

FOUR BIG SEVENS



In the book of Revelation, there are several sets of sevens that we need to know about. We have learned about the 7 churches, but there are also 7 seals, 7 trumpets and 7 last plagues. That's what we'll learn about in this lesson.

First, what are the **7 trumpets**? (Revelation 8, 9; 11:15–19.) These represent different judgments or punishments from God on Rome. Pagan Rome fell apart into ten different kingdoms around A.D. 476. By A.D. 538, the church in Rome had become so powerful that it actually ruled Rome. The papacy ruled for 1,260 years. The trumpets show God's judgments first on pagan Rome and then on papal Rome. The prophecies are very detailed, just like Daniel 11. It is very interesting to compare these prophecies with history and see how accurately God described specific events hundreds of years before they happened. We don't have time to study them in these lessons, but you will want to do that sometime.



In some ways the **7 seals** are similar to the **7 churches**. Both show what happens to God's people and both start in the days of John and go all the way to the end of time.

Why does God include both **seals** and **churches**? Do you remember how Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 help to explain each other? Daniel 7 talks about the same kingdoms as Daniel 2, but Daniel 7 gives more detail. Likewise, the 7 churches show the condition of God's people, and the 7 seals give more details.

Before we study them, you'll want to read Revelation 4 and 5, where John describes the throne room in heaven. There He saw Jesus, whom He called the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, and the Lamb of God. He also saw a scroll that was closed and sealed with seven seals.

In all heaven, Jesus was the only one found worthy to open that scroll.



1ST SEAL

1 As Jesus opened the first seal, what did John see and hear? **Revelation 6:1, 2** "Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I _____ one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, 'Come and see.' And I looked, and behold, a white _____. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer."



The horse is a new symbol. It represents God's people. (Isaiah 63:11–13; Zechariah 10:3.)

In this first seal, we see God's people, under Jesus' leadership, conquering the then-known world with the good news about Jesus. Thousands of people became Christians in the Roman empire and far beyond.

The horse is pure white, just as the church in those days was pure. It had not been corrupted by false doctrines.

2ND SEAL

2 As Jesus opened the second seal, what did John see? **Revelation 6:3, 4** "When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, 'Come and see.' Another horse, fiery _____, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should _____ one another; and there was given to him a great sword."



Can you think of why the horse would be red? Remember the church of Smyrna from lesson 12? It was a faithful church, but what was happening to them? The world was persecuting them, and their blood was being shed for the gospel. John also saw that peace was taken away, and that "people should kill one another." During this time of persecution of the Christians, there was also great unrest in the world. Thousands of pagans died in the many wars and plagues.

3RD SEAL

3 As Jesus opened the third seal, what did John see? **Revelation 6:5, 6** "When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, 'Come and see.' So I looked, and behold, a _____ horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, 'A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a _____; and do not harm the oil and the wine.'



The rider on the black horse was holding a scale to weigh food.

A quart of wheat and three quarts of barley wouldn't make much bread. A denarius was a day's wage. (Matthew 20:2.) Can you imagine working all day just to buy a few loaves of bread to feed your family?

Bread symbolizes the Word of God. (Matthew 4:4.) Jesus said He is the living bread that came down from heaven. (John 6:51.) Things that are costly are rare or hard to find. In this prophecy, the price of bread (God's Word) is high. The Bible is being abandoned as the only rule for faith. Traditions are creeping into the church. As the Bible is discarded, it becomes rare. This is the time period of the church of Pergamos, which we studied about in lesson 13.

Notice the color of the horse. It is black—the opposite of white. As the church left the Word of God and compromised with the pagans, it lost its purity and became corrupt. We studied about some of these compromises in lesson 14.

4TH SEAL



4 As Jesus opened the fourth seal, what did John see? **Revelation 6:7, 8** "When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, 'Come and see.' So I looked, and behold, a _____ horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And _____ was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth."

In this seal we see a pale horse; the rider is called death. Obedience to the Bible brings law, order, and

peace to a society. It protects life. By this period in earth's history, the Bible had been withheld from the people for many years. This time is called the Middle Ages or Dark Ages. This was a period of great civil unrest. Thousands of people died from senseless wars and disease. Thousands of others were hunted and murdered by the church, which professed to be following God. This seal covers the time period of Thyatira.

5TH SEAL

5 A change came with the fifth seal. What did John see next? **Revelation 6:9–11** "When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the _____ the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they _____ with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' Then a _____ robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed."



John saw martyrs wondering how long it would be until God punished their persecutors. These saints were calling for justice. God told them to wait a little longer. The white robes are a reference to the investigative judgment, which will answer their questions about justice.

Do you remember this investigative judgment we studied about in lesson 7? You can also read about it in Daniel 7:10–14. That time of judgment started in 1844 and corresponds to the church of Philadelphia which we studied briefly at the end of lesson 17. This seal is the time period just before the judgment and corresponds to the church of Sardis, the church of the Reformation. Many of the reformers and their followers (today called Protestants) were cruelly tortured and killed, and in this seal we see them symbolically “protest” against this injustice. (See Genesis 4:10.)



Will Jesus come back to the earth before or after the judgment? It has to be after the judgment, because in his vision John saw that the saints have to “rest a little longer.” God will give Satan more time to show the world and the watching universe what his character and government are really like.

God’s love and purity are revealed by His patient saints. He encouraged them by giving them white robes, a symbol of the righteous characters He is developing in them. (Revelation 19:8.)

6TH SEAL



6 What did John see next? **Revelation 6:12–17** “I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the _____ became

black as sackcloth of hair, and the _____ became like blood. And the _____ of _____ of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, _____ themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’”

The sixth seal gives the signs of Jesus’ soon coming. Compare these signs with the signs Jesus shared of His coming in Matthew 24:29–31, Mark 13:24–27, and Luke 21:25–28.

- 7** Number the signs of Jesus’ soon coming in order (1–6):
- _____ sun black as sackcloth
 - _____ sky recedes
 - _____ moon blood
 - _____ mountains/islands moved
 - _____ great earthquake
 - _____ stars fall

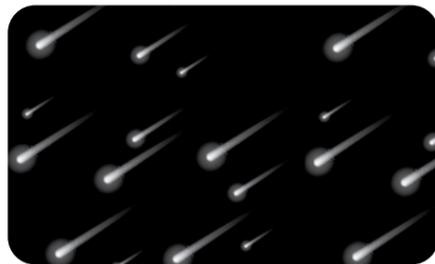


This seal starts with a great earthquake. This earthquake happened before the sun became black and just before the end of the 1,260 years of terrible persecution when the martyrs cry for justice. The November 1, 1755 great Lisbon earthquake fulfilled this sign. This earthquake was felt in a large part of the world and changed the course of earth’s history.

The next sign occurred on May 19, 1780. On that day, the sun came up as usual, and people went about their work. Then without warning, the sky became black. The chickens went back to roost, the cattle went back to their stalls, and people went home because it was too dark to work. That night, the moon appeared blood red.



The third sign occurred on the night of November 13, 1833 when the sky lit up with thousands of falling meteors. Newspapers quoted Revelation 6:13 in reporting this event.



There are still two more signs, and these will happen right before Jesus takes His faithful children to heaven.

We are living in the sixth seal, right between verses 13 and 14 of Revelation 6. We know that Jesus will soon set up His kingdom.

Jesus gives some very important details about the time just before His second coming in Matthew 24. He says that there will be lots of deceptions. There will be many people claiming to be Christ. How can we know the truth? How can we avoid being deceived? One way is by studying what the true coming of Jesus will look like.

8 What will Jesus’ coming be like? **Revelation 1:7** “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and _____ eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

Jesus’ coming will not be a secret event where righteous people just disappear. It will be loud, and the



entire world will know about it.

9 What will make so much noise? **1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17** “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a _____, with the voice of an archangel, and with the _____ of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the _____. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

Notice that we will meet Jesus “in the air.” Remember this so you won’t be deceived. Jesus’ feet won’t touch the ground when He comes.

Between the sixth and seventh seals is Revelation 7, which talks about the sealing of God’s people before the last big trouble comes on our world. In lesson 14 we learned that God’s people are sealed on their foreheads.

10 From what does this seal protect God’s people? **Revelation 7:1–3** “After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four _____ of the earth, that the wind should not _____ on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried



with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, ‘Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.’”

This seal protects God’s people from

the terrible time of trouble that will happen just before Jesus comes.

7TH SEAL



11 What did John see when Jesus opened the seventh seal? **Revelation 8:1** “When He opened the seventh seal, there was _____ in heaven for about half an hour.”

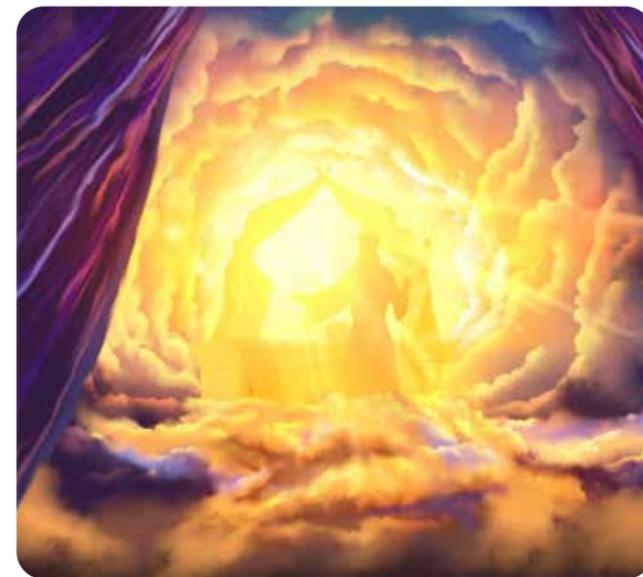
12 When Jesus returns to earth, who will come with Him? **Matthew 25:31** “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and _____ the holy _____ with

Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.”

Jesus and all the angels will leave heaven and come to this earth to rescue God’s people. If there are no angels left in heaven, do you think it will be quiet there while they are gone?

So far, we’ve learned about 7 churches, 7 trumpets, and 7 seals. There’s one more 7 we need to understand.

John saw 7 bowls filled with the “wrath of God” (Revelation 16:1) which



are poured out at the end of time on the people who reject God’s mercy. These terrible events are often called the **7 last plagues**. These plagues don’t start until the judgment in heaven is finished. You can read about them in Revelation 16.

Daniel also wrote about this time. In Daniel 7, we learned about a courtroom scene in heaven where the court “was seated” for the judgment (Daniel 7:10). When every person has made a final choice to serve either God or Satan, probation is closed. The righteous will always be righteous, while the wicked will always be wicked. (Revelation 22:11.)

When the judgment is finished, Jesus “stands up.” Then comes a very terrible time of trouble. (Daniel 12:1.) But when these 7 last plagues fall, God will shield and save His loyal people.

Do these plagues need to scare us? No! Read Jesus’ promises in Psalm 91.

13 Are you willing to trust our loving Jesus to take care of you, too?

Answers

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|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. heard / horse | 5. altar / cried / white | 8. every | 11. silence |
| 2. red / kill | 6. sun / moon / stars | 9. shout / trumpet | 12. all / angels |
| 3. black / denarius | / hid | / air | |
| 4. pale / power | 7. 2, 5, 3, 6, 1, 4 | 10. winds / blow | |

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