

**VICTORIOUS LIFE CHURCH BIBLE STUDY SERIES:
THE BOOK OF REVELATION
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CHAPTER SIX: The Opening of the Seven Seals - The Four Horsemen**

Chapter six is the second section of the largest portion of the book of Revelation (4:1–16:21). It is primarily devoted to the opening of the seven seals by the Lamb, in which three things will stand out.

First, the opening of each seal, one by one, which are accompanied by last days events which contain a great deal of theological significance.

Second, the first of several periods of time found throughout the book occurs here, separating the opening of the sixth and seventh seals (7:1-17).

Third, the opening of the seventh seal (8:1-5) is intimately connected to the seven angels with seven trumpets, which immediately follows (8:6–11:19).

The seals fall into a four-three pattern, where the first four stand together, while the fifth, sixth, and seventh seals stand on their own to a certain extent. There is clearly a tight connection between the actions of the Lamb in chapter 5 and his actions here. Sometimes this connection is not fully recognized because chapter 5 is filled with scenes of worship and adoration while the opening of the seals is accompanied by suffering and death inflicted upon the world. The symbolic expression of this affliction is illustrated by the use of the four horseman and the wrath of God being poured upon the earth. These four horsemen appear to symbolically portray four disastrous occurrences that will take place before the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Historians have argued over whether these events have already happened or whether mankind has yet to experience them. But most evidence points to the fact these have yet to take place

Revelation 6

1. And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

The scene opens with the familiar “I saw.” The words “**when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals**” indicate that the long-awaited action of the Lamb is now underway. Somewhat unexpectedly, John immediately describes not what he sees but what he hears, for one of the four living creatures was speaking with a voice like thunder. The appearance of one of the four living creatures reminds readers of the creatures’ strategic location in and around the throne. The creature’s voice as thunder suggests a close association between this living creature and the throne of God, where thunder was one of the theophanic elements to come from it (4:5). Such an indicator suggests that, when the living creature speaks, he speaks for the one who sits on the throne. The Mention of the living creatures points to the continuity that exists between those who worship in chapters 4–5 and those who act in chapter 6. The utterance of this thunderous voice is the command “come” or “go.” (John Christopher Thomas)

2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

The White Horse and Horseman

The first horse, a white one, seems bent on conquest (Revelation 6:2). There is a rider who *conquers the earth, greedily running rough shod over all who stand in his way with his out-of-control lust for power.* He is a great deceiver, a dictator, and a living devil. Its rider wears a crown and holds a bow.

Some people have attributed the rider of this horse as the person of Jesus, as later in Revelation 19:11-16 Jesus rides a white horse.

11 And I saw 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. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King Of Kings, And Lord Of Lords.

This is not a reference to Jesus on His white horse but is more likely the antichrist. The Greek text in Revelations 6 reveals that the crown worn by the rider on the white horse is called “stephanos,” a crown of victory worn by a military conqueror. The Greek word for the crown that Christ wears in Revelation 19 is “diadema” or a crown of royalty. The rider on the white horse in Revelation 6 is the great deceiver, not Jesus! The antichrist tries to mimic the works of the Messiah and can do miracles according to 2 Thessalonians 2:7-9. This rider is also bent on conquering the world.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

The bow he carries can represent violence. After three and a half years of peace Daniel 9:25-27, he will wage war upon the saints.

25 “Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, [f] the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. 26 After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. [g] The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. 27 He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ [h] In the middle of the ‘seven’ [i]

he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple[j] he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

He is a man, not a machine as some have suggested that the antichrist will be. He is Satan's demonic messiah (Daniel 8:24) He is the Anti-Christ, the chief son of Satan who will come promising world peace, but will bring a global blood bath. He will force every person to take his number or mark in their right hand or on their forehead. If you refuse, you will have your head cut off. The Bible calls him the lawless one. He will set up his image in Jerusalem and demand that the world worship him or face certain death in the most brutal fashion.

3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4 And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

The Fiery Red Horse and Horseman

The next horse, a fiery red one, takes peace from the Earth according to Revelation 6:4.. He carries a large sword and blatantly represents war and violence. This makes sense to follow after the conquest-driven horse and rider. Conquest often leads to war in which people take the lives of one another in order to rule. The antichrist will seek to wage physical war as well as spiritual war. Take, for instance, the abomination of desolation he will place in the temple, after the three and a half years of peace (Daniel 9:27). He will take the lives of many in a physical and spiritual sense.

The red horse brings death in which $\frac{1}{4}$ of the earth will be slaughtered. Many people equate this to a possible global, nuclear war. Einstein once predicted that in a full-scale nuclear exchange, $\frac{1}{3}$ of the earth's population would die. Imagine, in a world of 7 billion people, 2.5 billion people suddenly dying.

5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

The Black Horse and Horseman

This rider carries a pair of scales in his hand and seems to refer to a famine that will wipe out wheat and barley supplies, and spare oil and wine reserves (Revelation 6:5-6). Some scholars attribute this famine to the wars that occurred before it. Throughout history, those who tend to farm and contribute to food supplies yield such duties to fight in wars. Because of this, the food supplies suffer, and entire civilizations collapse.

The black horse of famine will bring with it a global food shortage. Super markets will be stripped bare. Civil riots will break out over the lack of food! People will begin to know the aching, clawing sensation of true hunger. The rider on the black horse holds up a balance and scale, declaring how much one simple meal will cost...the sum of one day's wages. There will not be enough to share with family or friends. Just one meal for one day's wages. Starving people in the coming global famine of the Great Tribulation will kill each other in order to eat. Eventually the Anti-Christ will have complete control over all of the food on planet earth. The oil and wine discussed in the book of Revelation are food for the wealthy, also controlled by the Anti-Christ. These rulers and their subordinates will stock their shelves with choice products from the state-owned supermarket; but the masses will starve to death, exactly like what happened in the Holocaust as Hitler and his Nazi regime had the finest of everything...and the Jews literally died of starvation in the concentration camps just a few feet away.

7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. 8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death,

and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The Pale Horse and Horseman

Naturally, when food supplies dwindle and wars break out, death follows. The pale horse has the power of famine, plague, and to kill by sword and by the wild beasts (Revelation 6:8). Sickness and famine often break out as a result of warfare, and this horse stands as no exception.

The fourth horse is the pale horse of death. The Greek word for this horse is “chloros,” which means green. Some have noted that the CIA Fact Book (1999) states that green is the traditional color of Islam.

Have the four horsemen already come?

Historians can often point to the fourteenth century as a time that echoed several of these apocalyptic events. The crusades echoed the conquest of the first rider, a great many wars broke out such as the Hundred Years War, and famine and death overtook the land because of the Bubonic plague and the Great Famine of 1315-1317. Nevertheless, history does have a way of repeating itself. Even if the events that transpired in the past reflected those in Revelation, we have yet to experience these again.