

The Pattern of Perdition

Revelation 6:1-8

Big Idea: The pattern of our perdition cries out for Christ to come.

- v. 1 – The opening of the seals is a literary device by which John narrates visions which **PREPARE** for the unveiling of the scroll.
- In Matthew 24, Jesus specifically identifies the hardships associated with the opening of the seals in Revelation 6.

1.) The first seal depicts **DECEPTION** (v. 1-2, Mat. 24:4-5).

- The opening of the first four seals introduces the notorious image of the “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.”
- The first horseman in today’s text is probably not Christ.
 - a.) These horsemen seem to be sent out as one unit (Zech. 6:1-3).
 - b.) Deception is by its very nature deceptive (2 Cor. 11:13-15).
 - c.) The pattern in Matthew 24 strongly suggests that the first horseman is a deceiver (Matthew 24:3-4).
 - d.) The concern over false prophets in Revelation 2-3 suggests false prophecy as the most likely interpretation.
- Deception is an insidious part of the pattern of this age.

2.) The second seal depicts **WAR** (v. 3-4, Mat. 24:6-7a).

- Once deception sets in, people start fighting to impose their deception on others, and that spirit of conquest inevitably leads to war
- Matthew 24:6 – “...but the end is not yet...” – False teachers and the wars they bring will be the common pattern of life in this age.

3.) The third seal depicts **SCARCITY** (v. 5-6, Mat. 24:7b).

- This seal portrays an extreme scarcity of food and other basic necessities of life.

-- Despite our ever-growing advancements in agriculture, scarcity remains an undeniable part of the pattern of life (Mark 14:7).

4.) The fourth seal depicts **CALAMITY** (v. 7-8, Mat. 24:7c).

- This fourth seal represents tragic and untimely deaths that result from murder, starvation, disease, and random disasters.
- These are all ways that people might die apart from the normal progression of death by old age (Ezekiel 14:21).
- It seems we are no closer to ridding the world of calamity than the first century audience to which John originally wrote.

Application

1.) Don't try to **PREDICT** the end (Acts 1:6-7).

- In Matthew 24:8 – *“All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.”*
- The signs of this age—deception, war, scarcity, and calamity—come early and repeat often.
- While they are not necessarily signs the end is immediate, they are signs that it is inevitable.

2.) Stand firmly upon the **TRUTH**

- Since deception is the starting point for the terrors of this life, only truth is ultimately effective against it.
- If our responses to the dreadful pattern of this world are not centered in Jesus Christ and the Gospel, then we are not fighting the right fight.

3.) Comprehend the awesome glory of Christ's **VICTORY**

- These judgments are intended by God to bring us to repentance before the contents of the scroll are unveiled and it is too late.
- The dreadful pattern of this age emphasizes the undeniable necessity and the incalculable enormity of Christ's victory.

4.) Long for our Lord's **RETURN**

- The horrors and frustrations of earth are meant to make clear how badly we need redemption and to prepare the way for our Redeemer to come again and make His victory complete.
- To recognize fully the inescapable pattern of these days is to be eager for our Lord's return (Philippians 3:20-21, Revelation 22:20).