

“America in Prophecy”

(Rev. 6:1-8)

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I. Introduction

A. Earthquake this week in Japan

1. Caused a spill of radioactive materials
2. Must have caused many to think back to August 6, 1945
3. It was 8:15 a.m. in Japan
4. Warning bell sounded at Japanese Broadcasting Corporation
5. News flash from the Chugoku District Army Headquarters

—*“Three enemy aircraft have been spotted over the Saijo area—”*

—Suddenly there was a blinding blue flash of light over Hiroshima

—A mushroom cloud rose

6. Newsman and radio station were instantly vaporized

B. War would never again be the same

1. In 1945, America stood alone with *“The Bomb”*
2. Then other nations soon joined the “Nuclear Club”
 - a. More are frantically trying to obtain them
 - b. Recent news from North Korea
 1. Agreed to shut down their nuclear reactor
3. Atom bombs and the potential for devastation...
 - a. WW II killed 2% of world’s population

1. 20,000,000 in Russia alone
- b. Yet the power of “The Bomb” now
 1. “The current stockpile of 60,000 bombs gives the human race the power to destroy the entire earth 17 times over, through nuclear flames reaching 130 million degrees
 2. And all that in one blinding flash
- c. Bomb drills when I was in school—
 1. We all lived in fear of the bomb
 2. Many expected it to happen
 3. Who would want to survive?

*what would be left?
- d. Leonid Brezhnev of the old Soviet Union:

“Only he who has decided to commit suicide can start a nuclear war”
- e. Another Russian, Yuri Andropov:

“Wherever and however a nuclear whirlwind arises, it will inevitably go out of control and cause a worldwide catastrophe.”
- f. General Omar Bradley
 1. Speaking at an Armistice Day celebration in 1948
 2. *“We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. – The world has achieved brilliance without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants.”*
- g. Albert Einstein
 1. Predicted that in a full-scale nuclear exchange at least one-third of the population of the World would die
 2. Same proportion the Bible used in Ezekiel 5:12

C. We stand poised on the edge of a time of tribulation like the World has never seen before.

1. A true “World War”
2. World-wide famine
 - Nobody to come to the rescue
3. Disease and pestilence world wide
 - a. The Black Plague – Europe
 - b. 1300’s...killed 1/3 of Europe

D. And God has been warning us about it for 2,500 years

1. Daniel 9:26
 - a. The war of desolation
2. The words of Jesus

“For then there will be great distress (tribulation), unequalled from the beginning of the world until now...and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive,” (Matthew 24:21-22)

E. The details are in the final book of God’s Word: “The Revelation of Jesus”

II. Background

A. The Church Age is completed (Ch. 1-3)

B. John gets a glimpse of Heaven (Ch. 4-5)

1. Questions regarding Heaven
2. Right after Labor Day

C. John sees “the Scroll” with seven seals (Ch. 5)

1. “Who is worthy to claim it?”
 - a. The Title Deed
 - b. To reclaim the earth from the usurper
 - c. Jesus – the Worthy Lamb

2. Contains God's plan for the end of earth

a. Rev. 6-19

D. Now...in Chapter 6, the scroll is opened

(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!' (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."

E. Revelation made simple

1. Chapter 6 begins the description of the coming Tribulation

a. The final 7 years

1. In chapters 6-19

b. Same as described in Daniel 9:27

He (the Anti-Christ) will confirm a covenant with many for one "seven." In the middle of the "seven" he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

c. The tribulation is just before God's kingdom comes to earth

2. God has 4 primary purposes for the Tribulation

a. Dan. 9:24 *"Seventy sevens are decreed for your people and for your Holy City..."*

1. "to finish the transgression"

2. "to make an end of sins"

3. "to make reconciliation for iniquity"

4. "to bring in everlasting righteousness"

5. "to seal up vision and prophecy"

*and most importantly...

6. "to anoint the Most High"

- b. Summarized

Restore Israel spiritually

Punish the ungodly

Establish Christ's kingdom on earth

Bring salvation to untold multitudes

3. *The events in Revelation are to be taken as literal*

- a. Even though metaphors are used to describe them

- b. Describes –

1. Percentage killed
2. The number of evangelists
3. The number of months and years

4. *The events in Revelation are in chronological order*

- a. I'll show as we go through them

- b. Overview

Ch. 1-3 The Church Age

Ch. 4-5 Preparation in Heaven

Ch. 6-19 The Tribulation

***Seven years**

Ch. 20 The Millennium

***1000 years**

Ch. 21-22 The New Heaven & New Earth

- c. Even the order of Ch. 6-19 are in general sequence

1. Later

- d. There will be three “pauses” in the action
 - 1. To summarize and give an overview
 - 2. Like a “parentheses”
- d. Like watching “The Longest Day”
 - 1. Things happening at the same time in different places
 - 2. Flashes back to heaven or to earth

5. *The Tribulation has not yet begun*

- a. There have been some tough days on this earth
- b. Why this is different?
 - 1. Intensity of tragedy
 - 2. Timing of tragedy
 - 3. Scope of tragedy

6. *There are signs all around indicating the end is near*

- a. The sound of thunder (6:1)
- b. Hot, humid, August evening
 - 1. Stillness
 - 2. The roll of thunder
 - couldn't see it yet
 - louder and louder
 - then flashes of lightning
 - then the Heavens exploded
- c. The thunder is getting closer!
 - 1. Iraq, Iran, Israel

2. It's all about the Middle-East

7. Don't let all of the "sevens" confuse you

- a. The 7 Seals, 7 Trumpets, and 7 Bowls
- b. Out of the 7th seal will come 7 trumpets
 - 1. forms of judgment
- c. Out of the 7th Trumpet will come 7 bowls of judgment

III. Text....Rev. 6:1-8

A. The First Six Seals described in Chapter 6

- 1. Many believe the 1st six occur during the first 3 ½ years
 - a. And the 7th seal opens the second 3 ½ years
 - 1. The *Great* Tribulation
 - b. A logical break after seal number 6
 - 1. The great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand? (Rev. 6:17)
 - 2. Transitional chapter (Rev. 7)
 - 3. The description of the Great Day of Wrath begins in Rev. 8:1
- 2. I believe that the 7th trumpet, which announces the 7 bowls of wrath occur during the first 3 ½ years
 - a. The seven bowls of wrath begin the start of the 2nd 3 ½ years
 - b. Not dogmatic
- 3. Either way it begins with "*The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*"

B. The first four seals (v. 1-8)

- 1. *The White Horse and Rider (v.1-2)*

(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!” (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.

- a. The “Lamb” is Jesus
 1. Rev. 5:12
- b. The 1st Seal
 1. As the scroll is gradually unrolled
- c. The 1st of 4 Living Creatures
 1. Voice like thunder
 2. “Come and see”
- d. The white horse and rider?
 1. One of 4 colored horses
 - a. White
 - b. Red
 - c. Black
 - d. Pale
 - pale green
 - chloroform gas
 2. A sequence of events that open the Tribulation
- e. The White Horse and Rider...***the Anti-Christ***
 1. At start of tribulation
 2. (Mt. 24:5)—“For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.”
 3. White charger – Roman victory parade

4. Imposter!

f. Will offer the World *peace*

1. The world craves it!
2. Will have just gone through a horrible trauma
 - a. Rapture of the church
 - b. USA no longer the “policeman of the world”
 - c. Russia attacks the Middle East and Israel
 1. Aided by Iran (Persia)
 - d. Described in Ezekiel 38-39
 1. Describes Russian and its allies
 - a. Persia is Iran
 2. They suffer a horrible defeat
 - a. As they prepare to invade
 - b. Massive earthquake
 3. Seven years to burn the debris (v. 9)
 - e. Must occur just prior to Tribulation
 1. Either before or after Rapture
 - e. Many good scholars put it during the Tribulation
 1. Works best before
3. The offer of protection peace by the Anti-Christ starts the clock on the seven years
 - from old Roman Empire
 - Europe
4. The Tribulation will begin with a promise of protection

“Then the Anti-Christ will confirm a covenant with many for one week” (Daniel 9:27)

g. But where’s America?

1. Why would Israel turn to somebody else?
2. We’ve stood by them since their birth in 1948
3. And does America show up anywhere during the time?

h. Possible answers

1. America weakened by the Rapture

- a. The role of Christians in leadership today
- b. Greater loss than other nations
- c. God’s special role for the United States
 1. Missionaries to the world
 2. Temporary home for the Jews
 3. Guardian of Israel
- d. God will take over during the Tribulation

2. America part of the old Roman Empire

- a. Most of us are of European descent
- b. Included in that broader group

3. America is the one that betrays Israel

- a. Only one presidential election away from a different Middle East policy
- b. A new president may value oil above Israel
- c. We may be the nation that offers Israel protection...then after the rapture turns on her

i. Israel turns to the Anti-Christ for peace and protection

1. And it appears to work....for awhile

2. The Red Horse(v. 3-4)

(3) When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!"

(4) 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

- a. The 2nd Seal
 - 1. Warfare
- b. Blood red
 - 1. The color of war
- c. The Anti-Christ proves to be a liar
 - 1. Promised peace....delivered wars
 - 2. Nations killing each other
 - 3. Shiites killing Sunnis
- d. Will eventually betray Israel

3. The Black Horse (v. 5-6)

(5) 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. (6) 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!"

- a. The 3rd Seal
- b. Black is the color of disease and famine
 - 1. The results of war
 - 2. The Sudan
 - 3. Darfur
- c. World wide famine

1. No more surplus wheat
 - a. Biggest suppliers are the US and Russia
2. A quart of wheat for a denarius
3. Denarius – one day’s wage
4. Quart of wheat – enough to feed one man for one day
5. Three quarts of barley –
 - Cheaper grain
 - Three meals for one man
6. Work all day just to feed self
 - not enough for—
 - a. Shelter
 - b. Food for family
- d. Yet some eat well
 1. The oil and wine
- e. The World’s economic-system collapses
 1. World wide disasters
 2. Satan’s man – messiah – has utterly failed

4. The Pale Horse (v. 7-8)

(7) When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!” (8) 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.

- a. The 4th Seal
 1. Death

- b. “pale” = Greek = “chloros”
 - 1. Color of Chlorine Gas – death –
- c. The results of wars – famine – disease
 - 1. DEATH
 - 2. ¼ of the earth
 - 3. Atom and the “nuclear winter”
 - 4. Wild beasts roam and kill
- d. One Billion dead!
 - 1. And the worst is yet to be revealed
 - 2. And yet they believe this
 - 3. (II Thes. 2:7-12)

⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.