

Revelation 6 "Riders on the Storm"

Intro

Jesus told us that in this world we will have trouble. He also told us to not worry because He has overcome the world. So whenever something happens in my life that is trouble I am not surprised.

Somehow just knowing that whatever I have experienced has been vetted by Jesus makes the troubled times of life better. No matter what I am going through, I know that Jesus knows. I know that He could have stopped it but instead He allowed it. I know that He loves me and so if He felt trouble was best for me then I have a lesson to learn that could not have been learned any other way.

So when trouble strikes my life, my question is not "Why me?" but rather "God what would you like for me to learn? God How do you want me to change? What can I learn about myself that I could not have learned without going through this trouble?"

Last week we learned about the throne of God. The best thing about the Throne is that it is God's throne and He is sitting on it. No matter what happens in Tribulation....the Great Tribulation...or the tribulation that is causing you trouble in your life today....

What we must remember is that God is seated on His throne and He knows....He knows...whatever you are struggling with....God has allowed and He knows...and He is willing to use it to change you into the person He wants you to become. Whatever you are going through, God has determined it necessary for Him to carry out His will in your life.

So before we learn of the tribulation at the end of the world...God wanted to make sure we knew that God is fully in control and seated on His throne.....that is why He revealed the throne first to John. Last week was about Worship...the next weeks are about wrath. And God is sovereign over it all.

We have learned in the past that God has orchestrated appointed times. Feasts that foretell of the Messiah. Each feast associated with a key event in the life of Jesus. He has been, is, and will be in control of every event in human history. The feasts reassure us and remind us of who God is and what He has promised to do.

Today at sundown in Jerusalem about 6:30pm their time or about an hour from now...The Feast of Trumpets begins. **PHOTO 1** It technically starts about the time I finish this sermon. It is the first of the Fall Feasts.....If you were here for the series we recently completed on the Messianic Significance of the Fall Feasts....then you know that I believe that the rapture of the church will occur during that feast. The feast runs from 11am today our time until 11:30am on Tuesday.

I am not date setting. I don't even know if the day we celebrate the Feast of Trumpets is exactly the correct day....it is a day that no one knows for sure....I don't know if it is this year or one thousand years from now, but the key events of the life of the Messiah have been prophesied and fulfilled in the Feasts thus far and I believe will be so in the future.

I say it every night....I can't believe that we are still here. I expect Jesus to return at any moment and it could be any day. It is just that my expectations are a bit more amped up during this feast every year. I would love to not finish this sermon today.

But we are not to live our lives for Christ by just looking at the sky ready to fly. We have work to do.....so we continue our series about What in the World is Going on. We are in the book of Revelation....Week 15...and we are in Revelation Chapter 6.

End Time Events....the curtain is closing. God is bringing about His solution to our sin problem.

Every one can feel it. Our world is spiraling into a climactic end. Even people who don't our future as foretold in the Bible still get a sense of impending doom. You can't watch the news and think that things in this world are getting better.....You watch and wonder how low can we go....and if you believe in Jesus....How much more can you tolerate before you fix this?

Last week we saw John try to use human words and images to describe the very throne of God. John, Ezekiel, Daniel, and others all we shown the throne of God in Heaven and all did their best to reveal it to us.

God gave Daniel a Scroll and when he read it He turned pale and ashen. He couldn't handle the truth of our future. God told him to seal the scroll until the appointed time at the end. So Daniel did so. Now that scroll was in the right hand of God on the throne and we learned last week that only the Lamb of God....the slain Messiah...the Wounded but victorius lamb could open the seals that bring about the end of times.

Notice that the theme of Revelation 4-5 that we studied last week was all about Worship. We saw the throne of God, we heard the cries Holy Holy Holy. We felt the Spirit of God in our midst. Those chapters are about Worship. These next chapters are about Wrath.

Several weeks ago I taught on getting comfortable with the wrath of God. Let me remind you that we underestimate His wrath because we underestimate His holiness. I told you that we tend to down play the offense of our sins on the Holiness of God and thus His just wrath seems excessive to us.

This is the beginning of the seven seals, the beginning of Christ's ascent to His throne as King. John is going to watch as 7 seals are opened...one at a time....perhaps a short time in heaven but over 7 years on earth....Each one bringing about the end of times as foretold and directed by God. Remember that during all seven seals...all seven trumpets....all seven thunders....and all seven bowls of judgement, every second and every moment is directed by the God Jesus with God the Father sovereignly seated on His throne. The world is not out of control during these 7 years....God's justice....very much under His control....is being brought forth in order to bring control to the chaotic world our sins have caused.

We have sadly become accustomed to a world full of sin....thankfully God has not. The story of Revelation is cleansing justice and the eradication of sin forever.

In Revelation 5 Jesus receives the seven sealed scroll in heaven that was sealed by Daniel.

Photo 2 The scroll contains His inheritance, which is the Kingdom of the World. For that Kingdom to be realized the seven seals must be opened.

this scroll is the history and destiny of mankind and creation, and only Jesus—the Lamb—had the right to loose the seals on this scroll of the culmination of history.

As Christ opens each seal, judgment is released. But the end of the seals is not the end of tribulation. The 7th seal contains another series of judgements- the seven trumpets.

Dictators, war, famine, death and persecution have been familiar throughout all history, but not to the magnitude and the severity with which they will be present in the Great Tribulation.

As far as the seals are concerned, they will be an intense amplification of bad conditions often experienced through history. God will give mankind over to his fallen nature—and more!

What does it mean that God will judge the world? Many people think that judgment only involves the active stance a judge takes when he delivers a sentence to the guilty party. But the judge can just as easily take a passive stance, letting the chips fall where they may and allowing the consequences of one's behavior to serve as the judgment. The latter is how God will judge the world. He will simply let the world have its own way. And ironically, when the world gets what it wants, it will not want what it gets.

Although some view the seven seals, trumpets, thunders and bowls as parallel and simultaneous, the fact that the seventh seal contains the seven trumpets indicates that the seven trumpets follow the seven seals and that the seven bowls in turn follow the seven trumpets. Also, since the judgments in each series are different and intensify as the Tribulation progresses, the succession view is best. This chart **Chart 1** shows how these three series of judgments relate to one another.

Remind where we are

Chart 2

Chart 3

This book of Revelation is best understood in the context of the preceding 65 books. So before we open the scroll, I want to take us back to a moment in Peter's life that he recorded in 2 Peter.

Peter is in prison. He has been tried and convicted. He is writing his last letter before his execution that he knows is on the horizon. And he knows his execution is certain because Jesus said so.

John 21:17–19 (ESV) — 17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. 18 Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you

and carry you where you do not want to go." 19 (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me."

So Peter knows what awaits him and he is writing his final plea to the believers.

2 Peter 3:1–3 (ESV) — 1 This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, 2 that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, 3 knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.

2 Peter 3:3–4 (ESV) — 4 They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."

2 Peter 3:5–6 (ESV) — 5 For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, 6 and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.

So Peter says...think back...from creation until Noah everyone said...."God would not destroy the earth..He created it...He loves everyone....God wouldn't do that" Peter says, don't be fooled. God has done this once before.

2 Peter 3:7 (ESV) — 7 But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

Peter says....I know that I am departing soon and the Lord has not yet returned. Just as He stored up water for the flood...He is storing up fire for the judgment. The heavens and earth that now exist will be destroyed by fire. It seems like a long time to us, but not to the Lord. Look at the next verse.

2 Peter 3:8 (ESV) — 8 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Why does it seem like it is taking Him so long? Next Verse.

2 Peter 3:9 (ESV) — 9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

But Peter says....just because it seems like a long time to us...there will be a day when it all ends. The Day of the Lord is certain to come. It is a day of certainty that has been marked on the calendar. The great and dreadful day of the Lord which all the prophets referred to....sometimes calling it "that day" will come. Peter says....here is what is on the agenda....

2 Peter 3:10 (ESV) — 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Everything you have ever seen in nature is temporary. The Grand Canyon....The Oceans....Mt Everest....The Sahara....The Amazon Jungle...The Earth itself....round by the way.....every star....every constellation....every city....every familiar place...every planet....every galaxy....every inch of the depths of the ocean....they are all temporary.

One day...those of us who trust Jesus will watch it all happen.....we will outlive our own planet. After that God will bring to us a New Heaven and a New Earth.....It must happen. You see our sins ruined not only us but all of creation.

Romans 8:18–22 (ESV) 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

Our entire world is under the shackles and bondage of sin. God is going to destroy it....destroy all sin....save those who surrender to him and cast out those who don't. Then He is going to take us back to a time similar to creation. No sin, Man in perfect relationship with God, and a new creation with Jesus ruling supremely. I can't wait to see it.

Given that certainty, Peter says, how should we be living in the meantime....and he goes on. But he is clear...this earth that we live on....is coming to an end.

In fact, after this happens we will read in Rev 21 that John says.

Revelation 21:1 (ESV) — 1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

Revelation 21:2–5 (ESV) — 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." 5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

So Peter says....the end will come like a thief....the earth as we know it...will become a burned up piece of space junk. How will all this happen? We are going to watch it unfold in Revelation 6-18

So, as we open the seals, the end begins. Let me remind you that we have learned what was, what is...and now we will learn what will be. At this point, I believe the church will have been raptured and has been taken home as a bride to the Father's house with Jesus.

The rapture of the church is the next prophetic event to occur. It is imminent and we are closer today than we have ever been before. In Matthew Jesus referred to the events of Rev 6-18.

The Prophetic clock comes from Daniel. We have covered it in detail before, but lets revisit it so we know what the seals are initiating.

Daniel 9:24–25 (ESV) — 24 "Seventy weeks (70 sets of 7 years=490years) are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. 25 Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks (7 years) Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. (7+62= 69 weeks....69 sets of 7 years....= 483 years)

So from the time in Nehemiah's day when the King gave the order to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem...until the Messiah arrives in that temple will be 483 years.

So when was the decree given?

Nehemiah 2:1 (ESV) — 1 In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, I took up the wine and gave it to the king.

The King notices that Nehemiah is sad and Nehemiah asks permission to go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.

Nehemiah 2:6–8 (ESV) — 6 And the king said to me (the queen sitting beside him), "How long will you be gone, and when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time. 7 And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, 8 and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy." And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.

The 20th year of King Artaxerxes rule....during the month of Nisan...the month of Passover was in 445BC

So from 445 BC at Passover God told Daniel that the Messiah would arrive at the temple in Jerusalem in exactly 483 years.

So, 483 years later...to the day....at Passover...Jesus arrives as the Messiah and fullfills this prophecy to the day. Why were they waving palm branches and praising Him as the Messiah- they were expecting the Messiah on that Day because God promised it in Daniel.

When you correct for the Jewish calendar to the Gregorian Calendar that we use, Jesus arrived on Passover exactly to the day promised in AD 32

So 69 Weeks or 69 sets of 7 years were decreed...But remember that Daniel spoke of 70 Weeks. 69 Weeks until the Messiah.....70 weeks until all is restored.

Daniel 9:24 (ESV) — 24 "Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.

So...483 years pass and the Messiah comes...32 AD. Most people thought that Jesus would return 7 years later...in 39 AD. That is what the early church expected based on the prophecy of Daniel.

Daniel 9:25–26 (ESV) —26 And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing.

That is what happens...Jesus is presented to the temple at Passover...is crucified as the Lamb of God...is sacrificed for our sins....and then is buried.

Daniel 9:26 (ESV) — And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.

The Temple in Jerusalem is destroyed by Roman Emperor Titus in AD 70. The people of the prince to come....the antichrist...

Daniel 9:26 (ESV) — and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.

From AD 70 until today...war... has continued. Humanity has been at war with each other the entire time. Sometimes global other times more regional...but always at war. In 2000 years we have never seen global world peace.

Daniel 9:26–27 (ESV) — 27 And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week,

He...some person...will make a strong covenant for one final week...one final 7 year period.

Sometime in the future....between the destruction of Jerusalem....and the the return of the Messiah...a leader will arise who will make a covenant with Israel for the final 7 year period. That Covenant will be part of a plan that brings about global world peace.

But God tells us through Daniel...that covenant will not last...

Daniel 9:27 (ESV) — 27 And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."

Some person, Daniel says will come and he will bring this whole era of continual war to an end. He will enable peace through a treaty with Israel that will allow once again sacrifice and offering at the temple in Jerusalem...temporarily....so the temple will be rebuilt. He is someone who will bring about world peace....that is the first sign that the seven year clock is starting again.

So this peace will be an imposed peace on the world. And 3.5. years into this last week of 7's, the covenant of peace with Israel will be broken by this person...who will end sacrifice...end offering....desecrate the temple by establishing himself as god...and then the decreed end will be poured out on this person...the desolator.

Matthew 24:15–22 (ESV) — 15 "So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, 18 and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. 19 And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! 20 Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. 21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. 22 And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.

Jesus said, that there is a time coming when the events are going to be so horrible that it will be worse than anything the world has ever seen to date....think about what we have seen....The Holocaust....Nuclear Explosions in Japan....Horrible famines and epidemics...major earthquakes....tsunamis....hurricanes...fires...whatever you want to think of...nothing compares to these days Jesus says.

This Great Tribulation that Jesus promises is not only the worst thing we have ever seen, nothing like it will ever happen again. With that we have our introduction to Rev 6-12...what will be

This transformation will occur through 7 seal judgments....7 trumpet judgements....7 thunder judgements that we are not allowed to know about....and 7 bowls of judgement. With the breaking of the first seal....the prophetic clock once again begins ticking....moving to the end.

So lets see how this plays out in the next 12 chapters of Revelation. It all starts when the first seal is opened by the Lamb....want to guess what the first seal brings to the world?

Revelation 6:1–2 (ESV) — 1 Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!" 2 And I looked, and behold, a

white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer.

The First Horse of the Apocalypse....The White Horse.....Is this rider Jesus? We know at the end of the tribulation Jesus will return on a white horse....we see that in Rev 19. Look at how Jesus is described.

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 does judge and make war

Rev 19:15: And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword

Out of Jesus Christ mouth we see a sharp sword coming out

Rev 19:12: His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns

And Jesus has many crowns in His head

Jesus has conquered...He has earned and been given many crowns...He has a sharp sword the Word of God from His mouth and His eyes are a flame of fire.

But this rider....the Rider of the White Horse...the First Horse of the Apocalypse is very different.

This rider is a fake christ....He is the Antichrist. Trying to mimic him to fool people, particularly the Jews.

He will come to conquer. He has not yet conquered anything. He will have to conquer....He doesn't have a sharp sword...doesn't have the Word of God from his mouth...instead he has a bow...with no arrows. He doesn't have many crowns on his head...just one....but even that one he didn't earn...He is given a crown by the people...He didn't steal it....He didn't win the crown...it is given to him.

Because the crown was given to him, some take this verse to mean that the world's inhabitants make the antichrist their leader and subsequently submit to his leadership. The bow without an arrow may indicate that the antichrist's world government will be established without initial warfare.

He came out conquering and to conquer. His goal is total world domination.

Those of us who believe in a Pretribulation Rapture believe that the Church...the Bride of Christ will be raptured before the first seal is broken.

To be precise, the rider on the white horse is a wave of false messiahs that will appear after the Rapture. The sudden disappearance of all the true believers will open the floodgates for an outbreak of deception and counterfeit Christs who will claim to have the answers for the world's chaos. Eventually, one man will quickly stand out head and shoulders above the rest. He will be the decisive fulfillment of the rider on the white horse— the ultimate anti-Messiah. We know him best as the Antichrist.

So when Jesus break the first seal of the scroll in heaven....the rider of the white horse is allowed to begin his reign on earth....notice that even the arrival of the AntiChrist on earth is brought about only when God on His throne determines that the time has come. Everything that happens is not under the control of the Antichrist, but rather is dictated, directed and delivered by the One enthroned in Heaven.

Seal #1.....Arrival of a World Leader.....Who has the crown given to him....who comes without enforcing his will by force....but comes to conquer through the will of people who are devoid of the Spirit of God in a world where the believers have left a vacuum through their raptur.

As soon as the Antichrist, likely from Rome, signs a peace treaty with Israel and the rest of the World you can be absolutely guaranteed that Jesus is coming back in 7 years. The 7 years of tribulation has begun. Daniels clock is now in the last week....the 70th 7 years.

But world peace does not last....the next seal judgment changes everything.

Revelation 6:3–4 (ESV) — 3 When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" 4 And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword.

The second horse of the Apocalypse is unleashed on earth....The breaking of the second seal unleashes the Rider on the Red Horse.

All he needed to do was take peace from the earth. Once this peace—God's gift to man—was taken, men quickly rush in with war and destruction. Peace between men and among nations is a gift from God. It is not the natural state of relations between men. God allowed world peace for a time.

We just read in Daniel 9 that half way through the last 7 years that the peace treaty with Israel would be broken. So 3.5. years after peace is imposed...The Red Horse is given permission to TAKE peace from the earth.

In Matthew 24 Jesus calls this moment the Abomination of Desolation. Paul refers to it in 2nd Thessalonians. The Abomination will be an image of this leader in the temple and he will declare himself to be God and that action...triggers all out war.

The fiery red horse is the horse of War....peace ends and war breaks out with a great sword.

There is almost universal agreement among scholars that this horse and rider represent war, international strife, and civil upheaval. The promised peace of the white horse is swiftly shattered by the war of the red horse.

The second seal broken unleashes the Red Horse and brings about the war between the Antichrist and all who oppose him. He declares himself as God and demands through force...he was given a great sword. Note that the sword was given to him....he is allowed to have it because God allowed it,....but it appears that the world's nations will surrender their military to him...they will give him a sword.

He will likely demand that all armies give up their weapons during the time of peace...because they are not needed anymore. We humans have achieved world peace. In doing so he will consolidate all weapons and have them under his control...the sword is given to him and he is now using it. Jesus allowed it when He opened the second seal.

Revelation 6:5–6 (ESV) — 5 When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!"

The third horse of the Apocalypse...the black horse...the horse of famine...**PHOTO** well at least for the poor.

A quart of wheat or three quarts of barley for a denarius....massive inflation....In other words...a thousand dollars for a loaf of bread....do not harm the oil or wine....the rich people's stuff. The Black horse follows war and is famine.

A denarius was equal to an average day's wages. A measure (koinix) of grain was slightly less than a modern quart— the basic portion of food for one person for one day. In other words, the world will suffer hyper-inflation. Food prices will skyrocket so high it will take everything a person can earn in one day just to buy enough food for one day for himself. The prices listed here are about 1,000 percent more than the average prices in the Roman Empire at the time John was writing Revelation. To put it in ordinary language, the situation would be such that one would have to spend a day's wages for a loaf of bread with no money left to buy anything else. The symbolism therefore indicates a time of worldwide famine when life will be reduced to the barest necessities, for famine is almost always the aftermath of war.

People will resort to lower quality food just to put something on the table for their families. In the ancient world, wheat was the main food and barley was a lesser quality grain with less nutritional value. It was often used to feed animals. During this future famine, people will quit buying the normal foods they have been used to and will turn to cheaper foods.

Do not harm the oil and the wine: Yet, the nicer things will be available for those who can afford them. There will still be the oil and the wine that should not be harmed.

The world will be swallowed up by the rider on the black horse. The world will writhe in the clutches of stabbing hunger. The global economic collapse and food shortage will set the stage for the Antichrist to move into position to begin seizing control of the world economy

Revelation 6:7–8 (ESV) — 7 When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" 8 And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider's name was Death, and

Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

The pale horse of Death.....the 4th Horse of the Apocalypse.

The word used to describe the fourth horse's color is ashen or pale. The Greek word chloros is the source for our English word chlorine. It usually denotes a pale green color. Revelation uses it elsewhere to describe the color of grass and vegetation (8: 7; 9: 4). However, in Revelation 6: 8 the word "designates the yellowish green of decay, the pallor of death. It is the pale ashen color that images a face bleached because of terror. It recalls a corpse in the advanced state of corruption."

"In this terrifying scene, John saw the grim reaper and the grave digger moving together across the face of the earth. Hades is the NT rendition of Sheol or a place for the dead. Death slays the body while Hades swallows up the soul. These two symbols represent the massive number of deaths that will follow in the wake of the first three horsemen. One-quarter of the world's population will be lost in their rampage."

Our modern age has seen hundreds of millions killed by dictators, war, and famine. Yet all that will pale in comparison to the death toll coming in the wake of this ultimate dictator. No wonder Jesus said of this time For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. (Matthew 24:21)

Power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill: Power was given to the horseman, and given by God. Though all hell breaks loose on the earth, God is very much in control. He still holds the scroll and opens the seals.

When Jesus breaks the 4th seal and unleashes the final horse of the apocalypse....He gives them authority to kill 1/4 of the world....Death comes and Hades follows so this 1/4 of the world are not new believers....their death would be followed by heaven which we shall see in the next seal.

They will cause death in one of four ways: War....Famine...Disease...and oddly wild beasts of the earth. Perhaps some say, the food chain is going to be altered and animals are going to feed on humans.

But In Revelation the word for "Wild Beast" theerion, is used 38 times. In every other time the word always means those acting with the Antichrist or the Antichrist himself. Thus many believe that the wild beasts of the earth that destroy people in Rev 6 are the military and political leaders who overpower, oppress and persecute their subjects....and I think this is the best explanation.

The 4 Horses of the Apocalypse have lined up...and they move out one by one...at their allotted time....during the last 7 years. PHOTO

While the Four Horses of the Apocalypse unleash their fury on earth....The Father remains patiently, quietly and sovereignly on His throne. He is not full of fury...He is not finding joy in destroying a sinful world....He is not full of uncontrolled rage....

The Father has already poured out His wrath for the sins of the world on to Jesus. He is not up on His throne full of rage and anger. Note that He is seated on the throne.

The seals are broken by the Lamb....by Jesus...the Second person of the Trinity. He paid the price for everyone's sin. All authority in heaven and earth has been given to Him. He is the only one worthy. He is the wounded but very much alive lamb. He is the judge. He knows who rejected Him. He has the truth of the Word in His mouth....He has fire of anger in His eyes...He has all the crowns on His head and He is releasing the seven seals.

While His judgment causes chaos on earth....It brings order in heavenly places. After the cross there was only one sin left that remained unpunished. The sin of rejecting Jesus's gift of the cross. PHOTO

He paid for everyone's sin. But many have rejected it. Their sins remain unpaid. The wrath for their sins remains. If everyone had accepted Jesus' substitution punishment for them there would be no wrath and no tribulation. The tribulation completes what the cross did not. Not because Jesus didn't pay for it all, but because many have rejected His gift. By rejecting Jesus, man brought the tribulation upon himself. The seven years of tribulation is about God restoring holiness to His creation. Preparing us for a new heaven, a new earth, and a new eternity.

4 Seals down. More to come. Soon the trumpet will blow all across the Holy Land PHOTO...to some it is another Jewish Holiday....to others it means absolutely nothing...but to those who know Jesus...it is a reminder of the Rapture...the promise...the tribulation to come....and the restoration of all that is soon to be restored. It is our call home and throughout it all....God sits on His throne. Let's pray.