

05b REV

Let's resume our study now. We're looking at the heavenly scene that John gazes upon in his vision. And we've taken a little bit closer look at the four living creatures and the nature of the description that John gives of He who sits upon the throne.

And once again, with all of these clues that this is God as He is revealed to an earthly and specifically Israelite context, it makes sense that God the Father, of course, is revealed through the Son. And the Son, proleptically or prophetically, is revealed in the priestly functions in Israel. And so you have these two stones in the breastplate that represent Reuben and Benjamin and represent Christ in prospect.

And of course, at the time, so to speak, that John is looking at this, you're now in the time of the end where Christ has come. And this is a look back, but it's still in sort of Israelite terms. Well, then we went over to Daniel and we looked at the sort of false fours that typify and characterize Antichrist.

He's got his four beast characterizations and his false cherubim with their four little heads. And God doesn't even bother to show Daniel what the four heads look like. They just have these four heads.

They may all be leopard heads. And then right after that, in Daniel chapter 7, verse 8, I was looking at this beast with the iron teeth, devouring, breaking in pieces, trampling, different than all the beasts that were before it. And it had ten horns.

We know upcoming in Revelation we're going to see the beast with the seven heads and the ten horns. This is the same beast. Daniel says in verse 8 of Daniel 7, I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little horn, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots.

This has to do with the inner dynamics of the revived Roman Empire. We'll look at it in detail when we get to that point. But he says, there in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

Now, what kind of eyes does the lamb have that stands up next to the throne of God? You have a direct comparison not only of these other aspects of the force, but also of the eyes. This thing tries to have wings like an eagle, but they get picked off. It's like Icarus flying too close to the sun.

The wax melts, and he's just a man. Well, the same thing here. He's going to speak these pompous words out of his mouth, but his eyes are just the eyes of a man.

He sees things the way men see. He doesn't have the seven-fold spiritual vision that the Lord Jesus Christ in his humanity has through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The same ministry that you and I have.

We can have special perception. We can have supernatural perception of the world around us through the ministry of God's Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ inaugurated this.

Jesus Christ test drove the new spiritual life. He was the first man to live the spirit-filled life in his humanity on the earth. He demonstrated it for Israel.

They didn't partake. They didn't accept it. I was looking at Kirby's website the other day for something.

Oh, I know. I was trying to figure out how to operate my sweeper, and I went up on their website. It turned out I was able to figure it out without their help.

But while I was looking at their website, it came to my attention that you cannot go to a store and buy a Kirby. They aren't sold in stores. I knew that used to be true when I was small.

It's still true. They said if you find a Kirby in a store, it's used, because new Kirbys are only sold by these guys that come to the door and say, let me give you a demonstration. That's the only way Kirby has ever sold their sweepers brand new.

And so if you get a Kirby from any source other than an authorized Kirby individual knocking on your door, it's not a new Kirby from the factory. It's something weird. It's a repo, maybe.

But anyway, when I was young, there used to be vacuum cleaner salesmen coming all the time and doing all these sleight of hand things to try to get you to buy a sweeper. They would dump dirt in your rug, and they'd say, now sweep that up with your sweeper. And you'd sweep it up and vacuum over it and over it.

And they'd say, now watch my miracle sweeper. And they would go in and they would put a piece of black cloth in the bag of their sweeper and then sweep all over it and then take the black cloth out. Well, my goodness, look at all this dirt your sweeper missed.

And make this demonstration. Well, the hands-on approach of selling sweepers and hands-on experience of actually seeing it is better than just watching a commercial or whatever. I mean, you run the old sweeper, you run the new sweeper, and you see how it works.

And this gives you a first-hand experience. And the man shows you how it works. And so later on, when you buy one of these things, and it's got a hair-cutting attachment, and it's got a flower-watering attachment, and all of these special things that go on the sweeper, you can't believe the things they have for Kirby sweepers.

I'm not kidding you. There's a hair-cutting attachment for the sweeper that you can get from Kirby that's kind of like a super flobey. I'd be scared to put my head in that thing.

That's a powerful sweeper. It might just make you look kind of strange. But there are lots of different things.

And if you don't have someone demonstrate first, I would like the Kirby man. Let him show me the haircut on himself first. Then maybe I'll try the hair-cutting attachment.

The Lord Jesus Christ, to strike a little more serious note, was the first one to live on earth in His humanity by the power of the Spirit. This is what it talks about in John 1. We all beheld Him. We beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father.

But He's begotten. It's His humanity. Jesus Christ, in His pre-incarnate form, was not the begotten Son of God, was He? He wasn't begotten until 2,000 years ago.

Then He became the only begotten of the Father. And any time you see Jesus in terms of His being begotten of the Father, it is a reference to His humanity. That's new.

And it completely screws up all of the theologians. I don't know if you know this or not, but do you all know what I majored in when I went to seminary? What my major was? It was systematic theology. I figured you could major in Greek.

You could major in New Testament. You could major in this. But I figured systematic theology, you've got to comprehend the whole thing and understand it categorically.

And so I majored in systematic theology. Well, one of the categories of theology is theology proper. Theology is a general term.

And then theology proper is theosology, the study of God proper, the characteristics and nature of God. And so you look at the essence of God. What are His attributes? And some of us have heard for a long time this tenfold breakdown of sovereignty, righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, omnipotence, omnipotence, omnipresence, immutability, and veracity.

And that's a nice little convenient. But you can no more put God in a box or define Him by a set of terms than you can put lightning in a jar. There's no way.

It's convenient to describe certain attributes. But here's the thing. One of those is immutability.

What does it mean when it's immutable? Immutability is a property of change. They say God is unchangeable. Now, all three members of the Trinity are co-equal, co-eternal, have the identical same essence.

Well, it just completely torts the brain of theologians when they come to Christ and the Incarnation. Because the second person of the Trinity changed. He is not the same now that he was 3,000 years ago.

He's just not. He mutated. He went through some mutability.

He was all divine. Now he is the God-man. He changed.

And so people that like all their stuff sliced and diced and indexed and filed and all in neat little rectangular boxes just have springs coming out of their head when they look at this because they can't figure it out. And there's been endless dead seas of ink spilled trying to noodle around the problem of Jesus changing. Wait a minute.

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever? Well, stop and think about that. Jesus Christ the same. When did Jesus become the Christ? Incarnation.

From the time he was born yesterday through today and unto the ages, he is evermore the same. There has been one mutation in the second person of the Trinity, and that's the Incarnation. He was immutable before that.

He's immutable after that. But there's one place where he was mutable. He voluntarily changed himself permanently on a one-time basis forever.

For us. He did it for us. And he made humanity acceptable to dwell with God for eternity.

It's a huge thing. And it's a shame that people get all mixed up trying to make Jesus not mutable and miss the point that that change is the biggest thing that's ever happened in God's universe. God changed.

The Father is evermore the same. The Spirit, evermore the same. But the second person changed.

Well, part of that change, when he took on humanity, when he became human, he lived his human life in the power of the Spirit. Every miracle, every insight, every understanding of the Word of God that he had when he walked this earth in the First Advent came through the ministry of God's Holy Spirit. He was filled with the Spirit out from his mother's womb, just like John the Baptist was.

And from an early age, he learned the Scriptures under the tutelage and the ministry of his earthly parents and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ and his humanity came to know who he was by the study of the Word of God. Just like we do.

How do we come to know who we are and why we're here and what our lot in life is, what our portion, what our assignment, what our opportunities are? How do we discern those in the spiritual realm? They are spiritually discerned. The things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned. The carnal mind can't comprehend them.

It doesn't make any sense. People with a carnal mind look at them and can't figure it out. They mock it and deride it and dissect it and pick it apart and never come to an understanding because the Holy Spirit has a unique ministry.

So, look at this. This horn in Daniel 7, verse 8, comes up. It has the eyes of a man.

It's carnal. And this is a terrible mutilation of terms here. They talk about mixing your metaphors and things like that.

But these eyes of a man are the Antichrist's Achilles heel because he can't see the way the Lord Jesus Christ can see with the sevenfold perfect vision given him by God the Holy Spirit in his humanity. And he is going to rule on the earth in his humanity. And he is going to implement that rule through faithful believers like you and me.

If we pay attention, we are going to be useful. We will in some way be able to justify and make worthwhile the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf because he will have redeemed to himself a worthy bride who is useful. It's pretty tough if you marry somebody and then they are just worthless.

They watch *As the World Turns* all day. And that's all they do. They just Tivo it.

They watch episode after episode. They don't pay any attention to you. They don't talk.

They don't listen. They don't contribute. They just sit there glued to the TV.

That would be... It never happens, but that would be an awful thing. Well, wouldn't it be awful if the bride of Christ was basically useless? This is what I think now. When you're in high school and you see a pretty girl in your class, you're a senior, and you say, I want to take her to a prom.

She's gorgeous. She is a wonderful person. I can't stop thinking about her.

Well, in hindsight, when you're old enough to realize what constitutes a really deep, meaningful relationship, you look at a 16-year-old and you think, good grief. If I was shackled to that, I would shoot myself. What's it doing? It runs around with headphones on listening to Smashing Pumpkins or something.

What good is that? Well, we don't want to be a useless bride. We want to make the Lord Jesus glad that he died for us. We want to reflect our gratitude in a tangible, material, meaningful way.

We can never earn or deserve God's grace. We can never earn or deserve our salvation. But we can certainly do our best to be good and faithful servants.

The Lord Jesus Christ changed from being co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit and uniquely took on humanity at a point in time and will evermore be that. And he did it for us. What is our response? Do we care? Do we know? Do we have any motivation of gratitude that causes us to want to be pleasing in his sight, to fulfill our opportunity and our potential in God's plan, to reflect his glory? This is our chance.

He has shown us the way to live in the power of the Spirit. It is the power of God's Holy Spirit that gave testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ when he was here the first time and is going to do the same thing the second time. And that is our opportunity while he is gone to be that testimony.

If you want to be a good witness, if you want to see souls saved, live in the power of the Spirit. Because the Spirit is what bears witness to Christ. And to the extent that we live a Spirit-filled, God-focused life, we will witness to the Lord Jesus Christ because we are like him.

We live a life like he lived. And we have that perception. It is completely opaque and mysterious and non-understandable to the unbelieving world.

It is mysterious and non-understandable, unfortunately, to a lot of the Christian world. But you and I know better. We have seen it in the Word of God.

We understand what the role of the Holy Spirit is. And if we can remember to live our life in his power, we represent Christ on this earth. We are what it is that is hindering the Spirit of Antichrist that is already at work in the world.

People can't pawn off a four-headed leopard with bat wings while we are here. People can't get the Antichrist thing going while we are here. It is not until that which hinders is taken out of the way.

Is it the church or is it the Spirit? Yes. There is no church without the Spirit. And you don't see the Spirit on earth without the church.

It is one and the same thing. Will there be some sort of ministry of the Spirit after the church leaves? Of course, just as there was in the Old Testament. You cannot understand the Word of God.

Every Old Testament saint that understood anything, that prayed anything to God, there was a ministry of the Spirit. But not like the Lord Jesus Christ. Not like the filling, the indwelling, the sealing, the gifting, the energizing, the perceiving ministry that He had for the Lord Jesus and that He has for us.

Nothing like it in the Old Testament won't be anything like it in the Tribulation, which is the last part of the Old Testament age. It is unique to us. And what a shame for us to miss it, to squander it, to waste it, when there are people in the Old Testament age who longed to see our day, who would give a lot to live just a day under the power of the Spirit as we have it daily.

Well, that's the eyes and the mouth speaking pompous words. Now look at verse 9. This is the reason we came back to Daniel 7, among others. I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated.

His garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire. Where have we seen wheels associated with the throne of God? As was pointed out during the break, what is the time period between Daniel and Ezekiel? They're contemporaries, aren't they? And in the same way that you have the earthly people of God represented in Israel and the heavenly people of God represented in the Church, you have the two prophets of God during this captivity of Judah.

Ezekiel is down by the river Kabar with the other captive Israelites. Daniel is up in the royal palace. He's up there eating king's food and dwelling in high places, wearing robes and governing.

And there is a comparison contrast between the prophecies of Daniel and the prophecies of Ezekiel that are similar to the kind of synergy and the kind of comparison contrast you have between Old Testament studies and New Testament studies. Ezekiel is Old Testament, earthly point of view. When he sees the throne of God, the throne of God has come down to earth.

And there's a storm cloud. There aren't any storms in heaven. There's no atmosphere up there in heaven.

You only get storm clouds and dust kicking up and so on when the chariot of God, the throne of God, comes down to earth. Ezekiel sees it from earth. How does Daniel see the throne of God? Upstairs.

He's got the same point of view that John does. And Daniel foreshadows. He is a preview of coming attractions because he gets the royal point of view, the heavenly point of view, the kingly point of view.

Ezekiel is down at the other end. No less valuable is Ezekiel. No less worthy, no less faithful.

Different function, different role, different assignment in the plan and purpose of God. But, here's the point. Look at the sequence here.

There is a vision by night for Daniel in verse 2. The four winds of heaven stir up the great sea. What is the sea the universal picture of, especially in the Old Testament? The wicked are like the troubled sea. It is the domain of Leviathan.

It is the domain of the chaotic uncontrollable forces of darkness. This is where these beasts come from that are like the lion with the fake eagle's wings and the bear and the rest of it. And as these beasts are revealed, Daniel sees them.

And you have the three horns pushed out of the way and the other little horn that comes up and this is all Antichrist stuff that takes place during the tribulation period, right? This

is our belief at this point anyway is that this pushing aside of horns and munching on three ribs and all the rest of that, the revelation of the Antichrist takes place after that which hinders is taken out of the way. Church slash Holy Spirit leaves. Antichrist is revealed.

Here Daniel sees him revealed. He's trampling, he's munching, he's doing all these things. Then in verse 9, Daniel says, I continued to watch until thrones were put in place and the Ancient of Days was seated.

So the question is, are these thrones that were put in place, the thrones of the 24 elders, i.e., did the elders not show up until after the Antichrist was revealed? And it says, The Ancient of Days was seated. His garment is white as snow. The hair of his head is pure like wool.

He's got a throne with a wheel and fiery stream issuing. Thousand thousands ministered to him. Ten thousands times ten thousands stood before him.

The court was seated and the books were opened. Now, obviously it is a judgment scene. There are thrones, which means there is going to be delegation of judgment, right? Just like in the days of Moses.

Moses, you can't do this all yourself, Jethro says. Get some help. The Lord Jesus is going to delegate judgment to those who sit on these thrones.

So the question is, who's sitting on the thrones and who is not sitting on the thrones, being judged by those who are on the thrones? And what is the time of this scene? Because one could make the case that, well, the church went on into the tribulation to some point, mid-trib, pre-wrath, whatever. Then the eject lever was pulled and they popped out of the cockpit and went to heaven and are now up there to occupy a throne and do judgment. Well, we need to read a little further to see what the clues are.

I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking. So this appearance of the thrones, sitting down for judgment, ranging about of these innumerable multitudes is during the 70th week. That seems clear.

You've got the beast before, you've got the beast after. He's speaking his pompous words before. He's still speaking pompous words after.

The rest of the beasts had their dominion taken away. Their lives were prolonged for a season at a time. I was watching in the night visions.

Behold, one like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven. He came to the Ancient of Days and they brought him near before Him. So now, if there was any doubt as to who the Ancient of Days is, now we know who it is.

It's God the Father, right? They brought Him, the one like the Son of Man, near before Him, the Ancient of Days. Then to Him, the one like the Son of Man, was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all people's nations and languages should serve Him. Dominion is everlasting.

Will not pass away. His kingdom shall not be destroyed. Well, you can go on down.

We'll be looking at this in great detail later. But I just want to say this much. The appearance during the pompous words of these thrones is the question we want to answer.

I watched until thrones were put in place and the Ancient of Days was seated. Now, normally, when we have a heavenly vision, we always see God the Father seated on His throne. His throne is surrounded by the cherubim.

He's got somebody sitting at His right hand. It would be kind of strange if He was standing and the Lord Jesus was seated. But it says, I watched until these were put in place.

The hair of His head is like pure wool. This is matched by the description of Christ in Revelation chapter 1. Like Father, like Son. This is a judgment visage.

The throne is a fiery flame. The wheels are burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him.

How different is this than the Kingdom of the Father picture? What issues from the throne in the New Jerusalem? Water, not fire. What are the four ancient elements? Earth, air, wind and fire. What is it that's going to be rolled up and taken away? Heavens and earth.

The air and the earth are going to go away. You still have water and you still have fire, right? You have fire from the throne of God. You have fire, the smoke of which burns forever and ever.

And you have water, the river of life. So, you can see that there is at least allusion to the ancient mind's understanding of what the universe is made of. And the fire is never said to go away.

It doesn't say, behold, in the New Jerusalem there is no more fire. Does it? And it doesn't say there's no more water. It does say, Peter says, the elements will melt with fervent heat and everything is going to be burned up with a big fire.

But you can't eliminate fire if it's in the middle of burning up with fire. So, you still have fire. And obviously, water is not in view.

It says there's no more sea. There's no more chaotic water. But there is this placid river

of life flowing out from the throne.

So, this is judgment mode of the throne. The eternal future is the grace, blessing, benefit mode of God's throne. Well, fiery stream issues, a thousand thousands minister to him, ten thousands times ten thousands stood before him.

The court was seated and the books were opened. So, who are these participants in this vision? A thousand thousands minister to him. Who are the ministers? Angels.

Behold, he make of his angels' ministers and his spirits a flame of fire. Humanity can't minister to God the Father. Angels are the Father's ministers.

They guard his throne. They walk in the stones of fire and so on. So, the thousand thousands minister to him.

Ten thousands times ten thousands stand before him. Why are they standing before him? To be judged. Ten thousands times ten thousands stood before him.

And the court is seated and the books are opened. You're in front of the judge. He's in judgment mode.

Fire is issuing forth from the throne. You hark back to wood, hay and stubble, gold, silver, precious stones. Thrones are in place.

Very first thing. Thrones, plural, are put in place or established. And the Ancient of Days is seated.

So, what judgment is this? What's available to us? Are angels being judged? We don't have any reason to think so. Are Old Testament saints being judged? Not yet. You got to go forward to Daniel 10 and then to Daniel 12 before you get to the resurrection to righteousness or shame and contempt.

So, who's left to raise and judge? And who is going to be available to stand before God's throne and be judged right in the middle of this revelation of the Antichrist when he's first speaking his pompous words? That would be, look around the room, that would be us. It's the only option left. It has to be the Church.

10,000 times 10,000 stand before Him to be judged. The remaining question is, who is sitting on the thrones, plural, to judge the Church? Well, if God is seated on His throne and He is the Ancient of Days and we know from the New Testament that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, the only possibility is that there is somebody that has been judged and found worthy to turn around and judge others. You know how this is where when the Church first started, the apostles were sent forth to find faithful men, teach them, and then they would turn around and teach others also.

Paul did this with Timothy and with Titus. Peter does it with John Mark. And the other

disciples did this.

It's where you train the first generation. The Jerusalem Church had the ministry of the apostles and then they turned around and had Stephen and the others who were judged faithful and took over distribution of goods and took over administrative functions within the Church. So my suggestion to you is, part of the rebuke of the apostle Paul in the Corinthians when he says, why do you take one another to court? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? If we are qualified to judge angels at some point, would we not be qualified to judge fellow believers having already been judged ourselves? I can't give you chapter and verse that we will judge each other, but I don't know who else it would be.

I don't think angels are going to be judging us. God already tried that back in Genesis 6. It didn't work out so well. And these thrones are... You notice it doesn't say thrones were set up and people sat on them.

Thrones are set up. The Ancient of Days is seated. The 10,000 times 10,000 are before him.

The books are opened. And you get the idea that after a few people come through the line, there's going to now be some people sitting on these thrones. Maybe these thrones, maybe the 24 elders, in a sense, represent those overcomers, those faithful in the Church.

And when the books are opened and this judgment takes place, these thrones are filled. It does not say anybody is sitting on the thrones. It just says they are set up.

So God is looking to fill those seats with somebody. Whether they in turn are going to turn around and judge or not is not explicitly stated. But it's interesting.

Because by the time John looks, there are 24 thrones around the throne of God, and there are white-robed, crowned individuals, elders, seated upon them. So Daniel's vision in chapter 7 would seem to immediately precede John's vision in Revelation 4 and 5. Does that make sense? So Daniel gives us the start-up sequence. It is as though God's throne itself is empty when Daniel first starts watching.

Because I watched this stuff happening down on the earth with this pompous voice and the bat-winged leopard and the bear with the ribs and the rest of it. And I kept watching until here's this heavenly scene. God comes in, seats Himself on His throne.

These other empty thrones are set up. His ministers are arranged around Him. This is the royal court scene like you see in Job chapter 1. And then you have those who are to be judged arranged before Him.

And this is before the age of Israel is over. The 70th week is just cranking up. So you don't see any of the trappings that indicate that this is an Israel scene.

You don't have four-faced cherubim spoken of. You don't have stones from the breastplate mentioned. All of the things that we just saw over in Revelation are conspicuously absent.

None of the Ezekiel trappings, none of the John in Revelation chapter 4 and 5 trappings that identify this scene with Israel are in place. It's completely different. So I would suggest to you that this is one of those things that was sort of sealed up until the church age came about.

I wonder if this could be one of the passages that the apostle Paul learned from during his time in the desert where the Lord Jesus trained him into being the 12th apostle. The apostle to the Gentiles. The apostle to the church.

The Lord Jesus might have taken him back and said, do you remember that thing in Daniel? Here's where these people come from. 10,000 times 10,000 and pointed out these very differences that we're looking at tonight. Well, this brings us back now to Revelation chapter 6 because once the proclamations of glory are made that we looked at last time, everyone acknowledges blessing, honor, glory, and power.

Remember the first time when the elders, let's just review this right quick as long as we're here. Revelation 5.11, I looked and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne. That would be the thousands and tens of thousands that ministered to the ancient of days that Daniel saw, right? The living creatures.

We know those are the cherubim, 24 elders. And the number of them was 10,000 times 10,000 and thousands of thousands saying with a loud voice, worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive seven things, power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing. Seven things.

This is the universal, both the angels and the elders recite this praise together. It's the heavenly things represented by three and the earthly things represented by four, total of seven attributes assigned to the lamb. Then every creature in heaven on earth and under the earth and in the sea, all that are in them I heard saying, this is heaven, earth, under the earth, and the sea.

How many attributes of earthly creation are mentioned there? Heaven, earth, under the earth, and sea. How many is that? Four. What's the number four represent? God's earthly creation.

And what do they say? How many attributes do they give to him who sits on the throne? Blessing, honor, glory, and power. Four attributes. So we are focusing in now.

There is a universal description, which the angels participate in, and then the creatures, which are in these realms associated with earth. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. That's an earthly description.

The fourfold places where you can be in the earth, they say four things about the lamb. Then the four living creatures say amen, and the twenty-four elders fall down and worship. Now we have chapter six, and you have the opening of the seals.

We have each of these... Now I've heard two different things about the scroll that we started studying last time with those five seals that we've already seen open. A total of seven seals. My understanding, and what I presented to you last time, is this is one scroll.

If you roll up a scroll... By the way, how did they make scrolls? They could be vellum. Those could not be much longer than the length of an animal hide without stitching another hide onto it. And you could make a vellum scroll.

Most scrolls were made of papyrus. How did they make a papyrus scroll? They would take the... You've probably heard in the past about the processing of papyrus. You take the plant, you mash it up, you get the fibers, you make a paper out of it.

And they would make this paper in eight by ten sheets. Not that different than what we have now. And they would glue those sheets together to make a scroll.

Scrolls are made of eight by ten sheets of papyrus glued together. And they finally said, what are we doing gluing these together? Why don't we just stick them together and put a binding on them and we can just flip through them. We don't have to keep rolling this scroll.

But that didn't happen until about the second century A.D. And so in John's day, in Jesus' day, everything was still being done with scrolls. So, if you roll up a scroll, everything is inside. And to seal it, you would put a blob of wax at that loose edge.

It's kind of like a roll of toilet paper now. You know, when you get a new roll of toilet paper out or a new roll of paper towels, how come that doesn't immediately unravel? They put just a little bit of weak glue right on the edge, don't they? And it's sealed. And you have to break that open.

And what annoys me is that sometimes they fold over the end. And so you think you're doing it one way and you're really doing it the other. And you waste this outside edge.

But it's sealed. It's sealed, right? Well, now, some people say, no, this wasn't sealed with seven seals along that edge. There was one seal on that edge.

And so they begin unrolling the scroll and read what's on it. And that's when the first horseman comes out and so on. And then you get as far as you can go.

And there's another seal that's got the scroll stuck shut. And you have to break the seventh seal so that you can read the next section. And, of course, I'm unrolling this

scroll to the left because I'm thinking Hebrew, but this might have been a Greek scroll.

So maybe it would unroll this way so they could read to the right. The Hebrew scrolls unroll this way. And you've got the heavy end in your left hand, the light end in your right hand.

And you start turning these in a, as you look down on it, it would be a clockwise manner. And you roll it up on the right, unroll it on the left, and you read from right to left in Hebrew. Well, whichever way it was, you would get to a stopping place.

Now, I'm asking myself, how practical is it to write a scroll, roll up a part of it, put a blob of wax, roll it up some more, put a blob of wax, and then unroll it and expect somebody to break the seals? I don't think this internal seal thing has any old ancient precedent. I don't think anybody ever did that. I think that's somebody's imagination working overtime.

The entire scroll is sealed and the breaking of the seals does not cause what is written in the scroll to take place. You can't unroll any of the scroll until all the seals are broken. This is my point.

So, that tells me that what is written in the scroll is not the content of the judgments associated with each seal. Those judgments aren't written on the scroll. Those judgments precede the unrolling and the reading and the implementing of the scroll.

So, it is an important point. What kind of seals are they? The scroll is not yet being read. And what we're going to watch for in Revelation is, here we're making such a big deal out of breaking each of these seals.

Does he ever read the scroll? It's got writing inside and outside. Big noise every time you break a seal. Must be a pretty important scroll.

Well, does the scroll ever get unrolled and read? We're going to watch for that when we go through Revelation because we haven't seen it yet. So, the first seal is broken and one of the four living creatures says, come and see. The first four seals gave us the four horsemen of the apocalypse and each one was introduced by one of the four living creatures.

So, there's something unique about the first four seals that pertains to earth. This number four just keeps coming up, doesn't it? It's God's earthly plan. God's earthly creation.

And so, out of seven seals, the first four have everything to do with what's going on down on the earth. And it's just like those four beasts in Daniel chapter 7 in a different light. You've got the four colored horses.

Each of the four living creatures introduces it. And what does this tell us? A point that Matthew made earlier. Just like in Old Testament days where you see angels associated with the implementation of God's plan on earth, associated with Persia, associated with earthly kingdoms, holding back winds, angels associated with making God's will happen on the earth.

Every time one of these seals is open, an angel speaks and says, come and see. And then you have a horseman riding forth. And so, he doesn't ride forth until the angel tells John to come look.

And it is as though an angel has to speak his peace before the horseman is released. And so, there is this angelic involvement in the unfolding of what God allows as well as what God causes on the earth. This is consistent with what we've learned in the book of Job where there are angels that are allowed to do certain things and not allowed to do certain things.

You can harm Job's stuff, but you can't touch Job. You can touch Job, but you can't take his life. And there is the implementation of testing or blessing or whatever else by the intermediate agency of angels.

And we are back to that mode in Revelation chapter 6. Angels are the intermediaries through which the implementation of these things takes place. And so, the first four seals were of that ilk. So, we would expect something different about the last three seals.

And that's where we are and that's where we will pick up next time looking at the fifth, sixth, and seventh seals. But let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for revealing your plan for the ages in your word, both the past, the present, and the future.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will remind us that the time is short and the opportunities are great to exploit your grace and to prepare ourselves for what is and what is to come. We pray that in all things our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be glorified. We pray it in His name.

Amen.