

## The Revelation of Jesus Christ – 15

### Revelation 6:1-8

1. The opening of the seals in Heaven leads to action on the earth
  - a. The seals set the stage for the prophecies that follow
  - b. The first four seals are one message regarding nations
  - c. Seals five and six are one message regarding the fate of all people – the saved (5) and the unsaved (6)
  - d. Seal 7 announces that these events are set and will now unfold (for example, Genesis 41:32 and Jeremiah 7:16)
2. **I looked on when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a thunderous voice, “Go!”** – Or “Come” as in “Come from Heaven” or “Go to the Earth” –
3. **And I looked, and suddenly there came a white horse! The one who rode it had a bow, and he was given a crown, and as a conqueror he rode out to conquer.** –
  - a. Who are these horses and riders?
    - i. The riders are angels leaving Heaven to carry out God’s will on Earth
    - ii. We’ve seen riders and horses from Heaven before – Zechariah 1 and 6
  - b. The sending of this rider suggests the coming of a ruler who will dominate world events
  - c. The message for all ages - God is in control of political events (see Isaiah 24:21, 40:12-24; Romans 13:1)
  - d. The Bible shows interplay between spiritual and natural (Daniel 10:13, 20, Zechariah 3:1-2, Ephesians 6:12)
4. **Then when the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Go!” And another horse, fiery red, came out, and the one who rode it was granted permission to take peace from the earth, so that people would slay one another, and he was given a huge sword.** -
  - a. Notice John does not write, “And I looked, and suddenly . . .” as he does the other three times
  - b. Wars are under the sovereignty and authority of God – He decides when there will be peace and when there will be war (see Zechariah 1:8-15)
  - c. Times of war are in God’s hands but we are judged for how we wage war (Isaiah 47 and Obadiah)
5. **Then when the Lamb opened the third seal I heard the third living creature saying, “Go!” And I looked, and suddenly there came a black horse! The one who rode it had a balance scale in his hand. Then I heard something like a voice from among the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat will cost a day’s pay and three quarts of barley will cost a day’s pay. But do not damage the olive oil and the wine!”** – A common result of warfare – food becomes scarce and the poor suffer, but others get rich off of war and live in luxury
6. **Then when the Lamb opened the fourth seal I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Go!” And I looked and suddenly there came a pale green horse! The name of the one who rode it was Death, and Hades followed right behind. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill its population with the sword, famine, and disease, and by the wild animals of the earth.**
  - a. “Death” refers to the bodies of the dead; “Hades” refers to their souls - Just as bodies remain in the grave and are not collected in another place, so there is no place where all souls are gathered – this is the way the Bible refers to the dead
  - b. ¼ of all mankind will die as a result of warfare and its aftermath – famine, pestilence and wild animals, all of which often follow warfare – that’s 2 **billion** today (or ¼ of the earth will be embroiled in war)
7. What is the lesson of this passage that we are to heed?
  - a. God controls earth’s unfolding history at all times
  - b. As Jesus reminds us, just as there is always war on earth, so this time of warfare signals the beginning of the distress that will result in the birth of the Kingdom of God on earth (Matthew 24:7-8)
  - c. This eruption of conflict will contribute to humanity’s desperate search for a “man of peace” who can bring safety and security (that is, the Antichrist)
  - d. God reminds us of His sovereignty so that we will not give in to fear (Isaiah 45:5-7, Matthew 10:26-31, Romans 8:28) or put our trust in earthly leaders (Psalm 118:8-9)