

In Focus: The Horsemen of Zechariah and Revelation

The book of Revelation draws on Zechariah's first and last visions to picture four different coloured horses: white, red, black and pale (Rev. 6:1–8). Each horse rides out in judgment when a seal of the scroll in the hand of the Lamb is opened. Unlike Zechariah, the colours of the horses seems to reflect their judgment tasks, with white representing conquest; red, bloodshed; black, famine; and pale (or 'chlorine'), death.

These are not a sequence of judgments so much as a combination of judgments that have fallen on the world now that Christ has died and been raised (Rev. 5:8–14). They are evidence of God's present activity in the world and point to his final judgment, as Wilcock (1991: 76) notes, 'Seals 1 to 5 portray different aspects of the whole of history; Seal 6 describes the day which will end it.' The vision of John in Revelation is to comfort Christians that God has all things in hand, no matter how horrible. It is also a challenge not to grow complacent and get caught up in a world that is coming to judgment.

It is perhaps the rider on the white horse in Rev. 19:11–16 that has a greater affinity with Zechariah's last vision since it connects with the final judgment where the nations of the world will be subjected to his rule. This rider is called the Word of God, who is followed by the hosts of heaven, also on white horses, and who strikes down the rebellious nations with his sword. He is the 'KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS'.

Like the victory of Yahweh's hosts in Zech. 6, Christ's assured victory is to give courage to God's people today and to inspire obedience to the word he has spoken.¹

¹ Anthony R. Petterson, [*Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi*](#), ed. David W. Baker and Gordon J. Wenham, vol. 25, *Apollos Old Testament Commentary* (Nottingham, England; Downers Grove, IL: Apollos; InterVarsity Press, 2015), 180–181.

Living in the modern day, knowing this, how will it effect your life knowing that such enemies of God would be brought to justice?