

Apocalypse Now: The Challenge of Revelation

Week 4—Revelation 6-7

October 5, 2022

I. Review

A. Things are not as they seem.

B. The Message of Revelation 2-3.

C. The message of Revelation 4-5.

1. Look! A Door. Look! A Throne. Listen

D. A scroll with 7 seals.

1. The scroll represents God's Word fully, finally revealed

2. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah is worthy to open the scroll. But the lion is a slaughtered lamb.

3. We will (and do now) reign with the lamb.

II. Chapter 6 is a vision of the scroll, sealed with seven seals

A. Introductory observations: God's judgment is just.

1. Come! Seals 1-4

2. Numeral 4 is the corners of the earth; a cosmic vision.

B. The Four Horsemen

1. Rider #1. The archer on the white horse. Outside threat

2. Rider #2. The Red Horse takes away peace. Inside threat

3. Rider #3. The Black Horse Brings famine & starvation. Threat of economic collapse

4. Rider #4. Has a name: Death; Hades follows him.

C. Seals 5-6 The Saints and the Kings

1. Fifth seal: the Saints Cry "how long" and receive hope

2. Sixth seal: Kings run for cover; receive wrath of Lamb.

- a) The first 5 seals speak of historical realities; with final seal, the cosmos itself starts to come apart.
- b) Sun turning black; moon to blood; stars falling is standard apocalyptic imagery for world ending.
- c) God is saying to the world, “thy will be done.”

D. The seventh seal will wrap it all up.

III. The Seal Interlude (Chapter 7).

A. Surprise.

B. The Church on Earth 7:1-8 (prior to the judgment).

- 1. The four winds and the four horsemen represent the same reality. Cf. Zechariah 6. But who are the “sealed servants” of God?
- 2. The Servants of God are “sealed,” so they can persevere through great tribulation.
- 3. How many is 144,000? It was a big number.
 - a) $144=12 \times 12$ (tribes x apostles) $\times 10^3$.

C. The Church in Heaven 7:9-17

- 1. Vs. 9 How big, really, is the church?
 - a) 12 tribes times 12 apostles times 10^3 . REALLY big.
 - b) The purpose of Israel (12 tribes) is now being realized. Cf. Genesis 12.
- 2. Vs. 13-14 Who are the figures dressed in white?
- 3. What is the “Great Ordeal (Tribulation)?”
 - a) Greek *thlipsis* (pressure) cf. 1:9.
 - b) Speculation about the “Great Tribulation”

Vss. 15-17 What happens to those who follow the Lamb?

D. Seal 7 The Coming of the End 8:1

- 1. Long period of silence. Time for the end, but not yet.
- 2. Beautiful pastoral figure-- the Lamb shepherding his people