

*Morning Sermon August 15, 2021*  
*“The Four Horsemen” Revelation 6:1-8*

- I. The first seal, and the first horseman / bowman represents Christ, His Gospel, His church’s ministry, going out into and impacting a sin-filled world, saving souls –*

**6** Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.” <sup>2</sup> And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. **Revelation 6:1-2 (NKJV)**

*Reasons for counting this first seal / horsemen to be symbolic of Christ and the Gospel, and not of Satan –*

- 1. The scroll was from the hand of God and given to Christ for Christ alone to open – **Revelation 5:1 & 5***
- 2. Those “under the earth”, Satan and demonic beings, are mentioned among those not able and not worthy to open the scroll – **Revelation 5:3***
- 3. This scroll, with its seven seals, seven trumpets and seven bowls all coming out of it, has as its main themes the advancement and final victory of God’s Kingdom and the judgment of the kingdoms of man and Satan – **Revelation 11:15***

*The entire Book of Revelation is about God’s Kingdom, and its advance, Jesus and His Gospel, even we “conquer” – **Revelation 6:2***

*The Greek word, or root word used for both conquering and to conquer is **νικᾶω**; “n: to win a victory over—‘to be victorious over, to be a victor, to conquer, victory.’” Louw Nida 39.57*

*In my book, Jesus is the Victor, not Satan!*

- 4. A battle is implied and / or actually stated in this book and Christ is represented as riding a white horse, and His followers white horses -*

<sup>11</sup> Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. <sup>13</sup> He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. <sup>16</sup> And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS** **Revelation 19:11-16 (NKJV)**

- 5. One of the arguments AGAINST this first horseman being Christ, His church or His gospel going forth is that counting Jesus to be One of the Four Horsemen, reduces Him to a level with the other three horseman, but in my view this argument is defeated by the details of this passage:*
  - A. This rider has a crown - :2, the others do not!*
  - B. I believe that shows He is the leader and commander of them of them, note this has for a long time been the case with Christ, as He leads God’s forces on earth –*

<sup>13</sup> And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You for us or for our adversaries?” <sup>14</sup> So He said, “No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?” <sup>15</sup> Then the Commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, “Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so. **Joshua 5:13-15**

- C. Now, this is the argument that others have against this, they don’t like Christ being associated with war, economic disparity, and death, what is generally agreed these other three horsemen symbolize. I would argue:*

- Look at **Joshua 5:13-15** above and remember what happened at Jericho ↑
- Look ahead here in Revelation 6, and read about the wrath of the Lamb! **Revelation 6:16**

*These passages communicate clearly God's judgment and wrath against sin and sinners! However, this white horse, with a crowned rider symbolizing Christ and Christianity does not primarily bring judgment but represents the conquering grace of the Gospel! The ministry of the Word is a sword ministry, Spirit helped preaching of God's truth against sin CUTS the Heart –*

*C1. Truth, our sins killed Jesus, Whom God has made Lord -*

<sup>36</sup> **“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Acts 2:36 (NKJV)**

*C2. God's Word (Preaching) makes us feel pain for this sin -*

<sup>37</sup> **Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Acts 2:37 (NKJV)**

*In Acts 2, maybe it is the sword of God's Spirit, God's Word that cuts the heart, but here in Revelation 6, the horseman has a bow – ... a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow... Revelation 6:2*

*“The convictions left by the Word of God are sharp arrows, and they can reach their target from a distance.” J.I. Packer*

*C3. At this point, when they are crying, and no longer fighting against God and His Word, it is at this point forgiveness, grace and salvation are offered –*

<sup>38</sup> **Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup>For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” Acts 2:38–39 (NKJV)**

6. *The idea that this horse represents Christ, Christians, His Gospel going forth in a sin-filled world, fits with the spiritual warfare theme that runs throughout the New Testament –*  
<sup>10</sup> **Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. <sup>11</sup>Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Ephesians 6:10–11 (NKJV)**

*A. In our warfare we carry a Sword, not a scalpel –*

<sup>17</sup> **And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; Ephesians 6:17 (NKJV)**

*B. Christ knocks us down, humbles us, brings us pain, to win our souls –*

**9 Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest <sup>2</sup>and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. <sup>4</sup>Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” <sup>5</sup>And he said, “Who are You, Lord?” Then the Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.” <sup>6</sup>So he, trembling and astonished, said, “Lord, what do You want me to do?” Then the Lord said to him, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” Acts 9:1-6**

*C.S. Lewis, “Christ whispers in our pleasures, but shouts in our pains.”*

*C. We as believers, especially preachers, but anyone who shares God's word, are part of this battle –*

**<sup>4</sup>For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup>casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2 Corinthians 10:4-5**

- 2 Cor. 10:4 Not carnal, here means spiritual, not a physical sword but God's Word.
- 2 Cor. 10:4 Yet, these weapons are powerful, and we should trust that power – Psalm 20:7
- 2 Cor. 10:5 Casting down arguments, implies winning a debate not a physical battle, and we have the Spirit's help -

II. *What do all four of the first four seals have in common?*

1. *Horses, implying battle, spiritual battle –*

<sup>7</sup> **Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God. Psalm 20:7 (NKJV)**

2. *Riders, implying tame, directed horses or forces, rather than something wild or haphazard, this is especially important when we think of the last three horse, symbolizing war, economic disparity and death is all its variety including by disease ...*

A. *These things are not bucking broncos!*

B. *These are meek stallions, running to do God's will –*

C. *Because these things are controlled by God is why repentance and prayer are real answers –*

<sup>14</sup> **if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.**

**2 Chronicles 7:14 (NKJV)**

*Even Nineveh is spared judgment by fasting and prayer –*

<sup>4</sup> **And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"**

<sup>5</sup> **So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. <sup>6</sup>Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. <sup>7</sup>And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. <sup>8</sup>But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. <sup>9</sup>Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish? <sup>10</sup>Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it. Jonah 3:4-10**

*Nineveh was a sinful, gentile nation, yet God saw their repentance and heard their prayers ...*

III. *Q. How is the Gospel of the Kingdom, the first seal, the first horseman, related to the other three, which seem so negative? A. The next three seals, and the second, third and fourth are fighting under and in support of the Gospel, primarily by restraining sin –*

*Note these are negative things -*

1. *The red horse is war / conflict / murder -*

<sup>3</sup> **When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." <sup>4</sup>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. Revelation 6:3-4**

2. *The black horse is economic disparity -*

<sup>5</sup> **When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. <sup>6</sup>And I heard 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 the wine." Revelation 6:5-6**

3. *The pale horse is death in all its forms -*

<sup>7</sup> **When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see." <sup>8</sup>So 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. Revelation 6:7-8  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the earth is a limited judgement**

4. *Two things to notice Christ says –*

A. *These terrible things do not mean the end -*

<sup>6</sup> **And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.**

<sup>7</sup> **For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.**

<sup>8</sup> **All these are the beginning of sorrows. Matthew 24:6-8**

B. *The end will not come until God wants it to and that only when the Gospel has been preached in all the world -*

<sup>9</sup>“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. <sup>10</sup> And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. <sup>11</sup> Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. <sup>12</sup> And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. <sup>13</sup> But he who endures to the end shall be saved. <sup>14</sup> **And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.** Matthew 24:9-14

*We see in Matthew 24:6-14 the same thing we see represented in the six seals –*

*The events of Matthew 24:6-8 – are seen in the 2<sup>nd</sup> thru the 4<sup>th</sup> seal*

*The events of Matthew 24:9-10 – are seen in the 5<sup>th</sup> seal*

*The Gospel preached in Matthew 24:14 A – is the 1<sup>st</sup> seal*

*The end predicted in Matthew 24:14 B – “then the end will come” is the sixth seal!*

5. *How is war, economic disparity and death in general working according to God’s providence in concert with the preaching of the Gospel?*

*These things keep Satan, at least for a time, from accomplishing his full rule over sinners, his desire being to unify them all against Christ. 666 - man, is battling against 777 - God; and Satan as the ruler of this sin-filled world, is always trying to unify men against God, and God’s people, we see this in –*

- A. *The Tower of Babel – Genesis 11:1-9*
- B. *Egypt’s enslavement of the Jews – Exodus 1 – 15*
- C. *Haman’s plot to kill all the Jews – The Book of Esther*
- D. *Herod’s killing all the boy babies around Bethlehem – Matthew 2 / this was an attempt to kill Jesus, and Satan’s part in it is communicated in Revelation 12*

*The Roman Empire, Nero, Hitler, wicked Christian-persecuting Popes all are part of Satan’s plan to establish his kingdom ...*

*According to Revelation 13, one day a Satan-ruled world, unified against Christ and Christians, will be realized, but temporary –*

**13** Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. <sup>2</sup> Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of* a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. <sup>3</sup> And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. <sup>4</sup> So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”

<sup>5</sup> And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. <sup>6</sup> Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. <sup>7</sup> **It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.** <sup>8</sup> All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

<sup>9</sup> If anyone has an ear, let him hear. <sup>10</sup> He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Revelation 13:1-10 (NKJV)

*Yet, if you read carefully, Satan’s kingdom / full rule, will be short lived - to continue for forty-two months. Revelation 13:5*

*But before Satan’s kingdom has such power – Revelation 13:7↑, to overcome and hence silence Christians ... the death of a Nero, the defeat of the Nazis, wars, economic disparity, death, even by wild beasts, (Consider Daniels adversaries were fed to the lions that did not eat him, and Haman was hung on the gallows he built for Mordecai) God’s ordained, but limited judgments*

**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. Revelation 6**

*Limited judgements are mercies as they provide time for the Gospel to be preached!*

*Arnold Brevick*