

2.9 - Authorship

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When one considers the contribution of the book of Revelation to the completion of the [canon](#), its prophetic emphasis, and its teaching concerning controversial doctrines,¹ it is not surprising to find opposition to the book throughout its history. This opposition has centered in an attack upon its [canonicity](#) in conjunction with a denial of its apostolic authorship.² As we discussed previously, the [style of writing](#) of the original Greek text raised additional questions as to the authorship of the book. The primary reason given for rejecting John the Apostle as author is the style of the Greek. Here we should mention that the entire area of textual and New Testament criticism is fraught with difficulties in lack of objectivity. "The subject presents one of these questions in New Testament criticism in which mental bent, apart from the bias of prejudgment, is chiefly influential in determining the conclusion reached."³ Critics often come to the subject with preconceptions which result in an underemphasis on *objective* evidence in favor of overemphasis on *subjective* evidence. An example of objective evidence would be *external evidence* such as the testimony of early Church Fathers as to the authorship. Subjective evidence usually consists of *internal evidence* derived from an analysis of the text itself. The problem with internal textual evidence, as used in textual criticism, is that it is highly malleable and easily conformed to the biases of the critic. Johnson recognizes the contribution which presuppositions play in the conclusions reached and notes how unfruitful textual analysis has been in attempting to shed light on the authorship of the book:

The evidence that allegedly argues against a single author revolves around a number of internal difficulties. These fall into four categories: (1) the presence of doublets—the same scene or vision described twice; (2) sequence problems—persons or things introduced seemingly for the first time when in fact they had already been mentioned; (3) seeming misplaced verses and larger sections; and (4) distinctive content within certain sections that does not fit the rest of the book. In each case, however, there are satisfying alternative explanations. In fact, **the difficulties just named stem more from the reader's presuppositions than from the text itself.** Dissection of the text has been notoriously unfruitful in yielding further light on the book itself. [emphasis added]⁴

Guthrie makes the pithy observation regarding Dionysius' attack on Johannine authorship: "In this Dionysius foreshadowed, as a man born before his due time, those modern schools of criticism which have peopled early Christian history with a whole army of unknown writers, whose works attained as great a prominence as their authors obtained obscurity."⁵ As Guthrie has noted, the critics would have us believe that works of great prominence, such as the book of Revelation, accepted as part of the canon, must have been written by one or more obscure authors now lost to the mists of history. The critical tendency has become so prevalent and applied so widely to biblical texts that proving that the book of Revelation somehow differs essentially from John's Gospel no longer provides the conclusion that its author can't be John! "Dissimilarity with the Gospel neither proves nor disproves the apostolic authorship of the Apocalypse (since more often than not the Gospel is held by modern critics to be the work of **someone other** than John the apostle)" [emphasis added]⁶. When approaching the issue of the authorship of the book of Revelation, we should bear these two factors in mind: *First*, greater emphasis should be placed on the testimony of the early church (objective evidence) than analysis of internal factors within the text (subjective evidence); *Second*, attacks upon the Apostolic authorship are often coupled with an attempt to discredit the book and an attendant opposition to its doctrines (e.g., its Jewish emphasis, a literal millennium).

2.9.1 - Apostolic Authorship Opposed

Opposition to the Apostolic authorship of the book of Revelation was initiated because its teachings were thought to be incompatible with the rest of the New Testament or to be too Jewish in emphasis. A Roman presbyter by the name of Caius who held the book of Revelation to be inconsistent with other parts of the New Testament first attributed the authorship to Cerinthus rather than John the Apostle. Caius' criticisms were refuted by Hippolytus, but the issue was not put to rest.⁷ Marcion, a second-century [Gnostic](#), who rejected much of the New Testament because of his anti-Semitic stance, also rejected the book of Revelation holding that its authorship was not apostolic.⁸ By the middle of the third century, opposition to apostolic authorship had also arisen from Dionysius the Great, the bishop of Alexandria. Although he felt that the book was [inspired](#), his opposition to millenarianism (the belief in a literal one thousand-year kingdom on earth, Rev. 20:4+) was thought to have been one of the key factors which brought about his denial of apostolic authorship.⁹ Dionysius also based his rejection of apostolic authorship upon an analysis of the differences between the text of the book of Revelation and that of John's Gospel. Thomas has since shown that Dionysius' analysis was flawed.¹⁰ As bishop of

Alexandria, Dionysius had great influence and his conclusions were to color the acceptance of the book of Revelation as part of the [canon](#) within the eastern church for years to come. (We discuss this in greater depth in our treatment of the [acceptance of the book of Revelation into the canon](#).) Eusebius followed Dionysius in rejecting apostolic authorship and attributed the authorship to a different John.¹¹ Eusebius believed that Papias's mention of a "John the Elder" identified a different John at Ephesus from John the apostle and that this John wrote the book of Revelation. But there are reasons for understanding this mention by Papias as being the self-same John of the fourth gospel.¹² Rejection of apostolic authorship continued in various places, especially the eastern church, right up to the time of the Reformation. Erasmus, Luther, and Zwingli all regarded the book as non-apostolic, largely because of their opposition to its teaching of a literal thousand-year-reign of Christ on earth. Both Luther and Calvin more or less ignored the book.¹³

2.9.2 - Alternatives to the Apostle John

The author of the book of Revelation claims to be simply, "John" (Rev. 1:1⁺, 4⁺, 9⁺; 21:2⁺; 22:8⁺). While most throughout church history have understood the author to be the Apostle John, others have suggested it to be the work of other men named John or even those not named John. Osborne has identified seven main alternatives suggested as author of the book:¹⁴

There have been several suggestions: (1) John the apostle; (2) the elder John; (3) John Mark; (4) John the Baptist; (5) another John; (6) Cerinthus; and (7) someone using the name of John the apostle as a pseudonym.¹⁵

To this list, we could add a recent eighth suggestion that the book is a composite work of several authors. Swete observes the weaknesses of this eighth suggestion:

It is taken for granted by some recent authorities that the Apocalypse is a composite work. But does this conviction rest on more than the reiterated assertion of writers who have found in the analysis of the book a fascinating field for intellectual exercise? When the enquirer investigates the grounds on which the hypotheses of compilation rests, . . . The phenomena which suggest diversity of authorship admit for the most part of another explanation; they may well be due to the method of the author or the necessities of his plan.¹⁶

As we mentioned above, such theories are based upon an overt emphasis on *subjective* internal evidence.¹⁷ Even then, there is significant internal evidence of the unity of the book for those with eyes to see.¹⁸ The proposal which has received the greatest attention is that the book of Revelation is the work of a "John the Presbyter," a second John besides the Apostle who resided at Ephesus. This idea hinges entirely upon a fragment from Papias which is only preserved for us by Eusebius. The idea of a *different* John was called attention to by Eusebius, yet church history prior to that time is silent as to this possibility:

Except in an obscure fragment of Papias, preserved in Eusebius *H. E.* III. 39, no mention of the Presbyter John is found before the fourth century. Eusebius is the first to point out the existence of such a person as evidenced by the fragment which he preserves from the introduction to Papias' book . . . It must be said that the sole explicit historical evidence for the existence of John the Presbyter, as distinguished from the Apostle, is this passage of Papias. And while we are compelled to interpret the passage as witnessing to his existence, yet there remains the extraordinary fact . . . that no other trace of such a person appears till about the beginning of the fourth century, when Eusebius called attention to the significance of Papias' language, though Papias' book had been well known through the centuries.¹⁹

This suggestion of Eusebius is still popular among some today, although Swete notes that we know almost nothing about this figure, which is odd if indeed he *were* the author of such an important work. "Perhaps no conjecture hazarded by an ancient writer has been so widely adopted in modern times. A conjecture it still remains, for no fresh light has been thrown on the enigmatic figure of John the Elder. But this circumstance has not prevented scholars from confidently attributing to him one or more of the Johannine group of writings."²⁰ Along with "John the Elder," some, such as Calvin, have suggested John Mark (the author of the book of Mark)²¹ But this seems unlikely because there is no evidence in the New Testament or the early church of John Mark being associated with the Asian church²² nor are there any significant linguistic similarities between Mark's gospel and the book of Revelation.²³

2.9.3 - Internal Evidence

2.9.3.1 - Subjectivity of Internal Evidence

The two main areas of evidence for determining the authorship of the book are *internal* and *external*. Internal evidence is based on the contents of the book itself as set forth by the text and includes its self-claims, attributes, and grammatical signature. As we mentioned above, internal evidence is generally less reliable than external evidence. Not because the evidence itself is inherently flawed, but because determining which internal attributes of the book are of significance in relation to authorship and what those

attributes *imply* concerning the author is fraught with subjective assessment.

There is severe danger in relying solely on internal evidence for conclusions about authorship when there is a strong consensus of ancient tradition covering the same. One's use of internal criteria can and often does become quite subjective, allowing him to prove just about anything he sets out to prove. Sometimes, when there is no such consensus among the ancients, one must rely on internal matters, as is the case with the epistle to the Hebrews. But to use internal evidence to counteract a consistent tradition coming from the earliest period of church history is very ill-advised.²⁴

To help the reader more readily appreciate the subjective nature of drawing inferences solely from internal textual evidence, we need only cite the bogus conclusion of Collins in regard to the book of Revelation:

The most significant internal evidence for the date of Revelation is to be found in its references to the destruction of a city called Babylon (14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). It is highly unlikely that the author of Revelation would have been interested in the conquest of the historical Babylon by the Persians in the 6th century B.C.E. or in the occasions on which it was sacked during the period of the wars among the successors of Alexander. It is even less likely that the author hoped for the destruction of a fortified town called Babylon at the head of the delta of Egypt that was the headquarters of a Roman legion during the early empire. . . . The explanation [by the angel] that follows makes clear that the woman represents the city of Rome. . . . The use of this symbolic name is thus an important indication of the date of Revelation. It implies that the work was written after the destruction of the temple by Titus, that is, after 70 C.E.²⁵

To Collins, the mention of Babylon at the time of the author is an obvious indicator that he must be describing Rome, not Babylon. And John must desire the destruction of Rome because the Roman Empire had destroyed Jerusalem by the time of John's writing. Therefore, the book must have been written after 70 A.D. While this author agrees that the book of Revelation was written later than 70 A.D., this is a precarious position based on a faulty set of assertions! Collins' subjectivity in his assessment of the internal evidence is evident. He totally ignores the possibility that this prophetic book (Rev. 1:3⁺, 19⁺; 10:7⁺, 11⁺; 22:6-7⁺, 10⁺, 18-19⁺) may be describing literal Babylon in the far distant future to John's time. Thus is illustrated a major weakness in the use of internal evidence: the subjective nature of its application often results in taking a wrong fork in the road of interpretation which renders all subsequent conclusions void. So with internal evidence, we must proceed with caution.

2.9.3.2 - Simplicity of Title

Many have noted the simplicity of the title given by the author as simply "John." This in itself is evidence for the apostleship of the author:

The writer avouches himself as "John;" but, though there may have been other men named John in the Church at this time, John the Presbyter and others, still it is well-nigh impossible to conceive any other but John *the Apostle* who would have named himself by this name alone, with no further style or addition. We instinctively feel that for any one [*sic*] else there would have been an affectation of simplicity, concealing a most real arrogance, in the very plainness of this title. Who else, without this arrogance, could have assumed that thus to mention himself was sufficient to ensure his recognition, or that he had a right to appropriate this name in so absolute a manner to himself?²⁶

The writer is evidently known to the readers and needs no specific introduction. "The opening words lay no emphasis upon the call and authorization of the prophet (contrast Isa. 6; Jer. 1). His identity and authority are known to readers to whom he needs no introduction."²⁷ Beale notes that the form of identification, lacking any specific claim to apostleship, also renders the use of "John" as a pseudonym by some other writer unlikely: "If an unknown author were attempting to identify himself with a well-known Christian figure like the apostle John, he would probably call himself not just 'John' but 'John the apostle.'" ²⁸ Hilgenfield concurs: " 'An unknown John,' remarks Hilgenfield, 'whose name has disappeared from history, leaving hardly any trace behind it, can scarcely have given commands in the name of Christ and the Spirit to the seven churches.' "²⁹

2.9.3.3 - Authority of Author

Then too, the authority which the author wields within the text can also be best explained if written by John the Apostle:

It is worth noting that the author of the Apocalypse exercised an authority over the Asian churches that went beyond that normally associated with NT prophets. This leads to the conclusion that although he wrote as a prophet, he functioned among his churches as an apostle.³⁰

He commends the Church of Ephesus for trying and convicting "them which say *they are apostles*, and are not," by which he implies his own undoubted claim to apostolic inspiration (Rev. 2:2⁺), as declaring in the seven epistles Christ's will revealed through him.³¹

2.9.3.4 - Textual Similarities

Others have highlighted what they see as differences in the text between the book of Revelation and John's Gospel, but there are many similarities as well. Only in these two books is Jesus called the [λόγος](#) [logos] in the [NT](#). Smalley "argues that the three main christological titles—Word, Lamb of God, and Son of Man—are so similar between the Gospel and the Apocalypse that they suggest unity of authorship."³² Haupt comments on the prominence of [μάρτυρία](#) [martyria] as a signature of John's writings, also found in the Apocalypse. Haupt also notes the frequent use of triplets and septets as a signature of John's gospel. In the opening chapters of all three of John's writings, we find a reference to Jesus as the "Word" (John 1:1; 1Jn. 1:1; Rev. 1:2+).³³ The frequent use of "overcome" also appears to be a signature of John:

The use of [νικῶ](#) [nikan], with [the single exception of Rom. 12:21] is exclusively St. John's; and the frequent recurrence of it on the one side in his Gospel and Epistles, and on the other in the Apocalypse (thus compare John 16:32; 1Jn. 2:13-14; 5:4-5, with Rev. 2:11+, 17+, 26+; 3:5+, 12+, 21+; 12:11+; 21:7+), constitutes an interesting point of contact between the language of this Book and of those others whereof he was the author as well.³⁴

Fausset observes John's unique use of the Greek diminutive for "Lamb," "The Greek diminutive for 'Lamb' (arnion, literally, 'lambkin') occurs twenty-nine times in the Apocalypse, and the only other place where it occurs is John 21:15. In John's writings alone is Christ called directly 'the Lamb' (John 1:29, 36)."³⁵ Osborne favors the view that the Apocalypse was written by John the Apostle and cites a number of similarities:

(1) the only two books in the NT to argue for the deity of Christ on the basis of the "oneness motif" between God and Jesus are John and the Apocalypse; (2) they share a similar theme—God seeking to bring the world to repentance; (3) Mounce observes that the same Greek verb (ekkenteō) used in the Septuagint version of Zec. 12:10 appears both in John 19:37 and Rev. 1:7+, but appears nowhere else in the NT; (4) the identification by Ozanne of words and phrases common to John and the Apocalypse such as "conquer," "keep the word," "keep the commandments," "dwell," "sign," "witness," "true."³⁶

Swete provides a list of some 27 phrases found in common in various parts of the book as evidence of a single author.³⁷ Thomas provides an extensive review of common vocabulary and syntactical similarities between Revelation and the other writings of the apostle John.³⁸ Swete observes that the differences found between the book of Revelation and John's other writings which are thought to indicate a different author are overrated and fail to take into account the differences in the content and themes of the books:

It is to be remembered that whereas the simple narrative of the Evangelist demands for the most part only commonest words of daily life, the Apocalyptist deals with a great variety of subjects, some of which call for a liberal use of special terms. . . . the enumeration of articles of merchandize in Rev. 18:11-13+ is responsible for twelve of the words peculiar to this book, and the list of precious stones in Rev. 21:19+f. for ten more.³⁹

2.9.4 - External Evidence

2.9.4.1 - Testimony of the Early Church

As we have noted, the external evidence should be granted greater weight than internal evidence due to its less subjective nature. As Thomas noted above, it would be foolish of us to reject the early and objective evidence of historical witness in favor of late, subjective theories of internal grammatical and textual analysis.⁴⁰ The earliest testimony to the Apostle John as author appears to be that of Justin Martyr. He appeals to the book of Revelation as an acknowledged work of John the Apostle.⁴¹ (See Beckwith for an extended treatment of the church tradition that John ministered at Ephesus after his release from Patmos and died of old age in Asia Minor. [Ibid., 366-392].) His testimony is of special significance because he lived for some time at Ephesus amidst the [seven churches](#) of Revelation 2+ and 3+ who were direct recipients of the book and because some of Revelation's original readers would still have been alive to refute or correct him on this point if need be.⁴² Justin's testimony was echoed by [Irenaeus](#), [Tertullian](#), Clement of Alexandria, and [Origen](#).⁴³ Another early witness is that of [Papias](#). As bishop of Hierapolis near Laodicea, one of the seven churches (Rev. 3:14+), his testimony to apostolic authorship is especially weighty.⁴⁴ He placed great emphasis on oral teaching derived from those who once knew the apostles and is less likely to have simply repeated the written tradition of others. Victorinus (d. c. A.D. 304) also states that the book of Revelation was written by John the Apostle during the reign of Domitian. "Victorinus of Pettau states that John was banished (damnatus) by Domitian to a mine or quarry (metallum) on the island of Patmos, where he saw the revelation (in Apoc. 10:11). In another passage, he explicitly says that the work was written during the time of Domitian (in Apoc. 17:10)."⁴⁵ Fausset observes that the weight of such historic testimony, especially in view of its contemporary locale and time to that of the book of Revelation, is convincing.⁴⁶

Tregelles well says [New Testament Historic Evidence], “There is no book of the New Testament for which we have such clear, ample, and numerous testimonies in the second century as we have in favor of the Apocalypse. The more closely the witnesses were connected with the apostle John (as was the case with Irenaeus), the more explicit is their testimony. That doubts should prevail in after ages must have originated either in ignorance of the earlier testimony, or else from some supposed intuition of what an apostle *ought* to have written. The objections on the ground of internal *style* can weigh nothing against the actual evidence. It is in vain to argue, a priori, that John could not have written this book when we have the evidence of several competent witnesses that he *did* write it.”⁴⁷

2.9.4.2 - Testimony of Enemies of the Early Church

Sometimes enemies can be friends. Such is the case regarding the contribution to this topic of the testimony by those who opposed the early church. Ladd notes the opposition of the Alogi who opposed the doctrine of Jesus as “the Word.” They rejected the book of Revelation as they did all literature by John the Apostle, thus attesting the early tradition of John the Apostle as author.⁴⁸ The witness of early [Gnosticism](#) also attributes authorship to John the Apostle:

An important witness for the apostolic authorship of Revelation has more recently come from the Gnostic materials discovered in 1945 at Chenoboskion in Upper Egypt. One of the documents is the *Apocryphon of John*, which cites Revelation 1:19⁺ and claims to be written by “John, the brother of James, these who are sons of Zebedee.” Helmbold cites authorities who date the *Apocryphon* as early as the end of the first century and notes that in any event it cannot be given a date much later than about AD 150.⁴⁹

Those who deny apostolic authorship of the book of Revelation must explain how it came to be that this important body of prophetic revelation was given through an individual who lacked the intimacy with God which characterizes other revelatory writers within Scripture? In other instances, especially significant passages in the Word of God are given through individuals who have a special intimacy with God. For example, the Torah (Pentateuch—first five books of the Bible) were given through Moses whom God spoke with “face to face” (Num. 12:7-8). Next to Jesus, no other prophet had the status and access to God as Moses (Deu. 18:18). In the case of prophetic revelation of the distant future, Daniel is also unique. Having no sin on record⁵⁰ and called “greatly beloved” of God (Dan. 9:23; 10:11, 19), it was through him that God chose to give prophecies of great significance to the subjects of the book of Revelation. Are we now to hold that this capstone of all prophetic revelation, the book of Revelation, is the work of some obscure secondary and not the Apostle John? How much more sound to expect God to entrust this important work to the “disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20).

Here we find the disciple whom Jesus so dearly loved. John had been with the Savior since the beginning. He had left the family fishing business to follow the carpenter from Nazareth. He was in the “inner circle” with Peter and James. At the Last Supper, he was seated next to Jesus and leaned over on his shoulder to talk to Him. He was the *only* disciple to show up at the cross. It was there that Jesus entrusted the care of His mother, Mary, to His beloved disciple (John 19:25-27).⁵¹

It is against the very character of God, as revealed throughout Scripture, to entrust such a significant work to someone whose identity the critics would have us believe has been lost to history. If external evidence of historic testimony is given primacy, especially that of those closest to the time and area of authorship, then it seems best to understand the human author as the Apostle John who had the great privilege of being the servant through whom God would close the [canon](#).⁵²

Notes

¹e.g., the existence, timing, and nature of the Millennium and the description of a future time of catastrophic events coming upon the earth.

²“The determining factor in New Testament canonization was inspiration, and the primary test was apostolicity . . . If it could be determined that a book had apostolic authority, there would be no reason to question its authenticity or veracity.”—Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, [A General Introduction to the Bible](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), 283.

³Isbn T. Beckwith, [The Apocalypse of John](#) (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 354.

⁴Alan F. Johnson, [Revelation: The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1966), 7.

⁵John MacArthur, [Revelation 1-11 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1999), 5.

⁶Robert H. Mounce, [The Book of Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), 29.

⁷“A zealous anti-Montanist the Roman presbyter Caius in the time of Zephyrinus (pp. 199-217) wrote a Dialogue against the Montanist Proclus in which he attributed the Apocalypse to Cerinthus . . . [finding] various discrepancies between it and the other

parts of the New Testament. . . . Caius criticism was . . . taken up and refuted by Hippolytus.”—Beckwith, [The Apocalypse of John](#) 340. “Cerinthus . . . resided in Ephesus around the turn of the first century. Included in his heretical potpourri of doctrines was the notion that at Christ’s second coming a millennium characterized by sensuous pleasures would be established.”—Larry V. Crutchfield, “[Revelation in the New Testament](#),” in Mal Couch, ed., [A Bible Handbook to Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 26.

⁸“The first to reject apostolic authorship was Marcion, the second-century Gnostic who rejected all non-Pauline books (apart from an edited version of Luke) . . . because of their Jewish influence. Dionysius . . . was the first to develop a series of arguments for his position, . . . Dionysius believed that ‘another (unknown) John’ wrote Revelation.”—Grant R. Osborne, [Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 3.

⁹“Toward the middle of the third century Dionysius the Great, bishop of Alexandria, in his opposition to millenarianism and apparently influenced by Caius, took up anew the question of the authenticity of the Apocalypse . . . concluding that the John who wrote it was not the Apostle, he nevertheless accepted it as divinely inspired . . . The criticism of so illustrious a figure in the church as Dionysius could not fail to exert influence, especially in Egypt and the east.”—Beckwith, [The Apocalypse of John](#) 341.

¹⁰“Twelve of the nineteen terms or expressions with which Dionysius says the Apocalypse has no connection or affinity . . . are found in the book, some of them with great frequency.”—Robert L. Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1992), 6-7.

¹¹“Following in his [Dionysius’] footsteps Eusebius, . . . bishop of Caesarea . . . saw a second John as the author of the book.”—Beckwith, [The Apocalypse of John](#), 341.

¹²[Osborne, [Revelation](#), 3], [MacArthur, [Revelation 1-11 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#), 6].

¹³“The Dutch reformer Desiderius Erasmus, German reformer Martin Luther, and Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli . . . all regarded it as a nonapostolic work. All three did so largely because it teaches a literal thousand-year earthly reign of Christ. Essentially, John Calvin and Luther simply ignored John’s Revelation.”—Crutchfield, [Revelation in the New Testament](#), 33.

¹⁴It should be noted that several of these options are directly at odds with a belief in the inspiration of Revelation and its inclusion in the Canon. For example, if the book was written by Cerinthus or using a pseudonym, then we have what would amount to divine inerrancy set forth within the framework of a lie.

¹⁵Osborne, [Revelation](#), 2.

¹⁶Henry Barclay Swete, [The Apocalypse of St. John](#) (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998, 1906), xlviii.

¹⁷The facts of the internal textual elements themselves are not subjective, but deciding which are important and what they mean is highly subjective.

¹⁸“Swete points to twenty-seven phrases in the early chapters that are matched up by nearly the same wording in the final chapters. ‘Such coincidences leave no doubt that the same writers has been at work.’ ”—Mal Couch, “[The Literary Structure of Revelation](#),” in Mal Couch, ed., [A Bible Handbook to Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 70.

¹⁹Beckwith, [The Apocalypse of John](#), 362,366.

²⁰Swete, [The Apocalypse of St. John](#), clxxii.

²¹“As for the authorship of the Apocalypse, Calvin suggested John Mark as a good candidate.”—Crutchfield, [Revelation in the New Testament](#), 34.

²²“There is nothing in the New Testament or early tradition associating [John] Mark in this way with the Asian church.”—Beckwith, [The Apocalypse of John](#), 347.

²³“There exist no significant linguistic similarities between Mark’s gospel and the Apocalypse, nor does the Evangelist display characteristics of a visionary possessed of a strong prophetic consciousness.”—Mounce, [The Book of Revelation](#), 25.

²⁴Thomas, [Revelation 1-7](#), 10.

²⁵Adela Yarbro Collins, “[Book of Revelation](#),” in David Noel Freeman, ed., [The Anchor Bible Dictionary](#) (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1996, c1992), 5:700.

- ²⁶Richard Chenevix Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#) (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1861), 2-3.
- ²⁷Colin J. Hemer, [*The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 30-31.
- ²⁸Gregory K. Beale, [*The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 34.
- ²⁹Walter Scott, [*Exposition of The Revelation*](#) (London, England: Pickering & Inglis, n.d.), 431n.
- ³⁰Mounce, [*The Book of Revelation*](#), 26.
- ³¹A. R. Fausset, "The Revelation of St. John the Divine," in Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, [*A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*](#) (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997, 1877), Rev. 1:1.
- ³²Osborne, [*Revelation*](#), 5.
- ³³Thomas, [*Revelation 1-7*](#), 4-5.
- ³⁴Trench, [*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*](#) 90-91.
- ³⁵Fausset, [*The Revelation of St. John the Divine*](#), Rev. 1:1.
- ³⁶Osborne, [*Revelation*](#), 5.
- ³⁷Swete, [*The Apocalypse of St. John*](#), xlii-xliv.
- ³⁸Thomas, [*Revelation 1-7*](#), 11-15.
- ³⁹Swete, [*The Apocalypse of St. John*](#), cxvi.
- ⁴⁰Unfortunately, the tendency of academics is to reject historical witness in favor of novel theories. It is not clear whether this is fueled simply by the need for new Ph.D. topics or simply a reflection of human pride.
- ⁴¹"The earliest testimony recorded is that of *Justin*, who lived some time at Ephesus, the center of the region to which the book was sent, at a date when the generation to which it first came had not yet passed away."—Beckwith, [*The Apocalypse of John*](#), 349.
- ⁴²"The testimony of Justin and Irenaeus is especially significant, since they lived in Ephesus and Smyrna when some of Revelation's original readers would still have been alive. That the church could have been mistaken about who wrote Revelation virtually from the time it was written is inconceivable."—MacArthur, [*Revelation 1-11 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*](#), 4.
- ⁴³"Justin Martyr in the mid-second century wrote that the apostle John was the author (*Dialogue with Trypho* 81.4), and this became the accepted view (so also Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.20.11; Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 3.14.3; Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 2.108; Origen, *De principiis* 1.2.10)."—Osborne, [*Revelation*](#), 2-3. "Irenaeus . . . a younger contemporary of Papias and Justin . . . makes frequent and explicit reference to the Apocalypse as that of 'John the disciple of the Lord' and he shows distinctly that by this term he means John the Apostle. From this time on the same testimony appears generally in the fathers, e.g. Clement of Alexandrian, Tertullian, Origen, etc."—Beckwith, [*The Apocalypse of John*](#), 349-350.
- ⁴⁴"Papias . . . recognized the book, according to Andreas, as inspired, . . . from the manner in which Andreas refers to Papias' view of the book, . . . he regarded him as agreeing with his own opinion, that the author was the Apostle."—Ibid., 349. "Papias was bishop of Hierapolis, near Laodicea, one of the seven churches."—Fausset, [*The Revelation of St. John the Divine*](#), Rev. 1:1.
- ⁴⁵Collins, [*Book of Revelation*](#), 5:700.
- ⁴⁶"These testimonies of persons contemporary with John's immediate successors, and more or less connected with the region of the seven churches to which Revelation is addressed, are most convincing."—Fausset, [*The Revelation of St. John the Divine*](#), Rev. 1:1.
- ⁴⁷Ibid.
- ⁴⁸"The first opposition to its apostolicity came from the Alogi (ca. A.D. 170), who opposed the Logos doctrine of the Fourth Gospel and therefore rejected all Johannine literature. The Alogi therefore testify indirectly to the Johannine tradition and to the tradition that

the Gospel and Revelation came from the same hand.”—G. E. Ladd, [“Revelation, Book of,”](#) in Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ed., [The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979, 1915), 4:172.

⁴⁹Mounce, [The Book of Revelation](#), 28.

⁵⁰But being a sinner nonetheless (Rom. 3:19).

⁵¹Edward Hindson, [Revelation: Unlocking the Future](#) (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2002), 20.

⁵²“Indeed, it would be a serious mistake to regard John as the originator of this book, for it would then become merely a human being’s comments and prediction of the future, which would deprive the book of all its authority and impact. We therefore need to recognize, right at the outset, that this book was virtually dictated by God, and that John was merely the privileged scribe who recorded what he saw and heard (this is not to suggest that God dictated all Scripture, but this certainly holds good in large measure for Revelation).”—Monty S. Mills, [Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John](#) (Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries, 1987), s.v. “Introduction.”

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