

HOPE through Prophecy



Lesson 8 – Revelation's Four Horsemen

1. In the vision of Daniel 8, what diabolical things does Daniel see the little horn do? Dan. 8:9-12; 23-25.

- (1) He destroys the _____ and the _____ people (vs. 10, 25)
- (2) He exalts himself as high as the Prince of the Host ("against the _____ of _____" vs. 11, 25).
- (3) The place of the Prince's _____ was cast down (v. 11).
- (4) He cast _____ to the ground and caused _____ to prosper (vs. 12, 25).

The antichrist power wages a war of persecution against the "holy people," exalts himself into the place of God ("I will be like the Most High" – Isa. 14:14), "casts down" Christ's temple by developing a system of earthly priests and mediators for the forgiveness of sin, and causes tradition and humanistic philosophies to be exalted above the Word of God, causing deceit to prosper as truth lies trampled in the dust.

2. What color is the first horse of Revelation 6? What is the significance of this color? Rev. 6:2; 19:8; Isa. 1:18). What did the bow stand for? Ps. 64:3; Hab. 3:9, KJV, ASV.

The white horse symbolizes the early Christian church from the ascension of Christ in 31 A.D. to the turn of the first century. The church went forward with the Word of God conquering the powers of darkness, and receiving the crown of victory (2 Tim. 4:8).

3. What did the apostle Paul warn would happen after his death? Acts 20:29-30.
4. The rider of the red horse was given power to take _____ from the earth, that men should _____ one another (Rev. 6:4).

The symbolism of the red horse is plain. This horse represents the church after the death of the last of the apostles, as persecution arose within and without, and the church, in order to avoid persecution, began a creeping compromise with darkness. It was in reference to this period that the historian Schaff wrote:

“Christianity became an established religion in the Roman Empire and took the place of Paganism... Christianity as it existed in the Dark Ages might be termed Baptized Paganism.” – Dr. Philip Schaff, Church History, cent. 2, chpt. 2, sec. 7. This horse covers the period of the Christian church from 100-313 A.D.

5. What did the rider of the black horse have in his hands? Rev. 6:5. What was he measuring? V. 6.

The Roman penny was the equivalent of a day's wages (Mt. 20:2). The wheat and barley rations were moderate for a working man. These prices were between 8 and 16 times the normal cost of wheat and barley. The picture is one of famine (read Am. 8:4-6, 11-12). The black horse represents a compromising church, when the light of the Word of God was almost completely extinguished by human tradition, ideologies, philosophies and opinions. This horse covers the period dating from 313-538 A.D. Of this period the historian Mosheim wrote:

“An enormous train of superstitions was gradually substituted for true religion and genuine piety. This odious revolution proceeded from a variety of causes. A ridiculous precipitation in receiving new opinions, a preposterous desire of imitating the pagan rites, and of blending them with the Christian worship, and that idle propensity which the generality of mankind have toward a gaudy and ostentatious religion, all contributed to establish the reign of superstition upon the ruins of Christianity... The public processions and supplications by which the pagans endeavored to appease their gods, were now adopted into the Christian worship... The virtues which had formerly been ascribed to the heathen temples... were now attributed to Christian churches... The same privileges that the former enjoyed under the darkness of paganism, were conferred upon the latter under the light of the gospel, or, rather, under that cloud of superstition which was obscuring its glory.” – Mosheim, Ecclesiastical History, 4th cent., chpt. 3.

6. The voice from heaven warned not to hurt the _____ and the _____.” Rev. 6:6.

The oil represents the Holy Spirit (see Zech. 4:1-6; Isa. 61:1; Lk. 4:18). The wine represents the blood of the New Covenant (Mt. 26:28-9). The wine of the New Covenant, the oil of the Holy Spirit are almost lost. Yet a voice from heaven says “preserve them.” They are still available to all who would receive them.

7. How does the Bible describe the fourth horse and his rider? Rev. 6:8.

The fourth horse represents what has been long referred to as “the dark ages.” The apostasy reached its height in 538 A.D. when the compromising church was given the seat of civil authority. As one historian wrote, “The noon of the Papacy was the midnight of the world.” – Wylie, The History of Protestantism, b. 1, chpt. 4. This period covers a “time, times and half a time,” “1260 days,” and “42 months”- the 1260 years of Papal supremacy, from 538-1798 A.D. Multiplied millions of Christians were martyred for their faith during this period. Regarding the Inquisition, which occurred during this period, one Catholic historian wrote “Compared with the persecution of heresy in Europe from 1227 to 1492, the persecution of Christians by the Romans was a mild and humane procedure... Making every allowance required of an historian and permitted to a Christian, we must rank the Inquisition... as among the darkest blots on the record of mankind, revealing a ferocity unknown in any beast.” - W. Durant, The Age of Faith, p. 784.

8. Was God's truth to be trodden down forever? Dan. 8:12-14; Prov. 4:18.

No. The light of God's truth would penetrate the darkness and continue to increase in intensity until it reaches a blaze of glory at the second coming of Christ.