

March 21, 2021

The Sunday View

"Sir, we wish to see Jesus." —John 12:21

Welcome Visitors!

You are our honored guests and we are pleased that you have chosen to visit us today. Our goal is to do everything according to God's word, including respecting its silence. This is a church of Christ; we are not a denomination, not part of anything larger than this local church and we have no earthly "headquarters." The six elders oversee this work and, ultimately, we answer only to Christ. The comments you hear today are primarily aimed at our own members, as we examine Scripture and seek to be built up in our faith in Christ. If you don't understand something, please do not hesitate to ask one of the elders. We welcome and appreciate your comments and questions on any issue and especially if you see or hear anything that you feel does not correspond to God's word. We are here to serve; please help us do that.

Please fill out a visitor's card and put it in the collection plate at the entrance. Thank You

Schedule

The Lord's Day Assemblies

Three assembly opportunities, in the building:

9:30 AM / 10:30 AM / 11:30 AM

Livestream at 10:30 at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLEmwy2IYxrL7ZUgTiZTVqA>

Speaking today: David Posey
The Value of Adversity
Revelation 6

Young People's Classes Today

High School & Up: 5 PM
Contact David Posey for information at (530) 558-5057

Middle School: 5 PM
Contact Dan Stegall for information (818) 209-9810

Weekly Online Classes

Tuesday 10 AM ("Conformed to Christ")
Check with David Posey at dpaulposey@mac.com or text @ 530-558-5057

Wednesday 7 PM (Faith: Hebrews 11)
Check with Jack Horak: jshorak98@gmail.com

Saturday AM Men's Breakfast
7 AM, second Saturday of the month
Contact Tyler Wade @ tyler@ppldev.com

Additional Classes

There are some smaller classes in progress.
If you are interested in participating in any of them, please contact David Posey

Information

Website & Online Presence

Visit our website at www.folsomchurch.com for updates and material on current and past classes, and recorded sermons and classes. You will also find a directory of churches on page one. If you are a member of the church here at Folsom, see one of the deacons or elders to inquire about access to the password -protected members section. Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/folsomchurch>

Classes & Home Studies (Will resume soon)

We have classes for children from 18 months and up. Please see the map in the hallway or ask any of the members which room is appropriate for you and/or your child. There are several Bible studies in progress on Sunday afternoon and evening. Check with David Posey if you have questions.

Restrooms

There are two sets of restrooms: one off the first hallway to the right of the lobby and another at the end of the first hallway to the left. Ask anyone and they'll be happy to point you in the right direction.

For Small Children

There is a special room for nursing mothers and a separate "cry room" at the rear of the auditorium. You enter them from the first hallway to the right, across from the restrooms.

View & Junior View (Let us know if you don't get a copy)

Be sure to pick up a copy of the View and Junior View; both are sent out weekly to our member list and hard copies are printed on Sundays and available in the foyer.

Prayer Requests & News Items

Send to David Posey at dpaulposey@mac.com or text at 530-558-5057

The God Who Sings

BY JEFF HERRIN

God sings. I do not know how to even begin to wrap my brain around what that must be like. We sing about how wonderful it will be when “all of God’s singers get home.” But I can only imagine the awestruck wonder of God’s people when He joins in the song.

Zephaniah spoke of singing with God in a messianic prophecy addressed to the remnant of Israel. “Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: ‘Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing’” (Zeph 3:14-17). What powerful emotion

we see in verse 17! The God of the Bible cannot be described as reserved. Instead, we see a God who unashamedly wears His emotions on His sleeve because His feelings are right and honorable. He is a God of joy and music.

As Zephaniah said, God yearns to rejoice over us with gladness and exult over us with singing. God is truly wise and just, but He is not distant or detached. He is not somber in the way that He feels about us. God is passionate about righteousness and mercy, and He exults over His people with “loud singing.” It is essential that we see this side of God. He has not hidden these

feelings, but revealed them for our learning on page after page in the Bible.

It should not surprise us that Jesus joined in a hymn with His disciples before going to Gethsemane (Mt. 26:30). His brotherhood with us was demonstrated when he worshipped God in song. As the Hebrew writer quoted from Psalm 22, “I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”

We serve a singing God with a savior who loves to praise God with his saints. What about us? An eternity worshipping God in heaven is not a very enticing picture to some. Maybe, sometimes, that is our fault. We can make worship too formal, turning it into a somber and dry affair. We can let our zeal subside as God gets

crowded out of our lives by cares of the world. Are we perhaps guilty of hiding the joy of serving God from the lost? More importantly, have we failed to reciprocate God’s love?

We serve a God of music and joy who created the whales to play in the sea (Ps. 104:26). I don’t see

anything in the Bible to suggest that the mood in heaven can be characterized as reserved. Heaven will be filled with celebration, joy, and singing. We will praise God forever for what He has done and what He will do forevermore. And God will rejoice over His people, reciprocating our love. Nothing will be bleak or melancholy on that day. If there is a pause of silence in heaven, perhaps it will be with anticipation before God begins to sing.

Notes on Revelation 6 & 7

BY DAVID POSEY

Revelation 6 can be divided into three parts: (1) the first four seals feature four horses and horsemen each depicting some brand of calamity and adversity (6:1-8); (2) the fifth seal that symbolically pictures martyrs in heaven crying out for justice but are told to wait a little longer until others of their brethren who will be killed will join them (6:9-11); (3) the sixth seal that depicts a judgment that has the greedy rich, the famous, and the powerful fleeing from the wrath of the Lamb. There is nothing too difficult here if our imagination is active and we keep things in perspective.

The main controversy among students of Revelation 6 is whether the rider of the white horse is Jesus or evil warmongers. Homer Hailey (*Revelation, an Introduction and Commentary*) favors the view that Christ is on the white horse, due to the similarity with Christ on the white horse in chapter 19. If that's true, then Christ is separate from the other three horses; it's not the "four horsemen of the apocalypse" but Christ going out to conquer and then *three* horsemen of the apocalypse.

While I'm reticent to disagree with brother Hailey (his commentary, on the whole, is excellent) there are significant differences in the two descriptions of the rider on the white horse in chapter 6 and chapter 19. It's true that white often represents holiness and purity in the book of Revelation but it also can symbolize triumph and victory. In chapter six, the rider has a bow instead of a sword and the crown is the crown of victory (*stephanos*) while, in chapter 19, Christ is wearing "many crowns" (*diadems*, the crown of a King). And, instead of a bow, as in chapter 6, in chapter 19 a "sharp sword comes from his mouth" (see 19:11-16). Also, if v.8b is applied to all four horsemen, then there is another argument against Christ as the rider of the white horse. If it is Christ, going out to "conquer" with the gospel, then he is conquering more than one quarter of the earth.

The majority of scholars interpret the rider on the white horse in chapter 6 as symbolizing conquering forces that wage war and exert power over others through military or political might. This fits with the general theme of these first eight verses which seem to depict timeless havoc and chaos: the white horse representing conquest, the red horse representing war and bloodshed, the black horse symbolizing scarcity of food and, appropriately, the last horse, the pale horse, with Hades in tow, representing disease and death.

While I feel the argument for the latter view is stronger, either way, there is one major lesson here: adversity affects the whole world and is timeless. As long as the world exists, there will be tribulation of various kinds.

The fifth seal (6:9-11) depicts the ultimate tribulation: martyrdom. The souls "under the altar" who had been killed for their faith in Jesus cry out for justice. Jesus, however, says "not yet;" more martyrs were yet to join them before God brings the curtain down on their oppressors. We shouldn't assume that this is a description of the after-life in heaven; rather, it is a symbolic, dramatic way of telling those still on earth that justice will come, in time.

The sixth seal (6:12-17) is opened and seems to be describing some kind of end-time judgment. It's more likely, however, that it is describing the beginning of the end, some type of penultimate judgment. The language is similar to Matthew 24 where Jesus is describing the destruction of Jerusalem. There is much in these descriptions that at least portends the end of time, but there are also differences. For example, in II Peter 3:10, Peter says the end will come like a thief in the night and the sense is that it will be sudden (see I Corinthians 15:52, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet"); there will be no time for people to hide themselves "in caves and among the rocks of the mountains" (Revelation 6:15). I conclude that this text is describing the general demise, over time, of those who rejected Christ in the past and are now facing "the wrath of the Lamb."

What we see in this chapter is the reality of adversity and trouble that all face in life on earth. This will be the theme of my sermon on this today. Jesus told his disciples, "in the world you will have tribulation; but take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

So the end of chapter 6 describes the judgment of those who reject Christ — they will face the wrath of the Lamb. Chapter 7 describes the "sealing" of the faithful on earth and the reality of those who are in heaven, who "came out of the great tribulation" (7:14). The "144,000" is not a literal number (despite the claims of the Watchtower Society). That it is referring to something on the earth is clear from the language: "I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth..." (7:1). Another angel appears, holding the "seal of the living God" (v.2) with instructions to not harm the earth until the "servants of our God" are sealed (v.3). So, we know that the identity of the "sealed": they are servants of God who are on earth.

But why the number "144,000"? Hailey says, "the most reasonable view is that twelve, the religious number, multiplied by itself and then by one thousand, indicating fullness or completeness, represents the entire number of saints on earth at any given time. These are distinguished from the members of the victorious church in heaven before the throne...the 144,000 who are sealed to God probably represent the active faithful church on earth at any time... under an entirely different circumstance and setting, the same group is presented again in chapter 14 (Hailey, p. 204, 206).

Why are they from the tribes of Israel? Several passages in the New Testament teach us that the church is the "new Israel" or the "Israel of God" (see Galatians 6:16; Romans 2:28-29; Philippians 3:3). The "sealing" of those on earth is not protection against physical suffering brought on by the workings of the riders on the horses in the previous chapter but it is a spiritual sealing that guarantees that no matter what happens to them on earth, they are "signed, sealed... and will be delivered into heaven when they die." 7:9-17 clearly depicts those who are already in heaven, a great number of saints that no one could count. This is our destiny if we remain faithful to Christ until the end (see 2:10). More on this next week.