

Lesson 32  
The Kingdom in the Revelation  
Part II

Why do students of Scripture have difficulty comprehending the book of Revelation?

Two things we can do to help our understanding of the Revelation: 1. We can avoid getting bogged with the detail of the meaning of the symbolism and; 2. Understand the Apocalypse as a book that amplifies both OT prophecies and the teaching of Jesus about the future coming of the Kingdom

**I. Introduction**

- a. Regardless of the numerous and wide differences of opinion as to the details of interpretation of the symbolism of the Book of Revelation, there should be no disagreement regarding three **general** features from Chapter 4-18:
1. First, it presents a time of divine judgment and wrath poured out from heaven upon a **world system** which is opposed to God and His Christ. (4:2; 6:13-17; 11:18; 14:7; 15:1,4; 16:7; 17:1; 18:8-10)
  2. Second, these judgments appear in **three series** of seven each: seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls or vials, the last being followed by a voice declaring that it is done". Rev 16:17 *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. KJV*
  3. Third, within the entire period there appear some clear and striking **correlations** with certain divine judgments predicted in the OT and also by Christ Himself, as preparatory to the establishment of the Mediatorial Kingdom on earth.
- b. This lesson will demonstrate the **clear** connection between OT prophecies, Christ's teaching of the conditions that will prevail at the time of His second advent and the material within Chapters 4-18 of the Apocalypse.
- c. It is not our aim to become too enmeshed in deciphering the symbolism given in the Revelation, but only to examine the general flow of the content which will reveal its **connection** with both OT and Gospel predictions of the establishment of the Kingdom.

**II. Pre-Kingdom Judgments (4:1 to 18:24)**

- a. John sees a **court** of judgment in Heaven, the description of which extends from Chapter 4 through 22:5. This court is an expansion of that recorded in Daniel. Dan 7:9-10 *I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. 10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. KJV*
- b. The **judicial** character of this period is marked by announcements made from heaven. With the breaking of each of the seals, the sounding of each of the trumpets and the pouring out of each of the bowls, judgment is executed.
- c. Even if one makes allowances for the symbolical language describing this period, one would be hard pressed to find any series of events in recorded human **history** that would even approximate the severity of these judgments.
- d. While some have attempted to identify the rider on the white horse with Christ, there are serious **objections** to this view: Rev 6:2 *And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. KJV*
- e. The Lord is seen as the Lamb in heaven, the one opening the seals, and to make Him the rider would introduce unnecessary **confusion** of the symbolism within the verse. Rev 6:1 *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. KJV*
1. To make Christ the rider makes Him the **leader** of the devastating trio of war, famine and death.
  2. Such a view would introduce **two** comings of Christ to the earth, this one and another at the close of judgments. Rev 19:11-16 *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND Lord OF Lords. KJV*
  3. While both of these figures ride upon white horses, the names applied to Christ in Chapter 19 clearly belong to Him while those in Chapter 6 depict a **lesser** conqueror.
- f. Therefore, given these objections, the rider on the white horse of Chapter 6 is more appropriately identified with the "**little horn**" of Daniel's prophecy. Dan 7:8 *I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. KJV*
1. **Given the prominence** of the "Little Horn" of Daniel's prophecy, it is not unreasonable to expect that in John's **amplification** of these events we should see a significant place given to "antichrist" in the Apocalypse.
  2. This is precisely what we see in Chapter 13 of Revelation under the undisputed reign of the **Beast**. Rev 13:4-7 *Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? 5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. KJV*

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- g. The four **horsemen** of the Apocalypse bring bloodshed, economic ruin and death to a world reeling in the judgments of God. Rev 6:8 *And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. KJV*
- h. In times of widespread warfare (international war on terror) the liberties of men are always restricted on the premise of protecting a greater social good. Hence we see religious **persecution** during this time. Rev 6:9 *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: KJV*
- i. With the opening of the sixth seal it becomes apparent that the geological and cosmic disturbances are **supernatural** in nature. Rev 6:12 *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; KJV*
- j. Caught in the terror of events wholly beyond their control, the **collective** estimate of mankind will be that the world is standing under the judgment of God. Rev 6:16-17 *And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? KJV*
- k. The thought of Rev 6:17 is almost identical to the thought expressed by the OT prophet **Joel** who is describing the judgments prior to the arrival of Messiah. Joel 2:11 *And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? KJV*
- l. Our Lord Himself also echoes an **exact** forecast of the judgments and the sequence under the first six seals of Revelation 6.
1. He warns of **false** Christ's. Luke 21:8 *And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. KJV*
  2. He predicted **warfare** on a world-wide scale. Luke 21:9-10 *But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. 10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: KJV*
  3. He predicted earthquakes, **famines** and pestilences. Luke 21:11 *And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences;*
  4. He spoke of fearful **sights** from heaven. Luke 21:11 *and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. KJV*
  5. He spoke of religious **persecution** and martyrdom. Luke 21:12 *they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. KJV*
  6. As terrible as all these might be they are to be considered merely the "beginning of **sorrows**", thus leaving room for other and greater sorrows more fully revealed by the visions of John beyond the sixth seal. Matt 24:8 *All these are the beginning of sorrows. KJV*
- m. The greater sorrows are introduced by the opening of the seventh seal. This introduces a **double** series of seven supernatural judgments imposed by angelic agency. (Rev 8-18)
1. The first series is introduced by **trumpets**. Rev 8:2 *And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. KJV*
  2. The second is introduced by the pouring out of **vials**. Rev 15:7 *And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. KJV*
  3. Throughout this visitation of judgments, the supernatural manifestation of the divine Hand becomes **increasingly** evident until the train of events is consummated by the entrance of Christ in glory and power. Rev 19
  4. While there are certain similarities between the judgments of the seals, trumpets and vials, the **effects** of each of them is different.
  5. As these judgments run their respective courses, it is the increasing **severity** of them that sets them apart from one another.
  6. This is seen when **comparing** what happens when the first seal is loosed (6:1-2) with what happens under the pouring out of the last vial. Rev 16:18 *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. KJV*
  7. The first four seals bring about judgment through events that are **familiar** to all men, war famine and death.
  8. But the first four trumpets bring extraordinary events, clearly supernatural in character; yet only affecting a **third part** of its objects. Rev 9:15 *And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. KJV*
  9. However, when the first four vials are poured out, the supernatural judgments are no longer partial but become **universal** in their effects, even to destruction of islands and the leveling of mountains. Rev 16:20 *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. KJV*
  10. The sole exceptions are the small number (144,000) 7:3-8 who are divinely protected and the woman of 12:13-17, both of whom represent certain members of the nation of **Israel**.

### III. Application

- a. While we may not know when the judgments detailed in chapters 4-18 of the Book of Revelation may occur, there can be no doubt that they will occur. Given that certainty, what effect does your knowledge of these things have upon:
1. The way you view unsaved persons within your sphere of influence?
  2. The sense of urgency you feel about your own personal preparedness to stand before Jesus Christ, your judge?