***The Red Horse and Rider

RV117-01***

We now proceed to the second seal in Revelation 6:3-4:

**Jesus Christ Opens the Second Seal**

"And when He had opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, 'Come." And there went out another horse that was red, and power was given to him that sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another. And there was given to him a great sword."

The apostle John was sent into exile by the Roman government to the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea near the end of the first century. While he was on that island, God gave John the vision, which is recorded here in Revelation – a vision of the final judgments during the seven-year tribulation period when God exercises his wrath against rebellious humanity. The judgments are contained in a scroll with seven seals which mark off the various divisions of this revelation. The Lord Jesus Christ has been declared to be the only one worthy to break these seals, and to reveal what is written on the scroll, because He is the Savior of mankind, and because He is the one who is destined to rule the world during the millennium, which will be the result of these terrible judgments upon mankind.

**The Tribulation Society**

The breaking of the seals reveals the steps leading to the establishment of Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and the full vindication of the truth of the Bible. Therefore, the scroll is, in effect, the title deed of the Lord Jesus to the Millennial Kingdom. The first seal revealed a condition of enforced peace in the world under the authority of the antichrist, which was pictured as a rider on a white horse. This condition takes place during the first half of the seven-year tribulation period. The removal of all Christians, previous to this event, through the rapture has freed mankind to pursue a course which makes man the lord of creation instead of God. The result is a world society totally devoid of biblical guidelines and morality. The New Age movement, which we have been studying, is a vast network of powerful leaders and institutions which is leading the world into the Age of Aquarius based on the dogmas of humanism.

**The Education System**

The American public school system is the primary instrument being used to usher in the new age of mankind, which will be dominated by Satan's man, the antichrist. To bring about this condition, the minds of people must be changed from their biblical heritage in this country to a humanistic heritage. The bottom line of the New Age effort is to discredit the Bible, and to remove it as an authority over our society.

**The Welfare State**

The global world, which will be ruled by the antichrist, is actually rapidly being accepted by Americans in a variety of expressions, and may all be summed up as the welfare state. The welfare state is now a thinkable concept for Americans, where once it was unthinkable.

**The New Age Movement**

The New Age movement is actually an occult religion based on the beliefs of Eastern mysticism, and based upon the rejection of the Lordship of Jesus Christ and His deity as the God-man Savior.

**Humanism**

Christians today, therefore, are faced with the problem of relating themselves to this mounting apostasy away from God and away from His Word. Each of us is faced with that problem in the world in which we now live. Some Christians actually express approval of the dogmas of humanism, except, they say, for the teaching about the nonexistence of God and the nonexistence of the supernatural. They say they reject that part, but the other principles of humanism, they go along with it. If you say that a political candidate subscribes to the principles of humanism, some Christians will say, "Oh, well, I'm sure they don't subscribe to the principle that there is no God. But of course, that is the basic concept of humanism. It doesn't matter what you say as to your view about God, if you accept everything else in the humanist manifestos, you have, in effect, accepted the position of atheism. You have, in effect, accepted the position of man as the lord, and God as not existing at all.

Those who are sounding the warning concerning the New Age movement, this intricate network, and seeking to expose it, are passed off as the lunatic fringe. And some people are calling people like Bill and Penny Bowen, who will be here next Friday night, as those lunatic fringers. And with one blow, they seek to wipe them out.

I wonder why it is so difficult for some Christians to comply with the requirement placed upon all of us, as Paul expressed it in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, where Paul said, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion has light with darkness, and what concord has Christ with Belial (a name for Satan)? Or what part has he that believes with an infidel? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God; as God has said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (speaking of us – we Christians). Wherefore come out from among them and be separate,' says the Lord, 'and do not touch the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto, and you shall be My sons and daughters,' says the Lord Almighty."

Why is it that some Christians find that such a difficult requirement to accept – to be separate from the evils of our society, and to be separate from the principles of humanism, and all that the New Age movement indicates that it stands for? Our Heavenly Father calls upon us to be a people who practice holiness. 2 Corinthians 7:1 says, "Having, therefore, these promises (all these grace promises relative to being members of the body of Christ), dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

If you were here last Sunday night to hear the presentation by Roy and Sandy McKesson's, you got a good stomach full of unholiness and of filthiness of the flesh, and you understand what this verse is calling us to abandon. It is that sort of thing that you heard last Sunday night that is permeating the educational system of the government schools that we are called upon, as Christians, to abandon. Well, the New Age movement, is at the core of promoting that kind of filthiness? It is not a lunatic fringe. It is a reality. But why do Christians dig in, and hesitate to separate themselves? I suspect that down deep within them, they are loathe to separate themselves from a society whose benefits and fruits they desire in some way.

Lot had exactly this same problem in Sodom and Gomorrah, the filthiest place that you could imagine on the face of the earth, in the rampant homosexuality which was a lifestyle, and publicly accepted, and was viewed as acceptable public morality. And Lot could not take himself away from it. The Scriptures describe how he wounded himself; how he vexed his own spirit; and, how he degraded himself, and what it did to the destruction of his own family to the place where they practiced incest with their father. But Lot said, "There's so much culture. There's so much refinement. There's so much that I want from that Sodom and Gomorrah society. I just can't believe it." Also, his wife, as you remember, was even more loathe to separate herself from it.

You and I cannot pretend, as Christians, that the globalists and the humanists who express the objectives of the New Age movement do not really mean what they say, and do not really mean to secure the objectives they have declared. We Christians had better realize how prone we are to rationalize the evil of human viewpoint thinking in our society, because we are seeking the glory of men, in some respects, instead of the glory of God. So, don't pretend to yourself. At least, in Heaven's name, have the personal decency to say, "Yes, like Lot, I want to go with the filth. It might hurt my children; it might hurt my wife or husband; and, it might hurt my family, but I want to be out there in the filth because that where it's at for me, and that's what I have a taste for." Then we will all respect you, for at least you have identified yourself, and don't go around pretending that, somehow, we Christians who are saying, "That's wrong, and God has condemned that," and call us the lunatic fringe. The only lunatics in Noah's day were the people who are outside the ark. We who are in the ark, and the safety of God's salvation, are not the lunatics. We're the people who are the wise ones in truth.

**The Second Seal**

So, in this session, we move from the first seal (the white horse condition) – a condition of world peace that has been brought about by the antichrist during the first three-and-a-half years of the tribulation. And the second seal gives this a little more information of a rather amazing kind of a condition that will immediately begin to show up in the early part of the tribulation. It is hard to believe that this will take place, but this is what this seal reveals.

**Revelation 6:3**

So, we begin in Revelation 6:3. The word "and" is the small word "kai." This is a conjunction. It simply indicates that the vision of John is continuing now as he moves on to break the next seal: "And when he had opened." The word "opened" is this Greek word "anoigo." "Anoigo" means "to break." Here, it is in the aorist tense, which means at the point when Jesus Christ reaches over and he snaps that second seal. Its active voice. Jesus Himself does the breaking of the seal. And what He does break is indeed similar to the "seal" that He broke just previously with the first one, the "sphragis." The "sphragis" is that seal that is sort of like a piece of wax, on which has been imprinted an emblem indicating that the contents are secret until the seal is broken. Now the second seal is broken, and the contents are opened to be viewed.

**A Command to "Come"**

Immediately, John again hears something. The word is "akouo." This word indicates that John hears an intelligible sound. It is at the point when the seal is broken. It is active voice. John's own ears actually hear these words. And what he hears is spoken by one of the living creatures: "And when he had broken the second seal, I heard the second living creature" – the "zoon." We have studied them extensively. The "zoon" now is the second of the four living creature angels who stand as an honor guard around the Father's throne. One angel has already spoken, and brought forth the first horse. The second horsemen of the apocalypse is now called forth by the second living creature angel. He, no doubt, speaks with the same thunderous voice that we're told that the first one spoke with – a voice that sounded like a roll of thunder as he shouted out, "Come," which is the Greek word "erchomai." This is a command to move out. It is in the present tense, which means it's telling him to continue to do this. It is a continued action. The horseman is personally to do the riding forth. It's in active voice, and it is imperative move which tells us that it is a command. This living creature angel is commanding the second horseman to arrive on the scene.

In verse 4, we read, "And there went out:" "There went out" is again the same word "erchomai." Here it means "to come out" or "to go out:" "There went out another:" This word "another" is "allos." The word "allos" here means another of the same kind. The Greek has a way of saying "another" if it means "another of a different kind," or "another of the same kind." That's what this is here. What John sees is another horse animal being ridden again by a rider. And upon the command from the angel "to come," out comes this "hippos." "Hippos" is the Greek word for horse, and this horse, remember (as all the horses) symbolize some movement, or some facet, or some condition in the tribulation era. They do not represent individual people per se.

**A Red Horse**

John is startled to see that this horse is colored red. He is a "purros" color. "Purros" means "fiery red," or more explicitly (more correctly) "blood-red." The color is important. The color tells us what this horse represents. The color of the horse corresponds, of course, to the mission of the rider. It doesn't take too much imagination to connect the fact that the red horse has the mission of bloodshed. And that's exactly what this one stands for.

We read, "To the rider on this horse." The word "power" is not in the Greek Bible. It's simply that: "To him was given." This is the Greek word "didomi." "Didomi" indicate to receive something. Here we could translate it as "was granted." It's in the aorist tense, which means at a point in the tribulation. And it is passive voice. This horseman receives a mission from God – a mandate from God. Do you know what the mandate is? It is what his color represents – bloodshed. So, here you have a writer on a red horse being sent out with a mission from God (a mandate) to kill. It is not something that he takes on himself. That's the significance of the passive. It's indicative of a statement of fact concerning this second horseman being used as an agent of God.

**Peace is Taken**

"And there went out another horse that was fiery red (blood-red), and it was given to him that sat on it." The word "sat" is the Greek word "kathemai," which simply describes the posture of the rider. He's in this constant position. John sees that the rider himself is on the horse. He is not a specific individual, but he personifies a condition in the tribulation world. He sees that, to this one who was on this horse (who sat on this horse): "It was given to him to take peace." The will "take" is "lambano," which means to secure something. At some point in the tribulation era, this rider himself personally does the taking, and the mood here is infinitive which indicates a divine purpose. It is God's purpose to send this rider forth with a mandate to take something from the earth. And that is "eirene" ("peace"). The word means a condition without strife, whether it's personal or national. It actually connotes the absence of violence between people.

So, here is a condition that's to be changed. Where there was no violence between people, God sends out a horseman on a red horse to bring violence into the society of the tribulation world, and for that violence to be expressed with the shedding of blood. In Matthew 10:34-36, we read that Jesus says, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's foes shall be they of his own household." So, this word, "eirene" means a condition where you do not have any foes. So, if peace is removed now, you have a society filled with people who are each other's enemies. John is told that this rider is going to take this peace.

He is scheduled: "To take this peace from the earth." That means "from off of the earth." The word "ge" refers to the planet earth. He is to take peace from the earth. At the beginning of the tribulation, when the antichrist comes to power over the ten-nation Western Confederacy, he establishes a certain condition of peace. During the first three-and-a-half years of the tribulation, the antichrist is consolidating his power. He is consolidating his position, and he is trying to avoid any conflicts. The antichrist is powerful enough to create a certain stability, as is illustrated by the fact that he becomes Israel's friend, and is capable of protecting them from the Arab world, to the extent that the Jews breathe a sigh of relief, and they accept this man as their protector. This suggests to us that probably the antichrist will be a Jew – that the Jews will readily accept one of their own as their protector. So, this man has a certain capacity for creating a stability in society in the part of the world, at least, that he controls, which is only the confederacy of Western nations.

**Bloodshed**

Furthermore, it says that this red horse rider: "Is to take peace from the earth," and instead of peace, that there should be a condition where people are killing one another. The word "that" is "hina," which is a conjunction indicating the purpose of the red rider's mandate – specifically what he is to do, and that is that he would create a condition where people were "killing." That's the Greek word "sphazo." "Sphazo" means to slaughter by violence. It is the word that you use when you sacrifice an animal in offering. It generally indicates the cutting of the throat. It *always* indicates the shedding of blood. When you exercise "sphazo" against a person, you make him bleed. You don't just hit him over the head. You don't just inject him with a poisonous substance and kill him that way. You don't just put him under water and drown him. You do something to him that causes his blood to be shed. This word is the word that is used in describing for us what Cain did to his brother Abel. It tells us that he "sphazo" his brother, which indicates to us how he killed Abel. He grabbed him by the hair, jerked his head back, and slashed him across the throat, probably with the same sacrificial knife that Abel had used in killing the animal in the same way for the sacrifice that he offered to God.

So, here's an interesting observation. The red horse rider is sent forward with a mandate from Almighty God to take peace off of the earth – to remove the condition where people are not antagonistic to one another, and where they are not enemies toward one another, and it is given to him to remove this peace, and to create a condition instead where, in the future (this is future tense), after the peace is removed, they proceed to kill. It is active voice. People individually are doing the killing, not as armies, but as individuals. It's a statement of fact. And the people they are killing are "one another" ("allelon"). This is an adjective, and it refers to the people who are living during the tribulation – the inhabitants of the earth. This is the absence of peace in the form of one individual slaughtering (shedding the blood) of another individual.

So, the slaughter of the tribulation world, that is brought about by this red horse rider, is primarily individual in nature rather than a condition of war. It is a mistake to say, "Well, the red horse rider represents war." No. He represents bloodshed. This word "allelon" indicates that it is bloodshed of one person taking the life of another person. We're talking about widespread homicide cropping up in the tribulation era.

**A Great Sword**

Furthermore, we read that: "There was given to him a great sword." The word "great" is the word megas "megas," which means large. And what was given to him was a sword, which is the "machaira" type of sword. The "machaira" was a standard weapon of the Roman infantrymen. It was the short sword. It was the close combat sword. It could even sometimes be in the way of a short type of knife. But it was not a long sword weapon. It was one that one could easily carry hidden on his person, and which he could easily bring out and use. It is a weapon which causes bloodshed. You don't take the "machaira" and beat people over the head. You stab them with it; you cut them with it; and, you cause them to bleed in some way in order to take their lives.

The word "megas," connected with this word "machaira" indicates that the extent of the slaughter is very great. It isn't that the sword is big, because we know it is. It's a "machaira." It's a small sword, but its influence (its effect) is enormous.

**Warfare**

So, we find from this red horse rider that the period of the tribulation becomes a period of great bloodshed. There is, of course, some slaughter of warfare during the tribulation. Peace is taken from the earth in some degree by warfare between nations. It is true that there will be some of that on the earth because the antichrist doesn't control the whole world in the first part of the tribulation. From the middle part of the tribulation on, after Russia is destroyed, he controls the whole world. But in the early part, he has the ten-nation confederacy of Western Europe, and he can control that, but there is conflict in other parts of the world so that there is bloodshed as a result of nations in combat with each other.

**The Olivet Discourse**

As a matter of fact, the Lord Jesus Christ indicated to His disciples that that's exactly what would exist during the tribulation era. In Matthew 24:6-7, the Lord gave this instruction to His disciples, and he is talking about the age of the tribulation: "And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are 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 pestilence and earthquakes in various places." This statement is part of what we call the Olivet Discourse of Jesus Christ. The Olivet Discourse deals with what pertains to the Jewish people as the chosen people of God in reference to their Messianic Kingdom. The prediction made by Jesus Christ is an answer to the disciples' questions about: what would be the sign of the end of the tribulation era and his Second Coming.

Notice Matthew 24:3-4. Here's the question: "Has He (that is, Jesus) sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came up to him privately saying, 'Tell us. When shall these things be? (And they're referring there to the destruction of the temple and the city that he just described). And what shall be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age? Now, what age are they talking about? They're not talking about the churches. They're not talking about where we live now. They were Jews. They were not fully aware of the church age at this point. They were talking about their own kingdom-coming age, and they knew that, somehow, the Savior, Jesus Christ, was going to leave, and He was going to come back, and these things were then we're going to come to a head, and they want to know: "When is the end of the age going to arrive, and when are You going to come back? Give us some sign of the things that will exist." That's what they wanted to know.

**The Abomination of Desolation**

Well, the Lord Jesus proceeded to do exactly that. In Matthew 24:15, Jesus quotes Daniel 9:27: "When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, whosoever reads, let him understand," then He goes on. What is the abomination of desolation? That is the thing that Daniel described in Daniel 9:27 of the antichrist setting his own image up in the temple as the object of worship – setting himself up as God for people to worship. So, it is clear from this quotation from Daniel, which does talk about the tribulation, that what Jesus is describing here to His disciples is what takes place during the tribulation – not what takes place during the church age. So, the disciples understood that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ was going to be preceded by all of these things that He then proceeds to tell them about in the Olivet Discourse.

So it is clear that the tribulation era will not be a time of peace on earth. Jesus described the first three-and-a-half years of the tribulation as the beginning of sorrows in Matthew 24:8. And He called the last three-and-a-half years the great tribulation in Matthew 24:15 and Matthew 24:21, because that's when things are really going to pick up speed, and things are going to become very terrible.

It is obvious that wars between nations have indeed caused tremendous bloodshed. And I don't want to dismiss the fact that there will be some wars between nations during the tribulation period, in spite of everything that the antichrist has tried to do to establish stability and peace. Wars between nations have always resulted in enormous bloodshed. World War I took 8.5 million lives; World War II to 78 million lives; and, the conflicts of the tribulation will take even a greater number of lives. The presence of nuclear weapons makes the kill-rate potential enormous – beyond anything that anybody has ever imagined.

The communists, of course, do not hesitate to slaughter people, including their own. They are the greatest destroyers of human beings in history. They have shed more blood than any group of people in the history of the world. It is interesting and fitting that Russia should use the color red as its national color. It is appropriate to a nation of butchers such as they are. Nikita Khrushchev, when he was premier of Russia, summed up the communist attitude toward bloodshed. On one occasion, he said, "What do we care if three-quarters of the people are destroyed as long as the one-fourth left are communists?" What Khrushchev was saying was, "Indeed, we may slaughter, through nuclear weapons, most of the earth's population, but if the people that are left are all communists, then all is well." They do not object to bloodshed. The enormous kill power of modern weapons necessitates the divine shortening of the tribulation era to preserve mankind from total mutual destruction.

That's what Matthew 24:22 actually says: Jesus says, "Except those days (the tribulation days) should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved. But for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened." For the Millennial Kingdom to begin, you must have people who come out of the tribulation, who were born again in the tribulation, both Jews and gentiles, who then go in their physical, un-glorified bodies (just as the bodies we have now) into the Millennial Kingdom. When the tribulation begins, everybody is lost. All of the saved people have been caught out of the world in the rapture. Then Jews come to the knowledge of Christ. Then gentiles come to the knowledge of Christ. Soon there is a large contingent of sheep in the midst of all these goats in the human population. It is some of these sheep who go out into the Millennial Kingdom. Now if God were to permit man's destructive capabilities, with his weaponry today, to carry out to the full extent of the destruction that he can execute, there'd be nobody left alive, and God's word could not be fulfilled with the Millennial Kingdom that is based upon people who come into that kingdom born-again out of the tribulation era.

People today, of course, are in deathly fear of war, and they haven't really seen anything yet. They don't know what fear is going to be. But that's the condition today. Luke 21:26 says, "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 again." This is again describing the condition of the human heart and the attitude during the tribulation era.

In recent days, of course, we're all reading about the reviving of an old horror in the form of chemical warfare, which Iraq is now using against Iran. With the new nerve gas chemicals, the kill power of chemical weapons has been moved up tremendously – far in excess of what they were able to do in World War I with chemical weapons.

So, there is some bloodshed and nation against nation via warfare. But that's not the main point of this red horse rider. The words "one another" indicate to us that the main thrust is homicide – individual killing individual. The Bible reveals that the condition of human society, just before the Second Coming of Christ, will be identical to that that existed in Noah's day before the flood. Notice Matthew 24:37: "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. That's a very important insight. Conditions preceding the Second Coming of Christ in the tribulation will be just like they were in the days of Noah.

Well, what were they like in the days of Noah? While we go back to Genesis 6:5, and the record tells us: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." And the result was that the earth was covered with violence. Violence is the result of the evil mentality of people. Evil minds were the product of those people before the flood rejecting God and rejecting His word, and in fact, accepting the doctrines of demonism – the kind of New Age thinking that we have today.

The control of demons was so complete that they entered marriages with human women in that pre-Noah (pre-flood) era. In Genesis 6:1-2, we read, "And it came to pass when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, that daughters were born into them, and the sons of God (a technical term for demon spirits) saw the daughters of men, that they were fair, and they took them wives of all whom they chose." Then verse 4 says, "There were giants in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God (the demons) came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. And the same became mighty men who were of old men of renown." From this demon / human woman combination (cohabitation) came a hybrid race of half-demon / half-humans, which were renowned, of course, and which were memorialized in ancient mythology of the offspring of gods, goddesses, and human beings.

So, the Bible makes it very clear that before the flood, occultism (demonism) was rampant, and the total abandonment of God's divine viewpoint produced a society that was terribly degenerate in every way. Furthermore, pre-flood humanity was violently doing its own thing, which was to do every conceivable kind of depravity and violence. They thought that they were finally rid of the old myth about God. And under Nimrod's leadership, they were building a new age of freedom and human fulfillment. In fact, their days were numbered. They were all doomed except Noah's family. Noah's family was called the lunatic fringe in that day. And the only people who had a ticket on the boat were the lunatic fringe. Genesis 6:3 tells us exactly that – that the days were numbered. God said, "I'm going to give you 120 years. In the meantime, we're going to build the ark, and then we're going to wipe it all out."

So, Matthew 24:38-39 says, "For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came and took them all the way; so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be." The Lord said, "Before Noah's day, they made fun of Noah and his family. They were the crazies. But the day came when suddenly the door of the ark was closed, and there was no more opportunity to change their mind (to change their direction). The flood came, then they discovered how wrong they were." I assure you that all of the New Age movement people, and all of you Christians who are there fawning at the feet of these people, because you want their favors and you want their honors – you're all going to discover how wrong you are, and you'll have all of eternity to regret it. The world is in for a repeat performance of a total catastrophic judgment of Noah's day.

The tribulation has conditions which are particularly conducive to individual acts of bloodshed. The antichrist himself will be operating on the humanist thesis that there is no God beyond himself; and, furthermore, that everyone else is at different stages of evolving into godhood. This demonic doctrine from Eastern mysticism, therefore, removes the restraint of biblical morality, and the fear of divine judgment. If there is no living Creator God out there, then the Bible is a fake; it is not from Him; and, we don't have to pay any attention to it. That's the line of reasoning in the tribulation. It turns every human being in the tribulation loose, then, to be his own god, and to make and execute his own rules: Freedom to be me. You know how the song title says, "I've got to be me." ... The inevitable result is that violence and bloodshed as evil men remove whatever stands in the way of satiating their lusts: "If I am God, I can do no wrong. If I make the rules as God, they must be the rules that are acceptable." Now you have got a society with everybody doing his own thing.

So, the tribulation will be characterized by the same mental evil producing violence and bloodshed as it did before the flood. The spiritual deception will lead to the same moral corruption and the same brutality. People of the tribulation will have been conditioned by the public school education to obey their own sense of morality, and to execute their own views of justice, as we have already seen in our studies.

So, the tribulation is going to be a time for the maximum expression of the sin nature. The sin nature is the source of all of the fighting in the conflicts within the human race. James 4:1 says, "From whence come wars and fighting among you? Don't they come even from your lust that war in your members (coming from your sin nature)?"

Furthermore, it is the nature of evil, if it is tolerated, to get worse as time goes by. If you tolerate an evil, it will escalate. 2 Timothy 3:13 gives us that principle: "But evil men and seducers shall become worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." It moves up to a higher level all the time.

Therefore, periodically in history, things have gotten so far out of hand that God has had to step in and slow down the violence and the bloodshed. He did this with the Noahic flood in Genesis 6:5-8. He did this at the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:5-8. He did this with Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19:13 and Genesis 19:24-25. Any society which thinks it can long continue in the violation of biblical principles is in for a shock. That's the tribulation era mistake. People act on the basis of what they believe to be true. The tribulation is totally anti-God and demonic, so bloodshed is inevitable. And there will be no restraints then on their conduct.

1 Timothy 4:1 says, "Now the spirit speaks expressly that, in the latter time, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and the doctrines of demons." That's exactly what will happen in the tribulation.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 tells us that the antichrist is a lawless one, so he himself will set the pattern for other people to follow. The frustration then of unfulfilled expectations is what is going to bring down individual personal bloodshed in the tribulation. Today, mankind is been conditioned to accept a central government planning on a global scale as the means to the good life. Politicians now openly campaigned on the basis of what they will use the power of government to secure for various groups, and they make no bones about it. Such a system of government benefits requires a control over the people and over the resources by some elite group who makes all the decisions for the good of the people. Such a system, in effect, deifies the state and removes personal freedom.

When people realize that state socialism does not produce – it exercises an oppressive control, but they don't get what they want, because you kill off the producers, then the result is violence and bloodshed. So, the red horse rider indicates that the tribulation society is going to turn to killing one another in a way that is beyond anything we can imagine today. There will be no restraint by God the Holy Spirit, and there will be no restraint by the principles of the Word of God, so the tribulation society will run amuck.

Matthew 24:10-12 describe for us the conditions that will exist: "And then many shall be offended, and shall betray one another, and they shall hate one another." And when you hate people, you're ready to murder them. That's why the Bible says that hatred is equivalent to murder: "And many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive. Many people will be operating on demonic doctrines, and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall grow cold. People won't have love for one another. Class will slaughter class; race will kill race; ethnic group will liquidate ethnic group; political party will eliminate political party; drug users will be against other drug users; religion will kill religion; sex competitors will remove their competition; assassination will be a daily occurrence; people will live in fear of ambush by their enemies; and, the tribulation will become a reign of terror and bloodshed as people turn on one another. Everyone will be living in an armed camp. The red horse heritage will not be the bloodshed of nation against nation, but of person against person.

The New Age leaders today claim that a society functioning on humanism will achieve the "love thy neighbor and peace on earth" ideal that Christianity has failed to achieve. But the red horse rider gives the lie to that false hope. People are going to be consumed by jealousy over what others have, and that jealousy will then go to envy, which means that they will try to destroy what other people have. Terrorism is going to have a field day in the tribulation.

Those who are born again are going to be one of the primary sources of the bloodletting. Matthew 24:9 says, "Then they shall deliver you to be afflicted, and they shall kill you, and you shall be hated of all nations for My namesake."

Then in Revelation 6:10-11, one of the seals describes the condition of these people who are believers who will be the object of bloodshed: "And they cried, with a loud voice saying, 'How long, O Lord, Holy and True, will you refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' And white robes were given unto every one of them. And it was said unto them that they should rest for a little season until their fellow servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." The Lord comforts them and says, "Yes, I'm going to avenge your blood. But there's some more believers who are still going to be slaughtered by the rider on the red horse in the tribulation."

The truth of our Lord Jesus Christ divides people. It divides them into life and into death. It does that today, and it will certainly do it in the tribulation. In Matthew 10:34, Jesus puts it this way: "Do not think that I am come to send peace on earth. I did not come to send peace, but a sword." Those of you who know the doctrines of the Word of God are the objects of the hatred of Satan and his New Age movement people. You are the people that stand in the way. Therefore, when the tribulation era comes, and believers will no longer be under that protective hand of God, except in a limited way, then they will pay with their blood. They will be in the forefront of the slaughter. But the whole tribulation will be a dangerous era. Can you imagine living in a society where you have to look over your shoulder every day and every night because somebody out there may be ready to take your life? It's a society which is the ultimate expression of all the doctrines of humanism.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1982

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