

Week Twelve

It Won't Be Long (6:1-17)

... who is able to withstand it?

Feel free to mark up this copy of *Revelation 6:1-17* from the NET Bible with your own observations and notes.

^{6:1}I looked on when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a thunderous voice, "Come!" ²So I looked, and here came a white horse! The one who rode it had a bow, and he was given a crown, and as a conqueror he rode out to conquer.

^{6:3}Then when the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come!" ⁴And another horse, fiery red, came out, and the one who rode it was granted permission to take peace from the earth, so that people would butcher one another, and he was given a huge sword.

^{6:5}Then when the Lamb opened the third seal I heard the third living creature saying, "Come!" So I looked, and here came a black horse! The one who rode it had a

balance scale in his hand. ⁶Then I heard something like a voice from among the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat will cost a day’s pay and three quarts of barley will cost a day’s pay. But do not damage the olive oil and the wine!”

^{6:7}Then when the Lamb opened the fourth seal I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come!” ⁸So I looked and here came a pale green horse! The name of the one who rode it was Death, and Hades followed right behind. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill its population with the sword, famine, and disease, and by the wild animals of the earth.

^{6:9}Now when the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been violently killed because of the word of God and because of the testimony they had given. ¹⁰They cried out with a loud voice,

“How long, Sovereign Master, holy and true, before you judge those who live on the earth and avenge our blood?”

¹¹Each of them was given a long white robe and they were told to rest for a little longer, until the full number was reached of both their fellow servants and their brothers who were going to be killed just as they had been.

6:12 Then I looked when the Lamb opened the sixth seal, and a huge earthquake took place; the sun became as black as sackcloth made of hair, and the full moon became blood red; ¹³and the stars in the sky fell to the earth like a fig tree dropping its unripe figs when shaken by a fierce wind. ¹⁴The sky was split apart like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved from its place. ¹⁵Then the kings of the earth, the very important people, the generals, the rich, the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. ¹⁶They said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who is seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷because the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to withstand it?"

Lord,

We are studying the beginning of an event that no human being can withstand ... the wrath of God. We thank you for the righteousness of Christ given graciously to us through faith. Teach us how to stand firmly and faithfully in proclaiming your salvation to our generation as we are living in the last days when things like this take place.

Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus!

Amen

Monday

The Lamb of God has taken the scroll and begun to open the seven seals which have preserved this act of judgment for Him and Him alone. It is this action on the part of Christ which begins the end of this age preparing the ushering in of the Millennial Kingdom, the Thousand Year Reign on this earth!

To refresh your memory, use the chart to make your summary of what happens as Christ opens each of the seven seals?

	#	Event
6:1-2	1 st	
6:3-4	2 nd	
6:5-6	3 rd	
6:7-8	4 th	
6:9-11	5 th	
6:12-17	6 th	
8:1-6	7 th	

Why is Christ alone worthy to open these seals (6:2f)?

Tuesday

Today we want to examine the first four judgments, the four horsemen of the Apocalypse: *Conquest, War, Famine, and Death*. Do you see a logical progression in these four, if so, what?

The four horsemen of the Apocalypse are built upon an earlier revelation in Zechariah (1:8 and 6:2-3 use similar imagery). The Old Testament prophet asks a very crucial question, “What are these, sir?” (6:4). According to the answer given him (Zech. 6:5), who were those horsemen?

Do you think the riders in Revelation 6 are angelic beings, human, or both? Why?

What will be the ultimate result of the judgment brought on by their work?

Wednesday

Today let’s consider the rider on the white horse who John tells us pictures a conqueror going forth to conquer. Some people have thought that the conqueror is Christ (*Revelation 19:11-19*). Others see this as Satan or the Antichrist (*Daniel 9:26-27; 1 Thessalonians 5:3*).

Who do you think rides the “white horse” and why (6:2)?

The “bow” probably would have brought to mind for the Roman world the Parthian warriors who were mounted on horseback and extremely skilled with the bow. The crown is that given to a general who defeated an enemy or conquered new territory. The phrase “conquering and to conquer” emphasizes the intent. This man will stop at nothing until he has taken over.

Human ambition usually brings with it war or some other conflict that brings destruction and even death. This is not only a universal and

ongoing historical pattern, this will be one of the things God uses to bring His judgment upon a rebellious world.

One key component of war is illustrated in the scales (6:5-6). What do they represent?

How much does a labor make today on minimum wage for a eight hours of work?

This is what would be required to purchase 4 cups of wheat flour (most recipes call for 5 cups). Barley would yield several loaves and be more suited to a man with a wife and one or two children. But all they will have to eat is bread with no money left over for anything else.

What does the phrase “Do not damage the oil and the wine” tell you about this situation during this famine (6:6)?

Thursday

Today we turn from what Christ is going to unleash upon the world to the important question of what is going to happen to believers during this time.

How were these witness killed?

The word for *martyr* and the word for *witness* in the New Testament are the same word. The NET Bible translates it as *testimony*. These people will be *violently killed* because of their witness for Jesus. A Christian witness needs to be ready to bear *testimony* to Christ even to the point of death (2:10).

What question did these martyrs have on their mind and why (6:10; see *Deuteronomy 32:35; Romans 12:19*)?

What does the answer given to them tell you about life in the end times

Have you ever been persecuted because of your faith in Christ? How?

Friday

Today we want to look at how people in the world will respond to what the Lamb will unleash upon the earth. What six cosmic catastrophes do you note in *6:12-17*?

These judgments strike fear into the heart of everyone in this corrupt society (*6:15*). Put their response in your own words:

Do you think this response adequate? Why or why not?

What do the following verses tell you about the kind of response necessary to avert the wrath of God?

Isaiah 45:22

Acts 14:15

Jonah 3:5–6

Week Thirteen

Sealed and Saved (7:1-17)

... the Lamb in the middle of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

^{7:1}After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth so no wind could blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. ²Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, who had the seal of the living God. He shouted out with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given permission to damage the earth and the sea:

³*“Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees until we have put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.”*

^{7:4}Now I heard the number of those who were marked with the seal, one hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed from all the tribes of the people of Israel:

^{7:5}From the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand, ^{7:6}from the tribe of Asher, twelve thousand, from the tribe of

Naphtali, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh, twelve thousand, ^{7:7}from the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand, ^{7:8}from the tribe of Zebulun, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed.

^{7:9}After these things I looked, and here was an enormous crowd that no one could count, made up of persons from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb dressed in long white robes, and with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰They were shouting out in a loud voice, *“Salvation belongs to our God, to the one seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!”*

^{7:11}And all the angels stood there in a circle around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they threw themselves down with their faces to the ground before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²saying, *“Amen! Praise and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!”* ¹³Then one of the elders asked me,

These dressed in long white robes – who are they and where have they come from?”

7:14 So I said to him,

“My lord, you know the answer.”

Then he said to me,

“These are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb! ¹⁵For this reason they are before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple, and the one seated on the throne will shelter them. ¹⁶They will never go hungry or be thirsty again, and the sun will not beat down on them, nor any burning heat,¹⁷because the Lamb in the middle of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Lord,

In the midst of so much sorrow, sin, and sadness, I need your encouragement. Lift my mind and spirit to you as I consider the truths revealed in this chapter about you and your wonderful son. Show me how to live rejoicing even in the midst of tribulation.

Amen

Monday

The events of this chapter were seen by John “after this,” referring to his seeing the judgments which are associated with the Lamb opening six of the seven seals. This does not mean that these events come next in

the chronology, but instead fills in details about what will happen to the people of God as a result of the *great tribulation*.

What is the mission of the four angels in 7:1-3 (compared 6:1-8)?

What activity is associated with the other angel (7:2-3; see Ezekiel 9:4; Rev. 14:1)?

Why does God delay damage to the earth (7:3)?

During the tribulation does God punish everyone, or just the God-rejecting world?

Tuesday

How are the ones to be sealed described (7:3-4)?

In Ezekiel 9:4, those who are marked upon their forehead are those “who moan and groan over all the abominations practiced in it [Jerusalem].” It is likely that these servants of God also are grieved over the idolatry going on in the world (2:14).

The Bible uses the phrase “*sons of Israel*” to refer to those who are physical descendants of Jacob as can be seen in the following sample verses:

These are the names of the sons of Israel who entered Egypt – each man with his household entered with Jacob:” (Exodus 1:1, NET)

“ When they heard this, they entered the temple courts at daybreak and began teaching. Now when the high priest and those who were with him arrived, they summoned the Sanhedrin – that is, the whole

high council of the Israelites – and sent to the jail to have the apostles brought before them.” (Acts 5:21, NET)

In John’s list of the 12 tribes of Israel, *Dan* is left out. This is not unusual as most of the lists of the tribes in the Old Testament omit one or other of the tribes with the exception of Ezekiel 48 (see Genesis 29:31-30:24; 35:23-26; Exodus 1:1-5; Numbers 26; 1 Chronicles 2:1).

Why do you think one tribe is usually omitted?

What is the purpose of the seal “...on their foreheads” (cf. 7:3-4; 9:4); cf.

Exodus 13:9; 28:38

2 Chronicles 26:19

Ezekiel 9:4

Revelation 13:16; 17:15

If all believers are raptured before the tribulation begins, how will the 144,000 will be saved?

The number 12 is a *symbol* for the nation of Israel which was considered to have twelve tribes (even though there were thirteen sons of Jacob).

What is the significance of the 12,000?

Many have speculated on the meanings of the numbers. The following is one of the most detailed:

Twelve is the number of the tribes, and appropriate to the Church: three by four: three, the divine number, multiplied by four, the number for world-wide extension. Twelve by twelve implies fixity and completeness, which is taken a thousandfold in 144,000. A thousand implies the world perfectly pervaded by the divine; for it is ten, the world number, raised to the power of three, the number of God.¹

For extra credit: How many sets (groups) of 3, 4, 7, and 12 can you find in the Revelation?

Wednesday

What do you discover about this enormous crowd (7:9-17; cf. 6:11)?

To whom do they attribute their salvation? Why?

Thursday

What do the angels ascribe to God in 7:11 and how does that compare to the praise offered the Lamb in 5:12?

7:11	5:12

¹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, A. R. Fausset et al., *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), Re 7:4.

Which of these is the most meaningful to you? Why?

This enormous crowd have white robes washed in the blood of Lamb. Why is being “washed in the blood of the lamb” necessary?

Why can’t you just get to heaven by being a good person?

What would you say to a co-worker who said, “I have lived a pretty good life? I think God will let me in.”

What exactly does it mean to be washed in the blood?

Friday

This chapter concludes with the eternal blessings enjoyed by this great multitude (7:15-17). These blessings are to be had in conjunction with the millennial kingdom (compare Isaiah 25:8; 49:10 in their context).

What are the blessings promised here?

Which of these blessing(s) will you appreciate the most and why?