

Revelation_6

1] When the Lamb opened one of the seals, one of the four living beings said with a thunderous voice: "Come". I perceive it was by purpose that the word "first" has been omitted and the phrase "one of the four" and "one of the seals" is used. Concerning the seals, some translations used the word "first". In the chapter 4, verse 6, the living beings are indicated as the first, the second, and on. Here we know not which being is the first one to speak the first call "Come". This gives me an impression that time sequence is not in focus here. Every change in the vision is announced by one of them; they act equally. All four beings made all four announcements like the four Gospel books present to us the entire record of our Lord's teaching while He was among the disciples in person – bodily. Perhaps the visions are recorded one by one to accommodate our limited ability in viewing - no more than one sight at a time. Since we know not which of the four beings sounded the first call "Come", we know not: which of these four was the second, which was the third, which was the fourth. If it was significant for us to know these details, the Lord would not have left them out of the whole vision. I perceive that these four are a team. Evidently, no change happened without the call of one of the four beings. All four beings are like an integral part of the throne. All events in this book and, in the entire universe happen because it is God's will that they come to pass: He suffered evil to happen to justify His judgment against Satan and sinner. I perceive in my limited understanding, God works all things for the good of His people [Romans 8: 28; Genesis 50: 20]. The worst evil deeds of sinners will bring glory to God and His justice. We are created and redeemed by our Lord's love and grace and His glory is our comfort as we battle; and in suffering. Our Savior's glory is our everlasting joy - after His victory gets completed in us and in the entire universe. God has created us in His likeness. We lost that likeness through sin. In Christ that likeness is restored to us. Now we can be truly happy & blessed by rejoicing in the glory and pleasure of the Father, & Son. In us it is His likeness; in our God, it is His

essence. The Heavenly Father performs all things to glorify His beloved Son. The Son works everything to please the Father. The Holy Spirit fills the universe with that glory of His eternal love. The teaching of love and God's glory is not His greed, it is for our blessedness.

2] A white horse appeared with an archer on its back. The rider was crowned and went on a conquest. I have read and heard a few contradicting interpretations about this horse and its rider. I could hardly accept any one of them. There is still a hope in my mind that someday I might hear or read a good one. In explaining my perception about all four horses and their riders, I'd like to tell you that in a number of passages, this book is reflecting to the beginning and signifying the same or similar patterns— between God and man - to the end. Here is our Lord Jesus, the Lamb: God's Ransom for the fallen humanity. The riders with the horses are signifying benefits of godliness and consequences of godlessness. Our Lord made man to live in purity with abundant blessings. Man enjoyed life and in his rejoicing glorified God. By believing deception and disobeying God's Word, we, men, produced our own death. The loss of fellowship with our Creator in Eden and all subsequent calamities are the product of our compliance with our adversary. After the great flood, God blessed the family He saved from death and gave them a new beginning. Soon the people neglected their Savior and turned to vanity. Our Lord blessed Abraham and Isaac abundantly, but Jacob got entangled in two family conflicts and his children became godless people - like gentiles. God gave great victories to Israel in the years of Moses and Joshua, but they refused to pursue His commandments and root out the entire idolatrous sacrilege.

God granted enormous prosperity and superiority to the kingdom of David and Solomon, yet Solomon turned to womanizing and gross idolatry. To make the long story shorter, let us look at the newer times. Our God's grace and might appeared to us more blissful and glorious than ever before – in Christ Jesus. We see our Savior's glorious ministry: His birth in Bethlehem, teaching of John, our Lord's teaching and miracles, suffering, death and

resurrection. We observe Him breathing into His disciples His Holy Spirit, His ascension, and outpouring of the power from above. The new Church became God's mighty fortress. Satan was defeated on every side. Christ's Gospel was conquering hearts of sinners all over the world. Christ is greater than Joshua in Canaan. Men and women, young and old, in every segment of humanity trusted & obeyed from the heart the blessed Gospel to become God's children [Acts 4: 4; 17: 12; 18: 8]. Our adversary, the devil, attacked from inside and from outside. Since he was not able to stop the true Gospel, he enacted many false gospels and antichrists [I John 2: 18]. After corrupted men misled many unstable souls, a faithful remnant was cruelly persecuted by the false church. Even so, Satan is losing. In the verse number two we see Christ, our great Conqueror, as the pure Gospel of our Lord Jesus - liberating souls of genuine converts. The horse rider we can see as our Savior's Spirit with His victory-crown. The white horse signifies a driving power of purity and holiness in miraculous accomplishments. In a world of idolatry and witchcraft, oppression with social and spiritual slavery, the blessed Gospel of salvation in Christ, God's own Son, proclaimed deliverance from evil: healing of the sick, strength to the weak, comfort for the sad, new, everlasting, life to the dead. The mysterious prophecies were fulfilled... This great gift and blessing – the new life and liberty for souls is in Christ presently and, eternally. We know not how many sin-slaves and slaves of the slave-masters became a part of God's new creation in Christ: mighty kings under the King of kings. Idolaters became Christ's royal priesthood and witnesses. The name of the mighty Lamb of God was proclaimed and glorified in prisons, in shackles, in torture and martyrdom and everywhere Christ is victorious in the hearts and lives of His redeemed disciples. Satan was furious. Persecution was cruel. The Spirit-filled Christian host marched as our Lord Jesus is leading. The godless rulers were urged by the devil to stop this blessed tide. They all suffered God's judgment for oppressing righteousness and demanding idolatry and immorality. In II Kings 19 the massive Assyrian army was destroyed. Daniel 4 told us of God's punishment and correction imposed on Babylonian king.

In the years of 1990 – 1992 the world was watching in amazement the fall of tyranny that oppressed believers for many decades, persecuted printing of the Holy Scriptures, and persistently worked on organizing false churches. The mighty fortress of evil crumbled when our Lord ordered: “It is enough!” In the Scriptures we read of many mighty testimonies of faithful witnesses that suffered oppression, persecution, torture, and martyrdom to declare the judgments and mercy of our Almighty Creator. Jeremiah, a prophet, is an outstanding proof that God’s Word is true: Satan is the deceiver & destroyer. Many tyrannies have fallen, many tyrants suffered God’s righteous judgment; and the rest – still existing in this world - cannot escape their fate, but the Gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus is still available and every person trusting and obeying the Lord Jesus is in the loving and caring arms of God, our Redeemer.

3&4] The Lamb opened the second seal: the second living being ushered the vision of the next major event: a red horse with a rider bringing tumult and bloodshed as our Lord Jesus has foretold. [Matthew 10:34&36; 24: 6]. No change great or small happened outside of our Lord’s control.

He reigns forever. The slaves of Satan suffer consequences of their evil-doing here and they face God’s righteous judgment after their death. The righteous suffer with our Lord for a testimony. In adversities we are sustained and comforted by His Holy Spirit’s power to reign against the evil forces here - to rejoice with Christ forever. How long our Lord has been calling the humanity to turn back to their Creator and Savior? After creation was completed, how soon men turned away from our Lord; after Noah’s flood, after Sodom’s doom, after the conquest in Canaan, after the great prosperity under David & Solomon: so soon in sin-slavery... After the great manifestation of our Heavenly Father in the Only-begotten, after Christ’s resurrection, ascension, and outpouring of His Spirit’s power, how soon Ananias and Sapphira plotted deceit? How soon the corrections in the epistles were urgent for those that once professed faith in the only Savior? Since the adversary snared so many collaborators among the Christians,

can we suppose what was the condition of the world in total darkness? God offered gifts, blessings, opportunities and ability to use all to His glory, to benefit one another by sharing the abundance of His grace and rejoicing in His salvation. After stubbornly rejecting our Savior's call, sinners increased the tumult of their idolatry to the extent that they were deaf and unable to hear God's calling. Men have taken the gifts and abilities that were still in their possession and use, to misuse them against one another. Instead of peace they had wars. The benevolent rulers were forgotten and tyranny with oppression gained power. Destructions replaced prosperity, perversions and sicknesses ruined health and beauty, godly teachers were ignored or martyred, false prophets and evil deceivers misguided human society deeper and deeper into darkness. From the Garden of Eden to God's great final judgment the pathway is saturated with godlessness and corruption of spiritual and carnal decay. Yet, at such awful times, when godliness is facing martyrdom, our Creator and Savior has never left His faithful and now, all that call on His Name receive His salvation. In every situation Christ is victorious and in Him - all His redeemed. Satan is defeated & his slaves perish.

5&6] God's Lamb opened the third seal and the third voice from the throne said: "Come". A black horse appeared. In the rider's hand was a scale. A voice from the midst of the four beings explained the sign, saying: A measure of wheat for a penny; three measures of barley for a penny; no hurt to the oil & wine. In Matthew 24: 7 and in Mark 13: 8, our Lord Jesus foretold of famines coming. It's only the beginning. In my limited personal experience I observed the people in the times of great calamities, wars and so called natural disasters. Some believers wished it was the end; many sinners feared that it might be. Our Lord is turning our heart and mind toward the Giver of the whole armor of godliness; to God, our true and only Savior. In the horrifying prophecy of Amos, 8: 11-14, we read about awful spiritual starvation of perverted and corrupted nominal believers. Long time they claimed to be God's people. They boasted of God's gifts and

promises, but despised and disobeyed the Giver of the blessing. A sore change happened. God's messages were not available and the rebels found themselves starving for the husks they were feeding on for so long; way too long [Luke 15: 16]. But they don't seek true manna. In the time of my imprisonment I was deprived of any Bible reading for some time. I was amazed with continuous streams of God's Word in my mind. I also remember the emptiness in my heart at times misused and wasted. Verses 5 & 6 seem to indicate scarcity of food: a small amount was very costly.

If we are in the habit of enjoying abundance of earthly blessings while practicing some religion to maintain a feeling of self-righteousness, in the time of crises and struggles in economy we are destined for spiritual starvation. Our Lord is teaching us to live in the Gospel-light and to be ready for adversities. God's Son teaches us to understand that our Heavenly Father leads us and, at times bears us in His arms, closer to the likeness and example of our Lord Jesus. In the flames of severe testing gold is purified; chaff is burned to ashes. Famines and starvations were allowed to happen to Sinners to seek the Lord. Suffering along with the unbelievers, disciples cleave to their Lord. One very revealing time of hardships is given to us in twenty chapters of Genesis beginning with the chapter 30. In 50: 20 is a bright truth. All things work together for good to them that love God, who live to please our Lord [Romans 8: 28]. Throughout the Scriptures we can observe suffering of our Lord's faithful servants. In the Book of Job we see human self-arrogance rebuked and godliness of Job lifted up closer to God. In times of severe testing our Lord is guiding us and giving us opportunity for a godly testimony to make us His light to the world. Faithfulness is encouragement to believers, warning to backsliders, and a Gospel call to sinners. Testing times reveal to us our real standing in faith which might be weaker than it appears to us. The scale in the verse 5 is used to indicate if the price paid is sufficient for the market value of the food on the scale. This is a reminder to us of the cost we are willing to pay for the precious Bread from Heaven. If we are underestimating the Word of

life in Christ, we suffer spiritual infirmity and defeat. Satan sneaks around. When we use all the gifts, opportunities, and blessings to honor our Lord, to bless our brothers and sisters, to walk in the Gospel-light, we feast at our Lord's Table and He makes us His light in this World. As we follow our Leader, He removes the seals and unfolds His amazing revelation to us - step by step. While the nominal believers and sinners experience lack of soul-sustainment and expectation of deliverance in troubled times, the faithful disciples receive undisturbed flow of the Holy Spirit's anointment-oil; and for truly penitent sinners the cup of wine – the redeeming blood - is prepared. The One, Who suffered for us before we knew Him, is always with us; His love is the everlasting love.

7&8] The Lamb removes another seal. Another one of the four living beings unveils another vision. A pale horse appears with death on its back. Sheol followed closely. These had power over one fourth part of the earth to kill by sword, by hunger, by death, and by the beasts of the earth. The removal of the first seal reveals the beauty and power of the Gospel. It was the fragrance of life to believers but the fragrance of death to the enemies of faith. The second vision unveils hopeless self destruction of the world in darkness. At such a time of darkness our living hope in Christ glows brighter. Destruction and bloodshed is followed by starvation in some parts of the world, but the Bread of Life is our stay. Many times the disciples, used to modest and humble manners of living, managed to survive through the time of famine much easier than the people with habits of wasteful customs and vanity. Many times through the recorded history humanity experienced epidemics of massive proportions. Some nations completely vanished from the face of the earth. Societies exhausted with deficiencies of basic life sustainment, were so weaken and discouraged that any additional problem would bring death. This pale horse seems to me as a wave of exhaustion in the world of sin and darkness, world without faith in our Savior. So many people victimized by abuse from other trusted or feared sinners around them just are not willing to turn to our Savior, or, are

too afraid of peer pressure if they would seek Life.

If our faith in our Lord is shallow, our walk in the Truth inconsistent, our mind is infested with worldly ways, we are also threatened with the worldly ignorance and fears as if the Lord does not care for His redeemed souls. Defeated disciples are victims of the devil's cruelty and craftiness. Christ is our surety. The four seals have been removed by the Lamb of God revealing to us the history of the humanity. When we are on the side of the victorious Gospel of salvation in Christ our Lord, whatever we face now and in the future, can only bring us closer to our Savior and another step toward His everlasting glory. Without trusting and obeying God's Son, every man, group, and nation, can only be on the path to hell. The hopes and confidence in the world, and ideals of the worldly leaders are all misguided by sin. Disappointments and turbulences are often on the path of sin & the end of it is everlasting destruction. In the grace of our Savior we are called to suffer for a time; yet He is with us giving us power, comfort and joy unknown to the world in sin. We are looking forward to meeting Him in glory to ever adore Him. In the first two verses of this chapter we saw the movement we should pray and strive to be a part of; the proclamation of the Gospel by godly example day by day, by diverse ministries our Father has blest His children with; all to glorify God's Son our only Savior and Master; our King of kings and Lord of lords. His personal pleasure is to transform dead sinners into the heirs of life everlasting. For such a great deed He can use a feeble instrument like a sinner formerly lost in darkness, now delivered. In the verses 3 – 8 it is revealed to us what we might face at times in the world and what are consequences of godlessness.

9-11] The Lamb of God opened the fifth seal; John saw the souls of martyrs slain for holding their testimony of God's Word. They shouted: How long, o Lord, holy and true, before Thou will judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? They received white robes and the Gospel message. Their waiting time is short. More martyrs are scheduled. In a few words so much is being revealed to us. Let us keep our focus on our

Redeemer, our perfect example. He sets us free from doubts and fears. With His victory in our heart He has overcome the world for us. Peter saw the waves and lost his Savior. But he cried: Lord, save me! [Matthew 14: 29-31] If our fears prevent us from seeing the victory of Christ in the faithful testimonies, we can benefit by looking closely at these verses. Our Lord's martyrs are His kings on this earth. They know the King of kings and are victorious in Him. Our Savior is glorified in them. Our Lord Jesus removed this seal for all that trust and follow His guidance. He gave us an open vision of His glorious victory in us now and, in His everlasting glory. That victory is blissfully manifested in our Savior's life and death on earth because He is victorious Martyr since the beginning and abides forever. At times the faithful disciples of our Master can get burdened with cruel oppression and raging evil in this world we invite unto the only Savior. At times we might question: is there any good result of all our labor. It's a blessing and encouragement often to look up to this altar: all God's ransomed are there. In Hebrews 9: 24&28 we see our Lord Jesus as both – the Priest and the Offering – in the heavenly sanctuary. No man will ever enter into His glory, but His redeemed; and none of His ransomed will be left to perish. Let us cleave in faithfulness to our Savior with full assurance in our heart: He is faithful. But the disobedient are on the left-hand-side [Matthew 7: 21-29; 25: 41-46] Claiming the blessings and promises while in disobedience is a snare of the devil; & so is every distrusting any part of the Gospel. These martyrs are revealed to us still down here, not to exclude them from the rest of God's saved.

This is an encouragement to all believers facing martyrdom, and, an admonishment for all Christians to admire the grace of God in the martyrdom of His faithful. The voice of His martyrs is very strong in our Father's hearing. In Genesis 4: 10 God powerfully hears Abel's blood although Cain thinks Abel is dead. In joy or suffering, in life or death, God knows all that is in of our hearts, because His Son's Spirit is in His dwelling place on earth. What then means the shout from under this altar? Are

Christ's martyrs begging, impatiently, for revenge? Our Lord, just nailed to the pillar of suffering and shame, is asking forgiveness [Luke 23: 34].

Stephan says: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." [Acts 7: 60] In Genesis 50: 17 it looks like Joseph is weeping because his brothers have not realized that he forgave them long before they asked. In the following verses he says that God meant all their evil for the good of saving much people.

Trusting our Lord's goodness and grace in all our suffering enables us to forgive in the Name of Christ. The entire humanity is a fallen race, unwilling to accept God's grace and salvation in Christ. Many times we ignore God, the giver of all blessings. We stubbornly reject our Savior's call to repent and forsake sin. We deserve death – not life. Often our Lord's Spirit moves our heart and enlightens our mind to seek His salvation in the midst of adversities, when we are not puffing up in pride but feeling helpless in despair. We learn our Father's mercy and the depth of perdition He delivered us from; we grow in the new life. We grow in faith and knowledge of our blessed Redeemer and Master. He reveals to us the purpose and value of suffering with Him in the world He is inviting to repent from sin and seek mercy unto salvation. We ask our Lord to give us grace He has and pay for the sin we have. Then we ask the same for all men. When we forgive any man, we confess that their sin is not against us, but against our Owner and Master. We leave all at His feet. We remember His forgiveness and, His promise not to reject any one that come to Him [John 6: 37].

Knowing all these facts, could the martyrs under the altar eagerly seek vengeance? In this book with many symbols and allegories, we, men of deficient insight, can form some baseless interpretation based on our carnality that seems 'so natural' to us. We have nothing our own: we have been purchased with a great price. We have no blood of our own, but the Blood of Jesus, God's Lamb. Even so, we must not be hasty seeking vengeance against those that refuse the Gospel we preach. They are our former fellow-sinners. How long did we reject His grace? Saul of Tarsus, a hard core murderer, once delivered from darkness and hell, hastened from suffering to more suffering to save his murderers. I perceive that these

martyrs are well aware of both, God's grace of salvation in Christ and, God's judgment against sin and Satan. They are amazed by God's patience and His grace transforming awful sinners into wonderful heirs of life everlasting; the royal martyrs adorned in Christ's own righteousness. The garments of pure white they received when they believed and obeyed their Savior. In this world of sin and darkness, living in Christ is greater wealth than any peace and pleasure Satan and the world can promise but can never give. The Holy Spirit made them kings on earth; and we should pursue their path. Their shout 'how long' is an expression of amazement, admiration and adoration: How long is His time of patience and endurance for the few sinners that will eventually turn to Him, believe and obey His call. We don't want to be ignorant of the II Thessalonians chapter 1; especially the verse 6. God will judge sin. But our concern should not be His prerogatives: He never failed; all His work is perfect [Deuteronomy 32: 35, Hebrews 10: 30, Jude 7]. In John 16: 30 our Lord gives us His peace and His victory in the midst of tribulation. He is our Fountain overflowing with joy when suffering and sadness surround us on all sides. Suffering in the world is for a short time.

Waiting after martyrdom is a short span. Glory and rejoicing with the host of Heaven and with all the redeemed – in the presence of the Father and Son is forever. None of persecutions are incidental or accidental. Our Lord guards us, His Flock, every step of the way.

12-14] John is watching the mighty Lamb removing the sixth seal. The earth is quaking horribly. The sun is now black – not bright. The moon has bloody color. The stars dropped down as untimely fig-fruits. The heaven rolled away like a scroll. All mountains and islands were moved out of their places. Is this a chaos? I don't think so. It's a perfect order of changes God has ordered. On the sixth day God completed creation of the world. Removing the sixth seal before our eyes, He is revealing to us the Truth we should have known since we grew up to the level of early childhood's discernment: He sustains all. He appoints the limits of suffering for His

children in their pilgrimage. He sets limits to the forces of evil. He orders the end before the beginning. He rules the universe and suffers evil for a time to manifest His perfect judgment in the sight of the heavenly hosts and all the redeemed. All power and holiness is His. The land seems unmovable. It's standing in its place for centuries and millenniums. Sinful rulers of states usurp blasphemous names and titles, build fortresses, gather weapons and ammunition, prepare massive armies, and labor to make us think they will last forever. This seal removed - reveals the facts. God alone is the Ruler of the universe. All sinners are Satan's slaves. If they repent not, they cannot escape the fate of their master. The Lord reveals to us how weak and deceitful is His defeated enemy. When men refuse to believe God's Word, trust in Satan's tricks, they give the devil power over them. The sun and moon cannot last longer than the time our Creator appointed for them. Far less can any tyrant, any man made government, any persecutor of God's children, stay in power one moment longer than the time limited by our God. The power of the Almighty is real and eternal since ever and forever. Removing these seals our Lord is giving us more faith and understanding to make our life in Christ His victory in us and through us. So, we can see that all is ready for God's appointed moment. For sinners and unbelievers, every major change is frightening, because they ignore God's warning and Christ's call. As the sun appeared black, much more shall turn black all the glory of the world at its end. Indeed, it is already black in its pomp and vanity, but the eyes blinded by sin refuse to see the reality of Gospel truth. Our Creator placed the stars in their places throughout the universe & He can remove them as He wills. So shall fall at His judgment all the false stars of entertainment, politics, leadership and fame. Health, wealth and lustful pleasures were changing users many times in the history of the world. In the end of sin and iniquity, God will end forever the sinful raise as the untimely fig fruits are shaken off by strong wind. We were told by the news media that some of the volcanic islands disappeared in the recent history. Our God can remove continents if He elects to do so. Some religious groups and large masses move from their

former standards with any wind of sinful tendencies and worldly influences to worship idols. Others are slowly but constantly drifting after the world keeping a short distance just to feel godlier. Only the hearts founded firmly on the Rock of ages cleft for us will be preserved in Him to the end of their journey and rejoice in His appearance as the Judge of all that refused His saving grace good will. All careless rebels with all of their false godliness shall be moved like islands away from their self confidence. God has judged all the idols of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria and Israel, that the ungodly minds in their dark imagination “hanged up in their sky” to worship. Daily we see the modern idols collapsing.

We can see the signs of our God’s displeasure in their fall; they prefer to label it as bad luck. Sinners didn’t believe Noah’s preaching until it was too late. And so it is today and until the end and judgment. God moved the mountains and islands from their places. He gave them these places in the past times. Every impenitent sinner, group, nation, empire, everyone in all generations of human history is facing God’s judgment. Only the souls redeemed in Christ, loyal to His mastership, are safe and preserved. God gave us His Gospel in His grace. Opportunity despised – will be removed. Fidelity is rewarded in Christ.

15-17] The entire rebellious humanity hides itself in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains. They seek refuge in, and, help from the lifeless rocks and cliffs. Misguided for so long by the evil one, they now try to escape from the merciful and just God they deliberately ignored and despised till now. By their words, or deeds, or both, they denied Him existence or His authority altogether, but now they see Him on His throne judging and they still trust in their caves. Their last hope is ending in their own destruction. They still refuse to acknowledge His supremacy. Such is the darkness of rebellion & idolatry. Darkness is exposed here so graphically, but it is not an entirely new foolishness of sinful, darken mind. The Lord Jesus is revealing here the same stubborn, rebellious character of disobedience that He told us about in the Gospel books [Matthew 7: 21-29;

Luke 6: 46-49 & 13: 24-28]. Rebellion is a deadly snare. I perceive that a dangerous pitfall hiding behind the attitudes condemned by our Savior in these references is nominal confidence, secret personal disobedience and underestimating God's Word given to us in Christ Jesus. If we regard any man as more or less than just a man, we offend our Savior & Lord. It is an awful tragedy to see any believer deliberately rebelling against the Word after we have known that person as a faithful disciple. We should pray for all God's children to be preserved and blessed in faithfulness. Our greatest need is our personal relationship with our Savior & Lord; hearty loyalty. No part of the Gospel teaching is negligible and no part too huge for us that we don't pray for, strive for and confess to the truth that only by the grace of our Father in Christ we labor to please Him. Pride, self confidence, and negligence are poison; our enemy strives to mix it with the pure water of life and truth. These evil attitudes are constantly used by the devil for flattering our "accomplishments" and accusing our brethren and our Lord. We must be armed with the fact: all our good deeds are our Lord's grace in us in spite of our weaknesses. If we are in Christ this time of His grace, we abide in Him - saved forever.