

The Four Horsemen

Seals 1-4

Sunday, June 19 at 8:00 & 10:45 † Wednesday, June 22 at 7 PM
First Sunday after Pentecost / The Holy Trinity / Father's Day – 2011

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, *as we jump back into the book of Revelation*, → we are in heaven, → God is on the throne, → the Holy Spirit is before the throne, → the four living creatures are around the throne, → the 24 elders are around the four living creatures, and → the Lamb has taken the sealed-scroll from the Father's hand.

Now, *in chapter 6*, the future events written in the scroll are revealed. As we study them now, *remember that they were revealed 1900 years ago*; therefore, we are living in the midst of them! Dr. Kretzmann put it this way: “Here begins the narration of some of the happenings which would strike the Christian Church... beginning with the time at which John wrote and ending with the great Day of Judgment” (610).

There seems to be a *connection* between *these chapters*:

Matthew 24

Deception (vv. 4-5)
Wars and rumors of wars (vv. 6-7)
Famines (v. 7)
Wars, famines, [etc.] (vv. 6-7)
Persecution (v. 9)
Gospel preached worldwide (v. 14)
Final events (v. 29)
Jesus' return (vv. 30-31)

Revelation 6

White horse (?) (vv. 1-2)
Red horse (vv. 3-4)
Black horse (vv. 5-6)
Ashen horse (vv. 7-8)
Souls of martyrs (vv. 9-11)
White horse (?) (vv. 1-2)
Final events (vv. 12-14)
Jesus' return (vv. 15-17)

1. **Seal Number 1 – White Horse:** ¹ Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures [the first seraph (compare Isaiah 6:1-3) with the face of a lion (4:7)] saying as with a voice of thunder, “Come.” ² I looked, and behold, a **white** horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. So what events are symbolized by the **white** horse? *This one is difficult*; white is the color for purity, but is this conquering true purity or false purity?

- a. True purity – The white horse *could* symbolize Jesus Himself and those who rightly proclaim the gospel. **Revelation 19** supports that position: ¹¹ “...behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True... ¹³ He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood... ¹⁶ And on His robe...He has a name written, ‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.’”
- b. False purity – The white horse *could* symbolize the many who *wrongly change* the saving truth of the gospel (Galatians 1:8-9) – for example, a false Christ, an anti-Christ (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7), and the many who *falsely* proclaim Christ.

Conclusion – Regardless of what the white horse symbolizes, GOD’S WORD IS THE TRUTH that sets us free from sin, death, and hell (John 8:31-32), so let us *personally* ♦ know it, ♦ understand it, ♦ benefit from it, ♦ live it, and ♦ share it!

2. **Seal Number 2 – Red Horse:** ³ When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature [the second seraph with the face of a calf] saying, “Come.” ⁴ And another, a **red** horse, went out; and to him who

sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that *men* would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him. So what events are symbolized by the **red** horse? ♦Taking peace, ♦people slaying each other, ♦red being the color of sin (Isaiah 1:18), and blood; *that all adds up to WAR!* Jesus said in **Matthew 24:6-7**: “You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars.... For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom...” Currently, *in 2011*, there are about 40 wars taking place around the world.¹ Every war and every rumor of war are birth pains – *signs pointing toward Jesus’ return!* Therefore, let us ♦read the signs, ♦be ready by grace through faith in Jesus, and ♦tell others about *our sin* and *Jesus’ saving work!*

3. **Seal Number 3 – Black Horse:** ⁵ **When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature [the seraph with the face of a man] saying, “Come.” I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.** ⁶ **And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine.”** So what events are symbolized by the **black** horse? *The scales and super-expensive food symbolize FAMINE!* Can you imagine a loaf of bread costing a day’s wage? Back then a denarius; today, \$100! In such times, the rich are satisfied, the others are hungry; today, *about 1 billion people are hungry!* So let us give thanks for our blessings AND help those in need!

¹ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/index.html>

4. **Seal Number 4 – Ashen Horse:** **7** When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature [the seraph with the face of an eagle] saying, “Come.” **8** I looked, and behold, an **ashen** horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth. So what events are symbolized by the **ashen** or literally green horse? The red and black horses – war and famine – brought death. Now we are reminded that death is not the end – *as Death is followed by Hades!*

- a. Think about the rich man mentioned in Luke 16, who was in Hades; *he longed for a single drop of water, yet none could be provided* (see my 9-6-2009 sermon)!
- b. At *some time* and in *some way* we will all die (unless Jesus comes first); then what? The Bible says: **Hebrews 9:27** “...it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment...” These words of John the Baptizer provide a good summary: “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36).

Conclusion: *We can ignore* the current signs which point to the end, or *we can faithfully* “seek first [God’s] kingdom and His righteousness...” (Matt. 6:33). May God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit keep us in Christ and use us to be an eternal blessing to others! And all God’s people said: *Amen!*

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