

Hermann Gebhardt, *The Doctrine of The Apocalypse* and its relation to the Doctrine of the Gospel and Epistles of John, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 38 George Street, 1878. This is a great, old work, but is still quite readily available as a used book, though sometimes quite expensive. There is a vital need for a new work of this subject in view of the vast contemporary critical literature on *The Gospel, The Epistles, and The Revelation of John*. This work is filled with running debate with the leading 19th century theologians therefore much of the content is irrelevant except for considerations in Historical Theology. The same is also true of the great theological commentary on the First Epistle of John, Robert Law, *Tests of Life*, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark. This is an excellent examination of the First Epistle of John and should be reprinted.

Gebhardt considers the doctrines of God, Angels, Heaven, The Devil, Perdition, the Earth and Mankind, Christ, The Spirit, The Gospel, Christian Life, Christendom, AntiChrist, The Last Things, The Call to the World to repent, the consolation of the Christians, The Future of Israel, The World in Wickedness, The End of the World, The Coming of the Lord, The Resurrection of Believers, The Judgment, and the Final State. Gebhardt provides an excellent analysis of the major doctrines of The Revelation in pages 1 through 303 from 304 to 424 he compares the theology of the Gospel, Epistles and The Revelation. Gebhardt also shares some of the negative German attitudes of his day toward the Bible and its doctrines. We shall consider only some of the doctrines discussed in the last section of Gebhardt's work.

G. B. Stevens, *Johannine Theology*. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895. This is still a valuable work to consult, but like Dr. Steven's other works, it clearly reveals that he does not have an adequate view of The Scriptures as the Word of God.

Henry B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John. op cit.*, chp. 14, Doctrine, pp. clix to clxxiii. There is much valuable material in this excellent reprint. Dr. Swete discusses the doctrines of God, Christ, the Spirit, the Church, Salvation, Angels, the Last Things, and Christian hope.

Special Study

Titles For Christ in The Revelation!

(These titles and their significance can provide excellent preaching materials for a series of sermons).

This appendix does not pretend to give an exhaustive list of the titles applied to Christ in *The Revelation*. Neither does it claim anything resembling an adequate discussion of these great names and phrases which describe the nature of the person of Christ, and the function of His work as redeemer.

We shall use Warfield's two general categories for the names of Christ in *The Revelation* (see his work listed below in note pp. 287): (1) Simple Designations; (2) Descriptive Designations. We will not discuss the distinction which must be made between the terms as proper name and as Messianic titles.

Simple Designations

(1) *Jesus Christ* (1:1, 1:5). This compound title is a combination of Jesus, which is transcribed from the Greek name and was used to translate the Hebrew *Jeshua*. The root of this Hebrew name means "He whose salvation is Yahweh." Jesus was a very common name in the first century A.D. Josephus gives over twenty persons with this name. Many of these were contemporaries of Jesus Christ, our Lord. (See Acts 13:6 - "a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus." *Bar* is Aramaic for son; therefore this man was the son of a Jesus).

The other title of the combination, *Christ*, is used in The Septuagint for the Hebrew word translated anointed. (Kings, Priests, Prophets and the Messianic Son of David were anointed.) Jesus Christ summed up all the implications of these two great names in the combination Jesus Christ.

(2) *Jesus* is used in 1:9; 12:17; 14:12; 17:6; 19:10; 20:4; 22:16. See brief discussion above on the compound - Jesus Christ.

(3) *Christ* used in 20:4,6. *The Christ* is used 11:15; 12:10 (compounds used 1:1,2,5).

(4) *The Lord Jesus* is used 22:20,21. The name Jesus has already been mentioned. The other part of this compound title is one of the most important applied to Jesus, so we will give a more extended consideration.

(5) *The Lord* is used in 14:13 (probably); 1:10; and part of title in 19:16 and 17:14. To the infant Christian community in Jerusalem, the ascended Jesus was their God, whom they addressed in prayer and from whom they sought in prayer the activities which specifically belong to God. Quite naturally in these circumstances the chief narrative name for Jesus in Acts becomes the honorific *the Lord*, which is employed about twice as frequently as the simple *Jesus* (thirty one times), and which is occasionally given more precision by taking the form the Lord Jesus or even the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is equally clear that in the use of this term the meaning primarily expressed is the profoundest reverence on the part of the

community before the highest conceivable exaltation and authority on the part of Jesus himself. It is often extremely difficult to determine whether, by *Lord*, Jesus or God the Father is intended. Some scholars maintain that the word *Lord*, appearing alone, always is God the Father in the New Testament.

We would have no problem concerning this title, had it not been for the publication of Wilhelm Boussett's *Kyrios Christos*, and the literature resulting therefrom. Dr. Vincent Taylor suggests an interval after Christ's ministry before the term was applied to Jesus.

What does the term *Lord* imply? What is its source - Hellenistic or Judaistic? How does the New Testament employ the term? Was the deific implication latent in the term before Pauline terminology became the dominant language of Christianity? Conflicting answers are given in Rudolf Buttmann's *New Testament Theology* and Adolf Deissmann's *Light From the Ancient East*. The problem is more than apologetic. It raises the question as to how the believing community regarded Jesus, and the grounds on which their regard rested.

In classical usage, *lord* describes a person who has control over another person or thing, either by right of divinity or by right of ownership. In the case of Christ, these two propositions are inseparable.

In the Septuagint translation, *kyrios* ("lord") is used as the translation of some twenty different Hebrew words and phrases, some of which apply to God specifically, and a few of which apply to man.

The New Testament use of the term involves at least three aspects: (1) "ownership"; (2) right of service"; and (3) "right of obedience." Paul uses this title for God almost exclusively in quoting from the Old Testament.

Elsewhere the term is employed of rulers, Roman deities, both male and female, and as a title of respect. It is used in Acts to show the subjection of the believer to Christ, thus manifesting two of the aforementioned three basic ideas in the term: ownership and right of obedience. Christ is designated in a discourse of Peter as "Lord of all" (Acts 10:36); the Greek for all is neuter, meaning Lord of all things - that is to say, universal sovereign. The phrase recalls the great declaration of Romans 9:5 to the effect that He is God over all. This use might also contain a theocratic suggestion of authority over all things. The sense of majestic exaltation is so clearly implied

we shall not labor its defense. To the early Christians, Jesus was Lord, as Jehovah God was Lord. They were neither led to that declaration nor deterred from it by Gentile applications of the term to their gods and great men.

(6) *The Lord's Christ* (also *God's Christ*) 11:15; 12:10. Here the term Lord is plainly applied to Yahweh. Note also that this term is applied without qualification to Jesus Christ.

(7) *The Son of God* is used in 2:18—(Note Jesus' words - My Father 2:27; 3:5,21). This title categorically asserts the Deity of Jesus Christ. Neither the O.T. nor the Hellenistic usage can possibly account for the biblical significance of this term as applied to Jesus by inspired writers. The title claims that Jesus Christ is unequivocally the Son of God (via His divine nature and not by way of adoption, as sinners *become* sons of God through Christ).

(8) *Son of Man* is used in 1:13; 14:14. This is a title which finds its origin in the Book of Daniel. This is the title which Jesus used - himself. It emphasized His human nature, just as other titles emphasized His divine nature.

(9) *The Word of God* is used in 19:13. (Hebrews 4:12-13; John 1:1-18). For our brief remarks see Special Study on The Biblical Doctrine of The Word of God after Chapter 19.

(10) *King of Kings and Lord of Lords* is used in 19:16 and in varied form in 1:5; 2:1,12; 3:7; 5:5; 17:14. The entire biblical teaching concerning the Kingdom of God in both O.T. and N.T. is summed up when the Seer of Patmos called Jesus Christ - "King of Kings." As Lord of the universe, He will reign over heaven and earth. The O.T. Messiah was to set on the throne of His Father David. Jesus fulfilled the prophetic declarations of the O.T. as He reigns eternally from the throne in the hearts of believers. But even the lost, unbeliever will one day need to acknowledge that Jesus is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." There is no greater ruler in the universe!

Descriptive Designations

(See B. B. Warfield, pp. 290)

(1) "Him that loved us and loosed us from our sins by His blood" - is used only in 1:5. This descriptive title has been basically considered in the text of the commentary. Every Christian must be grateful to Christ for redeeming us by His blood. This is our only hope of escaping the deadly power and guilt of our sins. (Also see note on *Blood* in this commentary.)

(2) The Lamb that hath been slain" - used in 5:12, 5:6,9; 7:14; 13:8. The title Lamb has already been discussed in the commentary. This is the imagery of the sacrificial lamb. Here is a clear and categorical claim for the vicarious atonement by God's Lamb, our Lord! (See *The Hebrew Epistle* for further marvelous claims about Christ's redemptive sacrifice.)

(3) *The Lamb* is used in 5:8, 13; 6:1,16; 7:9,10,14,17; 12:11; 14:1,4,10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7,9; 21:9,14,22,27; 22:1,3. The entire imagery of Isaiah 53:7 (see Acts 8:32f) is brought into play in this symbol. John the Baptist also came heralding - "Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"! John 1:29,36. This is also our unchanging message to the contemporary world which is filled with lost men!

(4) *The First born of the Dead* is used only in 1:5. The Greek word *prototokos* - firstborn is derived from the O.T. - Exodus 4:22, where it is used of Israel; Jeremiah 31:9 where it is used of Ephriam and Psalm 89:27, where it is used of the Messianic King. The implication of the term derives from the fact that God required the firstborn of the flocks, and the firstborn male inherited a double portion of the inheritance and the birthright. This background necessary to understand; John's use of the title. (See also Romans 8:29; Col. 1:15,18; Hebrews 1:6.)

The Arians, both ancient and their contemporary counterpart, the Jehovah's witnesses, attempted to use this term to show that Jesus Christ was a created being. This is a far cry from the scriptural assertions that Jesus Christ is God come in human flesh.

(5) *The Faithful Witness* - used only in 1:5. This title describes Jesus as faithfully bearing testimony concerning His heavenly Father. Their will or purpose for and message too - us are identical. "Nevertheless, thy will be done" - Matt 26:39.

(6) *The Faithful and True* - used only 19:11. Again, Christ is described as faithful to His Messianic vocation. He is said to be true. The Greek noun form means truth as distinct from the false, and it also has the connotation of being real or genuine in contrast to the unreal and counterfeit.

Note: For an excellent, but strange source for further study on the implications of the Greek vocabulary for *truth*, etc., see Martin Heidegger's, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, New Haven, Yale University Press. It contains a brilliant analysis. *The Manual of Discipline* (Dead Sea Scrolls) also contains some interesting information on the general Hebrew attitude toward the truth, the real, etc.

(7) *The Amen* is used in 5:14(?); 18:4. The English form is the transliteration of a Hebrew adverbial form of a verb meaning to support, or to confirm. These implications fit neatly into the picture of our Lord given in *The Revelation*.

(8) *The beginning of the creation - of God* - is used only in 3:14. The word translated "beginning" is *hē archē*. From the period of Homer forward it has the significance of beginning, first cause, government, as in Ephesians 6:12. This title declares that Christ is the source and origin of the creation of God (See also John 1:1-18; Hebrews 1:1-4.)

(9) "He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the keys of David, He that openeth and none shall shut and that shutteth and none shall open"—3:7.

(10) *The Lion that is of the tribe of Judah* is used only in 5:4. This title is found only in *The Revelation* (in the N.T.). Jesus is connected with the Davidic throne and the people of Israel. A lion would never be attacked by any animal its size, particularly when it is in its den. When John saw "in the midst of the throne, he saw not a lion, but a lamb standing as though it had been slain." Note the paradox - The Lion and the Lamb!

(11) *The ruler of the kings of the earth* is used only 1:5. Its meaning is clear and is also asserted in other titles.

(12) *The Root of David* in 5:6 only. This title is also found only in *The Revelation* (in the N.T.).

(13) *The Root and the Offspring of David, the bright, the morning Star*. Only in 22:16. The Bright, the Morning Star is found only here in the N.T. (See Numbers 24:15-19.)

(14) "The Son of God who hath eyes like a flame of fire and His feet are like unto burnished brass" - 2:18.

(15) "He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, He that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks - 2:1.

(16) "He that hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars" - 3:1.

(17) *He that hath the sharp two-edged sword* - only in 2:12. The Word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword in Hebrews 4:12-13. Here the living word personally wields a sword of judgment, which is also the Word of God! The sword is for the battle with evil.

(18) *The First and Last, which was dead and lived again* - only in 2:8. See the commentary for brief explanation of the verse. The words First and Last are clear claims for the deity of Christ. These titles are taken from Isaiah 44:6 - "I am the

first and I am the last; and besides me there is no God." (See also Isaiah 48:12).

(19) *The Living One* - only 1:18. This participle asserts that Christ is eternally alive. He has forever abolished death!

(20) *Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End* - only in 22:13. R. H. Charles shows that this title was used by the Greeks, Romans and the Jewish Rabbis to denote the entirety of all things.

The term God (*Theos*) is not directly applied to Christ in *The Revelation* but His deity is asserted with the most unequivocal language. Swete (*op. cit.*) has an excellent, brief statement, pp. c 1 XII (p. 162).

"1. He has the prerogatives of God.

2. He searches men's hearts, 2:23.

3. He can kill or restore life, 11:18; 2:23.

4. Receives worship - 5:13.

5. His priests are also priests of God - 20:6.

6. He occupies one throne with God - 22:1,3.

7. Shares one sovereignty with God, 11:15.

8. Christ receives the titles of God - He is the Living One 1:18; Holy and True, 3:7; Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, 22:13.

9. Passages which in O.T. relate to God are without hesitation applied to Christ, e.g., Deut. 10:17; 17:14; Prov. 3:12, 3:19, Dan. 7:9; 1:114; Zech. 4:10; 5:6."

There is some great biblical preaching to be done on the great names of Christ. They describe His person and function of His work. The imagery is not hard to communicate in preaching and teaching.

Note: The following works will be valuable for further study on the titles for Christ used in the N.T. in general, as well as *The Revelation*.

William Barclay, *Jesus as They Saw Him*, Harper and Row, New York, 1962. Very good preaching material.

O. Cullmann, *The Christology of The New Testament*, Westminster Press, Phil. English translation, 1959. Very fine examination of the titles, and their implication for the person and work of Christ. Cullmann is an excellent "mediating," European Lutheran scholar. He has control of the vast range of literature, and he also provides excellent bibliographical information, both of which are imperative in any critical, scholarly work.

Dr. Paul Heinisch, *Christ in Prophecy*, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1956. This contains a very valuable study of the messianic concepts of non-biblical religions as well as the O.T. doctrine of The Messiah. Dr. Heinisch discusses the great messianic titles used throughout the O.T. The discussions are excellent, but the beginner must be warned that he accepts the negative critical results concerning some of the O.T. books. He also includes a chapter on the supposed biblical foundations for the Catholic doctrine of Mary - pp. 237.

S. Mowinckel, *He That Cometh*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1956. The work considers the great Messianic titles. He is the father of Scandinavian O.T. scholars. His scholarship is of the highest order, but he works with the presuppositions of Scandinavian scholarships, and must be used only by those aware of this. There is a great reward here for those able to discriminate.

Vincent Taylor, *The Names of Jesus*, MacMillan and Co., N.Y. reprint-ed, 1954. Good brief study by a capable, mediating scholar.

B. B. Warfield, *The Lord of Glory: A Study of the Designations of our Lord in the N.T. with especial reference to His Deity*. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, chapter, The Witness of The Apocalypse, pp. 286-297. Warfield was the greatest conservative mind in his field. He was a brilliant Calvinist. This work is still excellent because of his biblical exegesis; but the work is dated regarding the works cited, and general critical attitudes then prevalent. Still excellent for Bible Study and personal study!

Special Study

Introduction

No one could seriously deny that *The Revelation* is a neglected source of biblical preaching today. The present author has been engaged in studying the text of the seer's book since he had a N.T. Seminar in the Greek Text of *The Revelation* during the spring semester of 1960 with Professor S. M. Smith of Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana.

I have enjoyed countless hours of creative discussion with my dear and beloved friend, Wayne Shaw, minister, Ellettsville Church, Indiana. He and his wonderful wife, Janet, opened their home to me while I was finishing residence requirements for Ph.D. in Philosophy at Indiana University. Wayne is working on a Ph.D. in the Speech Department at Indiana University. He also has the B.D. and M.S. degrees. He plans to teach in the Graduate School of Lincoln Christian College, Lincoln, Illinois, upon completion of his work at I.U. His special concerns are

Homiletics and to help restore great preaching in the Restoration Movement. He graciously consented to prepare this following brief challenge to all preachers of the Word—You Can Preach intelligently from the great themes of *The Revelation*. Some of the great themes listed below come from the seminar on *The Revelation* mentioned above; but the rest of this special study is his generous contribution to this study commentary. May it challenge every preacher to give serious study to the relevant N.T. book of our ages of crises.

A SERIES WITH THE SEER: PREACHING
VALUES IN THE REVELATION

by Wayne Shaw

In the opening lines of his book, *As Seeing the Invisible*, D. T. Niles gives an apologetic for studying Revelation, which, at the same time, states its demand to be preached: "The book of Revelation is part of Scripture, so that an adequate understanding of it is essential for a right appreciation of the biblical message as a whole. This is all the more true during times such as these when the sin of men and of nations is yielding such rich harvest, and the common man is asking what the meaning of life's tragedy may be."¹ Quite apart from his liberal attitude toward the Bible, Dr. Niles reminds us that we dare not ignore the ministry of the Word of God in Revelation for two reasons: it is a part of Scripture, and it has a vital message for us in our twentieth century.

For various reasons most preachers slight the Writing of the Revelator in their pulpits today. To some the message is too difficult to decipher and too mystical to proclaim with certainty. To others it is simply not worth the effort to explain the apocalyptic imagery and attempt a vigorous application to present-day man. To still others it seems a winding path far removed from the thoroughfare of first principles recorded in the book of Acts. The Lord's messengers are not so much guilty of adding to or taking away from the words of its prophecy as obscuring its important message by neglect.

Even the brave who plunge in have too often blunted the Revelator's cutting edge by becoming so preoccupied with intricate details that they entangle themselves in an exhausting yoke of bondage. Instead of the book's penetrating relevancy, they