

c. As far as the seals are concerned, they will be an intense amplification of “business as usual.” God will give mankind over to his fallen nature - and more!

i. This is not the case with some of the trumpet and bowl judgments of later chapters. They are completely unique manifestations of God’s judgment.

3. The sixth seal concludes with a valid question: Who is able to stand? Only the believer can stand before this great judgment, the one who is justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

a. Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand. ([Romans 5:1-2](#))

b. I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received and in which you stand. ([1 Corinthians 15:1](#))

c. Testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. ([1 Peter 5:12](#))

d. The believer can stand in the face of this great wrath of God because Jesus already bore the wrath the believer deserved.

THE TRIBULATION; IT HAS STARTED

Thursday, July 8, 2010

Text: Revelation 6

INTRODUCTION:

In the last two chapters, we have been in heaven. We have enjoyed the glory of the exalted Father and Son. Listened in on the songs and witnessed the praise. Now, it is time for God to begin working out His redemptive plan for the planet Earth. As the Lamb begins to open the seals, thunder is heard in Heaven. Thunder signals impending doom, (III. Thunderstorm). One of the beasts says, “Come and see”! The invitation is given for all men to approach the things of God and look into coming events. It is part of God’s plan and wish to save fallen man. He invites him to look that he might see what is coming and turn from his evil toward the Lord. Tonight, I want you to notice with me that there are Terrible events that are now unfolding on the earth. Let’s look in as Jesus begins the series of events that will reclaim earth from Satan.

I. v.2 THE SEAL OF DECEPTION (Horses imply swiftness and rapid succession) (III. This is not Jesus!)

A. **White Horse** - Gives the appearance of good. False purity, (false Christ), He will ride onto the scene in the wake of the rapture. deception is his weapon.

1. The Antichrist is now on the scene, and his initial works would represent peace is now on the horizon. When in reality he represents anything but peace!

a. Deceives many into believing that he is Christ.
“And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,” (2 Thessalonians 2:11 NKJV)

b. deception will become his greatest weapon.
“For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.” (Matthew 24:5 NKJV)
“For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.” (Matthew 24:24 NKJV)

B. **A Bow** - A military man who carries a bow, but no arrows. He conquers by deception rather than bloodshed.

(III. The world is ready for a man to bring peace.(III. World thought patterns have already been programmed to accept his doctrine - III. Communism, Dependence on government, Secular Humanism - Evolution, Situation Ethics, Moral Freedom, Self-sufficiency, Sexual Permissiveness, Anti-religion bias, Socialism, One World Government, Death Education, Human Destiny.) He will unite the world. Man’s other attempts have failed, his will too.

C. **A Given Crown** - The world will accept him and will crown him king of the world (III. He has no right to the throne!)

1. Chronologically, the trumpets do not follow the seals and the bowls do not follow the trumpets.

a. The first six seals are “a summary of the judgments distributed over the whole book; a brief summary of what will occur in ‘the day of the Lord,’ up the time of His actual Apocalypse or Unveiling in chapter 19.” (Bullinger)

b. That span begins with the revelation of the Antichrist (the first seal) and it concludes with the revealing of the face of Him who sits on the throne (the seventh seal).

2. Do the seals represent conditions immediately before the end, or more general conditions prevailing over a more extended period, up until the return of Jesus?

a. There is a sense in which we can say that the they represent both - dictators, war, famine, death and persecution have been familiar throughout all history, but not to the magnitude and severity with which they will be present in the Great Tribulation.

b. “The wars and famines predicted in the second and third seals are not unfamiliar events in the history of the world, but never before since the time of Noah has a judgment so devastating been consummated as to destroy one-fourth of the earth’s population at one stroke.” (Walvoord)

b. The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth: It is best to regard these pictures as real, but poetic. John isn't using technically precise scientific language, but he simply describes what he saw.

c. 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: All people are equally brought low by God's wrath. The judgment is all the more profound because it is the **wrath of the Lamb**.

i. "It is the wrath of love, the wrath of sacrificial love which, having done the absolute utmost for us and our salvation, tells us as nothing else could the certainty with which evil awaits its doom at the hand of God." (Torrance)

d. Hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne: They hide not only from the terror of the judgments, but from the face of Him who sits on the throne. "What sinners dread most is not death, but the revealed presence of God." (Swete)

C. Observations: How do the seals fit in God's prophetic plan?

1. There are many different opinions, but it seems best to say that the seals, trumpets, and bowls that will be described later are not strictly sequential events.

D. **He Comes Conquering** - He will take the world, He will be the last natural man to try and bring peace to the world. The world will be fooled by him. His false peace will last 3 1/2 years!

"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." (1 Thess. 5:3)

(III. This rider is not Jesus! Note how they compare: Both ride white horses. The first has a victor's crown, the second has many diadems, he is King of Kings; The first has a useless weapon, the second an all powerful sword; The first is a man, the second is GOD!)

II. v.3-4 THE SEAL OF DESTRUCTION

A. **Red** - The color of fire and blood. Fire devours and destroys. Bloodshed will be the natural result of these days. The false peace will be impossible to bring about. This apparently peaceful man now becomes an instrument of war.

B. Many wars will break out as antichrist attempts to consolidate his power. The words of Jesus - Mt. 24:6-8.

"And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. Matthew 24:7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. Matthew 24:8 All these are the beginning of sorrows." (Matthew 24:6-8 NKJV)

Russia and her allies will invade Israel - Exe 38-39.
WWIII will take place now - the world is ready!
60,000 H-bombs, enough to destroy the world 17 times
over at a temperature of 130 million degrees. The world
loves war! Ill. Scientific study; Ill. God - Rom. 3:17; Ill.
Since WWII - 12 limited wars; 38 political assassinations;
74 rebellions for independence; 162 revolutions. And
WWII was the war to end all wars!

C. Imagine a world without any peace! Its coming!

III. v.5-6 THE SEAL OF DESPAIR.

- A. **Black** - Mourning, sorrow, famine - Lam. 4:8-9. The aftermath of war is always famine, and with famine disease - Ill. 27 million died in Europe after WWI.
- B. **Balances** - Rationing of food.
- C. **Measure** - 1 Quart; Penny - A Days Wages. A days wage will buy one quart, the least a man can survive on, of wheat. Or, 3 quarts of Barley, horse feed. (What about the rest?)
- D. Could it happen? Consider this: 1/2 the preschool children in the world are undernourished; Over 1/2 the world goes to bed hungry; 10,000 people starve to death annually.
- E. While the poor starve, the wealthy enjoy excess. All compassion will be gone! Population: 203,000 births per day; 74 million increase per year!

At this point there are still many who have yet to be martyred for their rejection of the Mark of the Beast. In the midst of trouble, just rest in the Lord, we will understand it better farther on. Even now, God has a purpose - Rom. 8:28.

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” (Romans 8:28 NKJV)

VI. THE SEAL OF COSMIC DISTURBANCE- V.12-17

The opening of the sixth seal brings cosmic disruption.

a. **Vv.12-13** In the Bible, celestial disturbances are often connected with the coming of the Messiah. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Zephaniah and Jesus Himself all describe such things.

i. A passage from Zephaniah is an example:
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)

ii. Or, as in Joel 2:10-11: 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?**

B. V.10 THE CRY OF VENGEANCE -

It is probably best to see this as the cry of all martyrs for God's truth, not merely believers persecuted by the coming world leader, the first horseman of [Revelation 6:1-2](#).

1. **And they cried with a loud voice:** These souls in heaven cry out for vengeance (**until You judge and avenge our blood**). We usually don't think of God's people crying out for vengeance, but they make their cry to God, and leave the matter with Him.
2. When God's people are persecuted, He will set it right. It isn't wrong for God's people to ask Him to do what He promised to do. So the blood of Abel cried out from the ground for vengeance ([Genesis 4:10](#)), as did the blood of unavenged murders in the land of Israel ([Numbers 35:33](#)).

"And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground." (Genesis 4:10 NKJV)

"So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it." (Numbers 35:33 NKJV)

C. **V.11 THE COMFORT OF A PROMISE** (III. It is good to serve a God who knows it all!)

1. White Robes - a picture of Purity and cleansing. These are the folks who refuse the mark of the beast.

F. Population explosion statistics: 1850 = 1b; 1930 = 2b; 1961 = 3b; 1976 = 4b; 1989 = 5b; 6.75b by 2,000!

G. Waste: 1 days waste from average family would feed a family of 6 in India. Our dogs have a higher protein diet than many in poor countries. Our waste costs 17.5 Billion dollars annually.

H. Land: Nearly all the world's cultivatable land is being used. (III. The world eats enough grain each year to build a highway 18 yards wide, 6 ft. deep around the equator of the earth - 1.2 billion metric tons. There isn't much hope of producing more.

IV. v.7-8 THE SEAL OF DEATH.

A. **Pale Horse - Pestilence.** Green is the color of dying tissue.

B. Death is the rider with Hell following: There will be no restrainer.

"For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way." (2 Thessalonians 2:7 NKJV)

C. 1/4 of the world's population will be destroyed.

"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?" (Ezekiel 14:21 NKJV)

- i. There will be violence. - The sword.
- ii. There will be starvation - Hunger.
- iii. There will be disease - Death, Pestilence the bubonic plague; AIDS, 20,000,000 cases; possibly 100 times greater than reported cases! Chemical warfare -disease strains developed for war, etc.)

D. **The animals will kill - Beasts.** Possibly RATS - Destroy 1 b dollars of food in USA alone. Produce 5 or more litters of 8-9 each per year, fleas carry bubonic plague which destroyed 1/3 of Europe in 14th century. Carry Typhus which was responsible for over 200 million deaths in 400 years. Rats can carry as many as 35 different diseases. If 95% of population is destroyed, can replenish in 1 year!

The first four seals. The events of these verses, are during the middle portion of the Great Tribulation. The time known as Jacob's Trouble, (Jer. 30:7)As the fifth and sixth seals are opened, terrible things take place on the earth. Many are depressed by the events of Revelation. However, we must consider what this world has done and continues to do to God and His Son Jesus Christ. God has every right to judge mankind and He will exercise that right during the Tribulation. Let's look into the Word as the Lamb opens these two seals.

V. V.9-11 THE THE SEAL OF THE MARTYR-

(This passage refutes two false doctrines:

- 1. Soul sleep - These souls are awake!

- 2. Purgatory - These souls are not paying for anything, they are waiting on something!)

Note:

Altar = Safety; Security and Sacrifice. After the rapture, the world will hear the gospel -currently, Scripture is in 1,100 translations; 2,000 languages!

A. V.9 THE COST OF ALLEGIANCE -

- 1. Many will be saved during Tribulation. Many will pay with their own blood! The inquisition of the dark ages; modern persecutions!

"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12 NKJV)

"It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!" (Matthew 10:25 NKJV)

"These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. 3 And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. 4 But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. "And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you." (John 16:1-4 NKJV)

- 2. There is a price to pay for devotion to the Lord!