

The Seven Seals of Revelation: An Adventist Perspective

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Introduction

The book of Revelation unveils God's prophetic timeline, showing us the great conflict between Christ and Satan. The Seven Seals, found in **Revelation 6:1–17** and **8:1**, reveal the unfolding history of the Christian church from the time of Christ to the end of the world. The opening of each seal marks a new phase in this great cosmic drama, leading up to the Second Coming of Jesus.

This sermon will take an in-depth, verse-by-verse look at each seal, drawing from **Scripture, Ellen White's writings**, and lesser-known Adventist scholars. We will see how these seals apply historically, prophetically, and personally.

I. The First Seal: The White Horse (A.D. 31–100)

Revelation 6:1-2

"Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, 'Come and see.' And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer."

Interpretation

- The **white horse** represents **purity** and **victory**—the early apostolic church, full of faith and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- The **rider with a bow** symbolizes the spreading of the gospel, just as arrows are shot to reach far places.
- The **crown** (Greek: *stephanos*) is a **victor's crown**, given to those who overcome in Christ.

Historical Application

- This period (A.D. 31–100) was when the apostles and early Christians, filled with the Holy Spirit, spread the gospel across the world.
- Miracles, bold preaching, and martyrdom characterized this time.

Ellen White's Commentary

“After the ascension of Christ, the first disciples went forth with the gospel, clothed with divine power... They proclaimed the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Savior.” (Acts of the Apostles, p. 593)

Application

- The church today should strive for the same **spirit of evangelism**, spreading the gospel with boldness and power.
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II. The Second Seal: The Red Horse (A.D. 100–313)

Revelation 6:3-4

“When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’ Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.”

Interpretation

- The **red horse** represents **persecution and bloodshed**.
- The **sword** symbolizes the Roman Empire’s brutal persecution of Christians.

Historical Application

- This period (A.D. 100–313) saw severe persecution under emperors like Nero and Diocletian.
- Thousands of Christians were martyred in the Colosseum.

Lesser-Known Adventist Insights

- Some Adventist scholars, like **M.L. Andreasen**, note that this was also when **heresies began creeping into the church**, leading to the eventual rise of compromise.

Ellen White’s Commentary

“The church of Christ was in the dark ages for many centuries. The gospel was lost sight of, but God had His witnesses in every age.” (The Great Controversy, p. 61)

Application

- Even in **trials**, we must remain faithful to Jesus.
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III. The Third Seal: The Black Horse (A.D. 313–538)

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 black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice...saying, ‘A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.’”

Interpretation

- The **black horse** symbolizes spiritual darkness.
- The **scales** suggest the corruption of **true doctrine**.

Historical Application

- With Constantine’s “conversion” (A.D. 313), **compromise** entered the church.
- Paganism merged with Christianity, leading to **false teachings**.

Ellen White’s Commentary

“The nominal conversion of Constantine...caused great rejoicing; and the world, cloaked with a form of righteousness, walked into the church.” (The Great Controversy, p. 49)

Application

- Today, many churches **compromise** the truth. We must stand firm on God’s Word.
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IV. The Fourth Seal: The Pale Horse (A.D. 538–1517)

Revelation 6:7-8

“When He opened the fourth seal...behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him.”

Interpretation

- The **pale horse** represents spiritual **death**.

- The **power of death** aligns with the Dark Ages.

Historical Application

- From A.D. 538 onward, the **papal system dominated**.
- The Bible was banned, and those who opposed the Church of Rome were executed.

Ellen White's Commentary

"The papal church, uniting the forms of paganism and Christianity, sought to control the consciences of men." (The Great Controversy, p. 55)

Application

- We must **preserve** the Bible and stand against false teachings.
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V. The Fifth Seal: The Souls Under the Altar (1517–1755)

Revelation 6:9-11

- Represents **martyrs** crying out for justice.
- Symbolizes the **Reformation and Inquisition**.

Ellen White's Commentary

"Many were driven to mountains and forests, suffering great hardship, but their faith was unshaken." (The Great Controversy, p. 79)

VI. The Sixth Seal: The Signs of the End (1755–1844)

Revelation 6:12-17

- The **Lisbon earthquake (1755)**, **Dark Day (1780)**, and **Falling of the Stars (1833)** were prophetic signs.

Ellen White's Commentary

"These signs were seen as harbingers of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." (The Great Controversy, p. 304)

VII. The Seventh Seal: Silence in Heaven (1844—Second Coming)

Revelation 8:1

- **Silence** = Jesus **leaving Heaven** for His return.

Ellen White's Commentary

"When Christ shall come, all the angelic host will be with Him." (The Desire of Ages, p. 832)

Conclusion: The Call to Be Sealed

- Revelation's seals show **Satan's attacks** and **God's faithfulness**.
- The question in **Revelation 6:17**: *"Who shall be able to stand?"*
- The answer is in **Revelation 7**—those **sealed by God**.

Appeal

- Are you sealed for Christ?
- Are you ready for Jesus' return?

Let us hold fast to our faith, as we prepare for the **final crisis and the Second Coming**.