

EP58 Revelation 6 verses 9-11

Seal 5 is Opened

Revelation 6:9-11

When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those having been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they held; and they cried out with a loud voice, now saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You not judge and avenge our blood on those who are now dwelling on the earth?" And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should choose to rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who are even now being killed even as they had been, may be completed also.

The Number 5

Given that according to the **Code** the number 5 is associated with man's abject neediness and God's total and complete provision for all His needs (which is another way to speak of His grace), we should expect to find that the events addressed in the opening of this seal, in one-way-shape-or-form, address God's grace (man's abject neediness and God's complete provision).

Revelation 6:9

When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those having been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had held.

An Altar

It appears that John is in the heavenly tabernacle (which provided the pattern after which the tabernacle on earth was constructed), and he sees souls underneath the altar.¹ In the earthly tabernacle, there were two altars, the altar of incense and the altar of sacrifice (also known as the brazen or bronze altar).²

The altar of incense was located within the Holy Place (in the "*naos*") and is associated with the prayer of the saints. We saw a glimpse of this imagery as it exists in the Heavenly Temple with the Four and the 24-Elders, as each one had a censor of incense which represented the prayers of the saints. Later we will find that they add their incense to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which is before the throne.³

¹ *Hebrews 8:1-5*

² *Exodus 27:1-8, 30:1-10*

³ *Revelation 8:3-4*

In contrast to the altar of incense, the brazen or the bronze altar was positioned outside of the Holy Place (in the “*hieron*” -- the part of the temple which surrounds the Holy Place). This was the place of sacrifice, death, and blood. Given that John sees the souls of those having been slain, we are likely dealing with the altar of sacrifice, after which the bronze altar was fashioned.

The Souls

John saw the **souls** of those having been slain for the word of God and for the witness or the testimony they had borne. The Greek word translated as “souls” “*psuche*” – is from a root word meaning to breathe or breath. Although they are described as “souls” or breath, they obviously have some form and are not entirely disembodied spirits, because later they are given robes to calm them down.

Fiction Alert

FICTION ALERT

Souls & Not Bodies

It should be clear that these “*souls*” have yet to receive their new bodies which Jesus promised would be given to His bondservants at the time of the rapture. At the sound of the last trumpet, in the twinkling of an eye, the dead in Christ shall rise first and then those who are alive will rise and meet Him in the air. At that moment, the mortal will be transformed into the immortal and the bondservants of Jesus will have new immortal bodies in then likeness and nature of Jesus Himself.⁴

This begs the question, if the rapture happened at the end of **Revelation 3** when John was commanded to come up here, as the modern fiction asserts, why did John not see resurrected bodies instead of souls?

Tribulation Saints: Fact or Fiction

The pre-tribulation rapture theory has many fictions associated with it, including the presupposition that the “Tribulation” begins with the opening of the first seal and with the sending out of the white horse (who in their fictional narrative is symbolic for the Antichrist). If that were the case, then the rapture must occur before the white horse is released.

We know this first presupposition about the timing of the Tribulation is fiction because according to the **Code**, the rider on the white horse is now sitting on his horse and has already gone forth. We are not waiting for this to happen.

Continuing with the fiction, this theory presumes that these souls under the altar must therefore be from those “believers” who are killed during the Tribulation resulting from the events unleashed by the 4-horsemen of the Apocalypse. Thus, the reasoning goes that because they do not have new bodies, these souls are not a part of the church that was previously raptured (they are **NOT** part of the bride of Christ), but they fall into some new category of persons, which they call the “**tribulation saints**.”

If these souls were part of the church and had participated in the rapture, they would not be described

⁴ **1 Corinthians 15:50-57**

as souls, but would have their new bodies which are promised to those who are now following Christ. Thus, to support their fiction of a pre-tribulation rapture, they are forced to make up a classification of people that is not supported by the **Codex**. Hence, the creation of the **tribulation saints**.

According to the **Code**, we discovered that all 4 horses responded to the command to “*come*” or “*appear*” and are doing what they have been called to do. We are not waiting for them to be released. They are even now impacting our world. Their rides are not tied to the **End Times** (though they will overlap with the **End Times**).

2-Resurrections

We will discover throughout our journey in **Revelation** that all true believers who are killed during the first 3.5-years of the tribulation (which are many) take part in the **first resurrection**, which is a reference to the rapture.⁵

Revelation details two resurrections, 1) a resurrection of the followers of Christ (at an event we call the rapture, though it is not designated with that word in the **Codex**), and 2) a resurrection of all others which will occur immediately before they appear in judgment before the Great White Throne of God.

There are no other resurrections detailed in **Revelation** or anywhere else in the **Codex**. In fact, the Greek word translated as “first” means foremost in time. Thus, there are also no partial resurrections. The **Codex** does not indicate that the first resurrection is broken up into pieces where some are resurrected at one time and others at another time, but collectively it is the “**first**” (foremost in time) resurrection.

That idea that the first resurrection is broken up in parts is just nonsense and is taught by those who are trying to force their position onto the **Codex** and who do not let their position or understanding naturally flow from the **Codex**. It is another exercise of *religious licentiousness*.

There is the **first resurrection**, the rapture of those who are now believing and now overcoming. *“Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.”*⁶ And with this promise that they will be priests of God and Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years, we can be confident, based on Jesus’ promises to the churches, that those who participate in this first resurrection are the bondservants of Jesus Christ.

Then there is the **second resurrection** unto judgment where many, but not all, will be subject to the **Second Death**.

The first resurrection is painstakingly detailed for us in **Revelation 14:14-16** with a precision that matches every other description of this event that is detailed in the **Codex**. The second resurrection is detailed for us in **Revelation 20:11-15**.

Identification of Those Killed

Those who are killed for their testimony, including those during the first 3.5-years of the tribulation, are specifically identified as those who follow the Lamb wherever He goes, they are blameless, and have been purchased as first fruits unto God. And they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with

⁵ See **Revelation 11:7-13; 14:14-16**

⁶ **Revelation 20:6**

Him for a thousand years.⁷ They will not be hurt by the **Second Death**.

Again, these are all promises given to, and descriptors spoken about, the believers of the churches of Smyrna and Thyatira and not to some alternate classification of Christ followers known as the “tribulation saints.” And all those who are now believing, and overcoming, are deemed to be blameless before Him and the first fruits among God’s creation.⁸

Yahweh has given His promises to His Church—to His bride—and not to some other group of people called the **tribulation saints** who are not His bride. Moreover, there is only one resurrection of believers, the **first resurrection**; there are not multiple resurrections. It is the first, the foremost in time. This whole concept of “tribulation saints” that follow God after the church is raptured is a fictional non-factual narrative that cannot be supported by either the **Code** or the entirety of the **Codex**.

One Woman

Jesus has committed Himself to one woman, not to multiple women. He will be a husband of one wife. In **Revelation 21**, His bride, the wife of the Lamb, is imaged as a city (the new Jerusalem) that is even now coming down out of heaven from God, and not as 2-cities.⁹ Therefore, one is either part of the Church, the bride of Christ, because they are now believing and overcoming, or they are not. Those that are not will endure the **Great Tribulation**, the time of **Yahweh’s** wrath during the second 3.5-year period of the Tribulation. Whereas His church will be raptured prior to the time of wrath. At that point in time, they will no longer be these semi-disembodied souls, but they will receive new bodies.

New Bodies at the Rapture

There is a special promise given to the bride of Christ, and that is that they will receive new bodies, supernatural bodies, like Jesus had after His resurrection. They will not be bodiless souls throughout eternity. **However, the event that ushers in the transformation from the mortal to the immortal is not death, but the rapture of the Church.**

1 Corinthians 15:52-53

It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, *when the last trumpet is blown*. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. **For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.**

This transformation will be beyond fantastical, for we will be like Jesus. We will see Him just as He is.¹⁰ “As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake.”¹¹ We will be able to be right up close with Him, face-to-face, in the majesty of His glory. He will not have to

⁷ See **Revelation 14:1-5, 20:4-6**

⁸ See **1 Corinthians 1:8; Ephesians 1:4, 5:27; Colossians 1:22; Jude 24; Revelation 14:5**. See also **James 1:18** where true believers are addressed as the **first fruits** among God’s creation.

⁹ See **Revelation 21:1-4, 9-27**

¹⁰ **1 John 3:2**

¹¹ **Psalms 17:15**

shield Himself with the clouds for us to enjoy His company. We will be with Him. Our immortal bodies will be just like His immortal body.

But until this transforming event takes place, when a true believer dies, they go to be with Jesus instantly upon their death. However, they are in spirit form that clearly has substance, but they are not in their new promised immortal body.¹²

The Altar – A View Prior to the Rapture

These souls that are under the altar are a picture of believers who, throughout time, having been sacrificed for their faith. We are given a view of these slain believers prior to the rapture of the church before the time that they receive their new bodies. Hence, they are imaged as souls. In other words, at this point in the narrative, the **RAPTURE HAS NOT OCCURRED**.

Slain

This group is defined as those having been slain, or in the Greek literally **sacrificed**, for the word of God and for the witness they held. Therefore, Jesus keeps them close, under the brazen altar, reminding everyone that their sacrifice was not for naught.

The phrase “*who had been slain*” (as it is rendered in most translations) is oddly rendered in the *perfect passive participle*. Thus, it should be translated as “who having been slain.” This rendering is intended to communicate to us that even though they were slain and are at rest, the results of the action are still in existence. Hence, this sacrifice is honored before God, and they alone are imaged as souls safely hidden away under the sacrificial altar.

This group is comprised of heroes—men and women who stood for the truth in the face of sure death and ill treatment. The Lord gave them strength and courage (**His grace**) at a time when most people would have apostatized.

Sacrifice. Sacrifice is a powerful theme throughout the **Revelation** narrative, and it appears that many will get the opportunity to identify with Jesus in His sacrifice, in that many will be offered up as a willing sacrifice on behalf of others. **DO NOT** get me wrong, our sacrifice has nothing to do with atonement for others, but it is an identification with Jesus in His suffering, filling up what is lacking in His affliction.¹³ Perhaps our sacrifice will provide some covering or mercy for those who are deemed to be righteous yet who must go through the terrors of the tribulation. Only God knows the true purpose of our sacrifice.

The killing of our fellow brethren has never been something we have been able to fully understand or comprehend. It just does not hit us right. We should know, however, that the death of any believer is not insignificant. “*Precious in the sight of Yahweh is the death of His saints.*”¹⁴ And to be honest, those who die get the better deal as they are protected from the horrors, temptations, and evils of this life.

“The righteous pass away; the godly often die before their time. But no one seems to care or wonder why. No one seems to understand that God is protecting them from the evil to come. For those who

¹² **Hebrews 12:23; Philippians 1:20-24; Romans 14:8**

¹³ **Colossians 1:24**

¹⁴ **Psalms 116:15**

follow godly paths will rest in peace when they die.”¹⁵

Revelation 14:13

And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, '**Blessed** are the dead who are now dying in the Lord from now on!' " "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds now follow with them.

Hence, we can declare with complete confidence, that *“to live is Christ and to die is gain.”* *“For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself, for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s.”¹⁶* And those who are now dying, or now being sacrificed, are blessed because they get to rest.

The **Codex** also reveals that death of a believer is purposeful, intentional, and occurs according to **Plan-A**, the plan which **Yahweh** established for our lives from before time. As the Psalmist said, *“in your book were written all the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there were not one of them.”¹⁷* Our individual storyline has been written and our days numbered precisely. Thus, if we get to be sacrificed, it will be in **Yahweh’s** timing according to His perfect plan. And He will give us the **grace** to willingly lay down our lives on behalf of others.

The Scream of Vengeance

Revelation 6:10

...and they cried out with a loud voice, now saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You not judge and avenge our blood on those who are now dwelling on the earth?"

The Greek word we have translated “cried out” literally means that they croaked like a raven or screamed with a loud voice. The point being that they are so disturbed about the injustice that has been done to them, that they want God to move and to move now to avenge their souls!

Their cry starts with this powerful statement, but it is more gut wrenching than you would imagine. The translation “O Sovereign Lord” is a bit too whitewashed. Normally, “Lord” comes from the Greek word *“kurios”*—this was the same word used for Caesar as the people would worship him and say that “Caesar is *Kurios*” – the Lord.¹⁸ Instead, they are found to be now and continually saying,¹⁹ “O Absolute Despot, holy and true.” Their calling **Yahweh** an “absolute despot” is a bit more in line with their intense emotions and their loud screams. But think about it, this is an amazing statement, and this is the only time this word

¹⁵ **Isaiah 57:1-2**

¹⁶ **Philippians 1:21; Romans 14:8**

¹⁷ **Ephesians 1:3-6; Psalm 139:1-16**

¹⁸ “*kurios*” is used 717 times in the New Testament and 21 times in **Revelation**

¹⁹ Rendered in the *present active participle*

is used in **Revelation**.²⁰

One-the-one-hand, they are completely acknowledging that as the absolute despot, **Yahweh** is the supreme ruler. Therefore, what happened to them, the sacrifice of their lives, was His responsibility, it was part of His **Plan-A**, and it all happened exactly as He determined, as He purposed it.

On-the-other-hand, they acknowledge that those who are now dwelling on the earth, i.e., those who have made their permanent abode on this earth and not in heaven, chose to live without God, chose to reject truth for a lie, and therefore positioned themselves to be used as an instrument of God to shed the blood of these saints. And for that choice, these saints cry out for vengeance. It is one thing to have random persons kill you, but it is another thing altogether to have those who identify as brothers be the instrument of betrayal and death.

John 16:1-4

I have told you these things so that you won't abandon your faith. For you will be expelled from the synagogues, and the time is coming when those who kill you will think they are doing a holy service for God. This is because they have never known the Father or me. Yes, I'm telling you these things now, so that when they happen, you will remember my warning.

This inner treachery and betrayal is why these souls cry out with such an emotional plea for vengeance.

The Trouble with Choice

Now, what may seem like a contradiction is not one at all. All things happen according to **Yahweh's Plan-A** (as all things are from Him²¹), but He always works through agency, including the choices of men and women. He never takes away a person's personal sovereignty to choose the truth or to reject the truth. Yet, because He exists outside of time, He already knows exactly what each person is going to choose (within time) given a specific set of circumstances which He, as the Absolute Despot, the supreme ruler, has ordained.

Yahweh knows everyone and everything, even the thoughts that transpire in our minds. As He says, even before there is a word on our tongue, He knows it all, for He is intimately acquainted with all our ways.²² And although He ordains the circumstances with knowledge of a person's choice, it is still their choice, and that choice and responsibility is never taken from them. Thus, when He stands in judgment, we can be confident that His judgments are just and true, for righteousness and justice are the very foundation of His throne; thus, each is judged according to their deeds which flowed from their personal choices.²³

²⁰ "despotes" is used 10 times in the New Testament and 1 time in **Revelation**

²¹ **Romans 11:36; Hebrews 2:10; 1 Corinthians 8:6, 11:12, Colossians 1:16**

²² **Psalm 139:1-6**

²³ **Daniel 4:37; Deuteronomy 32:4; Isaiah 5:16; Psalm 33:4-5, 89:14, 97:2; Matthew 16:27; Revelation 2:23, 20:12-**

How Long Oh Lord

They scream and want to know “*how long oh Despot*” before He now judges and vindicates, or avenges, their blood. With both “*judge*” and “*avenge*” being rendered in the *present* tense, we know that even now this is their cry for vengeance. **NOW!**

I find it odd that these “believers” are in the tabernacle of **Yahweh**, yet they are fixated on justice, vengeance, and bringing to account those who spilt their blood. We do not find them singing “holy, holy” or some other anthem of praise and worship. And clearly, they are not talking about a direct accounting, as they are not crying specifically against Joe or Mary who murdered them. They are speaking about a generic accounting, a reckoning, of all those who even now are choosing to make their permanent abode on this earth—those who are responsible for hating God and hating the people of God, especially those who are of the household of God.

I think this entire piece of the narrative is intended to help us understand the gravity or the dire need for those in the Household of God to take **Step-2** and choose to be that little child dependent upon **Yahweh** for all things all the time. Yet, it is clear how hard that decision can be when a person looks to the things of this world to satisfy, validate, and give meaning and purpose to their life. Hence, Jesus warned us.

Matthew 24:9-13

Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. At that time **many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another**. Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love {*agape*} will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

Again, the deep emotion of this cry for vengeance is rooted in treachery and betrayal from those who identified as “brothers and sisters” in Christ, those who like the 5-virgins let their oil run dry, and whose *agape* love (which can only come from the Spirit of God who is *agape*) will grow cold or wax away like an exhaled breath.²⁴ And yes, many (not a few, but many) will fall away or apostatize and betray one another and hate one another.

Rest A Little Longer

Revelation 6:11

And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should choose to rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who are even now being killed even as they had been, may be completed also.

²⁴ See **Matthew 25:1-14; 1 John 4:8, 16**

Equipped with a Robe

Like the answer we tend to get when we cry out “how long O Lord,” Jesus tells them to wait and rest. However, by His **grace**, He also equipped them with the ability to wait and rest. Everyone one of those souls were given a special white robe that has a unique purpose. The Greek word translated “robe” is from where we get our word “stole,” as in a mink stole. The word “*stole*” comes from a Greek root word (“*stello*”) which means to stall or repress. In other words, this robe is imbued with a special something, something, to help suppress, or bring to rest, the desire within them for God to act in immediate vengeance. It is as if they can wrap themselves up in this beautiful white robe and sink back into a pleasurable rest, letting go of all their impatience and thirst for vengeance. And, of course, according to the **Code**, white is a symbol of righteousness and purity.

This idea of rest is rendered in the *future middle indicative*. Thus, they are given this robe so they can dig down deep in their soul and choose to rest. They are a bit excited and agitated now, but they will need to choose to rest. And it is rendered in the *future* tense because they will have to wait for a little season, some unspecified time, before God moves into action and takes vengeance. With that said, we all know that to God “a little while longer” (or “soon”) is something far different than it is to us (annoyingly so).

But it is notable that they still have a choice. Choice (personal sovereignty) is never taken away. They do not just obey like automatons. Rather, they freely get to choose to rest, hence, the *middle* voice. Free choice is one of the most beautiful and stunning aspects of God’s *agape* love.

More Killing

Jesus makes it clear that there are still others, fellow **bondservants**, who have been marked for murder. Thus, vengeance for those under the altar will not come until this is fulfilled or complete. Again, nothing about our lives is random or arbitrary, but all happens exactly as He has determined—according to **Plan-A**.

Killed or Slaughtered

It is interesting that the word used for “kill” is not the same word that was used in referring to the saints under the throne who were slain. They were in effect a sacrifice, but these bondservants will just be outright killed or murdered.²⁵

It is Happening Now

What is shocking is that this is not an event tied to the **End Times**, the killing is happening even now, as “**who were to be killed**” (which is how it is rendered in most translations) is in the *present active participle* and therefore should be translated as, “**who are even now being killed**.” In addition, “**killed**” is also rendered in the *present* tense.²⁶ All of this is a present reality, a current experience. Brethren, true believers, are now being murdered.

Once again if we stick to the **Code**, we see that these events are not tied exclusively to the **End Times**. The Spirit speaks of what is happening in our now, every moment of our now, from the time John received the revelation up to and through the number of those that will be killed, murdered, during the first 3.5-

²⁵ “slain” (*sphazo*); killed (*apokteino*)

²⁶ “killed” is rendered in the *present passive infinitive*

years of the Tribulation.

At the risk of berating the point, clearly, all of this is imaged for us as events which take place before the rapture of the church, for they are even now occurring.

Timing used for Interpretation

Little nuggets of truth that can be found in these verses help us with interpretation of other passages. Here we have saints, holy ones, fellow bondservants, brothers, all used to describe true believers that are even now being killed. Later we are told that this group are virgins (**Code** for the fact that they only worship God) and they follow the Lamb wherever He goes (**Code** for death, imaged in the Lamb of God who was slaughtered).

In addition, we are told that those who die at the hands of the Beast for their testimony about Jesus and for proclaiming the word of God will come to life again and reign with Christ for a thousand years. For them, the **Second Death** holds no power. They are part of the **first resurrection** (which is the rapture of the church), and they will be priests of God and of Christ.²⁷ Once again, these are the exact promises that Jesus made to the church at Smyrna and to the church at Thyatira.²⁸ Thus, these martyrs are fellow brethren, part of the church, the bride of Christ.

And since saints, holy ones, bondservants, brothers in Christ, the bride of Christ, those over whom the **Second Death** has no power, are **NOT appointed to wrath**,²⁹ we know that the Lord's time of Wrath, His time of vengeance, **CANNOT** take place until these Chosen ones are either killed or raptured.

Soon we will see the saints of God, followers of Jesus Christ, being killed in the final days of the first 3.5-year period and into the early days of second 3.5-year period of the Tribulation, which is immediately before the time of the Lord's Great Wrath.

The prophet **Daniel** makes it clear that the Beast wages war and overpowers or prevails against the saints, as the Beast will wear down the saints, or the holy ones. In the language of **Revelation**, the Beast makes war with God's witnesses, overcomes them, and kills them.³⁰

Moreover, Jesus said that during the time leading up to the *Abomination of Desolation*, after which the Beast is given power to rule only for the last 3.5-year period (42 months), the bondservants of God will be given over to tribulation, and will be killed, and hated by all nations because of His name. And it is for this very reason that many people apostatize and fall away from their faith.³¹

The point being is that there are many who are appointed to death, many who are even now being killed, and God's wrath or vengeance upon the earth will wait until this precise number is fulfilled.

They asked, "**HOW LONG O' DESPOT**" and He answered not in a specified time, but in a specified action. When those who are destined to be murdered are in fact killed. "*If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for*

²⁷ **Revelation 20:4-6**

²⁸ **Revelation 2:11, 26-28**

²⁹ **1 Thessalonians 5:9**

³⁰ **Daniel 7:21, 25; Revelation 13:7; 18:24, 11:7-10**

³¹ **Matthew 24:9-14; Revelation 13:5**

the endurance and faith of the saints.”³²

The Number 5 Revisited

Given that according to the **Code**, the number 5 is associated with man’s abject neediness and God’s total and complete provision for all His needs (which we know as His **grace**), we see that God extends forth His **grace** enabling these saints to choose to rest and wait. It is not what they want, and despite their literal screams for vengeance, He enables them by equipping them with a white robe that is purposed to quell their passion and intensity—to help suppress, or bring to rest, the desire within them for God to act in immediate vengeance. But as in every extension of God’s **grace**, they must realize their neediness for His help, and receive it; they must choose to put on their robes. And they will wait, because the **grace** of God has enabled their weakness to be strong in Him.

This passage also speaks of God enabling other believers to be sacrificed, or outright killed. Unlike those who fall away and turn to hate because of the rampant persecution of believers, these who are marked for murder have found the secret of depending upon Christ for all things, all the time, even in the midst of hatred and persecution. Even when those who claimed to be brothers and sisters in Christ will turn on them and against them. By His empowering **grace**, they trust Jesus with their lives, and they will, as a result, be part of the first resurrection.

³² ***Revelation 13:9-10***