



A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 37: The Seal Judgements, Part 5

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Review:

- A. We are in the middle of our study on the Seal Judgements of **Revelation Chapters 6 through the first part of Chapter 8**.
- B. These judgements are the first of a series of judgments we will study, and the Bible gives us every indication that these Seal Judgements take place in that timeframe immediately following the Rapture of the church
- C. So far, we've studied the first three of these Seal Judgements:
 1. **Rider on the white horse** – This is the political debut and ascent of the antichrist which leads to a false worldwide peace. In the aftermath and chaos of the global Rapture of the church, the antichrist will be perceived as having all the answers
 2. **Rider on the red horse** – The false peace gives way to worldwide conflict and bloodshed. Whatever pretenses of peace had been in place, they yield to open war and conflict between ethnicities and nations
 3. **Rider on the black horse** - The third Seal Judgement which we studied last week represents global famine and economic ruin. This text is found in **Revelation 6:5-6**. We learned a couple of things in our lesson worth repeating again:
 - a. According to this passage, this future situation will be dire. It will take an average entire day's pay to provide the minimal amount of food needed by one person. These will be incredibly desperate and difficult times.
 - b. Further, there will be a big gap between those who are wealthy and the common person. The wealthy will continue to have what they need and want, while the common person will not.
 - c. This, by the way, is a hallmark of a socialist political system which, as we've learned, is what the antichrist will implement.

NOTE: Today, we begin our study of the fourth Seal Judgment, and unlike the first three we have studied, which basically took a single lesson to present. This one will probably take two lessons to get through. And possibly part of a third lesson.

There is a lot more going on with this fourth Seal Judgement than initially meets the eye. I want to be sure we capture the full counsel of God's Word on this issue.

I. **Starting with the basics (Cf. Revelation 6:7-8)**

NOTE: Going 'apples to apples' with the prior riders here, let's get the picture straight:

- A. Here's a greenish colored horse (Greek: "chloros" – from which we get 'chlorine.' If you are familiar with chlorine gas, it's a pale greenish hue).
 1. It represents the look of a dead and decaying body.
- B. That's precisely what this fourth Seal Judgment is all about: Death

1. Death, and the loss of human life, has certainly been an ingredient in each of the preceding Seal Judgements
 2. In a socialist system, there is always the loss of life with the rise of power grabbers. It will be no different when the antichrist begins his political ascent in the first Seal Judgement.
 3. Obviously, when there is war and conflict, there is a huge loss of human life. That will certainly be the case with the second Seal Judgment.
 4. And as we learned last week, death is a direct result of famine and extreme economic ruin. Death will absolutely be a factor in the third Seal Judgment as well.
- C. But here, with this fourth Seal Judgement, is ABOUT Death. It's no longer an issue of death as a consequence or side effect of another set of conditions. Here it is ABOUT death.
1. Here, death is the singular purpose of this Seal Judgement. That is the focus.
 2. Here, all the forces, all the dynamics and intentions of this Seal Judgement are designed to bring about death. That is the goal. This is the intention here.
 3. This is a judgement about DEATH. That is why the horse is a 'chloros' (pale greenish) color
- D. Here is another comparison we don't want to overlook: All the prior horses had one rider, but this pale green horse has TWO riders.
1. This is the only one of the four horses where the riders are actually named. The previous riders were described, but here they are named.
 2. The names of these riders are in order from front to back: DEATH and HADES.
 3. Hades is the Greek word for Sheol in Hebrew. (Sheol shows up a lot in the Old Testament, while Hades is more common in the Greek-oriented New Testament). However, they are the same thing.
- E. Then lastly – each of the riders before has been granted something. They were each provided with a means or an ability to achieve a key objective.
1. The white rider was given the means to conquer and to achieve political gain.
 2. The red rider was given the ability to wage war and introduce conflict.
 3. The black rider was given the means to bring about famine and economic ruin.
 4. And here, with the pale green horse, DEATH and HADES are given: What(?). They are given POWER.
 5. Power to do what(?) - - Power to kill.
- F. **NOTE:** It's a common misinterpretation by most commentators and prophecy scholars to state that this Seal Judgement is that about one-fourth of the earth's population being killed.
1. That's not what **vs. 8** states (NOTE: Compare to **Revelation 9:15, (re-emphasized in vs. 18 as well)** - - in these latter verses, the language is clearly different.

2. What we see in Seal Judgement #4 is DEATH and HADES are given POWER.
 - a. They are given power OVER a fourth of the earth
 - b. In other words, 25% of the earth's population is enabled, or is given the ability or permission to KILL.
 - c. Seal Judgement #4 is a situation in which one-quarter of the earth's population turns into murderous assassins.
 - d. They are given the right or the directive to act in this manner. This is what Seal Judgement #4 is about.
 - e. It's about a worldwide genocidal campaign in which one fourth of the earth actively turns against the remaining population and has the capacity and the means to kill.
 - f. They kill by four different means which we will talk about further in a little bit: sword, famine, plague, and 'wild beasts' (This will be an interesting set of issues to talk about).

II. Let's talk a bit more about the two riders of this pale green horse.

- A. We've already noted their names, DEATH and HADES.
 1. Clearly, as we've discussed in past lessons, this is a personification
 2. Just as Wisdom is described in **Proverbs 1:20-21**, as: "she who cries out in the streets and in the public square." Here Death and Hades are also described as intentional personalities with goals and activities.
 3. We all know Death is an event, an end result, a phase of life, the actual ending of physical life. It has no personality or intentional character unto itself.
 4. But here, Death is represented as a personality; it has an active role to play. That's why we say here that Death is personified the same way Wisdom is in **Proverbs Ch. 1**.
 5. Hades is personified here, in this text, the very same way.
- B. The text says Death is followed by Hades. What we are seeing here is a natural process at play.
 1. Death deals with the material departure of a being from its physical house or body. Our body is little more than the vehicle that carries our true being. Death occurs when that vehicle is "totalled," when that vehicle is done.
 2. Hades places the focus on the immaterial aspect of a person after death. This is a commentary on one's soul.
 3. Presently, in this day and age, when someone dies their soul is delivered to its destination, which is Heaven if they're truly saved in Jesus Christ, or Hades if they're not saved.
 4. Recall the parable in **Luke Ch. 16** of the rich man and Lazarus. When the rich man died, he went to Hades.
 5. It's a common misunderstanding that if someone dies without Christ that they end up in hell. They eventually WILL, but there is an intermediate phase, and that phase is called Hades.

6. It's a holding tank, if you will, for the unsaved dead. It is a place of terrible torment and flames and conscious despair, but it is not YET hell.
7. Hell, the eternal lake of fire, is not where unsaved souls are cast until the end of **Revelation Ch. 20** AFTER the Great White Throne Judgement.
8. That is why hell is called "the second death." It's a terminal and eternal condemnation. It awaits all those who are in Hades, and its severity exceeds the terms of Hades.
9. So here, in **Revelation 6:7-8**, we see that one fourth of the world's population is given authority to kill, and it's clear from the details of this Seal Judgment, that many of those who die are unsaved.
10. **NOTE:** We will soon see in Seal Judgment 5 that Christians are a key target of Death here. However, Christians do not end up in Hades. It's clear that many will die without Christ at this point.

C. **NOTE:** (We've reached another juncture in our study series here where we need to start bringing together various things we've previously learned).

1. There is an implication in the details of Seal Judgment #4, as well as the details we will learn in Seal Judgment #5, that one fourth of the world's population at this future point in time are faithful followers of Death and Hades.
2. These are devotees so committed to some sort of cause that they are willing to kill any opposition.
 - a. Certainly, Christians are a key target as we will soon learn.
 - b. We can also discern that a population of unsaved people are also a target.
 - c. There is a common reason for both audiences being a target.
3. The fact that Hades takes a lead role in this global genocidal campaign infers that this a worldwide "religious crusade."
4. We studied the rise of a false one world religious system that will go into motion FOLLOWING the Rapture. We spent several lessons on that, and **Revelation Ch. 17** had a lot to say about this.
5. This future judgement scenario appears, within the full counsel of God's Word, to be an event that is reminiscent of the historical inquisition periods when Roman Catholicism was martyring the so-called Protestant heretics centuries ago.
6. I'm going to revisit this a little bit in the next lesson to refresh our memories, but for our present purposes, I believe what we are seeing here is the future rise of a deceptive "religion" that will so deceive its followers that they are eager and willing to kill all who oppose it.

NOTE: I was visiting with Bill Salus earlier this week, and I told him what we are presently studying. He was kind enough to send me some thesis notes of his on this matter, and I want to incorporate some of his thoughts here:

- D. Hades, as we've already noted, is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew word Sheol.
 - 1. The word Hades is sometimes wrongly translated as Hell in the King James Version. It is a poor choice of words if we properly understand Hell from **Revelation Ch. 20** as being separate from Hades.
 - 2. Hades, as I have stated, is the abode of departed unsaved souls or spirits.
 - a. Death and Hades appear together five times in the New Testament.
 - b. Death is likened to a lethal sting that kills its victim in **1 Corinthians 15:55**.

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

- 3. If the one who dies is an unsaved soul, their being goes to Hades, who in turn claims victory over that person's departed spirit.
- 4. In other words, Death detaches the soul from its body and then Hades imprisons it and holds it for the next phase of its eternal destination.
- 5. Jesus Christ, when His soul departed from His body after being stung by the death of His crucifixion, conquered Hades through the power of His resurrection.
- 6. In His victory over Death and Hades, Jesus Christ now possesses the keys to their gates.
- 7. His own claim is made in **Revelation 1:18**, where He says, *"I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death."*
- 8. Jesus Christ is now the gatekeeper, and He determines who enters Hades and who doesn't.
- 9. Upon death, a believer in Jesus Christ, a saved soul, is locked out of Hades. However, when an unbeliever, an unsaved soul dies, that soul enters into Hades and the doors are sealed shut behind it.
- 10. As per the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in **Luke 16:19-31**, Hades is an actual place and it is filled with unbearable torments.
- 11. In order to avoid being locked into Hades, a person needs to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior in this present life, after which the gates of Hades can no longer prevail against that person according to **Matthew 16:18**.
- 12. **Revelation 1:18** is the only verse where Hades appears ahead of Death when they are paired together in scripture, and this DIFFERENT arrangement underscores a key point:
 - a. When Death precedes Hades in scripture (that's the typical order), it alludes to the death of the body, which is the first death. We see that here in our operative text of **Revelation 6:7-8**.
 - b. However, when Death follows Hades, as in **Revelation 1:18**, it alludes to "the second death." This pertains to the final and eternal separation of the soul from God, its maker.
 - c. So, when Jesus Christ claims to have the keys of Hades and (then also) of Death, He is boldly declaring sovereign authority over the eternal destiny of each and every individual soul.

- d. That's why Jesus says in **Matthew 10:28**, *"And do not fear those who kill the body, (that's Death), but cannot kill the soul, (that's Hell). But rather fear Him, (that's Jesus Christ), who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."*
 - e. The bottom line is the doctrines of Death and Hades are indeed frightful in their implications. However, a true believer need not be fearful because Death and Hades are unable to destroy both their soul and body in hell.
 - f. So, these are words of comfort. They will be especially comforting to those saints who come to saving faith AFTER the Rapture.
 - g. They will know that, in all likelihood, they will be martyred by Death and Hades in the fourth Seal Judgment. But they will also know that they are eternally secure in Jesus Christ who has already conquered Death and Hades.
13. Death and Hades make their final appearance during the White Throne judgment at the end of the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.
- a. It is after the Great White Throne Judgment that Death and Hades, and all the unsaved souls they had previously killed and incarcerated, are cast into the Lake of Fire (**Cf. Revelation 20:11-15**):

"Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."

- 14. Death and Hades, just like unsaved souls, will face the second death. They will be terminated.
- 15. But, what we are learning today, is they still have a role to play before that point as the fourth Seal Judgment horsemen.
- 16. They will exert power and authority over a large religious system that will have many fanatical and devoted followers.
- 17. This massive false religious institution, according to the Bible here in **Revelation Ch. 6** and also in **Revelation Ch. 17**, is comprised of at least a quarter of the earth's population.
- 18. It will become the Harlot world religion described in **Revelation 17** where it is also noted in **vs. 6** that it will be *"....drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus."*
- 19. NOTE: We already see surging intolerance in our times against the Christian faith, and against any values and laws that find their origin in God's Word.

20. This trend will continue, and it will continue to exacerbate in that timeframe following the Rapture, when the truth about Jesus Christ and the removal of His church from this earth will NOT be tolerated.

NOTE: For that matter, any truth or any belief system apart from the deceptive one-world religious system of that time, will not be tolerated.

This gets into several important additional elements concerning this fourth Seal Judgement that we will explore in our next lesson.