

The Book Sealed with Seven Seals

1. The vision of the 7 seals of Revelation (**Rev 6-Rev 8:1**) is introduced by a heavenly throne room scenario in **Revelation 4** and in **Revelation 5** with a scenario depicting a lamb that was slain taking a book sealed with 7 seals from the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.
 - a. In **Revelation 4**—the spotlight is on God’s throne surrounded by 24 elders, 4 living creatures and a multitude of angels; it’s a worship setting in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary (where the 7 lamps of fire burning before the throne)
 - b. In **Revelation 5**—the spotlight is on the Lamb that was slain who takes a book sealed with 7 seals in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne, God the Father;
2. With regards to the scene depicting the taking of the book sealed with 7 seals in **Revelation 5**, the Spirit of Prophecy has this to say:

The fifth chapter of Revelation needs to be closely studied. It is of great importance to those who shall act a part in the work of God for these last days. **9T 267**

3. **Rev 5:1-8**-- In **Revelation 5**, Jesus, who is identified as the Lion of the tribe of Judah and the Root of David, is portrayed as a Lamb that was slain taking a book sealed with 7 seals from the right hand of the Father who is seated on a throne
4. If we can understand the meaning of the event John is depicting in **Revelation 5**, then we will understand why it is of great importance to those who will “act a part in the work of God for the last days.”

The Enthronement of Israelite Kings

1. First of all, The scenario John records in **Revelation 4-5** is nothing but a detailed explanation of an event which Paul refers to, in passing, in **Heb 1:3**; **Phil 2:5-10**; Paul alludes to this momentous event happening in the throne room of heaven many times in his epistles, although he does not take time to describe it like John does, in **Revelation 5**;
2. The scenario described in **Rev 5:1-8**, is the inauguration and enthronement of Christ as Priest-King after He ascended to heaven

Christ's ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to wait before they entered upon their work. When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was **enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels**. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers as a token that He had, as **priest** and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people. **AA 38-39**

3. But what does the taking of the book sealed with 7 seals from the right hand of God by Jesus have to do with His anointing or inauguration?
4. The enthronement and inauguration of Jesus as Priest-King in the heavenly sanctuary after His ascension to heaven follows the inauguration of Israelite kings who were types of Jesus' kingship;
5. As part of the inauguration ceremony of the Israelite kings, the people and the elders were assembled and the newly appointed king was handed a copy of the book of the law which was to be used as the basis of government;
 - a. This explains the presence of the 24 elders around the throne of God and the angelic hosts; they are there to witness the inauguration of Jesus as Priest-King (**Rev 4:4; Rev 5:8**)
6. The ordination of Israel's prominent kings is recorded in the following verses; by studying these passages, we get a more or less complete picture of how the Israelite kings were inaugurated as kings:
 - a. **2 Sam 5:3**—David brought before the elders of Israel at his inauguration as king of Israel
 - b. **1 Sam 10:24-25**—Samuel writes the "manner of the kingdom" in a book and laid it up before the Lord at Saul's inauguration as king of Israel
 - c. **2 Ki 11:10-12; 2 Chron 23:11**--Joash received a copy of the "testimony" (book of the law of Moses, **Deut 6:17**) at his inauguration ceremony as king
 - d. **2 Ki 22:8-13**—Josiah finds the book of the law in the sanctuary and calls for repentance and reformation immediately in whole land of Israel
7. **Deut 17:14-20**—As part of the inauguration ceremony of the kings of Israel, a copy of the book of the law was given to them to be read every day, so that they may learn to fear God and see to it that the laws and decrees of God were followed faithfully; the king's duty was to administer the laws and decrees and statutes of God in the kingdom for the good of all
8. **Rev 4-5**—True to the type, Jesus is brought before the Father and the 24 elders to be ordained King-Priest; the angelic hosts stand around the throne to witness this great event; as part of the ordination/inauguration ceremony, Jesus receives from His Father a book which interestingly, is sealed with 7 seals;

The Book of the New Covenant

9. **Question:** What exactly is the book that Jesus took from the right hand of His Father?
10. **Deut 29:1, 9; Deut 31:16, 21**—the book of the law in Deuteronomy is called a "covenant;"
11. **Deut 6:4-6, 14, 17**---faithful obedience to the laws and decrees contained in the book of the Law was the basis of the covenant God made with His people to be their God;
 - a. **Deut 28:1-14**--Blessings were guaranteed upon obedience to God's laws and commandments and curses would result in disobedience
 - b. **Deut 28:15-68**--Curses on those who violate the covenant; notice some of the language used to express the curses on the disobedient
 - i. **Verse 22**--Sword
 - ii. **Verse 26**--Famine
 - iii. **Verse 48**--Sword, hunger, death, the beasts of the earth

- c. **Ezek 14:21**—For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?
- 12. The book Jesus took at the right hand of the Father at His inauguration as Priest-King is the **New Covenant** which was typified by the book of the law or covenant the kings of Israel received at their inauguration ceremony as kings:
- 13. Unlike the book of covenant which the Israelite kings were given at their inauguration, the new covenant-book Jesus receives from His Father at His inauguration is sealed with 7 seals; i.e. perfectly sealed!
- 14. As long as the New Covenant is sealed, its stipulations are beyond the reach to anyone; Christ's powerful ministration in the sanctuary with all its attendant blessings cannot be administered to anyone
 - a. This explains why John wept much because the stipulations of the covenant must remain inaccessible, unless someone was found worthy to take the book and break its seals!
- 15. **Heb 9:16-17; Matt 26:28; Heb 12:24; Rev 5:6**—the death of Jesus is needed to ratify the new covenant!

Though this covenant was made with Adam and renewed to Abraham, it could not be ratified until the death of Christ. It had existed by the promise of God since the first intimation of redemption had been given; it had been accepted by faith; **yet when ratified by Christ, it is called a new covenant.** The law of God was the basis of this covenant, which was simply an arrangement for bringing men again into harmony with the divine will, placing them where they could obey God's law. **PP 370.**

- a. This explains why Jesus is presented in **Revelation 5** as a "Lamb as it had been slain"; the sacrificial dying of Jesus on the cross is what gives Him full right to execute the new covenant provisions with all its full blessings and also its cursings;
- b. Christ's sacrificial dying is what gives Him the absolute, unquestionable right to break or unloose the seals that bind the new covenant;
- 16. The seals of the new covenant are not broken all at once, but one after the other over periods of time; the blessings and the curses of the new covenant are ministered in part throughout the course of the Christian era
 - a. **Blessings on the faithful apostolic church**—outpouring of the early "rain" on the apostolic church is highlighted in the opening of the first seal (**Deut 28:12**); this is why the church is able to effectively advance the work of God throughout the Gentile world
 - i. The conversion of the Gentiles under the powerful ministration of the Holy Spirit in the time of the apostolic church is couched in symbolic language—rider in white horse with bow conquering (**Amos 9:11-12; Acts 15:14-16**)
 - b. **Blessings on the faithful followers of Christ throughout the Christian age**--the material and spiritual blessings of the new covenant are dispensed through the powerful work of intercession of Christ as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary (**Acts 5:31; Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; Heb 8:10-12**)

- i. Forgiveness and pardon for sin, sanctification and justification are benefits derived from the Priestly ministrations of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, none of which would have availed anyone if Jesus did not earn the right to take the new covenant from the hand of His Father
 - c. **Final blessing on the faithful martyrs who have died**—during the opening of the 5th seal, the white robe of Christ’s perfect righteousness is given;
 - a. **Curses and judgment upon to the disobedient**—the curses of the New Covenant fall on the enemies of the church in the opening of the seals
17. Hence, the vision of the breaking of the 7 seals is about Jesus as Mediator of the new covenant, dispensing the blessings and the curses of the new covenant to His covenant people throughout the Christian era;

The Opening of the 7 Seals

18. The meaning of the opening of the first four 7 seals of the new covenant is understood more clearly when viewed in the light of the vision of the 4 horns and the 4 carpenters of Zechariah (**Zech 1:18-21**);
- a. In previous studies, it was already shown that the 8 visions of Revelation are based thematically on the 8 visions of Zechariah and that John’s vision of the book sealed with 7 seals line up with Zechariah’s vision of the 4 horns and the 4 carpenters
19. **The 4 horns**—described as the heathen nations who scatter Judah and Jerusalem; the opening of the first 4 seals portray the scattering of the power of the church of Christ by its enemies
- a. **First seal opened**—time of the apostolic church; the unbelieving Jews move upon the Gentiles to scatter the church of Christ (**Acts 8:1; Acts 14:122**)
 - b. **Second seal opened**—Pagan Rome scatters the Jewish nation and the Christian church under pagan Rome (**Dan 11:20-24**)
 - c. **Third seal**—falling away or apostasy of mainline Christianity (**2 Thess 2:3-4**); the church scattered spiritually
 - d. **Fourth seal**—papal Rome scatters the power of the holy people (the church) for 1260 years (**Dan 12:6-7**)
20. The 4 living creatures are directly involved in the opening of the seals; their appearance reflects the pitiful state of the church as its power is being scattered to teach that Jesus is cognizant of the sufferings of His church; *“he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye. . .”* (**Zech 2:8**)
- a. **First living creature**—had the appearance of a **lion**—reflecting the status of a conquering church under the first seal
 - b. **Second living creature**—had the appearance of an **ox** in sacrifice—the church suffering under pagan Rome under the second seal
 - c. **Third living creature**—had the appearance of a **man**—the church in apostasy; the commandments of God replaced with the commandments of men (**Matt 15:9; 2 Thess 2:3**)
 - d. **The fourth living creature**—had the appearance of an **eagle**—the church during the Dark Ages; martyrdom under the fourth seal (**Matt 24:28**)

21. **The 4 carpenters**—symbolic of the 4 living creatures whose job is to “fray” or neutralize the enemies of the church; this is done by applying the covenant curses on the enemies of God’s people; seen more fully in the blowing of the 7 trumpets
22. The 4 living creatures are actively involved in the administration of blessing and cursings of the New Covenant
 - a. **Application of covenant blessings**--restoration of God’s people through a work of assisting Jesus in His work of intercession (**Rev 5:8**)
 - b. **Application of covenant curses**- The language of the four seals are an echo of the covenant curses found in **Deut 28** which are applied to the enemies of the church of Christ; these judgments are carried out by the agencies symbolized as riders on 4 horses with differing colors
 - I. **rider of a red horse with a great sword in his hand**--in the opening of the 2nd seal (**Deut 28:22**)—judgment on the Jewish nation first (**Dan 9:26-27**) and then pagan Rome resulting in its eventual collapse
 - II. **rider of a black horse with a pair of balances in his hand**--in the opening of the 3rd seal (**Deut 28:26**)—judgment on papal Rome; God strikes papal Rome with spiritual famine (**Amos 8:11-12**; God’s word suppressed; the “two witnesses” prophecy in sackcloth (**Rev 11:3-4**))
 - III. **rider of a pale horse who kills with the sword, hunger, death, the beasts of the earth**--at the opening of the 4th seal (**Deut 28:48**)—progressive judgment on papal Rome in the hands of the Mohammedans in the time of the Crusades, until her collapse in 1798 in the hands of France; the papacy receives a deadly wound from the “beast” coming out of the bottomless pit” (atheistic France, **Rev 11:7**; **Rev 13:7-20**)

Conclusion

23. The death of Christ ratifies the new covenant and gives Him the perfect right to administer its blessings and cursings; we are to be eternally grateful for Christ’s sacrificial dying, for this is the basis and ground for His priestly work of intercession;
24. The inauguration of Jesus as Priest-king presented in **Revelation 5** paves the way for the dispensation of the new covenant blessings and curses.
25. The blessings of the new covenant have been dispensed throughout the Christian era partially; the full and final blessing of the new covenant is still future and will result in a restored community of believers, fully possessing Christ’s perfect righteousness (**Heb 8:10-12**; **Heb 10:15-17**)

While Jesus is pleading for the subjects of His grace, Satan accuses them before God as transgressors. The great deceiver has sought to lead them into skepticism, to cause them to lose confidence in God, to separate themselves from His love, and to break His law. Now he points to the record of their lives, to the defects of character, the unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer, to all the sins that he has tempted them to commit, and because of these he claims them as his subjects.

Jesus does not excuse their sins, but shows their penitence and faith, and, claiming for them forgiveness, He lifts His wounded hands before the Father and the holy angels, saying: I know them by name. I have graven them on the palms of My hands. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Psalm 51:17. And to the accuser of His people He declares: "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Zechariah 3:2. Christ will clothe His faithful ones with His own righteousness, that He may present them to His Father "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Ephesians 5:27. Their names stand enrolled in the book of life, and concerning them it is written: "They shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy." Revelation 3:4.

Thus will be realized the complete fulfillment of the new-covenant promise: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." Jeremiah 31:34; 50:20. . . **GC 484-485**

26. The vision of the book sealed with 7 seals in Revelation is the prophetic narrative of the work of spiritual restoration that the church will finally go through as promised in the new covenant; this prophetic narrative will not fail, in spite of all the troublous, the upheavals, the apostasies and the opposition she struggles through throughout her long history, because the word of God is faithful. . .
27. The full and final application of the new covenant blessings is still future and will result in a restored, perfected community.