

A SERIES THROUGH THE REVELATION

Revelation 6—The First Six Seals | 5.12.22

I. INTRODUCTION (Revelation 6)

- A. It's important to remember both John's journey and ours to get to **Revelation 6-19**. In **Revelation 1** John/us were prepared to receive what follows by seeing Jesus' glory and Personhood. In **Revelation 2-3**, the Seven Churches/and us were told about the moral and spiritual preparation necessary to both endure and to thrive through what follows.
- B. Then in **Revelation 4** our hearts were stilled as we saw that the Father is seated on an eternally set throne, not on earth, but in heaven where He alone is ruling and reigning over the nations of the earth. And then in **Revelation 5**, we saw the only qualified One who's able to take over the leadership of the nations.
- C. And now that those things have been established, we are ready to see how Jesus will go about delivering and vindicating the Church, eradicating evil off the planet, and ushering in His Kingdom, eternally.

II. THE FOUR HORSEMEN (Revelation 6:1-8)

- A. **Revelation 6:1-2** *"Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see. And I looked, and behold, a white horse, He who sat on it had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer."*
 - 1. With the opening of the first seal, it's important to note a handful of things that pertain to all four seals;
 - a. I believe that this is a future event that has yet to happen (**Revelation 5-22**).
 - b. I believe that these seals are being broken during the Great Tribulation, which is the last 3.5 years of a 7-year period (*times, time and half a time, 1,260 days, 42 months*).
 - c. I believe that John is the one being instructed to come and see.
 - 1. **Revelation 6:1** *"...and I heard one of the four living creatures say, Come! And I looked, and behold..."* (ESV)
 - d. I don't believe there are literal horses coming. I believe these horses/riders are symbolic visions that present real scenarios and events that will unfold, just as John saw them.
 - 2. Beloved, in order for us to be prophetic people, we, like John have to see, and see rightly. Seeing isn't about what we want to see, it's seeing what God Himself shows us. If the prophetic people don't see rightly, if the prophetic people have no true vision, not only will we perish, but so also will those that God has given to us and set around us.
 - 3. The forerunner calling isn't a superior calling, it's actually a servant calling of a people who've looked rightly into the future and are able to work backwards bringing what's coming into the present, for preparation, so that we can help navigate the body of Christ through what's ahead (**Jeremiah 23:16-18, 21-22**).
 - 4. Well, John notices that it's a Lamb breaking the seals. It's not an angry, violent, out of control raging Lion destroying the nations. It's a tender Lamb using trouble, and pressure to gather the affections of the nations.
 - a. Beloved, this is what the Revelation is calling us to do; disavow, depart, and desert your former views of the Lord, and agree with who He is from the Word of God.
 - 5. With the opening of the first seal, John sees a white horse, with a rider on it, holding a bow and wearing a crown.

- a. White Horse—This is a counterfeit messiah, the antichrist (*not just against, but also in place of*) masquerading as God Himself. This is the antichrist in his political campaign, garnering the affection of the nations.
- b. He Who Sat On It Had A Bow—He possesses a bow without arrows, it's mostly bloodless victories that he's bringing about. It's a neighing horse, barked threats of violence that shutter his enemies.
- c. And A Crown Was Given To Him—He possess authority, but John's clear, his power doesn't originate from himself, it's been given to him. God is the unnamed Agent allowing/permitting this authority (**Revelation 9:1, 3, 5; 13:5, 7, 14, 15**).

B. Revelation 6:3-4 *“When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come and see. Another horse, fiery red went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another and there was given to him a great sword.”*

- 1. Well, this red horse is naturally following on the heels of the previous white horse. The political aggression, threats and geo-political barking of the white horse, have given way to a delivery on those threats.
 - a. Another Horse, Fiery Red Went Out—This fiery red horse is a sign of world-war, and great bloodshed (*“...and that people should kill one another and there was given to him a great sword.”*)
 - b. And It Was Granted To The One Who Sat On It To Take Peace From The Earth—This idea of peace speaks of the normal state of affairs, not internally, but globally. It's the outward peace that the whole world experiences.

C. Revelation 6:5-6 *“When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, Come and see. So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, A quart of wheat of a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and the wine.”*

- 1. Following the second seal, we have again what naturally follows political aggression, and world war: economic crisis and famine (globally).
 - a. A Black Horse—This horse speaks of sadness, mourning sorrow and lamentation. It's a horse of lamentation.
 - b. And He Who Sat On It Had A Pair Of Scales In His Hand—The scales speak of economics, it's the rationing and weighing of food because of severe famine.
 - c. A Quart Of Wheat For A Denarius, And Three Quarts Of Barley For A Denarius—A Denarius is a days wages. Barley was the food of the lower class, which you can purchase more of it, but it's an inferior product, giving you less calories. The idea is that people are working, only to purchase food, nothing else.
 - 1. Normally, a denarius would purchase 12-15 x's that amount of food. This is a full-blown financial collapse.

D. Revelation 6:7-8 *“He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, come and see. So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of Him who sat on it was death, and hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with the sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.”*

- 1. Look at the progression; political aggression (white horse), world-war (red horse), economic crash, famine (black horse) and now unprecedented death (pale horse).

- a. A Pale Horse And The Name Of Him Who Sat On It Was Death—This horse is pale green like the color of a bloodless body, representing death across the earth in a way that’s never been seen before.
- b. And Hades Followed With Him—Death isn’t the worst thing about this horse and rider, it’s the fact that directly behind it is trailing a hearse carrying these souls to eternal separation from God (*Hades refers to the grave of the unrighteous dead*). (**Matthew 10:28**)
- c. But Don’t Harm The Oil And The Wine—Oil and wine are products of the upper class, a luxury of their day that most weren’t afforded to enjoy. Beloved, this will create unthinkable rage among the classes, as the lower class (no middle class) look upon the upper class.
- d. And Power Was Given To Them Over A Fourth Of The Earth—Today, the world population is 7.9 billion people (Nov. 2021). The Great Tribulation is a time period of 1,260 days, of 3.5 years. $\frac{1}{4}$ of 7.9 billion is 1,975,000,000. And 1.9 billion people dying over 1,260 days, is 1,567,460 per day for 1,260 days.
 1. The Civil War lasted 4 years (1861-1865 and around 850,000 people died. WW1 was 4 years long (1914-1918) and around 116,000 people died. WW2/Holocaust lasted approximately 12 years (1933-1945) and around 6.4 million people died. All together you have about 20 years and 7.4 million deaths.
 2. 20 years = 7,304 days, divided by 7.4 million = 1,014 people per day.
- e. To Kill With Sword, With Hunger, With Death, And By The Beasts Of The Earth—Dying by the sword will be by humans means. The amount of famine that will be released during the four seal, will be unlike any other time in human history. This word death is often translated as pestilence, or disease. And lastly, it will be death through rabid, starving, crazed animals.

III. THE SOULS UNDER GOD’S ALTAR (Revelation 6:9-11)

- A. **Revelation 6:9-11** *“When He open the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony with they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long o Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth? Then a while robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.”*
1. Well, this could sound self-serving, and self-concerned, but in fact, they are saying, “Jesus, if You just stand there idly, they will never know about Your justice. You must stand up and bring this to an end. Give us justice.” And Jesus’ response to them is, “I’m going to do just that, just not yet.”
 2. Suffering, persecutions, martyrdom, and death as a follower of Jesus aren’t proof that God’s removed, it’s proof that His Kingdom is near, and coming closer. This is what happens when the kingdoms of this world, become His (**Revelation 11:15; Acts 14:22; 1st Thess. 3:3-7**).
 3. This seal isn’t a judgment. It’s not that God is going to kill believers, it’s a forecast, a harbinger, an announcement of what’s to come, it’s the prayers of the saints that won’t be diminished, even in death. Remember, the Churches prayers are the ones bringing about God’s activity on the earth (**Revelation 5:8**).
 4. When war and hostility break out on the earth, the Church will become target number 1. And our response, just like the Church through history will be to give God a priestly offering, not for atonement, but in devotion, in love for the Lamb.

IV. A GREAT SHAKING (Revelation 6:12-17)

- A. **Revelation 6:12-14** “And I looked when He opened the sixth seal and behold there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood; and the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.”
1. When the sixth seal is opened, John sees a great earthquake, but a better word used here would be convulsions. It’s not just an earthquake, it’s also global, cosmic convulsion, a forerunner of what’s to come, a precursor of where life is headed.
 2. Beloved, when that which has always been there, the same color, changes, and suddenly because of the smoke from the nations, turning the sun dark, and simultaneously changing the color of the moon, this will lead to the chaotic state of the nations.
 3. The idea is that asteroids, flaming debris or some shining mass is falling from the sky. They are signs in the heaven declaring the preceding the Lord’s return. The idea this will give is that the universe is literally unraveling, it’s coming apart at the seams.
 4. The idea is a massive upheaval, to the likes the earth has never seen, nor will ever see again. It’s letting us know that no stimulus package will bring us back from this brink. There’s not a Build Back Better, or Save America, or Make America Great Again slogan that will rebuild this.
 - a. The ultimate end is upon us, it’s here, and it’s never going to be remade, apart from Christ’s coming.
 5. Some people see this as the end of all things, but this simply can’t be. With the fourth trumpet (**Revelation 8:12-13**) there’s still way more stars to fall, and another earthquake that will greatly surpass even this one (**Revelation 16:18**). We also know that there will still be some mountains remaining, because the following verses tell us that people will look to hide in them.
- B. **Revelation 6:15-16** “And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!”
1. Well, it’s clear, God’s intention from this global convulsion works; the nations take note, they become aware, that God is seated high above the circle of the earth, and He’s pursuing the nations.
 2. The events of Jesus’ return will be the great equalizer. It will put all of humanity on a level playing field before the God of glory. That Day will destroy the rich and the poor alike.
 3. John hears that the unredeemed humanity has been divided into 6 categories;
 - a. 1) The Kings Of The Earth—These are the highest rulers in the land, the heads of nations 2) The Great Men—These are the high ranking officials of the kings courts, civil officials in charge of implementing governments 3) The Rich Men—These are the wealthy ones who are between kings, commanders, who have the money that pull the strings of the nations 4) The Commanders—These are leaders who oversee army’s, moving them into war 5) The Mighty Men—These are the influencers and those that exercise great authority over others 6) Every Slave, and Every Free Man—These two groups make up one class, the lower class of society. They are the ones who have no influence over others.
 4. Beloved, the great shocker is that panic-stricken humanity recognizes the Lamb’s role in inflicting their misery. The shaking is working.
- C. **Revelation 6:17** “For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”
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1. The Day of the Lord is always presented in the scriptures as being both VERY GREAT and TERRIBLE (**Joel 2:11, 31; Zephaniah 1:14-18; Matthew 13:24-30**). It's an hour of unprecedented glory and unprecedented trouble (**Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 24:21-22**).
2. The question that's asked at the end of verse **17** is answered in **Revelation 7**. But it's a question that should haunt us today, creating urgency in our relationship with Christ. Beloved, considering where life is headed, in light of this reality, who, or what type of Christian can stand?
 - a. **2nd Peter 3:1-13**
3. Beloved, it's true, we aren't subject to the wrath of God, but it doesn't mean we're removed while God's wrath is being poured out on the nations of the earth (**Romans 5:9; 1st Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9**). The idea is that for the disciple of Christ, we aren't the subject of His wrath, or who He's taking His wrath out on. For the follower of Christ, that happened for us on Calvary.