A Comparative Study of Hermeneutical Approaches to the Seven Seals

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Abstract
Problem

From the beginnings God had a purpose with His prophetic messages to the world and we can see in the Bible clearly, that God always presented His prophetic messages in a certain order. A chronological method was favored by God. That is why from the beginnings, as Seventh-Day Adventists we believed that the best way to interpret the secrets of Revelation is through the historicist approach. Unfortunately this view is fading among scholars, even among SDA researchers.

Purpose

We are going to investigate why this is happening and we will show that historicism has a lot to say, even in the 21st century. This view has to be protected and we have to give back its purpose and function. This is the only way we can really see what God has shown us through the book and this is what people need in the last days in order to be able to understand to book of Revelation appropriately.

Method

In order to able to see that the historical approach is appropriate, we have to see and
compare what the other interpretation schools have to say about the book of Revelation. That is what we are going to use in this paper. Seal by seal we will investigate each interpretation school (Preterism, Futurism, Idealism, Historicism), and what they have to say about the seals. This way we are going to have a clearer view of all these methods.

Conclusion

After a careful study, it will be presented that Preterism and Futurism have been developed way after historicism, by two different Spanish Jesuits. The reason is very simple. The time, when they came into existence was exactly the period when reformation started to occur within the church. That was the time when the reformers identified Babylon as the Roman Catholic Church. Of course this was not pleasant for the leaders so they needed to do something in the level of interpretation. This is the time when these two interpretation schools arose. Another important find is how God always had prophetic messages to his people. If we study the book of Daniel, we can realize that all the predictions about the futuristic kingdoms are in a chronological order, covering the whole period until Jesus' birth. The Bible says about God that He is not changing. God inspired Daniel to write his book, and the same God inspired John to write the book of Revelation, therefore the predictions in the book should have the same chronological order, which is absent from Idealism and Futurism. Some other findings are also in our favor which will be presented further in the paper.

Subject Area
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