
Segment III**When Was the First Seal Broken?**

We are faced with a substantial mystery when it comes to dating the events described in Revelation 4-6. As you might expect, Christianity is divided on this topic. Advocates of a pre-tribulation rapture believe Revelation 4 will occur in the future because they believe the breaking of the first seal marks the beginning of the Great Tribulation. Prior to the twentieth century, a majority of Christians believed Jesus was found worthy to receive the book sealed with seven seals at His return to Heaven in A.D. 30. Since the Christian community is “poles apart” on this subject today, let us take a moment to consider the substance of both views.

Will the Church Escape the Great Tribulation?

Advocates of a pre-tribulation rapture believe the seven seals are broken *after* the rapture. They base some of their reasoning on the idea that John was “raptured” to Heaven to see the Great Tribulation *from* the safety of Heaven. They believe that John’s experience parallels the Church’s experience in the last days. But, the question rises, “What does John’s trip to Heaven have to do with the church being raptured before the Great Tribulation begins?” John did not physically leave the Isle of Patmos and go to Heaven. John says he was taken to Heaven “in the spirit” – in a vision. (Revelation 4:2; 9:17) Similarly, Paul says he visited Heaven in visions that were so real that he thought he was actually there! He saw and heard many wonderful things that he could not express in words. (2 Corinthians 12) Even though Paul experienced this wonderful privilege, Paul did not escape incarceration or martyrdom. Emperor Nero beheaded him because of his faith and commitment to Jesus. Legend has it that the Romans also tried to kill the prophet John by throwing him into a pot of boiling oil. When the Romans saw that John was miraculously saved from death, he was set free. The point is that Paul and John did not go to Heaven, and they did not escape tribulation and death. If Jesus did not spare His closest disciples from tribulation and death (nine of the twelve died as martyrs), and if Jesus “handed over” the saints to the little horn for tribulation and death during the 1,260 years of the Dark Ages (Daniel 7:25), why would He spare “end time Christians” from forty-two months of the Great Tribulation? (Revelation 13:5)

The strongest rebuttal to the doctrine of a pre-tribulation rapture is this: The rules of apocalyptic prophecy do not permit a pre-tribulation rapture. John’s experience in Revelation 4 cannot represent the

experience of the Church during the Great Tribulation because John is sent back to Earth! In Revelation 10, John is told to eat a little book that was given to him and *he* is told to prophesy again to kings and nations. (Revelation 10:11) If John (representing the Church) is in Heaven during the Great Tribulation, how could John (representing the Church) accomplish this assignment without returning to Earth? There is nothing within the four rules, the five essential doctrines or within Revelation 4-6 that puts believers in Heaven prior to the Great Tribulation. In fact, the Bible actually says “the saints” will be on Earth during the Great Tribulation. **“He [the beast, the crisis government] was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation.”** (Revelation 13:7) The followers of Jesus will be persecuted for forty-two months and many will be slain during the fifth seal. (Revelation 6:9-11; 12:11; 13:5; 20:4; Daniel 12:12) The Bible also indicates that a large number of Christians will survive the Great Tribulation to see Jesus appear in clouds of glory! The doctrine of a pre-tribulation rapture will rupture when the Great Tribulation begins. Millions of Christians will discover they were misled. Why do Christians want to run and hide from their prophetic destiny? The final accomplishment of the body of Christ (the Church), though weak and feeble as it is, will be a stunning victory over the beast and its image through the power of Christ. (1 John 5:4; Revelation 20:4)

What Does Church History Offer?

The historical view of this topic has flaws, too. Down through the centuries, Christians have generally believed the scenes in Revelation 4 began a few years after Jesus ascended to Heaven. This idea has been perpetuated ever since the book of Revelation began circulating at the beginning of the second century A.D., but this view is faulty for several reasons. Here are two:

1. There is nothing within Revelation 4-6 indicating Jesus was found worthy to receive the book sealed with seven seals *shortly* after He returned to Heaven. Nothing is said in Revelation 4-6 about timing, except that Jesus *had been* slain. (Revelation 5:6) The timing of the convocation in Revelation 4-6 is not stated in Revelation because it was sealed in the book of Daniel, and the book of Daniel was sealed until the time of the end! Early Christians did not have Daniel’s rules or Daniel’s matrix, so they *assumed* that Jesus had been found worthy to receive the book with the seven seals shortly after He returned to Heaven. This assumption, like the assumption that Earth stood still and the Sun orbited around Earth, was harmless,

but it introduced more confusion than it resolved. In the sixteenth century, before Copernicus proved Earth orbited the Sun, the orbits of heavenly bodies were very difficult to calculate. However, once astronomers understood that Earth traveled around a stationary Sun, the orbits of heavenly bodies became much easier to determine. The same holds true on the timing of Revelation 4-6. Once the timing of Revelation 4-6 is properly determined from Daniel 7 and 8, the purpose of the book and the meaning of the seven seals are not hard to understand.

2. Apocalyptic prophecy is written in such a way that it has to be distorted to make sense if valid rules of interpretation are not used. This means the intended meaning of the seven seals will be distorted if their timing is not correctly determined. Even though we have not examined the meaning of the seven seals, a short presentation on the fourth seal can demonstrate how prophecy has been distorted for many centuries. Here is the fourth seal: **“When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, ‘Come!’ I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the Earth.”** (Revelation 6:7, 8)

A person does not have to be a serious Bible scholar to see that when the fourth seal is broken, the results will be deadly. In fact, the rider’s name is “Death,” and the grave (Greek: *Hades*), like a persistent vulture, follows close behind Death to consume the dead. The Bible says they will have power to kill 25% of Earth’s population. They will kill with God’s four deadly judgments: sword, famine, plague and wild beasts. (Ezekiel 14:21) The question naturally rises, “If the fourth seal occurred in the past, **when** did God deliberately kill 25% percent of Earth’s population with His four deadly judgments?”

Before I respond to this question, please examine two statements spoken by God Himself. These passages are profound because God identifies His four deadly judgments and justifies their use. The first passage is a selection of verses taken out of “The Song of Moses.” The Israelites were required to memorize and sing this song. (Incidentally, this song will also be sung in Heaven! See Revelation 15:3.) The second statement was spoken to Ezekiel just before King Nebuchadnezzar was sent to plunder and totally destroy Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Take a few moments to absorb these divine declarations because the breaking of the fourth seal means death to a huge number of people.

Statement 1: The Song of Moses – 1437 B.C.

“**Jeshurun** [A poetic name of endearment given to Israel. God used this name to indicate His affection for Israel, as though it were His pet.] **grew fat and kicked; filled with food, he became heavy and sleek. He abandoned the God who made him and rejected the Rock his Savior. They made him jealous with their foreign gods and angered him with their detestable idols. They sacrificed to demons, which are not God – gods they had not known, gods that recently appeared, gods your fathers did not fear. You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave you birth. The Lord saw this and rejected them because he was angered by his sons and daughters. . . . ‘I will heap calamities upon them and spend my arrows against them. I will send wasting *famine* against them, consuming pestilence and deadly *plague*; I will send against them the fangs of *wild beasts*, the venom of vipers that glide in the dust. In the street the *sword* will make them childless; in their homes terror will reign. Young men and young women will perish, infants and gray-haired men. . . .’**”
(Selections from Deuteronomy 32:15-25, insertion and italics mine)

Statement 2: Concerning the Destruction of Jerusalem – 586 B.C.

“The word of the Lord came to me: ‘Son of man, if a country sins against me by being unfaithful and I stretch out my hand against it to cut off its food supply and send *famine* upon it and kill its men and their animals, even if these three men – Noah, Daniel and Job – were in it, they could save only themselves by their righteousness,’ declares the Sovereign Lord. ‘Or if I send *wild beasts* through that country and they leave it childless and it becomes desolate so that no one can pass through it because of the beasts, as surely as I live,’ declares the Sovereign Lord, ‘even if these three men were in it, they could not save their own sons or daughters. They alone would be saved, but the land would be desolate.’ ‘Or if I bring *a sword* against that country and say, “Let the sword pass throughout the land,” and I kill its men and their animals, as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, even if these three men were in it, they could not save their own sons or daughters. They alone would be saved.’ ‘Or if I send *a plague* into that land and pour out my wrath upon it through bloodshed, killing its men and their animals, as surely as I live,’ declares the Sovereign Lord, ‘even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they could save neither son nor daughter. They would save only themselves by their righteousness.’ For this is what the

Sovereign Lord says: ‘How much worse will it be when I send against Jerusalem *my four dreadful judgments* – sword and famine and wild beasts and plague – to kill its men and their animals!’ ” (Selections from Ezekiel 14:12-21, italics mine)

God says that He has four deadly judgments which He uses to cauterize the growth of sin. God also says that He is reluctant to implement these judgments, but He is moved by divine justice (Genesis 15:16; Leviticus 18:24) when the cup of sin becomes full. (For a more thorough study of the full cup principle, review Chapter 2 of my book *Warning! Revelation is about to be fulfilled.*) The Bible says that God destroyed the world in Noah’s day because man’s thoughts were constantly evil. (Genesis 6:5) The Bible indicates that God destroyed Sodom, Gomorrah and Jerusalem because of degenerate behavior. (Genesis 18, 19; Ezekiel 5) So, Bible history leaves no wiggle room on this matter: God’s patience with sin and sinners has a limit. God destroys people, cities and nations when extended mercy cannot produce repentance, reformation and redemption. (Genesis 19; Leviticus 18; Colossians 3:5, 6; Revelation 18 and 20) Unfortunately, we do not hear much about the wrath of God these days and this silence has led many people to diminish their accountability toward God. There are several texts in the Bible that highlight God’s dreadful judgments within a punitive context. (Read Leviticus 26, 1 Chronicles 21; Jeremiah 14, 27, 44; Ezekiel 6.) Now that you have a little background information on God’s four deadly judgments, we will return to the attempt of Christians to interpret and locate the breaking of the fourth seal.

History Cannot Produce a Fulfillment

For twenty centuries, Christian expositors have made various claims of fulfillment for the fourth seal, but no one has stepped forward with a solution that has gained widespread acceptance. The problem with the fourth seal is the scope of destruction. The scope is huge and the destruction has to happen *between* the breaking of the third seal and the breaking of the fifth seal. The absence of a clear and convincing fulfillment should have caused more concern among Protestant expositors, but alas, prophetic details require distortion when things do not add up.

If the fourth seal was broken in ages past, what year was the fourth seal broken? When did Jesus punish the world by killing 25% percent of its people? A few Christians have argued the bubonic plague which swept through Europe in the sixth, fourteenth and seventeenth centuries was a fulfillment of the fourth seal. These epidemics were horrible, but the rate of death in each of these cases did not exceed two million people per year and these epidemics were local to Europe. Was the bubonic plague

sent as a *punitive judgment* from God or was the bubonic plague a consequence of poor sanitation and standing filth? The ravages of the bubonic plague did not kill 25% of the world's population.

Because the Protestant reformation grew out of persecution, numerous reformers in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries claimed the fourth seal covered a period of a thousand years – when the Church of Rome persecuted all who refused to obey its laws. The total number of martyrs during the Dark Ages (around A.D. 500 to A.D. 1500) has been estimated to be as low as ten million and as high as fifty million. When this figure is divided by a thousand years, the rate of martyrdom is a maximum of 50,000 people per year. No student of Protestant history doubts the persecution of the saints during the Dark Ages was horrible, but this interpretation does not begin to satisfy the specifications given in the fourth seal for two reasons. First, the Bible indicates that God's four judgments, sword, famine, plague and wild beasts, are punitive. They are directed *at wicked nations* who have filled up their cup of iniquity – not at faithful martyrs standing firm for God's truth. So, the fourth seal does not apply to the saints who were burned at the stake or imprisoned for their faith. Second, the Bible says that when the fourth seal is broken, God's four judgments will kill 25% of Earth's population. Even if the Catholic Church put fifty million saints to death, this could not meet the specifications of the fourth seal. The scope of destruction presented in the fourth seal is just too large.

A few Christians have suggested the fourth seal was broken around 1918, when at the height of its deadly grip, the world's worst outbreak of influenza killed twenty five million people in a single year! (From 1914 to 1918, nine million people died from World War I.) The influenza outbreak was horrible, and it was accompanied by a horrible war, but both events did not come close to killing 25% of the world's population. In short, history cannot produce a fulfillment of the fourth seal because the scope of the fourth seal is so large that nothing in the past can measure up. The second rule of apocalyptic prophecy says that a fulfillment occurs only when *all* of the specifications of a prophecy are met and there is no event in history that meets the 25% specification.

Understanding The Word

Now that the specifications of the fourth seal are known, and since there is no evidence of a historical fulfillment, please consider the following solution. The breaking of the fourth seal will mark the beginning of the Great Tribulation. According to Rule One of apocalyptic prophecy, the fourth seal has to be broken after the third seal is broken. Let us assume for a moment that Jesus was found worthy to receive the book

in 1798. Let us assume the third seal was broken in 1844. (This timing will be demonstrated in the next segment.) Since 25% of Earth's population has not been killed with divine judgments since 1844, the breaking of the fourth seal would be next. The breaking of the fourth seal could be called "the shock and awe campaign" of God's destructive power. The books of Daniel and Revelation indicate that Jesus is about to declare war on Earth. The King of kings is about to impose a regime change on this planet. Jesus is about to release His deadly judgments against planet Earth because we have become a degenerate world and Earth's cup of sin is full. Jesus said the days during the last generation would parallel the days of Noah. (Matthew 24:37) As God's wrath breaks out, 25% of Earth's population will perish (Revelation 6:7, 8) during a period of perhaps thirty to sixty days. (This sequence of events is described at length in my book, *Warning! Revelation is about to be fulfilled.*)

The Keys to the Solution

Because Revelation 4-6 says nothing about timing, we have to use four keys to unlock the timing of the convocation described by John:

- Key 1.** The dates of Daniel 7:9, 10 and Daniel 8:14 have to be understood.
- Key 2.** The exaltation and empowerment of Jesus in Daniel 7:13, 14 have to be understood.
- Key 3.** The subject of cleansing Heaven's temple has to be understood.
- Key 4.** The doctrine of parallel temples indicates the High Priest had to be found *worthy* on the Day of Atonement before he could cleanse the earthly temple.

When these four keys from Daniel are applied to Revelation 4-6, the mystery of timing can be resolved. Of course, if we correctly determine the date of the convocation in Revelation 4-6, the meaning of the seven seals will easily support this date, because the seals are broken in chronological order *after* Jesus receives the book. Remember, the intended meaning of apocalyptic prophecy cannot be determined without valid rules of interpretation. Throughout the ages, expositors have distorted scripture in an effort to make sense of the prophecies.

1798 Becomes a Key Date!!!

The heavenly scene recorded in Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14 parallels the event recorded in Revelation 4 and 5. Daniel and John, separated by seven hundred years, were shown pieces of the *same event* from two different perspectives. This is not unusual in the Bible. For example, the rise and

fall of Earth's kingdoms was revealed to King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2, and similar information was revealed to Daniel in Daniel 7. These two men had visions fifty years apart. They were shown the rise and fall of the *same* kingdoms from two different perspectives. God uses repetition and enlargement to make His visions succinct and concise. King Nebuchadnezzar saw an image of various metals and Daniel saw a chronological sequence of strange beasts. The point is that the various metals of the image and the wild beasts represent the same kingdoms. The beauty of this process is that once a student of prophecy has enough data to ensure that both visions apply to the same event, the matrix takes over because there is chronological order in both prophecies. The details in one vision compliment the details in another.

We know from Chapter 3 of this book, that this great convocation was assembled in Heaven in 1798. The Father predetermined the date of this meeting thousands of years before it occurred; He aligned this convocation in Heaven with the fall of the papacy so that at the appointed time of the end, students of prophecy could determine the timing of this meeting even though the meeting was not observed by anyone on Earth.

Daniel saw “thrones set up” for this occasion, and the prophet John also saw the same event. Daniel was zoomed upward to Heaven and forward in time to witness an awesome meeting where John also saw thrones set up for this occasion! **“After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in Heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.’ At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in Heaven with someone sitting on it. . . . Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.”** (Revelation 4:1, 2, 4) Of course, John could not know the timing of what he saw. He simply says, **“At once I was in the Spirit. . . .”** We now know that Daniel and John were zoomed forward in their visions to see things that would take place thousands of years later, and neither man understood the timing of what he was shown. *The privilege of understanding the timing of Revelation 4-6 occurs after the book of Daniel is unsealed.*

When John arrived in Heaven, he was awed by the things he saw. **“And immediately I was in the Spirit; and, behold, a throne was set in Heaven, and one sat on the throne. 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. 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.

“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 [the seven brilliant angels that stand before God] of God. 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 [strange looking creatures] full of eyes before and behind. 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. 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.

“And when those beasts [creatures] give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, 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, ‘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.’ ” (Revelation 4:2-11, KJV, insertions mine)

The description that John gave is not hard to figure out. He saw the Father sitting on an exalted throne. He saw twenty-four human beings (elders) wearing golden crowns and they were sitting around the Father. He saw the seven angels (seven living beings or spirits) who stand before God (Revelation 8:2; Revelation 15:1; Hebrews 1:14) and he also saw four living creatures standing around the throne. Of course, John noticed “ten thousand times ten thousand” angels attending the meeting. (Revelation 5:11) For many people, the four living creatures are a mystery, so a few words about them may be helpful at this point.

The Four Living Creatures

The four living creatures in Revelation 4 represent the third member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. This definition may come as a surprise at first, but the third rule of apocalyptic prophecy produces this result! Rule Three states, *“Apocalyptic language can be literal, symbolic or analogous. To reach the intended meaning of apocalyptic prophecy, the*

student must consider: (a) the context, (b) the use of parallel language elsewhere in the Bible, and (c) relevant statements in the Bible which define the symbol if an element is thought to be symbolic.” Because we have to follow valid rules of interpretation to arrive at the intended meaning of prophecy, we have to consider the five specifications which John gives about the living creatures:

1. There were four living creatures surrounding the throne.
2. Each creature had six wings.
3. Each creature was full of eyes.
4. Each creature looked like a lion, a calf, a man and a flying eagle.
5. The four creatures never rested from giving praise and glory to God.

Before we try to reach a conclusion with these specifications, Rule Three says we need to consider the use of parallel language in the Bible. Consider the words of Ezekiel because he saw the four living creatures as well! Notice the ten specifications given in Ezekiel 1 and 10:

1. There were four living creatures having the appearance of a man. (1:5)
2. Each living creature had four faces, four wings and four hands. (1:6,7)
3. Each living creature had the faces of a lion, ox, man, and eagle. (1:10)
4. The four living creatures appeared to be on fire. Lightning flashed from the four living creatures. (1:13)
5. The four living creatures traveled at the speed of light. (1:14)
6. Above the four living creatures was a great expanse that looked like a sheet of ice. (1:22)
7. A glorious throne rested in the middle of this sparkling expanse. (1:26)
8. The bodies of the four creatures were covered with eyes. (10:12)
9. Four dynamic whirling wheels were located beside each creature. (1:15,16; 10:16)
10. The power of the four creatures came from the four wheels. (1:20; 10:17)

Even though there are slight variations in the descriptions of John and Ezekiel, I have no doubt that these two men were shown the same thing from two different perspectives. By giving different people different views of the same things, God expands our understanding of a subject. This is why there are four gospels! The perspective of Matthew is not sufficient. We need the perspectives of Mark, Luke and John to better understand the ministry of Jesus on Earth. For that matter, where would Christians be today without the perspectives of Paul?

When the fifteen specifications of John and Ezekiel are consolidated (as Rule Three dictates), the following conclusions are possible:

1. *Four* living creatures represent four manifestations of an omnipresent Holy Spirit (four clones of the same thing); that is, one Holy Spirit can be four places (everywhere) at the same time. The four living creatures are standing at the four points of the throne: north, south, east, and west.
2. The four living creatures are covered with *eyes*. The Holy Spirit has omniscience – a power that belongs only to deity. The Holy Spirit sees everything – forward and backward – the past, present and future – all at the same time. Jesus also said the Holy Spirit could speak on His own, but He does not. (John 16:13)
3. The four living creatures have the same four faces. Each face describes certain capabilities of the Holy Spirit. For example, the Holy Spirit has intelligent understanding (the face of a man – Ecclesiastes 8:1). The Holy Spirit has incredible strength (the face of the ox – Numbers 23:22). The Holy Spirit is powerful (the prowess of a lion – Numbers 23:24). The Holy Spirit can travel to its destination at the speed of lightning and swoop down on its prey wherever it may be (the face of an eagle – Deuteronomy 28:49). The Holy Spirit can move at the speed of lightening and is represented by the presence of six wings.
4. The Holy Spirit never ceases from extolling the majesty, generosity, goodness and grace of God. This is His work. He constantly brings glory to the Father and to Jesus by exalting them and hiding Himself. (John 16:14) This feature, in itself, says so much about the humility and meekness of the Godhead.

The Bible teaches that the Godhead is made up of three separate and distinct Gods: The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three Gods make up the Trinity. They are one in purpose, plan and action.

These three Gods are equals in every way and they are coeternal. They serve the universe in distinct roles so that an infinite Godhead can be understood by a finite creation. The God we call “Father” serves as the Head of Government for the Universe. The God we call “Jesus” serves as the Creative Agent of the Godhead. The God we call “Holy Spirit” is omnipresent throughout the universe enabling communion between God and His children at all times. Paul says the Holy Spirit intercedes for us. He wrote, **“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.”** (Romans 8:26) Jesus said the Holy Spirit is a distinct entity because He hears what is said and He could speak on His own if He wanted to! **“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.”** (John 16:13, 14) Jesus also said sinning against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven, **“And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.”** (Matthew 12:31, 32) This verse settles the question for me. The Holy Spirit is God. We can submit to or reject the Holy Spirit because he is an entity separate and distinct from Jesus. These and many other verses in the Bible bring me to the conclusion that the four living creatures represent the Holy Spirit. A lot more is waiting to be discovered about the four living creatures. When we examine the four horsemen of Revelation 6, you will be surprised to learn what the Holy Spirit can do!

Who Is Worthy to Receive the Book?

The first order of business at the great convocation described in Revelation 4 and 5 was to find someone worthy to receive the Book of Life and break the seven seals. John wrote, **“Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?’ But no one in Heaven or on Earth or under the Earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. Then one of the [24] elders said to me, ‘Do**

not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.’ ”

(Revelation 5:1-5, insertion mine) John does not tell us at first what he understood about this book; however, it is obvious that John understood certain things about it because he wept and wept when no one was found worthy to resolve the sin problem.

A normal person does not weep over something he does not understand. John wept because he felt deep grief and frustration. I can faintly imagine the setting of this meeting. An innumerable host of angels were called from distant galaxies to this great convocation. The Ancient of Days arrived and took His seat. An announcer called for nominees who could resolve the sin problem and exonerate God’s government of all charges of tyranny. Silence followed. No one in Heaven or Earth or even “under the Earth” was found worthy. (If a nominee happened to be dead and deemed worthy for this job, God would have instantly resurrected that person. In fact, several “resurrectees” were at the meeting. Moses and Jesus had been resurrected from the dead as well as some of the twenty four elders. Matthew 27:52, 53)

The silence broke John’s heart. John’s emotion might be compared to that of a wife sitting in a courtroom waiting for a credible witness to come forward and exonerate her innocent husband of false charges that carry a death sentence. It is interesting to notice that the Father offered the Book of Life to everyone in the universe before Jesus was considered. God is fair beyond a doubt. When Jesus humbly offered Himself, all Heaven broke out in joyful praise and thanksgiving! “Worthy is the Lamb,” they cried!

Consider the suspense as Jesus stepped forward: **“Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the Earth. He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.”** (Revelation 5:6, 7) This was a thrilling and awesome event. No awards ceremony on Earth has ever come close to matching the splendor of this occasion. **“And they sang a new song: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the Earth.’ ”** (Revelation 5:9, 10) This song resolves a mystery. At first, no one was found worthy to take the book sealed with seven seals. What were the

qualifications that no one could meet? Look again at the song for it has the answer, **“with your blood you purchased men for God.”**

I am sure the angels have closely studied the record of Jesus’ life on Earth. When this convocation came to order in 1798 and nominations were solicited for someone to take the book, Jesus was found worthy because He is the person who (a) created man, (b) volunteered to die for man, (c) was born into sin and did not sin, and (d) lived a life of perfect compliance to the will of the Father. However, the greatest qualification that silenced all other nominations was His victory over Lucifer. No one else has ever been born under the obligation of law and been completely victorious over rebellion! After Jesus was found worthy to take the book, Jesus was given the seven attributes that belonged to the Father. This highest exaltation of Jesus is demonstrated in the jubilant song that followed: **“In a loud voice they sang: ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive (1) power and (2) wealth and (3) wisdom and (4) strength and (5) honor and (6) glory and (7) praise!’ ”**

(Revelation 5:12) Compare Daniel’s view of this scene: **“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”** (Daniel 7:13, 14)

Critical Point!

Daniel 7 and Revelation 5 are synchronized. They are inseparably aligned because, in both cases, Jesus is given something that He did not have before. Jesus was given sovereign power (total control) in Daniel 7 and in Revelation 5. The transfer of sovereign authority firmly aligns Daniel 7 with Revelation 5, because sovereign power is granted only once. If Jesus had sovereign power prior to this occasion, no more power could be granted to Him at this time. (For comments on Jesus’ words that all power had been given to Him before He returned to Heaven, please see the segment in Chapter 3 titled, “All Authority?”) Daniel 7:14 indicates that Jesus *received* sovereign power and dominion that will never end, and Revelation 5:12 indicates Jesus was found worthy to receive power to break the seven seals.

At this huge convocation, the Father publicly gave Jesus total control over Heaven and Earth to accomplish two tasks: the consummation of salvation for mankind, and the exoneration of the Godhead from all charges of wrong doing. Who else could do this but Jesus? After the

angelic host and the 24 elders declared Jesus worthy to receive the Book of Life, the Father relinquished sovereign control to His *worthy* Son. In the presence of billions of angels, the scepter of power was transferred. This glorious heavenly scene, unseen by people on Earth, occurred in 1798. We know this because the timing of this convocation is linked to the downfall of the apostate Christian Church in Rome in Daniel 7.

Harmony Harmony Harmony Harmony

Now that we are acquainted with lots of pieces in the puzzle, it's time to use the four keys mentioned earlier to solve the question of timing. Please give these four keys careful consideration.

1. **Jesus was given sovereign power in 1798.** In Chapter 3 of this book, we established the fact that Daniel 7:9 had to take place in 1798. We know that the Ancient of Days called Heaven's inhabitants to an assembly, and after taking His seat, ended the 1,260 years of papal persecution by pronouncing a restraining order in favor of the saints. The authority of the Church of Rome was wounded by Napoleon's forces, the pope was taken prisoner, and he was placed in exile. The wounding of the papacy on Earth aligns with the coronation of Jesus in Heaven. Jesus received Earth as His inheritance (Daniel 7:13, 14; Hebrews 1:2) in 1798 and 46 years later, in 1844, Jesus began cleansing Heaven's temple. The Bible says, ". . . **The court was seated and the books were opened.**" (Daniel 7:10)
2. **The third seal was broken in 1844.** The Bible teaches that man is not judged when he dies, nor does he go to Heaven or Hell at the time of death. Rather, when a person dies, it is as though that person is asleep. (See Chapter 13 in *Jesus: The Alpha and The Omega*.)

With the exception of a few cases like Enoch, Moses, Elijah, and the 24 elders, the saints are not in Heaven. Neither is there anyone burning in Hell. In death, the soul is in the same condition as it was prior to birth – it does not exist. When a person reaches the age of accountability, a record of his or her choices and actions is made *as they occur*. When that person dies, the record is sealed. This record is then used in the judgment of the dead. Jesus began to review and pass judgment on each dead person in 1844. (Ecclesiastes 12:14; Acts 17:31; 2 Corinthians 5:10) The dead continue "sleeping" until they are either resurrected at the Second Coming (the righteous) or at the end of the thousand years (the wicked). Even though we have not examined the third seal, we will find that the judgment of the

dead begins with the breaking of the third seal in 1844. Thus the following points also link together:

1. The exaltation of Jesus in Daniel 7 is linked to 1798.
2. The judgment of the dead is linked to the 2,300 years mentioned in Daniel 8:14.
3. The 2,300 years are also linked to the third seal (Revelation 6:5,6).
4. The fourth seal marks the beginning of the Great Tribulation and the judgment of the living!

Whew! This is a lot of linking, but the matrix in Daniel clearly aligns these pieces of the puzzle. See the chart below:

The Alignment of Daniel 7, Daniel 8, Daniel 9, Revelation 5 and the First Three Seals

	457 B.C		A.D. 33		A.D. 538		1798	1844	Today
Rev 6							Seals 1 2	Seal 3	Jesus Going Through the Books of Record Judging the Dead
Rev 5							Jesus Found Worthy		
Dan 9	457 B.C -- 70 Weeks -- A.D 33								
Dan 8	457 B.C. -----2,300 Years ----- 1844								
Dan 7					A.D. 538 -- 1,260 Years -- 1798				

Chart 10.1

3. The High Priest was found worthy on the Day of Atonement.

The doctrine of parallel temples contributes to the matrix in Chart 10.1. In Leviticus 16, the High Priest had to be found worthy *before* he could cleanse the earthly temple on the Day of Atonement. To gain God's approval, the High Priest had to present himself before God within the Most Holy Place with the blood of a young bull. This bull came from the High Priest's herd. In other words, the High Priest had to provide his own blood for this sacrifice. The parallel here is obvious. Jesus provided His own blood for the redemption of

sinners, and after a careful examination, He was found worthy before the Father, the 24 elders, and the angelic host to receive the Book of Life.

After the High Priest received God's approval in the earthly temple, the High Priest proceeded to remove the record of sin from the temple. (Leviticus 16) There are three points in this process which should be considered.

- a. The Day of Atonement service in the earthly temple shadowed the cleansing of Heaven's temple. We know from Daniel 8:14, the cleansing of Heaven's temple began in 1844. Even though the Day of Atonement occurred every year in the earthly temple, Paul indicates that the judgment day would convene once, near the end of the world. (Acts 17:31; Hebrews 9:26; 2 Corinthians 5:10) The Jews, even to this day, call the Day of Atonement, "Yom Kippur" which means "The Day of Judgment."

Many people do not recognize this, but the book of Hebrews centers on the ministry of Jesus in a "Day of Atonement" capacity. Paul wrote, **"We have this hope [of salvation] as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. . . ."** (Hebrews 6:19, 20, insertion mine) **"For Christ is not entered into the [Most] holy places made with [human] hands, which are the figures of the true [temple in Heaven]; but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the [actual] presence of God for us [just like the High Priest did on the annual Day of Atonement when he went behind the veil.] Nor yet that he [Jesus] should offer himself often [again and again], as the high priest entereth into the [most] holy place every year [on the Day of Atonement] with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered [every year] since the foundation of the world: but [right] now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."** (Hebrews 9:24-26, KJV, insertions mine)

Paul clearly understood the doctrine of parallel temples. (Hebrews 8:1-5) He understood the annual cleansing of the earthly temple on the Day of Atonement was a shadow of a "one time" cleansing of the heavenly temple that would begin near the end of the world. Because Paul thought he was living close to the end of the world, he believed that Jesus had entered into the

Father's presence [that is, the Most Holy Place] at the time of His ascension to intercede for mankind. (Hebrews 6:19, 20) The problem with this perspective is timing. Paul, like the other disciples of Jesus, was convinced that he was living at the end of the world and he clearly says so in other places. (Hebrews 1:1, 2; 1 Corinthians 7:29; Romans 13:12) However, the book of Revelation did not exist in Paul's day and the book of Daniel had not yet been unsealed. The point is that Paul saw the exaltation of Jesus as man's High Priest, and he saw Jesus serving in the Most Holy Place at "the end of the world" as our High Priest without knowing the timing of what he saw. Paul had the same limitations that Daniel and John had; they did not know about 1798 and 1844. To his credit, Paul wrote, **"For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears."** (1 Corinthians 13:9, 10)

- b. In ancient times, the worthiness of the High Priest was determined *just before* the temple was to be cleansed. The heavenly process is consistent with this fact because Jesus was found worthy in 1798, which is just before He began to cleanse the temple in 1844.
 - c. The High Priest could not enter the Most Holy Place except on the Day of Atonement. (Leviticus 16:2) This is a particularly important point. Only one service in the earthly temple concerned the Most Holy Place. This service occurred on the Day of Atonement and the purpose of this service was the cleansing of the temple. Because the book of Hebrews is concerned with the exaltation of Jesus (Hebrews 1-5) and Christ's ministry in the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement (Hebrews 6-10), Paul's comments in the book of Hebrews must be understood as taking place at, or near, the end of the world. (Hebrews 9:26) In other words, the ministry of Jesus as our High Priest – carefully described in the book of Hebrews – applies after He was found worthy in 1798.
4. **The matrix aligns Daniel 7, Daniel 8 and Daniel 9 with Revelation 4-6.** After reviewing Chart 10.1, we find the prophetic matrix easily aligns Daniel 7, 8 and 9 with Revelation 4-6. The doctrines regarding the state of the dead and parallel temples also contribute to this sequence of events. Let us review how Bible history and recorded history affirm the presence of a relationship between 1798 and 1844.

- a. The 1,260 years of persecution by the little horn power in Daniel 7 ended in February 1798, because the Father issued a restraining order against the little horn shortly after He took His seat. (Daniel 7:20, 21)
- b. The seventy weeks of Daniel 9 began in 457 B.C. and terminated with A.D. 33. Jesus confirmed the synchrony of these dates by conducting the Passover service for His disciples at the right time in A.D. 30 (Mark 14) and by dying on the cross in the middle of the seventieth week. Jesus died on Friday afternoon, April 7, A.D. 30. (John 19)
- c. According to Daniel 9, seventy weeks of probationary time were granted to Israel as a last chance to fulfill God's covenant. The seventy weeks were "cut off" from the beginning of the 2,300 years mentioned in Daniel 8:14 so that if Israel was faithful to God (in Plan A), the 2,300 year prophecy (in Plan B) would not be necessary. In fact, the book of Daniel would have remained sealed forever if Israel had been faithful to God and His covenant. Since Jesus affirmed the middle year of the seventieth week with His death, there is no question that the seventy weeks and the 2,300 years began in 457 B.C. Consequently, there is no question that the 2,300 years terminated in the Spring of 1844 and the cleansing of Heaven's temple began at that time.

Daniel and John Favorably Compare

Before we conclude this investigation on timing, please review the following parallels between Daniel and John:

Daniel 7:9: "As I looked, thrones [plural] were set in place."

Revelation 4:2, 4: "... before me was a throne ... Surrounding the throne were twenty four other thrones and seated on them were twenty four elders."

Daniel 7:10: "... Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him."

Revelation 5:11: "Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand."

Daniel 7:9: "The Ancient of Days took His seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of His head was white like wool."

Revelation 4:3, 4: "The One who sat there had the appearance of a jasper [having a translucent brilliance, golden quartz color] and

carnelian [having the multilayered brilliance of a ruby]. The elders were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.”

Daniel 7:9, 10: “His throne was flaming with fire and its wheels were all ablaze.”

Revelation 4:5: “From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne seven lamps were blazing.”

Daniel 7:13: “I saw one like ‘a son of man.’ He approached the Ancient of Days.”

Revelation 5:7: “The Lamb approached the Father sitting on the throne and took the scroll from His right hand.”

Daniel 7:14: “He [the Son of Man] was given authority, glory and sovereign power.”

Revelation 5:9, 12: “. . . They sang a new song, ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and open its seals.’ ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!’ ”

These parallels are interesting, but not identical. In fact, if there was no other information, these parallels would not be close enough to say they were describing the same scene. However, we have other data that tells us Daniel and John are describing the same scene, so the differences are more helpful than harmful because the details add information from two different perspectives. The differences between Daniel 7 and Revelation 4-6 can be compared to Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 where there are two different perspectives of the *same* thing, even though the visions are very different.

Now that we have examined the timing of Revelation 4-6, please review Chart 10.2. Notice the vertical alignment of the various elements that have been discussed thus far.

Revelation 4-6 Expands The Matrix

Today

Timing:	538 B.C.	331 B.C.	168 B.C.	A.D. 476	A.D. 538	1798	1844	Great Tribulation
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Rev 4-6						Jesus Found Worthy, Then Breaks First Three Seals Between 1798 - 1844		Seal 4 Marks The Beginning of the Great Tribulation	
						1 2 3		4 5 6	
Daniel 8	---- 457 B.C. -----2,300 Day/Years ----- 1844 ----							The Time of the End	
	Ram with Two Horns	Goat With One Great Horn -- then Four Horns	-- 538 -1798 --				Pre- Advent Judgment of the Dead	Judgment of the Living	Horn Power from the North: Stern Faced King
Daniel 7	Bear with Three Ribs	Leopard with Four Heads	Monster	10 Horns at First	1,260 Day/Years A.D. 538 to 1798		Books Opened	Little Horn Heard Boasting	Beasts are Burned Up in the Fire at the End
					Little Horn Rises Uproots 3 Horns	Court Seated Little Horn Falls			
Daniel 2	Chest of	Thighs of	Legs of	Feet of					10 Toes 10 Kings
	Silver	Bronze	Iron	Iron and Clay					Iron/Clay
	Medo- Persia	Grecia	Rome	Many Kings					10 Kings

Chart 10.2