"Seals, Trumpets, Bowls" Revelation 6

Introduction:

- 1. Last Time:
 - We Finished Looking At:
 - What Can Be Considered:
 - The Second Main Section:
 - Of The Book Or Revelation:
 - Which Was The Heavenly Throne-Room Vision:
 - Of Chapters 4-5!
 - Of Course This Followed:
 - The First Main Section Of Revelation:
 - Which Was The Seven Messages Of Jesus:
 - To The Seven Churches Of Asia:
 - That Experienced Challenges:
 - Of Both Persecution & Purity!

- 2. This Now Leads Us To:
 - A Third Main Section:
 - That Will Involve:
 - What Is Perhaps The Most Difficult & Debated Elements Of Revelation:
 - The Seals, The Trumpets, And The Bowls:
 - That Will All Culminate In:
 - The Return Of Jesus Christ From Heaven To Earth!

- 3. But Just Like We Said:
 - About The Relationship Between:
 - The First & The Second Sections:
 - Of Revelation The Same Thing:
 - Holds True For The Relationship Between:
 - The Second & Third Sections:
 - Of Revelation!
- 4. That Is There Is A Close Connection:
 - Between The Throne-Room Vision Of Chapters 4-5:
 - And Both:
 - Jesus' Messages To:
 - The Churches! (Chapters 1-3)
 - And Jesus' Unsealing & Opening Of:
 - The Scroll Of Destiny:
 - Which He Took From The Hand:
 - Of God The Father!
 - And This Section Of Seals, Trumpets, And Bowls Extends From:
 - Chapter 6-16!
 - So No Matter How Difficult It May Be:
 - To Fully Grasp What We Will Look At:
 - In These Chapters:
 - We Must Never Forget That:
 - It All Flows From The Sovereign Hands Of God The Father & The Lord Jesus Christ:
 - In Order To Fulfill & Finish Their Purpose & Plan For This World!
 - "Events On Earth Are First Decided In Heaven!" (Alan F. Johnson ECB)
- 5. But Before We Start Looking At:
 - Chapters 6-16 In More Detail:
 - We Need To Realize That:
 - There Are Different Approaches:
 - To These Chapters Just Like There Are:
 - Different Approaches To:
 - The Book Of Revelation As A Whole!
 - And All Of These Approaches:

- Are Based On A Firm Belief In:
 - The Inerrancy And Authority:
 - Of The Bible With A Desire To:
 - Understand & Apply The Book Of Revelation Better!

- 6. The Approach That:
 - We Are Taking In These Lessons:
 - To The Book Of Revelation As A Whole:
 - Is What We Called:
 - An Eclectic-Futurist Approach!
 - Which Means That:
 - Even Though We Believe That:
 - Much Of Revelation Is:
 - Prophecy Its Message Is Also:
 - Relevant For All Of God's People, No Matter Where Or When They Live! Past / Present / Future!
 - And This Is In Line With:
 - The Use Of All Prophecy:
 - That We Find In The Bible!
 - We Know That Revelation:
 - Is Prophecy:
 - Because Of What We Find At Both:
 - The Beginning & The End Of The Book!
 - At The Beginning:
 - In 1:3 John Writes:
 - "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this *prophecy*, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand!"
 - And Then At The End:
 - In 22:7 Jesus Himself Says To John:
 - "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the *prophecy* of this book!"
 - And, Of Course, Prophecy Often Deals With:
 - What Is In The Future:
 - To The Time When The Writer & His Audience Lived!
 - But We Also Know That Revelation:
 - Is Relevant:
 - To All Of God's People:
 - In All Ages:
 - Because Of The Same Verses:
 - That Tell Us That It Is A Prophecy!
 - Because As We Read & Hear The Book Of Revelation Being Taught:
 - We Need Be On The Look-Out For Ways:
 - That We Are To:
 - "Keep Those Things Which Are Written Therein!" And To Keep:
 - "The Sayings Of The Prophecy Of This Book!"
- 7. So We Will Be Approaching:
 - Chapters 6-16:
 - In The Same Way!
 - As Future Prophecy:
 - From When John Was Given This Revelation:
 - That Has Significance & Relevance:
 - To Us Even Today!
 - But Even As We Approach:
 - These Chapters As Prophecy:
 - There Are Some Different Ways:
 - To Approach The:
 - Seals, Trumpets, And Seals:
 - That We Will Come To!
 - And This Is What:

- We Will Spend Some Time Today & Next Week: - Over-Viewing - Before: - We Dig Into The Details! Now - When It Comes To These Chapters: - There Is A Definite Literary Arrangement: - That Must First Inform: - Our Approach To This Part Of: - John's Vision! - And - It All Begins: - When Jesus Takes The Scroll: - From The Hand Of The One: - Sitting On The Throne! - And - According To: - 5:1 - This Scroll Was: - "Written Within And On The Backside, Sealed With Seven Seals!" - And - All The Wonder & Worship: - That We Looked At In Chapter 5: - Focused On The Fact That: - Jesus Christ - As Both The Lion & Lamb Of God: - Was Found Worthy To "Take The Book, And To Open The Seals Thereof!" - So - The Great Anticipation & Expectation: - Of Every Creature That Is Found Singing In The Three Songs Of This Chapter: - Is That The Lamb Will Do: - What He Was Found Worthy To Do! - And John Is Then Given A Series: - Of Visions Of Scenes That Will Unfold: - The Rest Of God's Plan: - For This World! - Not As A Movie Projector: - But Through Pictures Painted With Words: - That Have Much Symbolic & Biblical Meaning! - And - This Is What Chapters 6-16 Entails! So: - In Chapter 6: - The First Thing The Lamb Does Is: - Break Open The First 6 Seals: - That Keep The Scroll Tightly Closed! - The First 4 Seals: - Of The Four Colored Horses & Their Riders: - Have A Close Connection Between Them! - And So Does: - The Next 2 Seals! - But - The 7th Seal Remains Intact! Because: - In Chapter 7: - There Is A Break Between: - The 6th & 7th Seals: - That Is Called An "Interlude" By Many! - And - This Interlude: - Is A "Closeup" That Reveals Some Truths: - About God's People: - During The Scenes Of The Previous Seals! - In Chapters 8-9: - The 7th Seal Is Finally Broken: - Which Then Brings Forth: - 7 Angels With 7 Trumpets!

And When Each Angel Sounds His Trumpet From Heaven:
Something Happens In & To This World!

- Now - Since The 7 Seals Where Used:

8.

- To Seal The Scroll Then: - The 7 Trumpets Reveal:
 - The Actual Contents Of The Scroll!
- The First 4 Trumpets:
 - Have A Close Connection Between Them:
 - In That They All Deal With:
 - The World Of Nature!
 - And The Last 3 Trumpets:
 - Are Also Closely Related:
 - Because They All Deal With:
 - The World Of Man And Are Classified As "Woes!"
 - But Before The 7th Trumpet Is Sounded:
- In Chapters 10-11a (10 11:14)
 - There Is Another Break Right Between:
 - The 6th & 7th Trumpet!
 - Another Interlude / Closeup:
 - That Reveals Some More Truth:
 - About John & About God's People:
 - During The Events Of The Previous Trumpets!
- In Chapter 11b (11:15-19):
 - The 7th Trumpet Is Finally Sounded:
 - At Which Point It Is Declared:
 - "The Kingdoms Of This World Are Become The Kingdoms Of Our Lord, And Of His Christ; And He Shall Reign For Ever And Ever!"
 - Now At This Point:
 - We Would Come To Expect:
 - The 7 Bowls To Be Poured Out!
 - But Since The 7 Vials / Bowls Represent:
 - The "Seven Last Plagues" In Which "Is Filled Up The Wrath Of God!" (15:1)
- In Chapters 12-14:
 - There Is Still Another Break Between:
 - The 7th Trumpet & The 1st Bowl!
 - So Instead Of An Interlude:
 - It Is A Prelude:
 - Before The Final Judgment & Wrath Of God Is Poured Out!
 - And In This Prelude:
 - There Is Another, Longer "Closeup" That Reveals Even More Truths:
 - About God's People:
 - During The Scenes Of This Tribulation & Judgment!

- In Chapters 15-16:
 - Seven More Angels Are Finally Given:
 - The "Seven Golden Vials Full Of The Wrath Of God" To Be:
 - Poured Out "Upon The Earth!" (15:1)
 - And Just Like The Seals & Trumpets:
 - The First 4 Bowls:
 - Have A Close Connection Between Them:
 - In That They Also Deal With:
 - The World Of Nature!
 - And The Last 3 Bowls:
 - Also Deal With:
 - The World Of Man!
 - But Upon The Pouring Out:
 - Of The 7th Bowl "Into The Air":
 - It Is Declared:
 - "It Is Done!"
- 9. This Is The Literary Arrangement:
 - Of The 7 Seals, 7 Trumpets, And 7 Bowls:
 - That John Saw In His Vision:

- And Wrote Down For Us!
 - A Lot More Detail To Get Into!
- But The Question That:
 - Often Comes To Mind Is:
 - If Revelation Is Prophecy:
 - About Reveal Events!
 - Then Is There A Chronological Arrangement:
 - To These Chapters & Scenes & Events As Well?
- Because Upon Close Inspection:
 - Though There Are Many Differences:
 - Between The Seals & Trumpets & Bowls:
 - There Are Also:
 - Many Similarities!
- 10. So There Are 3 Basic Ways:
 - That We Can Approach:
 - The Likely Arrangement Of These Scenes:
 - In Time & History!
- * The First Approach Is:
- 1. The Sequential Approach:
 - Which Involves Looking At The Scenes:
 - In All Of These Chapters:
 - As Taking Place In Sequence:
 - One Right After The Other!
 - So Taking All Of These Scenes:
 - As Prophecies Of Future Events:
 - That Are Broadly Painted Using Words:
 - With Biblical Meaning To Them:
 - They Will Occur In History:
 - In The Same Order In Which They Are Written!
 - This Does Not Mean That:
 - The Same Amount Of Time Will Elapse:
 - For Each Scene:
 - But That Each Scene Will Move History Forward:
 - Until The Return Of Christ!
 - So The First Things To Happen:
 - After John Was Given This Prophecy:
 - Is Revealed By:
 - The Opening Of The Seals!
 - Then By:
 - The Sounding Of The Trumpets!
 - Followed By:
 - The Pouring Out Of The Bowls!
 - As Can Be Seen:
 - In This Diagram:

Seals 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Trumpets | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Bowls 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

- And Though The Seals:
 - May Involve The Longest Time-Frame:
 - The Time-Frame For the Trumpets & Bowls:
 - May Be More Condensed!

- Since The Last Seal:
 - Encompasses The 7 Trumpets And:
 - The 7th Trumpet:
 - Encompasses The 7 Bowls!
- Though This Is A Very Natural Way:
 - For Us To Read Through Revelation:
 - Especially In Our American & Western Way:
 - Of Reading!
 - One Challenge To This Approach Is:
 - What Happens With:
 - The Last Seal, Trumpet, Bowl!
 - At The End Of Each Series:
 - We Find What Is Called A:
 - "Storm Theophany" Which Is What Heralds Of The Return Of Christ!
 - It Is A Picture Of:
 - Heaven Coming To Earth:
 - Since In 4:5 We Are Told That:
 - "Out Of The Throne Proceeded Lightnings And Thunderings And Voices!"
- So After The 7th Seal Is Broken Open:
 - In 8:5 We Are Told That:
 - "There Were Voices, And Thunderings, And Lightnings, And An Earthquake!"
 - "Earthquake" "Seismos" (σεισμός)
 - A Commotion / Shaking Whether In Heaven Or On Earth!
 - Something Similar Described In:
 - Joel 2:10 "The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble!"
- When The 7th Trumpet Is Sounded:
 - Not Only Are We Told In 11:15 That:
 - "The Kingdoms Of This World Are Become The Kingdoms Of Our Lord!"
 - In 11:19 We Are Also Told That:
 - "The Temple Of God Was Opened In Heaven, And There Was Seen In His Temple The Ark Of His Testament: And There Were Lightnings, And Voices, And Thunderings, And An Earthquake, And Great Hail!"
 - This All Leads To The Moment When:
 - In 14:14 John Sees The Return Of Christ!
 - In "A White Cloud, And Upon The Cloud One Sat Like Unto The Son Of Man, Having On His Head A Golden Crown, And In His Hand A Sharp Sickle!"
- When The 7th Bowl Is Poured Out:
 - Not Only Are We Told In 16:17 That:
 - "It Is Done!"
 - But In 16:18 We Are Told Again That:
 - "There Were Voices, And Thunders, And Lightnings; And There Was A Great Earthquake, Such As Was Not Since Men Were Upon The Earth, So Mighty An Earthquake, And So Great!"
 - And In 16:21:
 - "And There Fell Upon Men A Great Hail Out Of heaven, Every Stone About The Weight Of A Talent!"
 - And This All Leads To The Moment When:
 - In 19:11 John Sees:
 - "Heaven Opened, And Behold A White Horse; And He That Sat Upon Him Was Called Faithful And True, And In Righteousness He Doth Judge And Make War!"
- Now In Each Of These Descriptions:
 - Something Is Added:
 - To The Lightning & Thunder & Voices:
 - That Appear Out Of The Throne:
 - In 4:5!
 - In 8:5 When The 7th Seal Is Opened:
 - There Is Also:
 - An Earthquake!

- In 11:16 When The 7th Trumpet Is Sounded:
 - There Is Also:
 - Great Hail!
- In 16:18, 21 When The 7th Bowl Is Poured Out:
 - Both The Earthquake & The Hail:
 - Are Described As "Great!"
- These Differences Do Not Mean That:
 - They Refer To Separate Events:
 - But Are Instead A Way To Emphasize The Intensity:
 - Of The Final Judgment That Jesus Will Bring With Him:
 - To The Earth!
- This Literary Device:
 - Is Known As "Progressive Expansion!" (Mounce)
 - And It Is Used For Effect:
 - In Different Ways In Revelation!
 - For Example:
 - We Saw This Already Back In:
 - 5:3-4 "And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to *open* the book, neither to *look* thereon. / And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to *open* and to *read* the book, neither to *look* thereon!"
 - In The Same Way:
 - The "Progressive Expansion" Of The 7th Seal & Trumpet & Bowl Is Used:
 - To Focus Our Attention On The Great Power & Purpose Of God's Judgment!
- So Even Though:
 - There Appears To Be Some Definite Progression:
 - From The Seals To The Trumpets To The Bowls:
 - That Progress Seems To Be Related More To The First 6 Of Each:
 - With The 7th Of Each Taking The Readers Of Revelation:
 - To The Very Threshold Of The Lord's Return!
 - Which If You Remember From:
 - 1:7 Is The Main Theme Of Revelation!
 - "Behold, He Cometh With Clouds! And Every Eye Shall See Him, And They Also Which Pierced Him: And All Kindreds Of The Earth Shall Wail Because Of Him! Even So. Amen!"
 - The Purpose Of This:
 - Repetition Of The 7th Seal / Trumpet / Bowl:
 - Is "To Never Permit (Our) Gaze To Drift From The Invigorating Centre Of (Our) Hope (Our) Returning Lord Jesus!" (Dale Reaper Davis)

Conclusion:

- 1. So The Absolute Sequential Approach:
 - To The Seals, Trumpets, And Bowls:
 - Seems To Break Down!
 - So To Account To The Similarities:
 - Another Approach Has Been Suggested:
 - Which We Will Look At Next Week Which Has Been Described As:
 - The Simultaneous Approach!