

7 Seals

I. Announce:

A. **Tanzania update:** *Everyone is healthy and doing well. It's going well. We have been doing children's outreach, painting a mural, door-to-door evangelism, and helping with some repairs.*

II. Slide1 Intro: 7 SEALS

A. Well we come back down out of the heavenlies (ch.4,5) and spiral back down now to rebel planet earth (ch.6).

B. So the commencement of the 7 yr. **Tribulation**, the beg of *the day of the Lord*.

1. Joel 2:11 **For the day of the LORD is great & very terrible; Who can endure it?**

2. Slide2,3 Zeph.1:14-18 **That terrible day of the Lord is near. Swiftly it comes - a day of bitter tears, a day when even strong men will cry out. 15 It will be a day when the Lord's anger is poured out - a day of terrible distress and anguish, a day of ruin and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness, 16 a day of trumpet calls and battle cries. Down go the walled cities and the strongest battlements! 17 Because you have sinned against the Lord, I will make you grope around like the blind. Your blood will be poured into the dust, and your bodies will lie rotting on the ground. 18 Your silver and gold will not save you on that day of the Lord's anger. For the whole land will be devoured by the fire of his jealousy. He will make a terrifying end of all the people on earth.**

a) God once sent a **Peace Treaty** to earth to be signed my man. Man tore it up and sent it back. **That Peace Treaty was the Prince of Peace Treaty.**

C. The opening of the 1st seal here unleashes a volley of judgments that last through ch.20.

1. 1st the 7 seals, then the 7 trumpets, then the 7 bowl judgments.

2. Slide4-7 John introduces *the 4 horsemen of the apocalypse* (I found some crazy pictures), the martyrs, and the awesome, destructive power of the Lamb.

3. Rather than bringing about *total destruction*, remember these judgments serve to call people to **repentance**. (adapted from *Faithlife Study Bible* intro notes)

III. Slide8a **FIRST SEAL – WHITE HORSE (1,2)**

- A. **Why horses?** – They represent *military power* in Biblical times. [Note: 4 horses in Zech.6:1-8]
- B. **Who is this white horse?** - Some say Christ, **others** say Anti-Christ.
1. The only thing similar is the color of the horse.
 2. This riders crown was - *στέφανος/stephanos* **or** a **victor's** wreath.
 - a) **Jesus'** in 19:12 has many crowns - *διάδημα/diadem* **or** **kingly** crown.
 3. Jesus comes at the tail end of Judgment (Rev 19) [*i.e.* not the beginning]
 4. **Slide8b So** Antichrist arrives on the world stage with *the markings of counterfeit*
 - a) He begins his conquest of the nations by *peacefully taking control*.
 - b) Alexander The Great often conquered whole cities *w/out a drop of bloodshed*.
 - c) He seems to have *a bow* with *no arrows*.
- C. **How will he be received?** Jn.5:43 *I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.*
- D. It seems to be a **Cold War** in that there is still *peace* till the start of the 2nd seal.
1. **Slide8c** 1 Thes. 5:2,3 *you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.*
 - a) Satan seems to declare **peace** *before* he declares **war**...**so** beware of *his offers*.

IV. Slide9 **SECOND SEAL – RED HORSE (3,4)**

- A. We know that *peace* is removed from the earth, & people start **warring** against each other.
- B. A Sword *given* to him, shows.....*God is in control*.
- C. **Why Red Horse?** Maybe suggests **bloodshed**?
- D. **Wars** normally bring **Famine**.

V. Slide10 **THIRD SEAL – BLACK HORSE (5,6)**

- A. **Scales/balances** – The scale will aid in **rationing out** food/drink at exorbitantly high prices
- B. Normally a days wage (**denarius**) would buy **10 qrts** of **wheat**, **30 qrts** of **barley**.

1. During this famine you'd only get **1 qt.** of wheat, **3 qt.** of barley.
 2. Or, **1/10** the normal supply of food. So, basically *radical inflation*.
- C. Do not hurt the oil & wine - is an *ironic twist* in this terrible situation.
1. The **rich** will continue to enjoy their **luxurious lifestyle**. [rich get richer]
 2. Luxury food items will not be in short demand. Which will only taunt the people in there poverty stricken state.
- D. Slide11 Hunger Stats:
- E. More than 1/2 of the world goes to bed hungry.
1. **1.2 billion** of our neighbors live in **absolute/desperate poverty** (live on \$1 or less a day) **Another 1.6 billion** are **very poor** (live on \$2 or less, a day).
 2. We as, individual families, throw into our garbage cans every day enough food to feed a family of 6 in India.
 3. The average American dog has a higher protein diet than most peoples of the world.
 4. 1.5 million people are forever hungry...on what Ghandi called, *the eternal compulsory fast*.
 5. Slide12a-f The number of hungry people in the world exceeds the population of U.S., Canada, & the European Union combined.
 6. 34 million children suffer from severe acute malnutrition, a deadly condition if not treated.
 7. Around 1 million children each year die from hunger-related causes. This means malnutrition causes 15% of child deaths.
 8. A leading cause for malnutrition in children under 5 years old is diarrheal disease caused by unsafe water and sanitation.
 9. Hunger kills more people each year than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined.
 10. More than 60% of the world's hungry are women and girls.
- F. Famines normally bring Death.

VI. Slide13a **FOURTH SEAL – PALE HORSE** (7,8)

- A. **Pale** - Yellowish/green. *It refers to the color of a corpse, or the blanched appearance of a person struck w/terror.* LKGNT
- B. This is the *only rider named...Death.*
- C. Some think each of the 4 horsemen, are **not** persons **but** *personifications*.
1. Here is death personified.
- D. **Death** claims the physical part of the person.
- E. **Hades** follows & claims the immaterial part of the person.
1. Here is more evidence **death** doesn't end all. **After death** is...**Hades**.
After Hades is...*the Lake-o-Fire* [where the soul is claimed for eternity]
- F. **1/4th of earth** is wiped out [in **9:18** an additional **1/3rd** are killed]
- G. **Slide13b** There are 4 means of extermination:
1. **Sword** (war)
 2. **Hunger** (Famine, that normally follows war)
 3. **Death** (perhaps by plagues /diseases that accompany wars also)
 4. **Wild Beasts** (apparently unrestrained) [think rabies?]
- H. The most destructive is **not** the *lion, tiger, or bear*, **but** the **Rat** (though not a beast).
1. The Rat is *clever, adaptable & destructive*.
 2. **Slide13c** Rat Stats:
 - a) If **95%** of a Rat population is exterminated in a given area, it'll replace itself in **1yr**.
 - b) Rats have *killed more people* than all the wars of history.
 - c) They carry as many as **35 diseases**. [Their fleas carry *Bubonic plague*, which killed 1/3rd of the population in Europe in the 14th cent]
 - d) Their **fleas** also carry **Typhus** which in 4 centuries has killed **200 million people**.
 - e) Rats are also linked w/**Famine**. They are a threat to food supplies & contaminate it.

VII.Slide14a **FIFTH SEAL – CRY OF THE MARTYRS (9-11)**

- A. Now we shift to **heaven** for a glimpse of what is going on up there.
- B. **Who were these martyrs?** Probably martyrs from during the 1st 4 plagues.

- C. Why were they martyred? *for the word of God & their testimony*. [Lit. *For the witness which they were having*]
- D. Slide14b Why under the altar? The **blood** was always poured out at the foot of the altar. Lev.4:7
- E. The martyrs are *aware* of what is happening on earth (They are conscious, at rest, & aware)
- F. God's answer... *Wait...there are still more to be martyred*.
1. Here we glimpse at the long standing **problem w/evil & why it is allowed to reign**.
 2. We know it is for **His** perfect plan & purposes, which are best from **His** vantage point, of **His** total plan - though different from our limited viewpoint.
 3. This is difficult from the Martyrs standpoint, *why would God let these murderers live? Trust Him*. Let Him do **His** will, in **His** time.
 4. Death for Jesus sake is not a waste - but is sacrifice & worship!
- G. Slide14c Re: Martyrdom, *Love makes the whole difference between an execution & a martyrdom*. Evelyn Underhill

VIII. Slide15 **SIXTH SEAL – COSMIC DISTURBANCES (12-17)**

- A. Great earthquake - [3 more to come, in Rev]
- B. Sun *as* black sackcloth. Moon became *like* blood. [Note: *as & like*]
- C. Stars of heaven fell to the earth - A meteor shower on the earth w/great devastation.
- D. Sky receded/split apart as a scroll when it is rolled up - Heavens opened.
1. Heaven opens up for a brief moment but what were earthlings able to see that scared them so badly? **See** vs.16.
 - a) What is more dreadful than **death**? *The terror of the Lord*.
 - b) It wasn't the **physical** devastation, *but a glimpse of God*, that makes them cry, *hide me from Him on the throne & from the Lambs wrath*.
- E. Slide16 Every Mountain & Island moved [Note: *no like/as*] - Is this possible? *Yep!*
1. On March 11, 2011 **Japan** experienced their largest & most powerful earthquake in all their recorded history. A **(9.0-9.1)** quake lasting **6 min**. **4th most powerful** in the world since recording started in 1900. It **moved** Honshu Island 8' East, plus shifted the earth's axis 4-10", & it **sped** up the

earth's rotation 1.8 microseconds per day.

It triggered a **tsunami** which waves were reported at 133' high. When it hit Japan it was a **30' wave** traveling **6 miles inland**. The **tectonic plates** shifted 18 meters (54'). It triggered 160 **after shocks** in the 1st 24 hours, 141 were more than 5.0. Also the **nuclear accident**, level 7 meltdown at Fukushima's 3 reactors. Resulting in 15,896 deaths, 6,157 injured, and 2,537 people missing. A report from 2015 indicated 228,863 people were still living away from their home in temporary housing. **1 earthquake...that moved an island!**

- F. The result of all this mess so far? *to strike **terror** upon the hearts of the people on earth.*
- G. Did it help? See 9:20,21 :(*nope.*
- H. These 6 seals are only **the beginning** of troubles [if a woman had **3 hours** of hard labor...this is only the **1st hour**]

IX. Slide17 **SEVENTH SEAL – SILENCE (8:1)**

- A. Slide18 **Silence** is something **Heaven** is normally...**NOT**.
- B. **Silence is golden???** No...not always. *Silence can be eerie.*
- C. Heaven is where *Praise, Joy, & Singing* are given up day & night forever & ever...That's why this is so strange.
- D. Slide19a Imagine the 4 **living creatures** who rest not day & night saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy.*
Then all of a sudden they find a rest in their sheet music?
- E. **The silence** is *the lull before the storm.*
- F. Slide19b Zeph.2:20 *Be **silent** in the presence of the Lord GOD; For the day of the LORD is at hand, For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice(Israel); He has invited His guests(Babylonians)*
- G. Slide20a Read Joel 2:11-13 *The day of the Lord is an **awesome, terrible thing**. Who can possibly survive? A Call to Repentance 12 That is why the Lord says, "Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me your hearts. Come with **fasting, weeping, and mourning** (total heart). 13 Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead (torn heart)." Return to the Lord your God (turned heart), for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is eager to relent and not punish.*

1. Slide20b The Lord desires: **total heart, torn heart, turned heart.**
- H. **The Tribulation** is to cleanse the creation for its Creator & to draw to Him as many as will come. [Purification must precede Worship]