

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

A Lesson in Wanting to Know the Future

Revelation 6:1 Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!"

² And I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer.

³ When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!"

⁴ And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword.

⁵ When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair of scales in his hand.

⁶ And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!"

⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!"

⁸ And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

(Revelation 6:1-8)

Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Four Horsemen in Pop-Culture

There is perhaps no more famous imagery in Revelation than that of the “[Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse](#).” Pop culture is littered with it. [Notre Dame football](#) had them (Harry Stuhldreher, Don Miller, Jim Crowley, Elmer Layden). [The Supreme Court](#) had them (Pierce Butler, James McReynolds, George Sutherland, Willis Van Devanter). [World Championship Wrestling](#) had them (Ric Flair, Arn and Ole Anderson, Tully Blanchard). [Atheism](#) had them (Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, Sam Harris, Daniel Dennett). [Big Tech](#) has them (Google, Facebook, Apple and Amazon). [Hollywood](#) has many movies depicting or discussing them (*The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, *Pale Rider*, *Tombstone*, *The Crow*, *Horsemen*, *X-Men: Apocalypse*, etc.). You find them in music (Metallica’s “The Four Horsemen;” Judas Priest’s “The Four Horsemen;” The Clash’s “Four Horsemen;” Muse’s “Black Holes and Revelations;” Johnny Cash’ “The Man Comes Around;” etc.). There are [role playing games](#) (*Deadlands*), and dozens of [video games](#) about them (*Afterlife*, *Apocalypse*, *Call of Duty*, *City of Heroes*, *The Darkness*, etc.). [Television](#) and books have

an uncounted number of shows and chapters about them.¹ Why there is even a spoof called on *My Little Ponies* called “Apocalypse Ponies,” from the “kids” TV satire show called Robot Chicken. It stars a happy little suburban white family whose children are being naughty and so along come Pestilence Pony (Yellow), Venom Pony (Purple), War Pony (Red), and Death Pony (Black) to exercise “punishment from above” to the jingle of My Little Ponies.

In every instance, the idea is to [link the modern image to that of the coming apocalypse](#) as it is heralded by the four terrifying horses of [Revelation 6:1-8](#). For example, with Notre Dame the legendary sportswriter Grantland Rice took four obscure sophomores in the offensive backfield of coach Knute Rockne’s very first football squad (1924), and after they defeated the highly favored Army team 13-7, he brought sports immorality to them, their coach, and the Fighting Irish in what has become the most famous passage in athletic journalism,

Outlined against a blue-gray October sky, the Four Horsemen rode again. In dramatic lore their names are Death, Destruction, Pestilence, and Famine. But those are aliases. Their real names are: Stuhldreher, Crowley, Miller

¹ See “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse in Popular Culture,” *Wikipedia*, last accessed 2-23-2021. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Horsemen_of_the_Apocalypse_in_popular_culture.

and Layden. They formed the crest of the South Bend cyclone before which another fighting Army team was swept over the precipice at the Polo Grounds this afternoon as 55,000 spectators peered down upon the bewildering panorama spread out upon the green plain below.

With the Supreme Court, four justices were constantly voting to overturn Roosevelt's New Deal initiatives during the Depression. They were destroying everything! The Atheists' whole purpose was to overthrow organized religion. And, of course, you don't want to mess with Ric Flair or anyone he aligned himself with, as he has nine more world titles than Tom Brady! He will destroy anyone who gets into the squared-circle with him and all he has to do is holler, "Whooooooooooooo!"

... of the Apocalypse

As we move into **the meat** of this most difficult of all biblical books to interpret, I want us **to chew on** this idea of *the apocalypse* for a moment. When people hear that term, they automatically think, "**End of the World.**" And of course, that's the way most people today read almost all of Revelation—as exclusively future. Nothing shows this

better than the pop-Christian interpretation of the Four Horsemen. For example, a 2004 book called *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* by Mark Hitchcock (with an endorsement from Tim LaHaye) sells itself this way,

The image of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse in Revelation 6:1-8 is one of the most vivid and powerful in all the writings of the prophets. Their presence speaks of a coming day of horror - the first four judgments of the tribulation. White, red, black, and pale, they will wreak destruction around the world. Prophecy expert Mark Hitchcock takes an in-depth look at the horsemen and shows how today's events point toward the prophecy about them. Signs all around us indicate that the four horsemen of the Apocalypse may be ready to mount up and gallop across the earth.

Into this, Kim Riddlebarger writes something that I'm equally as concerned about as we move into this portion of the book,

Human curiosity can be a good thing. But it can also be a bad thing ... People are naturally curious about what the future holds. It is only natural that we seek explanations for those things which plague human existence; evil and human

suffering, wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes, floods and famines. But add sensational or catastrophic events to our natural curiosity to understand the ebb and flow of human history ... our curiosity jumps off the chart.

Many preachers and Bible teachers tell us that in the Book of Revelation we will find specific explanations for virtually every current event mentioned on the evening news. We are told that the way we should interpret biblical prophecy is by correlating current events with the things God reveals to us here in the Book of Revelation. Yes, Revelation addresses the future. But it does so not by predicting every event which transpires in the middle east or which effects the global economy.²

Recall that early on in the book's history, Christians titled it *Apokalupsis Joannou*, *The Apocalypse of John*. But "apocalypse" doesn't mean "future;" it means "a revelation," and therefore we know it as the book of Revelation. A revelation of what? Unless you have very good biblical justification, to insist that it is *only* the future is to beg the question. Most people just assume this point and run with it from there. And that's how you get the ubiquitous Four Horsemen in popular culture.

² Kim Riddlebarger, "The Seven Seals," Sermons on the Book of Revelation #12: Revelation 6:1-8; Zechariah 6:1-8 (2002).
<file:///Users/douglasvandorn/Downloads/The%20Seven%20Seals%20edited%2012.pdf>.

Context of the Four Horsemen

The Four Horsemen are found in the first eight verses of Revelation 6. This chapter is the second half of the second of the seven “cycles” of the book (chs. 4-7). They are found in the section usually referred to as the seven seals. These seals refer to the scroll that we were first introduced to in Rev 5:1. “Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals” (Rev 5:1). We saw in that chapter how there is no created creature in the universe who is worthy to open this scroll. Yet, there is a lion who is also a lamb, and he is worthy because he has redeemed a people from every tribe and language and nation and tongue through his death on the cross and his shedding of blood they might be saved from sin, death, and the devil.³

We saw previously that this scroll language reminds us very much of Ezekiel 2 which had “written on it words of lamentation and mourning and woe” (Ezek 2:10). We haven’t seen that from our scroll, yet, but we soon will. We were also reminded of Daniel 12:4 and the scroll-book that had to be shut up “until the time of the end.” This “time of the end”

³ A note for a later chapter. Gage has shown that the center of John, 1 John, and Revelation are all Jesus’ defeat of Satan. For a video see <https://vimeo.com/354288674>. Around 55 Mins in.

refers in Daniel both to the end of the present evil age and **the Second Coming** when there is the resurrection of the dead, but also to the end of the OT age and hence the **First Coming of Jesus**. This is precisely my position on how we should interpret Revelation 6's horses in our own day. It is not *not* about our own future, and yet it is precisely because it also has reference to the first century that we must temper our interpretation with much less future speculation than many are want to do.

In fact, what we are going to see as these horses unfold before our eyes that **the key to the future is often found in the past**. I want to explain this by first looking at the structure of the chapter. I've chosen only to look at the four horsemen, even though, along with the last two verses of ch. 5, ch. 6 forms a complete unit of thought. We can see this in the following chiasm:

- A. "To Him who **sits on the throne** and **to the Lamb**" (Rev 5:13-14)
- B. The **first four seals** unsealed (6:1-8)
 - C. Fifth seal: **souls who had been slain** for the Word and the witness (6:9)
 - D. They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" (6:10)**
 - C¹. **Fellow servants who will be killed** as they themselves had been (6:11)
 - B¹. The **sixth seal** unsealed (6:12-16a)
- A¹. "From the face of him **who is seated on the throne**, and from **the wrath of the Lamb**" (6:16b-17)⁴

⁴ This is a modification of **Christine Smith's** chiasm. Curiously, the Biblical Chiasm Exchange has no chiasm for this, and only this chapter of Revelation. Smith is clearly onto something

Though we will not talk about it much today, because we will limit ourselves to only the horsemen, I do want to focus on **the center** of this structure as a way of helping ground our feet in a very important parallel in the OT. The martyred saints cry out to God, “**O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?**” (**Rev 6:10**). The parallel is in a place few would look, unless they understand the typology of Revelation to **Joshua** that we discussed when we were introduced to the seven churches. Recall how those seven letters serve to prepare God’s people for holy war in the same way Joshua commanded Israel to prepare to war with Jericho.

The parallel works in the reverse, as actually our chapter does. This time it is God, through Joshua (remember, his name in Greek is Jesus) telling the people, “**How long will you put**

here. <https://www.alittleperspective.com/revelation-6-2016/>. Curiously, both “B” frames have their own mini parallel chiasms:

B Frame (vv. 1-8)	B1 Frame (vv. 12-16a)
<p>A. White Horse comes conquering (1-2)</p> <p>B. Red Horse comes taking peace from the earth (3-4)</p> <p>B¹. Black Horse comes taking prosperity from the earth (5-6)</p> <p>A¹. Pale Horse comes killing (7-8)</p>	<p>A. Eclipse of sun, moon and stars fall to the earth (12-13)</p> <p>B. Sky Removed like a scroll (14a)</p> <p>B¹. Mountains and islands moved, inhabitants hide (14b-15)</p> <p>A¹. To the mountains and rocks: Fall on us (16a)</p>

off going in to take possession of the land?” (Josh 18:3). Notice how the question, “How long” is the same, as is the “land.” In fact, “land” is the same Greek word in both (*gē*).

We know this is a parallel because of what follows. “Provide three men from each tribe, and I will send them out that they may set out and go up and down the land” (4a). You can think of this as similar to the four horses going back and forth through the earth-land. He then says, “They shall write a description of it with a view to the inheritances, and then come to me. They shall divide it into *seven portions* [seven tribes had not yet taken possession as they were commanded to; see vs. 2] ... And you shall describe the land *in seven divisions* and bring the description here to me ... So the men went and passed up and down in the land and *wrote in a book* a description of it by towns *in seven divisions*. Then they came to Joshua (Jesus) ... And there Joshua apportioned the land to the people of Israel” (4b-,5a, 6, 9, 10). This book with seven portions parallels this scroll with seven seals. Dr. Gage explains the meaning.

Jesus, the better Joshua, must unseal the seven seals to read the book, for only He is worthy to receive the inheritance of His Father (Rev 5:1–5). When His work is done, and the seven sealed book completely open, all twelve of the tribes

of the true Israel *will receive their heavenly inheritance* along with all those who have believed the gospel message of mercy announced by the twelve apostles to the nations (**Rev 21:10–14**) [emphasis mine].⁵

This is really important to understand. This means that the scroll in the hand of the Lamb of God is none other than **an inheritance scroll** for his people, a kind of property deed.⁶ As with Joshua, which was also a property deed, battles must take place in order to dispossess those unworthy of entering the new creation, and much of Revelation will be taken up with these thoughts, including the Four Horsemen.⁷ However, **gaining possession of the eternal home** is the

⁵ **Warren A. Gage**, *Gospel Typology in Joshua and Revelation: A Whore and Her Scarlet, Seven Trumpets Sound, A Great City Falls* (Fort Lauderdale, FL: St. Andrews House, 2013). It is curious that Joshua 1:8 has Joshua holding another book: the Book of the Law.

⁶ Collins notes, “The motif of sealing occurs in two basic forms: (1) in connection with legal documents, and (2) in various metaphorical senses. Legal documents that would be sealed in the ancient world include deeds, wills and certificates of debt. Jer 32:9-15 is an example of the practice of sealing in connection with the sale of land. The purchaser is given two copies of the deed. One is the official copy, which is sealed, while the other is open for easy reference. In this case, the purpose of the sealing is to prevent falsification of the document. The seal makes a document legally valid ... Books of judgment [a metaphorical sense] are often described as sealed until the day of judgment. Such books are explicitly said to be sealed in 1 Enoch 90:20 (cf. 89:61-64, 68-71 [cf. Dan 12:4]).” She does not, however, tie Revelation to a Property Deed directly. **Adela Yarbro Collins**, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation*, Harvard Theological Review: Harvard Dissertations in Religion 9, ed. Caroline Bynum and George Rupp (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 22-23.

⁷ Hence, Bauchkam has called it A Christian War Scroll. **Richard Bauckham**, “The book of Revelation as a Christian War Scroll,” *Neo Testamentica* 22.1 (1988): 17-40. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43070343?read-now=1&refreqid=excelsior%3A37098c0a026082a460d40b28c113ade7&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

reason the scroll is being opened. Thus, I want you to remember how at the end of each of the seven churches a great promise of an eternal reward was held out to God's churches, "to the one who conquers" (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). It is the unsealing of this book that allows God's people to take possession.⁸ Do you see how we have gone backward to interpret the future? There's more.

The other major OT background for our passage is also important and related. This is Zechariah 1 and 6. Zechariah is the only other place we find four horses. Zechariah's night visions actually open with this scene. "I saw in the night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen, and behind him were red, sorrel,

⁸ **Going Deeper:** Gentry sees a meaning of the scroll that I believe is complementary to this interpretation. He sees the scroll as the nation of Israel's certificate of divorce. He dedicates much space to this in his new commentary. But the end goal is similar, it's only the metaphor that changes. In order for Jesus to take his new bride, this adulterous wife, Israel, must first be put away. In this, Gentry (pp. 541-42 PDF) focuses much on the parallels of Revelation and Hosea (see chart below). Gage also complements this in another way. The Hebrew name Joshua is Hosea! In both books, a harlot is taken as a bride and this is a major theme of later on in Revelation. Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., *The Divorce of Israel: A Redemptive-Historical Interpretation of Revelation* (Dallas, GE: Tolle Lege Press, forthcoming), 1.541-42.

Hos 2:2, 5 = Israel's harlotry = Rev 17:1, 5

Hos 2:3, 9-10 = Israel is stripped naked = Rev 17:16

Hos 2:3 = Israel associated with a wilderness = Rev 17:3

Hos 2:5, 8-9, 22 = Israel's desire for oil and wine = Rev 6:6

Hos 2:5 = importance of trade = Rev 18:11-20

Hos 2:10 = Israel's lewdness = Rev 18:7

Hos 2:11 = Israel's loss of joy = Rev 18:22-23

Hos 2:12 = beasts eat Israel's goods = Rev 19:17-18, 21

Hos 2:13 = Israel decked in jewels = Rev 17:4

Hos 2:15 = Egypt mentioned = Rev 11:8

Hos 2:19-20 = God's betrothal = Rev 21:2

Hos 2:21 = heaven and earth witness = Rev 10:6; 12:12; 14:7; 18:20

Hos 2:23 = Israel called God's people = Rev 21:3

and white horses” (Zech 1:8). When Zechariah asks, “What are these?” (9), listen to how the language mirrors the Israelites having to patrol the land for the seven homeless tribes. “These are they whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth” (10).

In this chapter, they are just riders on horses, but in ch. 6, things change. The horses are hitched to chariots and the colors change. They are red, black, white, and dappled (spotted/patched). Peter Leithart explains the context,

At the beginning of his visions (1:7–17), Yahweh’s horses are in a pasture, not out surveying the earth, not fighting Yahweh’s wars. These are the fiery horses of Yahweh’s cavalry, but they are doing nothing. That is a problem, because the world is not as it should be. Specifically, in Zechariah’s time, the temple project has stalled. Cyrus supports the temple, but later Persian rulers may believe the lies of the people of the land. Zechariah laments for the same reason John weeps (→5:4–5), because the Lord’s promised redemption has not yet been realized: *Pax imperium* can be a curse (Koester 2015: 395–6). Zechariah wants the horses to go out from the pasture and start shaking things up. By dawn, he gets what he wanted: The horses, now with chariots, charge out of the Lord’s house, between the bronze pillars that have grown into mountains. The Lord is again at

war, and that means that all the things that Israel has waited for are going to happen. John's visions correspond to Zechariah 6 rather than Zechariah 1: The four horses of the Apocalypse are not in pasture, but heading out into the fray. And that is very good news.⁹

Since this is the first time we are really going to try to interpret prophetic things in Revelation, let's spend just a little more time on this thought of **going backward to understand the future**. We have said that you can't possibly hope to understand Revelation properly if you do not understand your OT. This book has perhaps more OT in it than any other in the Bible (see the Appendix at the end of the sermon). That means that the imagery of Revelation can only be understood by grasping the imagery and context of the OT. That doesn't mean it is applied the same way necessarily, but it does mean that **we get into trouble** when we interpret things like locusts as **Huey helicopters** in Vietnam, when in the OT there were plagues of locusts that taught us something quite different.

In the case of the book as a whole, now is a good time to remind you that as this book progresses, there is a very real

⁹ Peter Leithart, *Revelation*, ed. M. Allen & S. R. Swain (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2018), 1.278–279.

sense in which it is actually **taking us back to Genesis**, in other words, we are actually moving backwards in time.¹⁰

CHAPTER	EVENT	WHICH RECALLS
Revelation 1	The Lord Jesus Christ, who is Greater than Solomon, expands his temple to western Asia Minor. His 7 churches, like the temple's 7 lampstands, recall the temple of Solomon.	1 Kings 7-8
Revelation 4-5	The Lion of Judah, the Root of David, is enthroned.	2 Samuel 5
Revelation 9-11	Seven trumpets sound, and a great city, which is home to a whore, falls.	Joshua 6
Revelation 15	Having escaped the beast of the sea, the people of God sing the Song of Moses standing on a crystal sea.	Exodus 15
Revelation 20	Fire is poured out from heaven against the wicked of all the earth, which recalls the narrative of the flood.	Genesis 7
Revelation 21-22	We return to the pleasant garden, and the Tree of Life.	Genesis 2
Revelation 21-22	There is a new heavens and earth.	Genesis 1

We've seen since the beginning how this has a very real and meaningful importance in the way John has written Revelation to be **vol. 2 of the Gospel of John**. They correspond in remarkable ways and Dr. Gage has suggested that in fact there is an important sense in which John's

¹⁰ Charts are screen shots from **Warren Gage**, "Summer Academic Series – Revelation: The book You Never Knew," Grace Community Church, Lakewood Ranch, FL (Wed, Aug 14, 2019), <https://vimeo.com/354288674>. Around 51:40ff.

Gospel is Jesus' ministry viewed from earth while Revelation is his ministry viewed from heaven.¹¹ That would mean that Revelation is in many ways a commentary on Jesus' *earthly* ministry. Of course, it goes beyond this to the future just after his ascension all the way down to today, but that's such an important aspect of this book that people miss it is important to mention here, for as we move forward from the Horsemen onward, we are going to see how true this is.

The Four Horsemen

The White Horse: Conquest

Getting into our passage, we will simply go verse by verse. It begins, “Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals...” (Rev 6:1a). Only the Lamb is worthy to open this book, for only the Lamb has conquered. “... and I heard one of the four living creatures say with the voice like Thunder, ‘Come!’” (Rev 6:1b). Recall the four living creatures in the order they appeared: one like a lion, one like a bull, one like a man, and one like an eagle. These four beings in the unseen realm have their heavenly

¹¹ Ibid., around 51:40 ff.

counterparts in the constellations **Leo**, **Taurus**, **Aquarius**, and **Scorpio** and their earthly tribal counterparts in **Judah**, **Ephraim**, **Reuben**, and **Dan** respectively.¹²

As we will see with the second, third, and fourth creatures, the living creature speaking here is the one who **corresponds to Leo and Judah**. He is the lion. He has a voice that sounds like God's itself. It is terrifyingly loud and when it speaks, it claps out the word, "Come." So the Lamb opens the seal and the lion-creature yells come and what comes forth? Not John, as in **4:1**.

"**And I looked, and behold, a white horse...**" (**Rev 6:2**). It has a **rider** on it. Now, there is another white horse in Revelation, in a passage that many **Church Fathers** and others since have seen as the chiastic parallel to this. "**Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war**" (**Rev 19:11**). That's precisely what the white rider in our passage does. It is very clear that this rider is **Jesus** himself. Because both horses are white and both make war, many have taught that the rider on our white horse is also Jesus.¹³

¹² Later extra-biblical church tradition has the church counterparts in Mark, Luke, Matthew, and John respectively.

¹³ See Leithart's discussion, p. 278-79.

If we want to be technical about it, Rev 19 is *not the chiastic parallel* to ch. 6. That honor belongs to chs. 16-17. That doesn't mean this rider isn't Christ. But to me it does mean that it might not be him. It is curious that Historicists usually see him as *a series of Roman emperors* from approx. 96-180 AD. Preterists see him as *General Vespasian*, general of Nero's army. And Some Dispensationalists see this rider as the *Antichrist*!

This is one of the things that makes Revelation so frustrating. Can you get any different of interpretations as these four? These are the kinds of thoughts that probably made Revelation the only book that *Calvin* did not write a commentary on. Can you blame him? Along with the bizarre images, this is probably why *Mark Twain's* hermeneutical key is probably a view shared by Calvin. *"The book of Revelation is just one darn thing after another."* (That's about the best we can say.)

But I think we can in fact make sense of *why there are so many interpretations*. It isn't that people just make things up. It isn't that there are no real answers, and it is totally subjective. My answer is that they are *not (all) in fact mutually exclusive*.¹⁴ It's a huge problem people come to

¹⁴ As Dr. Poythress says here, *"According to our view of the interpretation of Revelation, the prophecies here have multiple embodiments. In the first century, the Roman Empire maintained control through conquest,* which could include bloodshed and ensuing famine and

Revelation with when they think their interpretation is *the only* interpretation. But this is a book written by God as a commentary on the entire Word of God. Its inspiration is deeper than the ocean and higher than Mt. Everest. We can't plumb its depths or scale its heights.

Rather, it is that, as the parallels with Joshua and John teach us, **history is typological**. I don't like calling history "circular," because history has an end. Jesus is coming back. But there is a reason why to this day we say that those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it. It's because **history repeats itself**. Redemptive history repeats itself typologically. Earlier events repeat in future antitypes, not just until the First Coming, but until the very end. That's one major way how God teaches us history! It's also how he teaches us the future. If it is true that multiple people can actually be correct in their interpretation of events in this book, then I like what Douglas Wilson says. **"The only true way is to interpret it with a clean conscience before God, and a spirit of charity toward those who differ."**¹⁵

death. Roman peace promised prosperity, but the reality was different. Conquest, bloodshed, famine, and death also stalk the human race throughout the church age, and may be expected to intensify in the final crisis leading to the Second Coming." **Vern S. Poythress**, *The Returning King: A Guide to the Book of Revelation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2000), 115. <https://frame-poythress.org/ebooks/the-returning-king/>.

¹⁵ **Douglas Wilson**, *When the Man Comes Around: A Commentary on the Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2019), Apple Books.

As we move forward, it's vital to understand that **whoever is riding this first horse**, he is under the authority and control of the Sovereign Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus opens the seal. And whether or not he is also riding the horse, it doesn't really matter, so long as we understand that all of these horsemen, with their human and/or supernatural correspondences, are all under the authority of Jesus who is Lord of all.¹⁶

As for the white rider, we learn that he has a “**bow**.” In Revelation 19, the White Rider has a sword. Both riders have a crown. And both ride out to conquer. White is the color not only of purity, but of victory. A fitting color for the Lion. Hence, the White Rider of Conquest.

The Red Horse: War

The Lamb next opens **the second seal**. A **second rider** is called forth with the same language, “**Come**” (**Rev 6:3**). This time, it is **the second living creature** who calls him. This means that it is **the Ox-creature** calling. The horse that comes out is “**bright red**.” Here it is interesting to add the furniture of the heavenly temple. We have seen a **throne**

¹⁶ As such, Wilson adds yet a third interpretation of the meaning of the scroll. It is also complementary to that of a property deed and a covenant divorce deed. He calls it The Book of the Reign of Jesus Christ. When he takes the book, everyone falls down. When he opens the scrolls, everyone does exactly what he commands.

(4:2), and a candlestick (4:5). We can also think of the table of showbread and the *sacrificial altar* (we've seen the altar of incense in 5:8).¹⁷

Curiously, we can fix each living creature to a piece of furniture. The lion obviously goes with the throne, which, like the horse, is white in Rev 20:11. The ox would go with the altar(s). Altars are places of blood and ox were often sacrificed on the altar. Blood is red and so also is this horse, so his color is also fitting. What does this horse do? “Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword” (Rev 6:4). There are a couple of things to talk about here.

First, this is the horse of war. Now, in the OT, it was the priests who became the great warriors who fought for righteousness. Levi and his brother killed all the evil men of Shechem (Gen 34). The Levites were the ones who alone stood with Moses at the Golden Calf incident and they put to death 3,000 of their treacherous kin (Ex 32:28). It was Phinehas alone who put to death the wicked man and Midianite woman who dared mocked God by worshiping

¹⁷ This discussion as well as the subsequent zodiac discussion is found in Leithart, 1.279-81. Revelation mentions the altar in 6:6, but not the table. It does mention the sea of glass (and hence corresponding laver). Leithart says of the missing table, “Revelation shows us the filling of his left hand, as the saints are harvested in the heat of tribulation to form the twelve loaves of a heavenly Israel (→14:14-20). The Apocalypse is an unveiling and a romance. It is also a baking demonstration” (221).

Baal in a sexual act at the entrance of the tent of meeting (**Num 25:1-8**). In this way, the priests cleansed the land.

The second point to look at is the word “**earth**.” We saw this word earlier with Joshua and the need for the tribes to go back and forth throughout the land of Canaan. It is the word *gē*. Here, the ESV and most English translations render it as “earth.” Hence, we get the idea that what is in mind here is **the entire planet**. The word in fact certainly has this meaning throughout ch. 5. But some scholars, especially preterists, make an important point that in the OT, this word (and the Heb equivalent *erets*) often has in mind **the Promised Land** very specifically.¹⁸ In fact, this is precisely what it means in Joshua. Because of this, a preterist will see the focus of the four horsemen as only dealing with Israel around 70 AD. As I said, I do not think this is wrong.

¹⁸ **Gentry** has a very long Excursus on this (1.260-67). Here is a chart from p. 265 (I replicate it, but do not necessarily agree with every interpretation):

<i>Uses of Gē in Revelation</i>		
“The Land” (of Israel) 52x (64+%)	Not “the Land” (of Israel) 24x (29+%)	Uncertain, indifferent, or double significance 5x (6%)
1:5, 7; 3:10; 6:4, 8a, 10; 6:15; 8:5, 7 (2x), 13; 9:1, 3a; 11:6, 10 (2x); 11:18; 12:4, 9, 12(?); 13:8, 11, 12, 13, 14 (2x); 14:3, 6, 15, 16 (2x), 18, 19 (2x); 16:1, 2; 17:2 (2x), 5, 8, 18; 18:3 (2x), 9, 11, 23, 24; 19:2, 19; 20:9; 21:24	5:3 (2x), 6, 10, 13 (2x); 7:1b (2x), 2, 3 (4x); 9:4; 10:6; 11:4; 13:3; 14:7; 16:18; 18:1; 20:8, 11; 21:1 (2x)	6:8b, 13; 7:1a; 9:3b; 12:16 (2x)

However, the word in both Hebrew and Greek is sometimes **ambiguous** and I want to capitalize on that ambiguity by asking why can't it focus on the Promised Land in one sense and refer in a fuller or later sense to the entire earth? I can't think of a reason. I'll say more about this when we get to a fuller interpretation and application.

The Black Horse: Famine

When the Lamb opens the third seal, John hears “**the third living creature says, ‘Come!’**” (**Rev 6:5**). This is **the Man-creature**. As he looked, John sees **a black horse!** Its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. Scales measure things, like king Belshazzar who was measured and found wanting (**Dan 5:25-28**). If the red horse takes peace from the land, the black one takes prosperity from it. “**I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, ‘A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine’**” (**Rev 6:6**). The prosperity referred to here is food, and hence, the horse of **Famine**.

The prices here speak of **hyper-inflation**. About eight times the normal price for wheat and five-and-one-third times the normal price for barley.¹⁹ The Talmud (b. *Soṭa*

¹⁹ **David E. Aune**, *Revelation 6–16*, vol. 52B, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 397.

49b) expects produce will soar in price with the advent of Messiah. The measures here are approximately equal to a day's ration for a cavalryman and his mount and it is about a day's wage for a normal worker.

The food reference is curious for another reason. Applying the Man-creature to our temple furniture, this would correspond to [the table of showbread](#). The fact that there is no table mentioned or showbread, yet bread and wine here, could imply that the people of God are in for a time of testing, given that they are what is represented in the showbread. And curiously, we've seen commerce come up previously, with the church at [Laodicea](#). They thought they were wealthy, but they were in desperate need of recognizing that the only wealth that matters is being in Christ. “[Those who are spiritually and personally impoverished receive the wealth of audible word and edible communion.](#)”²⁰

The Pale Horse: Death

Finally, “[When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, ‘Come!’](#)” ([Rev 6:7](#)). This is the Eagle-creature. When John looked, “Behold, a pale horse!” It's rider was not Clint Eastwood, though *Pale*

²⁰ Leithart, 292.

Rider is a great movie. This rider is **Death, and Hades** followed him. We've seen these two bad-boys before. In **Rev 1:18**, Jesus holds the keys "of Death and Hades." These are the same guys. Previously, we saw that they were certainly supernatural beings every bit as much as they are the great curse that comes to all men and the place that everyone in the OT went prior to Jesus' freeing the saints from Abraham's Bosom. "They were given authority over a fourth of the earth [or land], to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth" (**Rev 6:8**). It's a terrifying image, no matter what it refers to, especially when you put the **eagle's swift flight** to the horse's quick stride. So what is the meaning of all this? When do these things happen? What does this all mean for us today?

Meaning of the Four Horsemen

The Cosmic Nature of the Riders

As we think about this question, I want to address **three points**. The first is to think about *the cosmic nature of the riders*. The second point is to try to get a handle on the timing of

the fulfillment of these riders. The third is to *apply* this to our desperate need in light of them.

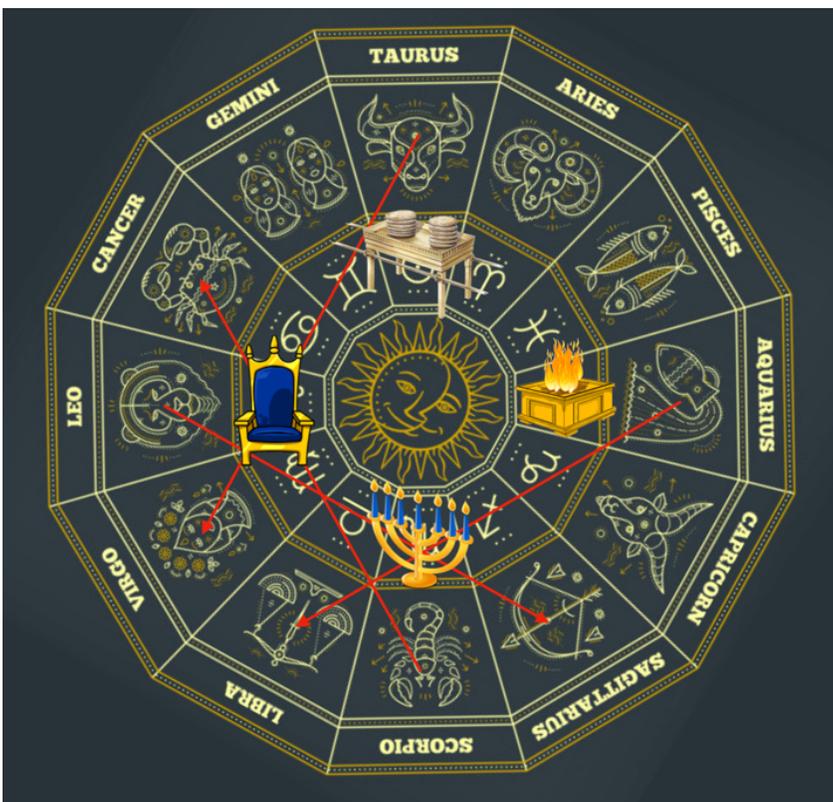
First, the cosmic riders. What I mean by “*cosmic*” is not merely heavenly, but all of creation. There is a sense in which these riders symbolize humans, angelic beings, and Christ himself. Creation is summoned and must heed the call of the Lamb.

Let’s look at him first. *If Christ is the rider* of the white horse or if he is merely the one opening the seals, it is *his sovereignty over the riders* that is front and center. It is the same in Zechariah, where the prophet sees the LORD in the midst of the horses, sending them out on patrol. Joshua, of course, as the OT “Jesus” is a type of this too. This is his book. It teaches us about what he is like in ways that other parts of the NT do not do. The Lamb slain is also the Lion roaring. And at this moment, he is as it were making his first march around Jericho.

Second, return to the living creatures: Lion, Ox, Man, Eagle. We’ve seen how there is a correlation of them to the four cardinal points of the *zodiac*. This continues in the horses. This time, we want to think of the four constellations calling out to four others among the twelve. Two of these are easy to see. *The first* has a bow in its hand and is in fact itself a centaur—half horse, half man. This is *Sagittarius*. *The third*

has scales in its hand. This is **Libra**--(sometimes a man with) the scales. The **second** is not as obvious, unless you know her mythology. This is **Virgo**. We think of her as the Virgin, however she is also lady Justice (think Statue of Liberty) and is portrayed with a sword. War.

If we look carefully, we can see that a pattern emerges. The Lion calls forth the centaur, **four to his right**. The Ox calls forth Lady Justice, **four to his right**. The Man calls forth the scales, **four to his left**. And so the Eagle would call forth **Cancer, four to its left**.



Leithart, who has a fascinating discussion on all this says there is **no obvious reason why Cancer** should be related to

the pale horse. I disagree. Cancer refers to the Crab. But our word “cancer” which you might think is unrelated comes from Hippocrates (460-370 BC), who used the terms *carcinoma* and *carcinoma* to describe non-ulcer forming and ulcer-forming **tumors**. These most likely applied to the disease because the finger-like spreading projections from cancer called to mind the shape of a crab.²¹ What does the pale rider bring? Among other things, it brings *pestilence*. Green death.

There are several purposes in understanding this. First, it shows us the **continuing relationship that Revelation has to the heavens**. Second, the heavens themselves are **a mirror** of heavenly beings involved in carrying out Christ’s plans on the earth. Third, these heavenly beings are **represented by earthly rulers** as counterparts, and this prepares us for understanding at least some of the fulfillment in the days of the Caesars.

Fourth, looking at the order of the constellations a very curious thing happens. We are **moving backwards**. Leo is the *summer* constellation. Taurus is *spring*. Aquarius is *winter*. Scorpio is *Fall*. **The order of their calling reverses time itself**. This prepares us for understanding more of the time fulfillment of these riders. But it also teaches us that in them,

²¹ “Early History of Cancer,” Cancer.org (Last Revised: Jan 4, 2018).
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-basics/history-of-cancer/what-is-cancer.html>.

God is doing a de-creation. He is moving backwards, destroying, like he did with the Flood when he returned the world to the dark waters of **Genesis 1:2**. The time fulfillment leads the way to a fifth point which is how God's people are also involved in what these riders represent.

Remember how Joshua had his tribal leaders and their armies go **to and fro** throughout the land of Canaan looking for a proper inheritance for seven of the tribes? This is symbolized in Zechariah's version of these riders and they go **to and fro** throughout the land. There is some kind of sense in which God's people are involved as riders. But what could that mean?

The early church believed in this sense that the white horse goes forth **conquering with the gospel**. The gospel is what subdues the nations. Only the gospel subdues them. **Nicholas of Lyra** for instance associates the arrows with the preached word, shot by the apostolic rider to pierce the heart. He gets the idea of an apostolic rider from the number "four." **Victorinus** has the arrows as **the Holy Spirit** who enters the heart through gospel. This is the Spirit's conquest of the nations through the gospel after Pentecost.²² And that gives us **one of the time frames** to be looking at. This fits the OT. Leithart has a fascinating comment here. "If the bow is

²² These are in **Leithart's** discussion.

the bow of Genesis 9, then it seems only the Lord can take it from its place in the sky and begin to use it again. Yahweh rides with a bow (Habakkuk 3), shooting lightning-arrows from his thundercloud chariot. As long as the book is sealed, the world is at peace, but it is an uneasy peace. It needs to be shaken, and the first horseman, riding out with the gospel, starts an earthquake.”²³

The other three follow in its train. The **red horse** of war breaks the bonds that prevent the gospel from advancing. The **black horse** with its scales and famine teach us what Jesus taught the Laodiceans. If you want food and wine you can afford, you must come to Christ. Andrew of Caesarea interpreted the wine as the blood of Christ and the oil as the unction of chrismation, which brought a believer into the church. The **pale horse** tells you that if you will not have him, then you lay outside the covenantal blessings and will die. You will not inherit the Land.

The Fulfillment(s) of the Riders

I find that all quite fascinating and comforting. But, of course, the main imagery here is of **judgment** from all four horses and the scenes are quite terrifying. We only have time

²³ Leithart, 288.

to briefly mention the fulfilment of these things. To me, this is important, but not the main point, as we have just seen, the main point centers on Christ and not the specific dreadful details that we can so easily fixate upon.

I've said that **Preterists** see these four horsemen as being fulfilled in the years leading up to the destruction of the Temple. There are fascinating historical reasons they see this, but perhaps the most pertinent is actually a biblical parallel that the horses share with the Olivet Discourse.²⁴

²⁴ This fuller chart with more of Revelation is found in Leithart, 30-31.

Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24)	Revelation
Deception (24:4–5, 11, 24; πλανάω)	Deception (2:20; 12:9; 13:14; 18:23; 20:7–10; πλανάω)
War (24:6–7a)	War (9:7–9; 11:7; 12:7, 17; 13:7; 16:14)
Famine (24:7)	Famine (6:8; 18:8)
Earthquake (24:7)	Earthquake (6:12; 8:5; 11:13, 19; 16:18)
Tribulation (24:9, 21, 29)	Tribulation (1:9; 2:10, 22; 7:14)
Believers killed (24:9)	Believers killed (11:7; 13:7)
Love grown cold (24:12)	Left first love (2:4)
Endurance (24:13; ὑπομένω)	Endurance (1:9; 2:2–3, 19; 3:10; 13:10; 14:12; ὑπομονή)
Gospel preached to <i>oikoumene</i> (24:14)	Gospel preached to all tribes and nations (14:6)
Witness to nations (24:14 μαρτύριον)	Witness (1:2–3, 9; 6:9; etc.; μαρτύριον)
Abomination of desolation (24:15)	Mother of abominations (17:4–5; 21:27)
Great tribulation (24:21)	Great tribulation (2:22; 7:14)
False prophets (24:24)	False prophet (16:13; 19:20; 20:10)
Coming of Son of Man (24:27, 30)	Coming of Son of Man (1:7; 14:14)
Sun and moon darkened (24:29)	Sun and moon eclipsed (6:12)
Stars fall (24:29)	Stars fall (6:13)
Fig tree (24:32)	Fig tree (6:13)
Jesus at door (24:33)	Jesus at door (3:20)

MATT. 24:6, 7, 9a, 29.	MARK 13:7–9a, 24–25.	LUKE 21:9–12a, 25–26.	REV. 6:2–17, 7:1.
1. Wars.	1. Wars.	1. Wars.	Seal 1. War.
2. International strife.	2. International strife.	2. International strife.	" 2. International strife.
3. Famines.	3. Earthquakes.	3. Earthquakes.	" 3. Famine.
4. Earthquakes.	4. Famines.	4. Famines.	" 4. Pestilence. (Death and Hades.)
5. Persecutions.	5. Persecutions.	5. Pestilence.	" 5. Persecutions.
6. Eclipses of the sun and moon; falling of the stars; shaking of the powers of heaven.	6. (As in Matt.)	6. Persecutions. 7. Signs in the sun, moon, and stars; men fainting for fear of the things coming on the world; shaking of the powers of heaven.	" 6. (6:12–7:3) Earthquakes, eclipse of the sun, ensanguining of the moon, falling of the stars, men calling on the rocks to fall on them, shaking of the powers of heaven, four destroying winds. ²⁵

My reading of Jesus’ great sermon on the future has him answering **two different questions**. When will these things, that is the stones of the temple being scattered be, and what is the sign of your coming at the end of the age.²⁶ The subject essentially changes from 70 AD fulfillment to a fulfillment still in our future in vs. 36. However, Jesus’ discussion of wars, international strife, famines, earthquakes,

²⁵ R. H. Charles, *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Revelation of St John* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark International, 1920), 1.158.

²⁶ For my basic view see R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co., 2007), 887-967.

persecutions, and heavenly signs, all of which we find in the first six seals, are found in his 70 AD predictions. Their focus is obviously [the land of Israel](#). So long as their early date holds, preterists are on to something important. Jesus was sovereign over the punishment of Israel for rejecting their Messiah and all that we said earlier about the gospel was understood perfectly by the Christians of that day.

[Historicists](#) see the riders roaming the whole earth and thus see events from (usually) post-70 AD all the way until today in the opening of these seven seals. The first four seals and the housemen they see as being fulfilled roughly until the time of [Constantine](#). While this one is more of a stretch, it works because of the ambiguity of “land/earth” and because history repeats itself. Is not Jesus in control of all history? Does he not lead forth riders to do his bidding whenever he wants? Of course he does.

A point many miss in their interpretation is how these riders are the heavenly [counterpart of Jesus’ earthly ministry](#)! This is seen in the parallels with John 6. We will only look at one of these today. The [quart of wheat for a denarius and three quarts of barley for a denarius](#) find their parallel in the story of the hungry masses. Phillip said to Jesus, “[Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little](#)” ([John 6:7](#)). John only

uses this monetary term one other time (John 12:5), so the fact that it is found right where there should be a parallel in the Gospel is deliberate. It is as I said earlier, Jesus is in fact the solution to the famines brought by the riders.

The Desperate Need to Rest in Christ

This is an important point to explore as we conclude. I began by talking about [my frustration of people reading Revelation as a guide map](#) to everything in our future. The riders are only the beginning of this. People worry themselves sick over the horrors they expect to be coming because of future riders.

Now, I'll say this. I do believe we may very well see these riders in our own future (my lifetime or someone else's, who knows). In fact, I'm almost certain of it. Why? Because [they've been all around the world many times](#) in the last centuries. We should not expect anything different, though God is gracious. When I look at how the riders in Zechariah were not going after just the Promised Land, but Babylon, it tells me that we can't confine our interpretation merely to 70 AD.²⁷

²⁷ John uses "Babylon" ironically in Revelation. In one sense, it clearly stands (as "Rome" and "Sodom" also do) for national Israel. And yet, national Israel acts like the nations around them and in that sense, these other places can also refer to themselves and/or to all the world system represented by the cities and nations of earth. It is curious that in the Revelation chiasm, 6:6,

But I simply do not believe that the function of Revelation is to be a road map to our future. The future is in it (it certainly was when it was first written), but its purpose is to help the churches. If we read John with Revelation as the parallel, then this point of **Jesus being the solution to the famine**, means that he is the solution to the riders' terrors. This is not just wishful thinking. It is a direct implication necessitated by the parallels in the books. It is also necessitated by Revelation itself.

Jesus is telling his churches this information so that they might not suffer the fate of the world or of Israel. It's a fate that we know about from the entire Bible, not just Revelation. The way *they* do that is the way *we* do that. By **bowing our knees** at the feet of the Lamb of God and by crying out in worship that he alone is worthy to open these seals. This gives us hope in the midst of judgment, no matter what should befall us, and as we will see, that could mean martyrdom for any Christian.

These riders, if they show anything at all, teach us **our desperate need to rest in Christ**. I choose the word "rest" deliberately for a few reasons. First, the word appears in our chapter in **Rev 6:11**. "Then **they were each given a white**

10, 13, and 15-16 have their parallel in the Babylon chapter in 18:12, 6-8, 2, and 3 respectively. See the giant rainbow colored chiasm just before the Bibliography in this PDF.

robe and told to rest a little longer...” These who are resting are the martyrs in Christ who have gone before us. Second, the horses in Zechariah 1 were at rest prior to being sent out by the LORD’s command. Third, the parallel of the Lion of Judah “breaking” the seven seals, which introduces the four horsemen (Rev 5:5) is found in John 5:18 where Jesus was “breaking” the Sabbath (the seventh day)! Oh, the Pharisees did not understand true rest!

But you can. The inverse parallel in John’s gospel to the resting of the martyrs until the full number of the elect are brought in is found in our Lord’s high priestly prayer. “I have kept them ... who You have given Me ... and not one of them perished” (John 17:12). We rest in Christ because we know that Christ is the one who found and saved us! This is anything but a works salvation. It is a rest salvation, resting in the finished work of the Lamb of God.

A second inverse parallel is found with the horse who was told to take peace from the earth (Rev 6:4). The parallel is found in John 16:33. “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace.” Do you see how reading John with Revelation is so meaningful? Our Lord’s work on earth in John parallels our Lord’s work in heaven in Revelation. It truly is back to the beginning to understand the ending.

You see? “The apocalyptic horseman who brings famine to the earth is sent by Jesus to vindicate the justice of God against man’s rebellion (Rev 6:5)” in the four horsemen. That’s usually the focus. “But the context of the parallel correspondence encourages the believer to remember that Jesus was mindful of the hunger of His people in the wilderness and that He is able to supply whatever they need.”²⁸ So in one final parallel, heed the words of the one who opens the seven seals. “Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal” (John 6:27). You do not want to be on the wrong side of these plagues. You do not want to have to face the riders on the horses. Be overcome with the white gospel, through the purifying red blood of Jesus, who feeds you live given bread and wine that your heart may not remain black, and who has conquered death itself that the disease of sin and the wiles of Satan should not turn your face green unto death.

²⁸ Warren Austin Gage, *John’s Gospel: A Neglected Key to Revelation?* (Fort Lauderdale, FL: Warren A. Gage, 2001), 86, n. 131.

Appendix: The Old Testament in Revelation			
OT Book	Theme	Revelation	
Genesis	Creation, 1	Sequences of seven, 2–3; 6:1–8:4; 8:6–11:18; 16:1–21	
	Adam and Eve, 2	Son of man and bride, 1:13; 21:1–8	
	Garden, 2:8	Paradise of God, 2:7	
	Tree of life, 2:9	Tree of life, 2:7	
	Serpent (and Eve), 3:1–7	Dragon (and woman), 12:1–5; 20:2	
	Rainbow, 9:13–16	Rainbow, 4:3; 10:1	
	Babel, 11:1–8	Babylon, 14:8; 17–18	
	Abraham from beyond river, 11–12	Army from Euphrates, 9:14; cf. 16:12	
	Sodom, 18–19	Sodom, 11:8	
	Judah a lion, 49:9	Lion of Judah, 5:5	
Exodus	I am, 3:14	I am, 1:8, 17; 22:13, 16	
	Plagues, 5–11	Plagues, 15:	
	River to blood, 7:19	Water to blood, 8:8–9; 11:6; 16:3–4	
	Frogs, 8:1–13	Frogs, 16:13	
	Hail, 9:18–35	Hail, 8:7; 16:21	
	Locusts, 10:1–20	Locusts, 9:1–11	
	Passover Lamb, 12	Lamb, 5:6	
	Bitter water, 15:23–25	Poison water, 8:10–11	
	Sea dried up, 14:21–22	River dried, 16:12	
	Song of Moses, 15:1–18	Song of Moses, 15:1–4	
	Manna, 16:1–36	Manna, 2:17	
	Eagle wings, 19:4	Eagle wings, 12:14	
	Kingdom of priests, 19:6	Kingdom and priests, 1:6; 5:10; 20:6	
	Thunder and lightning, 19:16	Thunder and lightning, 4:5; 8:5; 16:18	
	God the Creator, 20:11	God the Creator, 10:6	
	Tabernacle, 25–31	Spread tabernacle, 7:15; 21:3	
	Ark of the covenant, 25:10–22	Ark of the covenant, 11:19	
	Bronze altar, 27:1–8	Altar, 6:9	
	Golden altar, 30:1–10	Golden altar, 8:3	
	Lampstand, 25:31–35	Seven lampstands, 1:12	
	Priestly robes, 28	Jasper, 4:3; Name on forehead, 7:3; Gemstones, 21:19–20	
	Golden calf, 32	Image of the Beast, 13	
	Tabernacle filled with glory, 40:34–35	Temple filled with smoke, 15:8	
	Leviticus	Blood of sin offering, 4:18, 25	Souls beneath altar, 6:9–11
		Coals and incense, 16:12	Coals and incense, 8:5
		Burning of priest's harlot daughter, 21:9	Burning of Babylon, 17:16
		Lamb with first sheaf, 23:9–12	Lamb ascended, 5:5
Priests trim lampstands, 24:1–9		Jesus among lampstands, 1:13	
Numbers	Balaam and Balak, 22–25	Balaam and Balak, 2:14	
	Numbering of tribes, 1; 26	Numbering of 144,000, 7:1–8	
	Jealousy test, 5:1–31	Eating the book, 10:8–11	
Deuteronomy	Curses, 28	Trumpets and bowls, 8–11; 16	
	City of palms, 34:3	Palm branches, 7:9	
	Avenges servants, 32:43	Avenges saints, 19:2	
Joshua	Joshua with book, 1:8	Lamb with book, 5:6–	
	Fall of Jericho, 6	Fall of Babylon, 17–18	
Judge	Megiddo, 5:19	Har-Magedon, 16:16	
Samuel	David	Lion of Judah, 5:5	
Kings	Pillars in the temple, 1 Kgs 7:15–22	Pillar in temple, 3:12	
	666, 1 Kgs 10:14	666, 13:18	
	Jezebel, 1 Kgs 16–2 Kgs 9	Jezebel, 2:20	
	Shut up sky, 1 Kgs 17:1	Shut up sky, 11:6	
	7000, 1 Kgs 19:18	7000, 11:13	
	Fall of Jerusalem, 2 Kgs 25	Fall of Babylon, 17–18	
Chronicles	24 chief priests, 1 Chr 24–25	24 Ancient Ones, 4:4	
	Levitical choir, 1 Chr 25:1–31	Heavenly choir, 4–5; 15:1–4	
	Temple filled with glory, 2 Chr 5:14	Temple filled with smoke, 15:8	
Esther	Feast with gifts, 9:22	Feast with gift giving, 11:10	
Job	Satan the accuser, 1–2	Satan, 12:9	

Psalms	Rule with rod, 2:9	Rule with rod of iron, 2:27; 12:5
	Nations enraged, 2:1-3	Nations enraged, 11:17
	"How long?" 13:1-2; etc.	How long? 6:10
	Shepherd, 23:1	Shepherd, 7:17; 19:15
	Firstborn, ruler, 89:27	Firstborn, ruler, 1:5
	New song, 96:1; etc.	New song, 14:3
	Idols, 115; 135	Idols, 9:20
	Incense and prayer, 141:2	Incense and prayer, 8:3
	Hallelujahs, Pss. 146-150	Hallelujah, 19:1-6
Proverbs	Lady wisdom and folly, 7-9	Harlot and Bride, 17; 21
Song of Songs	Waf of the bridegroom, 5:10-16	Unveiling of Jesus, 1:12-17
	Knocking to enter, 5:2	Invitation to Laodicea, 3:20-21
	Waf of bride, 4:1-6; 7:1-9	False bride, 9:1-11; true bride, 21:9-22:5
	Come to me, 8:14	Come, Lord Jesus, 22:20
Isaiah	Pilgrimage of nations, 2:2-4	Kings bring treasures, 21:24
	Holy, Holy, Holy, 6:3	Holy, Holy, Holy, 4:8
	Seven gifts of Spirit, 11:2	Seven spirits, 4:5; 5:6
	Rod of mouth, 11:4	Rod, 19:15
	Sun darkened, 13:10	Sun black as sackcloth, 6:12; 8:12
	Fallen star of Babylon, 14:12	Falling stars, 8:10-11; 9:1-11
	Fallen is Babylon, 21:9	Fallen is Babylon, 14:8; 18:2
	Keys, 22:22	Keys, 1:18
	Wipe tears, 25:8	Wipe tears, 21:4
	Dragon, 27:1	Dragon, 12:3
	Sky rolled like scroll, 34:4	Sky rolled like scroll, 6:14
	Smoke forever, 34:10	Smoke forever, 14:11; 19:3
	First and last, 41:4; 44:6; 48:12	First and last, 1:17; 2:8
	Do something new, 43:19	Make all things new, 21:5
	Queen forever, 47:5	Queen forever, 18:7
	No hunger, thirst, heat, 49:10	No hunger, thirst, heat, 7:16
	Second exodus, 40-48	Come out, 18:4
	Nations walk by Zion's light, 60:3	Nations walk by city's light, 21:24
	Wine press, 63:2	Wine press, 19:15
	New heaven and earth, 65:17	New heaven and earth, 21:1
Jeremiah	Fire from mouth, 5:14	Fire from mouth, 9:18; 11:5
	Wine of wrath, 25:15	Wine of wrath, 14:10
	Golden cup, 51:7	Golden cup, 17:4
Lamentations	Treading wine press, 1:15	Treading wine press, 14:19-20
	Mourning over fallen city, 1:1-22	Mourning over fallen city, 18
Ezekiel	Vision of glory, 1-3	Heavenly liturgy, Rev 4
	Cherubim, 1:10	Living creatures, 4:7
	Rainbow, 1:28	Rainbow, 4:3
	Eat scroll, 3:1	Eat book, 10:8-10
	Marking those who mourn, 9	Sealing the 144,000, 7:1-7
	Harlot Jerusalem, 16; 23	Harlot Babylon, 17-18
	Tyre's goods, 27	Goods of Babylon, 18:11-13
	Restored Eden, 36:33-36	Holy city, 21:1-22:5
	Resurrection, 37:1-14	First resurrection, 20:4-5
	Gog and Magog, 38-39	Post-millennial battle, 20:7-10
	Scavenger birds, 39:17-20	Scavenger birds, 19:17-18
	Measuring rod, 40:1	Measuring rod, 11:1; 21:15
	Restored temple and city, 40-48	Temple-city from heaven, 21-22
	River and tree of life, 47:1-12	River and tree of life, 22:1-2
Daniel	Imperial statue, 2:36-45	Jesus's bronze feet, 1:15
	King of kings, 2:37	King of kings, 17:14; 19:16
	Head and hair white, 7:9	Head and hair white, 1:14
	Coming on clouds, 7:13-14	Coming on clouds, 1:8
	Son of Man, 7:13	Son of Man, 1:12; 14:14
	Beasts from sea, 7:1-8	Composite beast from sea, 13:1-2
	Glory, dominion, kingdom, 7:14	Honor, glory, dominion, 5:13
	Stars fall, 8:10	Stars fall, 6:13

	Michael, 10:13, 21; 12:1	Michael, 12:7
	Sealed book, 12:4	Sealed book, 5:1; 10:4
Hosea	Courting wayward bride, 1-3	Wayward bride in wilderness, 17-18
	Mountains fall, 10:8	Mountains fall, 6:16
Joel	Locusts, 1-2	Locorpions, 9:1-11
	Moon to blood, 2:31	Moon to blood, 6:12
Jonah	Sea monster, 2	Beast from the sea, 13:1-2
Habakkuk	Lord rides out with bow, 3:8-15	White horse rider with bow, 6:1-2
Zephaniah	Day of Yahweh, 1:14-18	Great day of God almighty, 16:14
Haggai	Shaking heaven and earth, 2:6-7	Earthquakes, 6:12; 8:5; 11:13, 19; 16:18
Zechariah	Horses, 1:8-11; 6:1-8	Four horsemen, 6:1-6
	Woman wickedness, 5:5-11	Harlot city, 17-18
	Joshua and Satan, 3	Satan and woman, 12:1-6
	Lampstands and trees, 4:1-14	Two witnesses as lampstands, trees, 11:4
	Conversation with angel, 4:5, 13	Conversation with angel, 7:13-14
	Tribes mourn, 12:10	Tribes mourn, 1:7
	Megiddo, 12:11	Har-Magedon, 16:16
	Holy city, 14:1-21	Holy city, 21-22 ²⁹

John		Revelation	
Parallel	Chapter	Chapter	Parallel
The Word and the Old Creation	1	21-22	The Word and the New Creation
The Wedding in Cana	2:1-12	19	The Wedding of the Lamb
Divine Wrath Poured Out from Earthly Temple	2:13-22	15-18	Divine Wrath Poured Out from Heavenly Temple
Out of the Darkness	3	20-21	The City of Light
The Samaritan Woman	4:1-27	17	The Whore of Babylon
The Samaritan Woman	4:28-29	18, 22	The Bride of Christ
The Old Jerusalem	5	18	The Great Babylon
From Shadows	6	14	To Reality
The Accusers Cast Out of the Earthly Temple	8	12	The Accuser Cast out of the Heavenly Temple
The War of Light and Darkness on Earth	8-12	11-14	The War of Light and Darkness in Heaven
Communion on Earth	13-15	7-10	Communion in heaven
The Grace to Persevere	16	5-7	The Reward of Perseverance
The Prayer of the Savior on Earth	17	5-6	The Prayer of the Saints in Heaven
The Arrest of God	18	4	The Worship of God
Suffering Before Glory	18-19	2-3	Suffering Before Glory
Recognizing the Risen Lord	20	1-3	Recognizing the Risen Lord
Jesus Calling Out to His Disciples Across Waters	21	1-3	Jesus Calling Out to His Disciples Across Waters
The Word and the Testimony	21	1	The Word and the Testimony

Communion on Earth	Communion in Heaven
13:26-27 "So when he had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas ... and <i>after the morsel, Satan then entered into him</i> "	10:9-10 "And he said, 'Take and eat ...' and it was in my mouth sweet as honey, but <i>when I had eaten it, in my stomach it was bitter.</i> "
13:27 "What you do, do quickly."	10:6 "there should be delay no longer"
13:28 "Now <i>no one</i> reclining at the table <i>knew</i> (except John and Peter)"	10:4 "Seal up the things which the seven thunders have spoken (to John) and <i>do not write them</i> "
14:1-2 "Let not your heart be troubled ... in My Father's house are many dwelling places"	7:15, 17 "He shall spread His tabernacle upon them ... and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes."
14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the life."	7:17 "the Lamb ... shall guide them ..."
14:23 "If anyone loves Me ... My Father will love him, and We will come and make Our abode with him."	7:15 "they serve Him day and night in His temple, and He who sits on the throne shall spread His tabernacle upon them."

²⁹ Peter Leithart, *Revelation*, ed. M. Allen & S. R. Swain (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2018), 1:5-8.

15:6 "they will gather the dried branches, and cast them into the fire, and they will be burned up ."	8:7 "and a third of the trees were burned up "
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The Grace to Persevere	The Reward of Perseverance
16:13 Jesus will send "the Spirit of truth (who) will guide you into all truth"	7:17 "the Lamb ... will guide them to springs of living water"
16:20, 28, 33 "I tell you that you will weep ... but <i>your sorrow will be turned to joy</i> ... I am <i>going</i> to the Father ... take courage, I have overcome the world."	5:4, 5, 7 "And I began to weep greatly ... and one of the elders said, ' <i>Stop weeping</i> ... the Lion of Judah has overcome ... and He <i>came</i> (to the Father)"
16:21, 33 "when she has given birth, she no longer remembers the tribulation ... in the world you will have tribulation "	7:14 "These (the redeemed) are the ones who have come out of great tribulation "
16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me you may have peace "	6:4 "it was granted to the one who sat on it (the red horse) to take peace from the earth"

The Prayer of the Savior on Earth	The Prayer of the Saints in Heaven
17:11, 13 "I (Jesus) am no more in the world ... I come to You"	5:7 "And <i>He</i> (the Lamb) came , and He took it (the sealed book) out of the right hand of <i>Him who sat on the throne</i> "
17:12 "I have kept them ... <i>whom You have given Me</i> ... and <i>not one of them perished</i> ..."	6:11 "they were told they should rest a while, until <i>the number of their fellow servants</i> ... <i>should be completed</i> ."
17:17-19 " Sanctify them in the truth . Your word is truth ."	6:11 "How long, O Lord, holy and true ...?"

John-Revelation Parallel Correspondence Chart	
6:7-9 "Two hundred denarii worth of bread ... five barley loaves"	6:6 "A quart of wheat for a denarius , and three quarts of barley for a denarius "
6:15 "when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king , He <i>withdrew</i> to the mountain by Himself "	6:15 "the kings ... the great men ... rich men ... commanders ... mighty men ... <i>hid themselves</i> in the mountains "
6:18, 27 "And the sea was stirred ... a great wind was blowing ... for this one has God the Father sealed "	7:1-3 "so that no wind should blow on the earth or on the sea ... until we have sealed the servants of God "
6:35 "He who comes to Me shall not hunger , and he who believes in Me shall never thirst "	7:16 "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore"
7:38 " rivers of living water will flow from him"	7:17 He "will lead them to <i>springs</i> of the water of life "

- A. 1:1. Things that must happen quickly (202)
- B. 1:3. Hears the words of this prophecy (200)
- C. 1:8. Alpha/Omega ... beginning/end (195)
- D. 1:17. When I saw, I fell at his feet (186)
- E. 1:19. The things which shall take place (184)
- F. 2:1. In the midst of seven lampstands (182)
- G. 2:7. the tree of life (176)
- H. 2:17. White stone, new name written (166)
- I. 2:26. He who overcomes ... will give authority (157)
- J. 3:1-2. A name ... not found your deeds complete (152-53)
- K. 3:5. Clothed in white ... book of life (149)
- L. 3:12. City of God comes down from God out of heaven (142)
- M. 3:16. Vomit you out of my mouth (138)
- N. 3:20. I will sup with him (134)
- O. 4:1. I saw and behold, a door was opened in heaven (131)
- P. 4.4. 24 elders, sitting clothed in white/crowns on heads (128)
- Q. 4:9. Living creatures give glory to him (123)
- R. 4:10-5:1. 24 elders fall down/God sits on throne/worship (120-22)
- S. 5:6. Lamb standing as though slain (115)
- T. 5:12. Worthy is the Lamb to receive riches (109)
- U. 6:6. A quart of wheat/oil and wine (101)
- V. 6:10. How long until you judge and avenge (97)
- W. 6:13. Stars of the sky fell to earth (94)
- X. 6:15-16. Kings of the earth say, "Fall on us..." (91-92)
- Y. 7:12. The blessing of the righteous (78)
- Z. 7:13. Who are these arrayed in white robes? (77)
- AA. 7:17. Lamb will lead them to fountains of living waters (73)
- BB. 8:2-3. Seven angels/altar before the throne (70-71)
- CC. 8:8. Second angel (65)
- DD. 8:10. Third angel (63)
- EE. 8:12. Fourth angel/a third of the sun (61)
- FF. 9:9. Breastplates of iron (51)
- GG. 9:11. King ... his name in Hebrew (49)
- HH. 9:16-17. Heads of horses/fire from mouths/myriads of myriads (43-44)
- II. 10:1. Angel clothed with a cloud/rainbow upon head (38)
- JJ. 10:6. Swore by him who made heaven/earth/sea (33)
- KK. 10:7. He preached the gospel to his servants (32)
- LL. 10:9. Sweet as honey in mouth (30)
- MM. 11:3. Prophecy for 1260 days (25)
- NN. 11:8. Sodom/Egypt saw fire from heaven (20)
- OO. 11:9-11. Martyred witnesses raised from death (17-19)
- PP. 11:15. Praise of the elders (13)
- QQ. 11:16-17. 24 elders worshiped God saying (11-12)
- RR. 11:18-12:3. Nations enraged/woman with child/dragon (6-10)
- SS. 12:3. Behold, dragon with seven heads/ten horns/seven diadems (6)
- TT. 12:4. Dragon's tail swept 1/3 to earth/stood before the woman to devour (5)
- UU. 12:5. she gave birth to a son, a male child (4)
- VV. 12:6. Woman fled into wilderness/place prepared by God/nourished (3)
- WW. 12:7. War in heaven/dragon (2)
- XX. 12:8. Devils did not prevail (1)
- YY. 12:9. Dragon/serpent/devil/Satan thrown down who deceives world
- YY¹. 12:10. Salvation/power/kingdom/authority of God and Christ ... accuser is thrown down
- XX¹. 12:11. Martyrs overcame them (1)
- WW¹. 12:12-13. Rejoice O heaven! Dragon thrown to earth (2-3)
- VV¹. 12:13-14. Woman with wings ... fly to wilderness/place/nourished (3-4)
- UU¹. 12:13. Woman gave birth to a male child (3)
- TT¹. 12:15-16. Serpent's mouth to sweep away/earth helped the woman (5-6)
- SS¹. 13:1. Beast with ten horns/seven heads/ten diadems (8)
- RR¹. 12:17. Dragon enraged at woman and her offspring (10)
- QQ¹. 13:4. They worshiped the beast saying (11)
- PP¹. 13:6. Blasphemy of the beast (13)
- OO¹. 13:12. Beast is healed of deadly wound (20)
- NN¹. 13:13. Beast makes fire come down from heaven (21)
- MM¹. 13:18. His number is 666 (26)
- LL¹. 14:5. In mouth was found no deceit (30)
- KK¹. 14:6. An eternal gospel to preach to those on earth (31)
- JJ¹. 14:7. Worship him who create heaven/earth/sea (32)
- II¹. 14:14. White cloud/Son of Man with a golden crown upon head (39)
- HH¹. 14:18-20. Angel has power over fire/horses' bridles/1 600 stadia (43-45)
- GG¹. 15:3-4. King of the nations ... who will not fear your name? (48-49)
- FF¹. 15:6. Girded around their breasts with golden girdles (51)
- EE¹. 16:8. Fourth angel poured bowl upon the sun (61)
- DD¹. 16:10. Fifth angel (63)
- CC¹. 16:12. Sixth angel (65)
- BB¹. 16:17. Seventh angel ... voice from the throne (70)
- AA¹. 16:19. Great Babylon given the cup of the wine of wrath (72)
- Z¹. 17:4. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet (78)
- Y¹. 17:5. The blasphemy of the whore (79)
- X¹. King of the earth ... Babylon is fallen (92-94)
- W¹. 18:2. Fallen, fallen is Babylon (94)
- V¹. 18:6-8. Pay her back as she gave/the Lord God judges her (98-100)
- U¹. 18:12. Wine and oil/wheat (104)
- T¹. 18:17. Great riches have been laid waste (109)
- S¹. 18:24. All who have been slain on earth (116)
- R¹. 19:4. 24 elders fall down/worshiped God who sits on the throne (120)
- Q¹. 19:7. Let us give glory to him (123)
- P¹. 19:11-13. A white horse. He who sat on it/head of diadems/clothed with robe (127-29)
- O¹. 19:11. Behold, I saw heaven opened (129)
- N¹. 19:17. The supper of the great God (133)
- M¹. 19:21. Killed with the sword out of the mouth of God (137)
- L¹. 20:9. They surround the city fire came down from God out of heaven (146)
- K¹. 20:11-12. Great white throne ... book of life (149)
- J¹. 20:15. Anyone's name was not found in the book of life (152)
- I¹. 21:7. He who overcomes I will give these things (159)
- H¹. 21:12-14. New names written ... the city had twelve foundation stones (164-66)
- G¹. 22:2. The tree of life (181)
- F¹. 22:2. In the midst of its street (181)
- E¹. 22:6. The things which must take place (185)
- D¹. 22:8. When I heard and saw, I fell at his feet (187)
- C¹. 22:13. Alpha/Omega ... beginning/end (192)
- B¹. 22:18. Hears the words of the prophecy (197)
- A¹. 22:20. I am coming quickly (199)

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