks? Nuclear warheads? Is that how Christ fought evil at Calvary?

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called

**FAITHFUL & TRUE.**

Revelation 19:11



# Revelation

## Critical Issues

► Genre: complex mix of three (apocalypse, prophecy, epistle)

\* Apocalypse (1:1): (1) symbolic language and (2) innovative use of traditions

\* Prophecy (1:3): (3) call to faithful obedience and (4) concord with rest of NT

\* Epistle (1:4): (5) setting primarily historical, and (6) interpreted as a unitary whole

167

# Revelation

## Critical Issues

► Genre: complex mix of three (apocalypse

\* Apocalypse (1:1): (1) symbolic language

*Epistle Genre: Two Interpretive Corollaries*

5. *Historical.* The document derives from a historical context. Interpretation is bound by the historical parameters of that context. The document has an author, addressees, and social location that gives immediate meaning to its words.

6. *Unitary.* The document is a literary unity. Individual parts contribute to the expression of the whole. Individual parts do not have meaning independent of their immediate context nor independent of all other parts taken as a whole.

"buy from me . . . white garments to wear."  
(Rev 3:18)



# Revelation

## Critical Issues

► Genre: complex mix of three (apocalypses)

\* Apocalypse (1:1): (1) symbolic language

Epistle Genre: Two Interpretive Corollaries

5. **Historical.** The document derives from a historical

Historical Example: Interpreting the Seven Letters in Rev 2-3 as to actual churches in these cities of first-century Asia Minor illuminates specific features in each letter that reflect local conditions in each of those cities.

6. **Unitary.** The document is a literary unity. Individual

Unitary Example: Rev 1:5, 5:6, and 12:11 clearly teach that the meaning of the robe "baptized in blood" for the image of Christ as the rider on the white horse in Rev 19 is not the blood of Christ's enemies but his own blood.



# Revelation

## Critical Issues

► Genre: complex mix of three (apocalypse, prophecy, epistle)

\* Apocalypse (1:1): (1) symbolic language and (2) innovative use of traditions

\* Prophecy (1:3): (3) call to faithful obedience and (4) concord with rest of NT

\* Epistle (1:4): (5) setting primarily historical, and (6) interpreted as a unitary whole

► Sources: complex mix of many (creating very dense presentation)

\* Old Testament: 579 allusions, but not one explicit quote!

\* Other Jewish literature: apocalypses (2 Esdras), non-canonical (1 Enoch), etc.

\* Pagan sources: Python myth (Greek), Zodiac 12 Signs (Babylonian), Roman, etc.

170

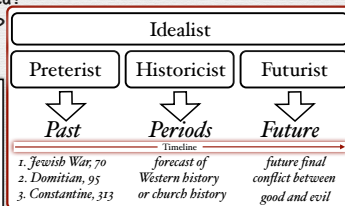
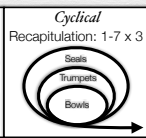
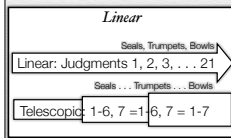
# Revelation

## Critical Issues

► Prophecy: complex questions of how to interpret

\* Structural: how are judgments configured?

\* Historical: when are judgments fulfilled?



# Revelation

## Critical Issues

► Millennium: complex questions of how to interpret

\* Background: how to contextualize?

~ Canonical: nowhere else in Bible, and almost nothing on messianic interregnum

~ Non-canonical: no standard teaching, not even agreed interval of time

~ Result: basic absence of any background! Sectarian teaching? Limited to Rev?

\* Language: how to read?

~ Literal: somewhere, some throne, some type total submission of all governments

~ Symbolic: conceptual, not concrete or referential

# Revelation

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Millennium: complex questions of how to interpret
  - \* Background: how to contextualize?
    - ~ Canonical: nowhere else in Bible, and almost nothing on messianic interregnum
    - ~ Non-canonical: no standard teaching, not even agreed interval of time
    - ~ Basic absence of any background!
  - \* Language: how to read?
    - ~ Literal: somewhere, some throne, some type total submission of all governments
    - ~ Symbolic: conceptual, not concrete or referential

Perhaps 1 Cor 15:24-26, but that passage notoriously lacks detail

# Revelation

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Millennium: complex questions of how to interpret
  - \* Nature: how to conceive?
    - ~ Civic: governmental, institutional, administrative, military, Jewish
    - ~ Personal: existential fulfillment, personal appropriation of lordship
    - ~ Church: co-extensive with present persecuted church or future triumphant church
  - \* Parousia: what is the connection?
    - ~ Premillennial: parousia inaugurates millennial reign of Jewish nation
    - ~ Postmillennial: parousia concludes millennial reign of future church triumphant
    - ~ Amillennial: parousia concludes millennial reign of present church persecuted

# Revelation

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Millennium: summary

### Millennium: Issues of Language, Nature, Parousia

1. *Premillennial*. The language is literal: the millennium is a literal 1000 year reign on earth. The nature is civic: the Jewish nation leads a global government whose capital is Jerusalem. The parousia inaugurates the millennial reign of the Jewish nation.

2. *Amillennial*. The language is symbolic: the millennium symbolizes the present persecuted church. The nature is personal: the reign occurs in the hearts of believers. The parousia concludes the millennial reign of the present church persecuted.

### Millennium: Issues of Language, Nature, Parousia

3. *Postmillennial*. The language is symbolic: the millennium symbolizes a time of unparalleled success in the church's gospel preaching. The nature is ecclesial: the reign occurs in the life of the church coming into full maturity in future history exerting pervasive influence in all areas of life. The parousia concludes the millennial reign of the future church triumphant.

# Revelation

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Canon history
  - \* Permanent problems in the East even up to the present time
  - \* West more amenable, but questions about apostle John as author, and authority
  - \* Reformation: both Calvin and Luther questioned
    - ~ Calvin wrote commentaries on every book of Bible except Revelation
    - ~ Luther relegated Revelation to an appendix in his German translation of NT
  - \* Conclusion: book must be "re-canonized" to be used = preach gospel
  - \* Canon quest inspires Dr. Stevens's "passion-millennial" approach

# Revelation

## Critical Issues

- ▶ Gematria: numeric symbolism
  - \* Ancient numbers: alphabet system
  - \* Typical meanings: 3 = divine, 7 = complete, 6 = incomplete, evil, 10 = human, etc.
  - \* Difficult meanings
    - ~ 144,000 sealed by God (chs. 7, 14); 1,000 year millennial reign (ch. 20)
    - ~ 666 cipher for the beast (ch. 13)
      - ◆ number of beast: Greek word for "beast," *tberion*, in Hebrew letters = 666
      - ◆ number of a man: Greek for "Nero Caesar" in Hebrew letters = 666
      - ◆ another possibility: evil (6) + divine (3x) = 666 = spiritual evil

# Revelation

## Critical

- ▶ Gematria: numeric symbolism
    - \* Ancient numbers: alphabet system
    - \* Typical meanings: 3 = divine, 7 = complete, 6 = incomplete, evil, 10 = human, etc.
    - \* Difficult meanings
      - ~ 144,000 sealed by God (chs. 7, 14); 1,000 year millennial reign (ch. 20)
      - ~ 666 cipher for the beast (ch. 13)
        - ◆ number of beast: Greek word for "beast," *tberion*, in Hebrew letters = 666
        - ◆ number of a man: Greek for "Nero Caesar" in Hebrew letters = 666
        - ◆ another possibility: evil (6) + divine (3x) = 666 = spiritual evil
- "The identification of Nero and the beast is not primarily about an individual. Rather, it reveals the true nature of imperial power: the spirit of Empire is the spirit of Nero, the arch-persecutor and opponent of God's people."  
—Ian Paul, *ExNT*, p. 323

# Revelation

## Theological Themes

- ▶ God as sovereign
  - \* Alpha and Omega: centrality of creation doctrine to eschatology
  - \* Almighty: countering Roman imperial propaganda
  - \* Throne: sovereign over history's goal
- ▶ Christ as redeemer
  - \* Son of Man as Daniel's "Ancient of Days" final judge
  - \* Lion of tribe of Judah as Jewish messianic traditions
  - \* Slaughtered Lamb as gospel truth transcending all
  - \* Highest Christology in NT

Theological significance of titles and hymns as John's principal mode of conveying theology. Note the strategic narrative placement of hymns throughout the book.

## Theological Themes

- ▶ God as sovereign
  - \* Alpha and Omega: centrality of creation doctrine to eschatology
  - \* Almighty: countering Roman imperial propaganda
  - \* Throne: sovereign over history's goal
- ▶ Christ as redeemer
  - \* Son of Man as Daniel's "Ancient of Days" final judge
  - \* Lion of tribe of Judah as Jewish messianic traditions
  - \* Slaughtered Lamb as gospel truth transcending all
  - \* Highest Christology in NT

# Revelation

## Theological Themes

### God as sovereign

- \* Alpha and Omega: centrality of creation doctrine to eschatology
- \* Almighty: countering Roman imperial propaganda
- \* Throne: sovereign over history's goal

### Christ as redeemer

- \* Son of Man as Daniel's "Ancient of Days"
- \* Lion of tribe of Judah as Jewish messiah
- \* Slaughtered Lamb as gospel truth transcending all
- \* Highest Christology in NT

Jesus shares titles, actions, places, and worship with God.

181

# Revelation

## Theological Themes

### Believer's witness

- \* Faithful witness to truth of God, like Jesus
- \* Faithful witness as the point of all "conquering" language in book
  - ~ Conquering theme: cruciality of Rev 12:11 for point of book
    - ◆ Conquer by blood of Lamb
    - ◆ Conquer by the word of their testimony

182

"And they conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not love their lives even to death" (Rev 12:11).

183