

Session 3: The Second, Third, and Fourth Seals: War, Famine, and Death

REVIEW: THE SEAL JUDGMENTS WILL TARGET THE HARLOT BABYLON

Roman Numeral I. As we are looking at the third session, we explore the second, third, and fourth seals. We are going to look at all three of them tonight. I want to give just a quick review:

Paragraph A. The seven seals, all seven of them, are released by Jesus. Because when you read them, and you are new, you kind of assume the Antichrist is releasing them. It is *Jesus* who is releasing them. That is an easy statement until you start studying them. Then when you start studying them you say, “Lord, I am now in a dilemma. How could you release these?”

THE SEVEN SEALS ARE RELEASED BY JESUS THE LAMB, NOT THE DEVIL

As long as you just say, “He releases the seals,” no problem. Then when you start studying them in detail, the dilemma we have is that we do not really understand the Jesus of the Bible.

We mostly are familiar with the Jesus of Western culture. The Jesus of the Bible and the Jesus of Western culture are not the same. It is very one-sided, the Jesus of Western culture.

The study of the book of Revelation challenges our thinking to expand so that we say what the Bible says and believe what the Bible says. The book of Revelation describes Jesus’ leadership to prepare the nations. It is His leadership that is on display as He is bringing His judgment against the Antichrist and the nations that are in agreement with the Antichrist.

Paragraph B. These seals are literal, and they are in the future, meaning you will find that some scholars want to make them symbolic and historical. In other words, they want to get rid of them. They have already taken place, so there is no reason to concern ourselves with them. There is no dilemma about the Jesus who would release these. They have already happened, and everybody is happy.

No, they are future, and they are literal. Do not explain them away as symbolic.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION IS OFFENSIVE TO THE NATURAL MIND

Paragraph C. The book of Revelation, which is the book that highlights Jesus' leadership in transitioning this earth to the age to come, is the most offensive book to the natural mind—to the mind unaided by the Holy Spirit. It is politically incorrect. It cannot be more politically incorrect to the natural mind.

So those of you who speak the truth of this book, you have to settle the issue. You are going to be rejected, and you are even going to be persecuted. I do not say that so you get into a persecution complex. That is not my point. My point is so that you do not get into a self-pity complex. Just settle it. If you magnify this part of Jesus, this part of His leadership and His heart, you will have many people upset with you in the Church and outside the Church.

It is not so troubling in 2009. As a few decades unfold and we get closer to the time where these events will be happening, it will become not just a theoretical discussion; it will become something that is invasive and personal, and it will confront in a way that it is not right now.

The Lord is raising up faithful witnesses in the Church—forerunners who will begin to eat the scroll. That is a phrase from Revelation 10 when the angel told John to eat the scroll. To digest the message of this book so that we can speak it clearly and tenderly and faithfully. We do not draw back in any way. We cannot domesticate the book of Revelation by dumbing it down and explaining it away so that there is no offense in it for the future.

SEAL JUDGMENTS TARGET THE NATIONS THAT ALIGN WITH THE HARLOT BABYLON

Paragraph D. The seal judgments are targeting the nations that have aligned with the harlot Babylon. The first judgment is the raising up of the Antichrist. So it is not the Antichrist against himself.

He is actually judging the most powerful, political, and religious force in the earth at that time. This is the religious harlot Babylon. The religious system, the one-world system that has influence with kings. It has influence with the merchants. And it has influence with the wealthy of the earth, the powerful of the earth, and it has great influence with the religions of the earth. At the time the first seal is

released, the most powerful force in the earth will be the harlot Babylon because of its political, economic, and religious influence and unity, and the endorsement that it has.

The thing that is always so surprising to those who are new to studying the book of Revelation—the Antichrist is the one who burns the harlot Babylon. He uses her, and then he discards her. He helps raise her up before he comes on the world stage while he is still a regional leader. He has the same evil spirit she has, but at the end of the day this system gets in his way. So he burns it, removes it, and starts another world religion called Antichrist worship, which is intolerant and far more focused on his agenda.

These judgments—the Antichrist is actually going forth, but Jesus is releasing the Antichrist to go forth. He is going forth to judge the nations that were in unity with the harlot Babylon religion. Again, it had economic and political overtones to it as well.

PROGRESSION OF THE SEALS

Paragraph E. Each of the first four seals goes together as a group. They are grouped together, as are the first four trumpets and the first four bowls of wrath. The first four cluster together as a group. The first four naturally lead one to another.

The first one, the Antichrist goes forth, but he goes forth in political aggression. There is no bloodshed at the first seal. The second seal leads to world war. Then the third seal, which naturally happens after world war, is economic crisis and famine. After that, the fourth one is pestilence. It is a natural flow of events following one after the other.

REMOVING RESTRAINT

Paragraph F. The Antichrist is connected to each of the four horsemen and the events of the four horsemen. They show four dimensions of his reign of terror against the very nations he is going to take over. You would think, because you have a clear conscience and the Holy Spirit has blessed you in the grace of God with common sense—you might think, “Why would he not be nice to the people he is taking over?”

Throughout history, dictators are rarely nice to the people they conquer and make them serve them. Adolph Hitler was cruel and brutal to the nations he took over that he wanted to serve him. So were Stalin and many others. They were brutal to the very people that they wanted to serve. They killed them, in some cases with no mercy whatsoever. There was cruel bloodshed to the very people serving them. The four horsemen show four different dimensions of the Antichrist's reign of terror.

Paragraph G. What is happening in the seals is that God is taking His restraining hand off of wicked men. He is going to allow them to see what is really in their hearts. He is going to allow what is in their heart to come out. This has to happen. This is an idea that many believers have never thought through—that the evil in man's heart must be manifest, the evil that is truly there. Because men have an unperceived evil in their heart, they think they are doing well. They think they are doing well with God; they think they are okay.

If the right context is in place, what they really want comes to the surface. It is horrifying what is in man's heart, except for the grace of God. The truth of man must be made manifest for the justice of God to be magnified as He finishes His purposes in this age.

The truth of His judgments cannot be seen until the truth of man's heart is seen. The most offensive thing in the Church today, even in the Church, is the judgment of God, because the Church does not buy into what God says about the human heart.

The Church says, "I know I am a mess, but . . ." The Lord says, "You have no idea. Billions of people hate Me. They hate Me beyond what they understand. I am going to allow a context for their love for Me in the Church and their hatred for Me to come to the surface."

Of course in that context, the great harvest—we trust God for a billion people to come into the kingdom from all the tribes and the Body of Christ working together. The reason God's judgments are so offensive is because we do not have clarity of the true condition He is judging.

HOW GOD JUDGES EVIL

God's judgments: He will not release His judgments upon men who have evil thoughts. They have to act out their evil thoughts. They have to be deeds. He will not release judgments on the musing of evil, the pondering of it, but only on the acting it out.

He is going to give, before history transitions to the age to come, and we are still on the earth. We do not believe in the end of the world. We believe in the end of the age because Jesus comes back and sets His kingdom up on the earth.

It is not the end of the earth. The earth transitions to the age to come. We are still on the earth. Before that transition will happen, the Lord says, "I will not release my judgments, except the truth of man comes to the surface, good and bad."

The Body of Christ will love Jesus like no time in history, and the wicked will do wickedness like no time in history. God's justice will be magnified and the truth of His justice will be seen.

Part of that is in God allowing evil men to act against evil men.

ADOLPH HITLER AND NAZI GERMANY

I often draw the analogy of the Antichrist's reign of terror, because one of the best analogies is Adolph Hitler in Nazi Germany. It is not a perfect analogy, but it is as good of one I can see through history. I have been an amateur student of WWII for many years. One of the shocking things which is true in many wars is how in this culture, highly intelligent, dignified nations, when given the right context, turned on each other and killed each other. I am talking about the Holocaust right now. For example, take the good old guy who is thirty years old, a normal guy who gets a badge. The political climate changes, and he brutalizes his neighbors who were once his good friends—that is in the human heart. What God is doing in the seals, He is lifting His restraining hand off, and He is allowing the truth of the human race to come to the surface. That is an important backdrop to understanding the seals.

His justice is magnified. His justice and His love—there is no contradiction in them, by the way. We do not really like His love and kind of go shy on His justice. His love and His justice are identical. He does not suspend one attribute to exercise another. He does not have to hold His breath on His love to show justice. His love

is manifest in His justice, and His justice is manifest in His love. There is no contradiction in anything He does.

GOD ALLOWS MAN TO DO WHAT IS TRULY IN HIS HEART

So in the seals, the Lord is in effect saying, “I will let you have what you want. I will let you have—I will let the human heart in wickedness go to the full extreme that it wants to go. I will show you the truth.”

On the other side, the grace of God will be poured out, the greatest revival in history. The Body of Christ will come to such a level that the Holy Spirit will restore the first commandment to first place in the Body of Christ. He is going to restore the first commandment to first place. The church will love Jesus like no time in history worldwide. In the grace of God, that will come to the surface too.

THE SEALS ARE REDEMPTIVE

Paragraph H. The seal judgments are redemptive. They are not just punitive. God is not just showing judgment on those who deserve it. It is not just punishment. It is actually redemptive. He is going to reveal the condition of the human heart, good and bad.

He is going to magnify His justice. He is going to create a context for the harvest to come forth. He is actually cleansing the earth as well for Jesus’ reign upon the earth. There is a dimension of Him purging the earth. He is doing that through the tribulation judgments as well.

The events in these seals will create the context for the most powerful prayer movement in human history. The prayer movement will affect the seals. The seals will strengthen the prayer movement.

They will go hand in hand. As the judgments intensify, the prayers will become more focused, more unified, and the Body of Christ will be more pure and in unity together with each other and in agreement with God.

SECOND SEAL: BLOODSHED AND THE FINAL WORLD WAR (REV. 6:3–4)

We are going to look at three seals. The second, third, and fourth tonight. The second seal—bloodshed and world war. Another world war is coming. The scope of it will be far greater than the first and second world wars.

Revelation 6:3: “When He opened the second seal”—that is Jesus, Jesus is the One releasing this. Again, when you really study this with a heart of devotion, with an “I love You” in your heart towards Jesus, you start thinking, “I love You, Jesus. I thank You for Your leadership in the second seal.” Then read the second seal. You think, “I love You and . . . uh . . . I do not know what you are doing?” I mean it.

There is a conflict that comes to a head when you start thanking Him for His leadership in the book of Revelation. You go, “Hmm. I do not get it. I am more of a Westerner than I am a kingdom of God guy. Help me renew my mind so I am first a kingdom of God guy and second a Westerner.” That will take time, because our minds are far more anchored in Western culture than the revelation of the Word. Mine is. I am sure many of you are in the same boat. It is a challenge.

When I begin to thank Jesus for His leadership in these seals, trumpets, and bowls, at first it is like, “That is hard to say.”

Jesus says, “Why? You do not think My leadership is good?”

“Well, no. I know it is good.”

“Then thank Me for it.”

“Uh, well, I can say ‘Thank You for Your leadership.’”

Jesus replies, “No, be detailed. Actually name the things I am going to do.”

It creates a conflict. That is where the gap between what the Bible says and our unrenewed mind is—right there. Just by thanking Him for these, one by one, for His leadership.

He is allowing the devil to move. He is allowing evil men to move. You do not thank Him for that part, but you thank Him for His leadership. It shows the gaps in your thinking and in my thinking from how God thinks.

Anyway, verse 3, Jesus opened the second seal: “I heard the second living creature”—there are four living creatures around the throne. One of the living creatures in each of the first four seals say the same thing one after the other. They say to John, “Come and see.”

COME AND SEE

What that means is “Come near and see clearly. Come near God and see clearly what this is. Understand the significance and the implications. Come and see this.” I have asked the Lord and many of you are saying, “I want to come near You, Lord.”

Because if we do not come near, we will not see clearly. We will end up getting distorted in our perceptions. I say, “Lord, I want to see this.” Then the Lord could whisper—I do not hear the whispers, but I imagine He whispers, “Okay, here is the deal. Come near. I will show you more, but you have to say what you see.”

That will get you in trouble with many people. “Come and see” has an implication to it, but it is worth it. Because any time you come near and you see clearly and it is related to Jesus, it is good.

FIERY RED HORSE

Verse 4: there is another horse. Because the first one was the white horse we looked at in the previous session. This one is a fiery red horse. The fiery red horse—it went out. The Lord Jesus released this fiery red horse.

“It was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, so that the people should kill one another. There was granted to this one on the horse a great sword” (v. 4, paraphrased). This does not sound like the Jesus of Christmas.

“Take peace from the earth? I thought You were taking peace to the earth?” He is, but the way He is bringing peace to the earth is by confronting the evil, and it is the unrepentant evil He is after.

He has tremendous mercy on evil when we repent of it, but it is the unrepentant evil He is targeting. That is the part we do not get. We all get that people are evil and they need to repent. Everyone grasps that concept.

What we do not really grasp is the magnitude of how stubborn people will be, even in the presence and power of God. We would think, “If God is revealing His power, get with it.” It is called “the mystery of iniquity” (paraphrased) in the Bible in 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY

It is called the mystery of iniquity because evil has a power that is mysterious. Even in the presence of the glory of God, people will still hate Him. They will hate Him perfectly. It confuses us because we have been touched by the grace of God.

He is going to bring peace on the earth. Firstly, He will cause peace to be removed to confront the evil against His kingdom. He is going to bring it to the surface, drive it off the planet, and then establish peace on the earth forever.

Paragraph A. Fiery red speaks of worldwide bloodshed. At the time of the first seal, the Harlot Church has been prospering worldwide. Kings (political leaders), the great merchants (the wealthy leaders of the earth), and the peoples of the earth have all been really enjoying this system.

HARLOT BABYLON: ONE-WORLD CHURCH

The harlot Babylon one-world church will be far beyond how it exists right now. It does not exist right now. There are organizations called that. I am talking about something far more powerful and pervasive than anything that exists today.

There is another thing that is happening. There is world peace. That the powers that be have actually brought the conflict in the Middle East and the globalization processes will work where there will be short-term world peace.

COUNTERFEIT PEACE BEFORE THE STORM

This second seal is what shatters the world peace. Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 5:3 (paraphrased), “When they say (nations) peace and safety,” meaning peace in the nations and safety, the terrorism problem is settled and the economic problem is settled. There is safety.

We are not worried about bombs going off or big buildings being blown up by terrorists. There will be peace and safety in the nations of the earth. Peace and safety in the nations of the earth, peace politically and safely. Paul said (paraphrased), “When the nations are saying that, do not buy into it because suddenly: destruction.” He is actually talking about the second seal. War breaks out. Suddenly that temporary, short-term, superficial, counterfeit peace will evaporate.

It will be shown to be what it really is: not real. When that peace process is developing, the people who are saying, “This is not that. It will not last”—others will say, “Yeah, you Christians, you pray for peace. We finally get it and you are saying it is of the devil.” I can just imagine how that is going to sound. This red horse with a great sword is going to end this temporary time of peace.

GREAT SWORD

Paragraph B. The great sword speaks of violence in civil and military areas. It is a great sword because of the great number that it kills. The great devastation it brings, and the great sophistication and technology of the military equipment and apparatus, and all that is involved.

The fire will be great. The sword will be great in every way. It will be surprising to the nations. The word “great” is not good right here in terms of the natural. This is a terrifying word.

Paragraph C. Jeremiah the prophet spoke about specifically the second seal. In Jeremiah 25:29, he said, “I will call for a sword on all the inhabitants of the earth.” Verse 30: “The Lord will roar . . . against all the inhabitants.”

Verses 31–32 (paraphrased): “For the Lord has a controversy with the nations; He will plead His case against all flesh. He will give those who are wicked over to the sword . . . Behold, disaster will go from nation to nation.”

Verse 33: “At that day, the slain of the Lord shall be from one end of the earth to another.” Jeremiah is actually seeing, 600 years before Christ, the second seal. He is looking 2,500+ years into the future. He is describing the second seal.

TAKE PEACE FROM THE EARTH

Paragraph D. This rider will take peace from the earth. This peace will be removed quite quickly. Remember, the world has been saying, “Peace and safety,” until this hour.

They start getting nervous in the first seal when the Antichrist goes forth conquering and to conquer. It is bloodless conquest. It is political aggression without actually killing anyone.

They are nervous: “He is acting differently than he has in the past.” Then at the second seal, he takes his mask off and shows the truth of who he is—a man of violence. Peace will be taken from the earth.

It will start off as civil unrest, just social conflict and strife. Then it will go to oppression by the government. Your own government. Governments will oppress their own people. Then it will end up in international conflict. Peace will be taken from the earth in all these arenas.

God offered the nations a Lamb, and they said no. So now God sent them the Beast. He says, “You do not want the Lamb, then you will have the Beast.” It is years later, but from the historical point of view, from God’s point of view, He goes, “I will give you what you want.”

JESUS RELEASES THE SECOND SEAL, WHICH ENDS PEACE

Paragraph E. Jesus is the One releasing the second seal. It just says it. He opens the second seal and releases these events. This is contrary to what we believe about Jesus. We all know the famous verse—we do not know what to do with it, but we know it is there—Matthew 10:34 (paraphrased): “I did not come to bring peace, but I came to bring a sword.” Jesus was actually talking in the full sense of the second seal, through there was certainly historical application of this in 70 AD and different parts of history. This has its fullest application at the second seal. He is releasing the sword. He is lifting His hand off of evil men and allowing them to do what they are going to do. He is going to bring evil to the surface. Then He is going to drive it off the planet. He is going to do it in a way that magnifies His justice.

He says, “Do not think I came to bring peace.” Jesus is thirty-something, and somebody might say, “Hey, I remember thirty plus years ago, the story when You were born. I lived in Your town. I heard the story. The angel said, ‘Peace and goodwill.’ Of course You are coming to bring peace—what do You mean, ‘Not to bring peace?’”

He means initially. Initially in the global sense, in the global, historical sense, there will be conflict before there is world peace. Of course that conflict has been going on for 2,000 years since the cross. That conflict is going to come to a full manifestation.

PEACE COMES THROUGH THE SWORD

Then the peace will fill the earth afterward. Of course we labor for peace. We are mandated to labor for peace from the cross to the second coming. He said, “I want you to know, there will never be world peace until the sword is released in its fullness.”

We pray for peace. We labor for peace. We understand there is coming a plan. He orchestrates it. We do not need to orchestrate it. He will release the red horse. The second seal.

When Jesus said, “I did not come to bring peace on the earth,” He knew He was going to release the second seal 2,000 years later. He knew all about it. That was not a new idea to Him.

John was surprised about the second seal and the great sword being released. Jesus was not. He knew when He said this. Paragraph F. He is the Prince of Peace, Isaiah 9. The angel said He would bring peace and good will on the earth.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE WILL BRING PEACE AFTER CONFRONTING EVIL

He will. But He actually needs to confront the evil that is unrepented as part of the process of ultimately establishing peace in all the nations, which will happen at the second coming and then the millennial kingdom. This Jesus who is coming to release a sword on His way to release peace creates great confusion in believers who do not understand the basics. Nobody understands fully what the Scripture says about the end times—the ten or fifteen fundamental principles about God’s end-time purpose.

If they do not understand that, they are in conflict with what Jesus is saying in Matthew 10. Because He is the Prince of Peace and we do not know what He is doing in Revelation 6 releasing a sword.

It seems like a contradiction, but it is not. The Prince of Peace is confronting the issues necessary in order to establish world peace permanently. True peace. I will not go into detail on this, but paragraph H, from Daniel 11.

Daniel prophesied about the second seal. He prophesied about the time the Antichrist would begin to aggressively pursue war in the second seal. The angel

told Daniel in Daniel 11:38 (paraphrased), “This man will honor a god of fortress, or a god of war. He shall honor the god of military power.”

UNPRECEDENTED STRENGTH

He is going to honor it with money, meaning he is going to use unprecedented amounts of money to establish his military agenda. Demons will be involved with him. He will have supernatural power also operating with him and also unprecedented amounts of money to honor the god of war.

Paragraph I. Daniel is in the same prophecy. He is recording what the angel says. The Antichrist shall enter countries, he will overthrow them, and he will be against them (v. 42). He points out that Egypt specifically will not escape his oppression. He is describing the second seal. He will overwhelm, overthrow, and be against the countries of the earth. He will not take over every country, but he will conquer many. Not all of them. There will be countries resisting him even at the end.

THE RIDER IS GRANTED A SWORD

Paragraph K. This rider is granted a sword. God is the One who is releasing, or allowing, this situation to take place. He is not responsible for it in this sense. Evil operating in the human heart and the evil in the demonic kingdom are ultimately responsible for the negative. What God is doing—He is allowing the situation to be released where it is unrestrained and can be fully manifest.

It is granted. Twenty-two times in the book of Revelation, it says, “It is granted,” or “It is given.” The vast majority of those—the implication is that it is by God. God is not surprised by these events. They have been recorded for the Church to study for 2,000 years. They are not a surprise at all. Then the living creature says, Paragraph L, “Come and see” (Rev. 6:2). He says (paraphrased), “John, come near to God. Come close.” Because you are never going to see clearly if you do not connect with God in a deeper way.

Because without connecting with Jesus in a deeper way, it is not like our intellect will not work. It is that our biases will keep us from seeing clearly. When we come near Him and our spirits are tenderized and our agendas are laid aside, then we can see more clearly. We need to come near to see clearly. The reason that I and all of us do not see is because we have agendas and we have biases in our viewpoints. We see and then we say, “No. That is not what it says.”

“What else could it say?”

“Give me a minute and I will figure out a way to get rid of that verse.”

When you come near, you see clearly because your agendas and biases become minimized.

THIRD SEAL: FAMINE AND ECONOMIC CRISIS

Roman numeral III. The third seal. Verse 5: “When He opened the third seal.” It is Jesus acting again. This is equally troubling as taking peace from the earth. It is famine on the earth.

“Famine? Like what?”

“People die of hunger. Babies die.”

“Not famine.”

He opened the seal. John heard the third living creature say, “John, come close again. See this. Understand its significance. Understand its levels of implications. Do not only think of time. Think of eternity. You have to see clearly, not just temporally. You have to see from God’s agenda—the big picture. Or you will never get what is going on. If you can only see the here and now, you are going to have a bias and you are going to have an agenda against this. So you have to come near and see clearly” (Rev. 6:5, paraphrased).

He says this four times in a row. Our temptation is to not come near and to not see clearly, but to stay in a place where our biases and our agendas minimize clearly what the Word says.

“So I looked” (v. 5). This time it is a black horse. “He who sat upon it had a pair of scales in his hand. Then I heard a voice” (v. 5, paraphrased). The voice of God is speaking now. It is coming from the midst of the living creatures.

The living creatures are around the throne, right? The four living creatures are the ones saying, “Holy, holy, holy,” around the throne night and day. There is a voice coming from where they are. In other words, it is coming from the throne.

Revelation 4:8—the living creatures are night and day around the throne. So a voice from the throne says this, describes the details of the famine.

“A quart of wheat for a denarius. Three quarts of barley for a denarius. But do not harm the oil and the wine” (Rev. 6:6, paraphrased).

BLACK HORSE

Paragraph A. The black horse speaks of the sorrow and the mourning and the sadness that will come to the earth.

The red horse spoke of bloodshed. This will be sorrow and mourning. The most natural thing after a global conflict is famine. They go together. In the time of war, there is famine in the nations that are under the attack.

Paragraph B. “A pair of scales” (Rev. 6:5): that speaks of economics, trade, and the market place. There is going to be a tremendous shift. What he is going to see when you do the math is the buying power is going to be reduced to one-tenth of what the buying power is normally in the world market.

It will be one-tenth of what it has been the last decades around the world—just a ballpark ratio there. Paragraph B, the greatest economic crisis and the greatest famine in history are yet to come. In the midst of that, Jesus will be in the midst of His Church, and there will be supernatural provision.

I do not mean everybody will be eating fine dining. That is not what I am talking about.

One of the most prominent miracles in the gospels was the multiplying of the food. It happened three times. It is not the same story told three times. It is three different occasions He multiplied food. It is recorded and it is one of those prominent miracles of Jesus.

Moses, when he left Egypt—one of the most prominent displays of the power of God was the provision of food and water supernaturally. When Elijah was confronting Jezebel and the great drought famine, there was supernatural provision of food. I believe there will be supernatural provision.

Paragraph C. “A quart of wheat for a denarius” (Rev. 6:6): that is a simple message. It is a bad message, but it is a simple one. A denarius was one day’s wages. It is what a common worker received for one day of work. Here is the problem. A quart of wheat—you can live on a quart of wheat, barely. You will lose

weight. If all you eat is a quart of wheat, you will not die of starvation. You will lose a little weight, but you will make it.

A guy will work all day and he will only have food for one person to eat at the most meager level. Well, he has a family of five, but there is only enough for one to eat. They do not pay the house payment, the car, and the utilities—just enough for one person to eat. The other four, there is no provision. It is a crisis beyond what we can even imagine on a global level.

Paragraph D. “Three quarts of barley for a denarius” (Rev. 6:6): you can get three times as much barley. Barley is cheaper. It is an inferior grain that does not taste as good—not as nutritious. The guy says, “I worked all day. I would rather not have less taste and nutrition, but three of us in the family get to eat today.”

You get to have the quality—a quart of grain. Or the sacrificial—the quart of barley, and three of you get a quart. The options are terrible. He goes on in paragraph F, “Do not harm the oil and the wine” (v. 6). There will be a very small elite in the Antichrist hierarchy that will have luxury, even in the midst of the greatest famine in history. The Antichrist’s reign of terror—by the time the third seal is happening, the wicked in the nations are troubled because he is striking against the nations that were aligning with the harlot Babylon.

These things happened one after the other, by the way—one event on top of the other. They also hit his own kingdom. All of these touch his own kingdom. Even though they are his acts, they are ultimately destroying the resources of his own kingdom. They are God’s judgments against him and the wicked in the nations who are resisting His kingdom.

This voice, paragraph G, is “in the mist of the living creatures” (v. 6, paraphrased). This is the voice of God. Jesus is the One actually orchestrating this at the highest level, though He is using evil men and even the cooperation of demons.

At the higher level, evil men and demons would do that today if Jesus would let them have their way. He will not let them have their way, just a little bit. He will take His hand off of them and let them have their own way. This will be their own judgment against their own kingdoms and their own empires. The Antichrist’s actions will come back on him—very similar to Adolph Hitler. His own actions came back and destroyed his own empire.

OUR ACTIONS WILL BRING JUDGMENT ON US

What God is doing in the seals—He is letting men’s actions bring judgment on men. If the Lord took His hand right now off the nations, we would end up in a mess right now. It is His goodness constantly keeping things in order in ways we do not grasp.

In eternity, we will see the details of His leadership. We will be awestruck about how many things He kept in order. The nations cry out and say, “If God is real, why does He not do something?”

He could answer, “If I took My hand off, you cannot imagine the chaos men would be in if they could do what they wanted.”

GOD IS WORKING FOR THE ETERNAL GOOD OF ALL PEOPLE

Paragraph one under G. He is working for the eternal good of His people. He is allowing these extreme measures because He is going to bring full blessing to the earth forever and ever and ever. He is working from an eternal point of view, not only a temporal one.

You will never understand Jesus by only thinking of what He is doing for you in the next three months or three years. You have to think what He is doing for you in the next three million years—not the next three years. That is the only way you can relate to Him. You will miss out on His leadership. He cares too much about you and me to only let things be released that have an impact right now in a three-year timeframe.

He is thinking of the eternal and the long-term conditions of the nations. He is saying by speaking His voice, “I will not be distant. I will not be uninvolved. I will monitor all of this. I will be there. I understand it. I am the One who is describing it.”

FOURTH SEAL: ONE-FOURTH OF THE EARTH’S PEOPLE DIE (REV. 6:7–8)

The fourth seal: “Behold, a pale horse. The name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. Power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, hunger, death, and by the beasts of the earth” (Rev. 6:8, paraphrased).

“The pale horse”: Some translations, instead of the word “pale,” they will put the words “pale green” or “ashen,” which is the color of decay, of death. One-fourth of the earth is going to die unnatural deaths—everybody dies. These are unnatural deaths. One-fourth! This is so staggering, we can hardly get our mind around this. This number is so huge, we cannot grasp it. Paragraph C.

SPIRIT OF DEATH

The name of the rider on this pale green or ashen horse, his name is Death. It is a spirit of death. The spirit of death is going to be released in a way that is beyond the normal way that the spirit of death operates—in a heightened way, on a global level. The spirit of death will be in hot pursuit of the victims of the earth. It is on a horse chasing the victims of the earth.

HADES

Paragraph C. Death is what happens to a person’s body. Hades is the place they go. Hades is a place. Death is what happens when a person’s spirit leaves their body. The unbelievers go to hades. That is a prison they go to wait for the final judgment. Death and hades are not synonymous. They go together. When you die, your spirit leaves your body, you go to paradise. You go to God’s presence.

An unbeliever—a demon spirit will bring them captive to hades in prison. Another word for “hades” is “hell.” We are familiar with hell, but it is often translated “hades,” which is a prison. It is the county jail, so to speak.

Because the federal prison—the final prison is the lake of fire after the great white throne. All the unrighteous that die go to the county jail, so to speak. They go to hades until after the millennial kingdom. Then they are cast forever into the federal prison, which is the lake of fire. That is the big sentence.

This is only the temporary one, hades. You have read at the end of Revelation 20 where hades is thrown into the lake of fire. It means everybody in that temporary prison, all of them, billions and billions, are thrown into the lake of fire. That is what it means by hades is thrown into the lake of fire later on in Revelation 20.

The picture is graphic. That the spirit of death is on the horse and the spirit of death takes the person and then Hades, the demon responsible to imprison them, is keeping pace with the horse.

Hades is as eager as death is. He says, “I am keeping pace with you. I want to imprison them and bring them to torment right now.” It is a terrifying picture.

POWER WAS GIVEN TO THEM OVER A FOURTH OF THE EARTH

It says, “Power was given to them over a fourth of the earth” (Rev. 6:8). This is a staggering concept. “To them”—that is Death and Hades, but I believe the “them” is not only the fourth seal. My assumption, and I could be wrong on this, is that the “them” is all four judgments. The first, second, third, and fourth seals are all coming to a conclusion here in the fourth one. My assumption is the one-fourth of the earth is the total of all those who have died in seals one, two, three, and four.

It might just be the fourth seal. It is really bad news either way it goes. It is so big we cannot grasp it. “Power was given to them.” Is the “them” the first four seals? Or is the “them” Death and Hades? Both/and. Either/or.

Paragraph J. These are the same four judgments that God spoke to Ezekiel about. Look at Ezekiel 14:21, thus says the Lord, “How much more shall it be when I send My four severe judgments . . . ?”

“The sword, famine, wild beasts, and pestilence” (Rev. 6:8, paraphrased): the same four. The Lord identifies with them in a special way. He calls them, “These are My four severe judgments” (Ezek. 14:21, paraphrased). The sword, number one, speaks of the human violence.

That is the second seal. The famine is the third seal. The word “death”—most Bibles translate it—it is the word often translated in the New Testament as “disease” and “pestilence.” My assumption—and I am not a Greek scholar; my assumption, having read a number who are scholars—they say this word “death” is the word translated in the New Testament a number of times as “disease” and “pestilence.” It ends up, if it is the word “pestilence”—that is my assumption—it ends up being the same four judgments God told Ezekiel about. My assumption is it is “disease.” So the uniqueness of the fourth seal is the disease dimension—the disease and the wild beast. Because the sword and the famine have already been operating from the second and third seal.

“The wild beasts” (Rev. 6:8, paraphrased): that is an interesting one. Well, they are all interesting. When men die, wild beasts multiply. Disease-carrying wild beasts. It might now just be the wild beasts attacking people. It might be wild beasts as

carriers of disease. That is a reality. If you remember the passage in Revelation 12:9 when there is war in the heavens and Satan and all of his demons are cast to the earth—it says, “They will be cast to the earth” (paraphrased).

Demons in the gospels are shown to inhabit animals. So there are going to be billions of demons on the earth. Wild animals and the two will come together. No doubt there is something related to that as well. So it is animals attacking, as well as, very possibly, animals as carriers of pestilence. Attacking and pestilence are the two main ways that I think of this. Obviously there could be many more applications than I can think of or any of us could at this time.

THE MAGNITUDE OF THE DEATH TOLL OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION

In conclusion here, I want to give you a sense—now you will not relate to this, but you will say, “Oh. I do not even know what to do with this.” I want to give you the magnitude of what one-fourth of the earth dying means.

The projected population in 2025 is eight billion people. I am not saying the Lord is coming in 2025. I am not remotely saying that. I am just giving a projection. I picked when the number was round. I was looking for a date when there was a round number. If it happened to be around that time and it may be a few decades later, maybe earlier or later. Nobody knows the day or the hour.

If a fourth of the earth died, that would be two billion people. Two billion. Instead of eight billion, there would now be six billion on the earth.

SIX TRUMPET: ANOTHER ONE-THIRD DIES

Paragraph B. We find out in Revelation 9:15 that in the sixth trumpet, a third of the earth dies. This is about a year or two later. After a fourth dies, then a year or two goes by and a third die.

So a third of six billion is another two billion. These are two different waves of death. The total is four billion people. Now you understand why people want to make this symbolic. They have to get rid of these numbers somehow. It is easier to just make it symbolic and go on your way.

It is not symbolic. The Bible gives a number (unless it indicates it is symbolic), because there are some times the Scripture makes it clear that it is symbolic. The

book of Revelation—we are to take it at face value except when it indicates it is symbolic.

Maybe ten or fifteen times, the angel says in essence, “Hey, this is symbolic.” Then, of course you take it symbolically. If not, we do not have the liberty to go there. We need to take Scripture at face value.

DEATH TOLL IS NEARLY 100 TIMES THE TOTAL OF WORLD WAR II

Paragraph C. The death toll of World War II was fifty million people, approximately. Nobody knows the exact number. Four billion is about 100 times the total of that. I mean, we cannot even get our mind around this at all!

If four billion people died in the final three and a half years of the seals, trumpets, and bowls, that means three million a day. Three million a day! That is approximate. That means that is about the death toll of World War II, almost double, every single month for forty-two months in a row.

We will end with this prophecy of Jesus. Jesus said, “There will be great tribulation such has not been since the beginning of the world, nor shall it ever be. Unless those days were cut short, no human being would be physically saved” (Mt. 24:21–22, paraphrased).

JESUS THE PROPHET

Nobody would survive it on the earth. Jesus the Prophet. We love Jesus the Savior. We love Jesus the Healer, Jesus the Provider, but Jesus the Prophet who said this—we do not know what to do with Jesus the Prophet.

He is the One who gave us the book of Revelation. Jesus the Prophet is a trouble. We like the Savior, the Healer, the Provider, the Helper, the Forgiver, but Jesus the Prophet is troublesome.

When I look at this, this should be, in our thinking, one of the weightiest prophecies. I like the positive ones. In the category of the negative, this is Jesus—this is not Jeremiah, though he is moved by the Holy Spirit anyway.

This is Jesus describing the future, the final hours before He comes. I look at this and I say, “Lord, this is You talking. I love You. I trust You. I believe You. Ahh. What meaneth all this?”

GOD’S SOLUTION: RAISE UP FORERUNNERS

The Lord is promising, “I am going to raise up forerunners. I am going to raise up those who will be a source of wisdom and a vessel of salvation.” The great harvest will come. It will be the hour of the victorious Church. The Church will have the largest number, the greatest purity, the greatest power, the greatest victory than in any other time in history. Amen.



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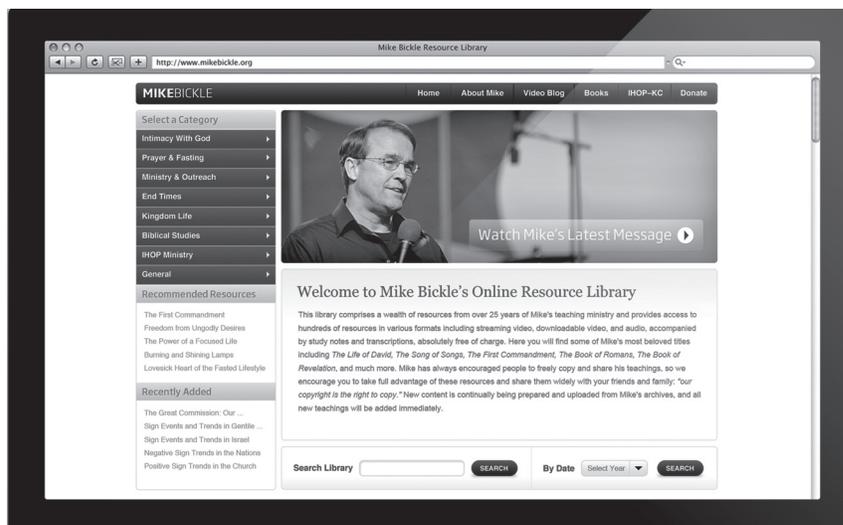
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