



A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 40: The Seal Judgements, Part 8

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Review:

- A. Last week, we concluded our study of The Fourth Seal Judgment.
- B. We spent four weeks on #4 as there were more details to understand with it than the previous three Seal Judgements.
- C. Last week, we were able to tie it all together. We linked the two riders of the fourth horse, Death and Hades, with the discussion of Death and Hades (Sheol) in *Isaiah chapter 28*.
- D. I shared that I felt both prophetic passages were essentially talking about the same period of time in the future
 1. In both, Death and Hades are personified
 2. In both, they concern a worldwide genocidal campaign or overflowing scourge
 3. In both, countless of people die
 4. In both, Death and Hades are agents of authority and power
 5. **(And I believe)** In both, Death and Hades are representing the command of the future one-world false religious system which will gain root and force conformity after the Rapture
- E. So, I presented some basic conclusions which I believe the greater counsel of God's Word supports, and we've studied various passages to come to these positions:
 1. In the timeframe immediately following the Rapture, a global false religious system (likely overseen by the Catholic church) will rise up and deceive many people. That's a key insight from *Revelation Ch. 17*.
 2. It will seek to explain away The Rapture, and it will also do all it can to perpetuate the deception that the Bible is irrelevant and it does not mean what it says. This is apparent in *2 Thessalonians Ch. 2*.
 3. Anyone who chooses to feel or think differently will be perceived as a direct threat, and so they will be killed. This is not hard to understand when we see how truth and facts are suppressed today.
 4. Death and Hades, as agents of this future false global religious system, will empower one-quarter of the earth's population to go out and to kill.
 5. As a result of this global situation, Israel, who is seeking to build her third temple, wants nothing to do with this worldwide genocide. *Isaiah Ch. 28* makes this very clear.
 6. She wants to pursue her own sacrificial religious system, and so she sits down at the negotiating table with the antichrist, who by this time, is perceived as a rising political star, AND with the agents of this false one-world religious system (represented by Death and Hades). This is clear in *Daniel Ch. 9, and Isaiah Ch. 28*.
 7. They all strike a deal – this becomes a key part of the covenant which the antichrist confirms with Israel in *Daniel 9:27*. Israel moves on from this feeling as though she got what she needed.

8. However, according to **Daniel Ch. 9** and **Isaiah Ch. 28**, it ends up being a false covenant which will be annulled.
9. As we know from the greater counsel of God's Word, the antichrist unilaterally breaks the deal at the halfway point of the seven-year Tribulation, he abominates the Jewish temple, he violently destroys the false one-world religious system, and he focuses on attacking and destroying the Jews.

NOTE: A significant series of facts emerge when you collect all the Biblical passages together and grasp the full picture:

10. First, the one-world false religious system has to emerge and grow sufficiently to wield power and genocidal intentions BEFORE the start of the Tribulation.
 11. As we know from **Revelation Ch. 17**, the rise of the antichrist, and the rise of this false one-world religious system, are interdependent at this phase. They each need the other in some way to achieve their own goals, even though the antichrist (as we learn in **Revelation 17**) hates this arrangement.
 12. However, Israel wants to have no vulnerabilities to the killing campaign of Death and Hades that is affecting the rest of the world. So, Israel's leadership sits down with the antichrist and with the agents of this false one-world religious system to come to agreement and to be an exception to everyone else.
 13. This agreement becomes the covenant that is confirmed with Israel, and this agreement starts the Tribulation.
 14. That means that the Tribulation HAS NOT STARTED by the point of Seal Judgement #4. Death and Hades must have already had their campaign well underway by this point. Their reputation is already established before this point. That much is quite clear.
 15. That's one of the reasons we know there is a gap of time – we don't know how long – that exists between The Rapture and the start of The Tribulation.
 16. It is my belief that DURING THAT GAP OF TIME, that the events of Seal Judgements #1 - #4 take place.
- I. Seal Judgement #5 occurs within that same indeterminate gap of time, and today we will look at Seal Judgement #5 (**Cf. Revelation 6:9-11**). As I generally do, I'll start with giving some high altitude perspectives:
- A. First, John shifts his view from earth to heaven. (Seal Judgements #1-#4 were about things happening on planet earth, but Seal Judgement #5 concerns things going on in heaven).
 - B. Remember, John is personally in heaven in a vision at this point in time. In **Revelation 4:1**, he is told to "Come up here" in a type of the Rapture. (The preceding passages show this is AFTER the conclusion of the church age, and the subsequent passages show this is BEFORE the start of The Tribulation).

- C. John sees in heaven an altar. We can assume that this altar is part of the fixtures of this heavenly throne room. It's a prominent element, and it shows up in other passages within **Revelation**.
- D. It is around or 'beneath' this altar that John sees the souls of 'those who had been slain.' My personal best guess here is these souls are not UNDER the altar, but rather the altar towers over them, so they are beneath it from a height perspective.
- E. There is a reason these people had been killed. It was because of their stance on earth. They WERE Christians, and they ACTED like Christians. More on this later.
- F. These souls of slain Christians are communicating, pleading, with God. These souls are feeling passion and a need for justice. And God is communicating, either directly or indirectly with them. (We're not told).
- G. That's a high-altitude summary, now let's dive into the details.

II. Question: What are souls?

- A. This is really a much larger question of what is meant when we say we are comprised of "body, soul, and spirit." It's a tributary we need to go down, and it'll likely take the rest of this class to get through. So let's try to unpack this question.
- B. First off, we are created uniquely by God. We are made differently than the animals of this world. We are created higher and better.
 - 1. That truth will infuriate rank-and-file libs and radical animal rights folks that want to protect minnows, gophers, flies, and snails at the expense of human life. I am speaking from a Bible-based point of view which the unsaved world does not want to accept.
 - 2. **Genesis 1:26-27** makes several good points about HOW we are created. It reads as follows:

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

- 3. Several BIG points are made in these two verses:
 - a. **First**, we are made in the image of God, which is part of the reason Satan hates mankind and wants to corrupt that image. He wants to tarnish the 'image of God' element we were created to have.
 - b. **Second**, we are made in two genders only: Male and Female. Just two. These two genders are intended, by God's design, to have a specific sexual relationship. Anything outside of that is NOT by God's design.
 - c. **Third**, we are created to have dominion over nature and over all creatures. Again, this infuriates the libs because they hate Scriptural truth and want to turn it upside down.
- 4. This is why, in **Romans 1:23-25** the picture of a depraved person: one who had rejected a right relationship with God and is often marked by two things:

- a. First, there is an elevation and reverence for creatures and animals that places the value of these creatures above human life.
 - b. Second, there is a propensity to engage in sexual impurities and perversions. (This, as the very next verse discusses, is homosexuality. We can add transgenderism, believing in multiple genders, and all the various sexual deviancies we see in our time to this list).
 5. But getting back to our primary point, we are made “IN THE IMAGE OF GOD”, and among other things, that is a Triune composition: body, soul, and spirit.
- C. Paul, affirms this same issue when, in signing off his letter to the Thessalonians, he said in **1 Thessalonians 5:23**, “*May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ...*” (What’s his point?)
 1. As I said, the Bible teaches we are created in **three parts**: body, soul, and spirit.
 - a. This is consistent with being created in the image of God. This is the three-part composition which began with Adam and it continues even now.
 - b. Some theologians believe we are created in what’s called a ‘dichotomous’ state, or two parts: body and soul-spirit. They claim the terms ‘soul’ and ‘spirit’ are used interchangeably in Scripture.
 - c. Others (and I am part of this second group) believe that we are created in a ‘trichotomous’ state, or three parts: body, soul, and spirit.
 - d. From what I read and understand in Scripture, it’s the three-part state that seems to have greatest Biblical support. Paul, when he signed off his letter to the Thessalonians, is one such example of that.
 2. As TRUE believers, all three elements are active and in full play. If we have placed our full trust in Jesus Christ for our salvation, if we have confessed with our mouths that ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and we believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, then according to **Romans 10:9**, we are saved.
 3. We are then, true believers. It is only then that all three elements of our created being: body, soul, and spirit, are active and in full play.
 4. This is not true for the unbeliever who the Bible says is “spiritually dead.” This starts to unpack the SPIRIT part of our composition, and so I’ll begin with that.
 - a. **Ephesians 2:1** says “...you were dead in your transgressions and sins...” (In other words, we can be physically alive before salvation, but we will be in a “spiritually dead” condition)
 - b. Other passages affirm this same point. The spirit of the unbeliever, of ONE WHO HAS NOT PLACED THEIR FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, is dead. Functionally speaking, they have no spirit.
 - c. (NOTE: Some people teach that the spirit is “absent” from the unbeliever. That’s not the best way to think about the situation).
 - d. The point I am trying to make – is the unbeliever’s spirit is inactive; it is dead.
 - e. Over and over the Scriptures drive home the point that the non-believer is dead in spirit.

- D. However, **everything changes at the moment of salvation**. The act of God whereby He makes us alive from this condition of spiritual death is called regeneration.
1. It is the first moment FROM OUR BIRTH that we are no longer condemned in our state of sin.
 2. As I've said before, everyone lives eternally, but without the regenerative work of Jesus Christ, we do not all receive ETERNAL LIFE. That only occurs when we are made "alive in Christ."
 3. This process of becoming "alive in Christ" is called the "quickenings" in some translations, and passages like ***Psalms 25:11, John 14:6, Et al.*** The King James translation uses this term to describe this event.
 4. It is at that point of true salvation that one receives ETERNAL LIFE. A true believer in Jesus Christ is made 'alive in Christ' and their spirit is no longer dead.
 5. Again, for the unbeliever, their spirit is dead. Unless they come to true repentance and salvation, they are destined to experience ETERNAL DEATH.
- E. Here's another example to help us understand all this: Jesus Christ had a conversation with Nicodemus in ***John Ch. 3***. Jesus told Nicodemus he needed to be "...born of the Spirit."
1. This process of being "born again" is the same point of being "made alive in Spirit."
 2. The spirit which was dead (or "functionally absent") before is now "quickened" or made "alive" in Christ at the time of being "born again."
 3. It is the first time in our life that we truly become "whole." That's why the Bible calls us "new creatures" at that point.
 4. Now all three elements of us are in full play: body, soul, and spirit.
 5. That's why - in Paul's writings, the spirit part of us is vital to our faith (***1 Corinthians 2:14***). "*The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to him.*"
 6. Our spirit is that element of our being that gives us the ability to have an intimate relationship with God.
 7. Whenever the word *spirit* is used, it refers to the immaterial part of us that "connects" with God, who Himself is spirit.
 - a. (***Cf. John 4:24***) - "...His worshippers must worship in Spirit and in truth..."

NOTE: In preparing this, I ran across several theological threads online where they went pages and pages deep on this matter. This is one of those issues that can easily become an endless rabbit hole. It was interesting to read some of the online comments to these posts. There were good-intentioned people who were trying to understand if unbelievers had a spirit or not, while other good-intentioned people were trying to explain the matter to them. It looked to me like holes got deeper, weeds got taller, and various discussion points got more obtuse and complex. All to say, it's a challenging matter to understand, but it's also an important matter to study prayerfully and with humility.

- b. Now let's look at our bodies and souls. Given our passage in **Revelation 6:9-11**, it's easiest to handle these other two contrasting elements of our composition together.
- c. **NOTE:** I want to revisit the parable of Lazarus and the rich man in **Luke Ch. 16**. Remember, the rich man died and he went down. Lazarus, the beggar died, and he went up. That's not a commentary on anything more than their spiritual condition while they were on earth. But let's see what they experienced when they both physically died.

F. First, here are the things that happened to both men in common:

- 1. Their physical bodies were buried and they decomposed. There is nothing more to our present bodies than this. They are temporary flesh homes for the real us.
- 2. Both Lazarus and the rich man were put in the ground where their bodies "returned to dust" as the Bible says all our bodies will if we die.
 - a. And note: We WILL all die, unless we are true believers in Jesus Christ and are alive at the time of the Rapture. Only then will we never experience physical death.
- 3. But, another thing the rich man and Lazarus had in common is their souls went someplace else. The real "them" moved on.
- 4. The real "them," their souls, could feel emotion, distress, comfort, pleasure, conscience, agony, and so on.
- 5. The real them could fully sense and respond to their environment.
- 6. It's important to understand their souls had form, location, cognition, communication, will, and emotion. The real "them" was still in existence.
- 7. These things were in common to both the rich man and to Lazarus. **NOTE:** It's exactly what we read about the martyred souls in **Revelation 6:9-11**, in the 5th Seal Judgment. All these qualities were true for those souls as well.

G. Now I need to talk about the things that happened to Lazarus and the rich man that were NOT in common:

- 1. Lazarus went to "Paradise" (AKA: "Abraham's bosom," or "Abraham's side"). This is all figurative language to say that Lazarus went "into the presence of God"
 - a. The Scriptures teach that to be "*....absent from the body (is to be) at home with the Lord.*" (**Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:8.**)
 - b. Jesus told the "good thief" at His crucifixion, "*today you will be with me in Paradise.*" When we die as believers, we are escorted (by the angels, I believe) into the very presence of God.
 - c. In that place, "at home," we are fully aware. It is our souls that are there and they are communicative, rejoicing, and possibly cognizant of events and things on earth (based on our passage in **Revelation 6:9-11**).

- d. **I cannot overstate the blessedness of this state! It's a promotion!** It is the fullness of our joy and the completion of our journey. It is the end of our pain and distress. There are no words on earth to describe this wonderful situation.
- H. The rich man's soul took a different trip. He went to Hades. (Some translations say Hell, but that's inaccurate if we think of the eternal burning lake of Sulphur and fire here. The better translation is Hades.
1. IMPORTANT: This is a holding place for people who die without salvation. We've covered this point in past lessons.
 2. It is a terrible place of torment and agony as **Luke 16:22-24** make clear.
 3. But it's not yet HELL. And the worst is yet to come for souls who go here.
 4. Like Lazarus, the rich man was fully cognizant, aware, feeling, emotional, communicative, etc. However, he was in unbelievable torment.
 5. Also, there was no way out of this situation. No remedy for his soul after this point. He died without Christ and that was his GREATEST mistake.
 6. His final judgement is still coming. The Great White Throne still needs to be faced, and the "second death" which is worse yet, is still pending (**Revelation 20:11-15**).
- I. However, at the resurrection (this is at the Rapture), something happens to the souls of true believers. They are reunited with their bodies. But it's not the same body we have now.
1. It's a "glorified one." It's a much more upgraded / advanced version of the one you have right now.
 2. Paul calls it an "imperishable" one in **1 Corinthians 15:52** –
"...in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed."
 3. The rapid "twinkling of an eye" is not our ascent upwards to meet Jesus Christ in the air; rather, it is a commentary on the miraculous change of our bodies from mortal to immortal. It happens in a flash.
 4. Right now, the body we have is a perishable one. It doesn't last. For all practical purposes - from the time we are born, we start the process of dying. For some of us it takes longer than for others.
 5. The inevitable fact, the inescapable truth is, we will DIE! This body is a temporary house for our soul. The point of everything I'm saying is our soul is the real US!
 6. Some people spend a lot of money trying to upgrade this temporary house. They tummy tuck and they face lift. They color their hair, botox their wrinkles, inflate their lips, toss in some silicon bags, and throw in an occasional new joint or two – or three or four! (rust!)
 7. But none of that sidesteps the fact we are going to die in this present body. It's a temporary house for our soul, but it's not who we really ARE.
 8. At The Rapture, the Bible says true believers will get a new body, we will be CHANGED!

