

Revelation Thirteen

09/21/2025

Hymns: 33 When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder 34 When We All Get to Heaven

Scripture: Psalm 46

Big idea: Milestones

When we go on a trip, we generally watch for **milestones**. We plan stops and layovers, and map out the best route to take. We note the halfway point and of course the final destination. Today, we will reach a very important future **milestone** in the Word of God as we continue our journey with the apostle John through the fascinating book of Revelation. This final book of the Bible sometimes called *the apocalypse*, unveils or reveals Jesus **not** in His humanity as shown in the gospels, but instead it reveals Him in His glory.

Let's start with a quick review.

Chapter 1 sets the stage with the apostle John receiving a message from God, through Jesus, and then then through an angel. The chapter includes a glimpse of Jesus as He is in glory. The chapter ends with an outline that indicates a basic chronological structure of past, present, and future for the book.

Chapters 2 and 3 contain letters that Jesus sent to seven churches located in the western end of what is now the country of Turkey. We visited the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Those actual churches at that time serve as an example of the kinds of churches with various strengths and weaknesses that have existed throughout the ages and continue to be seen even today.

In Revelation chapter 4, we traveled to heaven to the place where God appears before His own. We saw four animals. Each animal had the face of a different creature. We learned that these creatures were actually cherubim who represented the creatures of God's creation. In addition, we saw twenty-four elders seated before God's throne giving praise and worship to Him. These elders represented the saints of the church redeemed by Jesus Christ and betrothed to Him.

Last time you may recall, we studied Revelation chapter 5. The scene remained before God's throne in heaven, but the attention turned to the seven-sealed scroll. No one was found worthy to open it until the Lion of the tribe of Judah who is the Lamb of God stood in the midst of the scene before the throne of God and took the scroll from God the Father. With that, those around the throne broke out singing praises to Him. The scene then widened to include millions of angels crying out that He is worthy. This crescendo moved ever wider including every creature in heaven and earth praising Jesus Christ the Lamb.

That brings us to our text for today. Notice particularly all of the parallelism in this passage:

Revelation 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.***

*[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.*

[3] **And when** he had opened the **second seal**, I heard the **second beast** say, **Come and see.**

[4] **And** there went out another **horse that was red**: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

[5] **And when** he had opened the **third seal**, I heard the **third beast** say, **Come and see.** And I beheld, and lo a **black horse**; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

[6] **And I heard** a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

[7] **And when** he had opened the **fourth seal**, I heard the voice of the **fourth beast** say, **Come and see.**

[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.

Wow! That's some heavy stuff. Did you notice all of the fours here?

1. Four seals opened.
2. Each of the four beasts speaks.
3. Each says "Come and see."
4. Four references to "was given."
5. Four horses appear:
 1. White.
 2. Red.
 3. Black.
 4. Pale green.
6. Escalating calamity.

Let's now dive in for a closer look and see what we may find:

Revelation 6

[1] **And**

This narrative proceeds directly from chapter 5. The scene remains in heaven before the throne of God the Father with the Lamb of God standing in the midst with the seven-sealed scroll in His hand.

I saw

Who is *I*? This is John the apostle in heaven with a body suitable for being there.

when the Lamb opened one of the seals,

Who is *the Lamb*? This is Jesus Christ the only one in all creation **worthy** to take the scroll and open the seals. Which one of the seals did he open? That has to be the first or outermost one. Right here is a major milestone. We need to stop, take a breath and look carefully at this.

Daniel predicts details about the end times with his prophesy of the 70 Weeks (Daniel 9:24-27). Sir Robert Anderson determined that each week represented a period not of seven days as we know weeks but of seven years. Seventy weeks refer to 7 times 70 or 490 years. The clock for this time period began with the decree by Artaxerxes in 445 B.C. to restore Jerusalem.

Amazingly, the prophesy foretells that the first 69 weeks of years end precisely with the Triumphal Entry of Jesus (Luke 19:38–40) and demonstrates that these prophetic years have a 360-day length rather than that of our standard 365¼ solar years. When the 69th week ended, the prophetic clock stopped and the Age of Grace (our present dispensation) began. When the Lamb of God opens the first seal of the scroll, He ends the Age of Grace and restarts the clock setting the 70th and final week in motion.

and I heard,

The body given to John included normal senses like hearing and seeing events in heaven.

as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

Recall that these four beasts or creatures were actually cherubim – a special type of angel with six wings and great power, and now we learn they have a thunderous voice.

Next the Bible introduces the four horsemen of the apocalypse. Recall the word *apocalypse* means *unveiling* or *revelation*.

[2] **And I saw, and behold a white horse:**and he that sat on him had a bow;

Who remembers *The Lone Ranger* TV show? He was the good guy who wore a white hat and rode a white horse named *Silver*. Of course, the bad guys all wore black hats and never had white horses.

This guy in Revelation is riding a white horse. In Roman times riding a white horse often signified authority, power, victory, or honor. So is this rider in verse 2 a good guy or bad guy?

I remember in high school watching a play featuring Mr. White dressed in white and Mr. Black dressed in black. Until near the end, Mr. White appeared to be the good guy and Mr. Black the bad guy. Then the truth revealed just the opposite. Sometimes looks can be deceiving. But in Revelation 19:11-13 we see Jesus riding a white horse and in the next verse, we too who know the LORD will be riding white horses and clothed in white linen. We will be the good guys.

Note this rider has a bow. Many commentators notice that the verse does not mention arrows, and they surmise the bow without arrows indicates a peace gesture. This thinking represents a flawed practice stretching meaning beyond what is presented to

bolster their position this rider is the “little horn” spoken of in Daniel who makes a peace covenant with Israel. We will not resort to that kind of error here. Instead, lets just keep reading.

*and a crown **was given** unto him:*

This was a victor’s crown of laurel – not a royal crown.

Notice these four *was given* references. God is allowing these events to unfold. Jesus kicks them off as He opens these seals.

and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

The text says this rider sets out to wage war – not to offer peace.

While the reasoning of commentators is stretched regarding the meaning of the bow, this rider clearly looks like an imitator of Christ rather than Christ Himself.

1. He too rides a white horse.
2. He also wears a crown but one of inferior quality.
3. He ushers in the time of tribulation while Christ ends it.

This rider indeed does match the Antichrist or “little horn” of Daniel 7:7; 8:9 who makes war and conquers. We will learn much more about this “man of sin” when we reach Revelation chapter 13, but for now we will simply conclude this man on the white horse in not Christ, but an imitator or *anti-Christ*. Unbelievably, some Bible commentators think this rider is actually Christ. Clearly that cannot be true since Christ is the one standing in the midst of creation before the throne of God opening the seals. He cannot be on a white horse as well. That doesn’t make sense.

So who gave Antichrist authority to wage war? Ultimately it is God who is in control of this set of terrible judgments with Jesus Himself opening the seals to set them in motion and kicking off the final week (seven-year) Tribulation period with the rise of the Antichrist.

*[3] **And when** he had opened the **second seal**, I heard the **second beast** say, **Come and see.***

*[4] **And there** went out another **horse that was red**: and power **was given to him***

Here’s the volition of God that these events shall unfold.

*that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there **was given** unto him a great sword.*

Notice he **was given** the ability to kill. What we see here is a bloody slaughter of men versus men in armed combat.

[5] **And when** he had opened the **third seal**, **I heard** the **third beast** say, **Come and see**. And I beheld, and lo a **black horse**; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

This imagery is very familiar. You may have seen a picture of this.

[6] **And I heard** a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny;

The word translated penny is *denarias* which we know from the Parable of the Laborers was a day's wage (Matthew 20:2-13). During that time, most people will live from hand to mouth.

and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

The rich still had their delicacies.

[7] **And when** he had opened the **fourth seal**, I heard the voice of the **fourth beast** say, **Come and see**.

[8] **And I looked**, and behold a **pale horse**: and his name that sat on him was *Death*, and *Hell* followed with him.

The word for pale here refers to a greyish green color often seen on the faces of dead or dying bodies. Let's jump ahead here to see what ultimately happens to *death* and *hades*.

Revelation 20

[13] *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and **death and hell** delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

[14] *And **death and hell** were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

Revelation 21

[4] *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and **there shall be no more death**, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

*And power **was given** unto them over the fourth part of the earth,*

According to World Population Review the current world population is slightly over eight billion. One fourth of eight billion would be two billion. That's more than every man, woman, and child in China and the United States combined.

to kill

to kill 25% of the world population.

How will they effect this slaughter? The Bible tells us:

with sword, and
The red horseman did that.

with hunger, and
The black horseman did that.

with death, and
The pale green horseman did that.

with the beasts of the earth.
Here's something new for good measure – wild animals. This same list of sources of judgment also appears in Ezekiel 14:21.

Application

Those are very sobering words, but we should take heart. We learned a few sessions back that we who know the LORD need fear none of this. Before this calamity happens, the LORD will appear in the clouds, we will receive our perfect bodies, and we will meet Him in the air in an event called the Rapture of the Church – another very important **milestone**.

I Thessalonians 4

- [16] *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a **shout**, with the voice of the archangel, and with the **trump** of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*
[17] *Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*
[18] *Wherefore **comfort** one another with these words.*

In the next chapter we're told:

I Thessalonians 5

- [2] *For yourselves know perfectly that the **day of the Lord so cometh as a thief** in the night.*
[3] *For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*
[4] *But ye, brethren, are **not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief**.*
[5] *Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.*
[6] *Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us **watch** and be sober.*

[9] *For **God hath not appointed us to wrath**, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,*
[10] *Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.*
[11] *Wherefore **comfort** yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.*

And finally, in Titus 2:13 the apostle Paul refers to this event as a blessed hope.

Titus 2

- [13] ***Looking for that blessed hope**, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our*

Saviour Jesus Christ;

Each of us has experienced many personal milestones of life:

1. Birth.
2. Walking.
3. Talking.
4. Graduation.
5. Perhaps marriage, children, grandchildren and more.
6. For Christians: accepting the LORD and baptism.

Some day we will each reach that final milestone when we meet our Maker. Are you ready?
We have a wonderful Savior, and we indeed have a blessed hope as we watch and wait to see Him.

Benediction

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen (Revelation 22:21).

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