

INTRODUCTION

1. Please turn in your Bibles to Revelation chapter 6.
2. Before I went on a sabbatical in September, we were looking at the 6 seals found in Revelation chapter 6 and saw how they paralleled Matthew 24.
3. We started with the first seal but spent more time on a phrase found at the end of the 6th seal in verse 17.
4. It says, beginning at verse 15, “Then the kings of the earth and the great men and commanders and the rich and strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hid us from the

presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath [has come] and who is able to stand?’

5. We noted the phrase “has come” should be translated “is coming” because it is a dramatic aorist tense verb which is speaking of their coming wrath as “impending” or “yet to come” not as already come.
6. Some have viewed this as referring to the five seals that have been previously opened by the Lamb.
7. But when you examine the verb “has come” or “is come” (AV) you see something entirely different.
8. If you were not a part of this last message, I would

encourage you to pick up the CD on the table and listen or you can pick up a copy of Marvin Rosenthal's book "The Prewrath Rapture of the Church" and read pages 163-170 and it will give you an understanding of this verb.

9. But before we look at the first three verses of Revelation 6, let me give you a couple reminders of verse 17 and the phrase "has come."
10. Paul Feinberg of Trinity Evangelical Seminary, says this "verb...can be an ingressive aorist expressing a condition 'just entered' or a dramatic aorist which functions like a future tense—that the wrath is about to

begin.'

11. Gary Cohen, a Greek scholar and a staunch pretribulation rapturist, writes, 'The announcement... for the marriage of the Lamb is come' (Rev.19:7), is made after the Great Harlot is said to have been judged, and shows that the marriage is now imminent. The fact that the verb translated 'is come' is in the aorist cannot be allowed to push the marriage itself back into the past. The expression *elthen ho gamos...*, 'the marriage...is come' (v.7) is parallel to *elthen he hora*, 'the hour is come' (Mark 14:41). This latter saying is made by Christ speaking at Gethsemane of His impending *future*

crucifixion. Thus the aorist tense of the verb *erchomai*, lit. ‘has come,’ is sometimes used in the third person to tell of an over hanging event about to occur. Its

significance is precisely this here in Revelation 19:7 and it conveys the thought that the time of the marriage has now at last arrived.

12. This is the same thing we are seeing in Revelation 6:17.
13. “The great day of their wrath” has not come but is impending.
14. It is about to take place and that’s what we see with the opening of the 7th seal in Revelation chapter 8.
15. Joel 2:30-31 says, “I will display wonders in the sky and

on the earth, blood, fire and columns of smoke. 31 ***‘The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.’***”

16. This is precisely what occurs with the opening of the 6th seal.
17. Joel says in 3:14-15 says, “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. 15 ***The sun and moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness.***”
18. Even the prophet Isaiah said in Isa.13:9-10 - “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.*”

19. Even back in Isa.2:19-21, Isaiah says, “*Men will go into caves of the rocks And into holes of the ground before the terror of the LORD* And the splendor of His majesty, When He arises to make the earth tremble. 20 In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship, 21 *In order to go into the*

caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs before

the terror of the LORD and the splendor of His majesty,

When He arises to make the earth tremble.

20. That is exactly what is taking place in Revelation

6:12-17.

21. In both passages, men are said to flee to the dens and
rocks of mountains.

22. So with all that said, we will see the events of the first 6
seals.

23. Now as we look at the opening of the first six seals in
chapter 6, it is first mentioned in chapter 5 as being “in
the right hand of Him who sat on the throne” (v.1).

24. It was “written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals” (v.1)
25. In verse 7 Jesus takes the scroll “out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne” and now in chapter six He begins to break each seal.
26. The scroll is not read but acted out.
27. The scroll was a “deed or contract” (MacArthur).
28. Robert L. Thomas says, “This kind of contract was known all over the Middle East in ancient times and was used by the Romans from the time of Nero on. The full contract would be written on the inner pages and sealed with seven seals. Then the content of the contract would

be described briefly on the outside. All kinds of transactions were consummated this way, including marriage-contracts, rental and lease agreements, release of slaves, contract-bills, and bonds. Support also comes from Hebrew practices. The Hebrew document most closely resembling this scroll was a title-deed that was folded and signed, requiring at least three witnesses. A portion of text would be written, folded over and sealed, with a different witness signing at each fold. A larger number of witnesses meant that more importance was assigned to the document” (Revelation 1-7: An Exegetical Commentary, p.378).

29. John MacArthur adds: “Unlike other such deeds, however, it does not record the descriptive detail of what Christ will inherit, but rather how He will regain His rightful inheritance” (Revelation, p.164).
30. Now as we look at chapter six, we see Jesus, referred to in verse one as “the Lamb.”
31. Chapter six records only the breaking of the first six seals, the seventh seal is not broken until chapter eight.
32. Let us note also that what the opening of the six seals reveals is brief. Only two verses are devoted to each of the first four seals, three to the fifth, and a short paragraph to the sixth. The opening of the seventh seal in

8:1 is a different matter. (Lenski, R. C. H. [*The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation*](#). Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1935. Print).

33. Notice verse 1 of chapter 6 as we look at *the first seal*.

LESSON

I. The First Seal - False Peace (vv.1-2)

A. Its Opening (v.1a)

John sees “the Lamb” open “one of the seals” and then he hears a “voice.”

B. Its Summons (v.1b)

1. It is made by “one of the four living creatures”

2. He says “with a voice of thunder, “Come.”

Lehman Strauss, says “The voice is not speaking to John, but rather to the rider on the white horse” (Revelation, p.155).

Marvin Vincent also says the two words “and see” should be omitted.

Leon Morris says one of the four living creatures, “In a voice like thunder...spoke just one word, Come” (Revelation, p.101).

C. Its Contents (v.2)

John looks with amazement. He says, “I looked, and behold.”

1. “A white horse”

Horses of different color occupy 4 seals:

- a) The first seal, a white horse
- b) The second seal, a red horse
- c) The third seal, a black horse
- d) The fourth seal, an ashen horse

e) What is symbolized by the white horse?

The “white horse” “according to ancient usage, would be that of state and triumph, derived from the fact that white horses were rode by conquerors on the days of their triumph; that they were used in the marriage cavalcade (procession); that they were employed on coronation occasions, &c. In the triumphs granted by the Romans to their victorious generals, after a procession composed of musicians, captured princes, spoils of battle, &c., came the conqueror himself, seated on a high chariot drawn by four white horses, robed in purple, and wearing a wreath of laurel (Barnes, Albert. [*Notes on the New Testament: Revelation*](#). Ed. Robert Frew. London: Blackie & Son, 1884–1885. Print).

2. The rider on the horse

a) He “had a bow” (but no arrows)

The “bow” represents “war”

Some say this could be known today as a “cold war”

A “cold war” is a “a state of rivalry and tension between two factions, groups, or individuals that stops short of open, violent confrontation.”

b) “A crown was given to him”

This is not a diademas, “royal crown” but a stephanos, “a crown won as a prize”

c) He “went out conquering and to conquer”

He conquers with “peace.” As we will see later, it is a “false peace.”

Matthew 24:5 (NIV) For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will deceive many.

Robert VanKampen says “Because the rider is male (he), in the singular form (meaning one), and because ‘a crown was given to him’ (the word ‘crown’ is normally symbolic of rulership, in this instance a position that is specifically given to this particular rider only, going far beyond being just another false Christ), I personally believe this rider to be ‘the’ false Christ of all false Christs, Antichrist!” (The Rapture Question Answered, p.140).

1 Thessalonians 5:3 says that before the day of the Lord commences they will be saying “‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.”

Daniel 9:27 says that the Antichrist will “confirm a covenant [treaty] with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering and on the wing of abominations shall be one who

makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.”

In 2 Thess.2:1-12 Paul sheds more light on this period by revealing what will happen in that day.

John MacArthur says this so called man of peace is “no real king and has no real monarch’s crown (diadema), but has won a crown from the world for his triumphant achievements leading to world peace. He will not conquer by military force, but by cunning and deceit (cf. 2 Thess.2:9-11). His conquest will be a ‘cold war’ victory, a peace won by agreement, not conflict (Dan.9:24-27). Even as the final doom of the world approaches, Antichrist will promise a golden age of peace and prosperity. In gratitude, the world will honor him and elevate him to the position of supreme leadership. But both the accolades and the peace will be short-lived” (Revelation, p.180).

Before things get worse they will get better but peace will be short lived.

Robert Mueller was called the philosopher of the United Nations and its prophet of hope.

Mueller served the United Nations for thirty-three years, and performed diplomatic missions all over the world.

He was the Assistant Secretary General to the United Nations in charge of coordinating the work of thirty-two specialized agencies and world programs for the UN.

He was one of the best informed men in the world.

Mueller was convinced that, “There will be no third world war between the big powers.”

But instead, “We’re headed for a new age and a new world, a new Genesis, a true global, God-

abiding, political, moral, and spiritual renaissance to make this planet at long last what it was always meant to be, the planet of God.”

Muller was a good Catholic but His God, however, was not the personal God of the Bible, but the cosmic force who is pulling together unification all over the globe. (<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/66-23/the-coming-of-world-peace>).

But Muller’s insight may not be that far off.

Just look at what has taken place in the last couple of months with the Biden Administration and Afghanistan.

Biden caved to the Taliban but for what reason?

Was it peace? Or was it something greater. We will have to wait and see.

But the world longs for peace.

Israel wants peace with it's neighbors and will get it during this time when the Antichrist signs a 7 year peace treaty with Israel guaranteeing peace for Israel and her neighbors but it will be cut short.

Notice the second seal.

II. The Second Seal - War (vv.3-4)

A. Its Opening (v.3a)

“When He [the Lamb] broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, ‘Come.’”

B. Its Summons (v.3b)

He says to the second horse “Come.”

C. Its Contents (v.4)

John now sees “another” horse.

1. “A red horse” (symbolizes blood)

The NKJV says it was a “fiery red”

2. The rider on the red horse is “granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him” (v.4).

A **sword** is used in hand to hand combat. Thus the second seal contemplates invading armies in fierce person to person warfare. (MacDonald, William. *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*. Ed. Arthur Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995. Print).

The world’s euphoric mood of peace and harmony will be rudely shattered as the second horse and rider appear on the scene.

Just as World War II followed the deceptive peace promoted by Hitler, so devastating wars will spread throughout the world following the

collapse of Antichrist's false peace.

Here the story turns ugly and remains that way until the true King returns to establish His kingdom. (MacArthur, John F., Jr. [Revelation 1–11](#). Chicago: Moody Press, 1999. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary).

Matthew 24:6 says, “You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.

John MacArthur writes, “Men will slay one another on an unprecedented scale. Violent slaughter will become commonplace. While Scripture does not give the details, the advances in modern weaponry suggest a terrible, unimaginable holocaust” (Revelation, p.180).

As the head of a Western confederacy, Antichrist...will initially portray himself as a champion of peace. He will even appear to do what no one has been able to do, bring peace to

the troubled Middle East. He will make a treaty with Israel, posing as their protector and defender. But all too soon his true colors will show, and his desire for dominance will provoke rebellion. Antichrist's attempts to crush his enemies and rule them with an iron hand will touch off wars that will last throughout the remainder of the Tribulation. Finally, when earth's true King, the Lord Jesus Christ, returns, Antichrist will be cast into the lake of fire forever (20:10). (MacArthur, John F., Jr. [*Revelation 1–11*](#). Chicago: Moody Press, 1999. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

“As bad as these first two seals may be, they are not a part of the end of the age—the Day of the Lord. The wrath of God is still to come” (Robert Van Kampen, *The Rapture Question Answered*, p.141).

What comes with war?

III. The Third Seal - Famine (vv.5-6)

A. Its Opening (v.5a)

The Lamb opens the third seal and John hears the voice of the third living creature.

B. Its Summons (v.5b)

He calls for the third horse and its rider by saying “Come.”

C. Its Contents (vv.5b-6)

1. “A black horse” (v.5b) (symbol of famine)
2. “A pair of scales in his hand” (v.5b)

A voice coming from the *midst* of the four living creature says, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine.”

This is the last part of Matthew 24:7, “...and in

various places there will be famines and earthquakes.”

a) The “pair of scales” the rider carried in his hand “pictures the rationing that will result from the famine” (MacArthur).

A balance scale would be used for weighing bread only in a severe famine. Leviticus 26:26 and Ezekiel 4:16-17 both indicate that weighed bread is a condition of severe famine (http://revelationcommentary.org/06_chapter.html).

b) A “quart of wheat” “is barely enough to sustain one person for one day, while a denarius represents one day’s wages for an average worker” (MacArthur).

Just to put this in perspective, as a result of World War I and the revolutions which followed, 27 million people starved to death. (Tan, Paul Lee. [*Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times*](#). Garland, TX: Bible Communications, Inc., 1996. Print).

From the 1860s until 2016, an estimate of 128 Million people died in famines over this period (<https://ourworldindata.org/famines>).

It's hard to know the exact amount of those who have starved to death but let's just say the number is high and it will not compare to what will be unleashed in the third seal.

Robert Van Kampen writes, “The picture that is painted by John is a picture of food shortages that will accompany famine conditions in the world when the third seal is broken. In John's day, a denarius represented a full day's wage, giving us some indication of how highly inflated food prices will be during this time.

Returning to the Olivet Discourse, we see that the next event described by Christ, following the wars and rumors of wars, ‘will be famines’ (Mat.24:7b). Once again this perfectly parallels His revelation to John, one account

giving the reader an overview of what will occur, the other filling in the details.

Christ then continued to explain to His disciples that ‘all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs’ (Mat.24:8). In other words, the arrival of the false Christ or Christs (the first seal), the wars and rumors of wars (the second seal), and the famines (the third seal) are nothing compared to what follows next because ‘then they will deliver you to tribulation [persecution]...[for] when you see the Abomination of Desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place...then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall’ (Mat.24:9,15,21)” (The Rapture Question Answered, p.142).

CONCLUSION

1. False peace, war and famine – this is what is acted out in the first three seals opened by the Lamb.

2. This is only “the beginning of birth pangs” according to Matthew 24:8.
3. It will get worse.
4. Everyone wants things to always be better. And they will but then it will get worse.
5. The only way you can experience the *best* to come is to be a born-again follower of Jesus Christ who will be raptured before the Day of the Lord begins.
6. That is the only way you can be prepared for what is yet to come.
7. Next week we will look at seals four, five, and six and see what else will occur before Jesus returns for His church.
8. Let’s pray.