

Revelation 6 – Jesus Begins His Reign in the Earth

By Holly Effiom

VV1-2 The white horse

What is the Lamb's first act as Ruler?

What is the significance of a man sitting atop a "white" horse with a bow?

What is the significance of being given a crown? Who gave him the crown?

What was this rider's purpose?

LESSON: This first rider receiving a crown is very significant – this rider is given dominion. We know this because of where we know crowns come from, and the purpose that has been attached to this crown – conquest. Take note whether or not subsequent riders on their horses are given "crowns".

This is interesting, remember we read in chapter 5, Jesus was invested in His throne, which was dominion over the earth. By taking the book from His Father's hand (Dan 7:13-14; Rev 5), He was receiving the crown of dominion over the earth, and hence, it became His responsibility to conquer His enemies and enforce His order in the earth. We will learn more about this rider in Rev 19:11-16.

VV3-4 The red horse

What happened when the second seal was broken?

What is the significance of a man sitting atop a "red" horse?

Was a crown given to this rider?

What weapon did this rider carry? Why?

What was this rider's purpose? Matt 24:4-8, Matt 13:24-30

VV5-6 The black horse

What happened when the third seal was broken?

What is the significance of a man riding atop a "black" horse, carrying a pair of balances? What does this mean?

Who spoke, was it the rider? What's significant about what he's saying?

What did it mean to not "hurt" the oil and the wine, at that time? What does it mean today?

VV7-8 The pale horse

What happened when the fourth seal was broken?

What is the significance of a rider atop a "pale" horse?

How is this rider different from the rider of the "red" horse?

Over what part of the earth is this rider given power? Does this mean a specific part of the globe?

Was there a specific manner in which this rider was allowed to kill?

LESSON: Just looking at the riders on the horses, we see that none other than the first was given a crown; however, notice that the other riders were empowered, and they were riding *with* the first rider, not against Him – the first rider was bringing war, famine, sickness, destruction and death to the order that had been established in the earth. We will see these horsemen again in Rev 9:13-19 as the battle ramps up and becomes more intense, and at the sounding of the 6th Trumpet.

VV9-11 The martyrs

What did John see when the fifth seal was broken?

What are the martyrs calling for?

What was given to these martyrs?

Who received the white robe in the church of Sardis?

What were the martyrs beneath the altar told?

LESSON: A seal is set aside just for the martyrs. Why is this?

Jesus received and accepted dominion from His Father in chapter 5, and now here in chapter 6, He begins to rule – being the only one breaking the seals underscores this fact. And, we know that in order to take dominion, that the enemies occupying dominion must be unseated, and hence, war and conquest. And we learn here that one of these seals is for the martyrs, casualties of war – God in no way has forgotten them, and in fact, intends to meet out His wrath upon those who committed injustices against them.

When Jesus was speaking to the church of Smyrna (Rev 2:9-10), might He have been addressing some of these who would be joining these martyrs, such as Abel?

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VV12-17 Stars fall from heaven & natural disasters in the earth

- What happened when the sixth seal was broken?
- What did the stars of heaven falling to earth mean?
- What did Jesus teach about who stars are?
- What does it mean that every mountain and island was moved out of its place?
- What are “mountains” and “islands”?
- What did the powerful people of the earth do in this disaster?
- Who made up this group of powerful?
- Were the powerful concerned about what would happen to the powerless?
- Did these powerful ones of the earth know what was going on? Why would they be fearful?
- Who should be able to stand on the day of God’s visitation?
- Why did Jesus begin the book of Revelation with messages to His 7 churches?

LESSON: In this 6th seal being broken, we see that the result was upheaval in the heavens and earth – the stars fell from heaven into the earth. We will learn about why this phenomenon occurs in chapter 12.

We learned in chapter 1 that the “stars” are angels, so when we read that the stars fell from heaven, we understand that these are angels that were cast out of heaven into the earth. Well, when these angels landed in the earth, did this cause natural disasters to occur – were the mountains and islands displaced? And, what do the mountains and islands symbolize? Among the writings of the Biblical prophets, the word “mountain” was frequently used metaphorically to represent ancient, witnesses to creation, earthly leadership – like elders, leaders who have stood the test of time, have seen a lot and have a lot of knowledge. Isa 40:4; Mic 4:1; Mic 6:2; Zech 14:4; Jer 3:23; Jer 4:24; Jer 50:6; Hab 3:6, 10

When the angels were cast into the earth this caused a lot of upheaval because, though they too are ancient, they are not *native* to the earth – their presence upsets the order – but further, the fact that they were cast into the earth meant that God’s judgment was upon them and those of status and position in the earth who are dealing wickedly with His creation. And hence, the earth quaked.

Don’t lose sight of the significance of this chapter 6 – it gives a high-level overview of what is happening – but it also gives greater understanding of the necessity and urgency of Jesus’s message to the churches in chapters 2 and 3. The war was coming to the earth, God’s wrath was going to be falling on the wicked, and His church was going to be the refuge for the faithful in the earth, for His saints, for those who suffer collateral damage.

Jesus told a parable about wheat and tares, which is a picture of the end time. Matt 13:24-30; 37-43. We know that the children of God are the wheat and the children of the wicked one are the tares.

The wheat and the tares had to grow up together until one distinguished itself from the other. The proposed solution was for everything, good and bad, to be destroyed – but that would go against God’s nature and sense of justice. Furthermore, God’s intent of growing wheat is going to happen, despite what the enemy tries to do – it is the tares that are removed first. And, this is our comfort: in all the upheaval, it is the tares being destroyed, not the wheat. Make sure you distinguish yourself as *wheat*.