**Distant Hoofbeats**

**Chapter 4**

**Five Horsemen**

**About to Ride**

*And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals* . . . *behold*, *a white horse* . . .

*When He opened the second seal* . . . *Another horse*, *fiery red*, *went out* . . .

*When He opened the third seal* . . . *behold*, *a black horse* . . .

*When He opened the fourth seal* . . . *behold*, *a pale horse* . . . . (**Revelation 6:1-8**)

*Now I saw heaven opened*, *and behold*, *a white horse* . . . . (**Revelation 19:11ff**)

Scripture has a way of providing information after a manner quite different than how man might attempt to deal with matters along similar lines. In this respect, both the Old and New Testaments begin after the same corresponding fashion, though this is not readily seen because of the way man has erroneously arranged the four gospels.

The gospel of **John** should begin the New Testament, not the gospel of **Matthew**. **John** is the only one of the four gospels that begins and continues the same way **Genesis** begins and continues.

The first thirty-four verses of **Genesis** (**1:1-2:3**) and the first sixty-two verses of **John** (**1:1-2:11**) are parallel sections that form skeletal frameworks upon which the remainder of each corresponding Testament rests. Then continuing in each book, the remainder of each parallels the other, approaching the same subject matter from different perspectives.

And each corresponding Testament provides all of the sinews, flesh, and skin to clothe each beginning skeletal framework, with one completely clothed skeletal framework, in the end, looking exactly like the other completely clothed skeletal framework.

The latter would have to be the case, for it can be no other way. There is nothing in the New Testament that is not seen in the Old Testament after some fashion. The New is simply an opening up and unveiling of that which has lain in the bosom of the Old from the beginning.

And to illustrate the preceding, *the Word became flesh* (**John 1:1**, **2**, **14**) following the completion of the Old Testament (the Word) before a single verse in the New Testament (the Word) had been penned. And the Word that became flesh could only have been *incomplete* if any part of the subsequently penned New Testament is not seen after some fashion in the Old Testament.

*The Word that became flesh is a manifestation in the form of flesh of either Testament*, *or both Testaments together*, *leaving all aspects of the skeletal frameworks beginning both Testaments the same as well*.

(For additional information on the preceding, refer to the author’s pamphlet, Moses and John. As well, refer to the author's books, The Study of Scripture, Ch. 2, “The Septenary Arrangement of Scripture,” and Signs in John’s Gospel, Ch. 5, “Genesis, John.”)

Then, beyond the preceding, it becomes evident that Scripture closes in the book of **Revelation** after a similar fashion. A skeletal framework is given in the first eight verses of that section of the book introducing events that will occur during and immediately following Daniel’s unfulfilled Seventieth Week (**Daniel** **6:1-19:21**), which will conclude Man’s 6,000-year Day.

That which is seen in these eight verses (**6:1-8**) — with matters stated in a very succinct manner — covers the complete scope of events occurring not only during these seven remaining years but immediately following this time as well, with all of these events then leading into the Messianic Era.

And it could only naturally follow that the remainder of the book following these eight verses, along with all preceding Scripture as a whole, could be seen as providing all the sinews, flesh, and skin to clothe the skeletal framework set forth at this point in this closing book of Scripture.

These eight verses describe the actions of what is often referred to as “The four horsemen of the Apocalypse.” And this expression has been used numerous ways over the years, even by the world at times, but invariably out of context and having little or nothing to do with that which is actually involved in the text.

But make no mistake about it! These verses are not meant to be taken and used in any type of frivolous manner, no more so than are the similarly structured sections beginning both Testaments. These verses capsulate events during the last seven years of Man’s Day, leading into Christ’s return and immediately following events, which lead into the long-awaited Messianic Era.

In plain language, as often used today, these eight verses capsulate “the end of the world as we know it.” And this time will end in a manner far more horrific than anything man could ever dream up in a thousand lifetimes with his horror stories, books, and movies.

(E.g*.*, think about something far worse than present Middle East ISIS activity, but on a worldwide scale — *directed primarily at the Jewish people and any who would lend aid* [*seeking a complete destruction of the nation of Israel*, *every single Jew worldwide*, *along with any Gentile who would attempt to help a Jew* (cf.**Matthew 25:31-46**)] — and your thoughts will be very much in line with that which Scripture reveals about those days lying immediately ahead [cf*.* **Revelation 6:9-11**; **7:9-17**; **9:5**, **6**, **15**, **18**; **14:14-20**; **19:17-21**; **20:4**].)

It will all happen, exactly as recorded! The Prophets have spoken! And John, in the book of **Revelation**, simply summarizes, in eight short verses, that which is seen time after time in the Old Testament and that which John goes on to detail in chapter after chapter in the book of **Revelation**.

An Overview of Chapters **1-5**

Referencing the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, one can’t really begin at this point and properly understand what is occurring, for introductory material extending throughout five chapters precede this part of the book. Thus, let’s look at an overview of these five chapters first, placing chapter six in its proper setting.

1) The Opening Verse of the Book

To begin, note several things about the opening verse of the book of **Revelation**, which tells one what this book is about:

*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, *which God gave Him to show His servants* — *things which must shortly take place*. *And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John*.

The word “Revelation” in this verse is a translation of the Greek word *apokalupsis*, which means to “disclose,” “reveal,” “uncover.” And this word, along with its verb form (*apokalupto*), are, together, used forty-five times in the New Testament in passages such as **Romans 16:25**; **1 Corinthians 2:10**; **Galatians 1:12**; **Ephesians 3:3**, **5**; **1 Peter 1:7**, **13**; **4:13**.

The book of **Revelation**, the *Apokalupsis,* the “Apocalypse,” is about *a disclosure*, *an uncovering*, *an unveiling* of that which the Father had previously given to and would accomplish through His Son (cf. **John 3:34**, **35**; **5:20-22**; **7:16**; **8:28**). And that which the Father had previously given to and would accomplish through His Son is seen in both Old and New Testament Scripture as “all things” (cf. **Genesis 24:36**; **25:5**; **John 16:15**; **Colossians 1:16-18**; **Hebrews 1:2-13**).

Then, more directly, and in the words of the book itself, that being made known pertains to *a revelation of the Son Himself*. This book is an opening up of that which relates *all that the Father has given to and would accomplish through His Son*, *revealed through a revelation of the Son Himself*.

And the revelation of the Son, according to this opening verse, is going to be accomplished by and through a specific, revealed means — by and through revealing “*things which must shortly* [Gk., *tachos,* ‘quickly,’ ‘speedily’] *take place*.” That is to say, once this revelation of the Son begins by and through an unfolding of future events, the revelation will occur in a quick or speedy fashion — actually over time covering little more than seven years.

(On the translation of *tachos* in the opening verse as “quickly” or “speedily,” refer to a cognate word, *tachu,* used seven times in **Revelation**, translated “quickly” each time [**2:5**, **16**; **3:11**; **11:14**; **22:7**, **12**, **20**].)

Then there is the matter of *how* this revelation of the Son is to be given, seen through the word “*signified*” in the same opening verse. This word is a translation of the Greek word *semaino*,which is the verb form of the word for “sign” (*semeion*). The Apostle John introduced, opened up, and developed matters in his gospel account through *signs*. And in the book of **Revelation**, matters are introduced, opened up, and developed *in a similar manner*.

God, throughout His revelation to man, shows an affinity for the use of *types*, *numbers*, *signs*, and *metaphors* to make Himself, His plans, and His purposes known. And this must be recognized, else man will find himself failing to go beyond the simple letter of Scripture (cf. **2 Corinthians 3:6-4:6**).

Man, for example, will find himself understanding *biblical history* but failing to understand the God-designed *typical significance* of that history. Or if *numbers*, *signs*,and *metaphors* are used — which they often are — he will fail to understand the God-designed significance of these as well.

At the very outset, God makes it clear that the book of **Revelation** has been structured in *a particular manner*, closely related to the manner in which John was led by the Spirit to structure his gospel.

(The gospel of **John** was built around eight signs that Jesus had previously performed during His earthly ministry, and these signs were recorded and directed to the Jewish people during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel (which occurred between 33 AD and about 62 AD).

And the book of **Revelation** — dealing largely with the Jewish people once again [*exclusively*, along with God’s dealings with the nations through Israel, in chapters **6-19**, covering time and events during and immediately following Daniel’s Seventieth Week] — uses the verb form of the word for “sign” at the very outset in order to reveal the manner in which this book has been structured.

To understand how the word *semaino*, translated “*signified*,” is used introducing the book of **Revelation**, note how John uses this same word three times in his gospel, in **John 12:33**; **18:32**; **21:19**. The context leading into each verse provides an illustrative statement that allows that which is stated in the verse to be understood. Note the first of these three usages, within context:

“*And I, if I am lifted up from the earth*, *will draw all peoples to Myself*.” *This he said*, *signifying* [from *semaino*] *what death he would die*. [**John 12: 32**, **33**])

Aside from **Revelation 1:1** and the three verses in the gospel of **John**, the only other usages of the word *semaino* in the New Testament are in **Acts 11:28**; **25:27**. And the same thought is set forth through the use of the word in these two passages, though the illustrative statement is inferred in the first usage.

Thus, “*signified*,” a translation of *semaino*, has to do with making something known through a manner that carries the reader *from a somewhat indirect means to a direct means*, *using an illustrative statement as a means of explaining a matter.* And this is seen accomplished in the book of **Revelation** centrally by and through the use of numerous *numbers* and *metaphors*, though *other illustrative means* are used as well. And all illustrative means of this nature in the book are, they would have to be, in line with the meaning of the word *semaino* and the manner in which this word is used elsewhere in the New Testament.

2) The Opening Five Chapters of the Book

Following introductory statements (e.g*.*, as previously discussed, the first verse of this book, relating both the subject matter of the book and the manner in which the book has been structured), the book opens with the removal of the Church at the end of the dispensation (with all Christians throughout the 2,000-year dispensation seen removed and in Christ’s presence in heaven [the dead raised and removed with the living]).

This is what **Revelation 1:10ff** depicts:

*I was* [I became] *in the spirit on the Lord*’*s Day* [the Day of the Lord], *and I heard behind me a loud voice*, *as of a trumpet* . . .

*Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me*. *And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands* [the seven churches in chapters **2**, **3** (v. **20**), representing the complete Church throughout the dispensation],

*and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest* [breasts] *with a golden band*.

(vv. **10**, **12**, **13**).

And Christ in these and continuing verses (vv. **10-16**) is seen, not as High Priest (the office that He holds throughout the present dispensation), but as One specifically stated to be “*girded about the chest* [breasts],” signifying *a judge* (the office that He will hold once the dispensation has run its course [in this same respect, comparing Scripture with Scripture, note how the angels having the seven bowl judgments are girt in **Revelation 15:6**]), with everything about Christ’s description in continuing verses correspondingly depicting *a Judge* rather than a Priest (vv. **14-16**).

Then, after John had seen the complete Church in heaven, appearing before Christ in judgment, he was told to “*Write* . . . .” And that which he was told to write provides *a threefold outline of the book*.

*Write the things which you have seen*, *and the things which are*, *and the things which will take place after this* [lit*.*, after these things]. (v. **19**).

The “*things which* *you have seen*” could only refer to the things in chapter **one**, preceding verse **nineteen**, for that is all John had seen thus far.

Then, the “*things which are*,” will have to be understood two ways, in keeping with the two ways chapters **two** and **three** are to be understood:

1. The “*things which are*” would, first of all, have to be understood as the things that John was witnessing at that time, in the future, in the Lord’s Day (which would be the things that he had seen in the previous verses,i.e., in this respect, the “*things which are*” would be the same as the “*things which you have seen*”).

John had seen *the complete Church in heaven appearing before Christ in judgment*. *And this*, *of necessity*, *would have to extend into and include that which is seen in chapters* ***two*** *and* ***three*** *— the seven epistles to the seven churches*.

1. Then, “*things which are*,” as well, would have to do with the secondary manner in which chapters **two** and **three** are to be understood — *showing a history of Christendom relative to the proclamation of the Word of the Kingdom during the present dispensation*. This history would begin with Ephesus, which *had* *left its* “*first love*,” and end with Laodicea, which was “*wretched*, *miserable*, *poor*, *blind*, *and naked*”(**2:4**; **3:17***).*

In this respect, the “*things which are*,” from John’s perspective, though at a future time, *would reach back into the present dispensation*.

(For additional information on **Revelation 1-3**, refer to the author’s book, Judgment Seat of Christ, Chapters 2-11.)

Then, the “*things which will take place after this* [Gk., *meta tauta,* ‘after these things’]” could only refer to events beginning in chapter **four** where this expression (*meta tauta*) is used twice in the first verse. The “*things which will take place after this* [‘after these things’]” would refer to events occurring *after the present dispensation*, *after subsequent events surrounding the judgment seat* (chapters **1-3**); *and these following events would encompass that which is seen throughout the remainder of the book* (chapters **4-22**).

The continuing part of the book, preceding chapter **six** where we are introduced to the four horsemen, has to do centrally with two major events, one in chapter **four** and the other in chapter **five**.

Chapter **four** begins at the same place as is previously seen in chapter **one** (v. **10**), depicting once again the removal of the Church. But now revelation following the removal of the Church moves beyond that which is seen in chapters **one** through **three**.

The events in chapter **four**, following the removal of the Church, begin with a description of God seated on a rainbow-encircled throne, surrounded by twenty-four crowned elders, also on thrones.

The rainbow shows that *the judgment depicted in chapters* ***one*** *through* ***three*** *is past*. The judgment of Christians has already occurred and is complete at this point in the book (note that the rainbow comes into view in Scripture for the first time in **Genesis** chapter **nine**. And this occurs immediately following the judgment of the Flood, establishing a first mention principle in relation to the appearance of a rainbow in connection with judgment).

Then the crowned elders (“older ones” in relation to the earth’s government), who relinquish their crowns, *can only represent one thing*. They can only represent *those angels who*, *in the distant past*, *held positions of power and authority under Satan but refused to go along with him in his attempt to elevate himself above his God-appointed position as ruler over the earth* (two-thirds of the original total).

And, a principle of biblical government necessitates that an incumbent ruler, though disqualified to continue ruling, hold his office until his replacement is on the scene and ready to ascend the throne (e.g., note the account of Saul and David in **1**, **2 Samuel**).

Those who are to wear the crowns worn by these elders will, at this time, have been revealed by and through decisions and determinations at the judgment seat (chapters **1-3**). And, *for the first time in man*’*s history*, *these crowns can be relinquished*, with a view to redeemed individuals who have been shown qualified wearing them, ruling and reigning as co-heirs with Christ in His kingdom (when He replaces Satan, the incumbent ruler of the kingdom).

Then, chapter **five** has to do with the search and revelation of the One found worthy to break the seals of the seven-sealed scroll — a scroll that can only contain *the redemptive terms of the earth*, *the redemption of the inheritance* (a province in God’s kingdom over which Satan and his angels presently rule, which Christ and His co-heirs are about to rule).

The seals are to be broken by the One revealed as both *a Lion* and *a Lamb* (vv. **5**, **6**), though broken by Christ as *the Lamb* (**6:1ff**). In this respect, *redemption* is to be brought to pass by *judgments* (by *the Lamb of God* who paid redemption’s price, who is *the Lion of the Tribe of Judah* [the ruling tribe], showing Christ about to take the scepter, following His redemptive activity).

(For additional information on **Revelation 4**, **5**, refer to the author’s book, The Time of the End, Chapters 7-10.)

This then takes the reader into the beginning of chapter **six**, where Christ begins breaking the seals of the seven-sealed scroll.

Four Horsemen, About to Appear

We are nearing the end of the dispensation, and the four horsemen of **Revelation 6:1-8** are about to make their appearance, which will be in the sequential manner seen in Scripture. And, as well, that which is depicted when they ride forth will then occur.

The nearness of that hour is seen on numerous fronts, with everything rapidly coming together at the same time. And almost anyone with any type of knowledge of conditions in both the world at large and in Christendom within the world today can only know that an end to the world as we know it has to be near, very near. In short, *hoofbeats*, *as it were*, *can be easily heard today*, *growing louder and louder with each passing day*.

The present increasing unrest among the nations surrounding Israel in the Middle East alone, in the light of biblical prophecy, would relate the nearness of the hour (e.g., that which is seen in the activities of ISIS, Hamas, and Al Qaeda; or the existing Anti-Semitism [ref. Chapters 1-3 in this book]). Israel, in the midst of the surrounding Gentile nations, is *the key*. But other things enter into the matter. *And it is all rapidly coming together at the same time*.

A main factor as well, which is often overlooked, is the fact that *we*’*re fast running out of time*. The time allotted for Man’s Day in the opening chapter of **Genesis** and the corresponding opening chapter of the gospel of **John** is almost up. And time allotted for the present dispensation within Man’s Day — when the Spirit searches for and procures a bride for God’s Son — is about up as well.

God always works with *set times*. And when times that He has previously set have run their course, things previously foretold in Scripture begin to happen, at times quite rapidly.

(For additional information in this realm, refer to the author’s books, Moses and John and We Are Almost There.)

Then note how things are coming together elsewhere in the world at the same time as the unrest among the nations in the Middle East.

Note the increasing unrest and deterioration in world conditions (e.g*.*, economics, climate changes, different diseases on the verge of becoming uncontrollable, homosexual activity and its widespread acceptance, lawlessness on every hand, etc.).

And note a continued and accelerated deterioration in conditions throughout Christendom (see comments that follow, in the indented data).

All of these things viewed together can only point to one central fact:  *It Is Almost Over*.

(On conditions in Christendom today, one needs only to look around or go into practically any church of the land on any Sunday morning. One might find an acceptance of almost anything these days, all with *an affected Christian atmosphere,* so to speak.

But *the true proclamation and study of the Word* — which would take care of all that’s wrong, if present — is another matter entirely. And the existence of all that’s wrong, the world in the Church, the Church in the world, would alone relate the place to which any true proclamation and study of the Word has been relegated.

Conditions of this nature in Christendom tell a person the same thing as conditions in the Middle East or conditions in the world at large, for presently existing conditions in Christendom are exactly in line with the way Scripture states that they are to exist at the end of the dispensation [cf*.* **Revelation 3:14-21**].

With respect to where we are on God’s unchangeable timepiece, existing conditions are part and parcel with everything else indicating the nearness of that fast approaching hour.

[For additional information on the preceding, refer again to the author’s book, We Are Almost There, Ch. 8, “Christians and the World”].)

The entirety of that which is being depicted in **Revelation 6:1-8** is dealt with in *imagery*, *metaphors*, *and/or figurative language*.There are four different colored horses — *a white horse*, *a red horse*, *a black horse*, and *a pale horse*, in that order. And each horse sequentially appears on the scene with a rider, along with certain descriptive things stated about the rider’s activities in each instance.

And even the world when referring to “the four horsemen of the Apocalypse” has, over the years, dealt with the matter in a similar figurative fashion.

Though there are four different horses, the rider on each horse should not be thought of as a different person. As can be shown in the four subsequent chapters in this book, it becomes evident when reading and studying the text, along with related Scripture, that the riders on all four horses are *one and the same person* — seen riding forth on the first horse, then riding forth at later times on a second horse, then on a third horse, then a final time on a fourth horse.

That which is depicted when this man rides forth on *the first horse* sets the stage for all which follows.

Then that which is depicted when he rides forth on *the second horse* at a later time is contingent on and inseparably connected with actions occurring when he had previously ridden forth on the first horse.

Then, that which is depicted when he rides forth on *the third horse* at a still later time is contingent on and inseparably connected with actions occurring when he had previously ridden forth on the first and second horses.

And, likewise, that which is depicted when he rides forth on *the fourth horse* at an even later time yet is contingent on and inseparably connected with actions occurring when he had previously ridden forth on the first, second, and third horses.

*All four are inseparably related and connected, in this manner*. And seeing the entire matter as the actions of *one man*, *occurring at different sequential times*, depicted in the imagery used (four horses, each of a different color), appears evident from the way Scripture depicts and handles the matter (clothing the skeletal framework through using the provided sinews, flesh, and skin).

A Fifth Horseman, Then to Appear

Thus, where does this leave *Israel*, *the Nations*, and *the Church* — *Jew*, *Gentile*, and *Christian* (**1 Corinthians 10:32**), the three divisions of mankind? The answer to that question, solely from a biblical standpoint, is very simple.

Israel and the nations are about to enter into that time when the four horsemen of **Revelation 6:1-8** will ride forth (actually, as previously seen, one man riding four different colored horses at four different times). But the Church (all Christians, both the living and the resurrected dead throughout the dispensation) will be removed from the earth immediately prior to this time.

That’s where we are, at a time when God’s time-piece is *about to strike midnight*, when God will once again step into man’s affairs and all these things will begin happening:

Christians will be removed from the earth and appear before Christ’s judgment seat (**Revelation 1-3**).

A segment of the angels (two-thirds of the complete original contingent) will relinquish their crowns, with a view to those Christians having been shown qualified at the judgment seat wearing these crowns during the Messianic Era (**Revelation 4**).

The One worthy to redeem the inheritance will take the seven-sealed scroll containing the redemptive terms for the inheritance from His Father’s right hand (**Revelation 5**).

The Lamb of God will then begin breaking the seals of the scroll, beginning the redemption of the inheritance (**Revelation 6:1ff**).

And Israel and the nations will then find themselves going through that time together, completing God’s final seven years dealing with Israel during Man’s Day.

Then this will be followed by Christ’s return and ensuing events that will conclude with the destruction of Gentile world power and the ushering in of the Messianic Era.

All of the preceding is about to occur in a sequential order of events lasting not much longer than seven years. And during this time, beginning in the opening chapters of **Genesis** and continuing through **Revelation** chapter **nineteen**, far more biblical prophecy will be fulfilled in a far shorter period of time than at any other time throughout man’s 6,000-year history.

And that’s what the next four chapters in this book are about (Chapters 5-8), beginning with the actions of the rider coming forth on a white horse.

Then, following the appearance of all four of these horsemen, with ensuing events, the heavens will open, and the Rider on the fifth horse will come forth. He will then bring about *a just and righteous end to the whole of that which was brought to pass through the appearance of the previous four horsemen* (Chapter 9).

And that’s what the concluding chapter in this book is about.