

## Chapter 5

**THE FIRST FIVE SEALS****REVELATION 4: HEAVEN**

## Revelation

4:1 After this I looked, and, behold, a door [was] opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard [was] as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

4:2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and [one] sat on the throne.

4:3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and [there was] a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

4:4 And round about the throne [were] four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

4:5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and [there were] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

4:6 And before the throne [there was] a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, [were] four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

4:7 And the first beast [was] like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast [was] like a flying eagle.

4:8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about [him]; and [they were] full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

This is not the rapture as some think. John is transported in the spirit to heaven to be shown this scene. We will deal with the rapture in a later chapter.

Carl: I have a question on verse 6. It says, "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal . . . ."

V: Okay, we talked about that back when we were in the last chapter. We talked about the sea. Sea is Christianity. In general, the

sea of crystal is a clear Christianity, no disguises, no impurities, that kind of thing.

Carl: Glorified . . . .

V: Glorified church.

Betty: What about the word glass since it didn't exist.

V: Certainly glass existed because there was enough heat to melt the sand into glass, so that was a given. That is not a problem.

Paul: They were making spectacles back before Christ. I would not worry about it.

***Four Beasts***

V: We had four beasts that are described. These are angelic, living creatures, and they are described here as having a lot of eyes before and behind, so this gives indication that they are knowing everything that is going on in the world, and the descriptions that are given are linking them to the created order like lion, calf, man, and eagle. I think that there is some correlation between these four angelic beings and the four horsemen that we are going to see when we get to the seals. But I am going to leave it to you to draw that correlation. They should correlate. I am going to give you my estimation, and you can throw this out the window, but if you do, you have to come up with your own. Then we can throw yours out the window. (Laughter across the room.)

I think that man has to do with government, calf has to do with economics, the lion has to do with war, and the eagle has to do with death. That is what I think. That is how I correlate to the four horsemen. When we get

to the four horsemen, we will dig in a little bit deeper here.

These four beasts are leading the worship before the throne, and they are saying day and night “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” (Revelation 4:8). This description spreads completely over the full scope of time. “Was, is, and is to come” spans all of time. All of that horizontal time is vertical time to God, *kairotic* time. It is not horizontal time, but when we are looking at time, we have to see it horizontally because we cannot see *kairotic* time like God does. He is the I AM. In the past HE IS, in the present HE IS, and in the future HE IS. But we are not “is” in the past or in the future. The only time we are “is” is now.

Oscar: Someone was saying that since they are filled with the Spirit, they are eternal beings, and they were in the past and the present and the future.

V: What would I think about a person like that?

Oscar: Do you think they are just misunderstanding the concept?

V: By faith you can bring the future into the present, so in a sense you can operate in the future. Humankind is limited to the now, but by faith you can live as if you are victors in heaven. By faith! That is a spiritual thing.

### ***Utterances by Beasts and Elders***

Revelation

4:9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

4:10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou

hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

There is a distinction between the three things said by the angels (beasts) and the three things said by the elders. The difference is in the third thing said: one says thanks and the other says power.

When you go to heaven, and you have a crown, you are actually going to exercise power because Jesus, our God, has inherited all power, and He is going to hand that power to the church, but that is only to the ones who are crowned. Those who are naked are not going to have power. Those who have no crowns are not going to have power. Only the elder-types are going to have power, and that power will be for your use with your own discretion. He will tell you what He wants to accomplish in the universe, and the elders will see to it that it happens.

You are on trial right now. Every one of us is on trial, and if you will use the little bit that has been entrusted to you, much will be given to you in heaven. But if He gives you a little bit of power like He gave to Philadelphia, and you do not use that power, do not expect a ton of power in heaven because you have squandered your opportunity right here.

This is testing time. How you do in this testing time will determine exactly how God utilizes you in heaven. This is why there is gratitude from the angels, and there is worthiness of power from the elders who take their crowns off and cast them before the throne, saying “You are worthy of power.” They have power to return to the Lord.

The angels do not have that power. The angels are messengers. You see what an angel does? He does not do things on his own. An angel takes orders from the Lord. God says, “Go tell Bill that he needs to look at such and

such a book,” so he comes to me and says, “Hey, Bill, God says you need to look at such and such a book.” As I sit there I think I might need to look at such and such a book or something. You see how it works? But if the angel had power, he could be standing here and say, “I think Bill needs to look at such and such a book. Bill, look at such and such a book.” But when you are receiving power from God like the elders here, you can say, “Worthy is the Lamb to receive power,” and that is an honorable position to be in.

I am going to tell you right now, every one of you wants to be there. You may not know it right now, but you must start listening to what we are talking about here. There is a lot at stake—eternity.

Mary: When those angels are climbing back and forth from God to us, and suppose we commit some sin or something and a bunch of demons are on our back or whatever, then that demon is going to keep that angel from getting the message to us possibly.

V: Not necessarily, no. They may impede our getting the message, but they will not stop God’s angel altogether. A bigger problem will be our acting on the message.

I talked to you a little about why the prophetic gift does not continue on, and that we had the priestly and the royal gift to continue. We have three offices duplicating the Lord’s offices. The church has royal, prophetic, and priestly ministries. That is a given right now. But in heaven one of those is going to disappear—the prophetic function. We will still have the priestly and the royal. The royal is exercising the power that has been placed in your hands. Everybody is not going to get power—do not make that mistake. The only ones that will get power

are those who show they are good stewards of what they have right here.

The priestly ministry is when you take the concerns of the people to the Lord. When the Lord calls a council and the elders come in to run the council, the people who are in authority under that council and under the Lord will be coming in to give a report. I am going to be in charge of Georgia (laughter). That is the state I am putting in for. I go into the council, then, and I say, “These guys in Georgia need such and such,” or whatever. I will be bringing that report into the council meeting. That is a priestly ministry. You exercise that ministry right now when you go to the Lord, and you say, “Bill needs some help on his energy. He is getting weaker and weaker as the semester goes along,” and you pray for me. When you do that, that is your priestly ministry. If you cannot do that now, do not expect to be a messenger from the people to the council.

If you cannot use the authority now that God has given into your hands, the Word of God, then do not expect authority in the eschaton. You are an agent of authority now, and that means that the authority that you wield is not your own authority. You are an agent, but when you put on the crown in the eschaton, you will have the authority because the Lord is going to give it to you. You will reign. Do you know the difference? It should make you just jump up and down!

Jerry: The Bible says that you reap what you sow.<sup>1</sup> Is this talking about not only in the present sense, but if we are sowing, living holy, or praying like you say, then we are going . . . .

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<sup>1</sup> Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

V: Then we will reap identically, yes. God will not be mocked. We will, on the certainty of God's Word, reap what we sow. So let us sow, sow to the spirit, not to the flesh, not to the wind. Sow to the spirit!

### REVELATION 5

5:1 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

5:2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

5:3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

5:4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5:5 And one of the elders . . .

I wonder if this was John talking to Himself here.

5:5 And one of the elders saith unto me, . . .

It could be, you know. It could be John talking to John.

5:5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

#### *Seven Seals*

Let me stop there just for a minute to talk to you about the seven seals. You know the number seven means universally sealed. Seven seals mean that it is slam sealed up. Even though there is a quantitative dimension to this, the primary meaning of the seven seals is that it is completely sealed in the same way as we were talking about the seven Spirits being the Holy Spirit of God, the whole, one Spirit. The seven seals make one complete whole sealing. It is as sealed as you can get.

But there is a progressive indication here, and we are going to look at that because when you talk about the seven seals in one sentence, you are talking about the whole sealing. But when you enumerate them, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, there is a progressive nature and a quantity to the seals beyond the completeness of the sealing. But at this point, the reason for John's tears is because of the complete sealing of time. God sealed it, and only God can unseal it.

Steve: Is there a seal in each one of those seals?

V: Is there a seal in each one? Yes, there are seven individual seals that have progressive natures, but when you say it all as seven seals, it is the completeness of the sealing.

Steve: But it is a seal within a seal.

V: Within a seal? It is progressive so if that means that you open number one and you get to number two after a while, and get to number three after a while, yes.

#### *The Lord Jesus as a Lamb*

5:6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

5:7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

Now here is another example of how the Lord is not seen until after seeing His creation. When John looks up at the throne where God is, he sees the throne, the four angels (beasts), and around them the twenty-four elders, and before the throne the crystal sea, and all of the angels are singing. All of this gathering is what John sees. Standing in the midst of all of this crowd is our Lord.

John does not see our Lord at first, and when his eyes finally do come upon the Lord, it is after a witness in which one of the elders says to John, “Behold the Lion of Juda, the root of David.” Here is John looking at this wonderful spectacle. He is looking out there, and he is filled with awe. He is weeping, and he does not even see the Lord until someone says, “Hey! Look!”

John is weeping because “No man is worthy, no man is worthy.” He is weeping because nothing can happen. The elder says, “Look, behold, the Lamb who was slain.” Finally his attention turns, and he sees Jesus. What does he see? He sees the scars that indicate that He was slain. He does not see pomp and circumstance and all that kind of thing like we desire. We want people to look at us and say, “Look! Wow! Look at him!” That is not what he sees when he looks at the Lord.

Here, then, is the Lamb standing right there, and the Scripture describes Him as having seven horns and seven eyes. Here is, again, this absolute completeness, this number seven. Horns indicate power, and later we will see that horns are people who are bearing power. Here are seven horns indicating absolute, total power. Here are seven eyes that indicate absolute and total knowledge and understanding and comprehension. Then, he relates the seven horns with the seven eyes. Omnipotence and omniscience are put together. The Scriptures indicate those two together are the Holy Spirit because it says they are the seven Spirits.

Here is the Lamb as He had been slain. What John sees is the markings of the slaying. They are actually the marks of “glory” for the Lord. What are your marks of glory? Are you going to carry any wounds? What are your marks of glory?

Do you have suffering? Let us make sure that we understand that the victory we have from the Lord came through suffering and dying. Victory that comes from Satan comes through self-indulgence and killing. When you are winning your victories, it is to be through suffering and dying. Victory is through the *kenosis*, going down to your cross. Your victory, then, like the Lord’s victory, carries your marks into heaven, your sufferings into heaven. That is going to be your glory. That is going to be your glory! No pain, no glory! That is the way it works. As you go down into *kenosis*, as you sacrifice, you are going to be exalted after death. But if you do not go down, and if you do not have that suffering, where is your exaltation?

If you just slide through, ride on through, and everybody gives you the applause, and you have it made, what have you done that is so tough? Anybody can slide through on a big soft chair and just be applauded. It takes a real man to sacrifice and go down, deny himself, and carry his cross, bear his burden (Chart 5.1). Stand under that burden. If you can, show that you have the stamina to stay with it. Even when you are hurting, you stay with it. Then when you are in heaven He will give you a crown. You will put it on. Ultimately, you will cast it back to His feet as an offering to the Lord. Man! It is going to be time for you to shout and carry on.

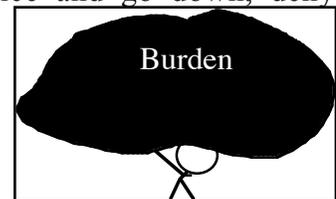


Chart 5.1

Jerry: I want to go back to the seven horns and the seven eyes. You said God’s omnipotence and His omniscience.

V: Yes.

Jerry: Now back to the scars. It reminds me of people when they share their war stories, and they say, “Well, you know, here it is right here, Guadalcanal, or the beach in Normandy, or whatever.” We are going to share war stories.

V: Yes, but we have to have some stories to share.

Jerry: I do not mean stories, but you know what I mean.

V: Yes, the real McCoy. We are going to go out there and ask the Lord, “What did you write in the sand when you bent down and wrote in the sand? What did you do out there?” I just want to be able to get close enough to hear what He says. I do not want to be way out there on the fringes.

Jerry: When John is standing here in heaven, is He on God’s time, the *kairos* time, the vertical time?

V: He is on both God’s *kairotic* time, and man’s *chronotic* time. That means past, present, and future are present to John because he is standing in the intersection of *chronos* and *kairos*..

Jerry: I was thinking that maybe that is why he could not see Jesus. That he was not on vertical time, and someone had to show him.

Oscar: He could see Jesus once his attention was drawn to Him.

V: Perhaps John expected Jesus to appear more like a ruler than a lamb. However I think it comes back to this propensity right now that people cannot see Jesus apart from looking at you. That is where they are going to see Him. You need to witness, not just in word but also in your life, in your ethics, in your behavior, in your countenance, in your treatment of others.

### ***Prayers of the Saints***

Revelation

5:8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four [and] twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

Now I think that every prayer that is prayed by a saint is collected and either acted upon at the time, or if it is a wait, I think it goes into the vial, and when the time comes, out that prayer comes, and the Lord says, “Now.” You will see it, and you will go, “Wow!” He is answering the prayers. Here is a collection of prayers, and these are the sweet smelling odors to the Lord, and we will eventually see that they are incensed later in another chapter.

### ***A New Song***

Revelation

5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Now this model here that reigning is through death is repeated over and over again. You reign through death. Worthiness comes through dying. Worthiness comes only through dying. Now, watch what these elders say. “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.”

Do you want to be worthy? The model describes giving our life for the purpose of redeeming others. Your life, everything that you have, everything you will have, everything that you are, you are God’s assets, His spending money, His resources to spend on

this earth to purchase something with. Purchase means redeem, to redeem people who have no hope. You are filled with hope. You are going to go to heaven. Heaven is the minimum that you are going to get. What you are doing now is determining what is going to happen to you in heaven.

Do you want to have the words, “Worthy are you, worthy are you?” If you follow in the footsteps of Jesus, then your life will be sacrificed for others. They, then, will have hope. Jesus sacrificed for you. You were redeemed, and now you have hope, and you have the same mission as our Lord Jesus Christ. So, is he going to say, “You are worthy, you good and faithful servant,” or are you indulging yourself and saying, “The Lord gave me all of this, and I am going to have a big time. I wish those people out there would just get wise and come to church and get saved. I am just cooling it, man. I am going to live forever, and I am going to have crowns and mansions and everything, and God is going to swoon when I walk on the scene?” That is how we think these days, but it is not like that. Worthiness comes under the same model as that of Jesus Christ—to die. If you want your life, give it.

Tom: That is the only way we will get in heaven is that we die. Otherwise we are here.

Henry: We are always thinking about dying, and then living on the other side, but Paul said, “I die daily.” As we die, He resurrects.

V: Resurrects you in the spiritual life.

Henry: Right now it is the spiritual life here.

V: We confuse that resurrection life with temporal exaltation and we look for the applause of men and all. We want to be

celebrated. We want to be on a throne now. Surely I am resurrected now to be on a throne, right? Wrong! When we start this climb of self indulgence, we have it in our mind that somehow by doing all this and getting to be some renowned person with wealth and many houses and cars and farms and cattle and all that, these things are all going to accrue somehow to our spiritual credit, and after the judgment, we will really be exalted. We will be way on up there in heaven (Chart 5.2). But it

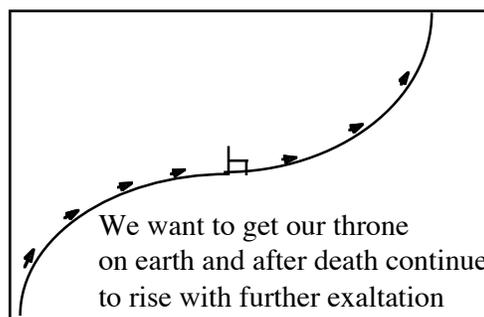


Chart 5.2

is not like that! So what we ought to do is reverse this climb, go down so that there will be an exaltation at the end.

Paul: Giving up our reputation?

V: Yes. When you sacrifice your reputation, you are following the footsteps of the Lord since that is what He did. That is why there is a new song: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.” Chart 5.2 pictures someone following a false *kenosis* by climbing up and seeking the applause of men, seeking a throne, seeking to climb further into heaven, but he is not worthy. Do not follow that path.

Wanda: Maybe you can straighten this out for me. When Jesus was on the cross dying for our sins, one on one side of Him hurled insults at Him, but one on the other side said, “Remember me in your Father’s Kingdom.” And Jesus said, “Today you will be in my Father’s Kingdom.” Now he did not

live the cross, he did not live a life like Jesus, he did not get to do good deeds, but Jesus forgave. He said, “Today you shall be in paradise.” Is he going to be naked because he did not . . . ?

V: No, he testified! He had one opportunity to hit a home run. The pitch came—wham! Out of the park.

Wanda: That was it right there.

Bob: You know it is interesting, the gentleman back here said we are preaching heaven as the maximum and not the minimum. You know a half-truth is not truth at all, and we have all been deceived by that fact.

V: That is why an angel of light is so deceptive because he is really bringing in a half-truth. He is putting error in the middle and coating it with truth and sweetness, and we just gobble it down.

Bob: You know it is interesting that the book of Genesis describes Satan as the crafty serpent. And that crafty means very shrewd, very clever, and very deceptive. He still does the same thing today with just a little different twist on it.

V: Yes. Good point.

### ***Kenosis is a Living Sacrifice***

Bob: According to your graph (Chart 5.2) that you have, you remember Satan says, “I will exalt my throne above the most High.”<sup>2</sup> Where Christ turned around and said, “I will be the servant of all.” Exact opposite.

V: Yes, exactly opposite. That is good.

Joe: Like someone said, we are all going to die eventually, and we want that death to be for God, but in the meantime we are to be a

living sacrifice<sup>3</sup> which is the *kenosis*. But people do not understand what a living sacrifice is.

V: I know it. It is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. It is continuous sacrifice.

Joe: Dr. Vinson, I say this with all humility. I want to be like Jesus. Can we get that?

V: Yes, sir. And the Lord has a plan for each one of us to get those kinds of feet. However, in order to get those brassen feet, you will have to go through the fire. What usually happens is that we get into the fire, and we get uncomfortable, and we see everybody else enjoying themselves and saying, “You must be in sin over there because you are in pain. Why not come on over here with the rest of us real holy saints because we have it made.” After you hear that for a while, you think, “Man, God does not want me to hurt!” You hear that, too, all the time. So you think: “Pain and suffering surely cannot be God’s will. This is tearing me up.” Then you look over there at the great majority enjoying life, and you are all alone. That is when we come out of the *kenosis* and join the others in living the “good life.”

What we need to do is get in our minds the model of sacrifice in order to understand that we have a call on our lives to be spent as the Lord wants to spend His resources. The more meek you are, the less your will gets in the way. If you can just submit to the Lord and let Him spend you on what He wants to spend you, then things will get right, and you will stay in that fire when He puts you in that fire. But it is very difficult. I am telling you right now, it is difficult to stay in the fire, and there are not very many people that can stay in there.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 14:12-15.

<sup>3</sup> Romans 12:1.

When you get in the fire, there will be this continuous pain, and you will hear the barrage of voices that are saying, “Get out of the fire, are you stupid or something?” You start hearing that, and the first thing you know a “carrot” will come by. You take your eyes off the cross, and the carrot will pull you in another direction. You get off the path; you open up the Bible, and it talks about the suffering, and you say, “My goodness! What am I doing over here?” You run back and get back focused again. Another carrot comes along, and the voices are encouraging you to get out. It is a continuous back and forth. Let me encourage you: keep your eyes on that cross, the cross is down here (Chart 5.3). Humiliation, suffering, obedience, and self-sacrifice are the pathway down, and exaltation is not prior to death. The good times are not prior to death. Exaltation comes after death, which follows a life time of suffering and sacrifice. Get that in your mind, settle it in your heart, go all the way to your death.

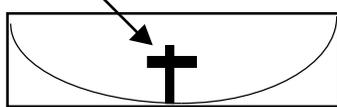


Chart 5.3

### Old Song

We have this new song, and why is it a new song? Well, it is upside down. It is an upside down song. All the songs prior to the Lord are “climb up.” Climb up. Deuteronomic theology declares that the better you are the more blessings you will have, and these blessings are interpreted materially. That is exactly the way it is interpreted by most! Every saint seeks maximum blessing but “blessing” is usually interpreted incorrectly. If you were asked, “Do you want maximum blessing?” everyone would say, “Count me in, put me down for maximum blessing.”

When James and John asked the Lord, “We want to sit on your right and left,” and the Lord said, “Man, that is maximum blessing! Do you think you can do what it takes to get maximum blessing?” “Oh, yes, strap it on us” is what they said. They did not know what they were asking for: “We are putting in for maximum blessings. Yeah, put me in. Let me sign up. Where do I need to sign? That is what I want.”

Well, maximum blessing comes in at the maximum bottom of the *kenosis*. Go slam to the bottom if you want to go slam to the top. What we want to do is reinterpret all of that. We want maximum blessing right here and now, and this maximum blessing does not even hold a candle to what we will get later. Get, get, get! Christ says, “Do you think you can drink of this cup?” “Oh, yes, I can drink this cup, lots of people drink this cup! I will strap it on. I like to drink this cup!” But, friends, it is very difficult! Maximum blessing comes from maximum sacrifice. “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.” A new song.

### *Worthy is the Lamb*

Revelation

5:11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

5:12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

I believe that the Lamb is going to turn around and say, “Worthy is my saint who was slain.” Everything that the Lord gets, He is going to give to the church. He is going to hand His kingdom, the reigning over the universe into the hands of His church. You are the church, so He is going to share what

He receives with you. Everybody is going to say, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.”

He is going to say, “Paul, come up here. Worthy is Paul who was slain.” “Peter, come up here. Worthy is My son who was slain.”

The guy who was not slain, who cooled it all the way through life, like a rich Christian who had the wonderful life will not hear Jesus say, “Come up here man, you are worthy. You did so good, you are wealthy. You indulged yourself, you really made me proud.” He is not going to do that; that is absurd.

The one who loved Him enough to be slain rather than recant his faith will be worthy. When they said to Polycarp, “Recant your faith,” he said, “I cannot recant my faith. He has never done evil to me, how can I recant my faith in Him.” They set the fire, and Polycarp said, “Let me demonstrate my love. You do not have to nail me to the stake. I will stand in the fire. My love will hold me in the fire. Let me demonstrate it.” When that sacrificial guy is compared to the materialistic guy who indulged himself, He will call the one who gave his life. He will say, “Worthy is my saint who glorified Me at his expense. The other guy glorified himself, and got his reward. His reward is over with because great is the fall of the house built on the sand.

Revelation

5:13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, [be] unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

5:14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four [and] twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

This is quite a scene, and I am going to be in this group saying these praises.

## REVELATION 6: SEAL #1— HUMAN KING

We are going to be starting in the seals.

Revelation

6:1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

6:2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

### *Coronation of Saul*

My interpretation of this seal is that this is the beginning of earthly government by a king, and it started with the coronation of Saul.

1 Samuel

8:7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

8:8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

8:9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

8:10 And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

8:11 And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint [them] for himself, for his chariots, and [to be] his horsemen; and [some] shall run before his chariots.

8:12 And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and [will set them] to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

8:13 And he will take your daughters [to be] confectionaries, and [to be] cooks, and [to be] bakers.

8:14 And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive yards, [even] the best [of them], and give [them] to his servants.

8:15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.

8:16 And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put [them] to his work.

8:17 He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

8:18 And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.

8:19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us;

8:20 That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

8:21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD.

8:22 And the LORD said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

Here is the beginning of a broken seal that is going to end with Antichrist. As a seal breaks it is not causative, it is descriptive.

God is restraining the evil, holding it back. The people say, “We want a king,” and Samuel the prophet says, “No, no, you do not want a king: let God continue to be your king. God is your King.” The people insist, “No, we want a king.”

We have to have a king. Samuel goes to the Lord and says, “They want a king.” God says, “Give them a king. They are not rejecting you, Samuel; they are rejecting me.”

Jack: It is not causative; it is descriptive?

V: Yes, once the seal is loosed, the people then have the freedom to move toward their destiny. They are then loosed from their restraints. God holds them back, but when they insist on having a king, God says, “Give them a king.” He looses them to their own devices. He does not cause this. He allows this. You see the difference?

Breaking the seal is the people breaking through that barrier. As a result the kings ruled over Israel to the point to where Israel went out of existence, and Judah was left alone and went into the Babylonian captivity all because they did not want God as their king. They wanted to see and touch their king, and they wanted a king that was a big tall man, who could really protect them much better than God. God is invisible, since we cannot see Him. We want us a big king, a giant of a man who is visible. He will go out and fight our battles for us. The seal is broken. The judgment time is the final result that occurs at the end of Chart 5.4 where the seal reaches total maturity.

Seal #1 A Human King			
White horse	Saul	Government	Antichrist
David			Jesus Christ
Judgment			

Chart 5.4

Seal #1 is broken in Samuel's day and goes all the way out to the judgment time. Just prior to judgment time, Antichrist will arise to the throne. He is going to finally be coronated as the king. Antichrist is going to be perceived as a great king. People are clamoring right now, looking for him. "We need us a king. One of those good kings to bring universal peace."

Pete: So is this coming of the Antichrist indicative of the fact that we, in contemporary times, have the same type of wicked inclination as they did then?

V: Same type, and that is what is happening right now, today. The world is clamoring for a king who will take control of this planet. This planet is in chaos. We think that we need a king who is going to bring peace to the Middle East, who is not going to have all these wars occurring all around. So we want a king, and it comes out of that same mentality from seal #1.

Beth: Does Catholicism fall into this mold?

V: Let me tell you. Anytime you have people who want a headship that is between you and God, it is the same inclination.

Steve: I know that here it talks about being bent on conquest. As I remember in church history, that is how the Roman church grew—through military conquest, especially through that of Charlemagne.

V: Church and state are going to come along side by side. We are going to see church and state right on through the book of Revelation. Every time you see "earth" that is state. Every time you see "sea" that is church. Side by side, through history is church and state: God's people and the rest

of the people, the church and the unsaved. Side by side, going all the way to the end.

Sybil: I think I am seeing that same inclination in my church because right now we are without a pastor, and it seems that nobody wants to do anything because we do not have a pastor.

V: Right. And submission to the Lord now is what we are supposed to be doing. See, a good pastor is not a pastor who rules over the flock. A good pastor is a person who takes the hand of the saint and the hand of the Lord, gets them together, and gets out of the way so that that person can follow the Lord and grow even past where that pastor is.

Ted: To let them be like the Lord instead of the pastor being the successor of the Lord.

V: Yes, that is good! You said a good thing right there.

Jack: It does not have to be a pastor, it could be any minister.

V: It should be every minister's role. But the pastor is the one who should be sure to see that it happens. He is to lead the sheep to feed, to where the meat is, to where that wonderful grazing is, and then he is to encourage, and he is to pray for, and he is to be a prophet to the people. But the whole thing is not for himself. It is for that saint and the Lord to get together.

Jack: Building the kingdom of heaven.

V: Yes!

Jill: Many of them are feeding themselves.

V: Yes, feeding themselves. And the opposite of the *kenosis* is this inclination to climb by using the sheep. The one on the true *kenosis* is giving his life for the sheep.

Here is that first seal, and you can pick your seal to be whatever you want it to be. I am clearly going public with mine, and that is where I stand. It is the coronation of Saul. Once this seal is broken, it is going to go all the way to the end. It is going to usher in Antichrist. That is the seal that brings in the Antichrist, but look at Chart 5.4. We are going to have David who is coming off of that line on a parallel line. He is part of that line, but he is a man after God’s own heart. Jesus is going to come out of the root of David. This second line is the Davidic line out of which Jesus comes. Jesus, now, will be the true king and judge at the end times. Antichrist will not quite get there, not healthily anyway. The whole issue of Seal #1 is who is your king? Who is going to be your king?

Henry: They made that decision to dethrone God, not accept Him, but reject Him and to enthrone man. Look at the ramifications.

V: A man king brings absolute devastation. However, God will resume His kingship at the end as a man through His Son, Jesus, the God-man.

Homer: I look at the decisions I make in my life . . .

V: If you can see that when the Lord is your king, and He spends you how He wants to, then you can

see how the *kenosis* makes much more sense. When you are in the trappings of this upper kingly line, when you are seeing that, the upside-down *kenosis* is the only thing that makes sense to you. People on the upper line will be climbing. Those on the lower line will be sacrificing. However, when we see Him, who will we see? We will see Him as the Lamb that was slain, carrying the marks of martyrdom. You can see, then, the two different aspects depicted by the parallel paths all the way through history beginning with seal #1 and going all the way.

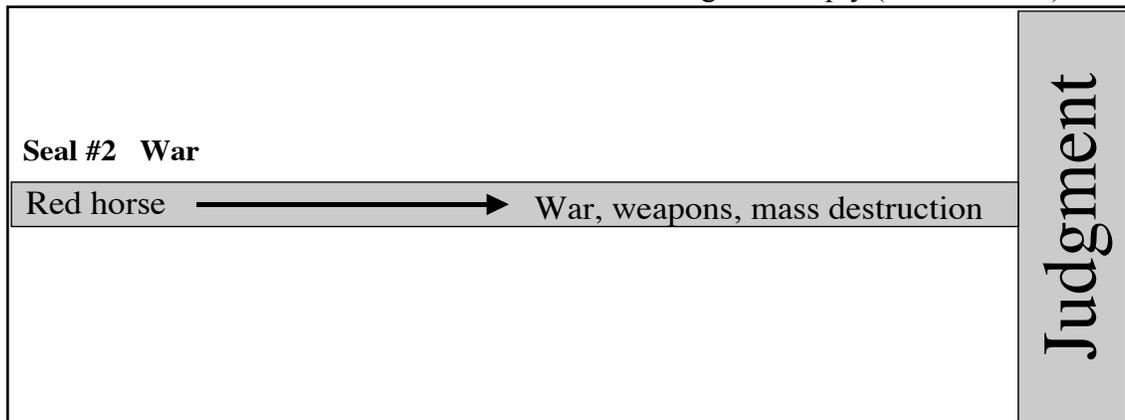
**SEAL #2—WAR**

Revelation

6:3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

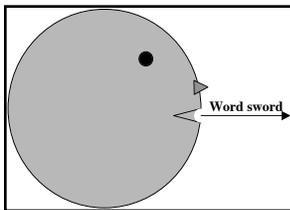
6:4 And there went out another horse [that was] red: and [power] was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

V: There are going to be ramifications all the way through this seal as well. This depicts the war in the world that is already going on. The great weapon is the nuclear devices that have been developed and have been continuing to multiply (see Chart 5.5).



**Chart 5.5**

The nuclear bomb is a great sword. Who is going to come into control of that kind of world? Which kingly line are the weapons of war going to be on? David's or Saul's? Saul's, of course. The weapons of war, the carnal weapons are going to be on Saul's line. The spiritual weapons are going to be on David's line. How do you Christians fight? You win by dying. That is how the Lord fought. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." How does Saul's line fight? Long distance with a bow. How does the Lord fight? Personally, close up with the sword of the



**Chart 5.6**

Lord, Scripture. It is personal, the Word of God. How do you fight? with a sword coming out of your mouth (see Chart 5.6).

Sybil: I hear what you are saying, and it applies today. We have nuclear weapons poised or aimed at us. We could blow up ourselves and others in one big explosion. What you are describing is here now.

### ***Each Seal is Progressive***

V: It is here. I want you to also see the progressive nature of the seals. When you break the seal, it is not an instantaneous result. All of this that is described does not happen in an instant. It is progressive. It is seminal, like a seed. The germinated seed pops up out of the ground, and you see the little plant that is coming up, but all through history you see it growing and growing, and becoming fully matured. When you get out to the end, you get Antichrist, the mature plant that came from the seed of a human king.

The seal is a very progressive kind of thing. So when you see the description that is

given, like this great weapon, which is going to be all of the nuclear power in the hands of Antichrist, it did not happen at the instant the seal was broken. There was no nuclear power back when the seal was first broken. But the power that you did have was wielded by kings marching against kings. It could have been bows and spears and whatever, but they were great weapons and caused a lot of death and destruction. This is a progressive description here.

As we get into the trumpets and on into the bowls, you are going to see how they are going to grow and magnify because the Lord's wrath is going to be added later. The current time we are talking about is not His wrath. What we are talking about here is His restraining of all of the evil power. The people are saying, "Oh, we want a king." "No, you do not want a king." He says to Samuel, "Go talk solemnly to them and tell them what the results of a king will be. Samuel tells them, "You do not want a king; he is going to take your sons and your daughters and your money and everything. You do not want a king." They said, "Oh, yes, we have to have a king. We love kings." That is stupid! The people wanted God's restraint removed. So, God broke seal #1 to let the people have what they wanted.

Jill: One question: On the dealing with the wars, would you consider that since we have had wars all the way back in time, the actual breaking of it could be within this century due to the fact that prior to this century the wars were fought by soldiers primarily. It was still pretty much that way until during World War II, the strategic bombing was taken to the populace.

V: Okay, yes I think so. This is a description of a progressive development here of that great sword, the great weapon.

Joe: That first seal, Dr. Vinson, should sort of enhance our desire or understanding about Christian war being that of being against the image of carnality because it is so easy to become victimized by physical things. We know that a bomb is physical, and the alternative is a spiritual weapon. Spiritual war is difficult. We need to work hard on that.

V: Amen. This is extremely difficult. You are right.

Henry: Going along with what this fellow back here said, could the great weapon be weapons of mass destruction?

V: Yes, weapons have progressively gotten more and more depersonalized and long range, but at the beginning it was hand-to-hand sort of stuff.

Tim: Talking about wanting a king, this could work the same way for a single person always saying, I must have a wife, I must have a wife, somebody I can put my arm around, but the Lord is there to comfort us, and, you know, we want that physical companionship. Paul said that when you are single, you can do all these things. Marriage is not a bad thing, but you may lose some of

those freedoms. You have to think about how you have to take care of your family. I was thinking there is a sort of parallel there.

V: I think that your parallel is analogous, but I do not believe that that is what he is talking about here. I think we are talking about government here.

### SEAL #3—ECONOMICS

Revelation

6:5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6:6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and [see] thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

This seal is describing economics, and, of course, I am harkening back now to the four angelic creatures. You can correlate these. This third seal is an economic statement. This seal is progressive also. By the time you get to the judgment time, it is going to be that all you will be able to earn economically with a man's labor will be one day's food (see Chart 5.7).

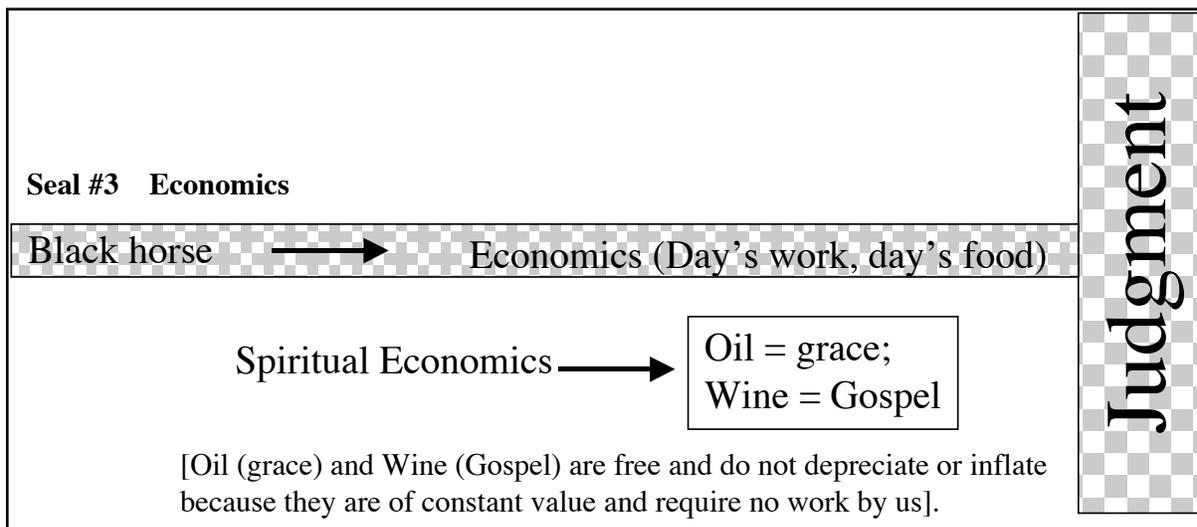


Chart 5.7

Tim: A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny. That is a man's work for one day.

V: Yes, that is a man's daily wage. When you get to the judgment time, that is the way it is going to be. But remember it is a progressive thing, and it is going on and on and on and on, and we are in it right now. The breaking of the seal starts the process which will fully mature only at the end, at the judgment. We are progressing in the seals to reach the full maturation as described in the Scriptures only at the end. By the time we get out here to the judgment, there is going to be not only the scarcity of food, it is going to not only be hard to come by, but you will have to have a mark to get it.

Mary: You took the words right out of my mouth.

Homer: This is a set-up for receiving the mark of the beast. Setting it up.

V: Yes, sir. But look at the good news here. A lot of people do not see this as good news, but I want you to see this as good news. That good news is that the oil and wine will not be hindered by economic distress. The oil is grace, the wine is Gospel. The Gospel and God's grace will not be hindered by economics. If it is being hindered today, it is a problem in the way we are handling it. Economics do not hinder God's grace nor His Gospel. Grace and Gospel are all gift! And they even grow under persecution. The oil and the wine, then, will not be hindered—not by the king, not by war, and not by economics. They will go forth and bring in that harvest that God intended them to bring.

Beth: You said, Dr. Vinson, that Gospel and grace are gifts.

V: Gifts, yes.

Beth: That is why the church is thriving in China under communism. It does not matter about the politics.

V: Yes, and during the time of the early church, the first century church when the Christians were being fed to the lions and burned at the stake and all like that, the Gospel and Grace swept the world like a tidal wave.

Beth: It got accentuated.

V: Yes, hard times accentuated Christian success.

Wanda: Dr. Vinson, if you want grace and Gospel to grow, throw persecution and hard times on people. If you want to see it diminish and people walk away, throw good times, money, and everything else at them.

V: I know it. It is an uncanny thing! We prosper under pressure, and we just fall apart when we have it made. It is uncanny.

## SEAL #4—DEATH

Revelation

6:7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

6:8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

Here is death restrained by the fourth seal. The breaking of this seal will loose death over the world (see Chart 5.8). Judgment time will see 1/4 of the world die under this one. Take a look at the elements: sword, hunger, death, and beasts of the earth. Think with me a minute on the beasts of the earth. The beasts of the earth are more than just lions and tigers and alligators and things like that. I think it is

also the beastly element of man that is going to be involved here.

We are moving into an era of society now in which there is no honor. A hero is a person who drives by and shoots an innocent person just standing on the street. The perpetrator does not even know the name of the person he kills. He can even kill a child, and they come in as heroes because they killed somebody. It is beastly. It does not make any sense to me. Then you have this beast that entered the Fort Worth church last week. Went in there and killed people he did not even know, people who loved the Lord, people who did good things, and here he is killing people. That is a beast. It does not make any sense. It is like an “insane” beast because even a tiger does not go in and kill for the sake of killing.

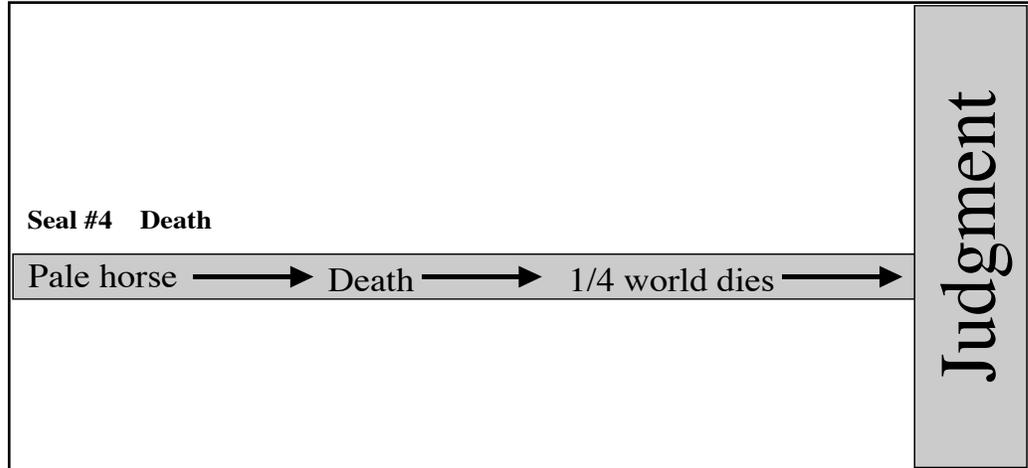
Steve: Do you think that it is going to be men and animals?

V: Yes, men and animals. I think that animals are going to be worse and worse, but I think men are going to be the primary parts of this beast business. Anyway, that is my thinking.

Betty: You do not think this refers to any specific thing that has happened in time?

**Point in Time**

V: Yes, but I cannot pinpoint the event. Let me tell you. All the seals have already been opened. We are progressing in the ma-



**Chart 5.8**

turing process to the ends being described by these Scriptures. The only way we are not going to get to judgment is from the restraining activity of God. We have pushed against the stops. We have kicked against the prods. We have pressed on and on and on. Now of our own free will, we are doing things that are absurd. God has held back and held back and held back, and we have clamored for more progress.

Our prophets have come to say, “You do not want this,” and we have said, “Oh, yes, we cannot progress if we do not get this. Shut up, prophet.” And the Lord says, “Okay, snap” (He breaks the seal of restraint). We run through the barrier and just keep running down the line until we come to another barrier. God says, “You are not going past this.” We hit there and hit there, and we say, “Why are we not moving? Let us move this impediment to our progress.” The prophets come and say, “You do not want this. You do not want this.” The people say, “Oh, yes, we want this! Oh, God, open up the doors, give us an opportunity and ‘blessings.’” He breaks the seal. Then we come running through, and come to another stop. “Oh, this must be Satan stopping us out here. Oh, God, open up the door and let us through.” The

prophets say, “You do not want this.” But we manage to get the restraints removed yet once again.

For example, the prophets warn that if you take prayer out of schools, you are going to have some bad things happen in schools. The people clamor: “Oh, we cannot have prayer in schools. Oh, God, bless our schools, take this prayer out.” Runnnnn through. “Oh, we must have homosexuality. We do not want to be a bunch of homophobes. Oh, God, we know that you love these homosexuals. They are heroes, and we must allow them to be married.” We run through. This scenario repeats over and over and over and over again. Pressing our way through, and God in His mercy is saying, “Do not go through.” He is sending His prophets. We kill the prophets. When someone preaches like this, the congregation says, “We need a new pastor.” If you say anything about sin, there are about 2000 people in your congregation who are steeped in that one sin right there. They say, “You are judging us!” It just goes on and on and on.

God is doing His part. He is sending His prophets. And He is trying to put the brakes on, and we are pushing through, pushing through, pushing through. Many of us have pushed and pushed against God’s restraining influence through our ignorance, but you are not ignorant any more.

Wanda: Lord, help us all.

V: That is right, help us, Oh, God.

Jill: I think that, if I understand, the book of Revelation says things will happen at the end times. We run through stop signs that tell us that we are going in the wrong direction and things like that. I think Revelation is a warning. It is warning us that we are heading in the wrong direction, and we need to change direc-

tions, and if we do not, then we are going to suffer for being stubborn and hardheaded for not heeding the warning signs.

V: You are right. Here is the thing: God gives us clear warnings here in this book. We see sign after sign of clear warnings. What does Satan do? He comes along and says, “You do not want to study the book of Revelation. You do not want to even read this book. It will give you nightmares, and you cannot understand it. Nobody can understand it, so do not read it.” Your preacher will say, “I do not want to preach that. My people cannot understand that. I am not going to study it. I am not going to preach it so I will not study it.” The warning signs are clear, but they are covered up. Nobody can see them because only the Lord’s slaves can see them.

Paul: You get labeled if you start reading.

V: If you start preaching this, you get labeled. However, if you love your saints, warn them.

Henry: I know what came out. I know we will not understand the whole book, but we can at least learn something. That does not mean we do not read it.

V: Right.

Henry: That is what we did when I was going to school. Just because I did not understand a book the teacher gave me, I did not say, “I do not understand this book, give me another one.” It is the same thing with Revelation.

V: Amen. You take what you can get. There will be some, God’s slaves, who will understand a lot more than others, but those who understand just a little bit should take that little bit and run with it. That is what we are trying to do here. We are going to take our little bit, and run with it.

## SEAL #5—PERSECUTION OF THE SAINTS

The first four seals were the four horse-men, and they correlate to the four angelic beasts.

Revelation

6:9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

6:10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

6:11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they [were], should be fulfilled.

I want you to hear this, because Jesus went this route. These saints that are going to be under the altar are going to be crying out, “How long are you going to wait, Lord, until you avenge our blood.” The saints who are crying out are the ones who die for their faith. When you are under Jesus’ reign, you are confessing Jesus Christ as Lord, and you are imitating Him, but you are going to get your head whacked off. It is going to happen. When it does, you are being sacrificial, not to gain money and wealth and applause, but to give your life in humble service doing only good things, and they whack your head off for it. You are going to say, “Oh, God, how long, how long will you wait before you avenge our blood.”

Carl: This is not when the Antichrist is taking off the heads because they will not receive the mark?

V: No, you are describing only the endpoint of Seal # 5, the reign of Antichrist (see Chart 5.9). The fifth seal began with Christian martyrdom and comes out to the

judgment. I want you to see that when the fifth seal is broken, it has already been broken, it is not fulfilled at the instant that it is broken. It is a descriptive process. When the seal is broken, the process begins and gets worse, and worse, and worse until it hits the barrier, the judgment. You see how it works? By the time they get out to the judgment, then the full description will have taken place. It is a process, not a causative process, but a descriptive process. And it is not where God says, “Okay, if you do not listen to me I am going to put this on you.” He is not putting anything on anybody. They are self-destructing. We are self-destructing.

Paul: Is martyrdom the same as going through the *kenosis*?

V: Yes, sir, going through the *kenosis*.

Paul: Would it be accurate to say, then, that all of the seven seals, since the number seven is like a universal consummation, they all come to their end at the same time?

V: Yes, sir, all the seals are going to come all the way out to the end times, to that great day. That is where they are all coming to. As a matter of fact, all the trumpets and the bowls, everything. After we get into them all, everything is going to come out to end at the judgment. If we had a big old chalkboard we could get down here and get some trumpets in here and all.

Beth: What are you classifying?

V: This one right here (seal #5 in Chart 5.9) is the persecution of the saints, and I want you to see here now that it is the determined thing that you fulfill the martyrdom. Martyrdom is set before you as a predetermined thing. Martyr is the Greek word for witness. History is going to usher in sacrifice, suffering, and death for witnessing. It is

already happening around the world. Thousands of Christians are being slaughtered by Muslims. It is going to get much worse.

You see the Lord has died. He has purchased for you new life, but the dying and the purchasing is not over with. Now it is our turn to die and purchase with our witness additional life for others. It is not that we have anything meritorious in us. Our dying is not meritorious. Our dying is through sacrificial service to propagate the great gift that the Lord bought with his death. Can you see that distinction there?

Beth: These saints under the altar have been accumulating as long as Christians have

been persecuted, right?

V: That is correct.

Beth: And martyrdom can be achieved also by dying to self and dying to sin and that kind of thing?

V: That is correct. It includes a spiritual martyrdom. Even the testimony, when you are witnessing, that is *martyria*. That is witnessing, martyrdom. So it comes even just out of your mouth, martyrdom.

Tim: You cannot be a pilgrim martyr if you are not a spiritual martyr.

V: Right.

Following is the complete chart of Seals.

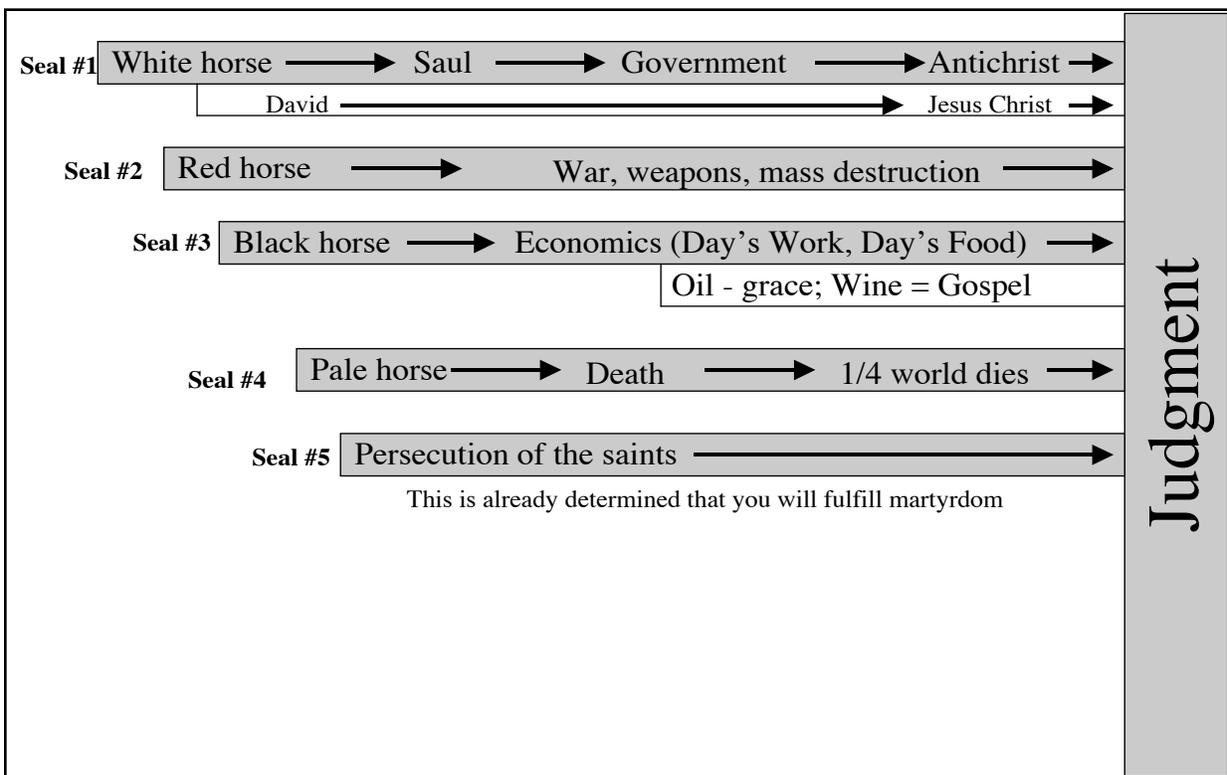


Chart 5.9

Chapter Questions

1. Duplicate the Seal Chart from memory. Describe each seal.