

Prelude to the Trumpets

Breaking the Seals

Revelation 5:1 - 8:6

*compiled by Rachel Cory-Kuehl, November 23, 2021
Scripture is from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.*

THE SCROLL

Revelation 5:1-3 “And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne [God the Father] a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?’ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.”

Revelation 5:5 “But one of the [24] elders said to me, ‘Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.’”

The scroll was sealed with seven seals. When the last seal is broken, the scroll will unroll, allowing the observer to see what is written on the inside of the scroll. The scroll is also “written on the back” - the outside.

I read an excellent posting by Dan Lewis, in a blog, under the title “Deeds of Title in the Ancient World” (Thursday, August 17, 2017, Labels: Biblical Interpretation, End Expectation, New Testament).

*Dan Lewis explained that **deeds of title** were often sealed in the Ancient Middle East. The seals were made by the witnesses to the document, and served the same purpose that signatures do today. One immediately wonders who the seven witnesses were, to the document of Revelation Chapter 5. Perhaps there are 7 judges, who sit on the Court of Heaven.*

*In his article, **Mr. Lewis suggests the scroll of Revelation, is the Deed of Title to this earth.** This fits well with Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14, 22, 26-27.*

The judgment of the heavenly “court,” will award “dominion” over “all peoples, nations and languages” to “the Son of Man.”

Daniel 7:9-10 “I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire; 10 A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened.”

Daniel 7:13-14 “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.”

Continuing Mr. Lewis’ article:

“In the Bible, we encounter such a title deed in the career of Jeremiah, when God instructed the prophet to purchase a piece of property from his cousin Hanamel ben Shallum (*Jer. 32:6-16*). Here, the deed of sale was signed, sealed and witnessed. It is of special interest to note that the title deed is described as being sealed, but that alongside it there also was an unsealed document. **The unsealed document served as an abstract—a description of the property and the terms of purchase, accessible to anyone who wanted to read it.** The sealed title, on the other hand, had to be preserved from any changes, which is why it was sealed in order to remain sacrosanct. Both documents were deposited by Jeremiah in a clay jar for safe keeping, much as hundreds of years later the people at Qumran deposited their precious scrolls in clay jars.

Sometimes, the “sealed” and “unsealed” documents were combined into a single document. To understand this, one must appreciate the fact that typically scrolls were inscribed on only a single side. (Imagine, for instance, trying to read a scroll on both sides as it is being unrolled.) After a scroll was sealed, however, one could write the abstract that originally was on a separate document on the outside of the sealed scroll (which would be the backside). As such, the contents of the sealed scroll remained intact, but the abstract, which now appeared on the outside of the sealed scroll, did not require a second document. This type of text gains the technical name of **a double-deed**, and such a text, written on both sides, is called **an opisthograph**. Good examples are known from ancient Mesopotamia. You also can find one briefly referenced in Ezekiel, when in his commission the prophet was shown a scroll written on both sides. Two excellent ancient examples of such double-deeds can be found in the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York and the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums, Jerusalem.

The latter was discovered at Elephantine, a Jewish community in the 5th century BC in Egypt. Both deeds are secured with a cord, and over the knots in the cord is a clay bulla, a lump of clay which has been impressed with a seal to secure the document. Printed in Hebrew characters on the outside of the sealed document is the Hebrew word for 'Deed.'"

*In the throne room scene of Revelation 5:1, the scroll is "in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne." God the Father has not broken the seals, to unroll the scroll. If this is indeed **the Title Deed to the World**, this fits well with **1 Corinthians 15:24-28**, because the kingdoms of this world are not yet "the kingdoms of our LORD and of His Christ." He has not yet defeated every enemy.*

Hebrews 2:8 "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." For in subjecting all things to him, He [God the Father] left nothing that is not subject to him. But now **we do not yet see** all things subjected to him." (NAS)

***Before Yeshua Messiah can take possession of His kingdom, He must defeat and cast out the current holder of this dominion.** Satan is called "the prince of this world" (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11), "the ruler of the darkness of this world" (Ephesians 6:12), "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4) and "the prince and power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2).*

1John 5:19 "The whole world lies in the power of the Evil One."

In the scene of Revelation Chapter 5, **the Lamb has been awarded legal title - the scroll**, with the right to judge, and to execute judgment. **The Deed of Dominion** has been placed in His hands (Rev. 5:5). He has been awarded legal right of rulership. He has not yet taken physical possession. He has not yet cast out Satan, consumed the wicked, or cast the Beast and the False Prophet into the Lake of Fire. **He begins to break the seals.**

Only the owner of the property could legally break the seals. The Lamb of Revelation has the right to break the seals, because He has become the owner. He has received the dominion. This tells us that **Christ cannot break the seals UNTIL He is given "dominion" by the Court of Heaven.**

IMPORTANT

Yeshua Messiah does not receive the scroll until the final days of this age. The "court" scene of Daniel Chapter Seven, takes place in Heaven as **the Little Horn** is spewing blasphemies on the earth (Daniel Chapter Seven) and persecuting the saints of God.

Daniel 7:21-22 “I was watching; and **the same horn** was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, UNTIL the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.”

Daniel 7:25-26 “Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. **But the court shall be seated**, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever.”

We know the Little Horn will come to power in the FINAL DAYS of this age.

**The conditions and events described under the seals,
belong to the LAST DAYS.**

As the first four seals are broken, we see war and scarcity, famine and death.
See the [FLOWCHART](#).

I believe the rider of the WHITE HORSE (the 1st Seal) is Christ (*Rev. 6:1-2*). The bow is the Word of God (*Habakkuk 3:9*). He is “given a crown” - the symbol of rulership. Perhaps because He is king only of Israel. He has not yet defeated every earthly power. He is going forth to war - to defeat the forces of Satan and evil men, to take physical possession of His kingdom. He must also prepare His own people, and seal them to withstand the trials that are coming. The Spirit is poured out with power. The last days of opportunity for repentance are passing.

NOTE: When the 7th Seal is broken, those who will “stand” at the “great day of His wrath,” have been sealed (perfect tense). The seal of God is the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13).

We see the white horse again in Rev. 19:11. “And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.” He now has “many crowns.” He has become King of Kings. He has conquered them all. He is coming to cast the Beast and the False Prophet into the Lake of Fire (*19:19-21*), and to cast Satan into the abyss for a thousand years.

The rider of the RED HORSE (*Rev. 6:3-4*) is evil. He is given power to make people kill each other. This isn't Jesus Christ. This rider is given a great sword - meaning great power or authority. The Beast of Revelation 13, is given “power” and “great authority.” I believe he is given “power” by Satan “the Dragon” (*Rev. 13:2*). He is “given authority (permission) by God, but to continue for only forty-two months” (*Rev. 13:5*), (1) to test those who live on the earth (*Rev 3:10*), and (2) to fill the cup of wickedness (*Rev 18:6*), so that God may bring it to an END. “**It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.** And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation” (*Rev. 13:5-7*). Satan is turned loose.

The Little Horn is attached to the Beast. He is given all the power of the Beast. He is the enforcer for the Beast. He will set up the Image of the Beast in the Temple at Jerusalem. He will enforce “the mark” mandate.

When the **3rd Seal** is broken (*Rev. 6:5-6*) John sees the BLACK HORSE, with scarcity and terrible hyperinflation. The price for a quart of wheat is ten times the usual for John’s day. A “quart of wheat” costs “a denarius” - a whole day’s wage for a working class laborer.

When the **4th Seal** is broken (*Rev. 6:7-8*) John is shown the PALE HORSE ridden by Death.

The world will “fill its cup” by its treatment of those in Christ Jesus. The “saints” will be made the scapegoat, for the woes that plague the earth. And so we hear the MARTYRS cry when the **5th Seal** is broken.

When the **6th Seal** is broken:

Revelation 6:14 “Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. 15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves 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 who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’”

Every person on the face of the earth, believes that “the great day of His wrath” has come. They say so. But have they actually “seen” Christ returning in glory? The text does not say that they have. Maybe they simply fear God’s judgment day has arrived because of the terrible convulsions of nature. The sky is split open. **An earthquake effecting the entire globe, moves mountains and islands.**

I have wondered if this will be the day of Satan’s appearance, claiming to be Christ come. Could Satan and his fallen angels effect a mega-earthquake? I don’t know. They could certainly anticipate an asteroid hit, and align the “appearance” accordingly.

How could life on planet earth continue *after* this day? We know that it does, because the Trumpet judgments begin on this day, and a lot of human activity and attitude is described under the Trumpets. When the **5th Trumpet** is sounded, “locusts” like scorpions, are released from the “bottomless pit” to torment those “without the seal” for **five months**. The tormented will “seek death and will not find it” (*9:4-6*). When the **6th Trumpet** is sounded, “four messengers” are released to “kill a third of mankind.” Yet those not killed by these plagues, still do not repent.

WHO IS ABLE TO STAND?

Malachi 3:2 “Who will be able to resist the day of his coming? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire, like fullers’ alkali.” (NJB)

The wicked, who believe God’s judgment day has arrived, ask a question: “Who is able to stand?” God has given us the answer to that question. 144,000 from the Twelve Tribes of Israel, will stand (*Rev. 7:1-8*) through the period of the Trumpets.

Most believe the 144,000 will be DNA descendants of Jacob. I believe they will be citizens of the New Jerusalem - “grafted in” to Israel, redeemed by their faith in Yeshua Messiah. See our study: “[Who are Israel?](#)”

I believe the 144,000 will be the faithful in Jesus Christ, who will “stand” at the final day. They will be the Two Witnesses of Revelation Chapter Eleven - the churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia, who are persecuted by the Beast power, and are finally killed (or at least under a death decree) just 3.5 days before the Glorious Return. They are “sealed.” Whether they physically live through to the day of His return, or are killed during the persecution of the final days, they will “stand” fast at the Day of Judgment, covered with Christ’s robe of righteousness.

See our study: “[The Two Witnesses.](#)”

6th SEAL or 7th Trumpet?

QUESTION: How can Christ return gloriously when the 6th Seal is broken, and return again at the 7th Trumpet, after the 7th Seal is broken.

When **the 6th Seal** is broken, all the “servants of our God” are NOT YET SEALED.

When the 6th Seal is broken, THE SCROLL IS STILL SEALED.

The scroll cannot unroll until the 7th Seal is broken.

Revelation 7:1-4 [The 6th Seal has been broken] “After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, **holding back the four winds of the earth**, so that no wind should blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. [They are holding back the Trumpet judgments.]

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, 3 saying, ‘Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, **UNTIL we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.**’ 4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand [a symbolic number] sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:” (NAS)

The sea and the trees are definitely harmed during the Trumpet judgments. This means the Trumpet judgments are held back UNTIL the servants of God are all “sealed.”

During **the 5th Trumpet** judgment, “locusts” from the bottomless pit, are allowed to torment only “those men who DO NOT HAVE the seal of God on their foreheads.” This implies the presence of some who *do* have the seal. The “sealed of God” are still on the earth, during the Trumpet judgments, which means that Christ has not yet appeared in glory to catch His people up to the clouds, to remove them from the chaos and destruction.

NOTE: There is no mention of the “sealed,” on the earth during the Bowls of Wrath.

MARK OF THE BEAST or THE SEAL OF GOD

In the final days, human beings will take the mark of the Beast, or receive the “Seal of God.” **They cannot do both.** They will suffer the wrath of God, or the wrath of the Beast. Either way - they will suffer, for some period. The wrath of the Beast will be short lived, and the reward of the righteous, will last forever.

Once dominion is legally taken from the Beast/Little Horn, (by the Heavenly Court), Christ then has the right to fight against and defeat them. **First, He must give them a final warning.** Their response to that warning will fill their cup in the sight of God, allowing Him to righteously destroy them by pouring out the Bowls of His Wrath.

Through the Old Testament, we see the stories of such warnings. Noah warned the pre-flood world. Pharaoh was warned. So was Nineveh. So was Israel. Upon entrance to Canaan, Joshua was told to warn each city to surrender and vacate the territory of Israel. If they refused, then Israel would attack. The prophets of God were - more often than not, called to warn.

WHEN THE 7TH TRUMPET SOUNDS

Revelation 11:15-18 “Then **the seventh angel sounded**: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’ 16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: ‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. [He has fought the forces of Satan and has won.]

18 The nations were angry, and **Your wrath has come**, And **the time** of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth.” *It is “time” for His glorious return to the earth.*

The kingdoms of this world LEGALLY became the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ” WHEN He received the scroll. Now the kingdoms of the world “**have become**” His by right of conquest. He has “put all things under His feet.” He has defeated the kings of the earth, and has made Satan His prisoner.

The kingdoms of earth have filled their cups of wickedness. They have all worshiped Satan. They have all declared the Law of God to be null and void. They have all persecuted and killed His righteous witnesses. There is nothing now, to stay the full wrath of the Lamb, and now the Bowls of wrath are poured out.

The 7th Trumpet will announce the Day of His Glorious Return - the day when He will take physical possession of this earth. Touching down on the Mount of Olives He will manifest His physical presence on the earth. He will take possession of Jerusalem.

NOTE: This does NOT mean that He must or will remain on the earth. His “bride” is already standing on “the sea of glass” before the Father’s throne. I believe God’s throne is already in the New Jerusalem - the “place” prepared for His redeemed. In vision, John saw the saints, standing on the Sea of Glass just before the 7 Bowls were poured out on the earth.

SILENCE IN HEAVEN THE GOLDEN CENSER IMPENDING DOOM

Revelation 8:1-6 “And when **He 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 And another angel came and stood at **the altar**, holding **a golden censer**; and much incense was given to him, that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel’s hand. 5 And **the angel took the censer; and he filled it with the fire of the altar and threw it to the earth**; and there followed 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.”
(NAS)

BURNING COALS

Ezekiel 10:2 “And he said to the man clothed in linen, “Go in among the whirling wheels underneath the cherubim. Fill your hands with burning coals from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.” And he went in before my eyes.” (ESV)

Ezekiel was given **a vision of judgment and destruction**. **Hot coals** (from “between the cherubim”) **were scattered over Jerusalem. The City was doomed to destruction.** Jeremiah is told no longer to pray for this people. The same will happen *before* the first Trumpet plague. The whole world will be doomed to destruction.

Ezekiel was among the first wave of captives taken by Nebuchadnezzar from Judea. When the wicked regent in Judea (serving in place of the king who was taken captive) later stopped paying tribute, Nebuchadnezzar returned to destroy the entire city of Jerusalem and all of Judea. Daniel was also one of the first wave captives.

Jeremiah was left at Jerusalem, to give the final message of warning. The wicked king gave Jeremiah into the hands of wicked men, who threw him into an abandoned cistern, but the LORD sent a man to rescue him. The LORD kept him safe when the city fell.

THE GOLDEN CENSER

We learn from 1Kings 7:48-50, that every article of furniture, and every implement used **within** the Tabernacle/Temple was either solid gold or overlaid with gold. The golden censer (or “firepan”) was carried by the High Priest (and only by the High Priest) into the Most Holy Place once each year, on the Day of Atonement.

Because the “messenger” (angel) seen by John has the “golden censer,” this tells us that **Yeshua Messiah** (our High Priest before God’s throne in Heaven) **IS that “messenger.”** He presents the prayers of His redeemed before the Father’s throne in Heaven. This also tells us that it is the Day of Atonement in Heaven. In context, speaking of judgment on unworthy servants, **Jesus said, “I came to cast fire on the earth,** and would that it were already kindled! (*Luk 12:49 ESV*).

The ceremonies of the ancient Tabernacle were an acted prophecy, depicting in symbols the work of Christ for our salvation. The time for repentance and forgiveness *will* come to an end. This is the message of the golden censer, thrown down. This is the final message of the Revelation. “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” (*Rev 22:11*).

When the High Priest throws the down the censer, this symbolizes the end of intercessory prayer for those who have refused to repent. Before the destruction of Jerusalem, Jeremiah the prophet was told, **“Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them, nor make intercession to Me; for I will not hear you”** (*Jer. 7:16*). There is a point beyond which the LORD will no longer hear prayers for or from, those who refuse to change.

NOTE: It is one thing to pray for forgiveness. It is quite another to repent - to stop the behaviors that are offensive to God. It's easy to ask God to forgive, especially when you're caught red-handed, or about to be penalized. It's what I call "buying fire insurance." Just say so many "Hail Mary"s, or do a little community service, or keep a priest on retainer (to say Last Rites over you) with no intention of humbly and sincerely asking God to change you on the inside.

The Creator of Heaven and Earth is about to allow the earth with it's citizens to reap what they have sown. Before such terrible judgment is executed, He will give final warnings. **The warnings will serve as proof for the heavenly court.** When those hardened in rebellion against the LORD, fail to repent despite **the warnings** and **the testimony of the Two Witnesses**, that will be proof positive that God can do no more. His final wrath will be poured out from 7 Bowls.

NOTE: Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ) will remove His own from this earth before the final judgments begin. We see them standing on the "sea of glass" in Heaven before the Bowls of wrath are poured out on the earth (Rev. 15:1-2).

Question: What is the point of continued witness for God in the world, if no one will repent?
Answer: To prove before the Court of Heaven, and to all of the redeemed, that such was indeed the case. Pharaoh did not repent. The wicked kings of Israel and Judah did not repent. And neither will those who serve the Beast in the final days (Rev. 9:20-21).

Revelation 9:20 [After the 6th Trumpet destruction has killed a third of mankind] "The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues **still did not repent** of the work of their hands; **they did not stop** worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood-- idols that cannot see or hear or walk. 21 **Nor did they repent** of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts." (NIV)

The "gods" of this age, are money, power, and pleasure, much as they have always been. To this we may add demons, because Satan is presently "the god of this world."

1 Samuel 8:18 "And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day."

Isaiah 59:2 "Your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear."

Micah 3:4 "Then they will cry to the LORD, But He will not hear them; He will even hide His face from them at that time, Because they have been evil in their deeds."

HIS SEAL IS PROMISED

To those who are called to endure the last days, His seal is promised. He will provide the strength. We are “confident of this very thing, He who began a good work in you, will complete it unto the day of Jesus Christ” (*Phil. 1:6*). Your victory is not up to you. It is up to the One who called you to His service. Your victory will be His victory. “Be strong and of good courage.” You have overcome them. For “He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (*1John 4:4*).

Ephesians 6:13 “Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.” (NIV)

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