

Abstract

The Apocalypse is replete with allusions to the Jewish scriptures. Many scholars acknowledge this dense network of allusions and conclude that these allusions help to explicate this complex literary work. Although many scholars agree that Daniel, especially Daniel 7, is a key source text for the allusions in the Apocalypse, no scholar has systematically examined its use. Another problem concerns Rev 1:7-8. Although many scholars regard Rev 1:7, 1:8, or 1:7-8 as thematic for Revelation, they have not substantiated their claim for its thematic centrality. Various lines of argument show that Rev 1:7-8, which highlights the cosmic parousia of Christ, is the multivalent thematic statement of the Apocalypse. As two interlinked prophetic oracles, Rev 1:7-8 features a prominent allusion to Dan 7:13, which, along with Daniel 7, serves as a major key for unlocking the multilayered meaning of the Apocalypse. The author centrally places these prophetic oracles in the prologue of Revelation, channeling the two oracles to flow into the prophetic core of the discourse. In crafting Rev 1:7-8 as the multivalent thematic statement, the author uses a variety of literary devices, including poetry, concentric double-ring composition, inclusive language, and liturgical dialogue. The author also uses chain-link interlock to connect Rev 1:7-8 with the initial vision in Rev 1:9-20. In turn, Rev 1:9-20 provides key words, phrases, and themes that recur in many passages in the Apocalypse. The author further links Rev 1:7-8 and Revelation 4–5 and establishes Daniel 7 as an allusion that controls the text in these two central chapters. Building upon his network of allusions, the author uses key words throughout Revelation 6–22 that resonate with Rev 1:7-8. With Rev 1:7-8 as the axis, the author expands the meaning of Christ's cosmic parousia in all its dimensions and ramifications. Thus, Christ comes first to John on Patmos, continues coming to his people throughout the story, and comes triumphantly at the cosmic parousia. The effects of the cosmic parousia unfold until the judgment at the great white throne and the creation of the new heaven and the new earth, where God and Christ rule forever.