

## **The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Message #5**

### **Revelation 6 – The Seal Judgments**

The future for the world is not one of peace and prosperity. The world is heading towards global calamity, confusion, death and destruction. Old Testament scripture has long predicted that this would occur. It is known as the Day of the LORD. This has been reinforced by the New Testament climaxing in the book of Revelation.

Chapters 4 & 5 focused upon heaven, now the scene shifts the focus to earth. In chapter 6 the main action of the book begins. Some title this chapter the wrath of the Lamb. Jesus is seen standing in heaven, opening the seals of the title deed to earth. With each seal catastrophic judgments are unleashed upon the world.

When we studied the book of Daniel we learned that the time of the Tribulation period would be seven years. We also learned that the seven year period would be divided into two equal halves. An event called “the abomination of desolation” would mark the middle. We also looked at Jesus teaching on prophecy from the Mount of Olives during the last week of His earthly ministry. In that message He outlined the Tribulation. **(Outline Map of the Tribulation)**. We said that the first six Seal Judgments seem to parallel what Jesus called “[the beginning of sorrows](#)”, [Matthew 24:8](#). This term means birth pangs increasing in frequency and intensity.

**(Refer to overview handout)**

Revelation is not necessarily in chronological order. The judgments seem to advance the narrative.

As John continues to view the incredible scene in heaven He witnesses Jesus opening the first seal (1).

Bruce Metzger writes, “Notice how brief and concise this account is. Each of the four scenes is like a cameo, very small and compact. None of the four horsemen says a single word. Each rides forth in silence.”

The command “[Come](#)” is a summons to each of four figures rather than to John. The words “[and see](#)” are not in the original.

#### **1. [Seal #1 – The Antichrist \(2\)](#)**

***The Rider on a White Horse***

[Matthew 24:4-5](#), “will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ'”

Some see this person as Jesus because of chapter 19. This is not Jesus but the Antichrist. The crown is not a diadem but a *stephanos* crown, a victor’s crown. The bow with no arrows may signify that he initially conquers by peaceful means.

- **The peace treaty of Antichrist marks the beginning of the Tribulation**

[Daniel 9:27](#), “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week”

When we studied Daniel we saw that the last period of Daniel’s Seventy Weeks Prophecy is yet to be fulfilled. One week equals seven years. The Antichrist makes some kind of covenant with Israel which marks the beginning of this seven year period. The Tribulation is the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel.

**The Rapture of the Church Precedes this Event**

[2 Thessalonians 2:1-9](#) **TURN TO**

The restrainer is the Holy Spirit. When the church is taken out of the path is clear for the Antichrist to begin to deceive the nations. He will be the head of some type of ten nation confederation coming out of the old Roman Empire. The Tribulation period will begin with a false sense of peace.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3, "For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape."

## 2. Seal #2 – War (3-4)

### *The Rider on a Red Horse*

Matthew 24:6-7, "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom."

Red is the color associated with Satan (12:3, "red dragon"; 17:3, "scarlet beast"). WWII followed a false sense of peace. Many refused to believe that Hitler wanted war. It is interesting how Hitler's hatred of the Jews paved the way for the state of Israel to be reborn. The false sense of peace will be short-lived.

- **The Antichrist will be a skilled warmonger**

Daniel 8:24, "His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; he shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people."

**All of these Events Are Allowed by God to Execute His Judgment upon the World**

Isaiah 13:6, "Wail, for the day of the Lord is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty."

## 3. Seal #3 – Famine (5-6)

### *The Rider on a Black Horse*

Matthew 24:7, "and there will be famines"

War produces famine. The scales picture the rationing of food. Food will become extremely scarce and very expensive. The voice John hears must be the voice of God.

- **These judgments are by God's decree**

"...A quart of wheat for a denarius". This amount would barely sustain one person for a day and it takes a day's wage to purchase it.

"...and three quarts of barley for a denarius". Barley was a lesser quality food often used to feed animals. "...and do not harm the oil and the wine". Oil and wine were considered to be essential in biblical times. The caution here is not to waste them.

**The Basics of Life Will Become Luxuries**

## 4. Seal #4 – Death (7-8)

### *The Rider on a Pale Horse*

Matthew 24:7, "...pestilences, and earthquakes in various places."

This is a pale green color like the pallor of death. The rider's name is "Death". "Hades" following death symbolizes spiritual death. This will be a time of unprecedented death and destruction. Literally one fourth of the world's population will die. Earth's current population is about 6 billion. That would mean almost 1.5 billion deaths just in the first half of the Tribulation.

- **People will die from war, famine, disease and animals**

"...to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth."

The word death can also be translated as pestilence. In war time disease usually kills more people than bullets or bombs. Some believe the reference to animals will include rats that historically have spread disease and death. The bubonic plague in Europe that killed almost 1/3 of the population was spread by rats.

God sent these very judgments against Judah when she went into captivity.

Ezekiel 14:21, “For thus says the Lord God: “How much more it shall be when I send My four severe judgments on Jerusalem — the sword and famine and wild beasts and pestilence — to cut off man and beast from it?”

### **In the Tribulation God’s Four Severe Judgments Will Be Worldwide**

Some believe that the 4<sup>th</sup> Seal indicates the Second Half of the Tribulation. In the prophecy of Matthew 24 they appear to be in the first half. It is not possible to know the exact placements of all of the judgments.

#### 5. Seal #5 – Martyrdom (9-11)

##### *The Souls under the Altar*

Matthew 24:9-10, “...I saw under the altar the souls”

The scene moves back to heaven where John sees a vision of those who were martyred apparently during the Tribulation. The altar is not identified. It may be symbolic of the altar in the Tabernacle. In the Old Testament the blood of the sacrifices was poured out under the altar, Leviticus 4:7. What is clear is the reason they were killed.

- **Because they believed the Word of God**

“...of those who had been slain for the word of God”

These will be people who will correctly interpret the cataclysmic events they are living through. They will recognize from scripture that this is the prophesied judgment of God. They will proclaim this truth to those around them. The Antichrist and his followers will not tolerate this.

- **Because they believed in the Son of God**

“...and for the testimony which they held.”

With the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit removed the Antichrist will be able to kill those who confess Christ.

This will eventually lead to the mark of the beast in Revelation 13.

13:15, “...and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.”

##### **The Saints Pray an Imprecatory Prayer**

“And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?””

Many of the Psalms are called imprecatory meaning to call down calamity on someone. This is not a prayer for personal revenge but for divine retribution. The word for “Lord” is *despotes* meaning master, power, and authority. The normal word is *kurios*. God’s holiness and truth demand divine retribution. God reveals to them that even more will be called upon to give their life for Him before the end.

“Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.”

#### 6. Seal #6 – Worldwide Chaos (12-17)

##### *Here God Acts Alone*

Matthew 24:12, “And because lawlessness will abound”

There will be natural, political, and economical disasters such as the world has never seen before. This is what the prophets have predicted, the day when God pours out His wrath upon the earth.

Joel 2:30-31, “And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.”

- **The period Jesus called “the great tribulation”**

This must be right at the end or the beginning of the final three years.

Daniel 12:1, "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time."

Many believe what is being described here is massive earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and cosmic events.

Isaiah 13:9-11, "Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations

will not give their light; the sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine. I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity"

- **The people of earth recognize this as God's judgment**

"And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves 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 who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?""

**People Will Be So Frightened by God's Judgment they Will Seek Death to Escape Him**

Hebrews 10:31, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."