

Foreword

One of the elements which defined early Protestantism was their *historicist*¹ approach to the understanding of Bible prophecy. *Historicism* interprets Bible prophecy as it has been fulfilled in history. Once the climate of ecumenism had developed amongst those churches, however, the inescapable conclusions of the historicist method of interpretation became increasingly unpalatable.

As a result, most Christian churches now apply a *Futurist / Dispensationalist* approach to Bible prophecy. *Futurism* typically seeks to place most prophecy into the future around the Second Advent. Other methods of interpretation such as the *Preterist*² and *Idealist*³ have also been introduced in an attempt to escape the uncomfortable yet compelling identification of key players in the prophecies describing the Christian era.

Today, Seventh-day Adventists almost stand alone as a denomination which still adheres to the historicist method. Work has been done to thoroughly validate the established Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Bible prophecy. It achieves this by faithful adherence to the Biblical principle of Scripture interpreting Scripture. It also acknowledges the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy in clarifying and affirming the Biblical text.

Unless otherwise indicated Biblical references are from the New King James Version. Wide use is made of historical sources to demonstrate how prophecies in the Apocalypse have been, and are being, dramatically fulfilled. This makes for fascinating and inspirational reading, while at the same time providing a readable but detailed exposition of the Book of Revelation.

The work is thoroughly referenced, providing an historical insight into the Christian Church and the movements which have shaped its history. The record of history is compelling evidence that the conclusions of the historicist approach are not only valid but verified.

A true understanding of the Book of Revelation is inspirational. It builds a grounded faith. A reading of each topic will establish the veracity of God's Word and provide an understanding of His acts in the history of His people.

This work is not an exhaustive treatment of the Book of Revelation. There remain many spiritual lessons and insights available to us from the study of this inspired book which are outside the scope of this work. Rather, this set of studies is designed to give confidence in the time-honoured prophetic interpretations of this book.

While this commentary follows the chapters of Revelation sequentially, the exposition is topic-based, rather than chapter-orientated. Commencing in March 2011, a new topic will be posted to the Waitara Church web site each week.

The Apocalypse of John, as the Book of Revelation is also known, is the revelation of Jesus Christ. It is the prayer of the Waitara Seventh-day Adventist church that every person who reads this work will come to understand the love of God for His people and come to know Jesus the Messiah as Lord and Saviour, and soon returning King of Kings.

The Waitara Seventh-day Adventist Church

¹ A more complete understanding of these terms below may be found on the internet.

² *Preterism* places the fulfilment of prophecy in the past, typically around the first century AD.

³ *Idealism* interprets the symbolic writings figuratively as spiritual lessons.