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## Duvall's "The heart of revelation: Understanding the 10 essential themes of the bible's final book" (book review)

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# Book Reviews

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Duvall, J. S. (2019). *The heart of revelation: Understanding the 10 essential themes of the bible's final book*. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic. 226 pp. \$24.99. ISBN 9781535981996

Ten major themes of Revelation are covered in this concise work, including God, Worship, The People of God, The Holy Spirit, Our Enemies, The Mission of the Church, Jesus Christ, Judgment, and The New Creation. Written by J. Scott Duvall, a professor of New Testament at Ouachita Baptist University, he does not try to advocate for a particular view of Revelation (Preterist, Futurist, etc.), nor does he take a stance on the timing of the millennium. Admittedly, he says it is not a technical or scholarly work, although he states he did try to utilize the most reliable evangelical scholarship. This thematic and canonical approach makes the book more accessible to anyone without cause for much theological debate.

Advocating for interpreting Revelation within its context, Duvall aims for people to consider the big picture of this book, which should bring people a lot of hope, rather than a common tendency to approach it with fear or fanaticism. His purpose is for people to learn its main teachings. First, he introduces the setting, audience, literary theme, and purpose of the book, which is to bring comfort, but also warning so people know who is Lord. Since we can be confident in God's victory, we should be inspired to live faithfully as believers until the end.

Foremost, while Satan, sin, and death exist as battles in the present, ultimately God is in control and will win this war. Christians must remain patient and endure, responding with worship to a Creator who is worthy of our trust and praise. Written to God's people, it is for them to remember even if persecution comes. Christians' main mission is to testify of Jesus Christ. Suffering is not the final chapter. We must learn to listen to the Holy Spirit whose presence shines through our weakness. Distraction and deception will come, but enemies are conquered through faithful witness. Revelation makes it clear that Jesus Christ is God, and He is coming back again. God allows evil to destroy itself, while continuing to show mercy through three series of judgments. Ultimately, Holy God will be the judge of evil. In chapter 9, Genesis and Revelation verses correlate the beginning and end. Through promise, place, people, and presence, God will bring the New Creation. Perseverance is possible through prayer and obedience.

In the beginning of the book, a list of terms is defined. Greek is interpreted for each main subject. At the end of each chapter, key texts are specified with a reading plan. There are community group questions, making this book a good selection for church libraries and small groups. Pastors could find it helpful for exposition. Additionally, endnotes, a subject index, and a Scripture index are all provided at the end, making it a good academic book to reference as well. Therefore, I would also recommend this for any seminary libraries.

**Reviewer**

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