

From the Rapture to the Second Coming

Revelation 6: “First Six Seals”



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Let's Get Started

In Chapter 6, the scene shifts from future events in heaven to future events on earth. We have looked at what will happen in *heaven* between the Rapture and the Tribulation Period. Now we turn our attention to what will happen on *earth* during this same period of time. There is much debate about how long this period will last, but three years is a good possibility.

Something to Ponder:

The Seven Jewish Feast Days

God gave the Jews **seven feast days** (Leviticus 23) to observe forever (see [Time Line #4](#)). It can be shown that:

- ✓ Jesus was crucified on Passover (the first feast day)
- ✓ Jesus was in the grave on Unleavened Bread (the second feast day)
- ✓ Jesus arose from the dead on First Fruits (the third feast day)

- ✓ the church began on Pentecost (the fourth feast day)
- ✓ there is reason to believe the Church will be raptured on Trumpets (the fifth feast day)
- ✓ there is reason to believe the Second Coming will occur and the Tribulation Period will end on Atonement (the sixth feast day)
- ✓ there is reason to believe the Millennium will begin on Tabernacles (the seventh feast day)

Interestingly enough, between Trumpets (the Rapture) and Atonement (the Second Coming and the end of the Tribulation Period) there is a ten-day period called the "ten days of awe," "the awesome days," or the "ten days of repentance." Since the seventieth week (or the Tribulation Period, Revelation 6:17) corresponds to seven years (one day of the seventieth week = one year of the Tribulation Period), it is reasonable to assume that the ten days of awe will correspond to ten years. This period of time will give people, Gentiles and Jews, an opportunity to grieve, mourn, repent and accept Jesus as Messiah before the Second Coming occurs and their fate is sealed forever. It will also allow three years for the Antichrist to come on the scene and rise to power before the Tribulation Period begins.

Something to Ponder:

The Number Seven

During the tribulation Period Jesus will start to deal with the Satanic trinity and man's rebellion on earth. His course of discipline will be directed from heaven, but the terrible events will take place on earth. The Holy Spirit has divided these events into three sets of seven: seven seal judgments, seven trumpet judgments, and seven bowl judgments. It would be easy to say that twenty-one judgments will occur, but that is not the case. The first six seals will be broken one at a time and each seal will produce a judgment for a total of six judgments. The seventh seal will not produce a seventh judgment. Instead it will produce the seven trumpets. The first six trumpets each produce a judgment for a total of six. But the seventh trumpet will produce seven bowls. When the seventh bowl is poured out, the Tribulation Period will come to an end.

A small number of prophecy experts suggest that these judgments will occur simultaneously. This can't be. The seven trumpets do not begin until the seventh seal is opened, and the seven bowls do not begin until the seventh trumpet is blown.

Over the centuries people have always tried to figure out the Antichrist's identity, since he will probably be alive when the Church is raptured. But the problem with this is he will be restrained (2 Thessalonians 2:6-8) and will not be revealed until the proper time. When the true Church is raptured, it will be time to start watching for the Antichrist. He will not stand out at first, so the best thing to look for will be a popular and powerful person. When he signs a seven-year treaty to protect Israel, his identity will be known.

Key Symbols:

Seven Seal Judgments	Seven Trumpet Judgments	Seven Bowl Judgments
Seal 1–Judgment	Trumpet 1–Judgment	Bowl 1–Judgment
Seal 2–Judgment	Trumpet 2–Judgment	Bowl 2–Judgment
Seal 3–Judgment	Trumpet 3–Judgment	Bowl 3–Judgment
Seal 4–Judgment	Trumpet 4–Judgment	Bowl 4–Judgment
Seal 5–Judgment	Trumpet 5–Judgment	Bowl 5–Judgment
Seal 6–Judgment	Trumpet 6–Judgment	Bowl 6–Judgment
Seal 7–Seven Trumpet Judgments	Trumpet 7–Seven Bowl Judgments	Bowl 7–Judgment End of Tribulation

What Others are Saying:

John Hagee: The Antichrist will be a man who makes his debut upon the stage of world history with hypnotic charm and charisma. He will probably come from the European Union or a country or confederation that was once part of the Roman Empire, which stretched from Ireland to Egypt and included Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. ⁶⁻¹

Noah Hutchings: The consistent interpretation by pre-millennial scholars of eschatology in reference to Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15–21 is that a dictator will rise up out of the Revived Roman Empire and confirm, or add the prestige and power of his empire, to a peace treaty that will involve Israel. This same dictator is thought by the same scholars to become the Antichrist... On page 11 of... *The European* (Nov. 15, 1995), Israel is hailed by the European Union (E.U.) as a new ally. Therefore, the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin actually hastened a comprehensive peace agreement in the Middle East, and now the E.U. states that within a few months this final peace process instrument will be confirmed by (its member) nations. ⁶⁻²

Like A Tiny Snowball Rolling Down A Hill

Revelation 6:1 I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, "Come!"

The terrible judgments will not begin like a nuclear explosion, but rather like a tiny snowball rolling down a long hill. They will not appear that bad at first but they will gain strength and momentum with each roll. Things will eventually get out of control and become so bad that mankind would destroy the earth were it not for the Second Coming of Jesus.

Notice who opens the seals. Jesus! He is in charge of the judgments and their timing. He once said, *Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son,*

that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father (John 5:22, 23). When he opens the first seal, one of the four living creatures will speak in a voice like thunder.

In each of the first four seals a horse and rider are released by one of the four living creatures of Chapter 4. Each horse is waiting in its stall ready to charge, as if in a race, when the command is given. They will not, however, all race out at once. Each horse must wait for its command, and its command will be given by a different living creature when Jesus breaks a seal. When all four living creatures have commanded their horses to come forth, all four horses will have been released. Each living creature summons its horse by speaking just one word, *Come!*

Key Symbols:

First Four Seal Judgments
the Four Living Creatures
four horses and riders

Remember This...

As long as Noah (Genesis 6, 7) was on the earth, God did not send the flood, but when Noah entered the ark, God did send the flood and judged the world. As long as Lot and his family were in Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:16–19:29), God did not send fire and brimstone to destroy the cities. But likewise, when Lot and his family were safely out of Sodom and Gomorrah, God did not hesitate to judge these cities. Today, as long as the Church is in the world, God will not send these terrible judgments. But as soon as the Church is taken to heaven, God will not hesitate to pour out his wrath.

A White Horse

Revelation 6:2 I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.

Chapter 19 also speaks of a rider on a white horse, Jesus. For this reason, a few experts suggest that this rider will also be Jesus. But most experts disagree, believing this rider to be none other than the counterfeit Christ, or Antichrist.

He will come forth with a bow. A bow was an effective weapon in John's day; a symbol of military power. However, nothing is said about arrows, so many think this rider will come forth as a man of peace.

Crowns were worn by heads of state. Those who wore them usually earned or inherited the right to wear their crown. But this man will receive his crown as a gift (Revelation 13:2, 4, 5, 14, 15), meaning he will not earn or inherit it.

The world will be looking for such a ruler who can put an end to nuclear weapons, environmental and economic problems, poverty, etc. He will go forth *as a conqueror bent on conquest*, thereby abandoning his peace program in an attempt to dominate the world. But his use of force to attain his goal of world domination will be a disaster, resulting in

the persecution and death of all those who oppose him. The earth will have a charismatic leader negotiating peace treaties (Daniel 9:27) that are a fake.

Key Symbols:

First Seal

the First Horse (white)
Antichrist

What Others are Saying:

John Hagee: In the surge of advocates for peace, voices of dissent will be shouted down or ignored. The peace process will cease to become a political action; it will become a spiritual mandate for a nation. Based on the words of the prophets of Israel (2 Chronicles 36:15, 16), I believe this peace process will lead to the most devastating war Israel has ever known. [6-3](#)

Grant R. Jeffrey: When the inner circle of five European nations expands to include ten states, the white horseman of the Apocalypse (as prophesied by John in Revelation) will arise to seize power over this alliance. This horseman, the Antichrist, will make a seven-year treaty with Israel as part of his strategy to *destroy the mighty, and also the holy people* (Daniel 8:24 nkjv). Daniel's prophecy that *the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary* (Daniel 9:26 nkjv) spoke of two distinct destructions of Jerusalem within this single prophecy. The first destruction occurred in 70 a.d. when the Roman Empire and its armies burned Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple. Daniel's prophecy also foretold a final attack on Jerusalem at the end of the seven-year treaty in the last days. *The people of the prince who is to come* reveals that the future *prince who is to come* will come out of the revived Roman Empire. This future Roman emperor will rule the ten-nation European confederacy of the last days. [6-4](#)

John Hagee: He (the Antichrist) is going to turn the streets of the world into a blood-bath. According to the prophets, one-third of all humanity is going to be massacred under this monster who is going to make Adolf Hitler look like a choir boy. [6-5](#)

John Hagee: Israel has yet to endure her darkest night. I believe the peace process now under way will prove alas to be a Trojan horse. Instead of bringing the long-sought-for peace, it will bring the Antichrist and the most horrible war the Holy Land has ever known. [6-6](#)

Related Current Events:

Israel and the PLO signed Phase I of the Oslo Peace Accords, called the Declaration of Principles, at the White House on September 13, 1993. Less than three years later, Israel accused the PLO of violating the accords by:

1	Opening fire on Israeli forces.
2	Failing to confiscate illegal arms and disband illegal militia.
3	Failing to extradite suspected terrorists to Israel.
4	Failing to change the PLO charter.
5	Incitement of violence against Israel.
6	Opening PLO offices in Jerusalem.
7	Recruiting terrorists to serve in the PLO police.
8	Exceeding the limit of 2 to 1 on the number of PLO police.
9	Abuse of human rights and the Rule of Law.
10	Conducting foreign relations. ⁶⁻⁷

What kind of peace can there be when only one side is sincere and forthright. When both parties do not negotiate in good faith, the end result is disaster. This is the kind of peace the Antichrist will negotiate.

Remember This...

When Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem as a man of peace, he did not ride in on a conqueror's white horse, but on a **donkey** (Matthew 21:1-10). When he returns as a conqueror at the end of the Tribulation Period, he will ride on a **white horse** (Revelation 19:11). Notice that the Antichrist does not ride in on a donkey in peace, but rather on a horse in conquest.

A Fiery Red Horse

Revelation 6:3, 4 When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay each other. To him was given a large sword.

The Antichrist will barely have his peace program off the ground when Jesus breaks the second seal. This time it will be the second living creature who speaks the command, *Come!*

A fiery red horse will go forth and its rider will have an unusual power. He will take peace from the earth and cause men to slay each other. This rider will charge forth with a great sword in his hand, signifying that he will go forth with many powerful weapons of war.

Some experts associate this rider on a red horse with Communism. The prophet Ezekiel foretells the rise of a dictator from *the far north* (possibly Russia) who will go forth to attack Israel (Ezekiel 38, 39) in the last days. He will advance with a great army carrying swords and riding horses, but will meet defeat when many of his own troops slay each other because God will turn each man against his brother (Ezekiel 38:21-23) so that God's glory may be shown.

Key Symbols:

Second Seal

Second Horse (fiery red)

sword

What Others are Saying:

Hal Lindsey: I believed that the peace process that Yitzhak Rabin (former Prime Minister of Israel) started would never bring peace, but would lead ultimately to nuclear holocaust in the Middle East, because they're giving away absolutely essential land assets that are indispensable for defending Israel in return for a treaty that doesn't remove the basic cause of war in the first place. [6:8](#)

Related Current Events:

In spite of all the emphasis on peace, this century has given us WW-I, WW-II, the Vietnam War, the Korean War, the Persian Gulf War, etc. There were 84 armed conflicts in the world during the first three years of the nineties.

Remember This...

The Prince of Peace - The Prince of War

The Antichrist will be a false prince of peace. God will show the world he is a fake by causing his phony peace programs to fail. Jesus is the true Prince of Peace. When world leaders reject him, they reject the only solution to their problems.

A Black Horse

Revelation 6:5, 6 When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, "A quart of wheat for a day's wages, and three quarts of barley for a day's wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!"

Peace without the Prince of Peace is no peace. The end result can only be war. War will rule the whole world after the Rapture. The wars of foolish and deceitful men will kill farmers, destroy land and crops, and cause the collapse of social, physical, and political structures. These wicked men will destroy, confiscate, and hoard food supplies causing despair, misery, poverty, and death.

When Jesus opens the third seal, the third living creature will give the same command as the first two, *Come!* This horse will be black, the color of grief and mourning. Its rider will hold a pair of scales that symbolize economic disaster and famine. The scales will be used to weigh food which will sell for a ridiculously-high price. A small quart of wheat will cost the equivalent of a day's wages, but many will not be able to survive on this, so they will be forced to buy barley, a cheaper food that is usually fed to animals. Three quarts of barley

will still cost the equivalent of a day's wages, so no money will be left for clothes, housing, or automobiles. In spite of all this, the rich will still be able to afford luxury items such as oil and wine.

Key Symbols:

Third Seal

Third Horse (Black)
scales

What Others are Saying:

Billy Graham: I have no doubt that a financial judgment day is coming for the United States before the end of this century unless our financial problems are addressed. [6-10](#)

Jack Van Impe: America, the world's sole remaining superpower, does not seem to play a significant role in the end-time scenario as described by the prophets. Why? Some scholars suggest America will be severely weakened, even neutralized, by the time the critical events, leading up to the Lord's return, occur.

- ✓ Economic collapse? Moral decay? Poor leadership? Nuclear attack? All are possibilities.
- ✓ The situation in Russia worsens with each passing day: a loaf of bread costs 1,500 rubles—about 8 percent of some monthly salaries. The average prices for rent, heat, and electricity often increase as much as 250 percent in one month. The fee for public transportation has increased 2,000 percent since 1994. And to make matters worse, workers are simply not being paid in some enterprises. [6-11](#)

Grant R. Jeffrey: I am not a prophet so I cannot predict when the governments of both the United States and Canada will "hit the wall" financially. That moment will occur when the national debt and its compounding interest charges have risen so high that the total tax revenue of the country will not be enough to pay the interest on the national debt... A nation cannot continue to borrow forever, going deeper and deeper in debt each year. Finally, they "hit the wall" and economic collapse or hyper-inflation is the only remaining option. [6-12](#)

Ed Hindson: Despite the initial success of global economic unity, a worldwide economic disaster will occur, increasing the need for further global economic controls, including a personalized insignia. [6-13](#)

John Hagee: People ask, "Why would God allow a financial collapse in America?" I'll tell you why. Because the First Commandment says, Thou shalt have no other gods before me (Exodus 20:3 KJV). And in America, money is god. [6-14](#)

Related Current Events:

Today, we have famine in Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia,

Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and North Korea. More people have died from famine in the last 150 years than in all of human history combined. More than 25 million people who are alive today are threatened. Almost one-half of the world's population is underfed. [6-15](#)

The world grain harvest (1995) was the smallest since 1988 and grain reserves (the grain available to the world if all production stopped) were at an all time low of just 48 days of consumption. [6-16](#)

World population, as it does every year, reached new heights, growing by 87 million to 5.732 billion. with more than 80 million added in developing (third-world) countries. [6-17](#)

U.S. Public Debt:

1980 \$907.7 billion
1985 \$1,823.3 billion
1990 \$3,233.3 billion
1995 \$4,974.0 billion [6-18](#)

Something to Ponder:

Jesus is the Bread of Life (John 6:31-35), but the Antichrist will be a false bread of life. The Antichrist will prove to be a fake when his food programs result in famine.

A Pale Horse

Revelation 6:7, 8 When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, Come! I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

The world will have a false peace, then war, and then economic collapse and famine. Things will grow progressively worse. This obviously contradicts those who say things will get better and better, or those who teach that the Church will eventually bring in a perfect society. The Bible says, *There will be terrible times in the last days and evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse* (2 Timothy 3:1, 13).

When Jesus opens the fourth seal, it will be the fourth living creatures turn to command a horse by saying, *Come!* This horse will surge forth creating an eerie sight because of its pale color. In the Greek translation of the Bible, the word used for pale is *chloros*, meaning pale green like chlorophyll. This horse is the color of spoiled meat and rotting flesh. His rider and the creature following him are personified by Death and Hades. This rider wont be looking for the saved who have been raptured or the few who have accepted Jesus during the Tribulation Period. Instead, he will be hunting the great mass of people who are destined for an eternity in hell. Sadly, this horse and rider will go forth to harvest the souls of unbelievers to fuel the fires of hell.

Notice the progression: The rider on the white horse will be only partially armed. He will have a bow but no arrows. The rider on the red horse will carry a single large sword. The

rider on the black horse will have two weapons, economic collapse and famine. This rider will have four weapons, a sword, famine, plagues, and wild animals. Things will get worse and worse, not better.

The sword signifies continuing war and bloodshed; famine signifies starvation; plague signifies diseases; and wild beasts signify the animals of the earth. This last weapon will be a strong signal to the politically correct who worship Mother Nature and value the life of animals over unborn babies. God will show the world that its wrong to worship Mother Nature. Hungry animals will turn on the unbelieving world and add to the death and eternal damnation of more than one billion people.

Key Symbols:

Fourth Seal

the Fourth Horse (pale)

What Others are Saying:

Billy Graham: It is not Gods intent that any should perish, but when people defiantly refuse Gods plan, the consequence of this disobedience is death. The rider on the pale horse is only taking his due. [6-19](#)

Hal Lindsey: It staggers the imagination to realize that one-fourth of the worlds population will be destroyed within a matter of days When I think about this awful judgment that awaits the Christ-rejecting world, it gives no satisfaction to my heart; it fires me up to get out the message that God has provided an alternative in Jesus. [6-20](#)

Jack Van Impe: The number of people who die every two days of hunger and starvation is equivalent to the number who were killed instantly by the bombing of Hiroshima. And there's no sign of better days to come. [6-21](#)

Grant R. Jeffrey: The dreaded plague known as AIDS may well be the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Fourth Horseman of the Apocalypse. [6-22](#)

Related Current Events:

We are standing on the brink of a global crisis in infectious diseases. During the past 20 years, at least 30 new diseases have emerged to threaten the health of hundreds of millions of people. For many of these diseases there is no treatment, cure, or vaccine. Hiroshi Nakajima, Director General of the World Health Organization. [6-23](#)

According to the World Health Organization between 300 and 500 million people will contract malaria in 1997 with as many as 5 million dying. [6-24](#)

Largely unknown to the outside world, we (the U.S.) now have information that the Russian military, in defiance of its own president, has been secretly developing biological weapons of mass destruction, including a super-plague for which the

Tribulation Saints

Revelation 6:9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.

Following the Rapture, multitudes will accept Jesus. They are usually called the Tribulation Saints. World leaders will say these Christians are a threat to world government, world peace, world religion, and the environment. Therefore they must be dealt with. Followers of the New Age Movement teach that the earth must go through a cleansing in order to proceed to perfection. This cleansing they envision will include the death of all who turn to Jesus (Matthew 24:9).

The opening of the fifth seal switches attention from the death of unbelievers to the death of believers; from the pit of Hades to under the altar in heaven. The four living creatures will summon no more horses. The last three seals will be different from the first four.

Jesus obviously will not forget his people because he showed John the souls of these slain believers gathered in a special place. They will have died because of the Word of God and because of the testimony they maintain. Many of these will be from families of Christians who left in the Rapture. Others will be Jews who realize the mistake they made in not accepting Jesus. Some will have heard the Word of God for the first time. Others will finally come to grips with their sin and turn to Jesus who said, *Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell* (Matthew 10:28). These believers will realize that the Antichrist can do nothing worse than kill their body, for God will raise them from the dead. They will choose to die one death (physical), rather than two (physical and spiritual).

Key Symbols:

Fifth Seal

under the altar the souls of the Tribulation Saints

Glorified Bodies

Revelation 6:10 They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"

The souls of the Tribulation Saints are under the altar crying out instead of rejoicing and praising God around the throne with the rest of the Church. Unlike those who received their glorified bodies in the Rapture, these saints will have to wait until later for theirs. Because of this they will be fully conscious and able to rationalize the persecution, torture and murder they have endured. They will have a sense of justice and want to be raised, vindicated, and given glorified bodies.

They will cry out with a loud voice which is reminiscent of Psalm 94:1–3: *O Lord, the God who avenges, O God who avenges, shine forth. Rise up, O Judge of the earth; pay back to the proud what they deserve. How long will the wicked, O Lord, how long will the wicked be*

jubilant? They will utter the prayer Jesus prayed, *Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing* (Luke 23:34). They will appeal to God's sovereign nature and to his sense of justice and fairness when they ask to be avenged.

What Others are Saying:

Hal Lindsey: It's a sobering fact that if people will not give their hearts to Christ now, while it is still easy and small cost is involved, when the Tribulation judgment sets in, although they can still be saved, it will be so as by fire (I Corinthians 3:15 kjv). [6-26](#)

Be Patient

Revelation 6:11 Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.

These martyrs will not be rebuked for asking to be vindicated. They will receive white robes signifying the righteousness of Jesus. Some experts suggest these robes may indicate some type of intermediate body, but whatever the case, we know that the martyrs will be able to hear, understand, and converse because Jesus tells them to be patient.

The Tribulation Saints will be told to wait until other believers are killed, indicating Jesus has a specific plan for the rest of the world.

What Others are Saying:

Billy Graham: We learn two important facts from this mysterious moment. First, there will be a point at the end of time when God will judge the inhabitants of the earth. Second, before that moment can come, other men and women equally dedicated to God and his kingdom will be martyred for the Word of God and for the testimony they maintain. Are you prepared for the risk such words describe? [6-27](#)

David Jeremiah with C.C. Carlson: As I write this, I long for everyone to give their hearts to Christ now, when it is comparatively easy to be a Christian. During the Tribulation, the fate of believers will be worse than what happened in the Nazi concentration camps during World War II. [6-28](#)

Definitely Not A Harvest Moon

Revelation 6:12 I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red,

When Jesus opens the sixth seal, the whole earth will shake. John calls this shaking a great earthquake, but the description sounds more like a nuclear explosion. It may be a great earthquake triggered by one or more nuclear explosions. Whatever it is, it will be massive. The whole earth will go into convulsions, and the appearance of the sun and moon will be changed.

While the earth is going through tremendous vibrations, the sun will be darkened as if

almost black, and the moon will turn blood red. It could be that one or more nuclear explosions will take place, causing the earth to shake violently and spew tons of debris into the atmosphere. The resulting atmospheric pollution will cause darkness to cover the land and the moon to appear red. The cataclysmic effects of Mount St. Helens and El Niño will be dwarfed in comparison.

Today the Middle East is brimming over with weapons of mass destruction. There are unsubstantiated reports that now Israel and Iran both have the nuclear bomb. Couple this with unfulfilled prophecy and we can understand why the prophet Isaiah said **Damascus** (Isaiah 17:1) will be turned into a ruinous heap and the mountains of Lebanon will be on fire. The prophet Ezekiel said **Egypt** (Ezekiel 29:9-12; 30:3-6) will turn to utter waste and desolation for forty years. It is easy to see the possible results of atomic or nuclear weapons.

The prophet Joel said *The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord* (Joel 2:28–31). According to Ezekiel, the sword will come upon Egypt when the day of the Lord is near.

Key Symbols:

Sixth Seal

earthquakes

What Others are Saying:

Hal Lindsey: The earthquake described in this sixth judgment will be of a magnitude never before known by mankind. It will be "the grand daddy of them all." The particular Greek word used here actually means "a violent, catastrophic shaking." This meaning, coupled with the darkening of the sun and the moon, leads me to believe that the Apostle John is describing an earthquake set off by many nuclear explosions. [6-29](#)

Related Current Events:

(Egyptian President Hosni) Mubarak's words were not the only ones that upset (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu. Egyptian Defense Minister Mohammed Hussein Tantawi earlier told the Egyptian Al-Gomhuriyyah (a Cairo newspaper) that Egypt's military was training in the event of a nuclear attack by Israel. [6-30](#)

Star Wars

Revelation 6:13 and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind.

The *Golden Rule of Interpretation* (see [Introduction](#)) states, "When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense." This, however, is one of those instances where the plain sense does not seem to fit because most stars are bigger than the

earth. No star could fall to the earth *as late figs drop from a fig tree* without decimating the planet.

Since the word *stars* in the Greek translation could also be translated "meteors," this could indicate a meteor shower. It could also mean a missile attack. During the Persian Gulf War nights were filled with cruise missiles and laser-guided smart bombs. One can easily see how someone living almost 2,000 years ago would describe scenes like this as falling stars. Whatever this is, stars, meteors, or missiles, they will fall to earth like overripe figs dropping from a fig tree in a mighty wind.

A Giant Tidal Wave

Revelation 6:14 The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

This seems to be another indication of a coming nuclear war. During a nuclear blast the wind is rapidly pushed out (displaced) for several miles, creating a vacuum at the center of the blast site. Suddenly, this wind, like a giant tidal wave, rushes violently back into the vacuum. The sky actually rolls up (Isaiah 34:1-10) on itself. This explosion will be so great it will cause every mountain and island on earth to move.

What Others are Saying:

Billy Graham: Pope John Paul II has stated, "Our future on this planet, exposed as it is to nuclear annihilation, depends on one single factor: humanity must make a moral about-face." [6:31](#)

Ed Hindson: The threat of a global nuclear holocaust will push the world to the brink of disaster and leave people crying for peace. This crisis will probably be centered in the Middle East. [6:32](#)

Run For Your Life

Revelation 6:15 Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains.

There will be worldwide panic (Isaiah 24:1-13). Regardless of one's status in life, all people will try to hide. Multitudes will leave everything behind and rush into caves and bomb shelters. Multitudes will flee the cities to hide in the mountains. Kings and princes will flee their palaces. Great generals and mighty men will turn and run in fear of their lives. People of every class will flee and hide. Survival will be man's only concern.

Key Point:

Survival will be man's only concern.

What Others are Saying:

David Breese: The love of God is eternal. His patience is not. [6:33](#)

Nothing Will Escape

Revelation 6:16 They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!"

Will these panic-stricken people call on Jesus (Acts 4:12)? **No!** They will call on Mother Nature. They will call on the rocks and mountains to fall on them, because they will want to hide from the face and wrath of God.

Multitudes will finally admit the existence of God. They will even admit that it is possible to anger Jesus, but they will not turn to him. Instead they will try to hide, but to no avail since nothing can escape the sight of God.

What Others are Saying:

David Jeremiah with C.C. Carlson: What a prayer meeting! The people will shout out to anything, even the mountains, for help. Their first instinct is to hide, get away from God. Isn't that what sin does to a man? He covers up what he has done, thinking that he can escape the consequences. He turns his back on God's provision for sin and seeks help elsewhere. [6-34](#)

J.H. Melton: We are not accustomed to connecting the thought of wrath with the lamb, which has always been the accepted symbol of gentleness, but after the grace of the Lamb of God is rejected, his indignation and wrath must be faced. The Lord Jesus Christ will either be your Savior or your Judge. Your sins will either be judged in Jesus Christ or they will be judged by Jesus Christ. Now he offers his mercy to save you. If you reject his mercy he will judge you in absolute justice and wrath. [6-35](#)

A Day of Wrath

Revelation 6:17 For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

The **day of wrath** (Zephaniah 1:14-16) is another name for the Tribulation Period. The multitudes will recognize the beginning of that day when the first seal is opened. Sadly, we read nothing about people repenting and accepting Jesus, only the realization that the dreaded Tribulation Period has come. And there is the question: *Who can stand?* The answer is in Revelation 6:18.

What Others are Saying:

David Hocking: Our present generation has no desire to hear of these things or to believe them. We want to be stroked and reminded of our self-worth and potential for success. The real issue has not changed, heaven and hell, life and death. [Where will you spend eternity?](#) [6-36](#)

Something to Ponder:

A Tribulation Yet To Come

In Daniel's 70-Weeks Prophecy (Daniel 9:20-27), the first sixty-nine weeks of Daniel's prophecy is the period of time (69 weeks x 7 years/week = 483 years) between the decree for the captive Jews in Babylon to return to Israel to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, and the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Since these first sixty-nine weeks of Daniel's prophecy were literally fulfilled, we can only assume that the seventieth week (the last week of seven years) will also be literally fulfilled.

Some people do not understand why prophecy teachers say there is a gap between the first sixty-nine weeks of Daniel's prophecy and the seventieth week (the Church Age—the period between the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and the Tribulation Period). A careful study of the prophecy reveals that Jesus would be killed, and Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed after the sixty-ninth week. That happened in 70 a.d. when the Romans overran Israel, burned Jerusalem, tore down the Temple, and killed 5 million Jews. Part of the prophecy has been fulfilled. But a careful study also reveals that the seventieth week will not begin until the Antichrist signs a seven-year covenant to protect Israel, that he will break that covenant and stop all animal sacrifices. For this to happen, Israel had to be restored as a nation (which happened in 1948) and the Temple must be rebuilt (which has yet to happen). Part of the prophecy is yet to come.

Some believe the Church will succeed in establishing the Kingdom of God on earth without the world going through the Tribulation Period. But the angel Gabriel told Daniel the Jews would go through the entire seventy weeks before the kingdom of righteousness is brought in. Since the earth has never experienced some of the things prophesied for that time, it must go through them before the Kingdom of God can be established.

Some people believe that the seventieth week of Daniel had been fulfilled by the time Jesus arrived, but Jesus spoke of these things as *future events* (Matthew 24:15), not events of the past.

Study Questions

- ✓ What weapon did the rider on the white horse carry?
- ✓ What power was given to the rider on the red horse?
- ✓ How much will a quart of wheat cost during the Tribulation Period?
- ✓ What was the name of the rider on the pale horse and who was following him?

[Go to Answers](#)

Chapter Wrap-up

The judgments of the Tribulation Period begin when Christ opens the first of the seven seals. ([Revelation 6:1](#))

The four horsemen will bring about: the Antichrist, war, economic ruin, famine,

and death. ([Revelation 6:2–8](#))

During the Tribulation Period people will still turn to Christ and be killed for their faith. These people will be known as the Tribulation Saints, and they will ask to be avenged. ([Revelation 6:9, 10](#))

An earthquake will wrack the earth affecting the sun, moon, sky, land, and sea. ([Revelation 6:12–14](#))

Following the sixth seal fear will grip everyone on earth as they try to hide from the wrath of God. ([Revelation 6:15–17](#))

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