

Revelation, Week 2

The book of Revelation is not written in a linear timeline of events, instead John sees **Windows of Events** that are a mixture of past, present, and future happenings that unveil God's heart and his plan eternity.

The Second Window is the Lamb and the Throne (chapters 4-11):

Revelation 4 & 5 we see a throne in heaven where God is surrounded by 24 elders that represent God's covenant people of the Old Testament and the New Testament church. There are four special creatures that represent and link God's glory to all of creation.

The living creatures are in God's presence "Day and night they never stop saying: " 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,' who was, and is, and is to come." (4:8 NIV)

John sees the 24 elders fall down before and throwing down their crowns and the one who sits on the throne. Then something happens and all of heaven erupts into Worship as the Sing a New Song to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb!

Understanding the Scroll and its Seals

Note: the reason for all the glorious worship in Revelation 5 centered around the scroll.

Understanding this scroll is vital to understanding the book of Revelation:

*Revelation 5:1-5 NLT Then I saw a scroll in the **right hand** of the one who was sitting on the throne. There was writing on the **inside and the outside** of the scroll, and it was sealed with seven seals. **2** And I saw a **strong angel**, who shouted with a loud voice: "Who is worthy to break the seals on this scroll and open it?" **3** But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll and read it. **4** Then I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll and read it. **5** But one of the twenty-four elders said to me, "Stop weeping! **Look**, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the heir to David's throne, **has won the victory. He is worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals.**"*

v. 7 *He stepped forward and took the scroll from the right hand of the one sitting on the throne.*

v. 9- 11 *And they sang a new song with these words: "You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed (or purchased) people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. **10** And you have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests for our God. And they will reign on the earth." **11** Then I looked again, and I heard the voices of thousands and millions of angels around the throne and of the living beings and the elders.*

The Scroll is Redemption's Deed: If a person or family lost his estate for whatever reason it would still be recoverable at a certain time. This certain time was called the year of Jubilee (50 yrs.). On the day of Jubilee, God gave nearest of kin the legal right to step in and buy it back or to redeem it.

The first human Adam lost our inheritance. He was called to reign and rule on the earth with God but because of his sin he was conquered and ruled by the serpent.

Jesus became the legal representative of the original owner when he was born as a human and as the second Adam, he conquered sins power and bought back our inheritance with his blood.

And now, he holds the Scroll, Redemption's Deed in his hands and that is what gives us power to become what God intended for us to be... a Kingdom of ruling priest for our God!!!

The Seven Seals

In chapter 6 and 7 John sees some incredible images as the Lamb begins to break open the seals of the scroll. To be honest, it is here where most people stop reading and lots of preachers stop preaching.

Note: when you are interpreting scripture, you should always begin with the historical setting.

- Who is writing?
- To whom is it written?
- What was the circumstance of the writing?
- How would the readers have understood what was being written?

First, we have to be careful not to make a writing mean something different than what the original recipients would have understood. At least this must always be our starting point.

Secondly, keep in mind that Revelation is the unveiling of unseen realities. Some would call it ultimate reality. Through this window John is seeing what has been and will be happening in the spiritual world.

Thirdly, I believe Jesus is exposing the enemies that he has conquered and encouraging us in the face of increased opposition from the spiritual forces operating on the unredeemed earth so that we will be able to stand and conquer with him as Kings and Priest in the world.

The 7 Seals begin with the Unveiling or Exposing the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

As the first four seals are opened, the four horses and their riders appear. These are not good!

These are the four major players in that bring deception, suffering, pain and death among humankind.

The first seal unveils the White Horse the Anti-Christ:

Revelation 6:1-2 NIV I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, "Come!" 2 I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.

Matthew 24:4,5 NIV Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many.

This rider imitates Jesus but isn't Christ.

The spirit of anti-Christ has been operating the entire church age.

*1 John 4:2-3 NIV This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, **3** but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.*

This white horse deceives and convinces people to create their own reality and their own salvation. It is an imitation of the salvation only Christ can bring.

The second seal unveils The Red Horse of War:

*Revelation 6:3,4 NIV When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!” **4** Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make people kill each other. To him was given a large sword.*

Matthew 24:6,7a NIV “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom...”

The third seal unveils The Black Horse of Famine:

*Rev. 6:5,6 NIV When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. **6** Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, “Two pounds of wheat for a day’s wages, and six pounds of barley for a day’s wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!”*

Matthew 24:7 NIV “... There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.”

The fourth seal unveils The Pale Horse is Death:

*Revelation 6:7,8 NIV When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!” **8** I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.*

*Matthew 24:21,22 NIV For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. **22** “If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive...”*

The fifth seal unveils The Increase of Intense Persecution:

*Revelation 6:9,10 NIV When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. **10** They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”*

Matthew 24:9 NIV “Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me.”

The sixth seal unveiled the Incredible Natural Disasters:

*Revelation 6:12-17 ESV When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, **13** and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. **14** The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. **15** Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, **16** calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, **17** for the great day of their wrath has come, and **who can stand?**”*

Chapter 7 The Sealed People of God

*Revelation 7:1-4 NIV After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. **2** Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: **3** “Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.” **4** Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel.*

The Singing Saints

*Revelation 7:9-12 NLT After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. **10** And they were shouting with a great roar, “Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!” **11** And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living beings. And they fell before the throne with their faces to the ground and worshiped God. **12** They sang, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength belong to our God forever and ever! Amen.”*

The seventh seal releases Seven Judgments