

Revelation 6: The First Seal and the White Horse

Revelation 6:1–2 | Sunday, April 12 | Revelation Series

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OVERVIEW

The recording opens mid-flow, with Hal finishing a survey of the book's structure before he reaches the seal he means to teach. He walks the group through what he calls the vignettes — the chapters that stop the chronology to explain a person or a movement: chapter 11 and the two witnesses raised at the exact middle of the seven years, chapter 12 and the mystery of antisemitism, chapter 13's prophetic biography of the Roman Antichrist and the false prophet, chapter 14 and the ultimate victory of the 144,000, chapter 15 where he says God's grace is finally exhausted, and chapters 17 and 18 on the religious and the economic aspects of the mystery of Babylon. From there he goes to Matthew 24:15 and the abomination that causes desolation, to 2 Thessalonians 2, and to Ezekiel 38. Only near the end does he open Revelation 6:1–2: the Lamb breaks the first seal, a living creature says "go," and a rider on a white horse goes out with a bow, no arrows, and a crown he is given. Hal reads him as the Antichrist, not as Christ.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Revelation 6:1–2 — The Lamb breaks the first seal — a white horse, a bow, a crown, going out conquering

Revelation 19:11 — The rider called faithful and true, whose name is called the Word of God

Revelation 11 — The two witnesses raised and caught up at the exact middle of the seven years

Revelation 12 — Israel, and what Hal calls the mystery of antisemitism

Revelation 13 — A prophetic biography of the Roman Antichrist and the false prophet

Revelation 14 — The 144,000 standing on mount Zion with Jesus at the end of the Tribulation

Matthew 24:15 — The abomination that causes desolation standing in the holy place

2 Thessalonians 2 — The man of lawlessness takes his seat in the temple of God and declares himself to be God

Ezekiel 38 — The attack that begins the war in the middle of the seven years

KEY TERMS

Vignette — Hal's word for a chapter that stops the chronology and explains a movement, an event or a person instead of carrying the action forward

The mystery of antisemitism — his label for chapter 12 — the mistreatment of the nation God created, and one of the major reasons he judges the Christ-rejecting world

The abomination that causes desolation — a Hebrew concept meaning the utter desecration of the holy of holies of the temple

“Go,” not “come” — how Hal renders what the living creature says to the rider; he says the Greek word can mean either, and that this one is go

A bow with no arrows — the threat of war rather than war itself — the pseudo peace of the first three and a half years

The twelfth imam — the figure Hal says the scholars of islam expect to return during a great war and subject the world to islam

Sanctified curiosity — what Hal calls the best tool to have in interpreting the Bible

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer from the message itself. Every answer is in the teaching.

1. What does Hal mean when he calls a chapter of Revelation a vignette?

2. How does Hal label chapter 12, and what does he say it adds?

3. What does chapter 14 show about the 144,000?

4. What passage does Hal connect to the 144,000, and how?

5. What does Hal say happens at the end of chapter 15, and why does it matter?

6. Chapters 17 and 18 both explain the mystery of Babylon. What is the difference between them?

7. What does the abomination that causes desolation mean, and what two instances does Hal give from history?

8. Who will commit the final abomination, and where does Hal get it?

9. According to Ezekiel 38 as Hal reads it, who attacks, and what reason does he give for the timing?

10. What claim by the scholars of islam sends Hal to Revelation 6, and what does he say is wrong with it?

11. In Revelation 6:1–2, what three details does Hal draw out of the text?

12. Why does Hal say the first seal covers more time than any other judgment, and why does he call it the worst of them all?

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

1. Hal says a vignette stops the story to show you a person or a movement whole. What do you gain from a book that keeps interrupting itself that way?

2. The world in this chapter follows a man because he brings peace and solves the insoluble. What makes a promise of security so hard to refuse?

3. Hal says the worst judgment of the whole set is people falling under the spell of a man. Do you agree that deception is worse than disaster? Why?

4. He calls sanctified curiosity the best tool for interpreting the Bible. What is a question about the text you have never let yourself ask?

5. Chapter 15, as Hal reads it, is where grace is finally exhausted. What does it mean to you that grace has a “not yet finished” about it now?

6. The rider of chapter 6 and the rider of chapter 19 both come on a white horse. How do you tell a counterfeit from the real thing when they look alike?

MEMORY VERSE

“And I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer.”

— Revelation 6:2, as Hal reads it in this message