

THE “INAUGURATION OF JESUS” OR END-TIME THRONE ROOM SCENE

There is keen debate over the meaning and timing of Revelation 4 and 5. If it is the “Inauguration of Jesus” (occurring right after His ascension), as many contend, the eschatological significance of this book is bruised. In chapter 1, verses 1-3 and 7, an end-time message is distinctly presented as the “timing” motif for the prophecies of that Book. It “anticipates” **when** all key messages are germane to God’s people. A first-Advent application of Revelation 4 and 5 would conflict with that first chapter’s instruction.

The following prophecies are prefaced by the noted verses and their numbers:

- The seven Churches though not numbered) with 9 verses (1:12-20)
- The seven Trumpets with 5 verses (8:2-6)
- The seven Thunders with 3 verses (10:1-3)
- The seven Last Plagues with 8 verses (15:1-8)

However, 25 verses are used to **prepare** us for the Seven Seals (4:1-11 and 5:1-14).

- This suggests that something of colossal importance relates to the meaning of those Seals which presently “hide” the contents of that mysterious scroll that God still holds while seated on His throne.
- Expositor White advised: “Closely study the fifth chapter of Revelation” [*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 267 (last time penned: 1909)]. A pivotal Christ-centered legal scene is there portrayed as He approaches that throne. Without that evidence and several timing clues, what follows could not be understood. Prophecy is not haphazard. It is logical and precise.

Timing Problem

Some scholars firmly portray Revelation 4 and 5’s Seal introduction as only having a historical venue, i.e.:

1. “They are timeless and highly symbolic of Christ’s victory and reinstated redemptive role at His inauguration.”
2. “They carry no specific ‘event’ relative of eschatological importance.”

This orientation should be summarily dismissed because Jesus noted to John that he was about to see “things” or events that “must be hereafter.” [Long after the ascension, beyond the point that a door was opened.] Jesus had distinctly advised us that those prophecies would relate to the second advent era (Revelation 1:7).

- The Greek word for “hereafter” or future (implied) means simply “after this thing.”
- What “thing” contextually in Revelation 4 and 5 could this be?
- That **open door** in heaven. This linguistic connection is important.

- It was opened (perfect tense) sometime in the past.

Again, many expositors construe that the vision portrays the coronation of Christ (inauguration and reinstatement to the throne) at His 31 A.D. ascension.

1. There is **nothing** within these texts or contexts that support this. Creating a composite opinion from various throne room images **adds** to the prophecy, which we are warned against (Revelation 22:18-19).
2. The imagery of Jesus is threefold in chapters 4–6:
 - a. Trumpet-like voice inviting John to “Come up.” He isn’t visualized at this moment.
 - b. Bleeding Lamb called Lion of Judah (before the throne and in its midst – no crown, but horns and eyes) – His approach to God is “**mission specific**” – to receive a sealed scroll, not a crown!
 - c. Lamb opening the Seals
3. The Lamb/Lion is neither on the throne nor visually interceding! Its imagery is functional, prophetic and highly symbolic of an eschatological preparatory act – the breaking of the Seals which **moves time forward** to earth’s conclusion (the Seals are sequenced). Breaking the Seals begins the “time of the end!”

The open door is “in” heaven – not “into heaven.” It was opened (past).

1. John is invited to come **through** that door – which is a “timing machine” of information.
2. That relates to the Philadelphia church where Jesus said he had (perfect tense again) opened a door which no man could shut (Revelation 3:7-8).
 - a. Some Philadelphians already have crowns of victory (they kept His word and didn’t deny His name – Revelation 3:8, 11). This suggests that a judgment process of the living has, **for some**, been underway! Judgment underway – sealing not finished.
 - b. Pending anticipated events in the Philadelphian message:
 - “*I come quickly*,” Jesus says (Revelation 3:11).
 - Then He warns – don’t let any “man take thy crown” (apparently, still a risk; therefore, they are not sealed).
3. E. G. White assigned this **open door** to the entrance into the Most Holy Place in heaven (*Early Writings*, p. 42).
 - It is therefore very end-time – “judgment of the living” period.
 - It relates to an invitation to pass into the Most Holy Place **when** living saints have already been identified with crowns (144,000 are the first prophetic remnant group to be identified).
 - Christ’s coming is anticipated.

The 24-Elder Factor

The events described show 24 elders enthroned (present tense – they are working/administrating – Revelation 4:4).

1. Many individuals arose with Christ at His resurrection (Matthew 27:52-53, Ephesians 4:8).
2. And were taken to heaven (*Early Writings*, p. 190)
3. BUT ...
 - There is no record of their being enthroned **until this time** of judgment.
 - Previously, Daniel wrote:

“As I looked, “thrones were set in place, [they are not described with occupants] and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened” (Daniel 7:9-10 – NIV).
 - This describes **judicial events**, not an **inaugural** scene, with no one seated on those surrounding thrones.
4. Daniel 7:9-10 and Revelation 4:4 are the **only** places in the Bible that thrones surround God’s throne.
5. The open door, the judgment of the living, those already with crowns and the eternal throne with associated 24 thrones with seated elders all speak of a **terminal judgment time**. Revelation 11:1 shows a judicial scene of living worshipers just preceding the final three and a half years.
6. During this judgment time, the Seals are opened. They relate to the sequence of final “players” in the Great Controversy, who right at the end arrive as principals to the last “world” scene. “The issues” written on the scroll won’t be reviewed until after the eschaton (noted in Seal six).
 - **Daniel’s “throne record”** does not portray any beings on those judicial seats – it is the **beginning** of God’s final courtroom scene.
 - Books are opened
 - Thrones set up
 - The Judge (Ancient of Days) takes His place
 - Judgment sits (begins)
 - **John** now sees the court in session. It is the **last phase** of God’s final courtroom scene.
 - 24 elders have been seated. The throne is **set** and God is **sitting** on it.
 - Jesus is in the midst of all the thrones AND in front of God who has the scroll.
 - The issue is a “worthy Lamb” to break the Seals, each provoking the onset of a sequenced end-time event.

- The matter of the unrolling of the scroll is not addressed in this prophetic message! The contents of that scroll will finalize the judicial process **after** the eschaton.

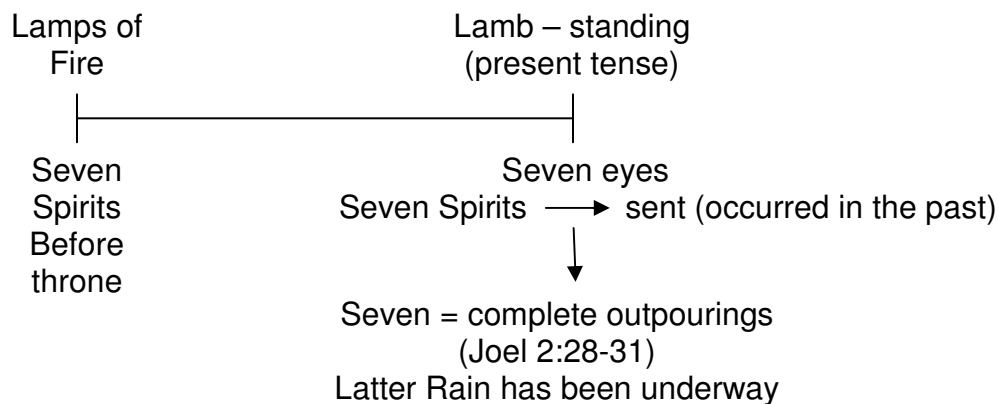
7. In chapter 5 the Lamb activity **is receivership** of the scroll.

- It can't be reviewed until the seventh Seal is broken.
- How Jesus appears and what occurs between He and God the Father is vital for us to grasp.

Seven Spirits and the End

The Holy Spirit is mentioned three times to this point in Revelation.

1. Greetings from the seven Spirits before the throne (Revelation 1:4)
2. Seven lamps of fire before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God (Revelation 4:5).
3. Seven eyes of the Lamb are the Seven Spirits of God, **sent** out unto all the earth (Revelation 5:6)



4. Thus, the Latter Rain has already begun when the Seals begin to be broken. The period of time (“when”) is not mentioned, but likely very recent in onset.
5. The “loud voice” of the angel makes it associated with the Loud Cry or final warning (the whole world is to hear).

E. G. White notes that Revelation 5 must be “closely studied” **because** “there are some who are deceived. They do not realize what is coming on the earth.”³ This can only mean that they have blinders to the “events” that are precipitated by the breaking of each Seal.

Christ’s inauguration is not in view or even a prophetic issue. The storyline is of a throne room at Feast of Trumpets (Revelation 1:10, 4:1-2), when the judgment of the living has already started, and of finding a worthy Being to break the Seals of a judicial document. It is totally end-time imagery!

Resources:

1. *Revelation, Chapters 4-6*, Sub-Title: End-Time Commentary from The Testimony of Jesus; editor Franklin S. Fowler Jr., M.D. (Christian Heritage Foundation, Banning, California) 2003, revised 2008.
2. Robinson, Harry (retired Seventh-day Adventist Pastor – North Carolina); “Revelation 5,” *EndTime Issues...*, January 2003.
3. *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 267 (1909).