

The Seven Seals

Revelation 6

I. Perspectives.

- A. Live for yesterday.
- B. Live for today.
- C. Live for tomorrow.
 - 1. For the hope promised in the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - 2. For the hope of man—*homo Deus*
- D. Humanity's three desires:
 - 1. To be God.
 - 2. To be master of meaning and destiny.
 - 3. To build heaven on earth.
 - a. "Burning Man" – Blackrock, Nevada

II. Whom shall we fear?

- A. Nuclear holocaust? Environmental disaster? Global warming? Virus?
- B. Hebrews 10:30— **"It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."**

III. Receiving Revelation chapter six:

- A. For the unbeliever—a warning and plea.
- B. For the believer—marching orders (Matthew 28:19-20).

IV. The first four seals—"The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse"

- A. The first seal—The white horse and rider.
 - 1. Not Jesus!
 - 2. Possibly no specific person is the rider, but rather a "movement of judgement".
 - 3. The Antichrist is the "mover" in the first judgement.
 - a. Counterfeit peace.

- B. The second seal—The red horse and rider.
 - 1. Takes away peace in the world.
 - a. Comes with a “*machaira*” sword—an assassin’s sword bringing war.
 - b. Matthew 24:6-8—coincides with Revelation 6
- C. The third seal—The black horse and rider.
 - 1. economic instability throughout the world, out of control inflation and an increase of sub-standard living.
 - a. A quart of wheat = 1 loaf of bread = food for 1 person a day.
 - b. 3 quarts of barley (animal feed) = food for 3 people a day.
- D. The fourth seal—the “ashen” or “pale” horse and rider.
 - 1. Pale = *chloros* = yellow green = death.
 - 2. ¼ of the world’s population will die.
- E. The fifth seal—Vengeance.
 - 1. The “souls under the alter” are the martyred for Christ.
 - a. People will get saved during the tribulation.
 - b. The judgement is future judgement to the oppressors.
- F. The sixth seal—natural cataclysmic catastrophes.
 - 1. The “Day of the Lord”.
 - a. Isaiah 13:9-10
 - b. Joel 2:10-11
 - c. Matthew 24:29-30
 - 2. The world will be “equalized” (6:15).
 - a. Kings and slaves will hide together with nowhere to go.

Where will you stand? Take your stand for the Lamb! King Jesus now!...a day is coming when it will be too late.

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Revelation 6

There are four perspectives that people often choose to pursue...(anytime someone limits the options to a specific number, be cautious, they probably are overgeneralizing!... 1. People live in the past... either good or bad... they live on past triumphs or past mistakes... past successes or past failures... their present lives are centered on their past.

2. Others live for today... yesterday is gone forever and tomorrow is tomorrow... what we have is today... 1967 the Grassroots:

One, two, three, four
Sha-la, la-la-la-la, live for today (Hey, hey, hey)
Sha-la, la-la-la-la, live for today
And don't worry 'bout tomorrow, hey
Sha-la, la-la-la-la, live for today
Live for today...and so many are doing just that...

The next verse is better but number 3...can you guess?... **people who live for the future**... the idea that we are not fully the person we can and will be... so we set goals and strive to meet them... in the future.

There are two approaches to this (generalization!)...

The apostle Paul said something along these lines in Philippians 3...**Brothers, I do not consider myself as having laid hold of it yet**, a righteousness of his own...embrace the resurrection of Jesus Christ... fellowship in His sufferings... conformed to His death... **but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

There is a **glorious future for the Christian**... the consummation of this book of Revelation reveals it to us... an eternity in heaven with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...

The other approach is also **looking to the future**... this is the trajectory the world is on... the answer is not Jesus Christ... but it is man...it's not that there is no god... it is that there is no God of the Bible... man is god... man and nature... the idea of "Oneness"... the idea of Utopia... that man is capable and able to create a perfect world...technology...

The problem is inequality... oppression... ecological irresponsibility... the answer is equity...environmentalism... socialism... integration... Oneness... when this is achieved nothing can stop man...

All this is not just theory or fantasy...science fiction... now the talk is “transhumanism” ... Britannica—*The term “transhumanism” is derived from “transcending humanity,” and it encompasses the belief that humans can—and should—take control of their evolution. Transhumanists seek to use science and technology to push the boundaries of human life, extending lifespan, enhancing intelligence, and overcoming fundamental aspects of human biology like aging, disease, and even death.... Basically to have man-made eternal life...*

To sum it all up... **Humanity has three great desires**...1. To be God 2. To be the master of meaning and destiny 3. To build heaven on earth.... Utopia. — Carl Teichrib

Right now... in a desert in Nevada... a model of this philosophy is going on right now... Perhaps you have heard of “Burning Man”...it’s been in the news much lately... What it is—A mixture of the spiritual and the secular, the mystical and the physical...

Not just a festival... it is all about building an organic community...70,000 people coming to the Blackrock desert in Nevada...an experiment.

Blackrock desert the most inhospitable places in the US...A nasty place...over a period of two weeks, they build a complete city... participant driven...people bring to it whatever they desire... it is a place built on the philosophy of freedom of expression...and Oneness...

The actual burn week is seven days... hedonistic, like Mardi Gras... but a place where the world comes together and has conversations...people from the World Economic Forum... several congressman attend... 2019 there were 52 Mayors of major cities who toured the city to learn how to better govern their own cities...

What happens when all of man’s inhibitions are let loose... complete freedom?

It is a petri-dish... a proving ground to experiment with all things self- expression... self-expression simply is expressing the true self... what is truly inside you... so there is an orgy tent...there are drugs... there is a form of intentional government...it’s not JUST a big party... it is a microcosm of the world of man.

In the center of the city is a huge wooden statue of a man...the focal point of the city and of the entire week in general... a 43-foot-tall, 20,000-pound modern-day interpretation of Leonardo da Vinci’s Vitruvian Man, suspended 50 feet in the air, rotating 360 degrees perpendicular to the ground.

Not a place for Christians to hang out!

The temple is the most important building... an incredibly ornate structure.. it literally is a place of weeping and mourning and gnashing of teeth for eight days... an 24/7 8day long funeral.... People post on the walls pictures of dead loved ones... statements of anger... what they hate... their rage... their pain...wondering what it’s all about....**and there are no answers there!**

One posted a suicide note... that said “If I am successful in my suicide, bring my note to the temple to burn.”... wedding dresses hanging up with the word “Fraud” printed across it... a place of deep, deep grief...

A place where people pour out their humanity for some sense of meaning...purpose... people searching life....a city without the biblical God... but a city with a god... man (homo deus) a place of experimentation...

The Godhood of man.

A global movement...110 burns around the world including Canada, Israel, China... South Africa... Transformational festivals... Transformational spirituality....a global footprint.

2019 smithsonian had dedicated an entire building to the B.M...you make it to the Smithsonian... you are not fringe... you have made it to mainstream.

The city... a nine-mile perimeter... Art installations... workshops...lectures...concerts...transhuman experimentation...the theme this year is *Tomorrow Today...*

The message...man and nature is god...**man can control destiny**... the answer is freedom of human expression, equality resulting in Oneness...

The truth is... man does not control the future...men cannot replace God...Man will not determine the final outcome of the earth and mankind.... a nuclear holocaust will not end the world... global warming, climate change will not cause the world’s ultimate demise... the world will not end by a meteorite falling on the planet...transhumanism will not come to its ultimate goal...a man-made virus will not end humanity.

If these are your fears... if these things keep you awake at night... you are not fearing the right thing.... We are studying Revelation because God has revealed He is in control of the universe... He has a plan for the end of the earth... He is going to judge all mankind... what are in these pages are inevitable... we can’t alter them or change them...God is not delivering idle threats.

It is God we should fear.

Hebrews 10:30 **For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge His people.” 31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

And these haunting words from Jesus...wise to heed...Luke 15 **“But I say to you, My friends, do not fear those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do....** Man can do a lot of wicked things...he can make bombs...create deadly viruses in a petri dish... he can torture, rape and kill...but he is limited with what he can do!

5 But I will show you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!

God not only can take one's life... He and only He has the right to be the eternal judge... and will judge the wicked and cast them into eternal hell... this is what we should be fearing today...

Revelation six is a warning to all who hear these words...THIS IS THE FUTURE... If you have not placed your faith in Jesus Christ...you will face eternal judgement... if you are a Christian... you have urgent work to do...these words in Revelation six and following should light a fire under you to share the gospel to those who without Christ.

Their future without Christ is described here... we look at the world today and think its bad... we see that it is crazy... this is nothing!.. Matthew 24:21 **For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.**

This has not happened yet... but it is promised

Put your faith in Christ... then...**Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit... teaching them to keep all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age..** Did you catch that?... Jesus will be with you even to the end of the age.... Which is where we are in Revelation chapter 6

These words in Revelation should drive us to share the gospel to those who are headed for this eternal judgement...

The apostle John has been invited to see all this through this revelation from Jesus Christ...

The scene is the throne room of God... heaven... God seated on His throne... the resurrected risen Jesus is standing to His right... God has a scroll in His right hand... the title deed to the earth... sealed with seven seals.

After each seal is broken a section of the scroll will be read...each of the seven sections releases a judgement onto the earth...these seven judgements increase with intensity as they are opened... Other than God sitting on the throne... only One is qualified to open the scroll and release the seven judgements.... Jesus Christ.

God is giving you and me a glimpse of what *will* take place in the future...

At the conclusion of the seven judgements... Jesus will reclaim the title of the earth which is rightfully only His...The process is the same for the breaking of each seal... Jesus will break the seal... and one of four cherubim angels will announce the release of the judgement.

The first four seals are four horsemen and four riders...come to be known as the *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*...I believe that these four horses and riders are released during the first 3 ½ Years of the seven-year tribulation period... [listen to my last sermon].

These first 3 ½ years are terrible years...what's going on in the world today are setting the stage... but these first 3 ½ years pale in comparison to the final 3 ½ years... The last seals...5,6,7 describe the last 3 ½ years known as the Great Tribulation (What Matthew 24:21 described)...

[By the way... chapter 6 is an overview of what we will be looking at all the way to chapter 19...you might leave this morning wanting more details...you will get them!... we will be filling in more and more details of these events as we go through the rest of Revelation...this is an aerial view]

let's first review the first horsemen.

Read verse 1

Last time we looked briefly at the first judgement.

Read verse 2

Some think the rider of this white horse is Jesus Christ... later in chapter 19 Jesus does return on a white horse... but this rider is a great imposter... he is seen carrying a bow but with no arrows... this is a bow of peace...arrows symbolize war... but they are missing... but this is not real peace... this is artificial peace... a counterfeit peace.

In other words... this horse comes... and with it is what appears to be peace... but underneath it all it actually brings great violence and war...that's what is meant by **he went out conquering and to conquering...**

He's wearing a crown... a *stephanos* crown which is a ma- made temporary wreath...made out of plants... given to those victorious in an athletic event or military victory...

Jesus was given a *stephanos* once... a wreath, or crown of thorns when He was on the cross... but when Jesus is crowned king of kings... it was a "diadema" crown...a royal crown made of diadems... a jeweled crown.

So who is this rider of the white horse?...many if not most say it is the Antichrist... I suggested last time that I think the riders of these horses represent an impersonal force...a general action that plays out...a movement of judgement directed by God...in this case worldwide peace... **deceptive worldwide peace...**

But the Antichrist is the key player and driver of this counterfeit peace...the Antichrist plays a central role in the tribulation period... in fact... **he's the main player for all of these**

judgements of the four horses and horsemen... God's tool for judgement.... He's known throughout the Bible:

He is the **little horn** of Daniel 7

The **Prince to come** in Daniel 9

The **King who blasphemes** in Daniel 11

The **Man of perdition** in 2 Thessalonians 2 (lawlessness)

The **Antichrist** in 1 John 2:18

The **Beast** in Revelation 13

The **Abomination that causes desolation**...Daniel 9; Mathew 24

The apostle Paul describes the Antichrist as the "**lawless one**"...listen to 2 Thessalonians 2:8-10

8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie...Peace! (NIV)

This Antichrist serves the lie of Satan...Some say it is God who crowns the Antichrist... I think it is Satan that crowns him the *stephanos* crown!... He enters the world bringing perceived peace...the people of the world is going to think everything is going so well... even the Palestinians are going to get along with Israel!... but this is not real.

1 Thessalonians 5:3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman who is pregnant, and they will never escape.

As we will see in the future... the Antichrist will blaspheme God...oppose God and exalt himself; he will set himself up in God's temple proclaiming himself to be God—2 Thessalonians 2; Daniel 7,9,11; Revelation 13.

That peace that seemed to exist dissipates during the release of the second horse and horseman...remember who releases these seals thus releasing judgment?... Jesus Christ.

Read verses 3-4

Red...the color of fire and blood... peace was short lived!... war and bloodshed breaks out... this rider does not carry a bow but wields a **great sword**...we've made distinctions in the swords we see in Revelation... this sword is a *machaira* sword...sometimes called an assassin's sword...a short sword for stabbing...

Matthew 24 speaks of this time... **And you are going to hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.**

7For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

The Greek word translated as “nation” is the word “ethnos”... “*ethnos will rise up against ethnos*”... ethnic group vs. ethnic group...people will slaughter each other....this rider takes peace away from the entire earth...no one will be spared... complete anarchy and bloodshed...

History has shown us some terrible wars...General Bradley's Armistice Day speech from November 10, 1948.

*"WITH the monstrous weapons man already has, humanity is in danger of being trapped in this world by its moral adolescents. Our knowledge of science has clearly outstripped our capacity to control it. We have many men of science; too few men of God. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. Man is stumbling blindly through a spiritual darkness while toying with the precarious secrets of life and death. **The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience.** Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living."*

That was 1948!...my how we have progressed... hard to imagine the tribulation!...And this is not the worst of times....yet!...the next 3 ½ yrs is unimaginable.

Read verse 5-6

The third judgement brought on by the black horse and rider... is famine and economic collapse... the scales represent rationing of food... verse 6 says “**one quart of wheat for a denarius**”...a quart of wheat... was barely enough to make a loaf of bread...enough to sustain one person... a denarius was about a day’s wage for the average worker.

So in today’s standard...a loaf of bread during this time would have cost about \$200.00...you couldn’t feed a family on that... so if you can’t afford enough wheat... you will have to buy barley...barley was animal feed... three quarts for a day’s wage...

So along with all the blood-shedding and warring brought on with the Red Horse and horseman...the black horse will bring with him economic instability throughout the world... Out of control inflation and an increase of sub-standard living.... People will be eating feed for animals.

You can see how this is possible can’t you?... the world economic system is getting more interconnected and interdependent where what happens to one nations will ripple down to all the others...the current experimentation of tariffs are exposing some of this...

And then the warning “**do not harm the oil and the wine**”... oil was necessary for bread making... wine was for purifying water and cooking.... These will become luxuries that needed to be protected... then the fourth horse and rider.

Read verses 7-8

Mine says “Ashen”, My Legacy says “Pale horse”... We know who the rider was on the Pale Horse... it was Clint Eastwood... the great 1985 Western “*Pale Rider*” named after Revelation 6:8... Clint Eastwood was the rider of the horse and he was a “ghost rider” who represented death... filmed here in Idaho’s Sawtooth Mountains”

Seriously... this is the worst of the four horsemen... The Greek word translated as “pale” is *chloros*... we get chlorophyll and chlorine which pale-green... like a corpse... represents death... specifically the death of many unbelievers...

During this judgement... unbelievers will meet their death in many ways... **sword...famine and pestilence...wild beasts**...how many will die?... 1/4th of all of them in the world... how many is that?... today there is about 8 billion people on the planet... that means over 2 billion people will die during this time... 2 BILLION!

By the way...except for Noah’s flood... nothing like this has EVER happened in the world in history... where ¼ of the world’s population died from sword, famine, pestilence and wild beasts... not even 70 AD... *And this is not the Great Tribulation?*... it’s just starting!...the 5th seal.

Read verse 9

Who are these souls **under the alter who have been slain**? These are believers!...*I thought they were all raptured before the tribulation ever started?*... These are those who came to Christ after the rapture of the church... 1 Thessalonians 4 tells us that **at the sound of the trumpet...the dead in Christ will rise first then we who remain alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air....and we shall always be with the Lord.** Then the tribulation begins...

And many, many people will come to Christ during the tribulation period... some think that there may even be more people who will come to Christ during the tribulation than any other time in history.

[Really! All the Christians you know vanish... these horrible judgements take place... ¼ of all the people in the world die... maybe I should pull that Gideon Bible out and read it!]

These “**souls**” under the alter had all been slain as martyrs... because of their faith in Jesus Christ... they were killed...Matthew 24 is the Olivet Discourse... what Jesus describes to His disciples is what is happening in Revelation 6:

In Matthew 24 verse 3, they ask the question, **“When is the sign of Your coming and the end of the age?”** When does the world wrap up? When is everlasting righteousness coming? When will evil be eliminated?

“And Jesus says, ‘See to it that no one misleads you. Many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and mislead many.’” Which is referring to the white horse and rider... the false, counterfeit peace.... And then in verse 6, **“‘You’ll be hearing’”** – following that immediately about the wars; the red horse comes right after the white one – **“‘rumors of wars. And nation’”** – verse 7 – **“‘rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; various places’”** – following – **“‘there will be famines.’”** And then Jesus adds the earthquake, which could include the natural disasters referred to as pestilences in Revelation 6:8.... And He says, **“‘All of these are the beginning of the birth pangs.’”**...the first 3 ½ years of the 7 years.

Then come to verse 9, **“‘Then they’ll deliver you to tribulation, and kill you.’”** These would be the believers in Christ.... All those who had come to Christ during the tribulation... See how Matthew 24 parallels in Revelation chapter 6?

The souls under the altar in the fifth seal are there because they were killed for their faith. That’s precisely what follows. What follows the death and natural disasters and the pestilences that end life for a fourth of the earth is persecution.... It says, **“‘You will be hated by all nations on account of My name.’”**

Later we will see this in greater detail in Revelation chapter 13... Believers will die during the tribulation for these reasons... 1. Worshiping Jesus Christ 2. Preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and 3. Not worshipping the beast—who will demand to be worshipped as God in the temple.... And 4. For not receiving the mark of the beast... we’ll eventually get to that.

What are these souls doing under the altar?... they are LOUDLY praying to God...

Read verse 10

They are praying for vengeance... God’s vengeance on those who martyred them... ***How long God?***... they want justice to avenge their death.

Read verse 1

[White robes...that’s interesting... souls don’t normally wear robes!]...I think God gave them white robes to let them bask in their heavenly bliss of being with the Lord...*just a little while longer...there’s more of you coming still...*

What is the 5th judgement?... it’s not martyrdom... martyrdom is not a *judgement* on believers... I think it is the coming vengeance of the Lord... His judgement and wrath on the wicked... Then the sixth seal is opened...

Read verses 12-13

With the sixth seal comes unimaginable natural catastrophes...Nothing like it has ever come close in the history of man...earthquakes...volcanic explosions...meteor showers... asteroids ...tsunamis.

After reading this a hymn came to my mind... *He's got the whole world in His hands*...[by the way, as of yesterday, about three of those catastrophes happened in Burning Man this week!] Cosmic upheaval...God's direct intervention in judgement and wrath...He won't be using the Antichrist here... it's all Him!... the imminent end of history has come.

No secret in the Bible... this day is all over the pages:

Isaiah 13:9 - 13:10

**Behold, the day of the Lord is coming,
Cruel, with fury and burning anger,
To make the land a desolation;
And He will exterminate its sinners from it.**

**10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations
Will not flash forth their light;
The sun will be dark when it rises
And the moon will not shed its light.**

Joel 2:10 - 2:11

**10 Before them the earth trembles;
The heavens quake; The sun and the moon grow dark,
And the stars lose their brightness.**

**11 But the Lord gives forth His voice before His military force;
Surely His camp is very numerous, For mighty is he who does His word.**

**The day of the Lord is indeed great and very awesome,
And who can endure it?**

Matthew 24:29 - 24:30

29 "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.

Read Revelation 6:14

What can you add to that?... except that God is in complete control....these will be the most terrifying events to ever effect the earth...

I realized the Hymn *It is Well With My Soul* referenced this verse:

*And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
A song in the night, oh my soul!*

*It is well, (it is well),
With my soul, (with my soul)*

Read verse 15

Interesting sight... you've got kings and slaves as equals... that's what happens when the world falls apart... no more kingdoms... no more governments... the kings are hiding next to the servants...the strong cling to the weak... trying to escape?... no... they make one more plea.... One more prayer to Mother earth....who they've been worshipping to save them from the Almighty Lamb of God...

Read verse 16

by collapsing on them! Hiding them from the wrath of THE LAMB... Jesus Christ.

Read verse 17

A great day is coming for every one of us when we come face to face with the Lamb... We will either stand with Him in His salvation or stand before Him at His judgement... We will either rejoice in His glorious grace or be terrified before His righteous wrath...Grace or wrath?...forgiveness or condemnation?

Where will you stand? Take your stand for the Lamb! King Jesus now!...a day is coming when it will be too late. – Daniel Akin