

Revelation Lesson 6

Revelation Chapter 6

Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies

Website: <http://www.kjvbiblestudies.net>

Email: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Introduction: We continue in our study of the book of the Revelation this week as we begin with Christ opening the first seal. In chapter 6, John describes the opening of six of the seven seals of the book taken by the Lamb from He who sat upon the throne. The first four seals reveal four horsemen. The fifth seal reveals more details about heaven, at least at that time.

The sixth reveals the apocalyptic judgment coming directly from God. Clearly implied is judgment on the earth. There seems little question that the time is the beginning of the Tribulation.

I. Christ Opens First Seal

(Rev 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.

As John observed the proceedings in heaven, he witnessed the Lamb open the first seal on the book. At the same time, John heard one the four beasts before the throne say, "Come and see." John commented that the voice of this creature was "as it were the noise of thunder."

Implied is the authoritative nature of the beast along with great power. It is evident that God created these beasts for the purpose of administration along with praising God and inciting the praise of the 24 elders. This command is not to John but to the rider of the white horse. Judgment upon the earth is about to begin. God is in control. He always has been and always will be. All of God's creatures perform His will whether they realize it or not.

(Rev 6:2) 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.

As John looked, he saw a white horse. The rider had a sword. Precisely where, how, or in what fashion John saw this horse, along with its successors, is not indicated. We are only told, he saw them. The collective context in chapter 6 is the beginning of the Tribulation, The four horses and their riders herein described are associated or involved with events taking place at the beginning of the

Tribulation.

The general flow of the book from this point through chapter 19 presents the sequential development of the Tribulation, with the exception of several chapters that provide greater detail of certain events. John saw the rider upon a “white horse.” He described him as having “a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.” A bow was primarily an offensive military weapon of that day.

The fact that he was given a crown indicates he had ascended to a position of great political power. Who gave this rider his crown is not yet revealed. However, as John’s account further develops, we will know the identity of the rider and the source of his crown. In any event, this armed and apparently aggressive ruler proceeds to conquer other nations along with a deep desire to conquer everything. This horseman on the white horse is the antichrist as he begins his ascent to worldwide power.

In Revelation 19:11, the Lord Jesus rides upon a white horse. This rider under the first seal is a false christ, a counterfeit, another Jesus, which is not another.

Rev 19:11 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.

He comes with a bow and a crown intending to conquer and to rule. His reign will begin with a resemblance to the reign of Christ. The antichrist promises peace and prosperity and he gives a likeness of it for a season. Soon, however, all his followers find they have been deceived. There can be no lasting peace or prosperity upon the earth until Jesus Christ, the “Prince of Peace” comes in person to reign upon the throne of David. The things that follow show beyond all doubt that this rider is not the rider of 19:11. The man of sin intends to conquer without battle or bloodshed. He will be quite successful for a short time in his attempt to rule by deception.

The wicked will prosper and rejoice under his rule while those who attempt to oppose him will suffer terrible persecution at his hand. The book of Daniel strongly hints that this satanically energized ruler will emerge from the Western world. Israel will be at peace, during the initial stages of the Tribulation. This false prophet seems to consolidate his base by working a solution to all of the world’s problems, particularly its economy. He will in time resort to aggression, forcibly building his empire by overrunning other nations.

In Matthew 24:6-8 (which evidently alludes to the initial stages of the Tribulation), Jesus foretold of “wars and rumours of wars” along with nations rising against nation.

(Mat 24:6) And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

(Mat 24:7) For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

(Mat 24:8) All these are the beginning of sorrows.

It is apparent that during the opening stages of the Tribulation, there will be the threat of world warfare evidently led by the man of sin as he begins his ascent to world domination under the promise of world peace.

(Rev 6:3) And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

(Rev 6:4) 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.

As John remained in heaven viewing the events taking place there, he observed the opening of the "second seal." John heard the second beast say "come and see". This time he witnessed "another horse that was red." The rider of this red horse was given the power "to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another. There was given unto him a great sword." This ruler and horse symbolize war.

The effort of the antichrist to bring peace on the earth has began to fail, now he resorts to bloody warfare, violence and strife. Just when the people thought that peace and safety had come, then terror begins. The antichrist will have great power. The man of sin will operate under the power of Satan. All the wars combined throughout history will not compare with the terror and slaughter that takes place during this time. This world has never seen anything to compare with what's coming. This is the period time spoken of in I Thessalonians 5:3, Matthew 24:6-7, Ezekiel 38:21.

(Eze 38:21) And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother.

If you find this disturbing, I advise you to listen next time the gospel of Jesus Christ is being preached and hear it again, and again, and read it, and plea with God to help you understand what Jesus Christ did that will allow you to turn away from this old sinful world and trust in Him, (Jesus Christ), with your whole heart and call on the Lord and He will save you. He will cast your sins off as far as the east is from the west. You will be His child, and He will be your God. You will be glad you did. Whereas the apparent violence of the first horseman was through warfare, here, the violence seems to be warfare coupled with a complete breakdown of international, national and social order.

Implied is a release of lawlessness of neighbors murdering neighbors, perhaps for the necessities of life as general warfare has destroyed the infrastructure of life. It very well might be inferred that during worldwide warfare at some point of the Tribulation, nuclear arsenals will be unleashed against adversaries. That would destroy the infrastructure of modern life which brings electricity, fuel, food, transportation, and communications. In a civilization accustomed to such amenities and having them destroyed, total anarchy with its incumbent violence is very plausible. It would seem that as the second horseman accomplishes his mission, all structures of social order will have been destroyed.

Recall the church, the salt of the earth has been removed and the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit diminishes, the power of wickedness and violence will grow. There will not only be great bloodshed from warfare but also from the complete breakdown of civilization in much of the world.

(Rev 6:5) 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.

(Rev 6:6) 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.

John witnessed the opening of the third seal. As the rider responds to the command of the third beast, he is seen on a black horse with a pair of balances in his hand. Black has universally been the color of death. In the hand of this rider was a balance-beam scale. It was the device ordinarily used in ancient times for commercial transactions.

John 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.” Food becomes scarce as is always the case in time of war. A man can only buy enough with a day's wage to barely feed himself and then he must divide with his family. Conditions will be so terrible that a man would rather die than live. Thank God we need not go through this. All who trust in Christ now will be with Him then. Will you?

A measure of wheat was the quantity that when ground into flour would produce a small loaf of bread. A penny (literally, a Denarius) was a Roman silver coin. According to Matthew 20:2-13, in the economy of the first century, it was the equivalent of a day's wage. Barley is a more coarse grain usually used for animal feed. Three loaves of that quality could be obtained for a day's wage.

The implications are bleak. Whatever one's wage might be, to be able to only purchase one loaf of white bread or three loaves of coarse bread implies severe economic conditions. There will be tremendous inflation of money or famine causing food shortages and likely both. The description here looks very much

like a near-complete economic collapse. Of interest is the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 24:7 of famines and pestilence in that same day. Both are the result of unlimited warfare.

As war ravages a nation, its economy often collapses. Famine sets in as crops have been destroyed, and disease often rages in the aftermath. If the threat of nuclear warfare comes to pass at that time, the economic consequences are all the more. It appears that as the Tribulation engages, there will be mass worldwide warfare along with a complete global breakdown of civilization and social order, and a complete economic collapse. That gives pause for concern to say the least.

The final comment, “and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine” is mysterious but not unknowable. The word translated as oil (elaion elaion) refers to olive oil. Both olive oil and wine have been symbolic of Israel’s economy, both then as well as the present. During the first half of the Tribulation or a portion thereof, God orders that Israel’s economy and safety be spared the judgment already going on elsewhere.

Because the trouble elsewhere is largely war-induced, implied is relative peace for Israel during the beginning of the Tribulation.. This is consistent with other eschatological portions of Scripture which seem to imply that during the first half of the Tribulation, Israel will have relative peace and be spared the judgment going on in the rest of the world. That, however, will change at the mid-point of the Tribulation.

II. Christ Opens Fourth Seal

(Rev 6:7) And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

(Rev 6:8) 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.

Under the first three seals we have seen a white horse, powerful but bloodless in his conquering. Next a red horse, blood colored and war-like. Then a black horse symbolizing famine, want and hunger. Indeed this is a terrible time but the terror and suffering upon the earth has scarcely begun. As the Lord opened the fourth seal, John heard the fourth beast summon the horse and rider. John saw a “pale horse: and his name that sat on the horse was Death, and Hell followed with him.”

The pale horses color is a deathly grayish green like the color of a corpse of putrefying flesh. The color mentioned evidently is the color of death, unnatural

and terrifying. This horse is ghastly in appearance and more feared than the other three combined. The name of this rider was Death (yanatov thanatos) as well as Hell.

The latter word is translated from ('Adhv) hades which referred to the realm of the dead, known to be in the center of the earth. It also had the generic sense of the grave. More specifically, the New Testament teaches that hades is the initial place of the departed dead. It might be likened to the initial place of torment prior to the Great White Throne Judgment and the everlasting Lake of Fire. Luke 16:22-23 makes clear it is a place of fire and torment. In short, the pale horse and its rider bespeaks of death and hell.

(Luk 16:22) And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

(Luk 16:23) And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

To John it was revealed that “power was given unto him over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.” Precisely to what the “fourth part of the earth” is referred to is not clear. It conceivably may refer to one quarter of the earth’s geography. However, the worldwide aspect of the Tribulation would seem to imply one quarter of the earth’s population. As the world warfare ignited by the antichrist rages with the subsequent collapse of civilization in most parts of the world—economic collapse, famine, and ensuing disease—it makes sense.

John notes four sources for such death:

- (1) The sword—death from either military action or civil violence;
- (2) Hunger—death from starvation resulting from widespread famine;
- (3) Death—perhaps caused by disease from the pestilence of war; and
- (4) The beasts of the earth—death from wild animals rampaging from the collective famine and chaos on earth. As though death by the sword and hunger and disease were not horrible enough now the voracious beasts of the earth are employed to execute death. What is happening? What has gone wrong? The devil is turned loose, the antichrist is in control. The Holy Spirit of God is not hindering him.

The four horsemen of the apocalypse are described. They comprise the initial judgments of the Tribulation. The white horse brings deception, rumors and lies among the nations causing wars. Israel is deceived. The red horse, war with strife, struggle and bloodshed. The black horse is famine taking away food and

bringing starvation; now this ghastly colored horse brings death and destruction in ways more terrible and far-reaching yet.

Death is personified as a mighty tyrant riding on a death-colored horse going forth to strike fear, anguish and terrible turmoil in the hearts of men. Hell is personified as a horrible monster that follows death. When and where the rider of this horse appears, the land of the living becomes the land of the dead and hell swallows them up.

(Rev 6:9) And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. As the fifth seal is opened, John's attention is directed toward events in heaven. John "saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held."

These are the souls of those who had been martyred for the Word of God and their testimony. The word translated as slain (sfazw sphazo) implies death by violence, even butchery. As the context will further unfold, these souls were saved throughout time, who were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony that they held. They are described as being "under the altar," which is in heaven. There is a Temple in heaven which quite evidently has an altar.

The pavement or 'ground' thereof has already been described as a sea of glass (5:6) which implies transparency. Apparently, God has provided a special place for these martyrs in an area located below the altar area of the Temple in heaven. With the transparency of the pavement above, John may have seen them. It might even be implied that because these were under the altar, they were 'under the blood.'

(Rev 6:10) And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

John records, And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? When folks get to heaven they are going to remember how they were treated on earth by their enemies. These martyrs are crying out for vengeance; they are not pleading for God to have mercy. In heaven everyone is in agreement with God. They recognize the fact that sin deserves hell.

(Rev 6:11) And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

Verse 6:11

White robes are symbolic of the righteousness of Christ. The people who are saved during the tribulation are saved just like folks were from Adam right up until now, by faith in the finished work of Christ. These souls are at rest and are told to rest a little longer because there are more souls to be gathered in before God begins to pour out His wrath upon the earth. God loves His children in heaven and He loves the ones on the earth.

Before it is over, many will be redeemed and will join their ranks. Revelation 20:4 speaks of those beheaded by the beast during the Tribulation. They appear to be believers martyred during the Tribulation. These are the redeemed Jews who turn to Christ in that day.

(Rev 6:12) And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

As the sixth seal was opened, John's attention was directed back to the earth and the cataclysmic events culminating there. The time now may be near the middle of the Tribulation. John begins to describe catastrophic events on the earth and particularly in the heavens above the earth. He records first "a great earthquake." As Jesus noted in Matthew 24:7, in that day, there will be "earthquakes in divers places." Evidently, at this time, there will be a particularly catastrophic earthquake. Though the events described here parallel those of Matthew 24:27-31, the time there clearly is at the conclusion of the Tribulation.

(Mat 24:27) For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

(Mat 24:28) For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

(Mat 24:29) Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

(Mat 24:30) And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

(Mat 24:31) And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a

trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Here, the time clearly is long before that and likely at the mid-point of the tribulation. The earthquake described here likely is the same as foretold in Isaiah 2:21 and 24:19-21. Things get progressively worse as the tribulation continues. The events in the heavens are such as have never been seen before. After the horrors of war, famine, starvation and death with even the wild beasts turned against man it may seem nothing worse could happen but they haven't seen anything yet compared to what's going to happen!

This is not a local earthquake but one that covers the earth. The word translated "earthquake" means to violently shake. Not only is the earth shaken but the heavens are as well. In recent years, we have seen the terrible effects of local earthquakes in Alaska, Asia and South American countries. Thousands of people killed, wounded, left homeless, billions of dollars worth of damage done. This is terrible, but think what it will be like when this quake covers the whole earth.

Jesus said in Matthew 24:29 that *"the powers of the heavens shall be shaken"*. If there is one thing mankind takes for granted, it is that the sun will come up in the morning along with the predictable stability of the heavenly bodies. That all will change at about the middle of the Tribulation. In that day, the sun will become "black as sackcloth of hair."

The latter is an ancient idiom for total darkness. Sackcloth of hair was a sack usually made of black goats hair. It was impenetrable by light. At the same time, "the moon became as blood." Joel 2:31 speaks of such events taking place just before "the great and the terrible day of the LORD come." The focus of the latter is from the perspective of Israel. For them, the wrath of God will not fall until the latter half of the Tribulation. Joel's prophecy concerning the sun and moon likely is the same as noted here.

III. Stars Fall Unto the Earth.

(Rev 6:13) And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

The Apostle uses the analogy of a fig tree full of green figs and having been blown down during a powerful wind storm. The analogy is applied to the stars of heaven falling to the earth. What John may have been describing is a powerful meteor shower, the likes of which the earth has never seen. The darkened sky seemed to be raining down the very stars of heaven in a terrifying downpour of meteors.

(Rev 6:14) And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their

places.

John continued, And the heaven departed as scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. As best as John could describe, it seemed as if the very darkened heavens were parted and rolled up. Isaiah wrote of a similar event in Isaiah 34:4. However, there the context seems to be the end of the Tribulation once again.

Putting this all together, what John may have witnessed was an asteroid sent by God, impacting the earth. As it approached the earth, it would eclipse the sun to the degree it appeared to be darkened. Its own reflection may have caused the moon to appear red. Alternately, the dust traveling with it may have so clouded the atmosphere that the moon seemed red. The cosmic dust peppering the atmosphere prior to the arrival of the asteroid would cause a meteor shower which seemed like the stars raining down.

Just prior to its arrival, the atmospheric heaven would seem to split and be rolled back as it crashed through the atmosphere. Its impact on earth would cause perhaps the greatest earthquake in history which would literally cause every mountain and the islands to be moved out of their previous place. Such an event would be deadly and and terrifying to those on the earth.

(Rev 6:15) And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

The population of the earth from the rulers down to the lowest echelons of human society seek to hide “themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.” As mankind realizes what is about to happen, they literally crawl into the caves and mountains seeking refuge.

(Rev 6:16) And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

As they hide themselves, they cry out to the mountains and rocks (if that would do any good) to fall on them and “hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.” What is amazing is that the population of the earth realizes it is God and His Son, the Lamb, who are pouring out their wrath upon the earth. They know God is judging them in fury never before seen. They are not calling on the Lord.

(Rev 6:17) For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Continuing, the remaining inhabitants of the earth realize, For the great day of his

wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand. Several implications are at hand.

In that day, the world will realize who is judging them. It is apparent that the day of wrath is just getting underway. The final 3 1/2 years will be even worse, especially for Israel. The world realizes the impossibility of withstanding God's judgment, yet there is no indication of repentance whatsoever.

The following chapter is largely parenthetical. The seventh seal will be opened at the beginning of chapter 8.

KJV Bible Studies are prepared and distributed free of charge. The lessons may not be sold without consent. If you have questions or wish to discuss the lessons, or possibly need help in finding Jesus Christ as your Personal Lord and Savior, contact us at email below..

Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Website: <http://www.kjvbiblestudies.net>

Email: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.