

Revelation 6 (NASB)

The First Seal—Rider on White Horse

6:1 Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come." 2 I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

Remember, a scroll was usually sealed with 7 seals with seven witnesses. The seals on the last scroll had to be opened in sequence. The Lamb, Jesus opens the seal. This appears to be a separate vision. The order to "Come and see?" is given by one of the four living creatures. The scene immediately changes from heaven to earth. The Antichrist is riding on this White Horse and he brings a bow but no arrows. In Revelation 19:11-16 the one riding the white horse will be Jesus and He brings peace. In Matthew 24:4-5, the Antichrist and False prophet will be trying to mislead us. We know because he comes to bring war, famine and strife. Jesus comes bringing peace.

If we see the Tribulation period as being 7 years, and the Great Tribulation as being the last 3 ½ years, this rider will come at the halfway point or midpoint. Daniel 9:27 tells us when the treaty is broken at the halfway point. 1 Thessalonians 5:3 says that it will happen "*While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.*" From the verse in Daniel 9:27, this treaty is not made with Israel but with many nations.

The Second Seal—War

6:3 When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come." 4 And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.

This rider brings wars, rumors of war, famine and earthquakes. Matthew 24:6-7 tells us so, "*6 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. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.*" This is accomplished because God's peace is removed from the earth. The rider of the red horse was given a sword but he doesn't have to do anything. God is still in control. The rider does not have to do any provoking of the men. The second living creature is doing the talking in these verses.

The Third Seal—Famine

6:5 When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, "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 rider brings famine (See Matthew 24:7 above). The rider carries scales. They are to carefully weigh and measure food during the great famine. Wheat has three times the value of barley. These prices were about 12 times higher than normal. The oil and the wine were not to be harmed because they were luxuries or because they are used in the temple.

The Fourth Seal—Death

6:7 When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come." 8 I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.

The fourth living creature is doing the talking here. This rider brings death and Hades. This is important because Hades contains the Antichrist followers. There are no believers left in Hades. Christ had set them free in 3 days after the crucifixion. Jesus says this time period (Great Tribulation) is the worst it has ever been or will ever be. Matthew 24:21 says *"For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will."* God is in control and puts a limit of one-quarter of the population of the world can be killed. The Greek word for "pale" is 'chlōros' and it means decomposing corpse. The "Wild Beasts" may mean animals like bears and lions. The Greek word is 'thēriōn'. It is used 37 times in Revelation and refers to the Antichrist and his demons. We know the church is gone at this point because the peace has been taken from the world. The one who restrains evil is already gone. 2 Thessalonians 2:7 tells us *"For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way."* The one who restrains evil is Jesus, Holy Spirit, the Church, Michael ?? We don't know. Daniel 12:1 says that Michael is the guardian angel of Israel. He represents them in spiritual war. According to Daniel, all nations have guardian angels.

The church is gone, it is confirmed by Revelation 3:10. It says *"Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."*

The Fifth Seal—Martyrs

6:9 When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; 10 and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.

The scene changes from earth to heaven with the opening of the 5th seal. These souls are probably not the people killed during the Tribulation. This is the very beginning of the Tribulation. These people cry out for revenge. They are asking God to avenge their deaths. We should not "seek" vengeance. Romans 12:19 tells us to leave it to God. From the same verse in Romans, we can be assured that God will get vengeance for you. Genesis 4:10 tells us that our blood will cry out for vengeance, we don't have to ask for it. There will be saved people during the Tribulation. Anyone who has heard the Gospel before the Rapture will NOT be saved during the Tribulation. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 tells us that if you have heard the Gospel message before the Rapture, then you will be confused and unable to understand the salvation plan.

The Sixth Seal—Terror

*12 I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.14 The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. 15 Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; 16 and they *said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

This "Great day of His wrath" is an unspecified amount of time. We find that in the Bible that if the word "day" has a number associated with it then it is a 24 hour period. In this verse, the number is missing so it is an unspecified amount of time. Read the following verses, they are all associated with a number.

Genesis 1:5	"one day" - 24 hours
Genesis 1:8	"a second day" - 24 hours
Genesis 1:13	"a third day" - 24 hours
Genesis 1:19	"a fourth day" - 24 hours
Genesis 1:23	"a fifth day" - 24 hours
Genesis 1:31	"a sixth day" - 24 hours
Genesis 2:2	"a seventh day" - 24 hours

The following verses are talking about a 24 hour day or an undetermined amount of time.

Haggai 1:1	"on the first day" - 24 hours
Zechariah 7:1	"on the fourth day" - 24 hours
Malachi 4:5	No number - unspecified amount of time
Matthew 11:24	No number - unspecified amount of time
Matthew 16:21	"third day" - 24 hours
Matthew 27:64	"third day" - 24 hours

The major difference between the troubles on the earth between the first four seals and the 6th seal is that God does not send anyone else. Remember with each of the first four seals, God sent a rider. This is God's first direct intervention with the affairs of man.

The first calamity is an earthquake. This is the period spoken of by Jesus in Matthew chapter 24. Before any of these things happens, many will come claiming to be the Christ. Matthew 24:4-5 says *"And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many."* Zephaniah 1:15-16 is also describing these events. It says:

*"A day of wrath is that day,
A day of trouble and distress,
A day of destruction and desolation,
A day of darkness and gloom,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,
16 A day of trumpet and battle cry
Against the fortified cities
And the high corner towers."*

These events are also recorded in Joel 2:10-11. These things happen all at the same instant, immediately. Matthew 24:29 says *“But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.”* These are actual events. The people on earth in these days hid from God instead of praying to Him. Just as Adam and Eve did after they sinned. The stars falling from the sky is a literal event. Isaiah 34:4 says:

“And all the host of heaven will wear away,
And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll;
All their hosts will also wither away
As a leaf withers from the vine,
Or as one withers from the fig tree.”

The following verses all tell us that believers can stand. Romans 5:1-2, 1 Corinthians 15:1 and 1 Peter 5:12.

The best thing about the coming events is that the church has been raptured. These events as well as those to come, will not impact believers. IT WILL GET WORSE!!!