

# REVELATION – SERMON 32

## *THE FOUR HORSEMEN – PART 1*

### Revelation 6:1-2

#### INTRODUCTION

- In 1947, the members of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists invented the “Doomsday Clock”, intended to represent how close the world was to a global nuclear catastrophe
- It is currently set at 2 minutes to midnight
- There is a day of doom coming when catastrophic events will take place on a scale that has never been seen before
- The great error of these atheistic scientists is their claim that the coming doomsday catastrophe will be man-made
- It is not man who will bring all these calamities upon the world, but God – it is the great and terrible day of the LORD
- Chapter 6 introduces four horsemen riding different coloured horses
- There are similarities with Zechariah’s first vision of riders on coloured horses (Zechariah 1:7-11) and his eighth vision of chariots drawn by coloured horses (Zechariah 6:1-8)
- Both Zechariah’s and John’s horses are sent at God’s command to execute judgment
- The horsemen are symbolic of events that will take place from the beginning of the tribulation
- Four is the number of earth
- The opening of the seven seals and the sounding of the first six trumpets take place in the first half of the seven year tribulation period
- The seventh trumpet and the seven vials take place in the second half of the tribulation
- In this sermon, we will consider Christ’s opening of the first seal, and the entrance of the rider on the white horse

## **I. THE CHRIST RULING IN HEAVEN (1)**

### **A. The Lamb opens the seals**

1. The book contains not only the judgments of God, but the consummation of all history
2. Only the Lamb is worthy to take this book and open the seals (Revelation 5:5)
3. The opening of each seal is not only a *declaration* of God's judgment, but the *execution* of it
4. All of the judgments that follow, the seals, trumpets, and vials, do not find their origin in man, Satan, or even the angels, but in Jesus Christ
  - a. All judgment is committed to him, and he will judge the world in righteousness (John 5:22; Acts 17:31)
  - b. Even as Satan wields great power during the tribulation, it is a power that has been granted to him by Christ, and is only a prelude to his final defeat
  - c. God sovereignly "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Ephesians 1:11)

### **B. The voice like thunder**

1. With the opening of each seal, each of the four beasts cries, "Come and see"
2. Not only do they continually worship the Lord (4:8), these beasts have a role in pronouncing and executing God's judgments (Revelation 15:7)
3. Thunder indicates God's great power and holiness, and serves to warn sinners of judgment (Exodus 20:18)
4. Thunder heralds the approach of a storm

## **II. THE CONQUEROR RIDING THE HORSE (2)**

### **A. There is a variety of views as to the identity of this horseman**

1. Some of these are Christ, antichrist, the word of God, the gospel, judgment, warfare, ungodliness
2. There are a number of reasons why this horseman is not the same as Christ in Revelation 19

- a. Christ has just opened the seal to send the horseman forth, making it illogical for him to be sending himself forth, then in v.3 to be back in heaven opening the second seal
- b. This horseman has a bow, whereas Christ carries a sword
- c. This horseman wears a “crown”; Christ wears “many crowns”.
- d. This horseman wears a *stephanos* – a victor’s crown, but Christ wears many *diademata* – royal crowns
- e. This horseman rides alone, but Christ is accompanied by the armies of heaven
- f. This horseman appears on earth at the beginning of the tribulation, whereas Christ comes to the earth at the end

## B. The description of the Antichrist

### 1. A white horse

- a. White represents righteousness (Revelation 19:8)
- b. Like the Pharisees, who outwardly appeared righteous (Matthew 23:28), the antichrist will present himself to the world as a holy man, even possessing divine qualities
- c. Rather than appearing as a roaring lion, this servant of Satan will appear as an “angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

### 2. A bow without arrows

- a. His rise to power comes not through military force, but by deception and peace agreements (Daniel 9:27)
- b. His astonishing “signs and lying wonders” (2 Thessalonians 2:9) as well as his miraculous survival of an assassination attempt will cause the world to adore him (2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:3-5)
- c. A feature of him is his use of words to accomplish his ends, possessing “a mouth speaking great things” (Daniel 7:7-8)
- d. This world leader will appear to be the one who brings peace to the world, uniting the nations and religions of this world under his leadership

### 3. A crown was given unto him

- a. A frequently recurring phrase in Revelation is “it was given unto him/them”, and applies both to the saints, the angelic powers, and even the demonic forces (Revelation 6:2,4,8,11; 7:2; 8:3; 9:1,3,5; 13:5,7; 16:8; 19:8 20:4)
  - b. Nothing occurs without God’s permission (Genesis 45:7-8; Job 2:6; Daniel 5:21; John 3:27; 19:10-11; Acts 4:27-28; Romans 13:1)
4. Conquering
- a. Both “conquering” and “conquer” come from the same root (*nikao*) as “overcomer”
  - b. As a false Christ imitator of the true Christ, he will arise as another “overcomer” (Revelation 11:7) in contrast to the True Overcomer (Revelation 3:21; 5:5; 17:14)
  - c. By his satanic powers he will become the most powerful leader this world has ever seen
  - d. The kings of the earth will submit to him and give their power and strength to him (Revelation 17:12-13)
  - e. He will conquer the hearts and wills of the people of the earth so that they worship him and his image, and receive his mark (Revelation 13:4,15-16)

## CONCLUSION

1. Doomsday is indeed coming – not from man, but from God
2. Those who are unprepared for it will suffer the terrible wrath of God
3. But God’s people will be kept from this hour of temptation (Revelation 3:10)
4. It is in man’s corrupt nature to look to great human leaders for our deliverance
5. Many of these leaders promise peace, yet any “peace” that excludes the Prince of Peace is a false peace (Isaiah 57:21; Romans 3:17-18)
6. God is ultimately in control of the events of this world, and of our lives
7. Am I in complete submission to his will, or do I stubbornly resist his rule in my life?