

Revelation

The Vision of the Son of Man

Interpreting the Text:

1. This letter uses strong imagery and the language of “the Son of Man” to create a sense of urgency for the reader. Does this approach appear to evoke terror or consolation? What do you think the author’s intention was?
2. The letters to churches in Asia identify issues that threaten congregations of believers. What are those issues? What do these issues tell us about the early church?
3. Revelation styles itself a book of “prophecy.” What is your experience with prophetic books of the Bible? What kinds of expectations does your experience with texts like Daniel generate as you come to read Revelation?

Applying the Text:

1. Christians throughout history have tried to map the events of Revelation onto their own time and place. Have you seen this done in your lifetime? What appeal is there in trying to interpret this prophecy through the events of our present world?
2. The imagery in this letter is dramatic and abstract, but some chose to look for these signs in a more literal way. How does this text change when you teach its events as literal versus allegorical?
3. For many believers today religious “visions” seem odd and off putting. How might a visionary like John of Patmos broaden and deepen our view of God and God’s interaction with the world?