

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Revelation 6:1-4

Key to the Book

The key to the Book of Revelation is at the door (1:19). It includes: a. Things seen (1:12 - 18). b. Things which are (ch. 2 - 3). c. Things hereafter (ch. 4 - 22).

THIRD HEAVEN

Scripture speaks of the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2). While its location is totally unrevealed, it is obviously the abode of God to which no created being has ever entered. However, John gives a description of God's throne (ch. 4) and the presence of the Lamb there (ch. 5).

Note: The first heaven is the atmosphere surrounding the earth. Here are the fowls (Hosea 2:18) and the clouds (Dan. 7:13). The second heaven is the stellar spaces and the abode of supernatural beings (Gen. 1:14-18).

RAPTURE -- Concept

Following the chronology of Revelation as recorded, the Rapture is suggested by the phrase "come up hither" (Rev. 4:1). This "catching away" of the Body of Christ is clearly taught in the Bible (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Only those "in Christ" (1 Thess. 4:16), hence His Body (Eph. 1:23) or the Church (Eph. 1:22) will be raptured. This means only those believers from Pentecost (Acts 2) till the Rapture will be "caught up" (1 Thess. 4:17).

RAPTURE -- Time

The Rapture is referred to as "the departure ()" (2 Thess. 2:3). Paul distinguished departure from the faith in the last days by using the verb form of the noun "departure" and the noun "faith" (1 Tim. 4:1). Accepting this distinction, the time of the Rapture (departure) is set. It is before the revealing of the "man of sin" (1 Thess. 2:3) who is Antichrist. Clearly, then, the white horse rider, Antichrist, who appears at the opening of the first seal, follows the Rapture and introduces the Tribulation Period (Rev. 6:1).

RAPTURE -- Left Behind People

Since the Rapture included the total Body of Christ (The Church), all left behind are non-believers. They are now faced with the wrath of the Lamb (Rev. 6:16). 144,000 Jews will be sealed and spared during the Tribulation (Rev. 7:1-8). Another large group will be saved (Rev. 7:9-17). Others however who "received not the love of the Truth" and "believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" will be damned (2 Thess. 2:10-12). They will not have a "second chance" after the Rapture. Two reasons are given

- 1) The Antichrist, with Satanic energy, will effect their perishing (2 Thess. 2:8-10).
- 2) God Himself will send a "strong delusion" (an actuation to go astray with error) so they will believe "the lie" () of Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:11).

SEAL JUDGMENTS

Seal #1 (Rev. 6:1, 2)

The revelation of Antichrist on a white horse. He has a victor's crown given to him. In a bloodless coup, he goes out conquering (present tense) and with the purpose to conquer (aorist tense). There is virtually no hope to oppose him without divine intervention (ch. 7:2, 3). With his appearance, the Tribulation surely has begun.

Seal #2 (Rev. 6:3, 4)

a. Its Identity

Here is a red horse rider who is an accomplice of Antichrist. He does not bear a specific identification. Apparently he challenges the claims of peace offered by the Anti-Christ. He may well be involved assisting the Antichrist to gain supremacy. The unleashing of this diabolical person is by the direction of the Lamb Who opened the second seal.

b. Its Activity

The red color of the horse symbolizes blood. By divine appointment, it is given to this personage to take peace from (away from) the earth (). Along with this dreadful assignment, the purpose of the judicial removal of peace is that people be charged to kill one another. The verb means to slaughter/slay (present tense,). The horror of it all is accented by the word for sword (). Being a "great" one, it is obviously not an ordinary sword for war. Here is a knife for cutting up meat! Some sort of horrible civil war is suggested (cf. Ezek. 38, 329; note 38:21).

c. Its Similarity

God patently affirms here that by this red horse rider nations will rise against one another. Our Lord predicted this in the Olivet Discourse (Mt. 24:6, 7). While men proclaim peace, there will be none (1 Thess. 5:3). There is no way to interpret this passage for contemporary affairs. The reference is to the Great Tribulation. It is the second, ox-like living creature, who calls for this horse.

APPEAL

In the days of the declension of Israel, Hosea the prophet called the nation to "... break up your fallow (uncultivated) ground; for it is time to seek the Lord (10:12). Isaiah exhorts "to seek ye the Lord while He may be found" (55:6). Faced with the impending judgments of the Great Tribulation, surely these words of these prophets 750 years before Christ (nearly 2000 years ago) should be heeded. Will you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ while there is time? Amen.