

Famine, Sorrow, and Death

Revelation 6:5-8, 1 Thessalonians 5:9, Revelation 3:10

Slide 1

The world today is seeing a massive explosion of signs on a scale never seen before.

These signs are not random events. They're happening because they're God's final message to the world of His mercy and love before His judgment is poured out on the world.

What you must understand is that the massive number of signs we see today are not His final judgement come to pass but they're a message of God's mercy.

God always, always sends warnings before He sends judgment. Amos 3:7, *"Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets."*

From Genesis to Revelation, God has always sent warnings first before He sent judgment.

For example, in our generation today, people say, *"I've been hearing about the return of Jesus Christ for 60 plus years and He hasn't returned yet."* The truth is, they're right, but for the wrong reason.

There're many Biblical reasons why Jesus hasn't returned; but knowing that God never sends judgment before He sends warnings is a clear picture of God's mercy.

Slide 2

76 years ago, when Israel became a nation again God, in His great love, gave the world its first warning that we're living in the last days and that judgment was coming.

For 76 years, God has sent thousands of signs and warnings that the end is near, and yet, for the majority of the world, it's business as usual.

In Matthew 24, Jesus listed several signs of divine warnings which I believe reveals we're the generation that will see the fulfillment of all Bible prophecy and Christ's return.

Jesus said there would be major earthquakes, wars, worldwide famines, pestilences, the worldwide preaching of the gospel, lawlessness, apostasy, false Christs, deception, and signs in nature and the heavens.

The last time I checked, every one of these signs are happening now, on a massive scale all over the world. These signs aren't a coincidence. They're not happening by accident.

They're God's warning system of His mercy to the world that the end is near and that judgment is coming. But, in spite of the numerous worldwide signs, there's an amazing indifference to His warnings.

Not only are these signs a warning that the end is near; they're also a warning that now is the time to repent and turn to God.

If we don't repent and continue to disregard God's divine warnings, there'll come a day when God's patience will be exhausted and the wrath of His judgment will come. We're drawing very close to that day.

A second profound truth that you must hear is that God hasn't appointed His wrath for those who are in Christ and love Him.

This means we'll not be on this earth when God releases these four horsemen and His wrath upon the world.

Why do I believe this? Listen to these three verses:

1 Thessalonians 1:10, *“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:9, *“For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Revelation 3:10, “Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.”

These three scriptures clearly reveal a pre-tribulation rapture where God, in His awesome grace, has promised to deliver those who love Him from His end time wrath.

However, the waiting of two thousand years for Christ’s return has lulled the world to sleep.

Therefore, when the Rapture does happen, and it will, it will be a shock so great that it’ll be like a steel trap closing upon the whole world.

In that earth shattering moment, those who have mocked, ridiculed, and scorned God’s warnings will know in that instant that they’ve been left behind to face a world gone mad with terror, judgment, and death.

Yet, it’s not God’s desire for anyone to fall under His judgment, which is why in His mercy He’s waiting to give people a chance to be saved.

God’s wrath hasn’t happened, but it’s coming. The warning signs are getting bigger and stronger, telling us that our time is almost up.

Let me put it to you this way; there’re warning signs that are happening that I have never seen in all my years of watching, but they’re happening, now, in our lifetime.

For those who have ears to hear, we can hear the hoofbeats of these four horsemen as they wait for their moment to enter the world's stage.

With this realization in mind, let's look at these final two horsemen and what they have to say.

Slide 3

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, "Two pounds of wheat for a day's wages, and six pounds of barley for a day's wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!"

When Jesus opens the third seal, He releases upon the world a black horse which is associated with famine and sorrow.

The Greek word used to describe this black horse speaks of a horse that's so dark that it has no color, like the black darkness in a cave without light.

If you've ever been on the Park Ranger's walking tour at Carlsbad Caverns, at one point as you descend into the caverns, they turn the lights off.

You literally cannot see your hand before your face. It's pitch black. This is what John's describing.

After the rapture, the world will experience several wars, including a massive world war, and as the world already knows from experience, famine follows war.

These wars will affect the world's food supply causing the world to operate on survival mode.

When the black horse is released, John also sees a pair of scales, and hears a voice that says, *“Two pounds of wheat for a day’s wages, and six pounds of barley for a day’s wages.”*

In the days of Jesus, a denarius was the standard payment for a day’s wages. The scales are a picture of the antichrist rationing the world’s food supply.

The black horse not only represents a food shortage, but it’s also a picture of hyperinflation.

That means in the early days of the tribulation, the world’s food supply, and the world’s economy, will be so bad that it’ll take a full day’s wages to buy just enough food to sustain the life of one person. Not a family... just one person!

There has also been a lot of speculation about the phrase, *“do not damage the oil and the wine.”*

Some say this is a reference to the rich being protected from the famine, while the poor suffer. Others say it refers to God’s mercy in the midst of His wrath. Both of these could be right.

However, I think it could also be a reference to Revelation 13:16-17, *“It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.”*

My point is, after the antichrist gains full control, he’ll say to the starving world, *“If you want to survive; if you want the oil and wine; you must take my mark and pledge your total allegiance to me.”*

Those who refuse to take his mark will be cut off from buying or selling and left to starve.

Those who take the mark of the beast will be able to buy and sell for a short time, but in the end, they'll pay the ultimate price with their eternal souls.

That brings us to this important point. There's no doubt that we can clearly see the ominous shadows of the black horse looming over the world.

The fact that we can see the shadows of these four horsemen tells us that we're very close to the rapture of the church, and the world's final days.

Thirty years ago, these signs weren't there, but now, in our lifetime, we can see the signs that the Black horse of famine is near.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see there's a grain shortage that's causing food prices to skyrocket, while at the same time, the world's also being hammered by inflation that continues to creep up higher and higher.

There's also a worldwide fertilizer shortage that'll have a direct impact on the world's food supply. Why do I say this?

Ukraine is the world's leading producer of fertilizer and because of the war, fertilizer isn't being produced, which will obviously have a direct impact on the world's food supply.

Also, Jesus said there would be wars, famine, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

These conditions have always played a part in food shortages. But now, they're happening on a massive scale far greater than the world has ever seen.

We're seeing record breaking 1000-year flooding in several parts of the world, while other parts of the world are experiencing 1000-year droughts.

In the past few months, there has been a record number of 6.0 earthquakes, along with a record number of erupting volcanoes.

All of these events have a huge effect on the world's food supply, and the closer we come to the tribulation, the greater and more intense these signs will become.

Now, one or two of these events wouldn't be a cause for alarm, but these geological events are happening on a scale never before seen, and they're increasing with frequency and intensity.

For me personally, that one factor alone, is a major sign we are living in the days of end time Bible prophecy.

Slide 4

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 fourth horse is a horse of a much different color. Our English translation says it is a pale horse, but the original Greek renders this horse as a pale, sickly green color of a decomposing body.

Also in verse 8, I see the possibility of two horses. One, which is a sickly green horse of death, and another horse called hell "*following close behind him.*"

The ultimate objective of these two riders, called death and hell, is to fulfill God's divine wrath to kill ¼ of the world's population with the sword, hunger, and the beasts of the earth.

Get this picture in your mind. As of 2022, there were about 8 billion people on planet earth. Let's say 1 billion people are caught up in the rapture.

Then after the rapture, about another billion people die from the Magog War, from various killings, and the world wars of the first and second horse.

That would leave about 6 billion people, and ¼ of 6 billion, would mean that another 1.5 billion people are killed by the fourth horse of death and hell.

That means at least 2.5 billion people, or about 40 plus percent of the world's population will die between the day of the rapture and the early part of the tribulation.

This is why I preach these truths and call you to give your life to Christ now before the rapture. Listen again to what John says about the rider of the pale horse.

Revelation 6:8, "I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him."

The word "*death*" in verse 8 means more than just when a person dies. It's the Greek word "*Thanatos*." That word describes the separation of the soul from the body; when the soul is condemned to hell.

The point is... the mission of this pale-green horse is to kill people and to send their souls to hell. That's why hades followed so close behind.

Hell followed the pale horse. Let those words sink in. Hell is a real place, and it's God's desire that no one perish in hell.

Listen to John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

Focus on these words, *"Should not perish."* You don't perish in heaven; you perish in hell. Jesus believed in hell. Paul believed in hell. Even the demons believe and are terrified of hell.

But what's so sad is that most people never give a single thought to their eternal destiny, and yet, for many, hell will be their final stopping place in eternity.

Jesus said in John 3:17, *"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

Hear this clearly; God's desires to save you. He's not saving you from the glory of His perfect kingdom. He's saving you from an eternity in hell and its unspeakable horrors.

Let's look at this from another angle. The tribulation that's about to come upon the world is far more terrible than I have the ability to describe, but, as bad as the tribulation will be, hell is infinitely far worse than anything that'll ever happen in the tribulation.

If you're afraid of the coming tribulation, then how much more should you be afraid of hell!

If you miss the rapture, there's at least a 50% chance you'll die within a few years, if not before, and if you die without Jesus, you'll endure the terrors of hell forever.

That's why now is the time to give your life to Christ, because only Jesus Christ can save you!

Slide 5

Conclusion

In closing, why should we care about the signs of the four horsemen?

Mark 13:29, *“Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door.”*

For those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, we can see this day approaching. We can hear their pounding hoofbeats. That's exactly why Jesus said, *“When you see these things, know that the time of His return is near.”*

When Jesus opens the seals and releases the four horsemen, they'll sprint across the world, bringing wars and famine and the perishing of so many souls that it staggers our minds.

But glory to God, for those who are in Christ, and love Christ, we'll not see one single day of the tribulation.

Very soon, the trumpet call of Christ will sound, and the church will be removed from this sinful earth into His glorious presence.

But for those who reject Jesus, they'll face a world that Jesus said will be the worst time in human history. That's why God's signs are a warning to the world that a great and terrible tribulation is coming.

How do you miss the tribulation? The only way to miss the coming tribulation is to be born again, which means to be born spiritually, by believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the only way of Salvation. Now is the time to be saved.

John 3:36, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them."

If you don't believe in Jesus, then you're destined for God's wrath. Believing in Jesus Christ is absolutely the only way to miss the horrific events that are coming to planet earth.

Romans 10:9-11, "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame."