**The Time of the End**

**A Study About the Book of Revelation**

Arlen L. Chitwood

[www.lampbroadcast.org](http://www.lampbroadcast.org)

Chapter Thirteen

The Four Horsemen

(The breaking of the first four seals of the seven-sealed scroll in **Revelation 6:1-8** provides *a skeletal account of Antichrist and his kingdom, from beginning to end*. The breaking of the remaining three seals and all of the asides seen from this point to the end of chapter **nineteen** provide *all of the sinews*, *flesh*, *and skin to cover the skeletal framework* set forth by the breaking of the first four seals [cf. **Ezekiel 37:1-10**], providing *a complete word picture of the last seven years of Man*’*s Day*. And this has been done *in complete keeping* with the manner in which the book has been structured, revealed at the beginning in **Revelation 1:1**.

“Four” is a number having to do with *the earth*, *particularly in relation to mankind on the earth* [*e.g.,* the material restoration of the earth was finished on *the fourth day* in **Genesis 1:14-19**, there are *four divisions* of mankind on the earth in **Genesis 10:5**, **20**, **31** (lands, tongues, families, nations), and there are *four points* of the compass in **Revelation 7:1**]. And a breaking of the first four seals of the scroll, having to do with *the earth and with mankind on the earth*, covering the whole of the matter, would be in complete keeping with the way numbers are used in the book of **Revelation** and with the manner in which Scripture is structured elsewhere, particularly evident in **Genesis** and in the gospel of **John**.

The relationship between the breaking of the first four seals to the breaking of the remaining three, along with other scripture extending to and including chapter **nineteen** of the book of **Revelation**, will be discussed in different places in subsequent chapters in this book.)

Christ’s future work surrounding *the redemption of the inheritance* will begin to occur through judgments seen when the first seal on the seven-sealed scroll in **Revelation** chapter **six** is broken. And this redemptive work will continue from that point until all of the remaining six seals have been broken and all of the judgments connected with the breaking of all seven seals have been brought to pass.

This redemption of the inheritance will occur during the last seven years of Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy (Daniel’s Seventy-Seven prophecy, often referred to as *the Tribulation*), which will be the concluding seven years of the previous dispensation, the 2,000-year dispensation in which God dealt/will deal with Israel (ref. Chapter 12 in this book). Then, this redemption will be completed through judgments occurring immediately following Christ’s return, preceding the ushering in of the Messianic Era.

Prior to that time, the 2,000-year dispensation in which God deals with the Church will have been completed (a period unseen in Daniel’s prophecy but occurring between the sixty-ninth and seventieth sevens, when “time” fulfilling Daniel’s prophecy has not been transpiring [God has, so to speak, stopped the chronometer in relation to “time” in Daniel’s prophecy]). And the Church will have been removed from the earth into the heavens before God allows “time” in the prophecy to resume (before God allows the chronometer to, once again, begin marking off time in the prophecy), fulfilling the final seven years (**Revelation 1:10-13**; **4:1**, **2**).

However, the event marking the beginning of Daniel’s Seventieth Seven is not the removal of the Church. Rather, this event is marked by *the ratifying of a covenant* between “*the prince who is to come* [Antichrist]” and “*many*” in Israel (**Daniel 9:26**, **27**). Or, another way of marking the beginning, viewing the matter from a different vantage point, would be to see this period beginning with *the breaking of the first seal* in **Revelation 6:1**, **2**. Daniel, in his prophecy, presents matters one way; John, in the book of **Revelation**, presents matters another way.

The sequential breaking of the first four seals of the seven-sealed scroll depicts *four horsemen* — *a rider on a white horse*, *a rider on a red horse*, *a rider on a black horse*, *and a rider on a pale horse*. And as each rides forth, certain things are stated about their separate activities, which have a correspondence with the different things signified by the different colors of the four horses (**Revelation 6:1-8**).

All of that being depicted is dealt with in *imagery*, *figures of speech*, *figurative language*. 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. To capsulate the matter and then deal with it different places later in this chapter, it becomes evident when reading and studying the text that the rider on the first horse is seen riding forth at a later time on a second horse, then a third, then a fourth.

That which is depicted when this man rides forth on the second horse at a later time is contingent on and results from his actions when he previously rode 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 results from his actions when he previously rode forth on the first and second horses. And, likewise, that which is depicted when he rides forth on the fourth horse at a later time yet is contingent on and results from his actions when he previously rode forth on the first, second, and third horses.

*All four are inseparably connected*, *in this manner*. And seeing that wrought through the actions of *one man*, *occurring at different times*, depicted in the imagery used (four horses, each of a different color), appears evident from the way Scripture depicts and handles the whole of the matter.

The Rider on a White Horse

*Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals*; *and I heard one of the four living* *creatures saying with a voice like thunder*, “*Come and see*.”

*And I looked*, *and behold*, *a white horse*. *He who sat on it had a bow*; *and a crown was given to him*, *and he went out conquering and to conquer*. (**Revelation 6:1**, **2**)

This is undoubtedly a reference to the actions of Antichrist as seen at the beginning of the Tribulation and continuing for at least the first three and one-half years of this time. He is seen at the beginning wearing a crown (Greek: *stephanos* [a victor’s crown], not *diadema* [a monarch’s crown]). And this man will go forth “conquering, and to conquer.” In the imagery used, he will possess *only a bow* in his hand as he goes forth, with there being no mention of arrows for the bow.

This man’s aspirations — *worldwide dominion* — evident from both *related Scripture* and *the type crown* which he is seen wearing at the very beginning (a crown depicted by the word *stephanos*), will be achieved by the middle of the Tribulation (after three and one-half years). Only after he has achieved this dominion can he be seen wearing a crown depicted by the word *diadema* (a monarch’s crown, a crown worn by one actually seated on the throne and ruling over a domain). And this man is ultimately seen wearing such a crown later in the book (**Revelation 13:1**; cf. **Revelation 12:3**).

And, as previously seen, this man will achieve *worldwide dominion* through a means that Scripture depicts as a rider on a white horse with a bow in his hand, but no arrows for the bow. To understand how this man will accomplish his objective through this means, one need only turn to commentary on **Revelation 6:2** in **Daniel 11:21** (comparing Scripture with Scripture), written over five hundred years before John wrote and over two and one-half millennia before the corresponding prophecies are to be fulfilled. And one can know that **Daniel 11:21** is dealing with the rider on the white horse in **Revelation 6:2** for the person in **Daniel** is said to be “*the prince of the covenant*” (v. **22**; cf. vv. **28**, **30-32**), who can only be “*the prince who is to come*” from **Daniel 9:26**, **27**, where this covenant is first mentioned in Daniel’s prophecy.

*And in his place shall arise a vile person* [paralleling **Daniel 8:8**, **9**], *to whom they will not give the honor of royalty*; *but he shall come in peaceably* [depicted by the rider on the white horse], *and seize the kingdom by intrigue* [depicted by the rider possessing a bow, but no arrows]. (**Daniel 11:21**)

The first part of the verse describes the person in God’s eyes — “*a vile* [‘a despicable’] *person*”; the second part of the verse — “*to whom they will not give the honor of royalty*” — has to do with this man obtaining his power through a means other than honorable. And the remainder of the verse deals with the means through which he will obtain this position of power — “*by intrigue*” (KJV: “flatteries”).

The word “flatteries” in the KJV in this verse (also vv. **32**, **34**), in the Hebrew text, has to do with being *smooth or slippery in a beguiling or scheming manner* (cf. **Jeremiah 23:12**). And it is apparent from corresponding Scripture (**Daniel 7:25**; **11:36**) that much of this will occur through his eloquence. This man will possess oratory capabilities that he will use to deceive the masses. He will deceive “*many*” in Israel and evidently throughout the whole Middle East and the world at large.

And due to the manner in which things are progressing in the world today, particularly in the Middle East, it is evident that the world is rapidly being prepared for the reception of a man *of the nature* described in Scripture; and the world, as well, will receive him *in the manner* described in Scripture.

He will appear as *a man of peace* (**Daniel 11:21**, **24**), one who seemingly has the answers for Middle East peace, a peace that has eluded man over the years; and, as previously seen, he will deceive the masses by and through his eloquence. And it is this type of setting that will allow him to make *a covenant* with “*many*” in Israel.

For three and one-half years this man will continue his conquest in this manner (seen in **Daniel 11:22ff**), until the day arrives when his true colors are seen by and through that which is depicted by the same man sequentially riding forth on the red, black, and pale horses.

(Many expositors relate **Daniel 11:21-35** to Antiochus IV Epiphanes [a Syrian ruler who reigned from 175 to 164 B.C.], seeing these verses as already fulfilled. Though there may be an allusion to this Syrian ruler, the prophecy, of necessity, looks beyond this man [similar to the manner in which the prophecy in **Ezekiel 28:12ff** looks beyond the King of Tyrus to Satan].

Seeing this prophecy fulfilled in history would be out of line with the manner in which earlier revelation surrounding the kingdom of Babylon in Daniel is structured — from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the days of Antichrist [particularly noting that when the kingdom was divided following Alexander the Great’s death (323 B.C.), earlier revelation moves immediately to the future kingdom of Antichrist; and in chapter **11** this same move from the past to the future occurs in v. **4**].

And when *the covenant* in **Daniel 9:27** is taken into consideration, it becomes even more evident that **Daniel**, in this part of chapter **eleven**, continues with revelation concerning “*the prince who is to come*” from chapter **nine**, here calling him “*the prince of the covenant*” [v. **22**], providing additional information about this individual and the covenant.)

The Rider on a Red Horse

*When He opened the second seal*, *I heard the second living creature saying*, “*Come and see*.”

*Another horse*, *fiery red*, *went out*. *And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take* *peace from the earth*, *and that people should kill one another*; *and there was given to him a great sword*. (**Revelation 6:3**, **4**)

*Israel* *and* *the covenant* — the covenant that “*many*” in the nation will make with the man seen riding forth on the white horse, and ultimately seen riding forth on the red, black, and pale horses — is *the key to understanding both this man*’*s rise to power and eventual fall from power*.

This man, appearing as *a man of peace* (**Daniel 11:21**, **24**), will apparently possess the answers necessary to defuse the Middle East situation (at least *seemingly*, *in man*’*s eyes*, for only Christ’s return can effect true, lasting peace in the Middle East and the world at large). And, because of the place that Israel occupies in God’s economy, Israel must be recognized as the nation lying at the center of the entire matter.  *A stable and secure situation surrounding Israel must exist first if the same thing is to exist in the Middle East and the Gentile world at large.* And the rider on the white horse, making the seven-year covenant with Israel, will apparently recognize and know at least that much about the overall matter.

God has placed Israel *in the midst of the nations* (**Ezekiel 5:5**); and God looks upon and deals with the nations, not just in the Middle East but worldwide, *through Israel* (**Deuteronomy 32:8-10**; **Zechariah 2:8**; cf. **Genesis 12:1-3**). Thus, the place that Israel occupies in the Middle East — whether at “peace,” or at “war” — has direct ramifications affecting all of the Gentile nations, beginning in the Middle East and extending worldwide.

(For additional information on the preceding, refer to “The Intractable Middle East Problem,” Appendix 1 in this book.)

It is evident from things that are stated in Daniel’s prophecy that the covenant that “*the prince who is to come*” will make with “*many*” in Israel will have to do, at least in part, with a restoration of the Mosaic Economy, apparently guaranteed by this man. Israel will be allowed to rebuild her Temple on the Temple Mount and reinstitute the Old Testament priesthood and sacrifices (evident from things seen in **Daniel**, **Matthew**, **Luke**, **2 Thessalonians**, and **Revelation**).

For the Jewish people to attempt something of this nature today, under present conditions and circumstances, would present insurmountable problems. In fact, if they tried to do this today, the Moslem world surrounding Israel on three sides would undoubtedly erupt, for a Moslem mosque (reputed to be the third most holy place in the world for Moslems) presently occupies the spot on the Temple Mount where many believe that the Temple will have to be erected. And even if the Jews sought to build a Temple any other place on the Temple Mount today, similar insurmountable problems would exist.

But in that coming day things will be quite different. They will have to be different. And this man will apparently possess the ability to bring about the necessary changes to make possible that which man would find impossible today.

In Daniel’s prophecy of the Seventy Sevens, where this man and the covenant are first introduced, things related to both his making and then breaking the covenant occupy center-stage. In reality, things surrounding the two together (his making and then breaking the covenant) comprise all that is revealed about this man in the prophecy of the Seventy Sevens.

Then, following the reference to “*the prince who is to come*” (**9:27**) as “*the prince of the covenant*” (**11:22**), Scripture again refers to this covenant several times during things that are revealed concerning his reign (**11:28**, **30-32**). And the things that are revealed about this man and the covenant in these subsequent verses have to do with exactly the same things that are introduced in **Daniel 9:27**, when he breaks the covenant.

When this man does break his covenant, after three and one-half years, in the middle of the Tribulation, *things will begin to change rapidly*. He will break the covenant by and through causing “*an end to sacrifice and offering*” (**9:27**) and entering into and desecrating the Holy of Holies of the rebuilt Temple (the dwelling place of God in the Old Testament theocracy). He will sit “*in the temple of God*, *showing himself that he is God*” (**2 Thessalonians 2:4**). And when this occurs, the Jewish people in Judea are told to run for their lives, to flee into the mountains or into a place in the desert which God will have prepared for their protection (**Matthew 24:15**, **16**; **Luke 21:20**, **21**; **Revelation 12:6**, **14-16**).

Once this man turns upon the Jewish people by stopping the sacrifices and desecrating the Holy of Holies, events will then occur *so rapidly* that the Jewish people are told to not even take time to gather any of their belongings but to flee for their lives with only the clothes that they will have on their backs at that time. And the Jewish people are further told to pray that this day does not occur in the wintertime (leaving them at the mercy of the elements) or on the Sabbath (the nation will be keeping the **Sabbath, with travel of this nature prohibited on this day [Matthew 24:17-20; cf. Exodus** 16:29]).

The reason given for such haste is then succinctly explained:

*For then there will be great tribulation*, *such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time*, *no*, *nor ever shall be*.

*And unless those days were shortened*, *no flesh would be saved*; *but for the elect*’*s sake those days will be shortened*. (**Matthew 24:21**, **22**)

At this time, as well, this man with his armed forces (those who will be affiliated with him against the Jewish people and the covenant [**Daniel 11:30**, **31**]) *will destroy both the Temple and the city of Jerusalem* (**Daniel 9:26**). The Jewish people who do not escape into the mountains or into the desert will then “*be led away captive into all nations*” (**Luke 21:24a**). And the nation of Israel, as we know it today — a recognized nation in the Middle East — *will cease to exist*.

The cry which began in the early days of the existence of the nation — *a cry for the utter destruction of Israel*, echoed by Nasser and others down through the years — will seemingly have been realized (cf. **Psalm 83:4**). A destroyed Jerusalem will then “*be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled*” (**Luke 21:24b**; **Revelation 11:2**).

(Note that “Jerusalem” is often used in Scripture as a reference to *the Jewish people*, *the people of the city*, rather than to the actual city [**Lamentations 1:7-9**; **Matthew 23:37-39**; **Luke 13:33-35**; **19:41-44**; **Revelation 17:18**]. Thus, **Luke 21:24b** and **Revelation 11:2** could be viewed in a larger sense as a reference to not only Israel’s capital city but to *the Jewish people themselves,* scattered among the nations.)

That is the setting for and the why of that which will occur when the second seal on the seven-sealed scroll has been broken. *Peace*, effected through the rider on the white horse, will be taken from the earth. The man who rode out with only “*a bow*” in his hand (**Revelation 6:2**), *effecting peace through his eloquence and through making a covenant with Israel*, is now seen as one having “*a great sword*” in his hand (**Revelation 6:4**).

He now rides forth in *a different manner entirely*. Note how **Daniel** describes the man in those days:

*Then the king shall do according to his own will*: *he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god*, *shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods*, *and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished*; *for what has been determined shall be done*.

*He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women*, *nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all*.

*But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses*; *and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver*, *with precious stones and pleasant things*.

*Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god*, *which he shall acknowledge*, *and advance its glory*; *and he shall cause them to rule over many*, *and divide the land* [the land of Israel] *for gain*. (**Daniel 11:36-39**)

With this man’s treatment of the Jewish people (seeking to slay or enslave them), along with his bringing about the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and a division of the land (which God calls “*my land*” and warns against anyone dividing this land [**Joel 3:2**]), is it any wonder that *peace is taken from the earth at this time*?

Again, Israel has been set *in the midst of the nations* (**Ezekiel 5:5**), and God views the surrounding Gentile nations *through Israel* (**Deuteronomy 32:8-10**; **Zechariah 2:8**). And the ill treatment which this man will accord the Jewish people, along with the destruction of that belonging to the Jewish people, *can only reflect negatively upon the welfare of the surrounding nations under his control and sway*.

Positive and negative ramifications surrounding the treatment of the descendants of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, and his twelve sons are given in **Genesis 12:3** and remain just as true today as ever. Individuals and nations that befriend Israel realize blessings from God. And the converse of that is equally true. A nation today, *seeking the destruction of Israel*, is doing little more than *seeking their own destruction.* They are doing little more than *committing national suicide*.

That is why when this man accords Israel the type ill-treatment which he will accord this nation in the middle of the Tribulation *he will be according like ill-treatment to himself*. And since he will be the world ruler at that time, *with all the Gentile nations under him*, *with God viewing these nations through Israel*, *this man will be doing little more than committing national suicide on behalf of the nations of the earth* — a sentence which will be carried out at the end of the Tribulation, when Christ returns (**Isaiah 63:1-6**; **Daniel 2:34**, **35**, **40-45**; **Revelation 19:17-21**).

(To illustrate the point, note the Third Reich in Germany, from Hitler’s rise to power in 1933 to its utter destruction in 1945. The Third Reich was to last for 1,000 years, but lasted for only twelve years.

Germany lost WWII before even entering the war. Why? Anti-Semitism! Hitler began turning his hand against the Jewish people only weeks following his rise to power [reaching a peak during the fall of 1938, resulting in that which ultimately occurred — the death camps and the death of 6,000,000 Jews]. Thus, *the unchangeable destiny* of the Third Reich was set during its early years, and Germany lay in ruins at the end of WWII.

So will it be with the rider on the white and red horses. Once this man turns against the Jewish people, *his unchangeable destiny* will be set, and his world will lie in ruins three and one-half years later.)

The Rider on a Black Horse

*When He opened the third seal*, *I heard the third living creature say*, “*Come and see*.” *So I looked, and behold*, *a black horse*, *and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand*.

*And I heard 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 the wine*." (**Revelation 6:5**, **6**)

The man who had previously ridden forth on a red horse is now seen riding forth on a black horse, depicting the result of his previous ride. That depicted is *famine*, which follows in the aftermath of war.

*The greatest famine in the history of the earth* will grip the world for the simple reason that *the greatest persecution in the history of the Jewish people* will have befallen the nation. And this famine will be *in complete keeping* with the persecution and the God-established laws of the harvest, for man does not violate that which God has established and decreed without suffering the consequences.

(A person *always* reaps what he sows, and he *always* reaps more than he sows, with a period of time lying between the sowing and the reaping. A sown grain of wheat, over time, produces a stalk of wheat with many grains; a sown apple seed, over time, produces an apple tree with many apples, etc. Everything, over time, reproduces “after his kind,” with that reproduced *always* more than that which was sown [**Genesis 1:11**, **12**; **Galatians 6:7**]. *These are God-established laws which cannot change*.

The man depicted by a rider on a white horse, then a red horse, then a black horse, and then a pale horse *will not be able to circumnavigate the laws of the harvest which God has established.* This man *will sow the wind,* *and he will reap the whirlwind* [**Hosea 8:7**].)

The man riding the black horse is seen with a pair of balances in his hand, and the price is given for a specified amount of food. A “denarius (KJV: ‘penny,’ a day’s wage when this was written)” would purchase “*a measure quart of wheat*” or “*three quarts of barley*.” That is to say, in that coming day, *it will cost a day*’*s wage for a minimal amount of food*.The thought appears to be that *life will be reduced to the barest of necessities — food to sustain life*, *and a fight for survival.*

From the remaining statement in verse **six** — “*do not harm the oil and the wine*” — food, though evidently scarce, will apparently be available for a price. The expression “*oil and the wine*” could only refer to the wealthy, those able to spend far more than a day’s wage for food (cf. **Proverbs 21:17**; **Jeremiah 31:12**).

But, the general populace will be another matter. What will be the end result of war, followed by famine, for the remainder of mankind? This is seen when the man responsible for the things which will have already come to pass rides forth on a pale horse.

The Rider on a Pale Horse

*When He opened the fourth seal*, *I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying*, “*Come and see*.”

*So I looked*, *and behold*, *a pale horse*. *And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him*. *And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth*, *to kill with sword*, *with hunger*, *with death*, *and by the beasts of the earth*. (**Revelation 6:7**, **8**)

Because of that previously brought to pass (depicted by the rider on the red and black horses), the rider on the pale horse, whose name is “*Death*,” was given power over “*a fourth part of the earth*.” The end result of peace being taken from the earth, in the manner in which this peace will be removed — *resulting directly from the ill treatment accorded the Jewish people* — will be “*Death*,” with “*Hades* [the place of the dead]” following fast on the heels of death.

One-fourth of the population of the earth will die in that day — a figure that can only be above one billion people, even when allowing for the absence of all Christians (previously removed from the earth). One out of every four individuals on the earth will die as a result of war, hunger, and apparent resulting disease (with probably very limited health care). And “*beasts*” (v. **8**) is used in this book as a metaphor for *Godless rulers wreaking havoc* (i.e., those ruling with and under the “*Beast*” [chapter **13**; cf. **Daniel 7:1ff**]), resulting from existing circumstances or any number of causes.

*That*, *according to Scripture*, *is what will occur in that coming day because of and through the outworking of the principles in* ***Genesis 12:3***.