Title: Repentance in the book of Revelation

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Abstract:

In spite of significant occurrence of the verb of repentance (metanoēo) in Revelation compared to any other book of the New Testament, repentance has been discussed only as a subsidiary theme in the book. The place and function of repentance in Revelation need to be clarified. The idea of repentance is evident in the occurrence of metanoēo twelve times, the call to fear and to give glory to God, and the invitation to come and to receive salvation.

The exegesis of eleven passages (Rev 2:1-7, 12-17, 18-29; 3:1-6, 14-22; 9:20,21; 11:13; 14:6-11; 16:8-11; 18:1-4; 22:17) indicates that repentance appears in connection to judgment. The treat of judgment is used to bring people to repentance. The more severe the threat and the judgment, the more urgent the need to repent. The call to repentance is given not only to the unfaithful Christians but also to all people. In the messages to the seven churches, the series of the seven trumpets, the door for repentance is still open. However, there is no more chance to repent when the seven last plagues are poured out.

In the light of the historicist approach, repentance is an important action to take along the timeline of history, since the time of John to the eschaton. In each period of the Christian church, these are spiritual problems surrounding the Christians. Repentance is a solution to bring people back into a close relationship with God. That is the reason repentance is emphasized in
the historical sections of Revelation (the seven churches, the seven trumpets, and the messages of the three angels). The mention of repentance in the eschatological section of the book (the seven last plagues) gives evidence that the last judgments are poured out on the basis of the failure of the people to repent. Repentance is reemphasized in the epilogue in relation to the coming of Jesus. This indicates that in preparing for the coming of Jesus, there is a strong message to be spread: Repent! Repentance needs to be seen as a major theme of the book of Revelation. All other themes are to be discussed in relation to repentance.