

The Revelation – Preparing for the Lamb

In last week's lesson we studied the opening of the first four seals of the Revelation book. With the opening of each seal came a new revelation. First came the entry of Antichrist onto the scene with the promise of peace. This peace is quickly followed by war, great depression, and the death of 25% of the population of the earth, and yet the people still do not turn to God. In today's lesson we will look at the opening of the fifth and sixth seals, which are recorded in Revelation 6:9-17, which says:

- (9) And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:
- (10) And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?
- (11) And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.
- (12) And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;
- (13) And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.
- (14) And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.
- (15) And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;
- (16) And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:
- (17) For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

With the opening of the fifth seal we are introduced to a new group of individuals. We see the souls of martyrs under the altar. There are a couple of things that I would like to make note of here. First of all, these are the souls of the individuals and not their reunited selves. This would seem to indicate that they are still waiting for the rapture, when soul and body are reunited to live with God forever. This is also indicated by the fact that they were told to rest a little longer. You see, the Bible talks of death as sleep (1 Corinthians 15:6-18, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 2 Peter 3:4), and these people have yet to be woke up from their slumber.

Notice also here that these individuals are waiting on vengeance, but God tells them that there are more who will follow them. You see, during this time of great tribulation the people of the world will begin an all out war against God's people, the Church. You see, they'll be looking at those "fundamentalist Christians" as the source of all of the world's problems. Actually, we're already seeing the beginnings of this on many fronts today. In all of this do not despair because God will be with his people.

The white robes that were given to the saints here are an indication of their purity. You see, their robes had been made white in the blood of the Lamb. There is no doubt that these are Christians awaiting the rapture.

Now as we get to the opening of the sixth seal I want to point out that we cannot look at Revelation as a series of events in chronological order. As a matter of fact, I believe that a close investigation reveals that the seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven vials of wrath as being successive revelations of the same events, with each revelation giving more details.

With that having been said, the opening of the sixth seal appears to occur at the very end of the tribulation period. I say this for several reasons. We see that the sun is darkened, the moon is turned to blood, and the stars fall from the sky at the opening of this seal. In part of his Olivet Discourse Jesus tells of this exact event. Matthew 24:29-31 says:

- (29) Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:
- (30) And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.
- (31) And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Notice here that Jesus plainly told us that these events occur at the end of the tribulation period, right before the return of Jesus Christ to the earth to gather together the elect.

Notice also that the Bible tells us that heaven “departed as a scroll when it is rolled together.” This seems to indicate that everything in the sky draws your attention to one point. No matter where you are on the earth you will see the exact same thing. This appears to me to be preparing everything for the next event, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is further reiterated by the fact that the people of the earth appear at this point to realize that the day of the Lord is at hand. They believe that immediate death would be more tolerable than to look upon the face of a just God. What they fail to understand that it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment (Hebrews 9:27). They will see God face to face as he says, “Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you.” They also realize that it is too late. Their chance has passed.

What about you today? Have you put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ? Has your robe been made white in the blood of the Lamb? Which side of the battle are you on? If you study the Scriptures you will find that prophecy after prophecy has been fulfilled, and these that remain will also be fulfilled. Satan’s glory may endure for a time, but God’s glory will endure forever.

If you've never received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior I want to invite you to call upon God right now. I want you to tell him that you recognize that you are a sinner, and that the wages of sin is death. I want you to ask him to wash away your sins in the blood of Jesus Christ. I want you to do all of this believing that God will accomplish that which he has promised. If you will do this while believing on him you will receive the gift of everlasting life, and you will be on the right team during the tribulation period.

Yours in Christ,

Bro. John Rich