

Mount Up Wednesday
The Wednesday Night Bible Study Ministry of
East Mount Zion Baptist Church
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The Study of Revelation

Opening the Seals
Revelation Chapter Six

The Book of Revelation is the prophecy of God taking back what rightfully belongs to Him, the Earth. This reclaiming takes place over the course of seven years or the 70th Week, as described in the book of Daniel chapter 9:26b-27. During these seven years, three sets of judgements will be released. This will begin with Christ Jesus breaking seven seals. The Seal judgements are the first of the set of three. The second set of judgements are called Trumpet Judgements and the last are the Bowl or Vial Judgements. The actions of each set of judgement gets progressively worse than the set before.

God, the Father, is completely in control of everything that is, was and will take place. However, He operates behind the scenes, giving Jesus authority to go forth.

Chapter Six outlines six of the seven seal judgements. The seventh is released in the beginning of chapter eight. In this lesson, we will study the six Seal Judgements, as well as the first Beast who comes out of the sea, aka the Antichrist.

The First Seal—Rider on White Horse

Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come." I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

John is continuing to share with us what is being revealed to him. Here he sees the Lamb, or Christ Jesus, break open one of the seals. He then hears one of the four living creatures, the ones who stand before the Throne, extend an invitation to "come." As John looks, he sees a depiction of what could be mistaken as Jesus, because of the majestic image of the white horse and the Kingly nature of the crown and bow. However, this is not Jesus. This is an imitator of Christ Jesus, the Antichrist. (See handout on the Holy Trinity vs the Satanic Trinity.)

Just as God the Father is behind the scenes, but fully in control. Satan, who always imitates the Father, is also behind the scenes putting things into action. We see this in Revelation chapter thirteen, the dragon, who is Satan, standing on the seashore. Coming out of the sea is the first Beast, the Antichrist. We know that it is the Antichrist based on the description of his fatal wound that has been healed. He is the imitator of Jesus.

The Dragon gives him his power, his throne and great authority, just as God the Father gave Jesus all power and authority and the seat at His right hand. Additionally, in chapter we read that the

rider on the white horse went out conquering and to conquer. The crown would indicate kingship, but the bow, without an arrow is telling. This would refer to the conquering of territory without force. The Antichrist, (a name not mentioned in the book of Revelation, but certainly displayed in the book), will make peace with the world, immediately after the Rapture. He will establish his throne based on deception and lure people into trusting him. This false peace will not last, because within 3.5 years his evil motives will be revealed.

Lastly was the requirement of worship from those left on the earth. These are all the people who were left behind after the Rapture, except the 144,000 and the two Witnesses and anyone who has accepted Christ during this period of time. Once the people feel they can trust the Antichrist, their next response will be to idolize him.

Rev. 13: states that the dragon gave the 1st Beast authority to make war with the saints and to overcome them. This would coincide with the Rev 6:3, the 2nd Seal.

The Second Seal—War

When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come." And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.

It is important to keep in mind that nothing happening on the earth is out of the control of God the Father, through Jesus Christ the Son. When the Seals are broken, the evil that is permitted to come forth has one express purpose, to turn the hearts of the people back to their God. You may ask "why would God allow evil to get the attention of His people?" Remember, all of these people were given many opportunities to accept Christ during their time on the earth before the Rapture and they didn't. What they will experience during the Tribulation Period is a consequence of their stubbornness. Therefore, we should be witnessing and helping people to understand the fate that awaits them. It won't be impossible to get saved during this period, but it will be very difficult.

When the 2nd Seal is broken, the evil antics of the Antichrist continue in full force. This rider as well as the other two, are demonic forces that do the bidding of the Antichrist. His political prowess, as depicted by the large sword, will cause people to wage war against one another and peace will be taken from the earth. This will all be brought about by his deception.

The Third Seal—Famine

When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine."

The evil that is unleashed in the earth will cause the world to fall into extreme famine. So devastating will be the famine that a day's wages will barely purchase enough ingredients to make a loaf of bread or a small meal. However, the oil and wine are not to be touched. There is a great deal of discussion around what this could mean. My interpretation is that these are elements used under the Old and New Testaments. Oil for anointing and Wine for symbolizing

the blood of Jesus. As people left on the earth accept Jesus and begin their new life in Him, they will no doubt, have need of these elements for their use in honoring and the soon coming King,

The Fourth Seal—Death

When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.

Jesus state in Rev. 1:18 that "He holds the keys to death and Hades." However, we see here that Jesus is releasing those keys to this demonic figure to kill one fourth of the population, by the two former means combined, along the torture of plague and wild beasts. This could easily be calculated to equal over one billion people. Image living through this devastation.

The Fifth Seal—Martyrs

When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.

The 5th Seal brings about a startling revelation; many of the people who died during this period this far will be believers. They will have come to the knowledge of the truth of Jesus Christ and refused to renounce it. They are martyrs and they are great examples what it means to be a follower of Christ. They are the first fruit of Tribulation Disciples, which means, as Rev 6:11 indicates, there will be more martyrs.

The Sixth Seal—Terror

*I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair; and the whole moon became like blood; and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they *said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

Old Testament Passages that refer to this text:

"The great day of the LORD is near; it is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter; there the mighty men shall cry out. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and alarm against the fortified cities and against the high towers. ([Zephaniah 1:14-16](#))

The sun and moon grow dark, and stars diminish their brightness... for the day of the LORD is great and terrible; who can endure it? ([Joel 2:10-11](#))

“The practical effect of the judgement was fear in the unbelievers from all walks of life. They called on the mountains and the rocks to fall on them and to hide them from God’s wrath. Their fear was so great they would rather be killed by a falling mountain than to face the wrath of the Lamb and that of the Triune God. Again, this is not a picture of ordinary trouble, but the period of greatest distress in world history.

Taken as a whole, chapter 6 is one of the most important and pivotal chapters in the entire book. It describes the first six seals and also introduces the seventh seal, which consists of and introduces the seven trumpets and the seven bowls of the wrath of God in chapters 8-9; 16.” (Bible Knowledge Comm. Pg 949.)