

Greetings all. As most of you know – we have 2 extension campuses.

- Say Hi to Pastor Fabian & the folks in SP. I'll be visiting there soon.
- I'm filling in for Pastor Jeff at the CI harbor campus.
- So that means we'll be showing the video at the Oxnard Main campus.

Before we stand & read this morning—today's message is less a sermon & more of a verse by verse Bible study. Because we're going verse by verse through **all** of Revelation, there'll be some Sundays when we'll zero in on just a few verses for a look at one thing.

But **between** those messages will be simple expository studies. That's what we're doing today.

Read 5:11-14 • Escrow

1. I mentioned last week, the Book of Rev. is like Escrow. Let's elaborate on that.
2. Ch. 5 begins w/John's vision of God sitting on His heavenly throne, holding a scroll; the Title Deed to Earth.
 - a. He sees Jesus as a Sacrificed Lamb **take** that scroll & prepare to break its 7 seals.
 - b. The best way to understand what's going on in all this is to **relate it to escrow**.
3. When you buy a house, you enter a time of **transition** when all the details & specifics of the transfer of the house from the previous owner to you are worked out.
 - a. Sometimes an owner sells a house he's rented out.
 - b. The renters living there usually aren't real happy about having to move.
 - c. And sometimes they try to stay, even though escrow says they **have to vacate**.
 - d. They become what's called "squatters."
 - e. They may even get nasty & damage the property.
4. That's kinda' what we see happening in the Book of Revelation.
 - a. God gave dominion of Earth to Adam, who forfeited it to the devil when he sinned.
 - b. Jesus **reclaimed** dominion of Earth at the Cross. Earth **rightly belongs** to Him.
 - c. But Jesus didn't take possession of it right away.
 - d. Earth entered Escrow; a really long Escrow of 2000 years.
5. What John sees in Rev. is when Jesus finally closes Escrow.
 - a. The problem is, the devil doesn't want to give up what he's held for 6000 years.
 - b. Like a squatter, he sits on what Jesus claims.
 - c. All the **judgments** of chs 6-19 are God **evicting** Satan & rebellious mankind allied w/him.
6. But before we look at that, we **finish off** John's vision of heaven when Jesus takes the title deed to Earth from the Father's Hand.

Vs. 11-14

¹¹ Then I looked, & I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, & the elders; & the number of them was 10,000 times 10,000, & thousands of thousands, ¹² saying w/a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power & riches & wisdom & strength & honor & glory & blessing!"

1. John sees an ever expanding circle of worship.
 - a. 1st it's the 4 cherubim, then the 24 elders Then the cherubim & elders together.
 - b. Now, **added to that** he sees a whole lot of angels.
 - c. And the praise becomes 1 long peal of accolades.
 - d. Jesus is worthy to receive Power, Wealth, Wisdom, Strength, Honor, Glory, & Blessing.
 - 1) All you long time members of Calvary probably know what comes next.
 - 2) We do a **word study** on each of these accolades.
 - 3) Without **actually counting** how many there are; because this is Rev. > **GUESS!**
 - 4) Your immediate guess should be ____ / Sure enough, **7** it is!
 - 5) The number of completion / perfection.
 - 6) Meaning we're to understand this list of tributes as representing **on-going** praise.
2. "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power & riches & wisdom & strength & honor & glory & blessing; **etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.**"

3. The angels **loudly declare** Jesus is rightly deserving of both power & strength.
 - a. The words are close but carry a slight difference.
 - b. **Strength** means **potential**; **Power** is **application**.
 - c. There are some big boys at the gym.
 - 1) I look at them and you know they can easily bench 225 lbs. > Piece of protein enriched cake!
 - 2) That's **strength**! You can **see** it before they ever lie down on the bench.
 - 3) **Power** is when they do lie down & throw that 225 lb bar up for 10 reps.
 - d. In the incarnation, Jesus' strength was veiled. His power hidden. > Not when He comes again!
4. He's worthy of **riches** = wealth & what it's able to accumulate in the way of possessions.
 - a. As Creator, everything really does belong to Him.
 - b. Yet in the incarnation, Jesus emptied Himself and became poor.
 - c. When He comes again, it all becomes His.
5. He's worthy of **wisdom** = the practical knowledge to succeed.
 - a. In the Incarnation, Jesus became a stumbling block to prideful men who consider the Gospel utter foolishness.
 - b. When Jesus comes again, All will see that He's been THE Answer all along.
6. Jesus is worthy of **honor, glory & blessing**.
 - a. In the incarnation He was dishonored, ridiculed, shamed, and made a curse.
 - b. When He comes again, every knee will bow & every tongue confess that He is Lord & God.

¹³ And every creature which is in heaven & on the earth & under the earth & such as are in the sea, & all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing & honor & glory & power be to Him who sits on the throne, & to the Lamb, forever & ever!" ¹⁴ Then the 4 living creatures said, "Amen!" & the 24 elders fell down & worshiped Him who lives forever & ever.

7. As John's vision widens out even more he sees all creation worshipping God.
8. Now; keep in mind what **prompted** this Creation-wide celebration Jesus taking Earth's Title Deed.
9. This helps us understand something the Apostle Paul wrote about in Rom 8 [vs. 19-23]
All creation is waiting eagerly for that day when God reveals who his children really are. Against its will, everything on earth was subjected to a curse. So, all creation anticipates the day when it joins God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And even we Christians, although we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain & suffering. We too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as His people, including the new bodies He's promised us. (NLT)
10. Paul says the all creation has been subjected to the curse & yearns for its liberation.
11. It's here in Rev. 5 we see the **beginning** of that deliverance. It's time for Jesus to Close Escrow.
12. No wonder all creation is stoked.

CH 6

1. Now in ch6, Jesus begins to break the 7 seals on Earth's Title Deed.
2. As He does, history begins to wrap up.
3. These are the last days of the kingdoms of fallen man.
4. Slowly but surely, God turns up the heat, backing humanity into a corner & facing the human race squarely w/its foolish rebellion.

1st Seal = The White Horse

¹ Now I saw when the Lamb opened 1 of the seals; & I heard 1 of the 4 living creatures saying w/a voice like thunder, "Come & see." ² & I looked, & behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; & a crown was given to him, & he went out conquering & to conquer.

1. When Jesus breaks the 1st seal, John is invited by 1 of the cherubim to see what it signifies.
2. He sees a white horse w/a crowned rider holding a bow.
3. It's clear **both** the rider's **ambition & career** are all about power. **This guy wants to rule!**
4. Raised on the images of good & evil Hollywood's set before us in countless movies, we expect the guy on a white horse is the good guy.
5. And being raised on those **very same movies** warns us this guy might be riding a white horse because he's in fact trying to fool us into thinking he's good.

6. The clue he's evil is that bow he's holding; that & by the verses that come after this.
 - a. What follows this first rider is war & a LOT of death.
7. We again have to ask, "What did a bow-carrying, white horse riding warrior mean to those who first read this?"
 - a. John's original readers immediately thought of the **Parthians**; Rome's ancient Eastern nemesis.
 - b. The core of their military might were horse-mounted archers.
 - c. Their favorite breed of horse was white.
 - d. The legions of Rome were bested by the Parthians time & again.
 - e. They were deadly accurate; able to hit a bird in flight at a full gallop.
 - f. But they weren't just good archers; they were also brilliant in strategy.
 - g. They used deception to great effect.
 - 1) They would rush at the Romans in a disordered mass.
 - 2) Then, they'd pretend to get scared & sound retreat.
 - 3) As soon as the Romans broke ranks & started chasing them w/ lowered shields,
 - 4) They'd look back over their shoulder & fire off a barrage of arrows that wiped out the front ranks.
 - 5) This was known as the **Parthian Shot**; a phrase that morphed into "parting shot," a devastating finish you can't recover from.
8. The point is, to John & his readers, this horse & rider conveys the idea of **irresistible military might**.
9. His crown isn't a royal **diadem**; it's the **stephanos**, the conqueror's crown.
10. Conquering is what he's about because his **entire ambition** is to **get & wield** power.
11. This is none other than the last times ruler foretold by the prophet Daniel, the Ap Paul, & others.
 - a. He's given many titles in the Bible. The most common is Antichrist.
 - b. He looks good, but he's all bad.
 - c. He rides a white horse but wears a black hat.
 - d. Like the Parthians, he'll use deceit to secure his power.
12. In 2 Cor 11:14-15, Paul says –
Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his servants also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.
 - a. The Antichrist rises to power because he looks & sounds good.
 - b. He'll seem to a world reeling from disaster to be a savior.
 - c. Millions will acclaim him as the Messiah.
13. But the antichrist cannot rise to power **until God permits it**
 - a. So note; it isn't till **Christ opens the 1st seal** he gets his crown & goes forth.
 - b. Right now, the Holy Spirit **holds back** the antichrist, who in all likelihood is alive somewhere right now.
 - c. In 2 Thess 2 we learn 1 day that restraint will be lifted & the antichrist will emerge.
14. The world is growing desperate for a leader, someone who can bring peace.
 - a. The threat of radical, Apocalyptic Islam is growing.
 - 1) The homicidal regime in Iran is committed to producing nuclear weapons.
 - 2) ISIS continues to recruit people from all over the world.
 - b. Europe's economy is imperiled by forces beyond anyone's control or wisdom to fix.
 - c. Russia re-asserts its power over weak neighbors in an attempt to resurrect the Soviet Union.
 - d. The great promise of **Science** to provide solutions to all our problems has totally back-fired.
 - e. It's **added** to the size & scope of the problems by producing weapons w/ the potential of wiping out all life on Earth!
15. 1 day a man will arise w/ what seems to be amazing solutions to all that's troubling the world.
 - a. And that's what people will be **AMAZED!**
 - b. He will seem to be The Answer to the World's need of a Leader.
 - c. Millions, even **billions** will flock to his banner.
 - d. He promises a plan for peace, but it's a blueprint for evil.
 - e. His winning smile is a mask that hides a gloating face of death.
 - f. Neville Chamberlain returned to England from Munich after meeting Adolph Hitler in 1938, saying he found the Fuehrer to be a "reasonable & peaceful man."

1) Chamberlain got off the plane & declared to the world "Peace in our time!"

2) Not long after, the German blitzkrieg crushed Poland.

16. The Antichrist will make Hitler look like a choirboy.

2nd Seal = The Red Horse

³ When He opened the 2nd seal, I heard the 2nd living creature saying, "Come & see." ⁴ Another horse, fiery red, went out. & it was granted to the 1 who sat on it to take peace from the earth, & that people should kill 1 another; & there was given to him a great sword.

1. As the 2nd seal is broken, John sees a red horse representing war.

2. The peace promised by the antichrist is seen for the sham it is.

3. In speaking of the end times, 1 Thess. 5:3 says, "When they say 'Peace & safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them."

4. When this horse & rider are loosed **Peace** is replaced by **war & murder** becomes **normal**.

5. If humanity **was** evolving as so many claim, we ought to expect people to become MORE civilized, not more barbaric.

a. But **barbaric** is exactly what the world's becoming.

b. ISIS & other Islamist groups **butcher** thousands by beheading & other torturous methods of execution.

1) That word "kill" in v4 means "to butcher / slaughter."

2) This is the kind of killing that's done w/o regret; there's a **relish** in it; a **delight in slaying**.

3) Isn't this **exactly** what we're seeing in the proliferation of serial killers & mass-killing events that have become a stock part of the weekly news?

6. There's always been war. But more people were killed by war in the 20th C than all history till then.

a. And so far, this C hasn't slowed that pace.

7. The greatest voice honoring the Sanctity of Life today is The Church.

a. But when the Church is removed in the Rapture, that voice will be silenced.

b. Violence & murder will explode across the globe.

The 3rd Seal = The Black Horse

⁵ When He opened the 3rd seal, I heard the 3rd living creature say, "Come & see." So I looked, & behold, a black horse, & he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. ⁶ & I heard a voice in the midst of the 4 living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, & 3 quarts of barley for a denarius; & do not harm the oil & the wine."

1. When Jesus pops the 3rd seal, John sees a black horse carrying a rider holding a pair of scales, the ancient symbol for **commerce**.

2. The idea here is famine.

3. Historically, famine follows war as fields have been neglected & men are killed.

4. John hears a voice say, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and 3 quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine."

a. A qt. of wheat was a **day's ration** while a denarius was a **day's wage**.

b. So, think of it this way; you work all day just to buy a single loaf of bread.

c. And that's good, **wheat** bread. **Barley** was the cheap grain used for livestock.

d. So if you have a **family**, you're not eating wheat bread; you're eating cattle food.

e. You're not enjoying Wheat Thins & Vienna Sausages; it's Milkbones & Snausages.

5. When a qt. of wheat costs a day's wage, things like **oil & wine** are luxuries.

a. Yet the voice says they're not to be harmed.

b. In other words, the rich will still be able to have them.

c. It's a time of great inequity. While most are starving, a wealthy few will have plenty.

6. In the 1st C, during the reign of the Emperor Nero, the entire Mediterranean basin had a severe drought that caused famine.

a. Entire regions of the Roman Empire were decimated.

b. Conditions in Rome were so bad thousands died.

c. Rome got a good part of its grain from Egypt, & 1 day during this famine a ship arrived from Alexandria.

- 1) Everyone thought it was carrying food, so they rushed it.
- 2) It was filled w/SAND for the floor of the arena so the rich could enjoy the gladiatorial games.
- 3) The starving masses rioted for days at the outrage they felt.
7. For all the Antichrist's promises of peace & prosperity, what he brings is famine, war & death.

The 4th Seal = The Pale Horse

⁷ When He opened the 4th seal, I heard the voice of the 4th living creature saying, "Come & see." ⁸ So I looked, & behold, a pale horse. & the name of him who sat on it was Death, & Hades followed w/him. & power was given to them over a 4th of the earth, to kill w/sword, w/hunger, w/death, & by the beasts of the earth.

1. 'Pale' was an interesting choice by the translators.
 - a. The word is 'chloros' from which we get 'chlorine,' as in 'bleach.'
 - b. It's a pale yellow-green. & by 'pale' – think semi-transparent.
 - c. The best way to understand this horse is that it's kind of ghostly.
2. Which makes sense when we see it's rider = Death.
3. Coming up like a dog chasing a horse is Hades, the **place** of the dead.
4. It consumes all those mowed down by Death.
5. This 4th horse is the mop-up for the 1st 3.
 - a. A ¼ of the world's population is killed by these 4 horsemen of the Apocalypse, as they are known.
 - b. There are abt 7 billion, 125 million people on Earth today.
 - c. 1/4th of that is 1 billion, 781 million.
 - d. That's the combined population of the US, Canada, Mexico, Central & South America, all Europe, & Japan.
 - e. **60 million** people died during WWII. ¼ of 7 billion is 30 WWII's !!!
6. 4 means of death are given here –
 - 1) The Sword = **War**.
 - 2) Hunger = **Starvation**.
 - 3) Death = This word points to **plague & pestilence**.
 - a. The world had quite a shock recently with the outbreak of Ebola in Africa.
 - b. Though it's quieted down in the news, just this week, Sierra Leone lacked down an entire province of 2½ million people.
 - 4) Beasts of the earth = Just that.
 - a. Creation turns **against** man who's to blame for subjecting it to the curse.
 - b. This is all those creepy animal-attack movies you've ever seen all rolled into one.
 - 1) The Birds, Arachnophobia, Jaws, Cujo, Sharknado, Snakes on a Plane, Attack of the Killer Tomatoes.

Not Preterism

1. I need to tell you that there's a way of interpreting Revelation that's gained in popularity over the last decade called **Preterism**.
 - a. You find it mostly among what are called Reformed churches.
 - b. Preterism says all of Revelation except the last couple chs. was fulfilled in the 1st C.
 - c. Really, that it all applies to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD.
 - d. All 4 of these seals & horsemen was prophetic only of that.
2. There's LOTs of problems with Preterism.
3. Two of the biggest problems with it are this
 - 1) John didn't even **write** Revelation till at the earliest the late 80's; over a decade AFTER Rome destroyed Jerusalem.
 - 2) V8 says a the 4th horseman is given power to kill a qtr. of the **world's** population; not Israel's.
 - a) In ch9 another third of the **world** population is culled.
 - b) Put all that together & **half** of those alive at the start of the Tribulation will be killed before it's over.
4. There's just no way you can make any of that fit into a preterist scenario without hopeless butchering the text and forcing it into a tortured interpretation - which is precisely what they do.

Conclusion

1. There's only one thing that keeps all this drama from happening now.
2. Remember, This is John's vision of a future event.
3. The World is IN Escrow right now.
4. The day will come, soon, when Jesus will close escrow & evict the devil and his allies from Planet Earth.
5. The only reason that hasn't happened yet is because of God's grace.
6. He's waiting for the last few rebels who are going to repent to do so.
7. Is that you?

Harry Truman.

1. Harry Truman was the care-taker of a recreation lodge on Spirit Lake near Mt. St. Helens.
2. In May, 1980, Park Rangers & Forest Service workers combed the region urging people to evacuate because the Mt. was spewing ash and it looked like it might blow.
3. Everyone left except Harry. He said he'd lived there a long time and would know if it was dangerous.
4. He refused to budge and the Rangers legally couldn't make him.
5. At 8:31 on the morning of May 18th, the mountain exploded.
 - a. No one was around to see what happened but the shock wave that came from the volcano was so great it flattened everything within 150 sq. mls.
 - b. Waves of superheated gas scorched the land & a wall of mud 50 feet high buried Truman's cabin.
6. He'd been warned & had seen the evidence, but refused to believe his home could be wiped out.
7. There are many people like Harry Truman today.
 - a. Long foretold events which herald the return of Christ are coming to pass before our eyes, but they refuse to heed them.
 - b. Like Harry, they will realize too late they've been fools.