

THE JUDGMENT AND THE SEVEN SEALS

Introduction: This study reveals that the breaking of the seven seals did not take place as an isolated event, but in the context of the investigative judgment which is brought to light in Revelation chapters 4, and 5. Therefore, the study of the seven seals is a study of the investigative judgment. It reveals the cases of every generation from Adam up to the crucial events that mark the opening of the Judgment of the Living.

Prayer Thought: 9T:267 “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 267.1}

1. Read Rev. 4 and 5

In these chapters, John the Revelator gave a forecast of the judgment. The same event was revealed to Daniel:

- Dan. 7:9 and Rev. 20:4 – thrones
- Dan. 7:9 and Rev. 4:2 – Ancient of Days; One sat
- Dan. 7:10 and Rev. 15:2 – fiery stream; sea of glass mingled with fire
- Dan. 7:13 and Rev. 5:6 – the Son of man; the Lamb
- Dan. 7:10 and Rev. 20:12 – books opened
- Dan. 7:10 and Rev. 5:11 – thousands of angels
- Dan. 7:10 and Rev. 14:7 – the judgment (hour) was set (is come)

Daniel saw the judgment *being set up* and makes mention of it twice. First, after the little horn arose (Dan. 7:9, 10), and second, before the saints possess the kingdom (Dan. 7:22).

John saw the judgment in full session and describes it in three parts, in three different sittings: One before the half hour (Rev.8:1), one after it, and a third one during the millennium (Rev. 20: 11, 12).

These events were to take place “here after” (Rev. 1: 1, 19), after John’s time.

2. What do the symbols in the Judicial Throng represent?

- Door - The door to the most Holy Place. EW 42
- The Throne – the One who sat there is the Judge - God the Father

- Rainbow - God's faithfulness to His promises – Gen. 9: 12-15; COL 148.1 - His divine mercy – Ed 177.3.
- 24 Elders - Jury. They are from among those who ascended with Christ. Matt. 27:51-53; DA 786; EW184.
- 7 Lamps of Fire - Completeness of truth; the church (candlestick) throughout all ages guided by the Holy (seven) Spirit from the very beginning by revealing truth.
- Sea of Glass - sea denotes endlessness. It represents eternal life with no imperfection (clear as crystal).
- Four Beasts – four classes of saints (GC 665) - the defendants in the judgment. They are not actually *there* - EW 54, 92. They, like the nations in Daniel and Revelation are represented as beasts. Rev. 5: 8, 9 - only human beings have been redeemed.
- Full of eyes before and behind – eyes give light to the body and provides sight, showing that God’s people had sufficient light (past, present and future) in every age.
- Lion - first period of the church before the ceremonial system - Adam to Moses.
- Calf - period of the ceremonial system (Moses to Cross)
- Man's Head - Cross to harvest period - 144,000 & GM.
- Eagle - period when the church is to be translated (144,000 and GM).
- Six wings – the period in which the judgment commences, in the 6th seal.
- Lamb – Jesus as advocate, priest (lawyer) - a lamb bleeding, "as it had been slain."
- Seven horns - Jesus has complete power (Matt. 28:18)
- Seven eyes - Complete vision - knowledge (Ps.139:12)
- Seven spirits of God - God's Spirit at work in all ages. (John 14:26)
- Many angels – they are witnesses. They record and testify to all events. GC 486.3.
- The Book - The Book of Life that decides every man's destiny. Ex. 32: 33; Rev. 13:8; 20:12; 22:19; GC 483.1; Col 294.1. It is the only book that is claimed for Christ. Thus it must be the same as the Book with seven seals which Christ alone opens.

3. The opening of the Book sealed with seven seals

Observe that this Book, which is the same as the Book of life, is opened in the judgment. The Heavenly Tribunal thoroughly scrutinizes every case, beginning with Adam through each successive generation and closes with the living - GC 483.1. Therefore, the Book covers the history of the entire world – 9MR 7. It cannot then start in the New Testament period as is generally taught.

4. Read Rev. 6: 1-8.

The colors *White, Red, Black and Pale* depict a progression of worsening conditions . . . Similarly, the symbols of the *crown, sword, balances* and *death* indicate that by men's deeds, the earth has gone from good to bad to worse. The horses depict something created by God but ruled (driven) by man. It must be the earth given to man by God to rule.

5. The first seal verses 1, 2

It calls attention to the first group of people to be judged in 1844, those who lived at the inception of the human race.

- White horse - the earth in a pure, sinless state – PP 47.
- Rider – Adam - Gen. 1:26, 28
- Crown - kingly authority - Gen. 1:26.
- Bow - the instrument with which Adam was to conquer and people the earth. It represents Eve. In harmony with the symbolism, children are compared to arrows. Ps. 127:4; Gen. 3:20. Conquering Man was to inhabit and people the earth - conquer it.

6. The second seal verses 3, 4

This denotes the period in which murder and war broke out among the nations. Red is a symbol of bloodshed. Abel was the first victim. This condition began after Adam and Eve and climaxed just after the flood and the Babel disaster with its confusion of languages.

To "take peace from the earth," implies that there was *peace before the time of the Red horse*. This again proves that the first seal must have begun with Adam when the earth was pure and at peace. There was no peace on earth at the time of the New Testament era - the time generally taught to be the beginning of the seven seals.

7. The third seal verses 5, 6

The third seal reveals the time when mankind well nigh lost the knowledge of God; the time God called Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Israel; the time men introduced commerce; the time the Bible was introduced.

- Black Horse - spiritual darkness - idolatry. This is the time when the knowledge of God was nigh obliterated. The record reveals only Abraham and Lot served God.
- Balances - trading, commercialism, led by the Phoenicians, the "busy bees of the ancient world." Tyre and Sidon were the chief centers of commerce - Isa. 23:8.
- A measure of wheat for a penny, a day's wage – Matt. 20:2, and three measures of barley for the same day's wage. The symbols have a very close connection with the parable in Matthew 20. The penny represents eternal life, salvation. Only human beings receive salvation as a reward for labor here on earth. The one measure of wheat relates to the *one hour* the 144,000 and GM will labor – Matt. 20:6. The three measures of barley relates to the three hours the Jews labored - Matt. 20:1-3. Observe that the 144,000 will receive eternal life first, a measure of wheat is mentioned first. Thus corresponding with the parable, the last shall be first – Matt. 20:16.
- Hurt not the oil and the wine. - Whatever is meant by the symbol, it is not of men, but of God, for it was His voice in the midst of the four beasts round about the throne, that gave the command to "hurt not the oil and the wine." Oil is used in Scriptures as a symbol of the Holy Spirit – Ps. 45:7; Isa. 61:1-3; Zechariah 4:12. Wine is used as a symbol of the blood of Christ. As the 'life is in the blood,' the wine denotes life eternal, found only in 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.' "The words that I speak" said Jesus, "are spirit and they are life" – John 6:63. Thus

the command, 'hurt not the oil and the wine,' denotes that there was to be no interference with Bible which was being written at that time

It is during the time of the black horse, third seal, when God called Israel that Moses began to write the Bible. Thus it was appropriate for God to announce protection for the Scriptures.

8. The fourth seal **verses 7, 8**

This seal unveils the commencement of the New Testament period, even as the third seal closed the Old.

- Pale horse, non-descript color, points to the same period as the Non-descript beast of Dan. 7:7, 8. The period of the ancient Roman government at the climax of idolatry. The color denotes a mixture of paganism and Christianity.
- Rider, Death denotes persecution. Rome killed many thousands of people, especially the Christians.
- Fourth part of the earth. - Rome was allowed to persecute the Christians for a quarter of the earth's age. After which its power was to wane. The earth is to be 6,000 years old. To get a fourth part, divide 6,000 by four ($6,000/4 = 1500$). Commencing at the crucifixion in 31AD, add 1500 to arrive at 1530 AD - the date of the Augsburg Confession, the separation of the Lutherans from Catholicism.

9. The fifth seal **Rev. 6: 9-11**

- The souls under the altar are the martyrs from the preceding period. This is evidenced by the fact that they were already dead when the seal opened.
- An altar signifies a renewal of faith, worship and reformation – Gen. 8:20; 12:8; 35:14. Thus it symbolizes the Protestant Reformation which began the downfall of Rome and the commencement of a spiritual renewal, restoration of true worship.
- The question "how long..?" and the answer that they should "rest for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren that should be killed as they were should be fulfilled," is evidence that the persecution and martyrdom of the 4th seal were to overlap the fifth seal and the judgment was not to begin until after the persecution had ceased completely. That is, although the reformation brought the decline of the Papacy, some of God's people were still to be martyred for their faith up to the complete fall of the papacy. Then the Judgment of the Dead would begin.
- The white robes given them show that they were accounted worthy of eternity.

10. The sixth seal **Rev. 6: 12-17; 7**

The sixth seal, the sixth period of time, brings the great day of God, the wrath of the Lamb.

- Earthquake – Lisbon, November 1, 1755 (GC 304)
- Sun, Moon - May 19, 20, 1780 (GC 306)

- Falling Stars - November 13, 1833 (GC 333)

These signs of the times were predicted in Matthew 24:29 and mentioned in GC 304, 309, 333, 334. They also betoken the terrors of 'the great and dreadful day' – Isa. 34: 1-8; Zeph. 1: 12-18

- Earthquake – the shaking, sifting among the nations – Isa. 30: 27, 28; Nah. 2:3.
- The darkening of the sun – the closing of the gospel, the end of probationary time – Amos 8:12; !sa. 60:2.
- The moon's becoming as blood immediately following the darkening of the sun, refusing to reflect light, would be an appropriate omen of the church's having finished her work of salvation, no longer needing to reflect the Light of the gospel.
- The falling stars are suggestive of the great and terrible day of the Lord - the day in which "the heavens...pass away" (2 Pet. 3:10), the day in which all their host is dissolved, and in which the Devil and his host, also the wicked in the church and in the world, "shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree." Isa. 34:4.

There is a climax in the judicial work in Rev. 6:14-17. The events in this scripture end the reign of sin. This being realized by even the sinners themselves, is a very good indication that during the sixth seal the Judgment of the dead closes, and the preparations for the Judgment of the living begin. It is the "dreadful day" for the wicked. Moreover, as the first phase of the Judgment passes with the sixth chapter of Revelation, the second phase begins with the seventh chapter; that is, it begins with the sealing of the living saints, the first fruits. It is the "great day" for the righteous.

11. The seventh seal **Rev. 8: 1-5**

Is the half hour silence the Second Advent of Christ?

- Jesus is still in the Sanctuary, represented as a Lamb at the opening of the seventh seal, indicating that He is still interceding and pleading during this period.
- The prayers of the saints are offered up before God, indicating that probation is still open. There will be no need for the offering of prayers at the Second Advent.
- The angel cast fire, a symbol of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4) into the earth. There will be no need for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the second coming of Christ.
- The voices, thundering and lightning, show a resumption of the Judgment.
- Half an hour silence during the Judgment implies a resumption of the Judgment after the silence. Therefore, the half hour divides the judgment into two, sections - the Judgment of the Dead and the Judgment of the Living.

What happens during the half hour silence?

The Purification of the Church, Eze. 9. It is the only event mentioned in the Bible and the Testimonies that accounts for Jesus interrupt His mediatorial work.

Read **5T 690** “Those who train the mind to seize upon everything which they can use as a peg to hang a doubt upon, and suggest these thoughts to other minds, will always find occasion to doubt. They will question and criticize everything that arises in the unfolding of truth, criticize the work and position of others, criticize every branch of the work in which they have not themselves a part. They will feed upon the errors and mistakes and faults of others, "until," said the angel, the Lord Jesus shall rise up from His mediatorial work in the heavenly sanctuary and shall clothe Himself with the garments of vengeance and surprise them at their unholy feast, and they will find themselves unprepared for the marriage supper of the Lamb." Their taste has been so perverted that they would be inclined to criticize even the table of the Lord in His kingdom. {5T 689.2}

This passage must be fulfilled during probationary time because it mentions "...the unfolding of truth..." Truth only unfolds while probation still lingers. It also states that "the Lord Jesus shall rise up from His mediatorial work..." This indicates that He will interrupt His work of atonement.

How long is the half hour silence?

About seven days, one week.

Using prophetic time, a day for a year, one year = 360 days, one day = 24 hours and one prophetic hour is $360 \div 24 = 15$ days. Therefore, Half hour is $15 \div 2 = 7.5$ days, approximately one week.

Conclusion: This study brought to light the judgment that is currently in session in the Sanctuary above. The Heavenly Tribunal is presiding over the case of each successive generation and will close with the living in the SDA first then the world. We will all have to account, not physically, but through our records that the angels took, for the lives we live. May this sober reality provoke us to righteousness.