

**Revelation: "The Seals"**

Revelation 6:1-17

"...for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?" (Revelation 6:17)

**I. A Symbolic Vision of What Is To Come (Struggle and Victory)**

- a. Revelation chapters 6-9 represent 3 ½ years. (Read Daniel 9:27; 12:1 and Matthew 24:25)
  1. They illustrate a vision of future suffering and devastation.
  2. Throughout the tribulation, God is in control and His purpose will be accomplished.
- b. The command "*Come*"; *was given to him* (v.2); *they were given authority* (v.8)
- c. God is ultimately in control, but He is not responsible for acts of *men* and *nations*.

**II. The Six Seals (Matthew 24:3-28)**

- a. As each seal is opened one of the four living creatures, around the throne, summons a rider.
- b. **1<sup>st</sup> Seal - White horse rider (vv.1-2) (False christs and false prophets)** (Matthew 24:4-5;23-25)
  1. Daniel 9:26-27 *a prince that shall come* (on a platform of peace carrying a bow with no arrows).
  2. Future world dictator (the Antichrist; death and destruction will follow). (2 Thess. 2:4-12)
  3. The Antichrist will work through man to accomplish his work.
  4. This is not the symbol of the conquering Christ. (Revelation 19:11) (*stephanos vs. diadema*)
- c. **2<sup>nd</sup> Seal - Red horse – war (vv.3-4) (the empty bow will be exchanged for a sword)**
  1. The rider is *permitted* to remove peace from the earth.
  2. The Antichrist's dominion begins in peace but introduces unparalleled bloodshed on the earth.
  3. When there is no peace, people will reach for anything that will give them temporary refuge.
- d. **3<sup>rd</sup> Seal - Black horse – famine (vv.5-6) (famines always impacts the poorest first)**
  1. War will bring about perpetual hunger (a man will eat, there will be nothing for his family).
  2. *Quart of wheat / 3 quarts of barley* (v.6) equates to one day's food supply.
  3. *Do not hurt the oil and wine* (luxury food). The rich will continue to enjoy access to these items.
  4. The Antichrist will work through man to control the economy.
- e. **4<sup>th</sup> Seal-Pale horse-death (vv.7-8) (Two images Death/Hades, but Christ has the keys, Rev 1:18)**
  1. Death claims the body and Hades claims the soul of the dead. (Rev 20:13)
  2. "pale" (Gr. *chloros* –chlorine/chlorophyll) refers to a pale green color;
  3. ¼ of the world's population will die (death by war, hunger, plague/diseases, wild beast).
- f. **5<sup>th</sup> Seal - Martyrs under the altar (vv.9-11) (even in death, God is in control)**
  1. Martyr – means "a witness", the martyr's sacrifice was an appointment not an accident.
  2. *under the altar* indicates their lives were given sacrificially to the glory of God.
  3. These saints were slain by the enemy because of their witness to the truth. (Revelation 17:6)
  4. They do not know God's schedule for their vindication, we cry with them, "Kingdom come."
- g. **6<sup>th</sup> Seal - Worldwide chaos (vv.12-17)**
  1. Worldwide natural catastrophes. All nature will be affected (sun, moon, stars, land, and sea).
  2. This is symbolic language, but it is a frightening description.
  3. Position in society or money will not provide an escape.
  4. The unbelievers on the earth will cry, *Hide us!*

**III. Are You Ready?**

- a. What about the 7<sup>th</sup> Seal?
- b. The book of Revelation is a book of hope, assurance, and victory for those who believe.
- c. If people do not accept the love of God, and be changed by grace, there will be no escape.