

## ***The 7 Seal Judgments & The Seal of God***

### **I. The Lamb Breaks The Seals**

- a. As we dive into this first end-time judgment series, we must recognize that *it is the Lamb who possesses the scroll and opens it's seals*. Each time He opens a seal, a true and righteous judgment is loosed upon the earth. *The seal judgments are directed toward the Antichrist and his empire*. The purpose of these end time judgments is redemptive, they are the least severe means to bring about righteousness throughout the earth.

***(Revelation 16:7 NASB) “Yes, Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.”***

***(Isaiah 26:9 NASB) “For when the earth experiences Your judgments, The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.”***

- b. The Lamb breaks the seals only when the Global Prayer Movement has fully matured. **Revelation 5:8** describes golden bowls that are filled up with incense (defined as the prayers of the saints) before He opens the seals. This goes to show that *the release of God's judgments are dynamically connected to the praying church that is in agreement with His plans and purposes*. Though Jesus is the only one worthy to loose each seal, He will do so in response to the praying church that will be asking Him to.

***(Revelation 5:8 NASB) “When He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”***

- c. For decades, the earth will have gone through the “*beginning of birth pangs*” followed by 3 ½ years of false peace during the “*increased labor pangs*”. When the Lamb breaks the first seal and we enter into the final 3 ½ years of this age, it will be the most dynamic season the earth has ever endured. *The judgments of God are literal events that will take place in the future and are redemptive in purpose as they are progressively poured out against the Antichrist Empire*. The final 3 ½ years are the final stage of the birthing process called , The Great Tribulation; what's being birth is a new age and the Millennial reign of Christ.

### **II. The Structure of The Seals, Trumpets, & Bowls**

- a. There are 3 main series of judgment described in the book of Revelation: **7 seal judgments, 7 trumpet judgments, 7 bowl judgments**. They are all structured in a similar way. They are divided into three parts. The first Part includes the first 4 events of each judgment series, the second part includes events 5 and 6, and the 7<sup>th</sup> one stands alone.
- b. The duration of the seals and trumpets is not explicitly laid out in scripture, but we know that the bowl judgments are poured out after the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet in a 30 day period (**Daniel 12:11; Revelation 11:3;12:6;13:5**). We also know that the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet lasts 5 months (**Revelation 8:10**). Based on the nature of the judgments and the “*birthing*” analogy, I think it's contextually safe to assume that the seals are poured out over the span of around 2 years, the trumpets are blown in the span of 12-18 months, and Bowls are poured out in 30 days.
- c. As we look at the seals, it's important to remember that these events will take place over the course of a few years. Knowing the exact “start date” for some of them may be vague, but we will see and experience the progressive outpouring of these judgments. It's also important to note that the Church will endure the seal judgments. The “Great Multitude” and the “144,000” do not receive the “seal of God” until *after the 6<sup>th</sup> seal is opened*. This gives great insight into Jesus' statement in **Luke 21:19**.

*(Luke 21:16-19 NASB) “16 But you will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, other relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death, 17 and you will be hated by all people because of My name. 18 And yet not a hair of your head will perish. 19 By your endurance you will gain your lives.”*

### III. Overview of the Seal judgments

- a. The first four seals each have a horse with a distinct color and a rider who sits upon the horse. The rider of each horse is released by a decree, given by one of the living creatures and results in a judgment. *The first four seals are the result of God lifting His restraining hand off of humanity allowing wicked men advance evil agendas.*
- b. The first 4 seals involve natural actions happening on the earth and the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> seal involve supernatural actions occurring in the heavens.
- c. The first 4 seal judgments are targeted at the harlot Babylon (wicked religious and economic system) and the nations that align with her, yet the ripple effects will be felt throughout the earth. The Antichrist will conquer the nations by force and overthrow the harlot through world war, economic crisis, famine and disease. There is a unique and dysfunctional relationship between the beast (antichrist) and the harlot Babylon. For a season they work together, but the antichrist and His ten-nation confederation hate the harlot and will overthrow her.

*(Revelation 17:16 NASB) “And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the prostitute and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire.”*

### IV. The Seven Seals of Judgment

- a. The First Seal (White Horse): The Antichrists Political & Military Aggression

*(Revelation 6:1-2 NASB) “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!” 2 I looked, and behold, a white horse, and the one who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.”*

- i. **White horse** – White is a symbol for righteousness, and the horse speaks of speed, strength, and agility. The antichrist is depicted here in white, because he will wear a false righteousness that will deceive the nations during his crafty rise to power. When he gets control over nations, it will happen swiftly and suddenly.
- ii. **Arrowless bow** – The arrowless bow speaks of the antichrists “threats of war” and bloodless victories. He will win many battles from a distance without ever getting “boots on the ground”.
- iii. **Crown** – The crown is a symbol for authority. He will rule the nations because the people of the earth will give him influence and God will allow this to happen.

*(Daniel 2:21 NASB) “It is He who changes the times and the periods; He removes kings and appoints kings...”*

- iv. **Conquering and to conquer** – This is a moment of “shift” for the Antichrist. While he’ll be involved in the political and economic scene for a number of years, when the Lamb breaks the first seal, the Antichrist’s lust for power goes to a whole new level and His intention is to conquer the world and be worshiped. *This is why I’m convinced the breaking of the first seal and the Abomination of desolation are either synonymous events, or happen around the same time frame (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15).*
- v. The Antichrist is neither a surprise to God nor a threat to Him. The beast is a tool of judgment raised up by God to primarily judge apostate Israel and the wicked nations.

b. The Second Seal (Red Horse): Bloodshed & World War

*(Revelation 6:3-4 NASB) “When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come!” 4 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 people would kill one another; and a large sword was given to him.”*

- i. **Red horse** – The red speaks of global bloodshed. Again, the horse represents speed, strength, and agility. Bloodshed and world war will escalate very quickly.
- ii. **Take peace from the earth** – The Antichrist, his false prophet, and the ten-nation confederation will kill and oppress those who stand with the harlot and also those who stand with Israel. They will promote civil unrest and international conflict that will rob the earth of the “false peace and safety” it had know for 3 ½ years prior.
- iii. **People would kill on another; and a large sword was given to him** – The Antichrist will initiate a final world war with the greatest devastation and destruction the earth will ever experience up to that point.

c. The Third Seal (Black Horse): Famine & Economic Crisis

*(Revelation 6:5-6 NASB) “When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, “Come!” I looked, and behold, a black horse, and the one who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 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.”*

- i. **Black horse** – Black speaks of sin, sorrow, sadness and mourning. Again, the horse represents speed, strength, and agility.
- ii. **Pair of scales in his hand** – The scales speak of world economics. The third seal prophesies the greatest economic crisis that the world will ever see. This will not come as a shock to the earth; it’s only normal to have economic repercussions after world war.
- iii. **A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius** – A denarius was equivalent to wages for one day of work. The message here is that *one days wages will only be enough money to buy food for one person for one day on a minimal diet*. Think about the implications of a world that can’t afford housing, food, etc...
- iv. **Do not damage the oil and the wine** – During John’s time, oil and wine were luxuries for the rich and were of not much consequence for the poor because they never had them anyway. The ruling class will still make money from oil and wine and have access to their luxuries. This will include the Antichrist, his hierarchy and those who submit to his leadership.

d. The Fourth Seal (Ashen Horse): Disease Leading to the Death of 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the Earth

*(Revelation 6:7-8 NASB) “When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come!” 8 I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and the one 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 famine, and plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.”*

- i. **Ashen Horse** – The pale grey/green color of this horse speaks of the color of death. The horse represents speed, strength, and agility
- ii. **Had the name Death** – The spirit of death will advance dramatically in this hour of history

- iii. **Hades (hell) was following with him** – Hades is the place where the departed spirit of an unbeliever goes after they die. Many unbelievers will die and be snatched by the demonic ranks of hades.
    - 1. *Hades* is a New Testament Greek term used for: 1) The grave – The place of bodily decay, 2) The place of punishment for the wicked, 3) Possibly a general term for the realm of the dead. Hades is not a permanent place; it will be destroyed (***Revelation 20:13-14***).
  - iv. **Authority was given to them over ¼ of the earth** – God gives death and hades power over 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the earth. The repercussions of the Antichrist’s reign are seen in massive death happening all across the earth.
  - v. **To kill with sword, and famine, and plague, and by the wild animals of the earth** – Death and Hades are given authority to kill ¼ of the earth by sword (war), famine, plague, and wild animals. This means that although the first three seals were similar, the fourth takes it to a whole new level and also introduces “*death by wild beasts*”. Certainly in the midst of famine, animals will be desperate, but I believe these animals will also be demonically energized and inspired to kill.
- e. The Fifth Seal: Prayer Movement Strengthened By The Martyrs

***(Revelation 6:9-11 NASB) “When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; 10 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 live on the earth?” 11 And a white robe was given to each of them; and they were told that they were to rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers and sisters who were to be killed even as they had been, was completed also.”***

- i. It is important to clarify that the fifth seal is not directed at the saints, but rather is a judgment directed toward the Antichrist BECAUSE of the increase of martyrdom.
- ii. The heavenly prayer movement is strengthened because the blood of those slain for the word of God gets louder and louder. The martyrs in heaven will cry out for justice, and it will fuel and strengthen the praying church on earth in this hour. I believe this is where we will see the start of the most epic supernatural miracles and breakthroughs ever.
- iii. Their cry, “*how long?*” is one of the most recorded prayers in the Old Testament. In this last hour of history, God will bring about speedy justice for those who were slain for his testimony by shaking the earth and confronting the antichrist empire with natural disasters and supernatural means.

***(Luke 18:7-8 NASB) “Now, will God not bring about justice for His elect who cry out to Him day and night, and will He delay long for them? 8 I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly.”***

- iv. They’re given white robes speaking of their purity and victory and told to “*rest*” a little while longer until the full number of their brothers and sisters are killed. God is communicating to them that *there is an appointed end to injustice that is knit to their “resting” or “patient waiting” in prayer.*

***(Isaiah 64:4-5 NASB) “For from days of old they have not heard or perceived by ear, Nor has the eye seen a God besides You, who acts in behalf of one who waits for Him. 5 You meet him who rejoices in doing righteousness, who remembers You in Your ways.”***

f. The Sixth Seal: Cosmic Disturbances and Terror

***(Revelation 6:12-17 NASB) “And I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became as black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. 14 The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 15 Then the kings of the earth and the eminent people, and the commanders and the wealthy and the strong, and every slave and free person hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; 16 and they said to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the sight of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17 for the great day of Their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”***

- i. The sixth seal is the answer to the prayers in the fifth seal. This seal is the shifting point of the Great Tribulation. By this point, the Antichrist will have built his empire and killed billions on the earth through his war, but at the breaking of the sixth seal, God supernaturally intervenes and shakes everything that can be shaken.

***(Haggai 2:6-7 NASB) “For this is what the Lord of armies says: ‘Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. 7 I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the Lord of armies.”***

- ii. The sixth seal is the ultimate fulfillment of the **Joel 2** outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This is the moment where the church will walk in the greatest degree of prophesy with signs, wonders, and miracles that we’ve ever seen.

***(Joel 2:28-31 NASB) “It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and your daughters will prophesy, Your old men will have dreams, Your young men will see visions. 29 And even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. 30 I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire, and columns of smoke. 31 The sun will be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.”***

- iii. During the sixth seal, there are many cosmic disturbances that begin to disrupt Earth in great measure. A great earthquake will shake the earth, and mountains will be removed from their place. The sky will split apart like a scroll so that the world leaders will be able to see the One on the throne and Lamb. This will impart great terror to people from ALL walks of life and spheres of society.

V. The Seal of God: 144,000 Messianic Jewish believers & A Great Multitude

- a. After the sixth seal is opened (**Revelation 7:1**), God will command four mighty angels to seal the servants of God for protection, because the judgments are about to increase in severity (i.e. harming the earth, sea, and trees (**Revelation 7:1-3**)).

***(Revelation 7:3 NASB) “Do not harm the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.”***

- b. Revelation 7 describes two different people groups as “bond-servants (**Revelation 7:3**)” that are sealed during the Great Tribulation. The first group is comprised of 144,000 Jewish believers from the 12 tribes of Israel (**Revelation 7:4-8**). The second group is a “great multitude”, which no one could count, from every nation and all the tribes, peoples, and languages” (**Revelation 7:9**).
- c. **144,000 (First Fruits)** –There’s two very important points to make related to the 144,000 sealed Jewish believers.

- i. The first point is that this literal group of 144,000 Jewish believers will be the “*first fruits*” from all of Israel to walk in purity and whole-hearted agreement with God (**Revelation 14:1-5**). They represent a much larger harvest at the end of the age.

**(Revelation 14:1-5 NASB)** “Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 who had His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. 3 And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one was able to learn the song except the 144,000 who had been purchased from the earth. 4 These are the ones who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are celibate. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from mankind as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. 5 And no lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.”

- ii. The second point must be understood through the lens of **Revelation 12**, which describes Satan and the Antichrist primarily directing their rage toward Israel and those who stand with her. Their evil intentions are rooted in their hatred for the Jewish people (and God’s eternal promises to her) and they will try to wipe the people of Israel off the face of the earth. The fact that God lists 144,000 Jewish people that are sealed after the 6<sup>th</sup> seal, speaks to God’s faithfulness through the preservation of Israel’s national, ethnic, tribal, and territorial identity.

- d. **The Great Multitude** – The great multitude shows that, despite calamity and wickedness that the earth will face, there will be a great harvest of souls at the end of the age. In this passage, John saw a great multitude of martyrs killed during the Great Tribulation (**Revelation 7:14**) that were dressed in white robes (**Revelation 7:9**) that have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. Though these saints have been martyred, the rest of the saints will continue through the Great Tribulation and be protected in the midst of the trumpet judgments (**Revelation 9:4**).

**(Revelation 7:14 NASB)** “I said to him, “My lord, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

**(Revelation 7:9 NASB)** “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all the tribes, peoples, and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands”

**(Revelation 9:4 NASB)** “They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.”

- e. Throughout the biblical narrative, God has simultaneously released His true and righteous judgments while protecting the faithful remnant in the midst of those same judgments. The Great Tribulation will be no different; God will defend, protect, supernaturally provide, and give clear direction to the Church that endures the Great Tribulation. God is raising up cities of refuge, like the land of Goshen during Israel’s captivity in Egypt, where *His people will be distinguished and protected from His judgment on the wicked.*

**(Exodus 8:22-23 NASB)**, “But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where My people are living, so that no swarms of flies will be there, in order that you may know that I, the Lord, am in the midst of the land. 23 I will put a division between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign will occur.”

**(Exodus 9:4-7 NASB)**, “But the Lord will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing will die of all that belongs to the sons of Israel.” 5 ... “Tomorrow the Lord will do this thing in the land.” 6 So the Lord did this thing on the next day, and all the livestock of Egypt died; but not one of the livestock of the sons of Israel died. 7 And Pharaoh sent men, and they learned that, behold, not even one of the livestock of Israel was dead.”

*(Exodus 9:24-26 NASB), “So there was hail, and fire flashing intermittently in the midst of the hail, which was very heavy, such as had not occurred in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25 The hail struck everything that was in the field through all the land of Egypt, from people to animals; the hail also struck every plant of the field, and shattered every tree of the field. 26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the sons of Israel were, was there no hail.”*

*(Exodus 10:21-23 NASB), “Then the Lord said to Moses, “Reach out with your hand toward the sky, so that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even a darkness which may be felt.” 22 So Moses reached out with his hand toward the sky, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. 23 They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the sons of Israel had light in their dwellings.”*

i. Examples of God’s divine protection in seasons of judgment

1. Noah was preserved in the midst of the Flood (*Genesis 6-8; Luke 17:26-27; 1 Peter 3:20*).
2. Israel was preserved in the midst of the ten plagues of Egypt (*Exodus 4-12; Micah 7:15*).
3. Rahab and her entire household were preserved in Jericho’s judgment (*Joshua 2:17-21*).
4. Daniel was preserved from being eaten, while in the lion’s den (*Daniel 6; Psalm 91:13*).
5. Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego were preserved from fire, but not from the furnace (*Daniel 3; Isaiah 43:2*).
6. Many apostles were preserved in the midst of prison (*Acts 5:18-19; 12:4-10; 16:23-26*).
7. Paul was preserved in the midst of tribulation, imprisonment, stripes, beating, stoning, shipwrecks and perils of various kinds (*2 Corinthians 6:4-10; 11:22-33*).
8. The Apostle John was preserved in the midst of the boiling cauldron of oil and didn’t die.

VI. The Seventh Seal: Prayer Movement Strengthened to Release Judgments

*(Revelation 8:1-6 NASB) “When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 3 Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar, which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense ascended from the angel’s hand with the prayers of the saints before God. 5 Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and hurled it to the earth; and there were peals of thunder and sounds, and flashes of lightning and an earthquake. 6 And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them.”*

a. There are 6 aspects to the seventh seal:

- i. Silence in Heaven
- ii. Seven angels are given trumpets
- iii. An angel is given heavenly incense to strengthen the prayers of the saints
- iv. Fire is cast to the earth
- v. Dramatic weather patterns occur in the sky
- vi. An earthquake occurs on earth.

- b. **Silence in Heaven** – There will be a dreadful yet glorious silence in heaven as those in heaven anticipate the release of the trumpet judgments. They are much more severe than the seals.
  - i. Why a half an hour? – It's said that it took priests about a half an hour to burn incense.
- c. **Seven trumpets were given to them** – These are the 7 trumpet judgments described in the following chapters of Revelation.
- d. **Much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayer of all the saints** – Heavenly incense strengthens the prayer movement happening on earth. Not only will we walk in signs, wonders and miracles, we will operate in the most anointed prayer ministry ever.
- e. **Hurled it to the Earth** – The God who “*answers by fire (1 Kings 18:24)*” will demonstrate His power and authority as a faithful remnant on earth partners with Him. God will cast fire to the earth in a dramatic showdown with the False Prophet.

*(1 Kings 18:24 NASB) “Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God who answers by fire, He is God...”*

*(Revelation 13:13 NASB) “He [False Prophet] performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of the sky to the earth in the presence of people.”*

*(Revelation 8:5 NASB) “Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and hurled it to the earth; and there were peals of thunder and sounds, and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.”*

- f. **Peals of thunder, and sounds, and flashes of lightning** – The weather patterns across the earth will be greatly affected in this hour.
- g. **An earthquake** – Another earthquake shakes the earth in preparation for the seven trumpet judgments.

### Questions For Discussion

1. What was one thing that was highlighted to you or stuck out in tonight's teaching?
2. Did this teaching bring clarity to a thought or question you had related to the end times?
3. How does this teaching mobilize you to pray? *(1 Peter 4:7 NASB) “The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer”*