

The Seven Seals

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Revelation 5:1-4

“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. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. 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.”

First Three Sevens of Revelation

- Seven Churches – History of Church
- Seven Seals – History of Revealed Truths
- Seven Trumpets – History of Calamitous Events

Seven Time Periods Are Debatable

- Vague Identifications in R5992
- Usual Specifics from Seventh Volume

Comparison of Datings

Usual Datings

- Ephesus – 33-99
- Smyrna – 99-313
- Pergamos – 313-1184
- Thyatira – 1184-1377
- Sardis – 1377-1517
- Philadelphia – 1517-1874
- Laodicea – 1874-??

Suggested Dates

- Ephesus – 33-130
- Smyrna – 130-313
- Pergamos – 313-1184
- Thyatira – 1184-1517
- Sardis – 1517-1648
- Philadelphia – 1648-1874
- Laodicea – 1874-??

Church History

Seven-Sealed Scroll

- **Each Seal Opened Reveals More Truth**

First Seal – Revelation 6:1,2

“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. 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.”

The Prime Message of the Apostles

- **Acts 2:36** – “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”
- **Acts 4:12** – “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”
- **1 Corinthians 2:2** – “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

Second Seal – Revelation 6:3,4

“And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. 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.”

Canonization of the Bible

- **Took 170 Years – 130-300 AD**
- **Caused Great Controversy**
 - **Who Could Interpret**
 - **Only Clergy or Also Laity**

Great Truth of the Second Seal

- **Authority and Inspiration of the Bible**

Third Seal – Revelation 6:5,6

“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. 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.”

Rise of Papacy

- **325 – Church-State Union under Constantine**
 - **State Dominates the Church**
- **539 – Fall of Ravenna under General Belasarius**
 - **Church and State on Equal Footing**
- **800 – Crowning of Charlemagne**
 - **Church Dominates State**
- **1095 – First Crusade**
 - **Council of Clermont Authorizes Military Force**

Age of Councils

- **Council of Nicea – 325 AD**
 - **Rejected Arianism on Nature of God**
- **Council of Constantinople – 381 AD**
 - **Asserted Personality of Holy Spirit**
- **Council of Chalcedon – 451 AD**
 - **Asserted God-Man Theory of Christ**
- **Second Council of Nicea – 787 AD**
 - **Established Worship of Images**
- **Third Lateran Council – 1179 AD**
 - **Condemned Albigenses and Waldenses**

Formation of Creeds

“Until the time of the Council of Nice there does not appear to have been any one particular creed which prevailed universally, in exactly the same words, and commended by the same universal authority.” (Browne, *On the Thirty-nine Articles*, art. 8).

Creeds

- **Nicean Creed – Trinity – 325 AD**
- **Constantinopolitan Creed – Trinity – 381 AD**
- **Apostles’ Creed – Basic Doctrines – 392 AD (?)**
- **Creed of Chalcedon – Trinity – 451 AD**
- **Athanasian Creed – Trinity – 540 AD (?)**
- **Probably by Bishop Vigilius or Bishop Hilary**

Third Great Truth Revealed

- **Nature of God and of Christ**
- **Rejection of Creeds**

Fourth Seal – Revelation 6:7.8

“And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale [or green] 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.”

Age of Inquisitions

- **French – 1184**
- **German – 1231**
- **Italian – 1235**
- **Spanish – 1242**

Literal Flight Into Wilderness

- **Cathari – 1149**
- **Waldenses – 1170**
- **Albigenses – 1176**
- **Lollards – 1382**

Revelation 2:24

“But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine [the doctrine of Jezebel, Papacy], and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.”

Great Truth of Fourth Seal

- **Individual Responsibility
for Bible Study**

Fifth Seal

Revelation 6:9-11

“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: 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? 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.”

Reformation Cry

➤ “How Long Will Persecution Continue?”

John Milton

“Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered Saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundredfold, who, having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.”

Fifth Seal

Revelation 6:9-11

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Dating the Fifth Seal

- **“Season” – Greek Chronos – “Time”**
- **“Time, Times, and Half a Time” – Revelation 12:14**
- **One Chronos = 360 Years**
- **October 31, 1517 to Jewish New Year 1878 = 360 Years**

Reformation Truths

- **Justification by Faith**
- **Sole Authority of Scriptures**
- **Priesthood of All Believers**
- **Identification of Anti-Christ**
- **Resurrection of Faithful**

The Sixth Seal – Revelation 6:12-17

“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

The Sixth Seal – Revelation 6:12-17

“And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

Emphasis on French Revolution But May Date Back to 1648 Truths of the Sixth Seal

- **Identification of Papacy as the “Man of Sin”**
- **Necessity of Personal Piety**
- **Concept of Sin Offering**
- **No Thought Control**
- **Jubilee Rights of Personal Freedom**
- **Fallacy of the “Divine Right of Kings”**
- **Fallibility of Papal Power**
- **Anticipation of Second Coming**
- **Chronology (Henry Fines Clinton)**
- **Nature of Man (Henry Grew)**

The Seventh Seal – Revelation 8:1

“And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.”

- Perhaps 1/24th of 1000 Years or 41¾ Years
 - John 11:9 – “Are there not twelve hours in the day?”
 - Ministry of Pastor Russell – 1874-1916
- Perhaps Half of Seven-Year Period or 3½ Years
 - Period Preceding Message – 1874-1878

The Finished Mystery

“But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.” – Revelation 10:7

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. . . . Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.” – Revelation 11:15,17

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“In point of time, the mystery of God will be finished during the period of the sounding of the seventh [symbolic] trumpet. (*Rev. 10:7*) This applies to the mystery in both senses in which it is used: the mystery or secret features of God’s *plan* will then be made known and will be clearly seen; and also the ‘mystery of God,’ the Church, the embodiment of that plan. Both will then be finished.”

Truths of the Seventh Seal

- The Presence of the King and His Kingdom
- The Times of Restitution and Two Salvations
- A Fully Developed and Synchronized Plan

Written on Inside and Outside

- “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.” – Revelation 5:1
- Outside of Scroll = Previously Revealed Truths
 - “The writing on the outside is the bare promise of salvation through the seed of the woman. – R3103
 - “And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.” – Galatians 3:8

Opened Only by a Lion and a Lamb

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

Opened Only by a Lion and a Lamb

- The Slain Lamb Shows His Worthiness
- The Glorified Lion Does the Actual Opening
 - Only the Lord is Worthy
 - But He Delegates Proclaimers
 - The Seven Messengers to the Church

Qualifications of Seven Messengers

- Must Give a Significant Message
- Message Must Relate to Prophecy of 7 Churches
- Must Give Message at Beginning of Period

Seven Messengers

Traditional (from Vol. 7)

- Ephesus – Paul
- Smyrna – John
- Pergamos – Arius
- Thyatira – Waldo
- Sardis – Wycliffe
- Philadelphia – Luther
- Laodicea – Pastor Russell

Suggested

- Ephesus – Paul
- Smyrna – Irenaeus
- Pergamos – Arius
- Thyatira – Waldo
- Sardis – Luther
- Philadelphia – William Penn
- Laodicea – Pastor Russell

Recapping Truths of 7 Seals

- **First Seal – Jesus Identified as the Messiah**
- **Second Seal – Inspiration and Authority of Bible**
- **Third Seal – Nature of God and of Christ**
- **Fourth Seal – Individual Responsibility to Study**
- **Fifth Seal – Justification by Faith**
- **Sixth Seal – Necessity of Personal Piety**
- **Seventh Seal – Presence of King and Kingdom**