

1. Last week I completed an analysis of Revelation Chapter six. When time expired we were in the process of analyzing Rev 7:1-3 where God's mercy is revealed even as judgment descends on planet earth.
2. Before continuing, I want to provide "1Jo 1:9 time" as may be necessary.
3. I want to review some of that learned last week and then begin new material on page four.
4. The four horsemen clearly describe a summary of the events of the seven year tribulation when the Antichrist rises to power and asserts his influence over planet earth. They describe a series of battles occurring just before the Second Advent.
5. It would be difficult to paint any scene more moving or terrible than that described at the opening of the sixth seal.
6. All the elements of a great catastrophic judgment of God are here present, namely, a great earthquake, the sun becoming black, the moon becoming as blood, the stars of heaven falling like ripe figs, the heaven departing like the unrolling of a scroll, and every mountain and island moving.
7. Men like Chafer, Thieme, Pentecost, Ryre and Walvord have urged an interpretation of Revelation in its plain sense unless good reasons indicate otherwise.
8. There are a number of reasons for preferring a literal meaning. While this is not the final breakup of the world as described later, it does seem to indicate that beginning with the sixth seal, God is undertaking a direct intervention into human affairs.
9. The judgments of war, famine, and death, and the martyrdom of the saints have largely originated in human decision and in the evil heart of man. The judgments described here, however, originate with God; seemingly His very own divine punishment inflicted upon a blasphemous world.
10. After due consideration of the great writings of past expositors from both camps and from comparisons of related Scriptures in both the Old and New Testament, there is no doubt in my mind a "literal meaning is required."
11. The resulting impression upon the unbelieving world is that the time of the judgment of God has come. They themselves say "let the mountains and rocks" ... Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" It is apparent that creatures of earth have had some foreboding that their blasphemous unbelief and worship of the beast pictured in Revelation Chapter 13 are in defiance of the true God.

12. As the sixth seal falls upon the planet the world seeks refuge from the divine wrath of God Almighty. The day of wrath in one sense is the whole period of the Great Tribulation, when God will deal in direct judgment with the world, climaxing with the return of Christ in power and glory and divine judgment upon all who oppose His coming.

13. Although the modern mind is reluctant to accept the fact that God will judge the wicked, the Bible clearly teaches He will. The Scriptures reveal a God of love as clearly as they reveal a God of wrath. The passages before us reveal God's solemn word that there is an inevitable judgment ahead for those who do not accept Christ as Savior.

14. The close of chapter six advances the narrative to a new high in the progress of the book. In some sense chapter 6 is the outline of the important facts of the period of the great tribulation. The rest of the events of the book of the Revelation is comprehended in the seventh seal which is later introduced in chapter 8.

15. Chapter 6 closes with a pointed question: "Who shall be able to stand?" The answer is obvious: Only those who avail themselves of the grace of God, even though they may suffer a martyr's death in this future tragic period.

16. Now let's see what we can learn from Revelation Chapter seven.

Introduction

1. In contrast to chapter six which seems in the main to give a chronological sequence of major events of the great tribulation, chapter seven does not advance the narrative of events but directs attention to two major believing remnants active in the tribulation.

1.1 The opening portion of the chapter pictures the 144,000 Jewish evangelist; they are representative of a Godly remnant of Israel on earth in the great tribulation.

1.2 The latter part of the chapter describes a great multitude of martyred dead in heaven, those who died as a testimony to their faith from every kindred, tongue, and nation.

2. The question has often been asked, Will anyone be saved after the rapture? The Scriptures clearly indicate that a great multitude of both Jews and Gentiles will trust in the Lord after the church is caught up to glory.

3. Though the children of God living on earth at the time will be translated when Christ comes for His church at the Rapture, immediately a testimony for Christ is raised up.

3.1 Though these are never described by the term church, they are constantly called saints, that is, those set apart as holy to God and saved through faith alone in Christ alone.

4. Walvoord has written: "The Holy Spirit will continue to be working in the world, but in some particulars in a different way. There is good reason to believe, however, that the Holy Spirit will lead people to Christ, and many will be saved during the tribulation. A description of this is given in the seventh chapter of the book of Revelation, which is so plain that no one should question whether people will be saved after the rapture."

5. Let's now look at an expanded translation of verses one through three of chapter seven.

Expanded Translation

Rev 7:1 After the vision of the six seals evincing a summary of God's judgment of planet earth during the Tribulation, the scene seemed to return to the beginning of the Tribulation just after the Rapture; here I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth; the winds were symbolic of the wrath of God just summarized by the six seals; the four were there to prevent certain destructive powers; perhaps total destruction of planet earth.

Rev 7:2 Then I saw a fifth angel coming up from the east, this angel had a special protective seal. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the earth.

Rev 7:3 "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put our protective seal on the foreheads of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists."

1. The awful judgments described in Chapter Six give rise to the desperate question of man, "Who is able to stand?" (Rev 6:17).

Rev 6:17 For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

2. Revelation chapter 7 answers that question. It also shows once more that "even in judgment, God demonstrates mercy." God will provide an opportunity for the whole world to hear the gospel of Christ during this awful time of Tribulation (Mat 24:14-15).

3. So far six seals of judgment upon the earth have been opened. Revelation Seven gives us a parenthetical panorama of the evangelistic activity of the Tribulation period. The chapter flashes back to the very beginning of the Tribulation when the Antichrist on the white horse is first revealed, i.e., right after the Rapture.

4. It is here we see God sending out 144,000 evangelists with the gospel message before any judgments fall upon the earth. These are Jews who have been witnessed to by Christians prior to the Rapture; when they discover believers are gone, they turn in faith to Christ as their Messiah.

5. The latter part of Chapter seven shows the great success of the Jewish evangelistic efforts. Their converts are shown at rest before the throne of God.

6. There is such a great multitude of them from all nations, tongues, and tribes that they cannot be numbered. Rev 7:9

7. There is another question introduced in this chapter, "why are the 144,000 chosen evangelists only of the Jewish race?" In order to answer this question, we must understand why God called the nation of Israel into being in the first place, and why they are called "the chosen race."

8. What were God's purposes for creating this race? There were numerous reasons, let me highlight four such reasons:

- First, the Jewish people were to receive and write down God's revelation to man.
- Second, the Jews were chosen to protect and preserve the textual purity of the Scriptures they had penned. The degree of success which the Jewish scribes had in doing this is one of the wonders of the ancient world.
- Third, to serve as the human family through which the Messiah, the Savior of mankind, would be born.
- Fourth, to witness to the pagan world that there is only one true God.

9. The great paradox is that when the Messiah did come with His credentials of fulfilled prophecy, the very people who had predicted His coming rejected Him! Nevertheless, the New Testament begins, "These are the ancestors of Jesus Christ, a descendant of King David and of Abraham"(Mat 1:1).

10. There has been much infidelity in Jewish history, and their present worldwide dispersion and persecution have been their divine discipline. However, God made unconditional promises of eternal blessings to the Jewish patriarchs and will someday restore the Jews to a position of special favor.

11. After the Rapture the Jews will once again be responsible, as God's special representatives, to take His message to the world. The 144,000 Jews will do in only seven years what their nation had failed to do in all its history, i.e., to evangelize the world!

12. Now let's get specific as we look at the seventh seal.

NIV

Rev 7:1 After this I saw **four angels** standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree.

Rev 7:2 Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea:

Rev 7:3 "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God."

1. Although the subject of angels has in the past, and is even today associated with fairy tales, these creatures are spoken of very matter-of-factly in the Bible. Angels of the Bible play a very important part in the predicted judgments of God on the earth.

2. The Bible speaks of three categories of angels.

2.1 First, there are the angels of God who remained faithful to Him when Lucifer (who later became known as Satan or "the Devil") rejected God and led a rebellion against Him.

2.2 The second category are the angels who followed Lucifer in the rebellion but are still free to work against God's purposes.

2.2.1 These are fallen, unbound angels and are usually called demons.

2.3 The third group are fallen angels who are now imprisoned in a special place.

2.3.1 Apparently these are particularly nefarious and it is likely they are the Angels who sinned just before the flood.

Gen 6:1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

Gen 6:2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

Gen 6:3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

Gen 6:4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

Gen 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Gen 6:6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

Gen 6:7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

2Pe 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (Tartaros), and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

2Pe 2:5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

1Pe 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

1Pe 3:19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

1Pe 3:20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

3. Because angels have superior power and intelligence, the four mentioned in verse one have apparently been given authority over the weather conditions of the earth.

4. I say weather conditions because if the world's wind patterns are changed, radical effects will occur in all the rest of nature because of its delicate ecological balance.

5. You'll note that verse 2 says ... "the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth." This harm will be upon the earth, the sea, and the trees.

6. Have you ever thought about how much destruction has been caused by wind? If you've ever experienced the terror of a great hurricane, typhoon, dust storm, or tornado you know what I'm talking about.

7. Many of the prophecies relating to the Tribulation indicate freak weather conditions and storms of unprecedented intensity.

7.1 In fact, Jesus Himself predicted that strange phenomena would occur regarding the relationship of the earth to the sun, moon, and stars.

8. Then there will be strange events in the skies, warnings, evil omens and portents in the sun, moon, and stars; and down here on earth the nations will be in turmoil, perplexed by the roaring seas and strange tides.

9. The courage of many people will falter because of the fearful fate they see coming upon the earth, for the stability of the very heavens will be broken up." (Luke 21:25-26)

Luk 21:25 "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea.

Luk 21:26 Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

End Lesson Taught 12-15-2016

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