

Revelation 6

Review from Revelation 5:

- Description of the scroll?** Written on both sides (very unusual)
- Why did John weep greatly?** No-one was worthy to break the seals
- Describe the priesthood of Jesus?** From Melchizedek, not Levi

Jesus was the scroll with the 7 seals on it – he is ready for the first seal to be broken

Revelation 6.1-8 – The breaking of seals #1-4

- This is the beginning of the description of the "four horsemen of the Apocalypse" (as they are known to most people)
- As the book of *Revelation* unfolds, we realize that these 4 horsemen are the powers that will destroy the Roman Empire, because of its persecution of the Lord's church
- Any country that persecutes the church of Jesus Christ will be shocked at how things turn out for that country!
- Zechariah also saw the 4 horses and riders patrolling the earth – **Read Zech. 1.8-11**

Vs 1 - **Who was the Lamb?** Jesus

- What did the first horseman have as a weapon?** A bow
- What was his job?** To conquer

V 2 - The first horseman was the symbol for the Parthians (known as the Persians in later history)

- They lived on the eastern border of the Roman Empire – they were excellent horsemen and specialized in the bow as a weapon – the Romans were not good with bows, but with spears and swords
- Therefore, the Romans were never able to conquer the Parthians (Persians), and the Parthians were always a threat on the far eastern border of the Roman Empire
- Go to any standard reference work for more information on the Parthians
- The Parthians (Persians) today are the people who live in Iran – they do not consider themselves to be Arabs, but they are the descendants of the Persians

V 3-4 - **What happened next?** Jesus broke the second seal

- What did John see then?** A man on a red horse
- What did he symbolize?** War
- Why red?** The color of blood – blood of the Romans that would be shed because of their persecution of the church
- Symbol for war?** The sword (specialty of the Roman soldiers)

V 5-6 – **Who did John see next?** Man on a black horse

- What did he symbolize?** Famine
- These prices were about 12 times what were paid for food in the first century
- Message?** When the Empire would begin to disintegrate (beginning about 115 AD), people would pay very high prices for their food (if it was even available)

V 7-8 – **Fourth horse?** Pale gray

- What did it symbolize? Death
- Very gruesome
- God uses various ways to punish those who try to harm his people

Revelation 6.9-11 - The breaking of the fifth seal

V 9 – Sympathy for the Roman Empire?

- For example, "*Those poor Romans, all these bad things that are going to happen to them*"?
- No, the reason for the fifth seal was to show why they would be punished
- What was shown at the breaking of the fifth seal?** The souls of the people killed for their Christian testimony
- List people who were killed because of their faithfulness to Christ?** Stephen, Apostle James, Antipas (at church at Pergamum)
- From church historians: Paul was killed by Nero, Peter was killed by the Emperor, John was in prison
- According to *Fox's Book of Martyrs* all of the apostles were killed by persecution

V 10 - The cry of the martyrs? "How long?"

- Explain?** The slain Christians wanted their deaths avenged

V 11 - What were they given? White robes

- What were they told to do?** Rest for a little longer
- Message?** Vengeance belongs to God, and at the proper time, he will carry it out – our job is to remain faithful – **Read Romans 12.17-19**

Revelation 6.12-17 – The sixth seal

V 12 – Signs of terror? - A great earthquake

- Sun was black
- Moon became like blood
- Remember the name for the language here: "apocalyptic language" – it was used in times of persecution to confuse the enemy who might be reading these words

V 13 – Stars would fall to the earth

V 14 – Sky would be split apart and rolled up

- Every mountain and island would be moved out of their places

V 15 – All the evil people would hide themselves in caves and among the rocks to try to avoid the punishment for their deeds

- Note to the teacher:** This sounds like events at the Second Coming of Jesus – it is similar, but John is really talking about the events leading up to the fall of the Roman Empire
- The Second Coming of Jesus is described in *Revelation 19-22*

V 16 – The people would beg that the mountains would fall on them

V17 – No-one would be able to stand before the wrath of God on that day

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