

REDEMPTION OF THE INHERITANCE

SIGNIFICANCE AND TIMING OF CHRIST BREAKING
THE SEALS OF THE SEVEN-SEALED SCROLL IN REV. 5

By Arlen L. Chirwood

“And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book [‘scroll’] 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 [‘scroll’], and to loose the seals thereof?

And no man in heaven, nor on earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book [‘scroll’], neither to look thereon.

And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book [‘scroll’], neither to look thereon.

And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, [‘scroll’] and to loose the seven seals thereof.

And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts [‘living creatures’] 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 [‘scroll’] out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne” (Rev. 5:1-7).

(For related or additional information on many of the things in this pamphlet refer to the author’s book, THE TIME OF THE END [a commentary on the Book of Revelation].)

The Book of Revelation, as the whole of Scripture, has to do with *Christ, the Church, Israel, and the nations, centrally in relation to the government of the earth*. This is the way Scripture begins in Genesis, continues from Exodus through Jude, and ends in Revelation.

Scripture is one continuous story *centered particularly in God’s government of the earth but also dealing with His government of the universe as well*.

(Ref. the author’s book, THE MOST HIGH RULETH, for information pertaining to God’s universal government in the preceding respect.)

Revelation chapters one through four have to do with *the Church in relation to a future regality*.

Chapter five has to do with *the seven-sealed scroll, containing God’s redemptive terms for the forfeited inheritance — the earth, presently under Satan’s governmental control*.

Chapters six through nineteen have to do with *events during and immediately following the Tribulation, with a view to a change in the earth’s government*.

Chapter twenty has to do with *events surrounding Christ’s millennial reign* (events immediately preceding, during, and following).

Chapters twenty-one and twenty-two have to do with *regal events during the eternal ages following the Millennium* (though some things in these two chapters reflect back on and have to do with events during the Millennium).

That, in a succinct manner, is how the Book of Revelation is structured. Then, with the complete structure in view, note that part of the book which deals with events following the present dispensation, having to do with *Israel and the nations during and immediately following the Tribulation* (chs. 5-19).

The Redemption of the Inheritance (Ch. 5)

The seven-sealed scroll in chapter five, as previously seen, contains *God’s redemptive terms for the inheritance presently under Satan’s governmental control, with only one person in heaven, on earth, or under the earth found worthy to break the seals of the scroll and set things in motion, resulting in the inheritance*

ultimately being redeemed.

The One found worthy is first seen as “the Lion of the Tribe of Judah” (5:5), but then takes the scroll from His Father’s hand and begins breaking the seals as “a Lamb as it had been slain” (5:6, 12, 13; 6:1ff).

Christ is first seen as a “Lion,” for *judgment is in view*. But He is then seen as a “Lamb” when He takes the scroll and begins breaking the seals, for these judgments are of *a redemptive nature; and the Lamb of God alone can act in this capacity*.

(Actually, Christ is only depicted as a “Lion” this one time in the whole of the N.T., but seen as a “Lamb” twenty-eight times in the Book of Revelation alone. And the reason for this is obvious. Revelation is a book dealing centrally with *redemption, though this redemption occurs through judgment*.)

The Breaking of the Seals (Chs. 6-19)

Chapters six and beyond are where individuals, more often than not, get hopelessly lost in the interpretation of this book, trying to understand these fourteen chapters as a continuing, connected sequence of events. This though, evident from numerous places in these chapters, along with numerous places in previous Scripture as well, is not the case at all.

In this type structure, a sequence of events is given, followed by commentary having to do with the sequence of events already given. Note, for example, how Scripture begins. The first thirty-four verses of Genesis provide the complete story of Scripture in skeletal form; then, the remainder of Scripture provides all the sinews, flesh, and skin to clothe the skeletal framework already given (cf. Ezek. 37:1ff). Or note Gen. 10, 11. The first part of chapter eleven forms commentary pertaining to events occurring during the first part of chapter ten.

Then another mistake is often made in the interpretation of Rev. 6-19. The events depicted in these chapters not only occur during time covered by the seven-year Tribulation but also extend over into a seventy-five-day period immediately following the Tribulation, preceding the beginning of the Millennium.

The redemption of the inheritance will not be

complete until all seven seals of the scroll have been broken and all the judgments seen when the seals are broken have come to pass. And these judgments extend not only throughout the Tribulation but are climaxed only following Christ's return at the end of the Tribulation, during the seventy-five-day period of Dan. 12:11-13 which follows the Tribulation.

And the book clearly shows where this division in the judgments occurs.

1) Sequence of Events

The seven seals of the scroll can perhaps best be understood by viewing them in two parts — *the first four*, then *the last three*.

The breaking of the *first four seals* (6:1-8), depicting four horsemen riding forth, are much like the first thirty four verses of Genesis — *an introductory depiction of the whole of the matter, in skeletal form*.

Then, the breaking of the *remaining three seals* (6:9, 12; 8:1) do not depict sequential events but *events/judgments occurring during time seen in the breaking of the first four seals, forming additional commentary*. And the same would be true for events in all chapters beyond this, with all of these events forming the sinews, flesh, and skin to clothe the skeletal framework depicted in the breaking of the first four seals.

Then, events seen in numerous, single chapters could cover *the complete time of the Tribulation, possibly extending into the period immediately following Christ's return*.

Note, for example, events in chapter eleven in this respect. The two witnesses (vv. 3-12) prophesy during the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation, and events having to do with the sounding of the seventh angel in verse fifteen takes one to the very end of all the judgments, to the end of the seventy-five days following the Tribulation.

And either the same thing or something similar can be seen in events dealt with in other parts of the book, such as chapters seven, twelve through fourteen, and seventeen through the first part of nineteen.

2) Christ's Return Seen Three Different Places

With the book structured in the preceding manner, Christ's return is not seen just in the latter part

of chapter nineteen but two earlier places as well. And His return is seen in these two earlier places for a dual purpose:

1) So one can know where to make the division between judgments occurring during the Tribulation and those occurring following the Tribulation.

2) So one can clearly see and understand how these judgments tie in with the type set forth in the Book of Exodus during Moses' day. Then this, in turn, will open up numerous other Scriptures having to do with events surrounding Christ's return.

a) So One Can Know Where to Make the Division...

The heavens are opened and Christ's return is depicted after one fashion when the sixth seal of the scroll has been broken, with the kingdom of Antichrist seen in complete disarray at this time (6:12-17). And this can only have to do with a scene at the very end of and immediately following the Tribulation.

Further Christ's return at this time occurs *before the seventh seal is broken, introducing the seven trumpet judgments, which takes one all the way to the destruction of Gentile world power* (8:1-10:11; 11:15-19). Thus, *the trumpet judgments are seen occurring following Christ's return at this point in the book*.

Then, the second picture of Christ's return is seen in chapter fourteen (vv. 14-20), immediately *preceding the seven vial judgments* in chapters fifteen and sixteen, with *the vial judgments seen following His return, as the trumpet judgments had previously been seen following His return*. And, as in the trumpet judgments, matters are taken all the way to *the destruction of Gentile world power*.

And it is plain that the trumpet and vial judgments (forming the judgments when the seventh seal is broken, completing all the judgments of the seven-sealed scroll) *are one and the same judgments, with the vial judgments (chs. 15-16) simply forming a further description of the previously revealed trumpet judgments*.

(Ref. the author's pamphlet, "Opening the Seventh Seal," where parallels are shown between the trumpet and vial judgments.)

Then the third picture of Christ's return is seen at the end of chapter nineteen (vv. 11-21), which, as well, ends with *the destruction of Gentile world power*.

b) So One Can Clearly See and Understand...

Understanding the preceding will allow one to properly see and understand how the judgments upon the kingdom of the Assyrian in Egypt following Moses' return typify the judgments upon the future worldwide kingdom of the Assyrian following Christ's return.

As well, this will evidently have to do with a future ministry which *Moses* will have a part in, following his return with Christ.

Also, *Elijah* returning with Christ as well, will have a ministry relative to Israel at this time, in fulfillment of Mal. 3:1-4; 4:5, 6.

And all of this will lead to the antitype of the tenth and last plague in Egypt, the death of the firstborn, pointing to *Israel's national conversion*, with that which the remaining six festivals foreshadow then being fulfilled, along with *the destruction of Gentile world power* — all *exactly* as seen in the type in Exodus.

Failure to understand proper divisions in the Book of Revelation on the timing of judgments connected with the sequential breaking of all seven seals of the scroll which the Son takes from His Father's right hand will close the door to a proper understanding of numerous other things — *e.g.*, the proper relationship of the opening fourteen chapters of Exodus to Revelation chapters five through nineteen, along with the proper place which Moses and Elijah will occupy in events surrounding Christ's return in the last two chapters of Malachi.

But, understand these divisions aright, and the matter will be completely different.

(For additional information on the preceding, see the author's book, COMING IN HIS KINGDOM.)

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