

# The Book Sealed with 7 Seals, III

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## The 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse

1. It is very tempting to take the 4 horses of Revelation 6 and interpret them as a prophetic narrative of the history of the church; and the colors of the horses as indicators of her spiritual condition over time—this many have actually done;
  - a. white horse—pure church
  - b. red horse—persecution of the church under pagan Rome
  - c. black horse—apostasy
  - d. pale horse—persecution under papal Rome

## Restoration and Retribution Is the Overall Theme of Revelation

2. **Zechariah Connection.** The interpretation of the vision of the 7 seals takes on a completely different picture however, when viewed in connection with the book of Zechariah;
  - a. When the vision of the 7 seals is examined in the light of Zechariah’s vision of the 4 horns and the 4 carpenters, then it is seen that the 4 living creatures who supervise the opening of the first 4 seals, are seen as doing a work of “fraying” or terrifying the powers that have been scattering the power of the church throughout history (**Zech 1:18-21**)
  - b. The 4 colored horses no longer appear to be symbols of the church, but rather symbols of the punitive agencies utilized by the 4 living creatures to inflict damage on the enemies of God’s church;
  - c. This is consistent with the biblical use of horses in history and prophecy—for battle (**Zech 6:1-8; Rev 9:9-11; Rev 19:11-14**)

## The Introductory Scenario Sets the Stage for the Breaking of the Seals

3. **Covenant Motif and Language.** The interpretation of the vision of the 7 seals also comes into much sharper focus when John’s use of covenant motif and covenant language is recognized, both in the introductory scenes found in **Revelation 4 and Revelation 5**, and also in the vision of the 7 seals itself:
  - a. **Rev 4**—the rainbow around the throne is a token of the everlasting covenant God made with Noah and his descendants after the flood (**Gen 9:9-17; Gen 17:1-7, 13, 19**)
  - b. **Rev 5**—Jesus takes the book of the new covenant from the right hand of His Father at His inauguration as Priest-King (**AA 38**) in fulfillment of Old Testament types (**Deut 17:18**); there is much rejoicing in heaven after Jesus takes that book because it guaranteed that the covenant blessings is assured for God’s people (**Rev 5:8-14**); it also guaranteed that the curses of the covenant are sure to fall on her enemies;

In this last act of Christ in partaking with His disciples of the bread and wine, He pledged Himself to them as their Redeemer by a new covenant, in which it was written and sealed that upon **all who will receive Christ by faith will be bestowed all the blessings that heaven**

**can supply, both in this life and in the future immortal life.**

This covenant deed was to be ratified by Christ's own blood, which it had been the office of the old sacrificial offerings to keep before the minds of His chosen people. . . **Ev 276.**

4. **Rev 6**—the application of the covenant blessings and curses over time is portrayed in the sequential breaking or opening of the seals, as can be seen in John's use of covenant curse language found in **Deut 28:22, 26, 48**, etc. (sword, death, hunger, beasts)
  - a. Covenant language permeates the entire vision of the 7 seals, from the first to the 7th;

### **The 4 Horsemen of Revelation 6 Are Transporters of Covenant Curses**

5. Again, why does John use covenant curse language in connection with the breaking of the first 4 seals?
6. **Deut. 29:25-26; Deut 28:20**— covenant curses are invoked against those who profess His name and yet in their lives "forsake the covenant"; worship of idols is singled out as main cause of breaking the covenant
  - a. **Dan 11:32**—this explains why mainstream Christianity during the Dark Ages is visited with the curses of the covenant
  - b. **Dan 11:30**—the church apostatizes and forsakes the covenant
  - c. **Dan 11:32**—the fallen church does wickedly against the covenant
  - d. **Dan 12:7**—the spirit of intolerance permeates the church; persecution scatters the powers of the holy people
7. **Rev 2:12-29**—the messages to the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira apply to the corrupt church of the Middle Ages and contain rebukes for idol worship and threats of covenant curses if there is no repentance
  - a. To **Pergamos**—I will come against you with the sword of my mouth (**Deut 28:22** cf. **Rev 2:16**)
  - b. To **Thyatira**—I will kill her children with death (**Deut 30:15, 19** cf. **Rev 2:23**)
8. The blessings and the curses of the new covenant are applied while Jesus is ministering in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary; Jesus makes application of the merits of His atoning sacrifice via His powerful high priestly intercession; the covenant blessings given were partial—dispensed through the daily service which has been going on in the heavenly sanctuary for many centuries;

For eighteen centuries this work of ministration continued in the first apartment of the sanctuary. The blood of Christ, pleaded in behalf of penitent believers, secured their pardon and acceptance with the Father. . . **GC 421**

9. In this work of dispensing covenant blessings and curses, Jesus is assisted by the 24 elders and the 4 living creatures and the angelic hosts (**Rev 5:8; Rev 8:3-5**)

### The 5th Seal Broken in the Time of the End

10. **Rev 6:9-11**—The opening of the 5th seal occurs at the end of the Dark Ages and ushers in the time of the end; it signals the beginning of the investigative judgment during which time the cases of the dead are considered first and then the living;
11. The breaking of the 5th seal coincides with the change of ministration of Jesus from 1st apartment to the 2nd apartment of the heavenly sanctuary to apply the full and final blessings of the new covenant; this full and final blessing comes in the form of receiving the gift of Christ's perfect righteousness in the fullest sense—perfection of character!
12. The dead in Christ are the first to receive the full and final fulfillment of the new covenant promise-- the robe of Christ's perfect righteousness not in the imputed sense, but in the imparted sense;
13. The cases of those who are alive are considered next; the judgment of the living is to determine who will receive the benefit of Christ's final atonement and receive the robe of His righteousness—while alive!!!
- a. This work of determining who among the living will receive His righteousness is set forth forcefully in the vision of Joshua and the Angel in **Zech 3:1-5, 9**;
  - b. The vision of Joshua and the Angel in **Zech 3:1-5** brings to view the work of the high priest on the Day of Atonement in the final cleansing of the sanctuary and of the congregation;
  - c. A work of judgment is implied along with the work of cleansing because it needs to be determined who among the congregation are doing a work of afflicting the soul and are entitled to the benefit of Christ's final atonement (**GC 421-422**)
14. The full and final application of the new covenant promise is in conjunction with Christ's closing ministration in the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary;
15. The final application of the new covenant promise results in a people whose sins are blotted out of the books of heaven, possess characters that are in complete harmony with the Law of God (the Law written in their hearts) and have their consciences purged so they can no longer remember their sins; this constitutes the work of restoration that God envisioned should happen to His people—

“finish transgression, make an end of .  
.bring in everlasting righteousness” **Dan**  
**9:24**

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I will put my laws into their hearts, and in  
their minds will I write them; And their sins  
and iniquities will I remember no more.

“And the Lord God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul. . . **Deut 30:6**

**Heb 10:16-18**

16. The full and final completion of the new covenant promise (**Heb 10:16-17**) is not until the last days of earth's history; the recipients of the full and final and permanent blessings of the new covenant are those living in the last days of earth's history — the final generation!
17. **Dan 11:35, Dan 12:9-10**—the final and complete work of purification of God's people is not until the time of the end;
- "purge and make them white, even to the time of the end" (**Dan 11:35**)
  - "the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many will be purified and made white and tried"

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.**

### Why Study the Fifth Chapter of Revelation?

18. Again it is important to remember that the Spirit of Prophecy say that the fifth chapter of Revelation should "be closely studied by those who will have a part to act in the work of God in the last days";

**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. There are some who are deceived. They do not realize what is coming on the earth. Those who have permitted their minds to become beclouded in regard to what constitutes sin are fearfully deceived. Unless they make a decided change they will be found wanting when God pronounces judgment upon the children of men. They have transgressed the law and broken the everlasting covenant, and they will receive according to their works. **9T 267.**

19. Since the full and complete fulfillment of the new covenant promise is about to be fulfilled it behooves every Seventh-day Adventist to understand the message of Revelation 5 and of the breaking of the seals;
- Revelation 5** and ensuing chapters—i.e., the breaking of the seals, specially the seals that are broken at the time of the end, pertains to them!
  - We cannot just sit idly acting like God has not shed light on this matter; to be willfully ignorant is to end up failing to receive the final blessing of the new covenant—the robe of Christ's righteousness!

### **Partial Application of the New Covenant Promise**

20. **QUESTION:** if the final and complete application of the new covenant promise is still future, if it is reserved for those living in the time of the end, then why does Paul apply this promise to his time—65-66 AD?
21. Paul quotes the new covenant promise in **Heb 10:16-18** as already fulfilled in his day, which is why the offering of sacrifices in the temple in Jerusalem, according to him, is meaningless;
22. **ANSWER:** Paul is making a partial application of the new covenant promise in his day; this promise has always been available throughout human history— but the final and complete application is reserved for those living when Jesus makes his final atonement in the heavenly sanctuary
- Rom 2:15**—the Gentiles who have the Law written in their hearts and live up to the little light that they know are accounted more righteous than the Jews who know the Law but do not keep it.

Wonderful scenes are opening before us; and at this time a living testimony is to be borne in the lives of God's professed people so that the world may see that in this age, when evil reigns on every side, there is yet a people who are laying aside their will and are seeking to do God's will—a people in whose hearts and lives God's law is written.

God expects those who bear the name of Christ to represent Him. Their thoughts are to be pure, their words noble and uplifting. The religion of Christ is to be interwoven with all that they

do and say.... God desires His people to show by their lives the advantage of Christianity over worldliness, to show that they are working on a high, holy plane. **AH 519-520.**

### **The Breaking of the 6th Seal**

23. **Rev 6:12-17**—the opening of the 6th seal covers the time of the appearance of signs in the heavens until the falling of the plagues;
- a. The breaking of the 6th seal is also expressed in covenant curse language; when the 6th seal is broken, the rejecters of God's mercy face the wrath of God and the Lamb; this wrath is also a covenant curse (**Deut 29:25-28**)
24. The wrath of God is contained in the bowls of divine wrath in the seven last plagues (**Rev 15:1**)
25. **Rev 19:11-15**—the wicked and the unfaithful face the wrath of the Lamb and the sharp sword out of His mouth at the second coming;
26. this scenario of rider on a white horse is a replay of the first seal, except the application is no longer spiritual but literal;

### **The Breaking of the 7th Seal**

27. **Rev 8:1**—When the 7th seal is broken, the saints are about to meet Jesus face to face and there is a time of awful silence as the saints and the angels wait to hear words of assurance from the Savior that His grace is sufficient for them;

#### **Everlasting covenant confirmed and the never-ending blessing given**

And as God spoke the day and the hour of Jesus' coming and **delivered the everlasting covenant** to His people, He spoke one sentence, and then paused, while the words were rolling through the earth. The Israel of God stood with their eyes fixed upward, listening to the words as they came from the mouth of Jehovah, and rolled through the earth like peals of loudest thunder. It was awfully solemn. And at the end of every sentence the saints shouted, "Glory! Alleluia!" Their countenances were lighted up with the glory of God; and they shone with the glory, as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai. The wicked could not look on them for the glory. And when the **never-ending blessing** was pronounced on those who had honored God in keeping His Sabbath holy, there was a mighty shout of victory over the beast and over his image. **EW 34.**

#### **Why there is silence. . .**

Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spoke the time, He poured upon us the

Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai. . . .

Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man's hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders; and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle; in His left, a silver trumpet. **His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, "Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?" Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: "Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you."** At this our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sang again, while the cloud drew still nearer the earth. **EW 15-16.**

28. There is a period of awful silence in the opening of the 7th seal as Jesus, at His second coming, searches His people through and through to see if there are any faults and defects in them; there is a period of awful silence while Jesus examines the robes that were given to them in the final atonement remained spotless throughout the duration of the falling of the plagues, when there is no intercession going on in the heavenly sanctuary (**Rev 16:15**);
29. Because the saints do not feel righteous even though they have been cleansed of sin, they doubt whether they have enough purity of soul to withstand this scrutiny and they cry out "Is my robe spotless?"
30. The reassuring words of Jesus removes every doubt and fear; the final atonement is sufficient to carry the saints through; the full blessings of the new covenant are sufficient to shield the righteous from the consuming fire of Christ's immediate presence;