THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Hamilton Moore.

The Book of the Revelation has been described as "the finest christian specimen of apocalyptic literature".[1] Such a claim prompts the discussion of three important questions. First, is Revelation an apocalypse to be classified as belonging to the apocalyptic genre? Secondly, is it christian? And finally, how has the apocalyptic imagery and the apocalyptic world-view been modified by christian adaptation in Revelation, in the light of the Christ-event. In this chapter we will attempt an examination of these topics.

Is Revelation an Apocalypse?

The Book of the Revelation opens with the words ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. The term ἀποκάλυψις which often in the New Testament means nothing more than the usual theological idea of revelation,[2] has been taken by scholars and since the early part of the nineteenth century, applied in a more specialized sense to a type of Jewish literature, mostly from the inter-testamental period, dealing with the secrets of the end time.[3] These writings have become known as apocalypses. Since the term itself has been taken from Revelation 1v1 it would be expected that this book also would be identified by all as an apocalypse. But this has been by no means universally the case. Objection to seeing Revelation as an apocalyptic book was expressed, for example by Kallas[4] who argued that its attitude towards suffering was different from that of the apocalypses. In such works sufferings come from forces opposed to God and these forces, which God will ultimately crush, are to be withstood. By contrast, in Revelation and other Jewish writings suffering comes from God and is to be submitted to, not resisted. Jones,[5] in reply was convinced that the situation was more complex than Kallas allowed and insists that there are passages in Revelation (and even in the apocalyptic literature as well) where suffering is regarded as an evil inflicted by the enemies of God (Rev. 1v9; 2v13; 6v9-11). Therefore the validity of Kallas' distinction must be questioned.

Many others since Kallas and Jones have expressed their own views concerning the links between Revelation and apocalyptic. Hill [6] acknowledges that there are certain features in the book which are commonly regarded as evidence of its sharing in the apocalyptic tradition. The imagery of the book, occasionally weird and grotesque, its determinism in which the plan of God is unalterably laid down (the book of the seven seals), and its dualism (between Christ and Satan, the church and the world) betray the influence of the apocalyptic genre. Again its insistence on the imminence of the End and the interest in the End-time events brings us face to face with the apocalyptic world of ideas.[7] But do these features make the book as a whole apocalyptic, or is the apparatus of apocalyptic taken over and made to serve a purpose other than that normally served in apocalyptic literature? Hill insists that there are certain features in Revelation which single it out from other apocalyptic writings. The book is not pseudonymous for, whoever "John" may be, he is known to the churches he addresses and writes under his own name and authority. Again the book nowhere lays claim to fictitious antiquity with esoteric or secret knowledge said to have been sealed up and secretly preserved from olden times, but rather claims to be an open, unsealed message and exhortation related to the present and immediate future.[8] Hill suggests that the work stands closer to the prophetic tradition than to the apocalypses. He finds support for this view in the author's own description of the book (1v3; 22v7,10,18f), the similar method of opening to that of prophetic books (cf Is.1v1), Amos 1v1, 3v7), his casting of himself as a prophet through whom the Spirit speaks (e.g. 2v7,11,17,19), and in his claim to have experienced a clear prophetic call (ch.10, cf Ezk.2v8-3v3). Hill is attracted by Conblin's [9] claim that the intention in Ch.10 is to suggest that with John there is a renewal or recommencement of prophesy- if πάλιν (v11) is capable of bearing this significance. For Hill John's understanding of his prophetic role may be reflected in the phrases ἐγενόμην ἐν πνεύματι (1v10; 4v2) and ἀπήνεγκέν ἐν πνεύματι (17v3,21v10)

and in his bearing witness to the ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ (the יהוה דבר) and in his identification of that witness as λόγος τῆς προφητείας Hill mentions von Rad's[10] differentiation between prophecy and apocalyptic - the former seeing God acting within history, the latter, only at the end, - and is convinced that the prophetic Hilsgeschechte is the view which underlies the book of the Revelation. John's starting point is the saving act of God in Christ. Thus, Hill is convinced that the author of Revelation considered himself a prophet and, while he employs much of the traditional apparatus of apocalyptic, he presents us with a writing prophetic in character and intention.[11]

Morris[12] also admits that apocalyptic characteristics are to be found throughout the Revelation. He mentions its symbolism, its eager anticipation of the setting up of the kingdom, the emphasis on angels and revelations made through them. Yet he also highlights, as Hill, important differences. The book is a prophecy, with no glossing over the offences of christians but rather stern demands for repentance. Again as with apocalyptic, Revelation looks for the End, yet contrary to apocalyptic sees God as having wrought out redemption in history. The really critical thing has already taken place. John sees Christ as victorious and as having won the victory through His death. Thus, while Revelation has connections with apocalyptic it is distinct. "It is a Christian writing setting forth what God has done in Christ and what he will yet do and using something of the apocalyptic method to bring all this out".[13]

Collins[14] in a persuasive article discusses the distinctive features which Revelation, the Apocalypse, is said to possess to establish whether they are merely superficial variants one might find within the genre or point to a distinctive type of literature. He considers the lack of pseudonymity and ex eventu prophecies, and the question of esoterism. As far as pseudonymity is concerned Collins acknowledges that some regard this as an essential feature of apocalyptic and so would exclude Revelation from the genre.[15] He explains that its use in the Jewish

apocalypses is usually related to the decline in prophecy in post-exilic Judaism, and was necessary if the Jewish visionaries and their writings were to have real influence.[16] But since in earliest christianity an authortive status was again accorded to prophecy Collins maintains that the author of Revelation felt free to disperse it. A revelation of Jesus Christ, given to an angel would be acceptable to his readers without any added authority. Thus, in departing from the use of pseudonymity John merely dropped one of the accrediting devices of apocalyptic style found to be superfluous in the historical context and the omission is not sufficient to indicate a new genre.[17] Again the purpose of ex eventu prophecy - according to Collins not a constant feature of Jewish apocalypses,[18] was to establish the predetermination of history and the imminence of the end. In early christian ity, however the proximity of the eschaton was scarcely in doubt. The belief was widespread that the last days had been ushered in by the death and resurrection of Christ. Therefore a christian apocalyptist in the New Testament period did not have to convince his readers that they were living in the last days, and thus the use of ex eventu prophesies was superfluous. Finally, on the question of esoterism Collins notes that much has been made of the fact that Revelation is a circular letter, while the apocalypses are often seen as esoteric in character.[19] He is convinced that the contrast between the "open" Revelation (22v10) and the sealed Jewish apocalypses is more apparent than real, for the esoterism of the Jewish writings is a by-product of the device of pseudonymity. If a book was allegedly written hundreds of years before its publication, some means must be found to explain why it was out of circulation for so long. But in the real author's day the contents were to be revealed and explained rather than kept for a closed circle. (Collins mentions the maskilim in Daniel who must "make the many understand" and 2 Apoc. Bar. which is punctuated by Baruch's preaching to the people, clearly on the basis of the revelation he had received (31-34; 44-47; 77; 78-87). In the light of these considerations

Collins maintains that the major points at which Revelation may be contrasted with the Jewish apocalypses do not represent a major change in perspective but are superficial differences. Their absence does not involve us in a rejection of either the forms or values of the Jewish apocalypses.[20]

Fiorenza[21] approaches the question of the genre of Revelation by a discussion of its complex literary type. Did John intend to create a liturgy, a drama, a cosmic myth, prophetic book, an apocalypse, or are these all used to fill out the epistolary framework which reflects his true literary intention? Some have seen the book as patterned in the form of a liturgy, the Jewish temple liturgy or the Jewish calendar of feasts[22] or a eucharistic or Pascal liturgy.[23] For Fiorenza even a superficial comparison of a ritual book with Revelation makes it clear that all such proposals force a liturgical pattern in the text although that is not to deny that liturgical symbols and forms are some of the structural components John used in its composition.[24] As for seeing Revelation patterned after the stages and scenes of the imperial games[25] there is little evidence, but proposals that the book reflects the influence of Greek dramatic forms are plausible particularly since it has dramatis personae, stage props, chorus, a plot and a tragic-comic ending, and the hymns appear to be used like the choruses of the Greek drama when they comment on a compliment the visions and auditions of the book.[26] For Fiorenza, however, these dramatic elements are also simply component elements and do not constitute its complex literary type. This is true also of the language of myth[27] used in Revelation, (eg. sacred books, stars, animal figures, the birth of the divine child, sacred marriage, the divine polis and the divine warrior); here again we have another component in the overall structure.

What of Revelation as a prophetic book or an apocalypse? Fiorenza is convinced that the author sees himself as a prophet and his work "a word of prophecy". He employs most of the traditional prophetic "forms" eg. vision reports messenger speeches, prophetic oracles, symbolic actions, laments and durges, announcements of judgment and proclam-

ations of salvation. Yet Fiorenza acknowledges that apocalyptic works often contain prophetic forms and it is therefore difficult to distinguish the two types of literature. As far as Revelation is concerned an either - or solution appears out of place for two reasons. The first is that Jewish apocalypticism integrates the prophetic-historical and the mythopoeic-cultic perspective and forms.[28] Prophecy understood divine activity as involving a movement from promise to fulfilment in history; the mythopoeic view tended to eliminate time and history operating in the realm of timeless vision. Jewish apocalyptic in combining both did not eliminate time as ancient myth or reduce itself to a circular movement reanacting again and again the actions of the Gods but remained bound to a linear development toward a promised goal. However, concerning Revelation, Fiorenza is convinced that the prophetic element in apocalyptic appears to dominate. "Language and elements of the combat myth pattern are without doubt found....Yet the author appears to have known this pattern through the mediation of the O.T. prophetic books...the language and pattern of divine warfare appears to be subordinated to the judicial language and patterns of prophetic judgment".[29] The second reason why Revelation cannot be called exclusively prophetic or apocalyptic is that since the early christians conceived of themselves as a prophetic community, apocalyptic imagery and patterns were used to serve prophetic admonition and interpretation and the Apocalypse is an example of this. The author begins his book with exhortation and interpretation of the christian situation in the form of a prophetic vision (1v9 - 3v22) and ends with visionary promise and exhortation (19v11-22v9). Again the central chapters of Revelation (10-14) are explicitly characterized as prophetic interpretation of the christian community's situation.

Is the Revelation just a book of prophecy then, with this element overriding all other elements, dramatic, liturgical, apocalyptic? Fiorenza notes that while the book begins with an introduction similar to Old Testament Prophetic books (cf Amos 1v1-2 with Revelation's superscription (1v1-3) and motto (1v7-8)) indicating both content and tone, yet inserted between the traditional prophetic form of introduction is

the prescript similar to that of the Pauline letters (1v4-6). The book is thus seen as an apostolic open letter to the communities of Asia minor, using dramatic, liturgical, mythopoeic, prophetic apocalyptic and christian language, set within an epistolary framework, which underscores the authority of the work.[30] Support for this view of Revelation is found in Fiorenza's understanding of the structure and composition of the work. She finds here the use of a numerical structure (the seven letters and three series of eschatological plagues) combining a cyclic form of repetition, involving the technique of intercalation[31] with an end-oriented movement which is interrupted by interludes of visions and hymns. This approach to structure enables the small prophetic scroll of ch.10 to retain its important central position,[32] allows the seven letters to be viewed as integral to the book and places the whole work within its proposed epistolary form. Thus the whole complex type of Revelation, involving many elements is integrated into a prophetic-apostolic letter - a convincing claim.

Is Revelation an apocalypse therefore? Yes if we follow Collins; but it is also a prophecy, as Hill maintained, and an apostolic letter as Fiorenza has demonstrated. Perhaps we may fall back upon Beasley-Murray's suggestion[33] that we recognise the uniqueness of Revelation, for within the first five verses of the prologue John has employed these three different categories of composition. The first word he pens is ἀποκάλυψις in v3 he calls his work a "prophecy", and then in v4 proceeds as if he were writing "an epistle". Beasley-Murray maintains "John's book takes its unusual character from its combination in a unique fashion of three of these forms".[34]

Is it Christian?

Many doubts have been expressed about the inclusion of the Book of Revelation in the New Testament canon and it has been regarded as sub-christian if not a-christian in content and tone. These difficulties are not just a modern phenomenon, - witness the problems Revelation experienced in being admitted into the christian canon at the first[35] and note attitudes at the time of the Reformation i.e.

Luther's comment "I cannot find Christ (i.e. Christ in the gospel) in the book of the Revelation",[36] and Calvin's doubts, when he passed over it in eloquent silence in his exposition of the New Testament. In more recent times Dodd [37] claimed that the excessive emphasis on the future had the effect of relegating to a secondary place the elements of the gospel (the Kerygma), which are the most distinctive to Christianity. The Book is evidence of our relapse from realized eschatology to pre-christian Jewish eschatology, which had adapted the whole apparatus of Jewish apocalyptic. The book's conception of the character of God and His attitude to man falls far below the level not only of the teaching of Jesus (His proclamation of the kingdom of God is associated with a new conception of the infinite loving-kindness of the heavenly Father) but also of the best parts of the Old Testament. Therefore "The God of Apocalypse can hardly be recognised as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor has the fierce Messiah, whose warriors rule in blood up to their horses' bridles, many traits that could recall Him of whom the primitive kerygma proclaimed that He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with Him".[38] Bultmann also maintained a similar viewpoint. The christianity of Revelation is a "weakly christianized Judaism" and "the peculiar 'between-ness' of Christian existence has not been grasped".[39]

D.H. Lawrence[40] called this book "the Judas of the New Testament" and his strong criticisms have been outlined in Sweet[41] along with the author's own able reply. Lawrence maintained that while authentic christianity holds that though salvation is to be consummated hereafter, it is already present and tangable now (II Cor.5v17, Co.3v1), Revelation seems intoxicated with the future - reigning in glory hereafter to compensate the frustrated desire to reign now. Sweet however is convinced that the book was written rather for christians who were intoxicated with the present. The victorious Christ is present now among the churches (2v1), and christians already share in his victory as "heaven-dwellers" (12v10-12), although they may lose their crowns (3v11). Again, for Lawrence there is a vindictive

harping in ch.6-20 on the torture and destruction of enemies (6v10, 14v11,20; 18v20; 19v17-21). But Sweet explains that this vindictiveness is directed against abstractions - Babylon, the beasts, the dragon, and the language reflects the conventional idiom of apocalyptic. One must remember that tyrannical rulers, torture and execution were part of daily life and John's "excesses" might be excused as the product of the author's personal situation and psychology.[42] Finally Lawrence claimed that the titles of God and of Christ in Revelation are always titles of power never of love. He maintains that there are two kinds of christianity in the New Testament, (a) the christianity of tenderness focused on Jesus and the command to love one another, and the other focused on the Apocalypse, i.e. the undying will to power in man. The devil has slipped into the New Testament at the last moment in apocalyptic disguises; "just as inevitably as Jesus had to have Judas Iscariot among His disciples, so did there have to be a Revelation in the New Testament."[43] Sweet however believes Lawrence has lost sight of the master-image of the slain Lamb, signifying the power of redemptive love, and that the structure of the book makes the severity of ch.6-20 subordinate to the pictures of Creation and Redemption in ch.4 and 5 and of healing and fulfilment in ch.21v1-22v5.

unique approach to the question of the christian character of Revelation is found in J. Massyngberde Ford's commentary.[44] She maintains that Revelation is not primarily a christian book; it does not fit into the christian apocalyptic genre, and has simply received christian additions. In support of her viewpoint she finds a difference between the Apocalypse and the New Testament apocalypses in I and II Thess., the Gospels and Jude and II Peter, in that Revelation is the only one in which Jesus is not the central figure.[45] Again the post New Testament christian apocalypses like the Didache, Shepherd of Hermas, Ass. of Isaiah, Ap. of Peter and Chr.Sib., all feature overt and indirect quotations from the New Testament and references to events in the life of Christ recorded there. Revelation ch.4-22 on the other hand in its Christology, Pneumatology and Ecclesiology shows little evidence of being a truly christian work.

Ford has revived the compilation theories of Revelation proposed by earlier scholars.[46] She maintains that the authorship of ch.4-11 originated in a trance-like revelation to John the Baptist recorded by a disciple before Jesus commenced His public ministry. Ch. 12-22 was written by a disciple of John in the mid sixties who may or may not have been converted to christianity. Ch.1-3, 22v16a, 20b,21 were added later by a Jewish Christian disciple who still retained the fiery, somewhat pessimistic outlook of his former master John. Therefore Massyngberde Ford places Revelation earlier than the gospels and most of the New Testament. It is "a prophetic link between the Old and New Covenants, and prepares the way for the gospel".[47]

Not much time or space needs to be devoted to these proposals, as they have not found much support among New Testament scholars. One cannot always dismiss clearly christian statements and references to Jesus in the main body of the book as interpolations (14v12, 17v6, 19v10, 21v14, 21v1 14v6, 13v8). Again, the identification of the scarlet woman, marked with the name Babylon, with Jerusalem and not with Rome seems very improbable. If one asks how Jerusalem is a maritime power, established upon many waters, with dominion over the kings of the earth reference is made to "sailors of the sea of Galilee and men employed in the brisk trade involving the salt industry at Qumran in the Dead Sea area"![48] The Lamb in ch.5 who redeems by His blood clearly is to be identified with the Lord Jesus Christ and His sacrifical death.

One popular method of attempting to defend the christian nature of the book of the Revelation is to appeal to the value of its "essential truths" or its "abiding message" for today. For example Hunter in the 1958 ed. of his introduction to the New Testament[49] suggests that John is involved in a particular historical situation and is sure that God is going to intervene catastrophically very soon with the result that Rome's end and the world's end will come. For Hunter his prognostications were not fulfilled as he expected. Rome did not fall as he said...Yet if the seer's lurid vision of the outpouring of God's wrath on Rome were not literally fulfilled, we may surely say that his promises of divine

succour for the stricken church were realized. In the essential truths which he proclaimed through his apocalyptic imagery the seer was right - i.e. all history is divinely controlled; the world is a scene of great conflict between good and evil, and in the end of the day God will finally cope with evil and make an end of it. Heaven is the most real place of all. This "modern understanding" of Revelation according to Hunter makes us value it higher than the reformers did.[50]

Not all New Testament scholars are content just to defend Revelation as christian by affirming simply its "essential truths". Fiorenza[51] attempted to uphold its genuinely christian character by an examination of the dispute of the author with Nicolaitan opponents, interpreted as christian gnostic enthusiasts, strikingly similar to the opponents of Paul in I Corinthians.[52] According to Fiorenza, John polemicizes against them not only in the "letters" but also in the entire book and is more in opposition to them than the Roman state and cult. She discusses whether the author employs an authentic christian theology or whether his christian faith is only superficial because he is so completely immersed in Jewish apocalypticism. Fiorenza is convinced that just as Paul fought his battle against Corinthian enthusiasts under the banner of apocalyptic (as Kasemann maintained) so John has taken the same approach.[53] Both make little reference to the earthly Jesus but centre their theologies in the resurrected Lord of the world. Also as Paul modified his cosmological theology by stressing the importance of the death of Christ, so John emphasises that Christ's Lordship over the world as "King of Kings" is rooted in His violent death (Rev. 5v3-14). Therefore Fiorenza claims that rather than just preserving remnants of Jewish christian theology, the author of Revelation, like Paul, chooses it in his struggle against the Nicholaitanes. Paul counters a realized eschatology by insisting that the christians have not yet achieved their resurrection because the last enemy, death, is still to be overcome. John argues that christians are already appointed to kingship and priesthood but are not yet taking part in the heavenly liturgy until the New Heaven and the New Earth. Thus the apocalyptic question as to

whom lordship of the world belongs underlies both works, and John's theology in Revelation "proves itself to be a christian theology in its own right and comparable to Paul's theological accomplishment".[54] We may not accept Fiorenza's view for a polemic against christian gnostics in the whole of Revelation rather than Rome but this does not neuteralize her defence of John's christian theology.

A more thorough and telling discussion of the true christian nature of the Book of Revelation is to be found in a recent article by Beasley-Murray,[55] briefly mentioned earlier. He examines the supposed sub-christian nature of its Christology, its eschatology and its doctrine of God, said to obscure the apostolic gospel, which lies at the heart of the New Testament. In considering its eschatology he compares the portrait of the Messiah as a lamb in the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs with that in Revelation ch.5. In the Testament of Joseph ch.19 we have in fact two Messiahs, one from Aaron and another from Judah, a lamb and a lion. The Lamb arises to destroy the mighty nations and bring deliverance to Israel by way of orthodox conquest in battle. It has nothing to do with sacrifice but is the young champion of the flock of God. In Revelation 5 the two figures of the lamb and the lion are fused together and unlike the Lamb in Test. of Joseph John's Lamb "stands as it had been slain", i.e. it has been slaughtered but lives again. Since exodus typology is common in the Book of the Revelation it seems clear that John wants his readers to recognise here also God's Passover Lamb (5v9 the Lamb ransomed men to God). The Warrior Lamb has thus conquered by accepting the role of Passover Lamb and so made possible a second exodus. For Beasley-Murray this transformation of the orthodox viewpoint of apocalyptic cannot be exaggerated. "It is more than the change of an apocalyptic figure into a christian symbol for the Saviour. The very nature of eschatology and salvation has been transformed in this change of concept of the Messiah"[56] The eschatology of Revelation is proclaiming that the long awaited deliverance that initiates the new age has already been achieved.

For Beasley-Murray also the Christology of Revelation is "very lofty"[57] worship is offered to the Lamb such as belongs to God alone. He is Alpha and Omega (22v13), mediator of creation (3v14) as of redemption (ch.5) and of the final kingdom (19v11ff), which is the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ (11v15). Again, the doctrine of God in the Revelation should not be viewed by itself but rather in the light of the Christology, soteriology and eschatology presented in the book. The God of creation (ch.4) is also the God of redemption (ch.5). It is God in Christ who delivers mankind and God in Christ who judges mankind. Revelation's presentation of the judgment of God has often been misunderstood. The three series of messianic judgments (seals, trumpets, bowls) present from three different aspects a single short period of judgment in history. Many have not grasped that this brief period is seen as a repetition of Israel's experience in Egypt. Antichrist is another Pharoah who resists God and brings judgment on himself and those associated with him, like the plagues of Egypt. But, as in Exodus, the crucial event is not the plagues, but the redemption which brings deliverance. With these arguments Beasley-Murray has presented a strong case for seeing the true christian nature of Revelation. Its purpose will not only have been the encouragement of the saints in their dark hour, but the bringing of men to their senses (9v20f) and to belief in the gospel (14v6) that they might share in the blessings of Christ's redemption (ch.5) and future glory (ch.21-22).

The Modification of Apocalyptic in Revelation

The Christ-event has meant modification for the apocalyptic world-view even in this most apocalyptic of books in the New Testament. Kümmel[58] examines the Apocalypse of John as an apocalyptic and prophetic book and in a masterly way outlines that modification. As others have, he finds many links in Revelation with the literary genre of Jewish apocalyptic, but stresses that "at more than one point the seer of the Apocalypse frees himself in a characteristic way from the schema of apocalyptic literature and sketches a historical picture of quite a different sort from Jewish apocalyptic".[59] Some notable differences are the fact that

Revelation is not a pseudonymous book, for John writes under his own name; he presents what he has seen, not secret wisdom allegedly from primitive times; the book is intended for a large circle and its literary framework, a preface (1v4ff) and conclusion (22v21) is reminiscent of the literary form of much early christian literature. But it is in its view of history that the Apocalypse contrasts even more sharply from the Jewish type. "What is new here in Revelation is a total recasting of the apocalyptic view of history out of the Jewish into the Christian mould. The apocalyptic view of history has received a new substructure through the historical appearance of Jesus. On this the entire weight of the structure rests. In distinction from Jewish apocalyptic there is lacking here any look back into the past and any forward view out of that fictional past into the present. For John, the point of departure for his eschatological hope is rather the belief in the saving of God in Jesus, and in his redemptive work which signifies victory."[60] In the light of this we must acknowledge that while apocalyptic has been strongly influential in this book it has experienced significant modification because of Christ's appearance and achievement at the cross. The apocalyptists looked forward to the end of the age for deliverance and blessing; John stresses that that deliverance has already been achieved in Christ. Thus here as in the Synoptics, and as in Paul, the coming of Christ has transformed the apocalyptic world-view. Yet it needs to be stressed that the apocalyptic hope has not been completely discarded. Beasley-Murray may stress[61] that Rev.5 reveals that Christ has commenced His rule, but he also acknowledges "the rest of creation has yet to render the acknowledgement due to the Lamb".[62] Again while lying at the heart of John's doctrine of redemption is the conviction that the kingdom promised through the prophets came among men (Beasley-Murray's interpretation of the author's millennial teaching),[63] yet he admits that that kingdom awaits a glorious revelation in history at the intervention of Christ at His parousia and will only reach its consummation in the transcendent order of the new creation. Also concerning the concept of the New Jerusalem, common in Jewish apocalyptic[64]

there may be "hints in Revelation 20-22, above all in 20.9 that the city which descends from heaven to earth is manifest in the kingdom of Christ" /65 but it still continues into the new creation.
Finally we may add that the Lamb who offers himself in sacrifice and brings deliverance (5.6,12;12.11;13.6) is still the Lamb who pours out his wrath (ch.6; 14.10), who overcomes those who make war with him (17.14), an emphasis which echoes the use of this concept in Jewish apocalyptic. /66 Therefore in conclusion we can say that "in the finest christian specimen of apocalyptic literature" /67 apocalyptic has been modified, even transformed, by the Christ-event, but the apocalyptic hope has not been cast aside. In fact, the past triumph of the Lamb in history and his presence in glory is the assurance of the full and final fulfilment of that hope.

Notes

1. A.M. Hunter, Introducing the NT, (SCM 1972), 88
2. eg cf Rom.16.25; 1 Cor 14.26; Gal 1.12;2.2; Eph 1.17;3.3
3. Barker, "Slippery Words", Exp.T. traces the use of the term in this specialized sense to the German scholar K.I. Nitzsch who used it in the early part of the last century to describe books which resembled the biblical apocalypse.
4. J. Kallas, "The Apocalypse - and Apocalyptic Book?" JBL , 86,1967, 69-80
5. B.W. Jones, "More about the Apocalypse as Apocalyptic", JBL,88 1968. 325-327
6. D. HILL, "Prophecy and Prophets in Revelation" NTS 18, 401-418
7. ibid, 402f
8. ibid., 403
9. J. Conblin, Le Christ dans l'Apocalypse,Paris 1965, 5f, 85 in Hill, op.cit, 403f
10. G. von Rad, Theology of the OT,II, ET, London 1965, 303ff
11. Hill, op.cit, 406ff
12. L. Morris.op.cit, 91ff
13. ibid, 95
14. J.J. Collins, "Pseudonymity, Historical Reviews and the Genre of the Revelation of John, CBQ 1977, Vol 39

15. Collins mentions B.W. Jones, op.cit., P. Vielhauer. "Apocalyptic in Early Christianity" in E. Hennecke, NT Apocrypha. ed. W. Schneemelcher; Philadelphia 1965, II 608-42

16. Collins finds support in R.H. Charles, APOT 2 IX

17. Collins, op.cit., 342

18. Such prophecies are missing in eg The Similitudes of Enoch 1-36; cf also 2 Enoch

19. See Daniel 12.4; also 4 Ezra 14. The visionary writes 94 books of which 24 the canonical books, were to be made public but 70 must be kept to deliver them to the wise among the people

20. op.cit., 342ff Collins believes the role of Jesus Christ in Revelation constitutes a major difference between this book and other apocalypses but still sees Christ as conforming to the traditional Jewish concept of heavenly warrior or judge, and its message is not altogether the kind the earthly Jesus envisaged in his own teaching.

21. E.S. Fiorenza, "The Composition and Structure of the Book of the Revelation", CBQ 1977, Vol 39, 344-366

22. A.W. Farrer, A Rebirth of Images, Boston 1949, finds in Revelation an elaborate pattern based on the week of creation, overlaid with the four important feasts of the Jewish liturgical year (Passover, New Year, Tabernacles and Dedication) suitably arranged.

23. M.H. Shepherd, The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse, Richmond 1960, 83

24. op.cit., 353

25. E. Stauffer, Christus und die Cäsaren, 6th Ed., Hamburg: Wittig 1964 in Fiorenza, op.cit. 353

26. P. Palmer, The Drama of the Apocalypse. NYork 1903; J.W. Bowman,"The Revelation to John. Its Dramatic Structure & Message", Int 9, 1955, 436ff

27. P. Carrington, "Astral Mythology in the Revelation", ATR 13, 1941, 289-305

28. op.cit., 356. Fiorenza quotes in support P.D. Hanson, Dawn, 402-403

29. op.cit. 357

31. The technique of intercalation involves the narration of two formal units or episodes (A and A1) and then intercalating another form or scene ie B between them, thus requiring the reader to see the combined text as a whole. Revelation often displays a double intercalation (cf Fiorenza, ibid, 361ff

32. Fiorenza points out that one can see here the affinity of the structure of Revelation to that of the Greek drama for, according to the compositional rules of the tragedy, the climax falls near the centre of the action and the denouement comes near the end.

33. G.R. Beasley-Murray, Revelation 34 ibid

35. For an outline of these difficulties see eg W.G. Kümmel, ntroduction to NT,, S.C.M., 1963, 469ff

36. See Beasley-Murray, "How Christian is the Book of Revelation?" in L.Morris Festschrift, Reconciliation and Hope, IVPress ,275

37. C.H. Dodd, Apostolic Preaching and its Development,

38. ibid., 40ff 39. R. Bultmann, Theology of NT, II London 1955, 175

40. D.H. Lawrence, op.cit.,

41. J. Sweet, Revelation, London 1979, 48ff

42. Sweet makes reference to C.G. Jung, Answer to Job,(ET Routledge and Kegan Paul) 1954; Reissued, Hodder & Stoughton 1965, 121ff

43. op.cit., 14

44. J. Massyngberde Ford, Revelation, NYork 1975

45. For Massyngberde-Ford the Lamb in ch.5 is simply the divine-human Messiah of Jewish apocalypticism and there is no reference here to Jesus or his death

46. Cf Fiorenza, Composition for examples 47. op.cit.

48. op.cit. 49. Hunter, op.cit 50. ibid, 103ff

51. Fiorenza, "Apocalyptic & Gnosis in the Book of Revelation & Paul", JBL,92, 1973, 565-81

52. ibid., 571ff 53. ibid, 573ff 54. ibid, 581

55. Beasley-Murray, "How Christian etc 56. ibid 279

57. ibid., 282

58. Kümmel, op.cit.458ff

59 ibid, 459 60. ibid 461-2

61. op.cit., 279ff 62. ibid 280

63. ibid.,280f

64. eg Text of Daniel 5.12; II baruch 32:2-4; II Esdras 7.26; 10.49

65. Beasley-Murray, op.cit., 281

66. eg 1 Enoch 89. 45,48

67. See p.1