

# A Key to Revelations by Craig Paardekooper

In order to understand the Book of Revelations a first step is simply to list the series of events described.

## Scene 1 : The 4 Horsemen (Rev 6)

### 4 main causes of death :

*"They (the four horsemen) are given power **over a fourth** of the earth to kill by **sword, famine** and **plague**, and by the **wild beasts** of the earth. "*

### Persecution of believers :

*"the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God (**martyrs**) and the testimony they had maintained." "each of them was given **a white robe**, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters,<sup>[a]</sup> were killed just as they had been."*

### Earthquake :

*"**a great earthquake**. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, <sup>13</sup> and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. <sup>14</sup> The heavens receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place."*

### Hiding Beneath the Ground :

*"Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, **hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains**. <sup>16</sup> They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us"<sup>[a]</sup>*

So this period is characterized by famine, plague, war and social breakdown. 25% of the earth's population are killed at this time.

There are persecutions against Christians, who are slain because of their testimony.

This period ends with a large earthquake, and with the political and military leaders, the rich and powerful hiding in caves / bunkers in the rocks, beneath the ground.

It is odd that people are taking refuge underground after a huge earthquake, since they could easily be crushed or trapped. It seems that they are more fearful of something coming from above.

## Scene 2 : Sealing of the Elect (Rev 7)

The chapter opens with an announcement that 4 angels have been given the job of harming the earth and sea. But the angels are instructed to wait until the servants of God have received a seal on their foreheads.

*"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."*

It is implied that this seal is a seal of protection – to protect God's servants from the destruction that will be wrought upon the land and sea.

### Who is Sealed ?

**144,000 from the tribes of Israel sealed :**

*12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel.*

**A vast number of gentiles sealed :**

*"a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language"*

**who survived the tribulation** : *"These are they who have come out of the great tribulation;"*

**who are Christian** : *they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"*

The 144,000 were **"redeemed from the earth"** (Rev 14 v 3)

*"It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these **who follow the Lamb** where ever He goes. These have been redeemed from Mankind as first-fruits for God and the Lamb, and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless."*

In other words, the 144,000 are Christians from the 12 tribes, and are the first of the redeemed. There are also a "great multitude" of gentiles who are redeemed "from every nation, tribe, people and language"

### God promises to protect these people

*and he who sits on the throne  
will shelter them with his presence.*

<sup>16</sup> *'Never again will they hunger;  
never again will they thirst.*

*The sun will not beat down on them,<sup>[a]</sup>  
nor any scorching heat.*

<sup>17</sup> *For the Lamb at the center of the throne  
will be their shepherd;*

*'he will lead them to springs of living water.'<sup>[b]</sup>*

*'And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'*

So God is promising to provide them with shelter, food, water . Perhaps the main effect of the destruction wrought by the 4 angels on the land and sea will be the loss of homes and habitats, food shortages, and water source pollution.

God does not say that the Christian gentiles are sealed, but God promises to protect them just as He promised the 144,000 that they would be protected.

## Survivors of the Great Tribulation

*<sup>14</sup> And I said unto him, "Sir, thou knowest." And he said to me, "These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

**21<sup>st</sup> Century New King James Version**

*<sup>14</sup> I said to him, "My lord, you know [the answer]." And he said to me, "These are the people who come out of the great tribulation (persecution), and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb [because of His atoning sacrifice]. **Amplified Bible***

*<sup>4</sup> "Sir," I answered, "you know." Then he told me, "These are the people who have come out of the Great Persecution. They have washed their robes and made them white with the blood of the Lamb. **Jewish Bible***

*<sup>14</sup> I said to him, "My lord, you are the one who knows." He said to me, "These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress;<sup>[1]</sup> they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. **American Standard Version***

It is suggested that the Tribulation period was the period of the 4 horsemen, which is why these people are said to have survived the Tribulation. During the tribulation many were martyred, murdered, infected with plague, and starved. Now God is sealing those of His people who survived that tribulation, so they are protected from the Judgements He is about to unleash.

### Scene 3 : The Destruction of Land and Sea (Rev 8)

<sup>6</sup> Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.

<sup>7</sup> The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came **hail and fire** mixed with blood, and it was **hurled down on the earth**. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

<sup>8</sup> The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something **like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea**. A third of the sea turned into blood, <sup>9</sup> a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

<sup>10</sup> The third angel sounded his trumpet, and **a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky** on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water— <sup>11</sup> the name of the star is Wormwood.<sup>[a]</sup> A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.

<sup>12</sup> The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them **turned dark**. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night.

<sup>13</sup> As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!"

These texts vividly describe 2 meteor impacts – one impacting the sea, and another over land. Smaller meteors preceded the large ones – forming burning hail. Many meteors are made of haematite that is reddish in colour. The red dust also contains sulphur, which reacts with water to produce an acid – making the water bitter – and killing the sea creatures. The impacts also cause dust to be thrown into the air, obscuring the stars, dimming the sun light and moonlight, and giving both a reddish hue.

The approach of these meteors would explain why the political and military leaders, the rich and powerful were taking refuge in bunkers underground immediately prior to the sealing of the elect. They feared something from above, and assumed that any life on the surface would be extinguished, so they hid underground.

People should also seek high ground, since the impacts will produce tsunamis destroying many ships and coastal cities.

Such devastation would certainly be enough to bring the "New World Order" to a premature halt. Its operations were probably suspended when its leaders ran for cover in preparation for the imminent impact. They simply stopped governing, and hoped the meteors would do their depopulation work for them.

## Scene 4 : The Bottomless Pit and Armageddon (Rev 9)

*9 The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss*

This verse seems to say that the bottomless pit had a lock - like a prison, or like a door to another dimension - and it was now unlocked.

### Who unlocked it ?

It was unlocked by "a star that had fallen from heaven to earth". This phrase is reminiscent of the story of Lucifer who fell from heaven to earth.

### What was inside ?

Unlocking the pit unleashed a battalion of demonic soldiers likened to a plague of locusts. These are controlled by an angel called Apollyon "Destroyer"

### The Elect were protected

These were commanded not harm any plants or trees, but only those who were not sealed by God. So here you can see that the elect are still on the earth (they have not been raptured away), but they are protected from the judgements.

### What did the demons do?

They tormented people for 5 months. But they had a more specific purpose. A huge army of military was assembled at the Euphrates - 200 million personnel in total. The description of these demons is the same as the description of the soldiers and of their vehicles provided later in verse 17-19.

<b>Demons (Rev 9 v 7-10)</b>	<b>Soldiers (Rev 9 v 16-19)</b>
Like horses prepared for battle	Army of horsemen was 200 million
Crowns of something like gold	
Faces of men	
Women's hair	
Teeth like lions teeth	Heads of the horses were heads of lions
Breastplates of iron	Breastplates of fiery red, blue and yellow
Tails like scorpions – stings in the tails	For their power is in their mouth and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents, and with them they do harm

The similarity in the description of what came out of the abyss, and the description of the army is deliberate. The soldiers manifested the demons – they became possessed by them, and slaughtered a third of mankind.

### What was this in preparation for?

You will see later that this gathering of military at the Euphrates was the beginning of the battle of Armageddon. On one side we have God and his elect, and on the other side we have a vast army in

defiance of God. The above texts suggests that this army became possessed by millions of demons that had issued from the bottomless pit.

So Armageddon is a battle of spiritual good against spiritual evil. It's a final battle between spiritual entities being fought out through the medium of physical human bodies.

### **What is the bottomless pit?**

It is possibly a gateway to an infinite (bottomless) dimension.

What seems certain is that this chapter is describing the opening of a gateway that releases millions of flying demonic entities whose purpose appears to be the possession of a human army in preparation for the final battle of Armageddon.

Those sealed by God however are not affected. The sealed are

1. protected from being possessed by these entities
2. protected from being tormented by these entities.
3. Protected from being killed by the possessed army?

Armageddon is often depicted as a war of annihilation. On one side led by Apollyon ("the destroyer") and his minion entities, and on the other side God and his elect. So it's a spiritual war with spiritual beings on both sides.

The narrative sequence I have described so far, is repeated over again in later chapters of Revelation, but with some extra detail added – filling in some of the blanks.

In order to demonstrate this, I am going to provide an outline of chapters 13, 14, 15 and 16 of Revelations. You will see how it is describing the same sequence of events as chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 of Revelations. These two parallel records paint a complete picture.

### **The Beast (Rev 13)**

The beast has power for 42 months (3.5 years) over every tribe, tongue and nation. So it is a world empire.

The beast persecutes Christians and the worship of anything but itself.

Everyone must receive a mark in order to be able to buy or sell.

### **The 144,000 (Rev 14)**

144,000 stand with Jesus on Mount Zion. These are the redeemed of Israel. Note that **only** the 144,000 stand with Christ on Mount Zion – these are the first of the redeemed from Israel. This particular group is regarded as very devout and pure. Perhaps they need that purity and strength in order to withstand the exposure to the natural and spiritual forces of the subsequent plagues.

### **The Seven Last Plagues (Rev 15, 16)**

These plagues are identical to the events described in Revelations 8 and 9.

<b>Plague</b>	<b>Rev 16</b>	<b>Rev 8-9</b>
1	Foul and loathsome sores	The first angel sounded: and Hail and fire followed, mingled with blood. A third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass as burned up
2	Sea turned to blood. Every living creature in the sea died	Something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood., and a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.
3.	Rivers and springs become blood	A great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water because it was made bitter.
4.	Sun scorches men with great heat	
5.	Darkness over the kingdom of the beast	Then the fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise a third of the night.
6.	Waters of Euphrates dried up, to prepare the way for the kings of the East. The spirits of demons possess all the kings of the earth to gather them for battle at Armageddon.	Satan is given the key to the bottomless pit – releasing millions of flying entities which torment people for 5 months. They take the same form as the army of 200 million gathered at the Euphrates. A third of mankind is killed by this army.

7.	Great earthquake, hail	
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As you can see, Revelations 16 describes the same events as Revelations 8-9. So the narrative follows a repeating cycle - with the same events described twice –

Cycle 1	Cycle 2
Period of the 4 horsemen	Reign of the Beast for 3.5 years
Sealing of the 144,000	144,000 with Christ on Mount Zion
Meteor Impacts	Meteor Impacts
Release of demons, and possession of the army of the kings of the East, gathered at the Euphrates, to fight at Armageddon	Release of demons and possession of the world leaders, an army gathered at the Euphrates, to fight at Armageddon

So we can see a simple plot.

Initially there is the reign of the beast where restrictions on buying and selling are used to coerce people into becoming infected with plague, or suffer famine. There is social unrest, and anarchy. 25% of the earth population is killed.

After 3.5 years, the leaders prepare for the imminent meteor impacts and take refuge underground, hoping that the meteors will do the job of depopulation. However, God seals the believers to protect them from the effects of the impacts.

After the meteor impacts, Satan is given the keys to the abyss (bottomless pit), and releases a vast army of entities (demons). These torment people for 5 months, but those who were sealed by God are protected from them. These demons take possession of all the world leaders, and also take possession of the army under their command. The army is led by the kings of the East, and kills 33% of the remaining world population. The sealed are protected from this slaughter. The army then gathers to fight against Christ, but is defeated.

So, if you survive the first 3.5 years, and if you are sealed by God, then you should be protected from all of the remaining events.

After the time of the Beast –

1. You will be sealed and/or protected by God (if you accept and obey God)
2. The New World Order will end because its infrastructure will be severely affected by the meteors.
3. The New World Order will be disrupted because all of its leaders will be hiding underground, and so will have ceased government activities on the surface to a great extent.

Shortly after the meteor devastation, the military and political leaders re-emerge from underground. About this time, the Abyss is unlocked, and the unleashed demons influence the world leaders to gather a vast global army to rout mankind – killing 33% of the survivors. Perhaps this was always their plan – to use blunt force to bring about depopulation. Once possessed, the soldiers feel less reluctance to carry out this task. However, this army will be defeated at Armageddon.



It's hard to see how a hi tech New World Order could persist through all this – since all its infrastructure is destroyed, its army defeated, and its leaders replaced by the victor, Christ, who assumes power and governance of the earth.

### **Can You Be A Neutral Observer ?**

Even if you don't support the New World Order, and manage to survive the 3.5 years of the Beast those who are not walking with God will still suffer –

1. the effects of the meteor – famine, water shortage, loss of home
2. the effects of the demonic invasion
  - a. 5 months period of demonic harassment described in Rev 9 v 10
  - b. vulnerability to being possessed by these demons yourself
  - c. surrounded by possessed people committing atrocities

If you are not for God, then whatever emerges from the bottomless pit may not regard you as neutral. Without protection you will fare the same as the others.

All this sounds very far-fetched .....

but if you survive the 3.5 years of the beast, then you will see for yourself.

When the first red dust begins to settle over the earth then you will know that it is true.