

**FR 117**

**PHILLIP SCHAFF WAS A "PRETERIST"!?**

By Ron McRay

That might be a strange heading, but let me quote something I received in the mail recently:

“For hundreds of years it has been commonly accepted by Bible believing Christians that John the Revelator was inspired to write the Book of Revelation IN THE YEAR 96 A.D. twenty-six years AFTER the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 A.D.

“BUT A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO THE PRETERISTS CAME UP WITH A GREAT NEW "REVELATION." (Emphasis is mine- R.M.). They now claim that the Book of Revelation was written sometime prior to 60 A.D. They obviously "invented" this new "revelation" because a future "temple of God" in Revelation 11:1-2 just doesn't fit into their claim that the Tribulation occurred from 66 to 70 A.D., and that most of Revelation is past history [from The Last Call, by F.M. Riley, Dec. 2001 issue].”

Here we are in the 21ST CENTURY, when Mr. Riley says the "Preterists" (whoever they are), came up with the idea that the book of Revelation was written before AD 70. Boy, does this guy need to read Bible history. [Emphasis mine-R.M.]

The well known historian, Phillip Schaff, wrote a history of the church in the 19TH CENTURY and said the book of Revelation was written before AD 70. He also named the prominent scholars of his day as agreeing with him. Let me quote from the introduction to the writing. [Emphasis mine-R.M.]

Phillip Schaff, author of "The History of the Apostolic Church", writing in 1853, supported the AD 95 date for the authorship of book of Revelation. Later, WRITING IN 1882, "The History of the Christian Church", he had changed his position and supported the AD 68-69 date. The following statements are taken from "The History of the Christian Church". [Emphasis mine-R.M.]

"On two points I have changed my opinion---the second Roman captivity of Paul (which I am disposed to admit in the interest of the Pastoral Epistles), and the date of the Apocalypse (which I now assign, WITH THE MAJORITY OF THE MODERN CRITICS, to the year 68 or 69 instead of 95, as before)." Preface to the Revised Edition, vol. 1, p. vi. [Emphasis mine-R.M.]

"The traditional date of the composition at the end of Domitian's reign (95 or 96) rests on the clear and weighty testimony of Irenaeus, is confirmed by Eusebius and Jerome, and has still its learned defenders, but the internal evidence strongly favors an earlier date between the death of Nero (June 9, 68) and the destruction of Jerusalem (August 10, 70)."

FOOTNOTES: "The great majority of older commentators, and among the recent ones Elliot, Alford, Hengstenberg, Ebrard, Lange, Hofmann, Godet, Lee, Milligan and Warfield (in Schaff's Encycl. III. 2035). I myself formerly advocated the later date, in the Hist. of the Ap. Church (1853), pp.418 sqq." [Emphasis mine-R.M.]

"The early date is advocated or accepted by Neander, Lucke, Bleek, Ewald, DeWette, Baur, Hilgenfeld, Reuss, Dusterdieck, Renan, Aube, Stuart, Davidson, Cowels, Bishop Lightfoot, Westcott, Holtzman, Weiss; and among earlier writers by Al Casar, Grotius, Hammond, Abauzit, and John Lightfoot." Section 101, The Apocalypse, The Time of Composition, vol. 1, p. 834.

The first thing that needs to be noted is that The History of the Christian Church is one of the most highly esteemed and respected works of its kind in the world, and has been for many years. Secondly, note that Mr. Schaff said that he not only agreed that the book of Revelation was written previous to the destruction of the Jewish temple in AD 70, but that THE MAJORITY OF THE MODERN CRITICS agreed with him when he wrote in 1882.

They all understood what Mr. Riley thinks only happened in the last two years. Sorry, Mr. Riley, but "for hundreds of years it has NOT been commonly accepted... that Revelation was written in the year 96 A.D."

Friends, don't be fooled by what unlearned and unstudied people present. THINK FOR YOURSELVES!

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