

And So It Begins...

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Date: 30 May 2021

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[0 : 00] It's appropriate when we cry out, oh how I need you, oh Lord, when we come to Revelation 6, because this is when, this is the beginning of the end, this is the beginning of Jesus Christ claiming what is rightfully his.

In fact, when we come to Revelation chapter 6, it is the ultimate answer to the when question. It is the when question that every Christian asks at some point.

Jesus, when are you coming back? When are you bringing your righteousness? Jesus, when are you bringing your justice? Ultimately, Jesus, when are you going to make things right for us?

This is the answer to that question that we find in Revelation chapter 6.

So please, I hope you have your Bibles open to Revelation chapter 6. Last week, we took a look at Revelation chapter 4 and chapter 5. In chapter 4, we looked at the worship that surrounded the indescribable one who sits on the throne.

[1 : 24] That indescribable one that the angels and the elders all worshiped and gave all their crowns and glory to is God. And what that throne symbolizes to us even today, as John saw in that vision that God still sits on the throne, he's just as sovereign now as he always is and always will be.

And even to these first century Christians who are living amongst hardships, persecutions, the government is chasing them down.

Some like John have been boiled in oil and put out to Patmos to suffer more. He is still over all of this.

And chapter 6 will explain to us how he will make it right. Chapter 5 reveals to us that there is only one and one only who can make things right.

Let's take a look at chapter 5. Just looking at these first five verses. John writes, Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll, written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals.

[2 : 58] And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scrolls or to look into it.

And I, John, began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. And one of the elders said to me, Weep no more.

Behold the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll in its seven seals. This is the revealing of Jesus Christ.

Tell me this. This should be giving you goose pimples, goose bumps. When we read this, it seems that even John, all is lost, but yet the perfect one, the root of David, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is going to make these things right.

And the takeaways that we have, as I've said, one, God is still sovereign, and two, Jesus Christ is the one who's going to make things right again.

[4 : 16] So, this is the way we are going to be reading how Jesus Christ is going to make things right.

Now, Revelation 6 begins with Jesus breaking the seals and opening the scroll.

And within the scroll, as we've read, are seven seals. And the way that, in the old times, just if you're wondering what the scroll would look like, it would look like a scroll that is round up, and they would put a seal on one section, roll it some more, put another seal.

So, it would be this one scroll, pretty large, that would have multiple seals in that, and there was only one who had the authority to open it. Now, I want to share with you something that I hope will help you in the understanding from chapter 6 all the way to the end of chapter 18.

Okay, now, when I was young, and I would read Revelation, I'd start reading, and I'd read about these seven seals. And then I start reading about seven trumpets, and seven bulls, and then there's plagues that I read about.

[5 : 44] And it's kind of exhausting. It's like one after another after another. And then there's this explanation of people or persons that are introduced.

There's the dragon. There is the woman that the dragon who's trying to devour the woman's child. There is the great prostitute Babylon, which is introduced.

Then we read about little beasts, great beasts. We read about, ultimately, the Antichrist. And when I was younger, I would read it, and I thought the way it was presented that it was chronological, like it was a narrative.

However, that is not how Revelation is written. It is not a chronological event. It's layers upon layers upon layers of events.

So I want to make a few things very clear. The seven seals that Jesus Christ is going to be opening represent the timeline between Revelation chapter 6 to Revelation 18.

[7 : 02] Everything that transpires in these chapters happens between seal 1 and seal 7.

So those trumpets, as we're going to find out, are a part of the seventh seal. In those trumpets, there's going to be seven bowls of judgments.

And we're going to get there in a second. So if you haven't, or actually, we're not going to cover the bowls this week. They'll be next week. But if you're new to Revelation, and I hope you've read ahead, and it's normal to be confused by this.

It's normal to try to get the understanding of these things. The reason I'm preaching this series is to give us a right understanding of the structure.

Okay? I'm not preaching a specific end time view. I'm not trying to present a pre-mill, an all-mill, or a post-mill view.

[8 : 06] And if you're confused as to what those are, please go back to the first sermon in this series where I give you the details. But what I want to give you is the structure so that you'll feel more comfortable with the book, and it will inform you along the way.

Okay. Now, there's a couple things that we need to understand what's going on between chapter 6 and chapter 18.

There are two things. There's one, there are events that John is describing. There's events on earth, and there's events in heaven.

And they're going on simultaneously. And God also introduces individuals or powers that exist. And within that, those powers will exist between seal number one and seal number seven. Now, some of that I can't tell you exactly when they appear.

[9 : 27] That's not what we're getting into during this series. I can tell you, but that's a whole other way of attacking the book that we're not going to do. So, you need to keep in mind that there's going to be events in heaven, events here on earth, and they're going to involve, Israel is going to be named, there's going to be prophets, there's going to be witnesses.

We're going to hear 144,000. We're going to hear about the little beast, the great beast. But these are all either individuals, countries, or powers that are existing here on earth that are involved between chapter 6 and chapter 18 within the seven seals.

I know, simple, right? It's easy. But I hope that makes sense. So, this is where we begin, is at the beginning of chapter 6, and it is Jesus Christ beginning to unseal the scroll.

He's breaking the seals. Now, if you're familiar with any type of movies, they always feature the first four seals.

And the first four seals have a very common characteristic. There's a horseman that's mentioned. So, please look at chapter 6.

[10 : 51] We're going to read in verse 1. I'm going to read selective parts of the chapter, and I'm going to pull out some of the truths that I really want you to see. I want you to know God, Jesus Christ, more through what we're pulling out.

But I'm going to try to clear up some confusion that people might have. All right. Introduction is done. Let's dive in. Chapter 6, verse 1. John.

Now, I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, Come.

And I looked, and behold, a white horse. And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering and to conquer.

So, what we're seeing here is the first seal. And this first seal is a little bit hard to describe in a way, but what's interesting that commentators comment on is notice that he is a rider, he has a bow, but there are no arrows.

[12:01] What it signifies that he is able to come and conquer peacefully without war. So, one of the seals is that there will be a peace that is worldwide, or whether you want to say it's worldwide or geographically centered, that's your own eschatology to work out.

I believe it's going to be worldwide, but that there is going to be someone that's leading, that there's going to be a peace. Someone is going to rule, or a force, a power is going to rule, and they're going to be able to rule peacefully.

It's going to join people together. Now, when we look at verse 3, When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, Come. And out came another horse, bright red.

Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth. So, that's where we're connecting. There used to be peace. There is no peace. So, that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword.

So, the second seal that Jesus Christ is opening is war. So, first, false peace. Then, there is this war. Now, maybe I'll talk about this in a little bit, but if you come from a pre-mill position like I do, people always ask the question, the seven seals happen within the seven years of tribulation.

[13:31] They don't necessarily coincide with each of the seven years, but as you see, we're going to be looking at four seals that are of special interest, and then we're going to see something with the fifth.

So, third seal. When he opened the third seal, I heard the voice, the third living creature say, Come. And I looked, and behold, a black horse, and its rider had a pair of scales in his hand.

And I heard what seemed to be 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 denarius, and do not harm the oil in wine.

What that scale represents is not from our culture, which means truth and justice, but it's a form of measurement that we use today when you look on your bag of flour, or it's 900 grams or 600 grams or whatever, and we pay for the value of that weight.

What the writer is saying is that there will come a time where a denarius, which is a day's worth of wages, would only buy you minimal food.

[14:45] So, what he's talking about is that pricing for food will be out of whack. And then we come to verse 7. When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, Come.

And I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And its rider's name was Death. And Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

So, now, we have an active force which is doing destructive damage.

Famine, death is the result of war, result of poverty, starvation, droughts, all those sorts of things, the result.

So, you have this world, and notice it's not naming the riders or the seals. People believe, commentators, scholars believe, that these aren't individual people, but these are forces or powers that are happening.

[15:55] If you're a pre-mill guy, you believe that these are the things that are going to happen within that first three and a half years. It's just the general chaos of the earth which is transpiring.

Now, take a look at verse 9. Something radically different appears in verse 9 of this chapter. When he, being Jesus, opened the fifth seal, John says, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne.

They cried out with a loud voice, O sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood for those who dwell on the earth.

The text tells us that these are the martyred ones. These are those who died for or in the name of Jesus Christ, who were persecuted for their faith.

The question is, is this people that throughout all of time were martyred for the faith or during those four unrolling of the seals during that time of earth?

[17 : 31] Personally, I believe it's between the first four seals. the people that died for their faith. What's interesting is during this time, later on, we're going to read in Revelations 13 7 when we are introduced to the characters of the book, Satan himself and his minions will be allowed to make war on believers and be able to conquer them.

So, just like, remember, in the book of Job, Satan wasn't able to do anything to Job until God gave him permission. And for some reason, God will give Satan permission to make war on the saints. But what Satan doesn't see or doesn't understand or what's going on here is that he's actually creating a force in heaven who will be praying before the Lord for justice to be done. It's incredible. So, if we understand that there's this one religion, and listen, we see this today, and I'm not trying to look at events, and I'm sure every believer through time, so whether or not you hold to a different position in some of these things, but this does happen to believers throughout time. There are different powers that rise, that start, even in that time, Rome was the dominant religion. If you were a Christian, you were persecuted for that. Okay?

[19 : 07] So, there's this ostracization of those who believe in Jesus Christ. They are persecuted. And Christians will be the ones standing outside the governmental ways of doing things.

And we have seen this throughout history. Regardless, but we get to see a glimpse into the Father's heart. Let's take a look at verse 11.

Then, these are the martyrs, they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

so they are giving Christ this robe of righteousness. But the question that is, what is this fifth seal? Right? It's like this event that's happening. What it is, it is God's wrath and judgment is being built up against the earth for how the believers in Christ are being unrighteously persecuted and dying for their faith.

[20 : 29] And God is essentially saying, hold on for a second. We're building up this group. And we're going to see the power of that group.

But look what they're doing. They're praying to Him. And they're not praying that justice be done because out of vengeance sake.

But they're praying that justice be done in the name of the sovereign holy God. Look what it says. It says, O sovereign Lord, holy and true is their call.

Verse 10, they cried out with a loud voice, O sovereign Lord, holy and true. How long before you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?

Well, we're going to find out very soon. But these are the saints. These are the culmination of those who've been persecuted with Jesus Christ.

[21 : 38] Notice we come to the sixth seal. seal. Now notice that event is in heaven. That event wasn't on earth. First four seals here on earth.

Kind of the effects of all those things happening. Believers in Christ are dying. God addresses them in heaven with the fifth seal.

And we come down to the sixth seal, the second last seal. And when he, Jesus, opened the sixth seal, I looked and behold, there was a great earthquake and the sun became black as sackcloth. The full moon became like blood and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter truth when shaken by a gale.

That is, the earth is in turmoil. The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up in every mountain and island was removed from its place.

[22 : 42] Verse 15, Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him who was seated on the throne and from the wrath of the lamb.

For the great day of their wrath has come, who can stand? So we have in those four seals great turmoil.

Fifth seal in heaven and now, God is pouring out his wrath on the earth and what we see from this is that there is no guessing who is doing this work and there is no guessing who is seeing this. It's not like there's a part of the world where people do not see. Notice what he's talking about. He's talking about rich kings, poor people, unknown people, people that are known, rich, poor, slave, free, every type of person will know that the events that are going to happen, that are happening in

this sixth seal will be undeniably God.

And not only is it undeniably God, they know God is coming for his justice and his righteousness and that there is no hiding from it.

[24 : 27] this is the final stretch that is to come. I would agree with the theologians that say this is the great tribulation and the time is characterized by one word and that word is beer.

So this is what we're reading from seal one to seal six is encapsulated within the sixth chapter of Revelation.

Now, there is a switch on Revelation chapter seven and before John begins to talk about the seventh seal and the seventh seal is the most intense of all the seals and it's good, they're going to be opening and it's going to be in a way that God is known and they know that God is coming for his righteousness.

He's kind of answering the question, are people going to believe? Is there going to be people who are going to believe in God?

Will they'll be turning, will people be turning during the famines, the wars, even during the false peace? Is God going to allow the gospel to continue spreading?

[25 : 58] Now, for me, from my theological point of view on end times, I don't believe the church exists anymore on the earth. It's been removed. That's what I put in the rapture part of it.

So here, God still needed witnesses to live on the earth to demonstrate or share the gospel with people. And this is where I believe, he makes the choice of those who will share the gospel.

So, Revelations chapter 7 answers the question, will people be saved during this time? What will happen to people who believe? And when God is revealing himself to the world, will people believe in him?

And this is where we are introduced to the 144,000. Now, let's take a look at verse 1. And this, I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree.

Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun with the seal of the living God. And he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, saying, do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.

[27 : 33] And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000 sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel. And if you go through, you're going to see there's going to be 12 tribes.

Now, some people are going to argue there's a couple of those names there that are different from the 12 tribes in Israel. And there's actually a very good reason for that. I'm not going to spend any time on that, but they all correlate to the 12 tribes.

Now, here again, we're seeing that layering. Okay? Those four angels, the corners of the earth, whatever the details are, those are the ones that allowed what was going on to happen in those first six seals.

the earthquakes, all those things. And what Jesus Christ was saying, with all that happened, I'm going to put my seal on these 144,000 people.

So then we move down to verse nine, and it presents for us this incredible picture. And it correlates to the fifth seal again, of those saints who were martyred during the events of these seals.

[28 : 46] So it's the people that are murdered within seal one, from one to five, who were reached by the works of these 144,000 missionaries.

After this, I looked and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes, and peoples, and languages, standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.

My friends, this is an incredible picture of God's wonderful justice and mercy. That when we read those six seals and the judgments that are coming upon the earth, death, it's intense, it's harrowing, people are dying.

These are no small things. But through these events, God is still calling his own.

How many people will be brought to salvation through these events? John testifies a great multitude that no one could number.

[30 : 19] That people will be coming to Christ in droves because they're going to see his power, they're going to see his glory, and they will repent and acknowledge that he is God, that Jesus

Christ is Lord, Lord.

And he deserves salvation, belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. Verse 11, and all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever.

Amen. the destruction that is happening here on earth leads to incredible worship in heaven as more and more saints are added to the number of angels and the incredible, the elders and the beings that are there.

Verse 13, then one of the elders addressed me saying, who are these clothed in white wool, robes, and from where have they come? And I said to him, sir, you know.

And he said to me, these are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed the robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb.

[31 : 54] some of these will be the persecutors. Some of those will be those who killed Christians.

Some of these people will be those who did vile acts against God. And through his incredible mercy, some will come to believe.

Some who followed false religions will be made to see right. They will be made to see the incredible power and love and mercy of Jesus Christ.

And they will be singing with us. Notice verse 15, Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple.

And he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. The sun shall not strike them nor any scorching heat.

[33 : 10] For the lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd. And he will guide them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

This is a beautiful picture of God's grace and mercy. This is the heart of our God.

God. It's who we were once we were, before we were saved, we were enemies of God. We deserved his wrath.

We hated him. We hated his ways. But even in so doing, God still reached out to us through his son, Jesus Christ, on the cross.

God calls us to follow him. And we are not relegated to some second class status. Some of you, I know, struggle with this.

[34 : 21] You know the rebellion you lived in, how you disobeyed God. You fought him. You purposely tried to lead other people away from him.

But once you see him, for all that he is, in all his greatness and mercy, God calls you to be his and his alone.

And he will wipe away every tear from their eyes. So you have this group of people who fought Jesus were against the church.

Now, some are saved, some were persecuting, some were using bad language, false accusations, whatever, deciding not to share their food.

But when God finally comes to reveal himself fully, he's there. this is worship in heaven.

[35 : 39] And the saints will be gathered at the time. And now, we gather for the seventh seal.

God will bring against those. And it begins in chapter 8. And it begins in chapter 8.

When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. more. Think about this.

Even the worship stops. the seventh seal, the final seal is going to be opened.

And this is the culmination, the final judgment of God's righteous wrath. Righteous judgment will be poured out on the earth.

[36 : 49] Verse 3. And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer. And he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne.

So there's this throne and the saints, those who are saved during these times and before the history of all those who are in Jesus Christ that are praying.

And the smoke of the incense. And it says, with the prayers of the saints rose before God from the hand of the angel. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and he threw it on the earth.

And there was peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. What that is, I have no idea, but it is going to be a spectacle to see and to experience.

trumpets. And then in verse six, we're introduced to seven trumpets. And these trumpets are being used to announce the judgments that will be occurring.

[38 : 06] The first angel blew his trumpet and there followed hail and fire mixed with blood and these were thrown upon the earth. And a third of the earth was burned up and a third of the trees were burned up and all green grass was burned up.

Notice verse eight, the second angel blew his trumpet and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea and a third of the sea became blood.

A third of the living creatures in the sea died and a third of the ships were destroyed. And a third angel blew his trumpet and a great star fell from heaven blazing like a torch and it fell on a third of the rivers on the springs of water.

The name of the star is wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood and many people died from the water because it had been made bitter.

So here we're being introduced to another character here on earth. We're not, I'm not going to go into that today but here we have this character that's being introduced for the first time.

[39 : 20] The fourth angel blew his trumpet and a third of the sun was struck and a third of the moon and a third of the stars so that a third of their light might be darkened and a third of the day might be kept from shining and likewise a third of the night.

this is earth shattering disaster. Now you got to keep in mind again who is left on earth after the six seals?

I don't believe it's any accident that we have just heard in chapter seven about all those saints that are in heaven but falling before God. There is a characteristic of those that are left here on earth. Now in the middle of this disaster John writes in verse 13 then I looked and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew directly overhead.

Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth at the blast of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow.

[40 : 38] Here is God once again giving warning. There is more coming and it is more fierce than before. This my friends is God's mercy again calling out to the unbeliever, the one who resists, the one who fights God.

It's the same thing that God does today. He fights for you and he wants to overcome your resistance. He continues to offer the cross.

And then we come to chapter 9. The fifth angel blew his trumpet and I saw a star falling from heaven to earth.

And he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit. And from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace.

And the sun and the air was darkened with the smoke from the shaft. Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth.

[41 : 55] They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree. But only those people who do not have the seal of God on their forehead.

Remember going back that there was a seal chapter 7 144,000 they're not to be touched. They were allowed to torment them for five months but do not kill them and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone.

And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die but death will flee from them.

And appearance verse 7 the locusts were like horses prepared for battle. Guys there's incredible imagery here and some of it I have no idea. But I noticed that Paul or Paul notice John uses words in appearance.

These are the words that best suit him through the power of the Holy Spirit to describe what is going on. In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold.

[43 : 12] Their faces were like human faces their hair like woman's hair and their teeth like lion's teeth. They had breastplates like breastplates of iron. And the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle.

They have tails and stings like scorpion and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails. They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit.

His name in Hebrew is Abedon and in Greek he is called Apollon. The first will was passed.

Behold, two woes are still to come. Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God saying the sixth angel who had the trumpet released the four angels who were bound at the great river Euphrates.

So the four angels who had been prepared for this for the hour, the day, the month, and the year were released to kill a third of mankind. The number of mounted troops was twice 10,000 times 10,000 that's 200 million.

[44 : 21] I heard their number. And this is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode them. They wore breastplates with color fire and sapphire and of sulfur and the heads of the horses were like lions' heads and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths.

By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed. By the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths for the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails.

For their tails are like serpents with heads and by means of them they wound. This is obviously we're going to talk about the battle of Armageddon.

These are all events that are layered on to the events that are going on. All as we know, and a lot of people, if you read some of the early books, they'll say those are helicopters that look like lotus and tanks and all that type of stuff.

Who knows? All I know is it's talking about this incredible victory and it's not important to know what's what. This is what John is seeing and he's seeing this incredible battle and people are dying.

[45 : 32] And notice in verse 20, the rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood which cannot see or hear or walk.

Nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. it's intense.

And we see even God's last strand of mercy of the eagle that flies over. Whoa, whoa, whoa. And then we come to this 10th chapter.

And we're going to start in chapter 10 next week. But one of the things that I, there's two things that I want you to take away of what we've learned today. Even the first thing I want us to take away, to learn, to glory, and to worship God in, is what I've been saying all along that he has so supremely manifested his presence, his mercy, even his love in the midst of things that cause us great fear.

There is still salvation to be found in the Lord. If you are what's called a historical premillennialist, you believe these things are already going on, and the woes have already been declared, and God is even now calling out to you to repent and follow Jesus.

[47 : 39] The second thing that I want you to see, lest you fear that God is somewhat unjust or unrighteous, that we somehow deserve, and I say we as mankind deserve this fate.

I call that a first world problem. I used to live in a world where I saw evil manifested in horrible and disgusting ways when I worked with the government.

And it was interesting, when I was in university, people would say that there really is no such thing as evil. They didn't believe it. Those people, for lack of a better word, have grown ignorant or soft or live in a world that doesn't exist in truth, because they live in this first world where we have freedom of rights.

There is no open wars. It's interesting, you talk to someone who's from another continent about North America, and we see the upheaval in North America today about those that are fighting for the rights of those rights that were denied through slavery.

Listen, slavery was evil, bad. those were horrible things, but America has evolved into a place that actually is so less prejudicial than the rest of the world.

[49 : 33] There's countries that they talk about, they will not give citizenship to anybody. You are a second, third citizen. There's still caste systems. There's still parts of the world where if you are some form of nationality or thought of nationality, you cannot serve.

You are to be submissive to the other people. You have no rights. You cannot acquire large amounts of money. There's still slavery.

But the point is, as God so eloquently wrote in verse 20, the takeaway is, the rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues did not repent of the works of their hands, nor give up worshipping

demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk.

And that is a word of saying that the Old Testament prophets used. They worship stone, things that they've carved that they actually have to move because the God that they've created can't even move himself across the room.

Yet man's heart is so full of himself, he would sooner give that worship to the dead stone, the dead wood, because they don't want to give it to God.

[51 : 05] The real God. the God who has revealed himself from day one on this creation of this earth. So lest you think that God is cruel or unloving, you have missed the story of God through Genesis all the way through Revelation.

Revelation. Revelation. The reality is some people do not want God, nor do they want to give righteous worship where it belongs.

We need to continue praying. So my takeaway is God continues to be merciful, just, and holy, deserves all our worship, and there's no such thing as a person or individual that doesn't deserve God's holy wrath.

There isn't. And God, before, when he begins to make things right, my friend, this should cause us fear, because this will happen or is happening in our time.

God will make things right. My prayer is that you would come to love the Lord Jesus Christ in an even more real, tangible way, even by studying these chapters which reveal his awesome glory.

[52 : 47] Let's end today by praying. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we thank you for this incredible picture. Father, we just know we can't understand all the things that are going on here, but one thing that we can take away is your mercy and your kindness.

Father, the pictures of the saints being surrounding the throne, which you sit totally indescribable, the elders who have laid down their crowns, the great angels that sing, and we get to be there praying and offering worship to you, those that have been before.

What an incredible time. Not only is it on earth that this judgment takes place, but there is an incredible event going on in heaven.

This worship is mighty and it's powerful. Father, I pray we catch a glimpse of that in our own lives today.

May we worship as families in our homes, even as we worship together as we're under this word. May we continue to fellowship. We look forward to two weeks to come together.

[54 : 12] I know we can now join together for walks, for barbecues, for spending time with one another. May we talk about these things. May we rejoice in the grace that has been given to us, Father.

Woe, woe, woe to those who persist in unbelief. Father, we pray that you would take a pickaxe to their hardened hearts, break those rocks, put in a heart of flesh that is real, that beats for you.

And I pray that every single one of them who are listening to this sermon will echo, amen. To your name be praised.

Amen.