

# The Six Seals of the Apocalypse: A Synopsis of History from Christ to the End of Time



On the morning of January 9, 2021, my wife and I read for morning devotions Revelation chapter 6. We knew the Book of Revelation is full of symbolic language. We had many questions about the meaning and felt led to see what the 17th century Bible commenter Matthew Henry had to say about it.



Matthew Henry

*Matthew Henry (October 18, 1662 – June 22, 1714) was a “nonconformist” Puritan minister in England, and perhaps the most preeminent devotional Bible commentator. The Exposition of the Old and New Testaments, commonly referred to as Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible (and sometimes referred to as Matthew Henry’s Complete Commentary), was used by many who helped to bring about the First Great Awakening in the 1700s. Henry’s commentary stands in enduring contrast to the ethos of liberal Christianity against the Bible – its author, its purity, its infallibility – and about the divinity of Jesus Christ, which even then was being promoted in certain educational institutions; to this day it remains one of the most popular and respected of commentaries. (Source: [https://www.conservapedia.com/Matthew\\_Henry](https://www.conservapedia.com/Matthew_Henry))*

Reading what Matthew Henry had to say about Revelation chapter 6 made me

realize it's a summary of events over the past 2000 years! I used to interpret the Book of Revelation from the viewpoint of the prophetic school of interpretation known as *Futurism*, meaning, meaning, most of the Book of Revelation are prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled in the future. From December of 2014, I became a Historicist, a person who looks at the Book of Revelation as history from the time of the Apostle John who wrote it, to the time of the return of Christ to earth.

The following is from Matthew Henry's concise commentary of Revelation chapter 6 taken from

<https://www.christianity.com/bible/commentary.php?com=mhc&b=66&c=6>

### **Commentary on Revelation 6:1-8**

Christ, the Lamb, opens the first seal: observe what appeared. A rider on a white horse. By the going forth of this white horse, a time of peace, or the early progress of the Christian religion, seems to be intended; its going forth in purity, at the time when its heavenly Founder sent his apostles to teach all nations, adding, Lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. The Divine religion goes out crowned, having the Divine favour resting upon it, armed spiritually against its foes, and destined to be victorious in the end.

On opening the second seal, a red horse appeared; this signifies desolating judgments. The sword of war and persecution is a dreadful judgment; it takes away peace from the earth, one of the greatest blessings; and men who should love one another, and help one another, are set upon killing one another. Such scenes also followed the pure age of early Christianity, when, neglectful of charity and the bond of peace, the Christian leaders, divided among themselves, appealed to the sword, and entangled themselves in guilt.

On opening the third seal, a black horse appeared; a colour denoting mourning and woe, darkness and ignorance. He that sat on it had a yoke\* in his hand. Attempts were made to put a yoke of superstitious observances on the disciples. As the stream of Christianity flowed further from its pure fountain, it became more and more corrupt. During the progress of this black horse, the necessities of life should be at excessive prices, and the more costly things should not be hurt. According to prophetic language, these articles signified that food of religious knowledge, by which the souls of men are sustained unto everlasting life; such we are invited to buy, Isaiah 55:1. But when the dark clouds of ignorance and superstition, denoted by the black horse, spread over the Christian world, the knowledge and practice of true religion (meaning the Gospel, the true doctrine of salvation by grace by Christ alone through faith in the Word of God alone) became scarce. When a people loathe their spiritual food, God may justly deprive them of their daily bread. The famine of bread is a terrible judgment; but the famine of the word is more so. Upon opening the fourth seal, another horse appeared, of a pale colour. The rider was Death, the king of terrors. The attendants, or followers of this king of terrors, hell, a state of eternal misery to all who die in their sins; and in times of general destruction, multitudes go down unprepared into the pit.

**\* Webmaster's note:** It's interesting that Matthew Henry wrote the person on the black horse is holding a yoke though the KJV says "pair of balances". I looked up balances in Strongs. The Greek word used in Revelation 6:5 is *zugos*, and the other 5 times in the New Testament that word appears, it is translated "yoke".

The period of the fourth seal is one of great slaughter and devastation, destroying whatever may tend to make life happy, making ravages on the spiritual lives of men. Thus the mystery of iniquity was completed, and its power extended both over the lives and consciences of men. The exact times of these four seals cannot be ascertained, for the changes were gradual. God gave them power, that is, those instruments of his anger, or those judgments: all public calamities are at his command; they only go forth when God sends them, and no further than he permits.

### **Commentary on Revelation 6:9-11**

The sight the apostle beheld at the opening the fifth seal was very affecting. He saw the souls of the martyrs under the altar; at the foot of the altar in heaven, at the feet of Christ. Persecutors can only kill the body; after that there is no more they can do; the soul lives. God has provided a good place in the better world, for those who are faithful unto death. It is not their own death, but the sacrifice of Christ, that gives them entrance into heaven. The cause in which they suffered, was for the word of God; the best any man can lay down his life for; faith in God's word, and the unshaken confession of that faith. They commit their cause to Him to whom vengeance belongs. The Lord is the comforter of his afflicted servants, and precious is their blood in his sight. As the measure of the sin of persecutors is filling up, so is the number of the persecuted, martyred servants of Christ. When this is fulfilled, God will send tribulation to those who trouble them, and unbroken happiness and rest to those that are troubled.

### **Commentary on Revelation 6:12-17**

When the sixth seal was opened, there was a great earthquake. The foundations of churches and states would be terribly shaken. Such bold figurative descriptions of great changes abound in the prophecies of Scripture; for these events are emblems, and declare the end of the world and the day of judgment. Dread and terror would seize on all sorts of men. Neither grandeur, riches, valour, nor strength, can support men at that time. They would be glad to be no more seen; yea, to have no longer any being. Though Christ be a Lamb, he can be angry, and the wrath of the Lamb is exceedingly dreadful; for if the Redeemer himself, who appeases the wrath of God, be our enemy, where shall we find a friend to plead for us? As men have their day of opportunity, and their seasons of grace, so God has his day of righteous wrath. It seems that the overthrow of the paganism of the Roman empire is here meant. The idolaters are described as hiding themselves in their dens and secret caves, and vainly seeking to escape ruin. In such a day, when the signs of the times show those who believe in God's word, that the King of kings is approaching, Christians are called to a decided course, and to a bold confession of Christ

and his truth before their fellowmen. Whatever they may have to endure, the short contempt of man is to be borne, rather than that shame which is everlasting.

(End of Matthew Henry's commentary)

## **Where are we in the timeline of the Six Seals?**

I definitely believe we are in the time of the Sixth Seal! The government of the USA has been shaken by the invasion of protestors who tried to stop the confirmation of Joe Biden as the 46th President of the United States of America. We are also in a time of great terror of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some believe the Coronavirus doesn't even exist and that it's really a propaganda scare tactic to earn more money for Bill Gates, Tony Fauci, and big pharma through the sale of vaccines. And others call vaccinations the Mark of the Beast! If it ever comes to the time that a person cannot buy food at the grocery store without showing proof of a COVID-19 vaccination, I would certainly think that the vaccination is the Mark of the Beast!

Is COVID an acronym for **C**ertification **O**f **V**accination **I**Dentification as some say it is?

And there are many people, perhaps the far majority of the world, who believe what the mainstream media is telling them about the pandemic. Many of these people hold in contempt those who are opposed to mask-wearing, social distancing, and who believe vaccinations are harmful.

Do you believe what the world's mainstream media is saying about the pandemic? Men and women of God are telling me *not* to believe what the world is saying about it! I would rather listen to them than what Lester Holt of NBC news is telling me. And I especially do not believe that the COVID-19 vaccines are "very safe". Some have died just hours after receiving one.