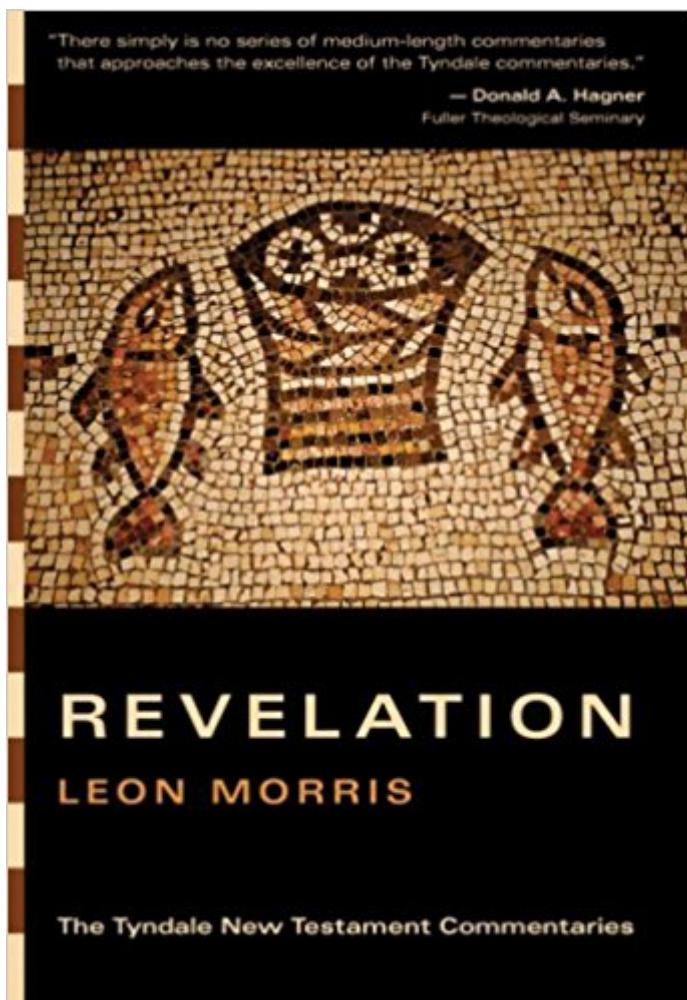


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# Revelation (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries)



## **Synopsis**

"The book of Revelation is, I fear, a very neglected book. Its symbolism belongs to the first century, not to our own age," says Leon Morris in the preface to his commentary on Revelation. Here he explains the significance of the symbolism and shows the bearing of the message of Revelation on the problems of the day. The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries have long been a trusted resource for Bible study. Written by some of the world's most distinguished evangelical scholars, these twenty volumes offer clear, reliable, and relevant explanations of every book in the New Testament. These Tyndale volumes are designed to help readers understand what the Bible actually says and what it means. The introduction to each volume gives a concise but thorough description of the authorship, date, and historical background of the biblical book under consideration. The commentary itself examines the text section by section, drawing out its main themes. It also comments on individual verses and deals with problems of interpretation. The aim throughout is to get at the true meaning of the Bible and to make its message plain to readers today.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I've used this commentary for my Sunday School class and it's received good feedback from laypeople who want a brief and clearly written exposition of Revelation. Leon Morris adopts a non-dispensationalist viewpoint in his commentary. It was hard to discern whether he was amillennial or historical premillennial. He believes that Rev. 20 describes the reign of the martyrs

rather than the reign of all the saints. A very interesting perspective. In any case, he interprets the 144,000 and the great multitude in Revelation 7 as representing spiritual Israel (the church) rather than literal Israel. Here are some of my assessments of this commentary.

**Good points:**

- 1) It is easy to read and the explanations are clear.
- 2) Morris provides an excellent outline of the whole book of Revelation.
- 3) Morris reminds the reader that we need to adopt a humble and open-mind when reading the book of Revelation.

**Weak points:**

- 1) Explanations are too brief or vague at points. Examples: "hidden manna" (Rev. 2: 17) -- Morris is somewhat ambiguous in his explanation of what exactly it is; "white stone" (2:17) -- Morris offers different suggestions on what it could mean and concludes "we simply do not know what the white stone signified, though clearly it did convey some assurance of blessing"; it is frustrating to read a commentary when the commentator says "we don't really know what this means." It is honest but not very helpful! (it is better for Morris to make a decision on what he sees as the most likely explanation)
- 2) Insufficient explanation for why certain things should be interpreted. Example: Morris states that the "Two Witnesses" in Rev. 11: 1-14 should be interpreted symbolically rather than literally. He states that "difficulties multiply" when one takes the "Two Witnesses" literally. What difficulties? To me, the symbolic interpretation of the "Two Witnesses" as representing the church has more difficulties than the literal interpretation. How does one interpret the dead bodies lying in the street if the two witnesses represent the church? How does one interpret the 3 1/2 days, and then the witnesses being caught up to God? Yes, chapter 11 is one of the most difficult chapters in Revelation to interpret. I was expecting Morris to do a more complete job of explaining his interpretation, but he didn't do an adequate job in explaining his reasons for interpretation other than giving blanket statements.
- 3) Morris should clearly state what his position is. For example, in the introduction of the commentary, he explains 4 different approaches in interpreting Revelation (preterist, historicist, idealist, and futurist). He states that one should incorporate several of these approaches and not just one approach. Yet, Morris fails to tell the reader which approaches he adopts. I noticed this throughout the commentary; Morris sometimes would present different options or suggestions on what a phrase or passage means, and then would not clearly state what his position is. I appreciated it when he did take a position. This aside, I still found this commentary to be helpful, in spite of its brevity. If you want to read a more complete expositional commentary, you can't go wrong with reading Robert Mounce's excellent commentary in the New International Commentary of the New Testament (Eerdmans). I find Mounce's viewpoint to be similar to that of Morris, but he gives a much more complete explanation both in his commentary and in his interpretation of certain passages. George E. Ladd's commentary on Revelation also offers a similar viewpoint as Morris' but a fuller explanation as well. If you want

an excellent and more technical non-dispensationalist commentary on Revelation, read G.K. Beale's commentary on Revelation (which requires the reader to be familiar with Greek). There is a plethora of outstanding commentaries out there on Revelation. What I've mentioned above are two excellent expositional commentaries on Revelation that hold a similar viewpoint and non-dispensationalist interpretation as Morris. Morris is a good introductory commentary but you need to consult other commentaries which offer a more complete and satisfactory explanation on the whole book.

Just a little about me: I have my BA in biblical and theological studies from a conservative seminary. I teach Sunday morning bible study. I have ADD and dyslexia so I have to be extra patient with a book. I cannot say enough about this commentary. I really enjoyed Morris's work here. I feel like I have an enhanced understanding of the book of Revelation. I accompanied this book with Mounce and his NICNT commentary, but eventually I relied mainly on Morris as his level of scholarship is unsurpassed. This is not a put down to Mounce, I just think Morris did a tremendous job. If you bring a lot of church baggage or are committed to the Premillennial position to the point that other views disgust you then this book will not please you; I know from those I have taught this to in my church, but I think you are only hurting yourself. A great progression for you if your interested in enhancing your personal study in eschatology, from an Amillennial perspective, would be (in this order): Graeme Goldsworthy "Gospel and Kingdom" (emphasize finding Jesus in the OT), Kim Riddlebarger "The Man of Sin" and "A case for Amillennialism". While you read these study Revelation with Morris's commentary and you will have a firm grasp on eschatology. Even if you hate Ammillennialism you would be served well by reading these. If you struggle with reading due to a reading ailment then your in luck because if I did it then you can too. Also, you will learn other important things in this process such as hermeneutics.

Revelation is probably one of the most feared books in the New Testament, and in the whole Bible. Its imagery is strange and often cryptic, and some don't quite know what to make of it--it seems easier to ignore it. But it's also a book that is full of stunning visions and memorable poetry. And Leon Morris opens the book up for the reader in a way that makes it approachable and understandable. I can't say that I often read commentaries from start to finish, but I did with this one. This commentary on the book of Revelation by Leon Morris, is part of the Tyndale New Testament Commentaries series. It's meant to be readable for layman as well as student and pastor. Morris is a recognized exegete on the Johannine literature, and brings learning to bear on this interesting

book. He takes a very irenic and faithful approach to the book that seeks to discern its meaning and intent, both in its original setting and for readers today. And I think he achieves just that aim. After reading this somewhat short commentary, Revelation seems so much more approachable, and I highly recommend it to others. Morris finds Revelation as a book of great comfort and encouragement to the troubled Christians for which it was written, who were struggling under persecution from the Roman authorities. But he also sees in it God's identity and intention for the world laid out for all to see. He unpacks the symbolism in a helpful way that keeps it meaningful and brings it "down to earth" without either being a slave to the literal or dismissing it as merely figurative. He seems to find just the right approach to the book that retains its prophetic power yet doesn't give the book over to complicated schemes of future-times events. Highly recommended. A great introduction to this powerful prophetic book.

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