

create a new spiritual community devoid of any humanly imposed boundary. The believers' transcendence of ethnic, cultural, social, and gender barriers in the fulfillment of the Great Commission is a powerful demonstration to their contemporaries of the very image of life in God's kingdom (70). As a united and loving community, the church becomes not only a true reflection of Jesus Christ but also an answer to his prayer for unity among his followers (John 17:11, 20–23). While life has become so politicized around ethnic, racial, and national identities, the church, through genuine and loving relationships between its members, can irrefutably show our fragmented world that a community of ethnically, culturally, socially, and gender diverse persons can live in reconciled relationships with one another because they have agreed to be led by the Holy Spirit.

Keener's point—that the believers' "role as Jesus's agents is indispensable, because others would believe through their message" (26)—needs further clarification in order to avoid misunderstandings. As it stands, the sentence may be wrongly interpreted to mean that what Christians do in mission is indispensable for the salvation of non-believers. While the church is the primary human agency in God's mission, it is not his only agency. Because of other divine agencies such as dreams and visions, angels, and the superintending work of the Holy Spirit, God's saving mission to humanity is not deactivated in the absence of believers' mission.

Although *For All People* is not a comprehensive look at the biblical theology of missions, it is still a resourceful volume for an in-depth study of the topic, given the extensive references Keener provides in the footnotes. Any student or practitioner of Christian mission will find it insightful and at times thought-provoking.

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Moloney, Francis J. *The Apocalypse of John*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020. xxiv + 404 pp. Hardcover. USD 54.99.

Francis J. Moloney, a renowned Catholic scholar who specializes in the Johannine writings, challenges readers with his unconventional outlook on the book of Revelation. Unlike the majority of scholars who believe that the Apocalypse describes events of the Christian era, Moloney argues that its visions span from the creation of the world to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For him, the cross of Jesus is the ultimate revelation, the meaning, and the culmination of sacred history, the end of the old system, and the beginning of the new. Moloney draws his inspiration from Italian scholar Eugenio Corsini's *Apocalisse prima e doppo* (1980), a book he translated into English (*The Apocalypse: The Perennial Revelation of Jesus Christ*,

1983). Moloney's commentary is divided into thirteen chapters conveniently following the text of the Revelation. In addition, it contains two excurses: "Witnesses to the Law and the Messianic Promises of the Prophets" (53–55) and "The Lamb That Was Slaughtered from the Foundation of the World" (199–204). The book offers a bibliography as well as indexes of modern authors, Scriptures, and other ancient writings that readers will appreciate. The foreword is written by Corsini himself, who endorsed the book before his death in 2018.

The main thrust of the book is that the Apocalypse is a "prequel" rather than a "sequel." In other words, it outlines events of the HB from creation until the time of the church. For instance, the letter to Ephesus describes the fall of humanity, to Smyrna—the Exodus, to Pergamum—the desert wanderings, to Thyatira—the time of kings, to Sardis—the Babylonian exile, to Philadelphia—the return and rebuilding of Jerusalem, and to Laodicea—the blindness of Israel's leaders (their inability to recognize the Messiah in Jesus). The author offers a cyclical understanding of the septets. The seven churches, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven plagues describe the same historical time frame from different perspectives. Each of the sevens, then, closes with "the victory of Christ's death and resurrection" (33). Thus the great tribulation (Rev 6:12–7:17) and the battle of Armageddon (Rev 16:1–21) both depict the eschaton in the death of Jesus on Calvary, not in the future (26, 121, 247–248). Consequently, Moloney interprets Babylon not as Rome but as Jerusalem. The death of Jesus, then, fulfills the mystery of God by judging Jerusalem and opening the door for the New Jerusalem, the church. Two other ideas support the main theme of the book. The author stresses that the Lamb was slaughtered before the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8), and from this Moloney infers that the saints who are persecuted and killed in the book of Revelation are not the Christian martyrs but rather the Hebrew believers who kept the word of God (the law) and were faithful to the messianic prophecies of the prophets. These prefigured the death of Jesus and set an example for Christians to be faithful during the hostile Roman empire (37–38). Satan's defeat by the cross ensured a new beginning where the church (the New Jerusalem) was to uphold the flame of the gospel until the second coming.

Although the book states that this view of the Apocalypse is as old as the first Christian congregations, it has not received much attention in the past and has been mainly rejected by modern scholarship (xiv). This commentary intrigued me with its innovative thesis and without a doubt will get its share of criticism. For example, the author does not clearly state his methodology for interpreting symbols. Although Moloney often appeals to allusions, the predominant method seems to be allegorical (106, 182, 242, 248). Frequently, the author spiritualizes the symbols, allowing fair room for imagination. For example, the six wings of the cherubs (Rev 4:6–8)

may allude to the six days of creation (92); the rider on the white horse (Rev 6:1–2) represents the *possibilities* of humanity (106); the fire from the altar (Rev 8:5) and the fire from heaven (Rev 20:9b) indicate Jesus’s death and resurrection as the turning point in history (134, 314); the eagle in Rev 8:13 is the symbol of hope (138); and the seven and ten kings in Revelation 17:10–12, if multiplied, “produce seventy, the Danielic number for the weeks of years that must pass before the definitive establishment of God’s ‘everlasting righteousness’ (Dan 9:24)” (267).

At times, the arguments seem speculative, as in the case of the sapphire color (Rev 9:17). Although sapphires are predominantly blue, the author advocates that John probably meant the black sapphires common in Australia and Madagascar (147). In addition, the commentary lacks consistency in the treatment of numbers. For example, the ten days of affliction (Rev 2:10) may allude to the ten plagues in Egypt (70), yet the five months of harming (Rev 9:10) are not chronological but rather a symbol of the complete suffering and domination (143). The forty-two months (Rev 11:1–2) depict the literal period of desecration of the temple by Antiochus IV (155). However, the same period in Rev 12:6 and 14 represents two symbolic eras when God provided for humanity after the fall (Gen 2–5) and for Israel during their wanderings in the desert (185–186).

Besides inconsistency with numbers, Moloney offers quite an unusual interpretation of the symbols in Rev 12. The woman is a symbol of the human condition. Being in pain represents “the difficulties of spiritual birth” set up by God in Eden when access to the tree of knowledge was forbidden (171–172). “The child born to the woman (12:5)...is not Jesus Christ, but a symbol of the *potential* of humankind” (176). Moloney’s interpretation of the loss of humanity’s potential is puzzling. For him, the potential “is not destroyed by the dragon” but, rather, is violently “snatched away” from the woman by God (176). Although it is possible to see what Gen 2–5 and Rev 12:1–6 have in common, one needs to be cautious not to overstretch the arguments to fit the text into the predetermined paradigm.

Another area that needs improvement is the interpretation of events surrounding the millennium. Moloney’s view is that the thousand years cover the period of Israel (306, 310), during which Satan is bound and locked away (311), which means that he “does not exercise his diabolic influence directly” but acts through his agents (306–307). The story of Job makes such an understanding questionable since Satan directly afflicted Job. Moreover, equating the fall of Satan in Rev 12:1–18 with his captivity in the pit in Rev 20:1–6 (311) seems weak since the two chapters project opposite sentiments. While Rev 12:10 pronounces woes to the earth due to Satan’s fall, Rev 20:1–6 bears a positive image for the world as a result of Satan’s confinement. Furthermore, the book posits that Satan’s destruction does not mean annihilation. It is a symbol of the turning point at the cross (313–314). The evil forces still exist

in the fiery lake; consequently, sin is still possible during the new creation era (322). Such an understanding of Satan's *binding* and *locking* during Israel's history and his *destruction* during church history (the new heaven and earth) raises a pragmatic question about what binding, locking, and destruction mean. From a practical standpoint, this is puzzling when one looks at all the horrors of world history.

Besides, there are a few minor suggestions that might improve the reader's experience. The author's cyclical view of the septets and frequent intratextual connections are commendable. It would be helpful if there were charts outlining (a) the parallels between the septets and (b) the overall historical time frame, with links to the book of Revelation. In addition, the phrases "Israel's sacred history" and the period "from the creation until the church" are used interchangeably. Such usage seems loose since both periods, although overlapping, are not identical. Some clarity in this matter is advised.

Overall, the commentary offers an unconventional view of the book of Revelation. Its allegorical and, at times, speculative nature may not be persuasive, yet it is likely to stimulate debate. This work might motivate researchers to probe its ideas further and maybe enhance its assumptions and historical application. Despite the criticism given above, this commentary is enriching in its theological insights, unusual intertextual connections, and overall understanding of the Apocalypse. Because of its unusual perspective, time will show whether it will be influential or not.

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Perrin, Andrew B., and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, eds. *Four Kingdom Motifs before and beyond the Book of Daniel*. TBN 28. Leiden: Brill, 2021. 353 pp. Hardcover. USD 196.00.

This is a collection of articles that reflects on a particular way that Jews and Christians, primarily, have schematized history. Although this layout of history, with its sequence of at least four kingdoms, harkens back to as early as the eighth century BCE (with Hesiod), it was popularized in the Judeo-Christian tradition because of the writings of Daniel. The symbols of the four-metal statue (Dan 2) and the four wild beasts (Dan 7) are familiar representations of this historiographical motif—thus, the priority of the book of Daniel in the development of this idea, as the title of the book suggests. Ranging from the biblical appropriation in Daniel to the modern interpretation of Hegel, the book shows how influential this division of time has been in literature and art. Some authors go beyond the four kingdom motif to address other types of historical periodization, such as the seventy weeks of Dan 9, or the ten eras of 1 En. 91 and 93 (the Apocalypse of Weeks), indicat-