

# UNLOCKING THE MYSTERIES OF REVELATION THROUGH BIBLE PROPHECY

## 6 The Four Horsemen of Revelation

Did you know that the book of Revelation accurately predicted the future of the church and shows how close we are to the time of the end? Revelation Chapter 6 shows us specifically a vision of Christian history in a scroll unsealed by Christ, the Lamb. As the scroll unrolls, four horses gallop across the sky representing four successive ages in the history of the church . . .

**The White Horse of Purity & Victory** – Revelation 6:2 says, “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.” White is a symbol of purity. The rider of the white horse held a bow, wore a victor’s crown, and rode out as a conqueror in the earliest days of the Christian church. The early church was faithful, even in the face of persecution. **Colossians 1:23** makes this incredible statement regarding the success of New Testament Christianity: “the gospel which you heard . . . was preached to every creature under heaven.” This period of apostolic purity and power lasted to about A.D. 100.

**The Red Horse of Fierce Persecution** – Revelation 6:4 says: “Another horse, fiery **red**, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.” This period of fierce persecution dates from about A.D. 100 to 313. Satan, seeing the Christian faith conquering hearts and minds, roused pagan emperors to stamp it out. Believers were burned at the stake, thrown to lions, torn apart on the rack. But remarkably enough, the church kept growing. The world saw Christians willing to die for their faith. And the world took notice. It was an argument hard to ignore.

**The Black Horse of Compromise & Corruption** – Pagan persecution failed to destroy the Christian church. So Satan, changing his strategy, decided to attack it from the inside. **Revelation 6:5** says: “I looked, and behold a **black** horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.” If the color white implies *purity* of faith, black represents *corruption* of that faith. The rider carries a pair of scales, or balances, picturing the church as “weighed in the balance and found wanting.” In this period Satan *infiltrated* the church. Pagan beliefs and practices crept into the church and were accepted as part of the faith! God’s Word was replaced with more and more tradition. All kinds of pagans, who’d worshipped Zeus or Caesar before, now wanted to join the Christian church. Unfortunately, many church leaders made the transition easier by allowing the new members to hang onto pagan ideas, images, and customs. The Second Commandment’s clear teaching **not** to make or bow before images—**Exodus 20:4-5**—was simply deleted from church teaching. Sun worship also had a very strong hold on the people of the Roman Empire. And it didn’t wither away when pagans began calling on the name of Jesus.

**The Pale Horse of Spiritual Death** – Revelation 6:8 says: “I looked, and behold, a **pale** horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.” A corpse is riding a pale horse. Compromise has become spiritual death. By A.D. 538, church councils took the place of the Bible and church leaders became substitute messiahs. This period is known as the Dark Ages. The church wielded the power of the state. The Inquisition was one horrible example of religion using force to maintain orthodoxy. *Outwardly* the church was splendid and majestic and influential. But *inwardly*, there was widespread death and

decay. This whole panorama of prophecy took 400 years, from about A.D. 100 to 500—a long period of decline.

**The Fifth Seal.** Under the fifth seal are seen those who have been martyred for their faith. Towards the end of the Dark Ages, a new movement arose called the Protestant Reformation. It sought to bring back many of the ancient truths that had been lost. Unfortunately, many of those who stood for their faith were killed and a cry goes out, “How long, O Lord?” But, through their faithful witness, God was restoring truth to his people. He blessed people like the **Waldenses** with the idea of God’s Word as the foundation of faith. He showed John Huss that obedience to God must take precedence over obedience to the church. He showed **Martin Luther** the wonderful truth of justification by faith. The **Anabaptists** rediscovered the truth of adult baptism by immersion. **John Wesley** rediscovered the truth of sanctification, of how the Spirit works in our lives.

**The Sixth Seal.** Strange signs in the heavens occur under the sixth seal. There is a great earthquake, the sun is darkened, and the moon is turned to blood. Then the heavens are shaken so that the stars fall to the earth like ripe figs. Each of these signs has already occurred, although they will likely occur again before Jesus comes. In 1755 a tremendous earthquake occurred in Lisbon Portugal. Its effects were felt over 4 million square miles. On May 19, 1780 the famous “dark day” occurred. That night, when the moon appeared, it had the appearance of blood. On November 13, 1833 there was the most extensive display of falling stars ever recorded. Many took these signs as evidence that Jesus was soon to return

**The Seventh Seal.** The end of the sixth seal and the seventh seal describe the return of Jesus. Some will be ready for his return and some will ask for the mountains and rocks to hide them. We need to prayerfully prepare ourselves for Jesus return and to stand with him on the side of truth.

<b>John 17:17</b>	Jesus prayed that His people will be sanctified by <i>His Word</i> and <i>His truth</i> in every age.
<b>Revelation 6:1-8</b>	John, the Revelator, in the symbolism of the <b>four horsemen</b> , describes the advance of God’s truth and Satan’s attempt to destroy it.
<b>Daniel 8:12</b>	Predicts God’s truth would be “cast down to the ground.”
<b>2 Thess. 2:3-7</b>	Predicts there would be “a falling away” or departure from the truth.
<b>Isaiah 58:12-14</b>	There’s been a breach, a break in the wall of God’s Ten Commandments, which the Lord says will be repaired.
<b>Jude 3</b>	Urges us to “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.”
<b>Revelation 14:6-7</b>	Shares the good news that the everlasting gospel
<b>Revelation 12:17</b>	Describes a people called the “remnant”—those who remain loyal to God—who keep His commandments in the last days.
<b>Revelation 14:12</b>	Describes a people who will keep God’s commands and be filled with the faith of Jesus.
<b>Isaiah 8:20</b>	Warns us not to accept the teachings of those who lead away from obedience to His law and His Word.