

REVELATION REVISITED

Assignment #4 - Seals 5 - 7

This week we finish the story of the unsealing of the book, found in Revelation 6:9 - 8:6. To shed further light on these passages, also read the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 23:29-36, Matthew 24: 7-10, and Luke 21:10-17. You may not see the connection at first, but will as the study progresses.

1. With the opening of the 5th seal, no horseman is seen. Instead, we get a look back in history at all those who have died in the cause of Christ. What question do these “souls” ask? _____

2. What answer are they given? _____
3. What is the implication of this answer? _____

In Matthew 23:29-36 Jesus lays out the principal of guilt-transference for the crime of putting his servants to death. This “woe” pronounced on the Pharisees is a powerful warning to the modern-day citizens of the earth that when they resume the persecution of God’s people that they will assume the guilt for those who were killed in the past.

4. Last week’s lesson on the first four seals spoke of war, famine and pestilence. We were able to find each of these elements in the list of events that Jesus said would occur when earth went into “labor pains”, prior to His return. Did He also warn of persecution at that time? _____

At the opening of the 6th seal, a number of dramatic events occur, bringing men everywhere to the conclusion that God is angry, and that “the time of His wrath has come.”

5. For the past 160 years we have used the language of the 6th seal to describe the Second Coming of Jesus. But is the Second Coming actually the focus of the 6th seal? The chart at the top of the next page shows the events that happen when the 6th seal is opened, and it shows the events that will occur at the Second Coming. Carefully compare these two columns. What conclusion can you draw regarding these two events?

At the opening of the 6th Seal:

- A great earthquake moves all islands and mountains.
- The sky is darkened.
- Meteorites fall.
- Atmospheric disturbances churn the clouds.
- Prominent people, military men and common people hide in the ground for protection.
- They realize that God is angry, and that the day of God's wrath has come.

At the Second Coming:

- A Cloud appears from the east.
- The assembled armies of the wicked fight against the army of heaven.
- The graves of the righteous are opened.
- The righteous dead are raised to life.
- The living saints are taken up into the air.
- A worldwide earthquake completely destroys all mountains and islands.
- The wicked are killed.

7. What one element did Luke include in his list of "birth pangs" that Matthew omitted? See the last phrase of Luke 21:11. _____

Between the 6th and 7th seal, another story is dropped in. This story introduces us to the 144,000 and to the "great multitude" that come out of the "great Tribulation". Let's spend a little time on what the Bible tells us about the 144,000.

8. How many are chosen? (This isn't a trick question) _____

9. What does the Bible call these people? Rev 7:3 _____

10. Look up each of these texts:

- 1 Kings 14:18
- 2 Kings 21:10
- Ez 38:17
- Amos 3:7
- 2 Kings 9:7
- Jer 7:25
- Dan 9:6
- Rev 11:18

Who else has been referred to by the same designation as the 144,000? _____

11. Read Paul's advice to the Christians in Corinth recorded in 1 Cor 14:1. Given the above information on the 144,000, can Paul's advice be relevant in our day as well? _____

12. What relationship does this "interlude" story have to the story of the 7 Seals? Is there a connection between the events that occur as the book is *unsealed*, and the people who are *sealed*?

13. What might we expect to happen after the 144,000 are sealed? Rev 7:3 _____

As the first six seals have been opened, we have witnessed a series of events that occur on earth. War, famine and pestilence have made their mark on humanity. Under the sixth seal, dramatic signs convince mankind of the fact that God is angry, and that the time has come for earth to feel God's wrath.

Now, as the seventh seal opens, our attention is directed to heaven. The first thing that John notices is the silence. When he earlier saw events in heaven, all was praise and worship. But now all is still. Why?

If we separate the sentence, "When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour" from what follows, we have no way of determining why it is so quiet there. We are left to conjecture.

Fortunately the text doesn't end there. It goes on to describe an impressive scene that unfolds in the heavenly sanctuary as all of heaven watches.

14. Notice the flow of action throughout the story. What angels are seen first? What is given them? _____

15. Who is the mighty angel that serves in the sanctuary? _____

16. What were the elements of the "daily" or "continual" sacrifice in the earthly sanctuary?

See Exodus 29:38-42 and Exodus 30:7-8 _____

This "continual" service was not for any specific sin, but was for the camp as a whole. It enabled God to "dwell among the sons of Israel". In this connection, **read Numbers 16**. This fascinating story points out that the censer service of the high priest protected the people from the wrath of God.

17. Read Daniel 12:11 from several different translations. What will come to an end? Is it possible that we are seeing the end of the "daily" service in Revelation 8? _____

18. What is allowed to happen as soon as the censer is thrown down? _____

Questions to Ponder

A. What does this lesson teach us about Jesus and the Father?

B. Does John 14:29 help us understand Jesus' care for us?