**Revelation 6**

The vision of chapter 4 and 5 continues into chapter 6.

Here the Lamb that appeared in chapter 5 begins to open the scroll that only he is said to be worthy to open.

The Scroll

1. The scroll involves the rest of Revelation
2. The scroll reveals the fulfillment of the rest of history
3. The scroll reveals the plans and mysteries of God's plan and purpose
4. The scroll reveals the inheritance of the Lamb and the saints.
5. The scroll reveals the judgment on the world, the beast and his kingdom.

There appears to be time sequence as the scrolls are opened since:

1. They are opened in a sequence and not all at once.
2. The martyrs of the 5th seal are told to wait until a little longer.
3. After the 6th seal is open it appears that now nothing is standing in the way of judgment which will happen next.

The scene of the vision shifts from heaven to the earth beginning in chapter 6.

Chapter 6 compared to Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24:1-35; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-33) Jesus description is broken into three parts:

1. Birth Pains - "All theses are the beginning of birth pains." (Mt.24:8)
   1. false Christ will appear
   2. wars
   3. famines
   4. pestilences
   5. earthquakes
   6. death
2. Great Distress (Great Tribulation) "For then there will be great distress, unequaled form the beginning of the world until now - and neer to be equaled again." (Mt. 24:21)
   1. "standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation' "
   2. "flee to the mountains"
   3. False Christs and false prophets will appears
3. The Return of the Lord The time "Immediately after the distress of those days" (Mt.24:29)
   1. Sun Darkened
   2. Moon not give light
   3. Stars will fall
   4. Heavenly bodies shaken
   5. Sign of the Son of Man
   6. Nations mourn
   7. Son of Man appears with angels to gather his elect

The seals would be an intensifying of the events that Jesus called "birth pains" that would cover the

entire time period between his first and second advent or the time of the Gentiles.

The Seven Seals are broken into two groups of four and three.

This is a pattern that is followed for the trumpets (four and then the three woes)

It appears that the first four seals (horseman) occur during the first 3 1/2 years.

The fifth seal begins in the first 3 1/2 period and continues into the second 3 1/2 year period known as

the great tribulation.

The sixth seal occurs completely in the second half of tribulation.

The seventh seal contains the 7 trumpets and the 7 seals which occur in the final days of the tribulation.

**The Four Horseman** (The beginning of the birth pains)

The four horseman have been interpreted in a wide variety of ways over the last 2,000 years.

1. These occur in the first half of the tribulation or 3 1/2 years
2. similar to Zechariah 1:8 and 6:1-8 -these were divine instruments of judgment on the enemies of God -the colors represent geographical points (red, black goes north, white goes west, dappled gray goes south) -they are sent out to patrol the earth
3. They are sent by Christ through the living creatures (cheribum)
4. They have power over the earth in a certain area
5. In chapter six the colors match the disaster they bring:
   1. White - conquest;
   2. Red - war and bloodshed;
   3. Black - famine and scarcity;
   4. Pale - death.
6. Similar to an show in the amphitheater or a circus in an auditorium of John's day. The charioteers would be summoned into the arena. Here the stage or the arena is the world and they are summoned by "come."

**6:1**

The Lamb sets these events into motion.

The Lamb was worthy when he suffered death and upon his resurrection could take the scroll and open

the seals.

Why has he not done it in the last 2,000 years?? The church age.

Once the church age is over, he will take the scroll that he was worthy of taking 2,000 years ago.

Jesus was worthy 2,000 years ago.

When a seal is broken the scroll is not read but instead the contents are acted out.

The cherubim speaks like a loud crack of thunder, "Come."

In Isaiah 6 when the seraphim said, "holy, holy, holy" the doorpost and thresholds of the temple shook. Each horse and each rider communicates a thought concerning the vision.

**6:2**

Horses symbolize conquest, power, triumph.

The riders represent not individuals but impersonal forces:

1. world peace
2. war
3. famine
4. death

The first rider is not Christ because Christ returns on a horse in 19:11.

1. Christ is the one who opened the seal
2. In 19:11-15 Christ wears a diaema, or royal crown. This rider has a stephanos, one of victory.
3. Christ carries a sword in 19:11-15 not a bow
4. Christ comes at the end of the tribulation not at the beginning.

The first rider is not the anti-christ since the other three riders are not individuals.

The first rider is world peace.

The anti-christ is a major player in the world peace, though.

The riders each bring to the earth:

1. Judgment on the world
2. Testing and persecution of the Christians
   1. Notice that after the end of the four horseman, the fifth seal reveals the souls of the martyrs.
   2. Each rider unleashes events that separate false and true belief.
   3. True Believers are sift out from false disciples

**World Peace**

International peace is so desired by the world that they will jump at any offer no matter how risky.

The anti-christ will convince the world he can provide that world peace and will deceive many.

The number one nation that will be deceived is Israel.

Daniel 9:27 shows that Israel, still in a state where the truth is veiled from them (as in 2 Corinthians 14-

17; Romans 11:7-16; Acts 28:25-28), will agree to a 7 year treaty of peace and protection from the anti-christ.

False promises of peace have always plagued the world.

Jeremiah 6:13, 14,

"From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit. They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. ' Peace, peace, ' they say, when there is no peace."

Jeremiah 8:11

Jeremiah 14:13,14

"But I said, 'Ah, Sovereign Lord, the prophets keep telling them, 'You will not see the sword or suffer famine. Indeed, I will give you lasting peace in this place.' ' "

1 Thessalonians 5:3,

"While the people are saying, 'Peace and safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape."

Before the great disasters of the tribulation and the battle of Armageddon there will arise a period of

false world peace that will deceive the nations and lull them into the greatest wars of all time.

**Hitler and Peace**

Hitler detailed his views and plans in Mein Kampf around 1928.

Hitler then began to display himself as a man of peace.

Britain and France watched Hitler reoccupy the Rhineland in violation of the Versailles Treaty that ended WWI but did nothing.

Hitler then annexed Austria, Sudetenland and Czechoslovakia.

In 1938 Britain's Prime Minister met with Hitler and received a signed pledge of peace from Hitler and returned home triumphant. In 1939 Hitler invaded Poland and WWII began.

**The bow** - with no arrows indicates a military victory with out blood shed.

The stephanos, winner's crown, indicates his triumphant achievement leading to world peace.

This peace will be won not by military force but with deceit.

**6:3**

Second horse is war and bloodshed.

“Sword” is “machaira” and refers to a short, stabbing sword used by a Roman soldier in battle.

It is used by assassins.

The false peace deteriorates into battles, assassinations, revolts, and massacre.

As was seen in OT study the AC will be a man of war.

Even the one who offered peace will start war.

“He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy the mighty men and the holy people.”

* Daniel 8:24

The rebellion will arise from Israel and other nations who signed a peace treaty with him only to realize

that he was seeking dominion.

The false shepherd

“The Lord said to me, ‘Take again the equipment of a foolish shepherd. For I am going to raise up a shepherd over the land who will not care for the lost, or seek the young, or heal the injured, or feed the healthy, but will eat the meat the choice sheep, tearing off their hoofs.’ ‘Woe to the worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm (power) and his right eye (intelligence)! May his arm be completely withered (paralyzed), his right eye totally blinded (nullified)!’ ” - Zechariah 11:15-17

**6:5**

Third horse is poverty and famine.

This is the effect of war and bloodshed

“Behold” indicates shock and alarm on John’s part when he saw this horse.

“Pair of Scales” indicates rationing of food and is interpreted with and economic statement:

“a quart of wheat. . .three quarts of barley for a day’s wage”

1. a day’s wage was a denarius
2. This inflation rate was 12x higher than normal
3. One quart of wheat would be one persons daily needs.
4. Barley was used by the poor to mix with the wheat to make it go further
5. Barley is low in nutrition and often was fed to livestock.

“Do not damage the oil or the wine”

1. The oil and wine where luxury items
2. This could indicate:
   1. the poor where going without while the rich got richer. A sign of the end times apparent in the book of James is the unjust treatment of the worker by the owner.
   2. that the famine was a recent drought effecting the grain but not the deeper roots of the olive trees and the vines.
   3. since in the East oil and wine are daily necessities and so the famine was not severe, yet. This was part of the birth pains of the beginning of Tribulation. This famine need not be as severe as a later one.

**6:6**

“Pale” is “chloros” a yellowish green.

It is the light green of a plant or the paleness of a sick person.

“Death” is “thanatos”

Intensity is increasing as it progresses from human violence

1. human violence. . .sword
2. to famine
3. to plague
4. to wild beasts

6:8

One Fourth of the earth dies.

There are 6 Billion people today. That would be a loss of 1.5 Billion people.

This could be the result of nuclear, chemical and biological warfare.

This could be the result of disease that follows war.

1. More soldiers died of disease during the Civil War than on the battle fiels.
2. In 1918-1919 30 million people died from influenza epidemic while 8.5 million died in WWI.

**6:9**

The fifth seal shows a scene in heaven.

Martyred saints under the altar begging for justice.

The judgment of the fifth seal is not martyrdom, but instead is the prayers of the martyrs who are crying

out.

These deaths are a result of persecution that intensifies in the middle of the tribulation and with the

placing of the statue in the temple.

Jesus had said the only hope of deliverance was to flee.

The altar could be the bronze sacrificial altar or the golden altar of incense.

This is most likely the golden altar of incense.

“Cry out” is a strong word emphasizing urgent need and strong emotions

“Sovereign Lord” implies ownership and is used in 1 Tim. 6:1 and 1 Peter 2:18 for slave masters

They were given a “white robe” (“stole” a long robe flowing to the feet) indicating their righteousness

but where told to wait a little longer because:

1. The time for judgment is not yet here
2. The time for the rewarding of these saints is not yet here They are told to wait “until the number of their fellow servants . . .was completed” which is speaking about their fellow believers from their age have finished their course and their time period is over.

**6:12**

The sixth seal reveals things that indicate the very soon return of the Lord.

The day is fast approaching Even from the OT and Jesus Olivet Discourse these are events that are

considered to occur right before the sign of the Son of Man occurs. (Matthew 24:29-30; Isaiah 13:10; Isaiah 34:4; Joel 2:32-32; Acts 2:19-20; Isaiah 2:10, 19, 21: Ezekiel 32:7-8;Zephaniah 1:14-18; Luke 21:11, 25-26 )

The signs are threefold:

1. the great earthquake and its strom affecting the sun and moon
2. the stars falling
3. terror on earth

These events are written from the perspective of ancient understanding of the universe:

1. Stars falling to the earth like figs
2. The sky rolling up like a scroll
3. The sky was like a great roof over the earth shakes as the foundation of the earth shakes from the earthquake

**6:16**

“Fall on us” is an OT statement by people in the midst of God’s judgment. (Isaiah 2:19, 21; Hosea 10:8)

Not only are they seeking deliverance from the terror of life, but they are also seeking to hide from the judgment of God.

“Wrath of the Lamb” is an interesting statement when you consider that lamb’s are not angry animals.