

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Revelation: God's Revelation To His Servants Today On Events About To Occur

Part IV: "The Things Which Shall Be Hereafter": Events After The Rapture Of The Church

C. The Great Tribulation Period, Revelation 6:1-19:21

1. God's Seal Judgments For The Lost World's Rejection Of Christ

(Revelation 6:1-17)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Our world reels under the weight of unrighteousness as seen by the August 19, 2014 Republican-American:

(1) Conservative columnist, Mona Charen's piece, "Cameras and more cameras," Ibid., p. 6A noted: "The Ferguson (Missouri) tragedy has provoked discussion of the excessive militarization of our police" as "(j)ournalists from The Washington Post and Huffington Post were arrested, and a team from Al-Jazeera was tear-gassed."

(2) On the other hand, the paper's editor on the same page cited John Hinderaker, the proprietor of www.powerlineblog.com in his August 17 piece, "Thoughts on the Ritual Now Taking Place in Ferguson, Missouri," Ibid., who held the Democratic Party was fueling the racial riots there because "(i)t can't win national elections without a ridiculous proportion of African-American votes . . . How else can the Democrats expect voters to overlook (the party's) failed policies and continue to toe the party line?"

(4) Aside from the Ferguson, Missouri issue, the paper ran stories of the "Huge rise in use of food stamps" (Ibid., p. 1A), of fighting in Iraq, tensions in Gaza and Liberia's search for 17 escaped Ebola patients, Ibid., p. 4A.

Need: So we ask, "With today's great load of sin that weighs down our troubled world, what is God going to do to begin to address it after the rapture of the Church, why, and how should it affect what we Christians do today?!"

- I. Revelation 6:1-17 seal judgments begin the expression of God's wrath on the world for rejecting Christ:**
 - A. The scroll with the seven seals that Christ, the Lamb, takes from the Father's hand in Rev. 5:7 and opens in Rev. 6:1-17 and 8:1 recalls Roman law where a testator and five witnesses each appeared in court to open their respective seals on a sealed will that it be read and administered by the court, T. D. N. T., v. VII, p. 950, 941. The sealed scroll is thus God's final will and testament for the lost world that has rejected Christ.
 - B. Yet, due to the cross, God **now** holds the lost accountable **only** for the sin of **rejecting Christ**, 2 Cor. 5:19.
 - C. Thus, the seal judgments start in the first half (3 1/2 years) of the 7-year Great Tribulation (Dan. 9:27) and go through the entire period for lost man's rejection of Christ, J. D. Pentecost, Things To Come, 1972, p. 359-361.
- II. However, man's rejection of Christ has grown in complexity, so God will administer complex judgments:**
 - A. The **number** of the seals on **God's** scroll is **7**, **not 6** as in the case of **Roman** law, and Leviticus 26:18 explains that God promises **sevenfold more** punishments if men refuse to heed His initial punishment.
 - B. Also, 3 sets of sevenfold judgments are revealed in Revelation, the **seal**, the **trumpet** and the **bowl** sets (Rev. 5:1; 8:1-2; 11:15; 15:1), and Lev. 26:21-28 has God adding **more sets** of **sevenfold judgments** for **more sin!**
 - C. Then, the 7th seal judgment contains the 7 trumpet judgments and the 7th trumpet judgment contains the 7 bowl judgments, so the 3 judgment sets are connected to each other in **complexity**, B. K. C., N. T., p. 950-951.
- III. Revelation explains this complexity of sin and God's responding complexity of judgment (as follows):**
 - A. Revelation 9:20-21 reveals the **trumpet** judgments occur for **replacing the true God with false gods, or idols**.
 - B. Revelation 17:1 then hints that the **bowl** judgments occur for **group idolatry** in "Babylon the Great."
 - C. So, due to 2 Cor. 5:19 (see "LB"), (1) the **seal** judgments are for the **individual rejection** of **Christ**, (2) the **trumpet** judgments, **growing out of** that **individual rejection**, are for **individuals** replacing Christ with **false gods** and (3) the **bowl** judgments, **growing out of individual idolatry**, are for **organized group idolatry!**
- IV. Thus, in the opening of the first 4 seals, God lets lost men face the antichrist for rejecting the true Christ:**
 - A. The 4 cherubs about the throne each consecutively verbally affirm the first 4 seal judgments with judgmental, thundering calls of "Come!" (Rev. 6:1, 3, 5, 7 NIV), and in a past lesson we saw they stood about God's throne in tense disorder, revealing their great tension over mankind's rejection of Jesus Christ, Revelation 4:6-7.
 - B. Thus, these cherubs in the first 4 seal judgments release their tension, calling for God's judgments, and the opening of the **first seal** presents the **REIGN** of **antichrist** who rises for lost man's **rejection** of **Jesus' RULE**:
 1. When Christ the Lamb opens the first seal, a rider appears on a white horse with a victor's crown and a bow but no arrow and goes forth as a conqueror to conquer, Rev. 6:1-2; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 947.
 2. His lack of an arrow means he gains power not by war but by intrigue, falsely presenting himself as a man of peace, Daniel 9:27. This is the antichrist who is predicted to arise in God's permissive will as judgment

in Zechariah 11:15-17 for man's **rejection** of the **TRUE Messiah, Jesus**, in Zechariah 11:1-14; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1564-1566. This judgment is the strong delusion God will send the lost in the early part of the seven-year Great Tribulation Period (Daniel 9:27) as predicted in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12.

3. The judgment fits the sin: Jesus was rejected when presenting Himself in His Triumphal Entry in true peace, riding on the foal of a donkey in true righteousness and grace (Zech. 9:9) in contrast to Alexander the Great who came as an oppressive conqueror on a horse (Zech. 9:1-8; Ryrie St. B., KJV, 1978, fn. to Zech. 9:9). Man rejected the True, Good Messiah, so God will let him be ruled by a lying, evil antichrist!
- C. The opening of the **second seal** presents **WAR** under the **antichrist** for **rejecting Christ and His PEACE**:
 1. Revelation 6:3-4 has the Lamb, Christ, opening the second seal, with the presentation of a rider on a red horse who has a great sword and power to take peace from the earth by having men fight one another.
 2. This judgment fits the sin: Christ Jesus came in meekness and lowliness, gentle and peaceful (Matt. 12:19-21), but in rejecting Him as their ruler, the world is judged of God to face open war under the antichrist.
- D. The opening of the **third seal** presents **FAMINE** under the **antichrist** for **rejecting Christ and His SUPPLY**:
 1. Revelation 6:5-6 has the Lamb opening the third seal with the arrival of a rider on a black horse, picturing famine, with very high food prices, *Ibid.*, Ryrie, footnote to Revelation 6:6.
 2. This judgment fits the sin: Christ's miracle of feeding the 5,000 (John 6:1-13), though testified in all four gospels, still did not lead the world to trust in Him as Messiah and God Incarnate. Thus, this judgment.
- E. The opening of the **fourth seal** presents **DEATH** under the **antichrist** for **rejecting Christ and His LIFE**:
 1. Revelation 6:7-8 has the Lamb opening the fourth seal with the presentation of a rider on a pale horse of death, what naturally follows open war and famine under antichrist, *Ibid.*, Bib. Know. Com., N. T., p. 948.
 2. This judgment fits the sin: Christ's works even to raise the dead (John 11:1-44 et al.) did not cause Israel and the world to believe in Him, (cf. Luke 16:19-31), leading to this judgment of worldwide death.
- V. **The opening of the fifth seal presents the souls of those martyred for trusting in Christ in the early days of the Tribulation Period (*Ibid.*, Ryrie, fn. to Rev. 6:9), and they cry for justice, a judgment in that they fuel God's wrath the more against a world that still does not trust in Jesus, Rev. 6:10-11; 2 Thess. 1:5-8.**
- VI. **The opening of the sixth seal brings the upheaval of the creative order, God's judgment on lost men for refusing to trust in Jesus Christ for His WORK on the CROSS in THEIR BEHALF, Revelation 6:12-17:**
 - A. With the opening of the sixth seal is a great earthquake, the sun turns black as sackcloth, the moon turns red as blood, the stars fall, the heavens vanish and every mountain and island is moved out of place, Rev. 6:12-14.
 - B. These events recall some of the signs at Christ's death (Matt. 27:45, 51), and Isaiah 34:1-4 and Joel 2:30-32 predicted them as expressions of God's wrath against sinners and His will that they call on Him to be saved.
 - C. Accordingly, God will judge the lost with the upheaval of the creative order for rejecting Christ's salvation as wrought by Him on the cross, and every lost man will hide himself in the dens and the rocks of the mountains and call upon them to fall on him and hide him from the wrath of the Father and of Christ, Revelation 6:15-17.
- VII. **[Since the seventh seal presents the seven trumpet judgments (Rev. 8:1-2), we view it in a later message.]**

Lesson: *Christ's death on the cross so satisfied the righteous demands of a holy God relative to man's sin, the only sin for which God judges the lost is unbelief in God's antidote for sin -- unbelief in Christ for the salvation He wrought for the world on the cross. Thus, Jesus Christ will administer the seal judgments only for that sin!*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) May we testify to the lost of their need to trust in Christ to escape God's judgment (Matthew 28:18-20). (3) May we then rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to mirror the gentle, righteous grace Jesus exhibited in His earthly life as a witness to our true Messiah, Phil. 3:4-14.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

While on our recent vacation, I had finished shopping at a grocery store and was returning my empty cart to the storefront when I noticed a car was about to cross my path. I happened to glance at the driver and saw she was an African-American, and she was nervously looking right at me! Sensing that the Ferguson, Missouri riots may have left her fearful of how a white man like me might treat her, I stopped to let her drive by me. As a pedestrian, I had the legal right of way, but, as a Christian who was to example God's grace to a fearful party who might not have known my Lord, I could not then exercise that right. I was obliged to honor this woman, to make her relax, 1 Peter 2:15-17.

So, I just stood there, looking in her direction and waiting, until the lady finally, slowly drove by me, and then I went on my way, hoping she understood my motive and action, and hoping I had represented Christ as I should.

May we trust in Christ as Savior, and seek to live Christ's gentleness and grace before a world in need.