

The Fourth Seal: The Fourth Horseman

Revelation 6:7-8

The End Times

In my last post, we continued our journey in **Revelation 6** as the third of the **seven seals** was opened. In this post, we look at the **Fourth Seal** which reveals the **Fourth Horseman**.

The Fourth Seal

⁷ When he broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living being say, "Go!" ⁸ I looked, and there in front of me was a pallid, sickly-looking horse. Its rider's name was Death, and Sh'ol followed behind him. They were given authority to kill one-quarter of the world by war, by famine, by plagues and with the wild animals of the earth. ~ Revelation 6:7-8 (CJB)

⁷ For peoples will fight each other, nations will fight each other, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various parts of the world. ⁸ all this is but the beginning of the 'birthpains.' ~ Matthew 24:7-8 (CJB)

The pale horse represents death, the natural result of war and famine. When civilization collapses, the wild animals of the earth will once again regain their dominance and add to the suffering and death already experienced.

When he broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living being say, "Go!" ⁸ I looked, and there in front of me was a pallid, sickly-looking horse. Its rider's name was Death, and Sh'ol followed behind him. They were given authority to kill one-quarter of the world by war, by famine, by plagues and with the wild animals of the earth. Death comes as the result of four means: war, famine, plagues, and wild animals. The outcome of all of this will be the death of one fourth of the world's population. This could be as many as one and a three-quarter billion people. Remember, these judgments are the result of conditions outlined in the *little scroll*, brought about by man's rebellion and the curse of sin both on mankind and this planet. Now, add to this the rule of the Antichrist and his part in the carnage and bloodshed by opposing God. He does all this by trying to exterminate all Jews and any others who may believe on Yeshua. This will become increasingly more apparent later.

These four horsemen, called into action at the very beginning of the tribulation period, are never recalled. The blasphemous philosophy associated with the worship of a man under the white horse, the belligerent policies that lead nations into war under the red horse, the baneful blight experienced under the black horse, all culminate in the pale horse and his stirrup-rider rampaging over a quarter of earth to the very end of the tribulation. If one fourth part of the earth is directly affected by these judgments the death toll must be very high indeed. While the text does not state that one quarter of the population of earth will die there is no doubt that death will ride triumphantly across earth in these dark days of the tribulation. The Lord's solemn words come to mind: ***Indeed, if the length of this time had not been limited, no one would survive; but for the sake of those who have been chosen, its length will be limited*** ~ Matthew 24:22 (CJB). If this is but the *beginning of the 'birthpains,'* then earth has much to endure in the night of her travail.

Special Comparative Note on Chapter 6:7-8 ¹

Historicist Approach:

Historicists date the fulfilment of this prophesy from 248 to 268 or 296 CE. During this period of time, every province of the Roman world was afflicted by barbarous invaders and military tyrants as the Empire

¹ Material in this section is taken from "Revelation: Four Views, Revised & Updated" by Steve Gregg

approached its dissolution. As many as 5,000 persons died daily in Rome and many towns became depopulated. Gibbon documents that half the human population of earth was killed in this period.

Preterist Approach:

Because of the internal fighting and starvation of the Jews, conditions described in this passage are reminiscent to the siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE according to **Preterists**. God also utilized these conditions at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 BCE according to Ezekiel. ***"For here is what Adonai Elohim says: 'Even if I inflict my four dreadful judgments on Yerushalayim — sword, famine, wild animals and plagues — to eliminate both its humans and its animals'"*** ~ Ezekiel 14:21 (CJB).

Futurist Approach:

Futurists view these first four seals to the future **Great Tribulation** spoken by Yeshua in Matthew 24:21. ***"For at that time there will be Great Tribulation, the kind that hasn't taken place from the beginning of the world until now and never will again!"*** (HCSB)

Idealist Approach:

Idealists see the first four seals as symbolically repeated throughout history with the militarism and lust of conquest displayed in a fallen world. The reference to the ***authority to kill one-quarter of the world*** emphasizes the fact that we are not at this point yet, but only recurring instances of geographically limited judgments.

In my next post, the **Fifth Seal** is broken.