

***Daniel and Revelation***  
***Revelation 4:1-8:1***  
***The Heavens Opened and the Seven Seals***  
***Revelation 4 & 5***

1. In Revelation 4 and 5, the camera focuses on heaven.
2. In Revelation 1-3, we see Jesus standing in the holy place in heaven. The focus in Revelation 2,3 is on events connected with Christian churches on this earth. Things look pretty bad.
3. **Revelation 4-5:** As we turn to Revelation 4, suddenly, John was once again shown heaven opened and God the Father seated on His throne surrounded by four living creatures and 24 elders. John was warned that suffering was coming for God's people. But Jesus would work on protecting them as far as possible. In addition to the four living creatures and the 24 elders, there were millions of angels observing, ready to do God's will. God the Father directs our attention away from Himself to Jesus. As He does so, heaven bursts out in song.
4. When we studied the book of Daniel, we noted in Daniel 7:9,10 that God was seated on His judgment throne in charge of the universe. (Compare Daniel 2:28; 4:25) In Revelation John saw a similar scene. A number of the prophets have also seen visions of God in charge. Micaiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Stephen, Paul, and John have had such visions. Heaven is a very busy place. It is a holy place and a friendly place. In front of the throne is a sea of glass. We do not know exactly what this "glass" consists of, but someday we too hope to be standing on it in front of God's throne singing.
5. Who are the four living creatures? Isaiah wrote of similar creatures and called them seraphs. (See Isaiah 6) Ezekiel called them cherubs. (Ezekiel 1,10) They apparently have six wings each and are sometimes pictured as having the face of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle. They are always pictured as having lots of eyes. These pictures obviously symbolize certain ideas and meanings. The human face suggests intelligence; the lion's face, strength; the ox's face willingness to be of service; and the eagle's face swiftness and perceptiveness.
6. Was Satan/Lucifer at one time one of those living creatures? (Ezekiel 28; Isaiah 14:12) Apparently so.
7. But we must always remember that the Person in charge is God the Father as He is seated on His throne. God's throne is mentioned a dozen times in the book of Revelation. (Revelation 4,5,6,7,20,21)
8. Now that we have "seen" the throne room in heaven, what are all those different beings actually doing? Since there is so much going on in heaven, does God have time to hear our prayers? Hebrews 1:14 says that all those angels are there to serve us. Jesus Himself said the angels that are assigned to young children are gathered around His throne. (Matthew 18:10) Psalm 34:7 (*English Standard Version*) reminds us that "The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them."
9. What is the significance of the rainbow around God's throne? In the Bible the rainbow is connected with God's promises not to destroy humanity again. (Genesis 9:8-17)
10. In Revelation 4 and 5, Jesus is described as the Lion of the tribe of Judah but also as a Lamb. (Compare John 1:29)
11. Read Revelation 4:8. What is the significance of the expression, "Who was and is and is to come"? Some people believe that this is simply a way of saying that God exists in the past, present, and future. But that is not the meaning of the Greek or the suggestion of other portions of Scripture. Compare Revelation 1:4,8; 1John 4:10; Exodus 19:9; 20:24; Hosea 6:3; 10:12. When Jesus was here on this earth and He heard that some human being or a group of human beings were in need, He "**came**" to them. But now appearing as a human being, without His

omnipresence, in heaven how can He come to each one of us in our need? That is the special work of the Holy Spirit. (John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 6:19) Clearly, God cares about each one of us. He will come to each one of us in our need if we ask Him.

12. Each time the camera focuses on heaven, we see Jesus or the Father either standing or sitting in some part of the heavenly sanctuary. In the courtyard there was the altar of burnt offering and the laver for cleansing. Inside the holy place there was the seven-branched lampstand, the table of the bread of the presence, and the golden altar of burnt incense.
13. In the second or inner room known as the most holy place, there was only the ark of the covenant with its chest containing the tables of stone on which were written the Ten Commandments. The ark was covered by a golden lid sometimes called the mercy seat with two angels standing or hovering over the box representing God's presence.
14. In the book of Revelation, the sanctuary is mentioned 14 times. God's throne is mentioned 40 times. Five of the major divisions of the book of Revelation are introduced with scenes that center on the sanctuary in heaven. The earlier scenes start in the holy place and the later scenes in the most holy place or in the temple as a whole. (See C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares* 2, Pacific Press Publishing Association, Boise, Idaho, p. 164)
15. In the historical half of the book of Revelation (Revelation 1-14), the section addressed to the seven churches (Revelation 1-3) began with Jesus standing amid the lampstands. The seven seals which we will talk about later begin with Jesus standing beside the table throne or the throne of the bread of His presence. (Revelation 5-7) The seven trumpets have Him standing beside the golden altar of incense. (Revelation 8-11) The historical section of Revelation concludes with the great controversy focusing on the most holy place where we know there are the Ten Commandments, representing judgment and condemnation for those who ignore God's commands. (Revelation 12-14)
16. Later, in the eschatological section (Revelation 15-22), we see angels carrying the seven bowls of God's wrath or plagues leaving the sanctuary. When the sanctuary closes in the eschatological end time, we are told about the fall of Babylon, the millennium, and then the new earth containing the new Jerusalem. At that time, there will apparently be no need for a sanctuary any more. (Revelation 21:22)

### ***Revelation 6 & 7***

#### ***The Seven Seals***

17. In Revelation 5 we were introduced to a scroll sealed with seven seals. Apparently, no one except Jesus Christ could open that scroll. Now we are going to see what the seven seals represent.
18. What is written on that scroll? Revelation does not tell us. However, Ellen G. White was shown the following scene in a vision.

Thus the Jewish leaders made their choice. Their decision was registered in the book which John saw in the hand of Him that sat upon the throne, the book which no man could open. In all its vindictiveness this decision will appear before them in the day when this book is unsealed by the Lion of the tribe of Judah. {*Christ's Object Lessons* 294.1}

What did Jesus have to do to qualify to open the scroll? (Revelation 5:5) He had to be victorious in the great controversy. He dealt with Satan's accusations and his questions.

19. Read Ezekiel 2:8-10. Revelation is not the first time a prophet has been shown a scroll written inside and out. When looking at the series of sevens in the book of Revelation, we discover that the first six of each seven take place in sequence. Then, before the seventh takes place, there is an interruption during which a certain task or a series of tasks is assigned to someone

followed by an assurance given to God's people that they will be shielded by God if they do as He asks.

20. God has often pictured Himself as shielding His people. (Psalm 28:7; 119:114)
21. It is interesting to note that there is a kind of play on words in this section of Revelation. In Revelation 5 and 6 we see seven *seals* being opened one by one. In Revelation 7 we see God's final remnant people *sealed with the seal* of the living God.
22. When opened, the first four seals reveal, consecutively, four horsemen. We notice that the first rider held a bow and a crown. The second rider had the power of war and was given a large sword. The third rider held a pair of scales suggesting a time of business activity or judgment. The fourth rider was named death and was followed by the grave. He was given authority over a quarter of the earth to kill by various means. Thus, we see that the first rider is dressed in white suggesting that He might be Jesus Christ Himself, and He will ultimately conquer. But the three following riders refer to a time dominated by swords, famine, and pestilence, and even wild beasts. (Revelation 6:1-8)
23. **Parallels between Revelation 6 and 7 and the prophecy given by Jesus in Matthew 24.** In Matthew 24:14, we are told that the gospel will be preached to the whole world. In Revelation 6:1,2, a rider on a white horse proclaimed Christianity. In Matthew 24:6-8, there are wars and rumors of wars, famines, and earthquakes; but the end is not yet. In Revelation 6:3-8, there are riders on red, black, and pale horses inflicting war, famine, and epidemics. In Matthew 24:21 there is predicted a time of great tribulation. In Revelation 6:9-11, under the fifth seal, souls are under the altar protesting the persecution.
24. In Matthew 24:29, there are signs in the sun, moon, and stars immediately following the tribulation. Under the sixth seal in Revelation 6:12,13, there is a great earthquake and signs in the sun, moon, and stars. Furthermore, in Matthew 24:30, the Son of Man returns while in Revelation 6:14-17, the sky rolls back and the Lamb arrives. Then in Matthew 24:31, angels gather the elect while in Revelation 8:1, under the seventh seal there is half an hour of silence in heaven while the heavenly beings come with Christ to earth to gather the elect.
25. Revelation is, of course, a book full of symbols. White, for example, is always a symbol of Christ, or of something associated with Christ, or of spiritual victory. Christ has *white* hair (Revelation 1:14); His faithful followers will receive a *white* stone with a new name written on it (Revelation 2:17); they are to wear *white* garments (Revelation 3:4,5,18); the 24 elders around the throne of God are clad in *white* (Revelation 4:4); the martyrs are given *white* robes (Revelation 6:11) as are the great number of redeemed (Revelation 7:9,13). The Son of Man is seen on a *white* cloud (Revelation 14:14), and He returns on a *white* horse accompanied by the armies of heaven who themselves are clad in *white* and ride *white* horses (Revelation 19:11,14). And in the final judgment, God is seen seated on a *white* throne (Revelation 20:11). (See *A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, George Eldon Ladd, p. 97,98)
26. When looking more closely at the **second, third, and fourth horsemen**, we notice that they represent certain concepts: **warfare, scarcity, and death**. This would suggest that the **first horseman** should represent a concept as well. Perhaps the best fit would be **true Christianity**. It is the opposite of warfare, scarcity, and death. Historically, we know that the church began in Jerusalem and went forth to the world. Unfortunately, over the next several hundred years, the world turned against the church and conquered it.
27. We have suggested that these series of sevens in the book of Revelation were to represent various events over the history of the world from the time of Christ's death until the second coming. The three evil horsemen could be symbolizing things like the bubonic plague, the black death, and perhaps most troubling, the church itself becoming a leading cause of warfare, famine, and destruction. Protestants fought Catholics and Catholics fought Protestants. Many

Protestants were driven out of the old world by the Roman Catholic Church and settled in America. Fortunately, true Christianity has survived and is still alive, and Christ is still there to help His faithful followers.

28. **The Three Woes or Horrors:** As the **fifth seal** is opened, the suffering of God's true people down through the ages is represented by a cry, "How long?" And God's response is, "I understand, but you must wait a little longer." (Revelation 6:11)
29. Chronologically, this suggests the fifth seal must take place before the final judgment begins. The final judgment was to begin in 1844 as suggested by Daniel 8:14 and the 2300 year-day prophecy.
30. After the pre-advent judgment begins and just before the final events of this earth's history, the 144,000 are to be sealed. (Revelation 7:1-3; compare 14:1; Ezekiel 9:2-6) What does that imply? What is the reason for the delay suggested in these verses? God is directing the angels to hold back the winds of strife until His children are ready.
31. What is the seal of the living God? Read Ephesians 1:13; 4:31. These verses suggest that the sealing is the work of the Holy Spirit. Ellen White tells us:
32. Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads—it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved—just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning, that we may know what is coming" (*MS 173*, 1902). *SDA Bible Commentary* Vol. 4, p. 1161; *LDE 219*; *Maranatha 200*; *FLB 287*; *1MR 249,250*; *10MR 252*
33. So, how do we become so settled into the truth that we cannot be moved? We must grow up. (Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 5:11-6:3)
34. Under the sixth seal, we notice the prediction of a violent earthquake, the sun becoming black like coarse black cloth, and the moon turning completely red like blood. The stars fall from heaven and then the sky disappears like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island is moved from its place. Where are we in this sequence? Historically, the events that fit most closely with the predictions here and elsewhere in Scripture suggest that the violent earthquake was the Lisbon earthquake of November 1, 1755. A dark day and the moon turning to blood occurred on May 19, 1780. There was a magnificent falling of the stars seen on November 13, 1833. But don't these events seem to be long ago to our minds? Clearly, the sky being rolled up like a scroll and all the islands being moved out of their places have not occurred yet.
35. Is it possible that we have not understood these predictions correctly and there are earthquakes, dark days, and falling stars yet to come? There will, of course, be more signs of the second coming, but these that we have mentioned fit right after the times of great tribulation prophesied in the Bible.
36. Thus, we see in Revelation 6 and 7 a sequence of events stretching from the time of relative purity among God's true children through a time of terrible persecution all the way to the second coming. Are we ready for the sky to be rolled back and the islands to disappear into the sea? Have we been sealed so thoroughly that we cannot be moved?

© 2010, **Kenneth Hart, MD, MA, MPH**. *Permission is hereby granted for any noncommercial use of these materials. Free distribution is encouraged. It is our goal to see them spread as widely and freely as possible. If you would like to use them for your class or even make copies of portions of them, feel free to do so. We always enjoy hearing about how you might be using the materials, and we might even want to share good ideas with others. So, let us know.* [Info@theox.org](mailto:Info@theox.org)

Last Modified: August 1, 2010

Z:\My Documents\WP\TG\Daniel-Revelation\Revelation 4-8-Fin.wpd