

# THE FIRST SEAL



## Revelation 6

1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

The lamb of God has prevailed to open the book with seven seals. He is worthy to open the book. Ellen White details what is contained therein:

There in His open hand lay the book, the roll of the history of God's providences, the prophetic history of nations and the church. Herein was contained the divine utterances, His authority, His commandments, His laws, the whole symbolic counsel of the Eternal, and the history of all ruling powers in the nations. In symbolic language was contained in that roll the influence of every nation, tongue, and people from the beginning of earth's history to its close. 13LtMs, Lt 65, 1898, par. 17

The heavenly records of the influence of every nation, tongue and people from the beginning of earth's history to its close was contained therein. An examination was about to begin. The lives of all those individuals whose names had been recorded in the book of life were about to come under scrutiny beginning at the time of Adam and Eve.

## Revelation 3:5

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Earlier in the book of Revelation Christ revealed to John the seven churches and the concerns he had for each of them. Writing to the church of Sardis John records instruction from Christ himself. It is he **THAT OVERCOMETH** that Christ will confess before his Father and the angels. This instruction is relevant to members of any church who claim to be following the Father and the Son. Overcoming sin is key to your name being retained in the book of life. Knowing that sin can keep you from inheriting the free gift of eternal life should be the only motivation needed to send you to your knees to plead with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ to forgive you, to cleanse you with the precious blood of the lamb and to strengthen you with their living presence - the Holy Spirit to enable you to overcome :

## John 14:20

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Overcoming without Christ abiding in your heart is impossible! But Christ reassures us:

#### **Mark 10:27**

And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

How wonderful it is to have someone who loved us so much that he was prepared to die in our stead and receive the punishment we deserved and pay the price for our sins. Not only is he our saviour, he also stands in judgment acting as our judge but also is a witness on our behalf :

I saw four angels who had a work to do on the earth, and were on their way to accomplish it. Jesus was clothed with priestly garments. He gazed in pity on the remnant, then raised His hands, and with a voice of deep pity cried, "My blood, Father, My blood, My blood, My blood!" EW 38.1

#### **John 1:29**

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

The precious blood of the Lamb of God washes clean the soul and Christ our judge and representative in the heavenly court, when our life is examined, confesses our name before his Father and the angels. He retains our name in the book of life because we have **OVERCOME** in his strength and spirit. We are clothed with the white robe of Christ's righteousness and pronounced forgiven and saved.

More than half a century had passed since John had leaned his head upon the bosom of his Lord, whom he loved with all the power of his being, and whom he delighted to honor. It was because of John's fidelity to his Saviour that he had been banished to the Isle of Patmos, and there he beheld the glorified person of his Lord. **There Christ opened to him the future of the church and of the world.** 17LtMs, Ms 136, 1902, par. 3

Christ is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, **the one who is soon to ride forth conquering and to conquer.** John describes the impression made upon him by the vision of his Lord: 17LtMs, Ms 136, 1902, par. 4

Ellen White in the quote above identifies who is riding the white horse of the first seal. It is Christ himself and he is described as **SOON** to ride forth conquering and to conquer. Christ had not ridden forth half a century after John had accompanied him as a disciple. Christ's riding forth was yet future. Yet it was Christ himself who revealed to John in vision on the isle of Patmos - the future of the church and the world.

Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, **the church is to enter upon her final conflict.** "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" (Song of Solomon 6:10), **she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer.** PK 725.2

Christ is the Head : **Ephesians 4:15** But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: It is Christ who leads his church who will go forth into all the world conquering and to conquer. His righteousness clads every soldier in his church and as she enters her final conflict Christ will lead, direct and protect his people.

The opening of the first seal is the opening of the judgment.

Daniel prophesied of the same event taking place:

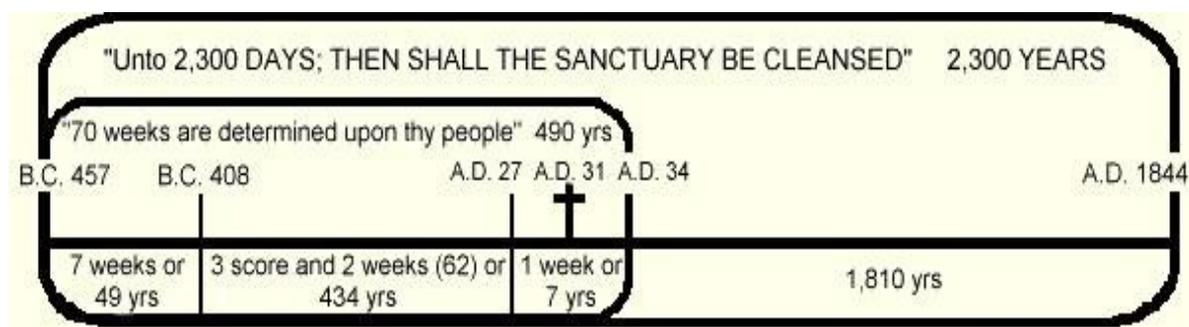
**Daniel 7:10** A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

The judgment is set in Revelation chapter four and five and it begins in chapter six when the first seal or book is opened.

The sanctuary is a key to understanding when this judgment takes place. Daniel also reveals when the judgment begins:

**Daniel 8:14** And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

This prophecy when examined closely tells us when the judgment begins and when the first seal is opened.



The cleansing of the sanctuary or removal of the contamination of sin was conducted on the Day of Atonement in the Mosaic sanctuary. It was symbolic of the cleansing that would take place in the heavenly sanctuary when the judgment would sit, the books would be opened and the lives of everyone written in the book of life would be examined.

A religious movement of great significance gained momentum in the early 1830's - 40's. It was known as the Millerite movement. William Miller believed that the end of the 2300 day prophecy would culminate with the second coming of Christ.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Millerism>

The prediction of Christ's return led to a great disappointment when he did not come as they truly believed the prophecy stated. Upon further study a small group of Miller's followers realised that the prophecy had in fact been fulfilled, but not in the way initially expected. The cleansing of the heavenly

sanctuary had begun at this time. Christ the heavenly high priest had entered the judgment phase or antitypical Day of Atonement. To cleanse the heavenly sanctuary of sin he would need to examine the lives of those who had claimed God's forgiveness for their sins. This judgment begins with the first sinners in the Garden of Eden and extends just prior to the sounding of the seventh trumpet when those living would be alive when their earthly probation ceased. This cleansing of sin and examination of the Book of Life was going to take a lengthy period and it is while this judgment takes place that the seals are opened by Christ.

The opening of each of the seven seals is accompanied by descriptions of earthly events that are taking place.

**Revelation 6:2** And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Christ, the rider on the white horse has led his church since that time. His followers soon after the disappointment uncovered the significance of the seventh day sabbath that had been hidden from the typical Protestant of that time. The church of Rome since AD 321 when Constantine venerated the day of the sun - Sunday as the first day of the week, a day of rest has created traditions that have become grounded in Protestant religions. God's commandments have been superseded by the traditions of men.

Who are God's true followers? Who is the church that will enter upon her final conflict. "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" (Song of Solomon 6:10)? Let the Word of God declare who that church is:

#### **Revelation 14:12**

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict. One army was led by banners bearing the world's insignia; the other was led by the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust, as company after company from the Lord's army joined the foe, and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God. An angel flying in the midst of heaven put the standard of Emmanuel into many hands, while a mighty general cried out with a loud voice: "Come into line. Let those who are loyal to the commandments of God and the testimony of Christ now take their position. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters. Let all who will, come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." CET 228.1

The battle raged. Victory alternated from side to side. Now the soldiers of the cross gave way, "as when a standard-bearer fainteth." Isaiah 10:18. But their apparent retreat was but to gain a more advantageous position. Shouts of joy were heard. A song of praise to God went up, and angel voices united in the song, as Christ's soldiers planted His banner on the walls of fortresses till then held by the enemy. **The Captain of our salvation was ordering the battle, and sending support to His soldiers. His power was mightily displayed, encouraging them to press the battle to the gates. He taught them terrible things in righteousness as He led them on step by step, conquering and to conquer.** CET 228.2

**At last the victory was gained. The army following the banner with the inscription, “The commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,” was gloriously triumphant.** The soldiers of Christ were close beside the gates of the city, and with joy the city received her King. The kingdom of peace and joy and everlasting righteousness was established. CET 228.3

The battle pictured in the above paragraphs has begun and will reach a crescendo when the loud cry of Revelation 18 is a reality . Christ has and will lead his church to victory.

#### **Zechariah 10:**

3 Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle.

4 Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together.

Christ is the cornerstone of his church. The Holy Spirit is able to nail truth into our hearts convicting us to follow that truth no matter what the cost. Christ has a bow from which his arrows of truth pierce our hearts and will convict those who are prepared to stand for the truth and faith of Jesus.

The first seal has been opened. Christ is leading his church. Are you prepared to join his army?