

The Revelation of Jesus Christ - Part 3

Seven Seals: When Kingdoms Collide

Revelation 6:1-8:6

May 3, 2020

I. First, some BIG PICTURE items.

- A. The CHIASTIC STRUCTURE.
- B. The RHYTHM of the “SEVENS”.
- C. The USE of NUMBERS.
- D. The GREEK word θλίψις (THLIPSIS). (7:14; 1:9; 2:9-10)

Revelation is a book that people often avoid. But if you can begin to see some of the big picture structural issues it can help you relate the parts to the whole.

1. What have been your past perceptions and experiences of the book of Revelation? How do they impact the way you read it today?

II. Reality, not JUDGMENT, consequences not PUNISHMENT. (6:1-17; 8:1-5)

- A. Seal #1 - RELIGIOUSLY motivated CONQUEST. (6:1-2)
- B. Seal #2 - The PRESENCE of WAR. (6:3-4)
- C. Seal #3 - FAMINE and ECONOMIC injustice. (6:5-6)
- D. Seal #4 - All this LEADS to DEATH. (6:7-8)
- E. Seal #5 - Suffering for CHRIST-FOLLOWERS. (6:9-11)
- F. Seal #6 - The IMPLOSION of CREATION. (6:12-17; 4:11)
- G. Seal #7 - And God RESPONDS. (8:1-5)

The seals on a scroll weren't meant to keep the information hidden forever. They just showed that only those with the right authority could open the scroll. As the Lamb opens the seven seals of the scroll we see what happens when the Kingdom of God collides with the current power structures of the broken world.

2. Kid's Question: Listen as the text is read. What is the most interesting thing in it to you and why?
3. What are some examples of the seals that you see in our world today? Do you agree that these are more about “reality” than “judgment”?
4. In what ways do we see religiously motivated conquest today? Is it happening within North America? How does this relate to what we've described as “overcoming” the past two weeks?
5. This interpretation shows the reality of suffering for the believer, but doesn't answer the question as to why. Is that enough for you?
6. What have you “cried out to God” about in the past, or even currently? Does this passage give you any hope? Any consolation?

III. A vision of HOPE as kingdoms COLLIDE. (7:1-17)

A. The PEOPLE of the LAMB... (7:3,13-14)

B. ...SEALED by the SPIRIT... (II Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30)

C. ...on both SIDES of DEATH. (7:14-17; Rom. 8:31-38)

Between seal #6 and seal #7 we are given a vision of great hope. It's a reminder to all of us in this times of "tribulation" that the collision of kingdoms around us make change the circumstances, but that we are safe within the protection of the Lamb of God. Nothing can separate us from Jesus. The Kingdom of God is the safest place to be when the world all around us is falling apart.

7. What stands out to you most about the vision of Revelation 7 and why?
8. What does it mean on this side of death that we are victorious on the other side of death as well? How does that shape your thoughts and actions today?