

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Chapters 6:1-8:1

Keys In Chapter Six:

1. In the first four seals, the white horse stands for conquest (v.2).
2. The red horse for slaughter (vv.3-4).
3. The black horse for famine and scarcity (vv.5-6).
4. The pale or sickly green horse for the consequences of the first three (vv.7-8).
5. The horses represent things God can employ to attempt to bring repentance in those who oppose Him.
6. The fifth seal is an important key for understanding a central theme in Revelation—the role of martyrs (vv. 9-11).
7. Those already martyred seek vindication (vv. 9-10).
8. They are told that they must wait for the full number of martyrs to be completed (v.11).
9. Revelation 20:4 shows the time when the full number of martyrs was realized and their cause was vindicated.
10. The sixth seal deals with the fall of earthly powers or governments in common apocalyptic symbolism—Isaiah 13:10; 34:4; Ezekiel 32:7-8; Matthew 24:29 (vv. 12-17).
11. This is another way God comes against those who oppose Him.

Keys In Chapter Seven and Chapter Eight Verse One:

1. The sealing of the 144,000 is another important key for understanding Revelation (vv. 1-8).
2. I believe the 144,000 symbolically represent the complete number of martyrs referenced in 6:11.
3. They are not Jews, since the religion of the Jews is no longer authorized by God (cf. 2:9; 3:9).
4. I believe they represent the martyr segment of the victorious church that is sealed for a particular work—dying for the cause as elite forces in the army of Jesus (cf. 14:1-13).
5. The tribes listed do not correspond to any Old Covenant list—Joseph is included and Dan is not mentioned—showing the obvious symbolic character of the passage.
6. The great multitude, in my judgment, represents the larger part of the triumphant church that was not martyred (vv. 9-17).
7. Notice the similarity between 7:16-17 and 21:4, 6; 22:1—heaven is the destination of all the faithful.

8. Revelation gives special comfort to the martyrs because of the more severe trials they would face, however, all the faithful would receive the reward of heaven.
9. The seventh seal brought an ominous silence, there was a pause allowing time for repentance, but repentance did not come (8:1; cf. 2:21).

General Comments:

1. The martyr theme runs throughout the book of Revelation (6:9; 11:3, 7; 12:11, 17; 13:7; 17:6; 20:4).
2. Vindication is also repeated (7:14; 11:11; 14:13; 15:2; 18:20; 20:4).
3. The "word" reoccurs as an emphasis (1:9; 3:8, 10; 6:9; 12:11; 17:17; 19:9; 20:4).
4. Giving testimony or bearing witness is an additional constant (1:9; 6:9; 12:11, 17; 19:10; 20:4; 22:16-20).