

Francis X. Gumerlock, trans. *The Seven Seals of the Apocalypse: Medieval Texts in Translation*. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2009. 96pp. Paper. ISBN: 978-1-58044-108-7. \$11.00.

We mention this small contribution by our friend, Frank Gumerlock, because it is a fascinating window into the Medieval interpretation of the book of Revelation. Frank has translated into English fifteen texts featuring the seven seals of Revelation 5-8. These range from the 6th (Apringius of Beja, Portugal) to the 15th century (Giovanni Nanni of Viterbo, Italy). The texts are divided into: Christological interpretation (i.e., the seven seals refer to seven phases of the life of Christ—incarnation, baptism, passion, etc.); ecclesiastical interpretation (i.e., the seals refer to future events in the history of the Christian church); and historical interpretation (i.e., world history is divided into seven ages which are identified with the seven seals).

Each of these interpretations is summarized in a brief but thorough introduction (15-25), followed by the representative texts (27-72). The notes are excellent; the bibliography virtually definitive; and the translations fluid and clear. Students of the history of interpretation will find the selection from Joachim of Fiore especially intriguing on account of its popularity even among modern millenarian expositors.

Bizarre interpretations of the book of Revelation is nothing new, as these selections demonstrate. All of which makes us appreciate the simplicity of the amillennial approach in contrast to these oft fanciful expositions. But throughout these selections, the adoration and exaltation of the Son of God is expressed. The church in every age, regardless of eschatological opinion, surely rejoices in him—the “Lamb that was slain” (Rev. 5:6, 9), who is worthy of all praise, honor, glory and blessing (Rev. 5:12).

—James T. Dennison, Jr.