



IMAGINING JUSTICE IN BALTIMORE

Part 3: Water Justice in Christian Tradition(s) Discussion Questions

What Comes to Mind When You Think of Revelation?

How do your own associations with the Book of Revelation align with / differ from some of those shared by the Fellows in the video? What else comes to mind?

Reading Revelation from a First-Century Perspective

In what ways do you think it is important to consider context when looking at religious texts?

Why might it be significant that Revelation is written to ‘a persecuted and alienated community’? In what ways might the text give this community hope?

The Historical Context of Revelation

Why is the relationship between Christianity and Judaism important for understanding the Book of Revelation and its first-century context?

Why might it be important to understand Revelation within the larger body of Jewish apocalyptic literature? Can you think of other highly symbolic texts you’ve encountered?

Heaven and Earth in Revelation

What similarities / differences do you find between your understanding and / or your tradition’s general understanding of heaven and earth and the presentation of heaven and earth in the Book of Revelation?

What does it mean to “see things from a heavenly perspective...seeing the reality behind the reality people are experiencing”? What might be the significance of this for the persecuted community to whom John is writing? For our current moment?

The Villains of Revelation

Why do you think John chose to use the symbols of Babylon (Rome) and the beast (Caesar) as the villains of the story?

What might be the significance of the polarization depicted in Revelation?

What does it mean for the central message of Revelation to be “hold on”? How might this change the way you read the text?

Critique and Judgment of Empire

How do you understand the critique of empire in which Revelation participates? In what ways do you agree or disagree with the idea that “human empire is fundamentally corrupt”? How would such an interpretation apply to our current moment?

What might be the significance of the plagues of Revelation paralleling the plagues of Exodus?

How do you sit with the idea that water is both essential to life and potentially destructive? How do you understand the idea of water in cleansing / judgment?

The New City

What are some of the contrasts between the New Jerusalem and the prior presentation of Babylon?

From your understanding of Eden, what do you see as the similarities / differences between the images that open (Eden) and close (New City) the Christian Bible? What might be the significance of linking these two?