

Revelation 16

Summary notes on chapters 6-7

1. These chapters show the acts of judgment on the earth and the wrath of men caught in them...this is not the final state of judgment but is the initial phase. It centers around the opening of the seals and the blowing of the trumpets. We must remember that the whole book is a revealing of Christ...not in the role of the opener of the seals and the initiator of judgment. The particular arrangement of seals and trumpets, etc., seems to be like this...

seal 1 seal 2 seal 3 seal 4 seal 5 seal 6 seal 7

trumpets 1-7

This means that the revealing of the judgments of the 7 trumpets is the opening of the seventh seal. The blowing of the seventh trumpet will reveal the seven bowls (vials) of divine wrath. If you can see it, it means that the seals, trumpets, and vials of wrath all end at the same time but begin as offshoots of the former judgment. Complicated? Well....

2. Note in the first four seals:

for each, the living creatures say "Come and see."

3. The progression of the seals is thus:

Seal 1: (6:2) A conqueror comes to the scene determined to rule the nations

Seal 2 Warfare follows with the ruin of peace on the earth.

Seal 3 Famine follows war and the price of food is high to suggest that the necessity items of life are almost impossible although the luxury items may still be found.

Seal 4: Death in great proportions follow the war and famine.

Of these first four seals, the judgments are all the sort that are produced by men in their sin

Seal 5 (6:9) Shows a martyred company crying for the coming of God's vengeance. TWT thinks these are early martyrs of the tribulation age who die rather than capitulate to the evil forces of the conqueror...rather than the martyrs of all time.

Seal 6 (6:12) Shows great judgments on the earth from heaven. It is interesting to note the response of men to these judgments and to compare this with the response seen later in 9:6, 9:20, etc.

4. Note a parenthesis between the 6th and 7th seals. We are shown two scenes before the trumpets are revealed: the sealing of 144,000 thousand of the people of Israel and a fuller picture of a group that has come out of "great tribulation" (7:14) through trust in the Lamb. We are prone to think these tribulation saints of Gentile background and the group in the earlier part of the chapter as being of Jewish background.