

## Chapter 6:

Jesus opens the first seal. One of the living creatures says in a voice like thunder “come”. The first rider came forth on a white horse. The rider held a bow and was given a crown. The bow could speak of having the ability to kill, but from a distance. Note there are no arrows and he was “given” a crown. This could speak of him being allowed to command or rule over others and will accomplish his work through others. He rode out like a conqueror bent on conquest. This is undoubtedly the Antichrist being released to do his work. This correlates to Daniel 9:27 where the Antichrist makes a seven-year peace treaty with Israel. This is the beginning of the tribulation.

Jesus opens the second seal, and the second living creature said “come”. Then a fiery-red horse came forth. Its rider was “given” a large sword and the power to take peace from the earth and make people kill each other, most likely through war. Jesus opens the third seal, and the third living creature said “come”. A black horse came forth and the rider was holding a pair of scales. There will be great famine following the war. The two pounds of wheat or six pounds of barley for a day’s wages speaks to great poverty. A person will work an entire day just for enough to feed their family that day. Do not harm the oil and the wine would speak to there being a group of wealthy people as the oil and wine represent wealth and luxury. This could also indicate that slavery, or slavery-like conditions may again exist.

Jesus opens the fourth seal, and the fourth living creature said “come”. A pale horse came forth and the rider was Death and Hades was following close behind him. They were “given” power to kill by war, famine, plague, and by the wild animals on the earth. Whatever the population of the earth is at this time, twenty-five percent will be killed. Note these riders are all “given” power to bring forth these events. This is God that is allowing these events through Christ’s word and the opening of the scroll.

Jesus opened the fifth seal and John sees the souls of the tribulation martyrs under the alter. These are believers who maintained the word of God and testimony of Jesus. They ask Jesus how much longer until He avenges their blood and judges the inhabitants of the earth that tortured and killed them. Jesus tells them to wait a little longer until the full number of their fellow servants have also been killed during the tribulation. We later see these souls come to life in chapter 20 to reign with Christ during the Millennium. They are found righteous and given white robes to wear.

The significance of “under the alter” is important. I do not feel that I have a full understanding of this at this time but will continue to study on it. Being a martyr is an act of sacrifice. These believers are sacrificing their lives for Christ. Do not mistake this act as the reason for their salvation though. Don’t forget they maintain the word of God and believe in Jesus. In Revelation 20 these statements are repeated.

My question is: why are the souls under the alter? Up to this point, my understanding is, when a Christ following believer dies, their spirit goes to heaven and their soul goes to Sheol. At the resurrection, the soul will be caught up in the air to meet Jesus and join their spirit. Those two parts will join a third part that is a “glorified body”. 1 Corinthians 15 explains the purpose of glorified

bodies well. Under the alter could be a new waiting area for believers awaiting the resurrection. This could have to do with Sheol not being a safe place for souls to await the transfer to heaven; during the tribulation. Death and Hades are moving across the earth, so who is running Sheol? If the activities on earth are this bad, during the tribulation, how much worse is it going to be in Sheol? I believe this full study will take a good deal of time, so I'm tabling it for now.

Jesus opened the sixth seal and there was a great earthquake. The sun turns black, and the moon turns blood red, most likely describing an eclipse. The stars falling to the earth are most likely meteorites from space that fall upon the earth. These events could be figurative, and they could have a different meaning, but meteorites are a reasonable happening. It is difficult to understand what "the heavens receded like a scroll..." means. It could be referencing how dramatically the clouds are moving across the sky. Or it could literally mean that heaven recedes from the earth and there is greater distance between the two. Every island and mountain being removed from its place is likely a result of great crustal plate movement on the earth. Reference also Matthew 24 for Jesus's words about the end times. I however do not believe these events, at this time, are what aligns with Matthew 24. I will explain this further during the sounding of the seven trumpets.

Versus 15 through 17 are stating that everyone remaining on earth will acknowledge that this is the wrath of God, and Jesus, that is causing these events. One reason the rich, mighty, and kings of the earth are called out is because these groups of people have always relied on whatever has given them power, and it wasn't God. They have no idea how to rely on the power of Christ in us. They will be unequipped to understand or face these terrifying events. I believe at this time the majority of Christians will have been removed from the earth. Either through the rapture or from being killed for being believers and waiting under the alter. See my upcoming study on the rapture and resurrection.

Chapter 6 begins the tribulation. We do not know how long each of these events last, but we do know that they are occurring during the first three and a half years, and before the sounding of the seven trumpets.