

Have the 7 Seals of the Book of Revelation Been Opened?

The same unusual subject came up three times on the same day, this past Monday, May 11. Was God sending a message to me about the end of the world, taken straight from the pages of the book of Revelation?

First, a caller to my radio show asked if we might be in the first phase of the breaking of the seven seals in the Book of Revelation and therefore in the beginning of “the tribulation.”

Then, a friend left a message on my cell phone asking what he should make of a respected Christian leader in another country telling him that the first of the seven seals was being opened.

Then, I spotted this headline featured on Drudge Report: “‘Four Horsemen are ACTIVE’ Bible scholars claim Book of Revelation seals broken ...” As the article explained, “Bible scholars have sensationally claimed the end of the world could be upon us as they believe the Four Horsemen, who bring about death, war, famine and disease before the return of Jesus Christ in the holy book, have all been released.”

What are we to make of these questions and claims? And what of the statements of these “Bible scholars”?

Not surprisingly, the article that claimed the support of biblical scholars was published in the U.K.’s *Express*, known for its sometimes sensationalistic reporting.

As for the scholars, the article quoted none. Instead, it referenced a 2005 article by a non-scholar and then—I kid you not—the article cited a Twitter user. So much for the notion that “Bible scholars have sensationally claimed the end of the

world could be upon us.”

The only thing sensational was the headline, followed by the article itself.

“But,” someone might say, “what about Revelation? What does it say?”

How about we take a look?

For argument’s sake, we’ll agree that that these prophecies are still for the future (rather than being symbolic of past events). And we’ll agree that these prophecies refer to literal events that will unfold on the earth.

Let’s examine each of the Four Horsemen.

Revelation 6 begins with these words: “I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures saying, with voice like thunder, ‘Come and see.’ And I looked, and there before me was a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow. And a crown was given to him, and he went forth conquering that he might overcome” (Rev. 6:1-2).

Where, pray tell, is this world-conquering figure? And how has he emerged since the pandemic began?

Let’s call this strike one.

The text continues, “When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ Then another horse that was red went forth. Power was given to him who sat on it to take peace from the earth, causing people to kill one another. Then a great sword was given to him” (Rev. 6:3-4).

How, pray tell, has peace been taken from the earth? And are people killing each other more today than during World War II? Or World War I? Or, here in America, during the Civil War?

Strike two.

Back to Revelation: “When the Lamb broke the third seal, I heard the third living being say, ‘Come!’ I looked up and saw a black horse, and its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice from among the four living beings say, ‘A loaf of wheat bread or three loaves of barley will cost a day’s pay. And don’t waste the olive oil and wine’” (Rev. 6:5–6, NLT).

Could it be that massive famine will overtake the entire world because of the financial meltdown? It’s possible, but we are nowhere near that now. As for the fact that many more people face potential starvation because of the pandemic, that is a tragic reality. But it is hardly what is described here.

We’re now up to strike three. But since there are four horsemen, let’s give it one more shot.

“When [the Lamb] opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, ‘Come!’ So I looked, and there was a pale horse, and the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed him. Power over a fourth of the earth was given to them, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth” (Rev. 6:7-8, MEV).

One-fourth of the earth, at present, would amount to almost 2 billion people, whereas the pandemic has taken less than 300,000 lives. This represents .00015 percent of that number.

Call this strike four.

That’s why I tweeted this later that same day (Monday): “A caller today wanted to know if we might be experiencing the divine judgments of the seven seals in Revelation and therefore ‘in the tribulation.’ I told her that when that time comes, she won’t need to call into my show to ask.”

That also means that, if the Christian leader who called my friend is right, and the first of the seven seals has been opened, things will change in front of our eyes more quickly

and dramatically than we can imagine.

Will that happen? We shall see. But I can say without hesitation it is not happening yet.

On March 2, I wrote my first article on COVID-19, titled, "Is the Coronavirus an End-Time Biblical Plague?" (This has been expanded into a full chapter in my new book *When the World Stops: Words of Hope, Faith and Wisdom in the Midst of Crisis*.)

My answer then was no. My answer remains the same today.

This is not to minimize the very real suffering caused by the pandemic. Nor is it to minimize end-time Bible prophecy. Quite the opposite. My goal is simply to put things in proper perspective.

In short, we have not yet reached the end of the world. When we get to that point in time, we won't need an article in the *Express* to let us know.