

The Antichrist
Revelation 6:1-2

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This morning we continue our series, Bible Prophecy, by dealing with one of the most astounding prophecies in God's Word, the famous Four Horsemen of Revelation 6.

For centuries, the world has wondered, *"Who are these four horsemen of the apocalypse that strike terror in the hearts of men?"*

"What's their meaning and when will they come thundering upon the world stage?"

In our lifetime, we're literally watching the prophetic words of Revelation 6 come to life. Twenty-five years ago, the world's conditions weren't ready for the release of these four horsemen.

Fifteen years, or even ten years ago, the world's conditions weren't yet ready. But now, in our lifetime, their shadows loom over the world.

If we were to put our ears to the ground, we could hear their galloping hoofbeats as they begin to sprint across the world stage.

Now, the opening of the scroll that releases these four horsemen can't happen until after the rapture of the church. It's at that time when Jesus takes the scroll begins to open the seals.

My point is, for us who love Christ, and are in Christ, we won't be on this earth for the horrific events of Revelation 6.

When the seals are opened, and those four horsemen gallop across the world's stage we'll be in heaven. Remember, God has promised to rescue us from the wrath of His judgment upon a Christ rejecting world.

If that's true, and there is no doubt that it is, then why should we focus on the four horsemen of Revelation 6? There are three reasons.

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First, the opening of the seven seals in Revelation 6 is a huge event, both in heaven and on the earth. The opening of these seals signals the beginning of God's wrath in the tribulation.

Second, they're a warning that those who reject Jesus Christ will be left behind to face a world of immense terror and great judgment.

Not only did Jesus say that this would be the worst time period in human history, but He also said that the world's conditions would be so bad, that men's hearts would melt with fear for the things coming upon the world.

Third, and very importantly, the numerous signs that are exploding on the world's stage tells us that the rapture is very close, and that we should be watching and ready for that moment.

We should be looking up for our redemption because the prophetic signs are telling us that the next stage of the most intense time in history is about to begin.

These four horsemen have already mounted their powerful steeds. They're waiting on the sidelines for that moment when Jesus Christ opens the scroll and releases them upon the world.

With that picture in mind, let's turn our attention back to Revelation 4. I spoke about this in my last message.

Revelation 4:1-2, *"After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must*

take place after this.” At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.”

Revelation 4 is a prophetic picture of the church in heaven after the rapture and before the tribulation.

In the very near future, every believer in Christ will hear the great command of Jesus cry out, *“Come up here!”*

In a moment faster than the speed of light, we’ll be forever changed into a new body of glory, instantly finding ourselves before the throne of God.

We’ll see the living God who sits upon the throne of eternal glory. What a glorious moment that will be! Then in Revelation 5, the entire scene changes...

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Revelation 5:1-2, *“Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?”*

What is this scroll? Why is it so important? In the days of John, important documents were written on parchment and rolled up like a scroll.

Sometimes, if a scroll had several parts, the writer would write the first part on a single sheet of parchment, and then roll that part up and seal it with a hot wax seal.

After which, he would write the next part, roll it up and seal it. He would continue this same process until he was finished.

To open the document, you had to break open the first seal and read the first part of the document, then the next seal would be visible at which time you could break open the second seal and read the second part.

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Here is a picture of what the scroll may look like.

You had to break open the seal to read the document and then do the same thing with each seal until all parts of the document were revealed.

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This scroll is a heavenly document that only one person can open, and that one person is Jesus Christ, the perfect Lamb of God who was slain before foundations of the world.

As the Lamb of God, Who is risen from the grave, He is the Lord of lords. He has all authority in heaven and earth, and He alone is the only one in all of creation Who has the authority to open the heavenly scroll and read its contents.

John knew that the fulfillment of all Bible prophecy couldn't happen until after Jesus broke open the seven seals that begins the final days.

That's why, when Jesus took the scroll, the four living creatures and the 24 elders fell down before the Lamb and worshipped Him.

That's why the heavenly hosts of ten thousand times the ten thousand erupted with a new song and sang with all their heart. Remember, this is us singing.

This is a prophecy of you and I watching this event take place in heaven and singing in praise, with all our might, to the Lamb of God. Worthy is the Lamb... Worthy is the Lamb... Worthy is the Lamb.

And then, in awe and silence, we'll watch as Jesus, the Lamb of God, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the eternal King of kings takes the scroll and breaks open the first seal, releasing upon the earth the first horseman of the apocalypse.

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Revelation 6:1-2, *"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!" 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."*

When Jesus opens the first seal, He releases a rider on a white horse who'll come thundering onto the world stage to conquer and dominate the world.

Revelation 13 calls this rider on the white horse *"the beast,"* and he's truly a beast unlike anything the world has ever seen. This rider is the antichrist.

There are four images associated with this rider on the white horse that gives us insight into what he'll do when he rides across the world stage.

First, he's pictured riding to victory on a white horse. A horse can move with both power and speed, which means he'll come thundering onto the world scene with lightning speed.

Historically, a white horse signifies victory and peace. However, this rider of the white horse will deceive the world into believing he's a man of peace, but instead of peace, he'll conquer the world with war and destruction.

Second, he has a bow, which represents authority. Make note, he already has the bow with him when he's released.

I believe that means when he explodes onto the world stage, he'll already be sitting in some type of position of power, and I sincerely believe he's in a position of power right now, waiting for his moment in history.

Third, he's given a crown to wear. This crown means that he's been given the authority to rule.

The Greek word for this crown is "*stephanos*" which describes the earthly crown of a conqueror. He's given this crown based on three things.

First, he receives this worldly crown from Satan. Revelation 13:2b, *The dragon (Satan) gave the beast (antichrist) his power and his throne and great authority.*

Second, in Revelation 17:2, we read that he will receive a crown from a ten-kingdom empire and form a one world government.

Revelation 17:12-13, *"The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast. They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast."*

These ten kingdoms have not yet gained their power, but they will, and when they do, they'll submit their full power and authority to this one man who'll use that power to rule the world.

Third, he receives a crown from the people of the world because they'll choose to worship him as their god.

Revelation 13:8a, *“All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb’s book of life.”*

The fourth picture that describes his rise to power is found in his image as a conqueror. Revelation 6:2b, *“He rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.”*

There’s a lot of meaning in that short phrase that I don’t have time for today. But when you compare it with other scripture, it’s the most frightening image of all.

Revelation 13:7, *“It was given power to wage war against God’s holy people and to conquer them. And it was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation.”*

The moment he’s set loose to ride onto the world stage, he’ll immediately begin a worldwide conquest that will result in a world war of terror and destruction, that’ll cause the death of 1/4 of the world’s population.

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That brings us to an intriguing question, *“Is the antichrist alive today?”* The late Dave Hunt, a world-renowned Bible scholar and author wrote, *“Somewhere, at this very moment, on planet earth, the antichrist is most certainly alive, biding his time, awaiting his cue.”*

I personally believe he’s right, and at this very moment, this man is alive and waiting for his moment of destiny, and I say that, because the warning signs that point to his coming are exploding all over the world.

A second big question is, *“Who is the antichrist?”* For years, people have tried to identify this man. I find it interesting that he is the ultimate man of evil, and yet nowhere in scripture are we given his name.

But that hasn't stopped people from making wild speculations. For example, some believed that John F. Kennedy was the antichrist.

When Hitler rose to power in Europe, there were many who thought he was the antichrist, and again, as we know, that wasn't true. Hitler had the spirit of the antichrist, but he wasn't the antichrist.

There are those who said the antichrist was the Pope, or some other world leader, but as of yet, no one knows who he is.

Here's a vital point to remember; according to Bible prophecy, the identity of the Antichrist will not be revealed until AFTER the church is removed in the rapture.

That means the rapture must happen first, BEFORE the antichrist can be revealed.

Remember, he's not revealed until Jesus opens the first seal and allows him to ride onto the world stage.

Another powerful question is, *"How close are we to rapture of the church and to that moment when Jesus opens the first seal and releases this rider of the white horse?"*

This prophecy is over 2,000 years old, so why should we suddenly think that we're nearing the time of this prophecy? Why should we think it's in our lifetime?

Consider this; of all the generations of history, we're the first generation where the prophecies regarding the antichrist and his evil rule are a true possibility.

Forty years ago, I couldn't understand how one man could possibly rule the world. It seemed impossible. I knew the Bible said it would happen, but I couldn't understand how it could happen.

I couldn't imagine how one man could effectively gain such power and control that it would enable him to conquer and rule the world, but in our lifetime that picture has become clearer.

We live in the age of super computers that are far beyond our comprehension. We live in the age of advanced global technology with Global positioning systems and satellite communications.

The internet, social media, cell phones, all of which reach around the globe, are pulling the world into a global community.

We have the ability to literally ID every person on the planet. This global technology is leading the world down a dark and dangerous path that'll ultimately end with a one-world government.

It's this great technology that'll give the antichrist the tools he needs to control the economic and cultural dynamics of the world. Again, we're the first generation that this is a reality.

On February 15, 2023, Klaus Schwab, founder and leader of the World Economic Forum, said in a statement at the World Government Summit in Dubai, *"Our life in 10 years from now will be completely different. He who masters those technologies will be the master of the world. There is a new boss coming, a new "master" of the world."*

This is where the world is headed. In their push for a one-world government, the nations of the world are looking for someone with the strength and charisma to bring the world together under the banner of peace and lead the world to greater heights.

For the first time in history, all the mechanisms are falling into place, and it's happening right now, in this generation, in our lifetime.

The idea of a ruler leading a one-world government is no longer a conspiracy theory; it's no longer a science fiction movie. It will happen.

But here's the thing to remember; this is happening exactly as the Bible predicted it would happen.

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Between today, and the opening of the scroll that calls forth the four horsemen and begins the nightmare of the tribulation, there are at least five major signs or prophecies that must first take place.

These five signs are...

- The evil spirit of the antichrist exploding all over the world, i.e. Wars, earthquakes, famines, worldwide deception, lawlessness, and immorality.

These signs are happening with such intensity and frequency that it is impossible to keep up with them. These signs are not going to stop until everything is fulfilled.

- The Israel and Magog war of Ezekiel 38 and Psalm 83. Israel must be a nation and as a nation they'll encounter two major wars; the Magog war of Ezekiel 38 against Iran and Russia and the Psalm 83 war with the Arab nations.
- A one world government of 10 kings. There must be a world government of 10 kingdoms that'll surrender their power to the antichrist.

This includes a cashless economic system which gives the antichrist ultimate control over the world's economy. The World Economic Forum is pushing for the creation of a new world order by 2030.

- Technology for the mark of the beast, which is possibly already here.
- Finally, the Rapture of the Church must have already happened.

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Conclusion

In closing, the signs are telling us that we're drawing closer to the day for the rapture of the church, and when the rider of the white horse is released.

We see the increasing signs of the spirit of the antichrist all over the world. We see the signs of a one world government. We see the signs of technology.

All of these signs are screaming at us that the end is near. So, what are we to do?

First, we're to lift our heads and look up, because we're not looking for the antichrist; we're looking for Jesus and the rapture of the church.

Second, we're to live faithful and godly lives as witnesses to those who are without Christ.

Third, if you don't have a relationship with Jesus, then I encourage you to give your life to Him today. Don't waste another moment.

Ask Jesus Christ to be your Savior and Lord. The return of Jesus for His church is very near, and it's imperative that you be ready to meet Him.

The reality is this, you'll either be in the rapture of the church, where you'll be with Jesus and spend eternity in His glorious kingdom, or

you'll be left behind to face the antichrist and his evil reign of terror that's beyond my ability to describe.

The time is near... *"Even so, come Lord Jesus!"*