

Lesson 11: The Seals, Part 1

Key Texts: Revelation 6:1-8; Leviticus 26:21-26; Deuteronomy 17:18-20

Lesson Outline

- I. Old Testament Background of the Scroll (Deuteronomy 17:18-20)
- II. Old Testament Background of the Seals (Leviticus 26:21-26)
- III. Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (6:1-8)
 - a First Horseman - white (6:1-2)
 - b Second Horseman – red (6:3-4)
 - c Third Horseman – black (6:5-6)
 - d Fourth Horseman – pale green (6:7-8)

Lesson Synopsis

In Revelation 5, we witnessed the enthronement of Jesus on the throne in heaven where He was installed to reign with the Father. He was deemed worthy to take this seat and receive the two-sided scroll because of what He accomplished on the cross. Now that he has the scroll in hand and is securely reigning as the Lamb of God, He will begin to open the scroll. Christ controls this process from the throne of God, and the living creature commands the situation. An understanding of how kings were enthroned in the Old Testament helps us understand the actions in this narrative. When in the Old Testament the newly crowned king took his place on the throne, the destiny of the entire nation was placed in his hands. The Old Testament enthronement ceremonies were usually followed by judgment actions of a newly enthroned king when he proceeded to judge those who had proven disloyal and rebellious; he would also bestow favorable judgment on the loyal adherents. This judgment aspect is expressed in the vision of the opening of the seven seals.

Key Terms by Seal/Horseman

First Seal (White Horse)

- “Come and See”
- “white horse”
- “bow”
- “crown”
- “conquering and to conquer”

Second Seal (Fiery Red Horse)

- “horse, fiery red”
- “people should kill...”
- “great sword”

Third Seal (Black Horse)

- “black horse”
- “pair of scales”
- “a quart of wheat...”
- “oil and wine”

Fourth Seal (Pale Green Horse)

- “pale horse”
- “Death and Hades”
- “a fourth of the earth”
- “sword, hunger, and death”

Perspectives of the 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Chronology of Opening of Seals

Rev. 4–5 (Father and Christ on throne)	Christ overcoming and joining his Father on his throne
Rev. 6 (6 Seals of the Scroll)	The seals describing the ongoing period in which God’s people are in the <u>process of overcoming</u>
Rev. 7 (144,000)	God’s people joining Christ on the throne of God (vv. 9–17)

New Testament Background

THEME	REVELATION	GOSPEL(S)
<i>the gospel spreading</i> (white horse)	Rev. 6:1–2	Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10
<i>war</i> (red horse)	Rev. 6:3–4	Matt. 24:6–7; Mark 13:7–8; Luke 21:9–10
<i>famine</i> (black horse)	Rev. 6:5–6	Matt. 24:7; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11
<i>pestilence</i> (pale green horse)	Rev. 6:7–8	Luke 21:11

Retrospect

The scene of the riders on the four horses is a strong warning of what will happen to those who reject the gospel. It indicates that ignoring and resisting the gospel message always results in spiritual famine, disease, and death. What the scene further makes clear is that the opportunity to receive the gospel, as well as him who is the central subject of the gospel, will not last forever. Before the very time of the end will come the last proclamation of the everlasting gospel to the inhabitants of the earth (Rev. 14:6–12; 18:1–4). The day is coming, however, when the gospel will not be offered and grace and mercy will not be available any more. But today is ours. “Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (Heb. 3:15).

Next Week - Revelation 6: The Seals, Part 2