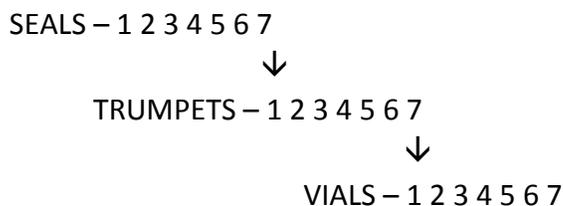


Three series with sevens start in this chapter – seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls or vials with the seven last plagues. Seven peals of thunder are mentioned in chapter 10 but not explained.



At Camp Pinnacle, there is a spectacular view of the Hudson valley that one can stare at for hours. When you fix your glance to the near point, you take in a great deal and likewise the farther most point. With another wider perspective, you may take in the whole landscape. John looks at the future in this way with the many visions given to him. Sometimes he focuses on one event in his immediate view, while another time he stares into the distant future, and then again he returns to a closer view. He tells us many things and sometimes the same thing with different information. He may focus in one vision about a certain event and yet again another vision about a completely different event that occurs at the same time. The reader can experience frustration if too much focus is upon the linear progression of the revelation since the information is not presented in this fashion. Always remember what our Lord said, "But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone." We can gain much information, but we are not going to pinpoint the exact information that reveals the precise moment of His return.

We should compare Revelation with Jesus' apocalyptic discourses in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 and acknowledge similarities without forcing them to be identical.

Revelation 5:1 – The book contains the world's destiny that is revealed to us pictorially as the seals are broken. Apocalyptic language is often metaphoric, so we need to be careful to discern the literal from the figurative. When figurative language is used, our focus needs to be to understand the truth communicated, not necessarily the figure.

Revelation 5:2 – The angel's voice is loud, penetrating heaven, earth, and the dead under the earth.

Revelation 5:3 – No one in heaven or earth or who has ever lived is qualified to open the book.

Revelation 5:4 – Perhaps John was depressed realizing that the end could not come unless someone opens the book.

Revelation 5:5 – The vision given to John is interactive.

Lion from Judah, Genesis 49:9 – The lion is the king of beasts, the monarch of the forest. Thus, it becomes an emblem of one of kingly authority and of power, and as such the appellation is used in this place. The constellation Leo, the fifth sign of the Zodiac, represents Jesus the Messiah.

The root of David – This expression connects him directly with David, the great and glorious monarch of Israel, and as having a right to occupy his throne and the authority to open the seals. Isaiah 9:7; 11:1-10; Jeremiah 23:5 and 6; 30:9; 33:15-17; Psalm 132:11-17; Ezekiel 34:23; 37:24 and 25; and Luke 1:32

Revelation 5:6 – The first of 28 times “lamb” occurs in Revelation is the same Greek word, “*arnion*.” It occurs one other time in the NT, in John 21:15. Another Greek word translated “lamb” is used only four times (in John 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32; 1 Peter 1:19).

Jesus as the lamb was the sacrifice necessary for the redemption of humanity and everything in heaven and earth. In Revelation, the fulfillment of the purpose of the ages is recorded by the victory of the slain lamb.

Seven horns – The horn is frequently used as a symbol of strength (Deuteronomy 33:17; 1 Kings 22:11; Jeremiah 48:25; Zechariah 1:18; Daniel 7:24). The strength of an animal is in the horn, and by this he obtains a victory over other animals. The number seven denotes spiritual perfection and may indicate his complete authority over all the earth since there are seven continents.

Seven spirits of God – The seven spirits are in the presence of God (5:4) and are sent into the entire world to see what is going on. The seven continents may be why there are seven spirits, or it may represent the perfection of seeing since seven is the number for spiritual perfection. The seven spirits illustrate God’s omniscience and almightiness delegated to the lamb and show that nothing escapes his sight or power.

The different symbols with the tribe of Judah and the line of David show Jesus to be supremely powerful and all knowing and that he has won his victory by his atoning and sacrificial death.

Revelation 5:8 – Harps are instruments used for thanking and praising God (Psalms 33:2; 71:22; 81:2; 92:1-8; 108:2-5; 144:9; and 15:3).

“Golden bowls of incense” indicates the precious value of the prayers of the saints and that they are a sweet smell to Yahweh (Psalm 141). Our prayers are ultimately answered, once all the seals are broken. Our prayers are not forgotten!

Revelation 5:9 – New song – Revelation 14:3; Psalms 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1; Isaiah 42:10

Revelation 5:9 and 10 – A common and frequent aspect about prophecies in eschatology is many times a broad swooping chronological order is used with only the beginning and end set forth. Here we begin with the lamb slain and are propelled to the saints reigning as kings in the Kingdom of God.

Revelation 5:12 and 13 – Again, we are propelled to a time at the very end when everyone in heaven and earth and under the earth praises Yahweh and Jesus (recorded in chapter 20 & 21). The tendency of eschatological prophesy is to present in an alpha and omega kind of way (Revelation 1:8; 21:6) and to state a beginning point then rush to the distant future without explaining what is in between.

Luke 1:31-33 – The beginning of Jesus is stated, then the account catapults to the end.

Acts 2:17-21 – The beginning of church (17 and 18) is given, and then it is propelled immediately to the end (19-20).

Isaiah 1:21-25 – Israel’s immediate future is stated and then is accelerated to the end of the age (26-2:4).

1 Corinthians 15:23 – The resurrection of the just is covered, many events are skipped over, then the account rushes to the end (verse 24) when Jesus will give the Kingdom over to God.

Philippians 2:6-11 – This begins with humility and ends with everyone exalting him.

Revelation 6:1-11 – The first five seals have already happened or are in the process of happening; (12-17) the sixth seal jumps ahead in time to what will happen in the end.

Revelation 7:4-8 – This begins before the wrath of God comes, then rushes to the end of the end (9-17).

Revelation 12:1-5 – This begins with the Messiah’s birth and rushes to the last 3 ½ years of this age. Chapters 4 and 5 proclaim in vivid and confident terms that the world’s destiny is not

under the control of some blind fate. We are all in the hands of a loving Father and of a Savior who died for us.

Revelation 5:14 – Amen – They acknowledge the absoluteness of the future plan of God.

REVELATION 6

Revelation 6:1 – Seven seals are opened by the lamb between 6:1-8:1 with an interlude between the sixth and the seventh in 7:1-17. Zechariah 6:1-10 is a loose comparison.

<u>Revelation 6</u>	<u>Zechariah 6</u>
2- First seal, white horse	2- First chariot, red horses
3- Second seal, red horse	2- Second chariot, black horses
5- Third seal, black horse	3- Third chariot, white horses
7- Fourth seal, ashen horse	3- Fourth chariot, dappled horses

The four horsemen show us the self-defeating character of sin. All God needs to do is allow man to follow his natural instinct of self-aggrandizement and conquest, then sinners will inevitably be punished.

Revelation 6:2 – “Come” is not addressed to John as AV translates “come and see;” rather, it is to the horseman. It is a call to action.

Job 39:16-25 – Horses are fearless. White horse = victory; red horse = anger and danger removing peace; black horse = depression, morbidity caused by famine; and pale horse = death. The four horsemen taken together indicate destruction, horror, terror.

The victorious warrior rode on a white horse. The “crown” is Greek “*stephanos*” and could be translated “wreath.” It is an adornment worn around the head and given as an award (Matthew 27:29; Mark 15:17; John 19:2, 5; 1 Corinthians 9:25; Revelation 2:10; 4:4, 10; 6:2; 9:7; 12:1). Greek “*diadema*” is a royal crown (12:3; 13:1; and 19:12).

Men carry out the deeds of the spiritual horsemen.

The bow – Isaiah 41:2; Jeremiah 49:35; 51:3, 56; Psalm 46:9; Ezekiel 39:3; Hosea 1:5

Revelation 6:3 and 4 – While the rider was given a large sword, he is not said to have killed anyone. He removes peace, and men proceed to do all the damage.

Revelation 6:5 – The black horse symbolizes famine. Ezekiel 4:9 and 10; Leviticus 26:26

Revelation 6:6 – The measurement indicates great lack. A denarius is equivalent to a day's wage. Barley is low grade subsistence for a family on one day. The oil and wine some think may mean the necessities of life for the poor will be in short supply while the luxuries of the rich will not cease. What is seen is famine that is not yet a disaster. Things are difficult, but the end is not yet.

The first three seals are all things that have been and continue to be happening in the world. These three seem to have occurred simultaneously and repeatedly in history.

Revelation 6:8 – “Ashen” is pale in the KJV and connects with death. “Hades” is translated in the KJV as hell, grave, and pit. The Hebrew word “*sheol*” and the Greek word “*hades*” mean the same thing – the common grave of humankind. Compare Psalm 16:10 and Acts 2:31.

Over and over throughout history, major portions of the population have been eliminated with sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts and still are today.

Revelation 6:8 – “Over a fourth of the earth” - the Greek word used for “earth” refers to the surface of the earth and not the people. $\frac{3}{4}$ of the earth is covered by water, and $\frac{1}{4}$ by land. This means death has authority over all the land, and indeed it has since the seal was broken. How many people die from old age?

The first four seals with the four horses is the beginning of sorrows our Lord Jesus spoke about (recorded in the Gospels – Matthew 24:4-14; 13:5-13; Luke 21:8-19).

Revelation 6:9 – The fifth seal reminds us that the images that John sees are not all to be taken literally; rather, we are to glean the truth that the images communicate. Horses do not literally ride out of heaven, nor did the dead people talk. The point is they will remain in the grave until the appointed time, and then they will be revenged. The resurrection is in chapter 20.

Romans 12:19 – Christians should not pursue personal vengeance. Retribution is a divine prerogative.

White robes are victory robes. The martyrs appeared to have been defeated by their enemies, but actually, they had been given the victory by God.

The end will not come until the full number of the martyrs is complete. This does not mean that God wants a specific number of martyrs and that He waits until somehow that number is reached. He is working out His plan, in which there is a place for other martyrs. Some had and some still have a problem in the fact that God does not punish sin here and now. A proper understanding of the cross is helpful. Because of the cross, believers will be judged by Jesus' sacrificial blood. However, the cross also assures that unrepentant sinners will be judged by their sins. God waits, and the number of martyrs grows to its completion, but the final destruction of evil is certain. It is not a question of whether but of when.

Revelation 6:12-17 The sixth seal is future for nothing like this has happened before. It is another example of how eschatological prophesies work. The first five seals have happened or are in the process of happening. The 6th projects ahead to what will happen immediately before Jesus returns.

The way Yahweh dealt with Egypt stands as type for what will happen in the end. The plagues are progressive as with the beginning of sorrows and the great tribulation.

Egypt

- 1- Water is turned to blood, Exodus 7:14-25
- 2- Frogs over the land, 8:1-32
- 3- Lice, 8:16-32
- 4- Cattle die, 9:1-7
- 5- Boils on man and beast, 9:8-17
- 6- Thunder, hail, and fire, 9:18-35
- 7- Locusts, 10:1-29
- 8- Darkness over the land for three days, 10:21-29
- 9- Angel of death; first born die

Egyptians were completely destroyed in the Red Sea.

Gospels

Matthew 24:4-14 – Beginning of sorrows

Matthew 24:15 – Abomination of desolation (trigger for great tribulation)

Matthew 24:16-31 – Great tribulation and return of Christ

Mark 13:5-13 – Beginning of birth pangs

Mark 13:14 – Abomination of desolation

Mark 13:14-27 – Great tribulation and return of Christ

Luke 21:8-19 - Beginning of sorrows

Luke 21:20-28 – Great tribulation and return of Christ

Seven Seals

First five seals correspond with the beginning of sorrows.

- 1- White horses - conquering and to conquer
- 2- Red horses - take peace from the earth; men slay one another
- 3- Black horses - pair of scales, famine
- 4- Ashen (pale) horses - death and Hades; ¼ of the earth is killed by sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts
- 5- Slain souls must wait until the right time

Great tribulation and return of Christ, seals 6 and 7

- 6- Great earthquake - Revelation 8:5; 11:13; 16:18; Isaiah 29:6; Ezekiel 38:19-23; Joel 2:10; Zechariah 14:5 and 6
 Sun becomes black; moon like blood - Isaiah 13:10; 50:3; Ezekiel 32:6-8; Joel 2:10 and 11; Zephaniah 1:14-18
 Stars of the sky fall - Revelation 8:10; 9:1; Daniel 8:10
 Sky split apart - Revelation 20:11; Isaiah 34:4; 2 Peter 3:10
 Every mountain and Island move out of its place - Revelation 16:20; Isaiah 54:10; Jeremiah 4:24; Nahum 1:5
 People hide in caves - Isaiah 2:19-21
 Hide from the wrath of the Lamb - Revelation 19:15

REVELATION 7

The sixth seal is an overview of the great tribulations that will be described in detail in the chapters that follow. The first five seals seem to happen at the same time. After the

abomination of desolation is set up (which will be explained in the coming chapters), the final wrath of God will begin (also called the great tribulation). Before this can happen, God must make provision to fulfill His promise to Israel about forgiving their sins and leading them back to Jerusalem at the end of the age. Chapter 7 gives understanding of how He will save Israel.

Revelation 7:1-3 – The four angels hold back the wind so the other four angels could not harm the earth until the bond-servants were sealed. Those held back are released in chapter 8.

First angel – Hail and fire mixed with blood; and $\frac{1}{3}$ of the earth, $\frac{1}{3}$ of the trees are burned, and all the green grass

Second angel – Something *like* a great mountain burning with fire is thrown into the sea; $\frac{1}{3}$ become blood; $\frac{1}{3}$ of the creatures die; $\frac{1}{3}$ ships are destroyed

Third angel – Great star burning *like* a torch falls on $\frac{1}{3}$ of fresh water which becomes wormwood

Fourth Angel – $\frac{1}{3}$ sun, moon, and stars are darkened

One of the grave and consistent errors in the interpretation of the book of Revelation is the failure to interpret in light of the scope of the Scriptures. Far too often, interpretation is sought outside the Scripture. Such is the case with the 144,000 and the great multitude in this chapter.

Revelation 7:4-8 – Clearly, the 144,000 are those of Israel. In the Old Testament, there are no less than 18 different listings of the 12 tribes of Israel, and the one in Revelation is not identical with any of them. Dan is excluded (likely because of the tribe's idolatry recorded in Judges 18:30 - "the Dainties set up for themselves an idol"). In 1 Kings 12:25-30, Dan became the site of the Baal shrine. Manasseh, one of the sons of Joseph, replaces Dan. Compare with Genesis 49.

Before the wrath begins, God reminds us that He will protect some of the biological descendants of Israel so that He can bring them into the Promised Land at the beginning of the millennial reign. These people are chosen but not yet convinced that Jesus is the Messiah. However, by the time the Kingdom begins, they repent and believe (recorded in Revelation 11:13). If a seal was not placed upon them, they may be destroyed by the wrath that is coming.

Romans 9:6-16 – Not all the biological descendants of Abraham are considered the children of God, rather those whom He has chosen by His mercy. God made Israel a promise that He will forgive them, and in the end, He will lead them into Jerusalem again.

Romans 11:25-27; Jeremiah 3:14-25; 23:5-8; Ezekiel 39:25-29; Hosea 3:4 and 5; Zephaniah 3:12-20; Micah 4:1-ff

Isaiah 55: 3 and 4; Ezekiel 34:11-13, 23-31; 37:24 and 25 – Covenant with David; He will rule as vice-regent over Israel

Malachi 3:16-18; Isaiah 10:20-23 – The remnant will be sealed in Revelation 7. They will enter into the land when the Messiah leads them. Also included will be those of Israel raised in the resurrection of the just. Those who are sealed may not yet believe that Jesus is the Messiah but will shortly thereafter.

The significance of the number twelve – Twelve is a perfect number, signifying perfection of government or of governmental perfection. It is found as a multiple in all that has to do with rule. The sun which "rules" the day and the moon and stars which "govern" the night do so by their passage through the twelve signs of the Zodiac. These complete the great circle of the heavens of 360 (12 x 30) degrees or divisions and thus govern the year.

24 elders – 12 x 2; 12 tribes x 12,000 equal 144,000; 12 tribes; 12 apostles

12:1 – On her head a crown of 12 stars

21:12 – 12 gates, 12 angels, 12 tribes

21:14 – 12 foundation stones, 12 names of 12 apostles

21:21 – 12 gates, 12 pearls

22:2 – Tree of life bearing 12 kinds of fruit.

Revelation 7:9-12 – The common assumption is the throne is in heaven, but there is not one other place in the Bible that indicates a time when this occurs. However, in Revelation 21:1-5 and 22:1-3, God's throne will be on earth, and at that time, every nation and tribe and people will praise God. Again, we see the aspect about eschatological prophecy of a broad, swooping, chronological order with only the beginning and end set forth. With the foreshadowing of the wrath of God, acknowledging what is going to happen at the very end is very helpful so that we may endure.

Revelation 7:14 – The great tribulation - the article in the Greek seems to indicate the great tribulation at the end of the age. Yet, it is likely that it also refers to tribulation in general (John 16:33; Acts 14:22) for not all will undergo the great tribulation.

Revelation 7:15 – The tabernacle represents God’s covering or protection (Psalm 27:5).

John 3:36 – He who does not obey the Son, the wrath of God abides on him.

Romans 2:5-8; Ephesians 2:3 – We were children of wrath.

Romans 5:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9 – We are saved from the wrath.

Revelation 3:10

Because you have kept the word of my perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Revelation 6:16 and 17 – The wrath of God and the Lamb are set forth in the book of Revelation. Chapter seven shows us that God will save His people from the wrath that the rest of humanity will experience. As Yahweh saved Israel when Egypt experienced His wrath, so the believers will be saved in the day of wrath. Exodus 8:22; 9:4-6, 26; 10:23; 11:6 and 7; 12:13

How extremely reassuring it is to know that Jesus will be our shepherd. The lamb becomes the shepherd – a complete reversal of roles.

REVELATION 8

The seventh seal presents seven pictures under the sounding of seven trumpets. Later, we find the seventh trumpet is composed of seven vials or bowls of God’s final, terrible wrath. Thus, the seventh seal has 14 pictures, each with many details. The seventh seal does not end; rather, it opens up into the seven trumpet scenes, then into seven vials.



Joshua 6 provides a prototype with the seven priests with the seven trumpets. Upon the seventh, the walls fall, and everything within the city was destroyed

Old Testament prophecies about the end times including trumpets are found in Isaiah 27:12 and 13; Joel 2:1-17; Zephaniah 2:14-18. In the New Testament, they are found in Matthew 24:31; 1 Corinthians 15:52; and 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

Revelation 8:3 – The “altar” occurs eight times in Revelation. In Revelation 6:9, the souls of those slain are under the altar. The temple had two altars, but here there is one. The altar of sacrifice is no longer needed; the other is the altar of incense that typifies homage and the offering of prayer.

Genesis 8:20 – Noah was the first to build an altar.

Genesis 12:7, 8; 13:4, 18; 22:9; 26:25

Exodus 30:1-10, 22-33 Altar of incense

Prayers of the saints – Before the opening of the seven seals, the prayers of the saints are mentioned in 5:8, and now before the trumpets sound, they are mentioned again. The trumpets are the beginning of the wrath of God that will usher in the Kingdom.

The prayers of God’s people are supremely important.

James 5:16-18 – The prayer of Elijah may be the prototype for those alive during the 3 1/2 years when the wrath of God is poured out.

1 Peter 3:12 and 13 (Psalm 34:1-ff)

"FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL." Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good?

Revelation 8:5 – Give place to wrath - Romans 12:19; Psalm 94:1-3; Na 1:2 and 3; Hebrews 10:30; 1 Peter 2:21-25

Revelation 8:6 – The seven angels bring plagues similar to but much more intense than the plagues in Egypt. The Egyptian story is a prototype.

Revelation 8:7 – First angel sounds, and hail and fire mixed with blood are thrown to earth; 1/3 of earth, trees, and all grass are burned up. Exodus 9:23-ff; Ezekiel 38:18-23; Isaiah 28:16

Revelation 8:8 – Second angel sounds, and great mountain burning is thrown into sea; 1/3 sea becomes blood; creatures and ships are destroyed. Exodus 7:17-21; Isaiah 2:16 and 17

Revelation 8:9 – Psalm 46:2 – “Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.”

Revelation 8:10 – Third angel sounds, and great star, Wormwood, falls; $\frac{1}{3}$ of fresh waters become bitter (Deuteronomy 29:18; Jeremiah 9:15; and 23:15). Wormwood as we know it is not poisonous.

Revelation 8:12 – Fourth angel sounds; $\frac{1}{3}$ sun, moon, and stars are darkened; $\frac{1}{3}$ of day also (Exodus 10:21; Isaiah 13:10 and Ezekiel 32:7).

Revelation 8:13 – As with the first four seals, the first four trumpets stand together and may all happen at the same time. The three woes come with each one of the next three trumpets; things are getting worse.