

Now that my book *The Triumph of Christianity* has come out, I'm thinking about my future books. The one I'm working on now is *The Invention of the Afterlife*, where I explore the origins of the idea that when you die, your soul goes to heaven or hell (it's not in the Old Testament and it's not what Jesus taught — so where did it come from??). But I always like to think two or three books in the future, and so I'm contemplating what I might do after this.

One idea is to deal with the belief that the world is soon to come to an end, a book that would, among other things, take on the book of Revelation. I've dealt with the issue before, of course, but not broadly. One of the things I'm interested in is how people interpret Revelation as referring to things about to happen in our own future. Here's something I say about the topic in my textbook on the Bible.

\*\*\*\*\*

One of the most popular ways to interpret the book of Revelation today is to read its symbolic visions as literal descriptions of what is going to transpire in our own day and age. But there are problems with this kind of approach. On one hand, we should be suspicious of interpretations that are blatantly narcissistic; this way of understanding the book maintains that the entire course of human history has now culminated with us! An even larger problem, however, is that this approach inevitably has to ignore certain features of the text in order to make its interpretations fit.

Consider, as just one example, an interpretation sometimes given of the "locusts" that emerge from the smoke of the bottomless pit in order to wreak havoc on earth in chapter 9. The seer describes the appearance of these dread creatures as follows:

**Does the Bible talk about what is soon to happen? To find out, you need to read the rest of this post, and to read the rest of his post you have to belong to the blog. Hey, isn't it worth it? It won't cost much, you'll discover the secrets of the universe, and every dime you pay goes to charity!**

You need to be logged in to see this part of the content. Please [Login](#) to access.



[Early Christology: How I Changed My Mind](#)  
[My Interview with Michael Shermer](#)