

THE FIVE HORSEMEN OF REVELATION THE UNFAILING ALLY OF WAR.

When the Lord Jesus Christ was on earth He presented Himself to Israel as their promised King and Messiah, But the sad story is, “He came unto His own and His own received Him not,” Pilate, the heathen judge, asked Israel's rulers, “shall I crucify your King?” They answered, “we have no King but Caesar.” Many “Caesars” and kings have troubled Israel from that day to this, and in return Israel has troubled many Gentile rulers and nations. Jesus Christ was despised and rejected of men: He was indeed the Man of sorrows acquainted with grief. He was the Stone rejected by the builders.

When Israel rejected the Lord Jesus He called their attention to the prophecy, that the builders would reject the Stone, and that the Stone would become the Head of the corner. Matthew 21:40 to 43. When Israel rejected Christ, God rejected Israel, and sent Paul to the Gentiles.

In Order that we may clearly understand what is generally called “The New Testament Scriptures,” we must see the two-fold rejection of Christ by Israel; once in His incarnation and again in His resurrection. In rejecting Israel Christ pronounced some awful judgments upon them, in Matthew 21:1 to 46—Matthew 22:7—Matthew 23:29 to 39, and Luke 21:20 to 31.

Because of Israel's rejection of Christ in incarnation, Divine punishment would fall on them. That punishment is also told of in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, in answer to the question of Christ's apostles, “What shall be the sign of Thy coming and the end of the world (age)?” Matthew 24:3, That chapter deals with Israel's great tribulation, prophesied by Jeremiah, Daniel and other prophets, That tribulation is described in Revelation.

Because of Israel's rejection of Christ in resurrection, Divine judgment would fall on them, which would mean rich, spiritual blessings for the Gentiles, That punishment is told in the eleventh chapter of Romans, in answer to the question, “hath God cast away His people (Israel)?” The answer is: “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob,” Romans 11:25 and 26. Since the words of Romans Eleven Israel has been an outcast nation for nearly 1900 years, a God-forsaken people, but a remnant has been supernaturally preserved.

During Israel's blindness and rejection the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, and all Gentiles who have been wise enough to be the recipients of God's grace, and take advantage of the free gift have learned something of the meaning of Romans 11:30 and Romans 11:15. “For as ye (Gentiles) in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their (Israel's) unbelief,” “For if the casting away of them (Israel) be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?”

Here we learn that the Gentiles have obtained mercy because of Israel's blindness and unbelief. Here we learn that the message of reconciliation was sent to the Gentiles when and because Israel was set aside.

But, of course, individual Israelites may trust in the redemptive work of Christ and be justified “without a cause by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Romans 3:24. In every way we are living in “the times of the Gentiles.” In the last three chapters of II Kings, and in the last three chapters of Jeremiah, we are told how and why “the times of the Gentiles” (politically) began. In the eleventh chapter of Romans we are told how and why “the times of the Gentiles” (spiritually) began. We must mark these two radical changes in our Bibles if we would understand God's program and purpose during this age, past ages, and in the ages to come.

In Luke 21:20 to 33, we are told how “the times of the Gentiles” will end. This is also told in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. It is very interesting, and instructive to observe that the times of the Gentiles began with war and famine. Note II Kings 25:3 and 4 and Jeremiah 52:6 and 7: “On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden: (now the Chaldeans were against the city round about:) and the king went the way toward the plain.”

II Kings 25:3 and 4. “In the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land. Then the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans were by the city round about:) and they went by the way of the plain.” Jeremiah 52:6 and 7.

And in Matthew 24:3 to 13 we learn that the times of the Gentiles will end with war and famine: “Many shall come in My name saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet, For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. Matthew 24:5 to 7.

Now let us note in Revelation 6:1 to 9, concerning the anti-christ movement: war, famine, and pestilence:

“And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see, And I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red; and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and to a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see, And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held.”

It is interesting to know that famine is mentioned more than ninety-eight times in the Bible. About twenty-five times sword and famine are mentioned in the same Scripture, Jeremiah 5:12—Jeremiah 14:2, 15 and 16—Jeremiah 21:7—Jeremiah 24:10—Jeremiah 27:8 and 13—Jeremiah 29:17 and 18—Jeremiah 32:24 and 38—Jeremiah 34:17—Jeremiah 38:2—Jeremiah 42:17 and 22—Jeremiah 44:3 and 12. Ezekiel 6:11 and 12—Ezekiel 7:15—Ezekiel 12:16—Ezekiel 14:19 and 21—Ezekiel 28:23—Ezekiel 33:27—Ezekiel 38:22—Habakkuk 3:5—Matthew 24:7—Luke 21:11.

We note that the “red horse” rider of Revelation has a great sword for war and that the “black horse” rider has a pair of balances in his hands to weigh food. Famine follows the war. Famine has always followed war. War has always followed a spiritual famine, a time of spiritual declension, or some anti-Christ religious movement.

We have often heard the statement, “experience is a great teacher,” “we profit by experience.” And we also hear the expression “history repeats itself.” The sinful people of 1940 A.D. are very much like the sinful people of 600 B. C. “For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the Lord. They have belied the Lord and said, It is not He; neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine,” Jeremiah 5:11 and 12. But note God's answer: “Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that prophesy in My name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed, And

the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them, Jeremiah 14:15 and 16. "And I will send the sword the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers." Jeremiah 24:10.

Note the awful judgment which God pronounced upon His own people because of their sins: "And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them. Because they have not hearkened to My words, saith the Lord, which I sent unto them by My servants, the prophets, rising up early and sending them: but ye would not hear, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 29:18 and 19.

Now God gives this warning to the Gentiles: "For if God spared not the natural branched; take heed lest He also spare not thee," Romans 11:21. Why should God spare the sinful and ungodly Gentile rulers and people if He spared not His own nation Israel?

Behold today the Germany that gave us the Reformation with the message of justification by faith and the beginning of a new era! Think of the corruption of Rome, which boasts of being the chief city of Christendom, with the holy see. What may we expect to follow the present outrages of the blood thirsty tyrants of Europe?

We say that famine has always been the unfailing ally of war, and if famine is not to be the ally of war in the present world conflict, this war will certainly be the exception.

Note the order:

1. spiritual declension.
2. war
3. famine
4. pestilence

Many Christian preachers were sure that the world war, famine, and pestilence of 1914 to 1919 would cause multitudes to turn to God and the Bible. We do thank God that, as the result of what transpired, many Christians saw the folly of Postmillennialism, and became Premillenarians. But there never has been more worldliness and apostacy among church members than there has been during the past twenty years, and God has again permitted an awful war to be waged.

Now every day the reports are coming from Europe that the inhabitants of that country are facing the spectre of famine. They very much fear that there will be a real shortage of food in most of the invaded and conquered lands. Where there is not a short harvest there is a shortage of men; men who should be out in the fields of wheat, with agricultural implements are on the bloody battle fields with their hellish implements of war,

Now the question which is in the minds and hearts of so many of God's people today, is whether the present European conflict has anything to do with the fulfillment of Matthew Twenty-four or Revelation Six, Has the red horse and his rider of Revelation 6:3 and 4 arrived? Will the black horse and his rider appear on the scene before this war is over?

If history is to repeat itself, most assuredly famine and pestilence will follow this awful war, And in addition to these sorrows undoubtedly there will be insurrection, rebellion and revolution, Only God knows the horrors ahead. But the intelligent, spiritual, diligent student of the Bible knows that the four horsemen of the apocalypse will not ride while the Body of Christ is in the making. God's definite specific purpose during this present dispensation of grace, is to complete the Body of Christ. Ephesians 4:10 to 14,

The Messianic Kingdom of Christ is to be established after this present dispensation has been brought to an end. The Kingdom is to be established when Jesus Christ comes as the Son of man and King, to deliver Israel from their great tribulation.

During this present parenthetical period, the dispensation of the mystery is to be made known, Ephesians 3:9. When the child of God knows this great truth concerning the Church of the Mystery, he

will not expect the white horse rider of Revelation Six, nor the white horse rider of Revelation Nineteen, until after the rapture of the Body.

In order that we may understand the five horsemen of Revelation, let us study the verses with some verses in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew and the twenty-first of Luke.

REVELATION

“And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see, And I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was reds and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and to a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand, And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine, And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him, And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death; and with the beasts of the earth. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held.” Revelation 6:1 to 9.

“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind,” Revelation 6:12 and 13.

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself, And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God.” Revelation 19:11 to 13.

“And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, against His army.” Revelation 19:19.

MATTHEW AND LUKE

“For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet, For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginnings of sorrows, Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name 's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another, Matthew 24:5 to 10.

“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be,” Matthew 24:21,

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” Matthew 24:30.

“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there

shall be signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And He spake to them a parable; behold, the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away. but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and care of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares," Luke 21:24 to 31.

We can understand the meaning of the five horsemen of Revelation by carefully studying the order in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. Note the order:

1. Anti-Christ.
2. Wars.
3. Famine
4. Pestilence
5. Persecution of saints
6. Earthquakes
7. Signs in the heavens
8. The coming of the Son of man—the fifth Horseman. Revelation 19:11 to 19,

It would seem, from this order, that the great tribulation will begin with the appearance and doings of the first white horse rider, and that the appearance and doings of the second white horse Rider will bring an end to the great tribulation. The great tribulation was prophesied in Jeremiah 30:6 to 9. "Ask ye now and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it, For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him; But they shall serve the Lord their Gods and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them."

Thus we learn that the great tribulation is prophesied concerning Israel; and inasmuch as God's spiritual program concerning the Body of Christ was not prophesied by Jeremiah, or any of Israel's prophets, the sixth chapter of Revelation and the twenty-fourth of Matthew have nothing to do with this present dispensation of grace or the Body of Christ.

Again, note Luke 21:28 to 31: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh, And He spake to them a parable; Behold, the fig tree, and all the trees: When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand," Whose redemption will be nigh when the signs begin to come to pass? What kingdom of God will be nigh when these signs are seen? Israel's redemption will be at hand. Israel's prophesied Messianic kingdom will be at hand.

In the meantime, what is at hand? "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Titus 2:11, For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Romans 14:17. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Colossians 1:13 and 14. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Ephesians 4:30

Those who are in the kingdom of the Son of God's love, during this dispensation of grace, are members of the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3:6, and they are sealed with the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption. As to this day of redemption we read, in I Corinthians 15:51, "Behold, I shew you a secret,

we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.” The day of redemption for members of the Body of Christ means the resurrection of their bodies, They will receive bodies of glory to appear with Christ in glory. Therefore they are looking for His glorious appearing. Philippians 3:20 and 21—Colossians 3:3 and 4—Titus 2:13. None of the signs of Luke Twenty-one, Matthew Twenty-four or Revelation Six will precede the day of redemption mentioned in Ephesians 4:30. But they will all precede the redemption mentioned in Luke 21:28, Israel's redemption.

The coming of the Son of man in power and great glory will follow the great tribulation. This coming and tribulation have nothing to do with “the dispensation of the Mystery (Secret)” mentioned in Ephesians 3:9. The Lord Jesus Christ is not the Son of man to the Joint-Body of Ephesians 3: 6, of which He is the Head. This Church of the Mystery will be safe with Christ in glory before Israel and the nations are plunged into their time of sorrow,

The coming of the Fifth Horseman is not His coming for the Church, but His coming to deliver Israel at the time of Armageddon.

But this does not mean that famine and pestilence and anarchy will not follow the present wars, whether or not members of Christ's Body leave the earth or remain here. Many who know the conditions in Europe are sure that a great famine is not far off. We read in Ezekiel 6:11 and 12: “. . . they shall fall by the sword, by the famine and by the pestilence . . . he that is near shall fall by the sword and he that remaineth . . . shall die by the famine.”

So war and famine are allies and always come after a spiritual famine: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.” Amos 8:11.