

The End Of Time

How and when the world will end is a subject not only of much concern but also of much speculation. Even though our Lord said, “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only” in Matthew 24:36, a theory being popularized by many religious preachers and self-styled prophets today is called Premillennialism. This fanciful theory, while individualized to suit the preferences of the particular presenter, has five common traits: (1) The Rapture, (2) The Great Tribulation, (3) The Revelation, (4) The Thousand Year Reign, and (5) The Great White Throne Judgment. A very serious question we pose is “Does the Bible teach this?” and “If so, Where?” Proponents of Premillennialism have long argued that although the word “Rapture” is not in the Bible anywhere, this theory of Premillennialism is in the book of Revelation.

Do you not think it would be odd for the apostle John who penned the book of Revelation by the inspiration of God, as he did four other books of the New Testament, to say in the opening sentence of the book that he was writing about things which “must shortly come to pass” (Revelation 1:1) and then subscribe to a theory that does not see a glimpse of its tenets coming about for more than 2,000 years after he wrote the book? That is why the Premillennialist is confused; he cannot get out of the first verse of the book without requiring his followers to wrench the verse out of its context. We cannot receive the inherent blessing of reading the book of Revelation we are promised in Revelation 1:3 if we follow an interpretive scheme that does violence to the context and content of the book.

The book of Revelation is about the victory of the church of Christ over all of his foes (Revelation 11:15; 17:14). If it has a message for us today, it must be derived by understanding the message for the first century church to which it originally was written. It does have a message for us today! And, that message involves our faithfulness in the midst of adversity if we, like our brethren of old, are to remain “faithful unto death” (Revelation 2:10) and, thereby, receive the crown of life.

Let’s not allow the speculations of those in error on the book of Revelation to hinder our being blessed by reading and studying the book of Revelation.—Gary McDade