

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“Unsealed Judgments”

Revelation 6:3-8

Introduction

1. The chronological arrangement of Revelation leads us to believe the Rapture of the Body of Christ takes place with the trumpet call: “Come up hither” (Rev. 4:1).

2. By being called up higher, John’s vision of things to come shows him the Throne of God (4:1-11) and the seven-sealed book which the Lamb was worthy to open (5:1-14).

3. After the vision of heavenly realities, John next sees the Lamb open the seven sealed book. This action by the Lamb initiates the events on earth after the Rapture. The time is the Great Tribulation which affects the entire world (Mt. 24:21).

4. The opening of the first seal brings the first of four horsemen into sight (Rev. 6:1, 2). Careful study indicates that this is the Antichrist, a real person variously identified in Scripture as 1) The “little horn” (Dan. 7:8). 2) The “King of fierce countenance” (Dan. 8:23, 24). 3) The “Prince” that shall come (Dan. 9:26, 27). 4) The “wilful King” (Dan. 11:36-45). 5) The “abomination” (Dan. 12:11; Mt. 24:15). 6) The “Man of Sin,” “Son of perdition,” “Wicked One” (2 Thess. 2:4-8). 7) The “Beast out of the sea” (Rev. 13:1-10).

5. The second seal having been opened reveals the second horseman riding on a red horse (Rev. 6:3, 4). This accomplice of Antichrist takes peace away from the earth. An unbelievable slaughter is effected resulting in some horrible civil war (cf. Ezek. 38, 39; note 38:21). Men will continue to talk peace after the Rapture (1 Thess. 5:3), but there will be none (cf. Mt. 24:6, 7).

6. These two seal judgments are part of the “beginning of sorrows” (Mt. 24:8). There is more to come. Consider the next two seals and the other two horsemen. Here is more judgment.

SEAL #3 (Rev. 6:5, 6)

a. Its Identity

The “white horse” (Rev. 6:2) is a symbol of power in victory and triumph. The “red horse” is a symbol of power in blood shed. Now this third “black horse” is the symbol of power leading to lamentation and mourning. This horseman may not be a specific individual, but an indication of the course of events. As a backlash of the rule of Antichrist or the attempt to get him established, these events occur.

b. Its Activity

This black horseman brings a dreadful situation to the earth. It is a progressive matter. The false peace brought by a vicious conqueror results in a flurry of wars which are “civil” in nature. Close on the heels of that picture comes famine and starvation (cf. Jer. 1:2-6; 14:1, 2; Lam. 4:8, 9; 5:10; Ezek. 4:10, 16, 17). The balances suggest enforced rationing (cf. Rev. 13:16, 17). Scarcity leads to restriction of food supply. Apparently, conscription

for military might makes food a priority for the armies, hence private citizens will be rationed and prices will soar. The penny (Greek: denarios) was the wages paid a laborer for a day’s wages, sufficient to buy for one person (Mt. 20:1-16) -- and that a slave! Thus, the lower economic classes will be devastated. In that “oil and wine” are not “hurt,” (the rich are spared). Here is demonstrated discrimination. The three measures of barley is a ration for animals and shows the extreme hunger of the Tribulation Period. Mark this: The aged, some women, many children, and others who are unable to work may not get food!

c. Its Similarity

The third living creature is man-like. He calls forth this black horse. The scarcity of food issues in class discrimination and famine. What is described by our Lord in the Olivet Discourse is the clear parallel (Mt. 24:7). There is nothing to compare with this before the Rapture and any attempt to do it lacks Scripture authority.

SEAL #4 (Rev. 6:7, 8)

a. Its Identity

The fourth seal is opened and reveals the judgment of wholesale death. The color of the fourth horse is pale and green like a corpse (cf. Rev. 8:7; 9:4). While not being a particular person, this seal exhibits a summary of the previous three horsemen.

b. Its Activity

This fourth horse brings death for the body. Its companion is Hell (Greek: Hades) which is an eternal dealing with the soul. The imperfect tense “follow” shows that Hades “continually follows” death. Here is unthinkable pestilence upon the whole earth including the sword (cf. v. 4 for an interchangeable word) hunger, death, and wild beasts. These four scourges mentioned in the text are enormous ravages of a colossal war exceeding anything ever known (Mt. 24:21). The toll of human life equals one fourth of the world’s population. The world becomes a vast graveyard due to war, famine, disease, pestilence, and ferocious wild beasts.

c. Its Similarity

The fourth living creature, which is a flying eagle, issues the call to “Come and See” the fourth pale horse. Surely this notes swiftness of God’s judgment. Time has run out with His patience. It is the moment of retribution. It is more than coincidence that the outline of events in the Olivet Discourse are the same as here (cf. Mt. 24:7, 8). These judgments are but the beginning of sorrows (Mt. 24:8). That being a Biblical statement, what will the end be!?!?

Conclusion

The Rapture is clearly a Scriptural given. So is the Tribulation. Now, however, is the hour of opportunity. Make certain you have made your reservation for the Rapture. How? Follow the instructions in Romans 10:9, 10 -- 1. Believe with your whole heart that God raised up Jesus from the dead. Why? Because He completed the work of God the Father to die for your sins (Ro. 4:25). 2. Confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord. Make your personal confession of being saved from your sins. I beseech you to do it now else you may be left behind.