

GoodNewsletter

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THE APOCALYPSE (DOES IT STILL SCARE PEOPLE?)

In the last book of the Bible, the **APOCALYPSE**, men are called to take notice. And, since the last book of the Bible is "**The Revelation of Jesus Christ,...to show to His bond-servant, the things which must shortly take place,**" (Rev. 1:1), we are told to listen and heed the time that is left for us here on earth.

Verse 3 records, "**Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.**"

Without question, the **Apocalypse** must be studied with a serious heart. Its message warns every person to repent. In a Spiritual sense, do the contents scare us? Are we falling on our knees, crying out to the Almighty?

We should! And, if we don't, perhaps the word, **APOCALYPSE**, isn't understood as it must be.

The last book of the Bible lists much destruction; but, from the Greek word, "**APOKALUPSIS**," scholars say it means, "**REVELATION.**"

It is imperative that we **do not** allow the events to determine the time the apocalypse occurs. In every age, men have believed His coming was in their time; something that Paul had to deal with at Thessalonica (2 Thes. 2:2).

For, most commentators explain that the Book of Revelation is to '**teach us to understand the times, not the times to interpret the Apocalypse**' (A uberlen, Jamieson, Fausset & Brown, pg. 655).

For example, **Vine's Word Studies** quotes a portion of Luke 2:32, "**a light unto the Gentiles,**" then gives this definition of **Apocalypse**: "**In the N. T., it is a drawing away by Christ of the veil of darkness covering the Gentiles,**"

Other meanings of **Apocalypse** are an "**uncovering**" and "**laying bare.**" It can also mean "**instruction**" (Thayer).

In the last book, there are such deep truths and Jesus wants us to know what they are. His words show us what will take place in the last days. It's a time when God unleashes sorrow for those on the earth.

The last days consists of the time between Christ's **1st Advent** and His **2nd Coming**; emphasizing, we think, on the latter end of this time period; close enough to be within 10 years, likely. That is, in our life time, Brethren.

Reading these events doesn't draw us to them, naturally. It's the opposite. We turn away from the many destructive events that fill the book.

But here, it is necessary to remember that the **Apocalypse** is giving us an understanding of the times. Some events are over; while, some are yet to occur.

For me, and anyone reading the last book of God's word, a real sense of spiritual care is needed in the heart. We must have God's mercy. Reading the Apocalypse is a time, hopefully, that all of

us to heed Isaiah's and "Seek the Lord, while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near," Isaiah 55:6.

TRUMPETS AND SEALS

'Word pictures' of gigantic proportions are presented in most of the seven (7) Trumpets and seven (7) Seals of the **Revelation**. And, they are gigantic proportions. Most of these terrible events happen on earth; but, some take place in heaven.

Under the **Fifth Seal**, for example, we are taken to heaven; but here, a cry is made for God to get back to earth and, "avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth," Chapter 6:10.

Then, the **Sixth Seal** informs us that God unleashes massive earthquakes. It is under the Sixth Seal that the Lord, Almighty begins a work on His creation. The record shows of His powerful touch that changes the color of the sun to **black** and the moon **red**.

Jehovah isn't finished, either. He causes **stars** to fall from **heaven** and further, He departs the sky "as a scroll when it is rolled together," 6:14. It is a fearful time for all inhabitants of the earth.

But, does the reading of these things of that day, move us? Are we are living APPROPRIATELY? Does the **APOCALYPSE** scared us to the point that we fear God and do something about it; like seek His will with our heart, mind and soul?

Picturing an earthquake doesn't take much. In our minds, it is easy to see great destruction. As, we must read the **Sixth Seal**, with the earth reeling under these calamities, are we ready, now? Today?

Again, do these events of the **Apocalypse** scare us? What man is so fleshly, so bold, that he is not taken back by the recorded Terrestrial and Celestial activities that occur? Kings? Great men? Rich men? Chief Captains? Bond or free?

The answer is, **None!** When God pours out His hot anger, the **Apocalypse** explains that **ALL MEN**, "hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to 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:" 6:15, 16.

Their final analysis is, "For the great day of his wrath is come and who shall be able to stand?" (V 17).

Even now, night driving causes many cars to pull to the side of the road. Men jump out to look up to heaven as a shooting star or a meteorite shower is displayed in the sky.

With, at least, curiosity, they take the cell phone in hand and quickly report the event to the proper authorities. They just want to make sure that UFO's aren't in the area.

If UFO'S scare people, just think what the **Apocalypse** will do to men's thinking; that is, if they, actually, read the book.

Most don't read it. We all know this. Do you? But, even those who do read the events of the **Apocalypse**, do so with a heavy pre-subscribed thought. It is a foregone conclusion to them. The **Apocalypse** is already figured out and decided. Most Christians have formed an opinion in advance of argument or consideration - no matter what the **Apocalypse** records.

In their foregone conclusion, all saved people will be resurrected before anything terrible happens on the earth. Again, most believe this. To them, Jesus has secretly removed all the saved to heaven; under Christ's safety and acceptance.

But, we read on; after the **Sixth Seal** comes the **Seventh Seal**. This seal is recorded in Chapter 8 of the **Apocalypse** and tells of angels with Trumpets that sound out more cataclysmic events for the earth.

Under the **Seventh Seal**, there is a horrible list of fire and blood, turning a third of the sea into blood, and Hail that descends on the earth. Then, one of the most **scariest things, ever**; the bottomless pit is opened (9:2). In my mind, I'm running, about now.

The trumpets number Seven. But, under the **6th Trumpet**, there is an army of horsemen of 200 million; "**infernal beings, constrained to work out God's will**," JF&B, pg 685.

We eagerly look for the **Seventh Trumpet** in the last book of the Bible; but, it doesn't appear until a chapter and a half after the **6th** one. Not until chapter 11, verse 15, do we see its effects.

But, there is much hope in this reading; for, it says, "**The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our LORD, and His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever**." AMEN!!!

Yes, the **Apocalypse** scares me. Mostly, in the spirit of God's mercy; for, I'm afraid for those not ready for His coming. That's how the Holy Spirit works. His love, for others, is caring.

And for me? Well, as a Missionary Baptist, I truly feel that all doctrinal points have been met.

1) My salvation is secure. 2) My baptism was administered with Church authority and is Scriptural. 3) Historically, my church goes back to Jerusalem. And, 4) I'm even settled on the difference between faith and works. All saved are eternally saved; but, inheriting the kingdom, is another doctrinal point - not all that are saved will reign with Christ (See Mt 7:21; Gal 5:21).

For the record, however - and in the name of honesty; it is my understanding that Christ comes under the **Sixth Seal** and at the time the **Seventh Trumpet** sounds. Here's why: Rev. 6:12 (6th Seal) speaks of great earthquakes; with, the sun and moon changing colors. This coincides with Matthew 24:29.

Notice this, carefully! Not only does Mt.24:29 teach a color-change in the sun and moon, as occurs under the Sixth Seal; but the verse begins with, "**Immediately after the tribulation**," (Mt. 24:29).

Jesus continues on: "**And then** (after sun and moon change) **shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory** (V 28-29).

So, that's my understanding on the **Sixth Seal**. Now, how about the **Seventh Trumpet**? It is under the sounding of this trumpet, only, that we find any idea of His **Second Coming**. No other trumpets indicate any appearing. Thus, we believe that Jesus comes but once. Two appearances are not found in the Bible.

Even though you might not be settled on the time, one point is for sure, He is coming, again! Things are going to be different. Things will change! So, why not now? Let's all join in and "**Pray Thy Kingdom come**," Mt 6:10.