

Revelation

Seven Seals and 144,000

Interpreting the Text:

1. This portion of Revelation features some pretty desolate depictions. How do you react to the scenes of doom and destruction that accompany the opening of the seven seals? What do you think the intended reaction from the author's audience was?
2. How do you perceive the balance between the visions associated with the seals and the visions of the saints in heaven? Does this successfully keep with the author's use of paradox in the letter?
3. The vision of the 144,000 and the countless throng that accompanies them sends a positive signal. How does this positive interlude, contrasted with the doom and gloom of the previous message, support the drama of this letter?

Applying the Text:

1. Much of the frightening imagery used here would have spoken to those Christians who faced threats of martyrdom. While Christian martyrdom is mostly a thing of the past, there are still forces that threaten our safety. How do the warnings and promises of these chapters speak to the threats of our present day? Do you find them comforting or hopeful?
2. Professor Bartlett writes about his wish for Revelation to be a blockbuster movie given its dramatic imagery. Given infinite resources, how would you express the book of Revelation in another medium? How would you try to convey the themes and messages of this letter in a different form?