

The Conqueror

All the articles on this site are presented with:

Words of Christ in '*red*'.

Scripture in '*Italics*'.

My words in this font.

All quotes are from the King James Bible unless otherwise stated.

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This site is a collection of thoughts regarding the four horsemen of the apocalypse. It contends that the horses represent the forces that have always shaped humanity, and attempts to reconcile the events in Genesis chapter forty seven with Revelation chapter six verses one and two.

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

The following doctrine contends that the first seal of the book of Revelation represents economic conquest.

The text for the following doctrine is Revelation 6:1-8 The four horsemen. And I would draw the reader's attention to the last sentence of verse 8 *...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.*

This largely explains the metaphor, but the first rider is somewhat of a mystery. I am convinced that Israel's time in Egypt correlates with the events in Revelation. Beginning with Joseph and ending with Moses. It began very well with Pharaoh welcoming the children of Israel, but soon turned into a long slavery, that ended with deliverance through Moses and the mighty hand of God. The comparison is we are in the golden age of Joseph's era. And the first horseman will be compared to Joseph. I would like to use Zechariah's vision as there are multiple important clues regarding these colour coded horses, chapter 6:1-8

Verse 4 *Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord?*

Verse 5 *And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four **spirits*** of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth.*

* Strong's H7307 רוּחַ-אֶחָד has 378 occurrences on the OT, and it translates into 15 different English words, most commonly it is spirit[s] or winds. The preceding adjective is often the context.

Spirit of God Gen. 1:2 First mention

of wisdom Exo. 28:3

of jealousy, Num. 5:14

alternative spirit Num. 14:24

contrite spirit Psa. 34:18

Holy spirit Psa. 51:11

haughty spirit Pro.16:18

broken spirit Pro. 17:22

perverse spirit Isa.19:14

evil spirit Jdg9:23, 1Sam16:16

lying spirit 1King 23:23

humble spirit Pro. 16:19

spirit of man Jdg. 15:19

breath of life, Gen.6:17

wind Gen. 8:1

whirlwind Ezk. 1:4

air Job 41:16

blast of thy nostrils, Exo. 15:8

mind Gen. 26:35

These 4 spirits / winds have shaped humanity from time immemorial. They are mentioned many times in the scriptures, but only as horses in Zechariah and Revelation, I will be going back to these books repeatedly. These horses/horsemen are not individuals. Birds of a feather flock together, and you can tell a lot about a person by the company they keep.

The Bow and Crown and Conquest

Only one person in the OT is associated with the bow, crown and conquest. That person is Joseph, Gen.49. 22-26. Joseph achieved much for God, among his many achievements was total economic conquest for Pharaoh. There are 4 examples of correlation between Joseph's life and the text in Revelation chapter 6 [i.e. 4 horsemen]

#1 The Bow is mentioned: Gen 49:24 *But his **bow** abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.*

#1a That might not sound like much, but when we consider the context it really takes it up a notch.

His father Jacob said: Gen. 49:1 *Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you **that which shall befall you in the last days.*** Jacob says he is prophesying and he is.

#2 The Crown is mentioned: V26 *The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: **they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.*** The crown in this context is the blessing of Abraham. The crown in Revelation is a different crown, it represents successful shooting as in olympic games. 1Cor. 9:25

#3 Total Conquest is mentioned. Gen 45:6 Two years into the famine Joseph tells his brethren to bring their father to Egypt. Because there are five more years. Some time passes and we pick up the story in Gen.47:14-15 [approx. 5-6th year of the famine] By the end of the famine Pharaoh owned: All the money. Gen.47:14

All the cattle. Gen. 47:17 #3a First mention of horses in the Bible Gen.47:17

All the lands. Gen. 47:20

And all the people. Gen. 47:21 [I should mention the children of Israel didn't get owned by Pharaoh]

Absolute total conquest without any war #3b Joseph's conquest wasn't just in Egypt, Gen 41:57 but other countries as well, this would include Canaan and Ethiopia.

#4 Trading grain during famine is mentioned: Gen 42:3 *And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy **corn** in Egypt.* H1250 this word appears 14 times in the OT, 5 times it is translated as wheat.

Joseph's trading in grain during the famine bears a strong resemblance to the words spoken as the black horse appears... *A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny...*

Disclaimer: The main Hebrew word for wheat is H2406 & H7668.

The White Horse

I submit the colour codes as such:

White horse represents prosperity.

Red horse represents war.

Black horse represents famine.

Pale horse represents death. My reasons to follow:

Question: If the black horse represents famine, what would the white horse represent?

Answer: Prosperity. The contrast is the first clue. There are four different coloured horses, but only two are opposites, the black and the white. The black clearly represents famine, so it follows that

the white represents abundance. A similar contrast can be seen in the fact that God is a God of Mercy and Judgment. His judgments can be seen in war, famine and death, but often His mercies are seen in prosperity. Consider the following:

*Zec 1:17 Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; **My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad**; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.*

So it makes sense that if the horses in Zec 6:8 ... *have quieted my spirit in the north country*. They don't always represent judgement, sometimes they represent God's mercies. And who doesn't want peace and prosperity?

Joseph's conquest is the model, it began with prosperity. Jacob was the first to notice Joseph's diligence towards his work, and then so did Potiphah, then the Jailer, and lastly Pharaoh. Seven good years represent the white horse, and seven years of famine represent the black horse. A man of Joseph's caliber with this foreknowledge conquered the known world. Of course Joseph never went to war, and never killed anyone so there is no mention of war [red horse] or death [pale horse] in the Genesis model. Joseph kept everyone alive, not so in the book of Revelation chapter six.

Some would argue that the colour white only represents purity in scripture, however it is also the colour of leprosy. Lev13:3 The word white first appears in the Bible with Jacob working for Laban and determining Jacob's wages [Gen.30:35]. This is a testimony of Jacob's prosperity, so much so even Laban admitted it [v27]. Gen.30:27-35

He went forth Conquering and to Conquer

The first horseman's conquest is done through prosperity not war, and Joseph's conquest is the model. The success of Joseph's conquest was the fact that he knew what the future held, and when it was going to happen. Rev. 6:2 *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.*

According to the text this is a two part process, starting with *conquering* and a final one-off event to *conquer*, but such a process requires a plan. You cannot go conquering at random or you will achieve nothing. If we consider the words in Rev. 6:2 *And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow*; I should mention that the rider on the white horse already had a bow when he first appeared, the crown was given afterwards. This suggests he had a plan before it was apparent to others. His opponents are not aware of what he is up to. They don't even know he is their enemy, they are easy pickings.

Even Joseph's conquest begun with a plan, and resulted in absolute final conquest that took at least 14 years to complete. I should mention that Joseph's conquest was from the goodness of his heart. Joseph was a mighty servant of God, a type of Christ, but the rider on the white horse is targeting his opponents with a weapon. Quite a contrast. So what is the plan? And what is this final event? I assume the plan [outcome] will be the same as what happened in Egypt. And the bow is a clue as to the means of achieving that outcome. Note that the bow is an assassins weapon, and so he has a target, and an agenda, and what's worse he has a licence to kill:

Rev. 6:8...*here was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill...*

Opponents be warned he is a killer according to the above text. I assume as he progresses with his conquering he makes more opponents, and more opponents means more dead bodies. I can envision the body count mounting as he completes his conquest. Here we see a big difference between Joseph's peaceful conquest, and the subtle and deceptive methods used by the rider on the white horse.

Joseph knew what would happen, and when it would happen, does the conqueror know the future? I don't believe he does. I believe that only God knows the future, and has revealed the important events in the scripture. But I'm sure the conqueror has a plan for the future, and it is world government with him and his buddies at the centre of it all. Everyone wants to rule the world, but we know

from scripture that there will be a brief rule by the devil, followed by the victorious return of Jesus Christ to rule for 1000 years.

Some Conjecture

He has ambitious plans for world government, and he has the economic means to achieve this goal. Planning a world government would be foolish unless you had this kind of economic power, and so this conquering must be very selective in targeting opponents. He'd rather use puppets than expose himself as the diabolical puppeteer. Consider the surreptitious methods used to gain economic control [Jekyall Island meeting], and what pains of secrecy are used to plan future events Bilderburgers et al. Today the nations are conquered by debt. There is a cartel of bankers that have exploited the transition from a gold backed monetary system to a debt backed monetary system. This process has spanned over a hundred years [the Swiss being the last to leave the gold standard], and there is barely a person alive who remembers a gold backed monetary system. Today's global monetary system is a debt backed system, it works by faith, and is driven by necessity, greed and fear. Like a house of cards, when it collapses under its own weight many will say it was inevitable. What could possibly go wrong? Those that have created the current system understand the potential for systemic collapse, and they have resisted all who have suggested alternative systems. Would they be so evil as to exploit such circumstances? Absolutely yes. All our politicians have learned to never waste a good calamity. Many reading this will quickly dismiss it as conspiracy theory, but if I speak well of the coming world government, those same people would think better of it.

There will be two world governments, the first will be very short lived, it will be the government described by Daniel and John as a beast with seven heads, and ten horns. But the main event will be after that when King Jesus returns and rules for 1000 years! That is the only government that matters.

Q) Previously I said these horsemen are not individuals, then I said there is a cartel of bankers that are conquering economically, so what it is?

A) Imagine a cartel of bankers riding the gravy train of prosperity created through excessive debt. The debt comes from thin air, but the resulting prosperity is real. The cartel have mastered this process, now our monetary system is backed by empty promises. Voila! Gresham's Law played out on a global scale over 100 years.

The Red Horse

Rev. 6:4...*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...*

Nothing new or special about war but again the contrast is the clue. If the second horseman represents war, that strongly implies the previous conquest was done without war. And this reconciles with Joseph's conquest. This is the second contrasting clue. Also this rider appears empty-handed, and is given power and a great sword, this suggests to me that his actions are more spontaneous than the previous rider. See the sub heading 'Cause and Effect' further down the page.

Note that the earth was conquered without much war on the part of the conqueror. In fact the conqueror financed both sides! Profiteering from the battles. Now the big war begins when the conquest is finished. Typical of human behaviour, close the barn door after the horse has bolted.

Rev. 6:4 cont. ...*And they should slay one another.* Interesting that the killing almost sounds like a grassroots movement i.e Islam V Christianity. Are religious wars included in this fighting? Perhaps with the break down of government pent up resentments are released? We won't have long to find out.

If this war is centred around Islam V Christianity, it will provide the atheists with a reason to outlaw fundamentalism on both sides. Claiming the high moral ground with their government approved religion[s].

The Great Sword

#1 There are 12 verses in Ezekiel chapter 21 that describe the sword of the Lord, and it has the same effect as the horses described in Zak.6:8

Ezek. 21:15-17 V17 *I will cause my fury to **rest**.*

Zak. 6:8 Same Hebrew word ...*Behold, these that go toward the north country have **quieted** my spirit.* Same Hebrew word, same effect.

#2 Ezek. 21: 9-12 V11 ...*to give it into the hand of the slayer.* Compare the words of Rev.6:4 ...*and there was given unto him a great sword.* The comparison is compelling. This sword is described as Great [Strongs# G3173 Megas] think mega.

The Black Horse

This horse and rider represents famine, severe famine: Lam.5:10 *Our skin was black like an oven because of the terrible famine.* The pair of balances show that a days wages only buys a measure of wheat or triple amount of barley. A day's wages would normally buy eight measures of wheat in ancient times. This is rationing unto death. As the famine in Egypt [and known world] escalated so did the control of the ruling power[s]. Food prices have skyrocketed, and someone is making a killing here.

Please note this rider already had the balances in his hand when he first appeared, just like the first rider he comes prepared for the event.

See thou hurt not the oil and the wine. Commodities or Symbolic? Typically oil and wine would be symbolic, but the context strongly implies commodities. The rider is trading grain and other food-stuffs during famine.

The Pale Horse

The only rider who is named. Is death an individual? No. And we know who his friends are. There is very little said about this rider. Death is often portrayed as having a scythe in his hand, but there is no mention of anything in his hand in the text. This rider is the second empty handed horseman, although he does have an entourage. What he lacks in purpose, he makes up for in sheer numbers.

The cycle effect

Traditionally these winds / spirits tend to go in cycles:

Zek. 6:6 *The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them...*

This can be observed though out history, these cycles of prosperity, war, famine and death are much repeated in the Bible and history. They don't always follow the same order, but they always go in cycles, exactly as shown in the scripture.

Ecc.3:1 *To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven* [H8064 same word in Zak.6:8]

Ecc.3:2 ...a time to die [pale horse]

Ecc.3:3 ...a time to build up Ecc.3:6 *A time to get* [white horse]

Ecc. 3:8 *A time of war* [red horse] and time of peace. They don't always follow the same order, but they always eventually go in cycles. Solomon never mentioned famine, most likely because he never saw any.

I should mention that the order listed in Revelation is different from Zek, and different again from the order in Genesis. In Gen. we see seven good years [white horse] followed by seven bad years [black horse] Notice there was no war [Red horse] and no death [pale horse] because Joseph kept everyone alive. In Zek chapter 6 the order is Red [war], Black [black], white [prosperity], grised [death]. Same horses, different order, but always cycling.

In Zek 1:8 we see a rider on a Red horse [war], then more red [war] horses and speckled [death] and white [prosperity]. Interesting cycle effect shown in Zek 1:16-17 The back story verse 8 sets the context. Previously the Lord had sent war and famine and death to Jerusalem [red, black and pale horses] and now it will be rebuilt with prosperity [white horse]. The cycles repeat throughout scripture. But our understanding is helped if we can recognise what goes with what. War and famine usually go together, not always but often.

Zek. 1:17 *Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.*

The overall effect

I mentioned previously, it was said of these spirits / winds that: Zak. 6:8 *...Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted* my spirit in the north country.* The effects of these horses can be seen in the above verse. It says they [black and white horses] have quieted* my spirit in the north country. H5117 *noo'-akh* has 144 occurrences on the OT. Mostly it is translated as rest or rested, the same word is in the verse below:

Ezek. 21:17 *I will also smite mine hands together, and I will cause my fury to rest: I the LORD have said it.* The overall effects of these horses [horsemen] serve the purposes of God, although that is not always pleasant with humanity, only God's purposes matter, and only God's purposes will stand in the long run. As God reveals His anger on the nations it is said that the nations were angry. Rev 11:18 *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come...* I dare say there is some pent up anger to be vented. God always wins.

Cause and effect

As these events unfold those affected agree on what is happening, but not everybody agrees on why it's happening. Believers see this as the work of God, the Lamb of God opens the seals, but unbelievers see this as the natural cause and effect, nothing to see here, move along... war always causes famine, famine always causes death.

This is also reflected in the fact that two riders appear empty handed, and the other two riders appear with something already in their hands. Both the riders on the white and black horses appear with important objects in their hands. But the riders on the other two horses [red and pale] appear empty handed. I would draw the reader's attention to the alternating pattern in the text. The first and third riders appear with objects in their hands. The second and fourth riders are empty handed.

It is my understanding that the riders who appear with something in their hands have an agenda, they are the cause. But the empty handed riders are the natural reaction, they are the effect.

This cause and effect plays out throughout the first five seals, it all changes when the 6th seal is opened. But if we work backwards through the first five seals, it begs the question:

Did the conqueror [first seal] cause the massive war [second seal]?

The answer to this question depends on how you view the events.

Dangers of Centralised Government

There is a subtle difference between Zek's vision and John's vision. Zek described the horses as being both localised and global, Zek. 6:6-7. But John described them as only being globalised. Revelation 6:8 *And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth.* Is this worth mentioning? Yes, because of the dangers of centralised government. A successful conquest similar to Joseph's puts all the power into the hands of a very few people. Compare Joe's conquest to a current global conquest: At the end of the famine in Egypt, Pharaoh owned all the money, all the cattle, all the land and all the people. Never waste a good crisis. In today's political climate we see politicians exploiting every crisis, and even engineering crisis for political gain. After 9/11 America got the Patriot Act. Imagine what horrors will be implemented in the aftermath of these horsemen.

Dan 7:2 *Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.* These four winds are the same four horsemen as previously discussed. In this metaphor humanity is the sea, and the effects of the winds [horsemen] always produce beastly governments arising from the tossed sea of humanity.

Finally, I would like to remind the reader that I have speculated in some of these points regarding this doctrine. And there is a large volume of information out there documenting the developments in economics and politics of the last hundred years, and in particular central banking. In my opinion it is largely a waste of time if you concentrate on these topics.

Ignore the politics and ignore the banking and focus on what the Lord Jesus said. His reign will be eternal, whatever can be achieved by human governments will be flawed, evil and short lived. Jesus taught us to pray:

Thy Kingdom come,

Thy will be done,

On earth, as it is in Heaven...

His Kingdom is the Big Event. The devil will have his five minutes of fame, but it's nothing compared to the plan God has for His Son and His Church on His earth, and in eternity.

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Various Objections

The Conqueror is Jesus Christ

Many teach that the conqueror is Jesus Christ because:

He rides a white horse. Rev.19:11

He shoots arrows. Psa. 45:5

He is crowned. Rev.19:12 Heb. 2:9

He has conquered [G3528] the world. John 16:33, Luke 11:22

This is a very strong argument. The Lord Jesus meets all the descriptions we have of the conqueror. He ticks all the boxes.

Q) So why would it not be Him?

A) The horsemen are 4 of a kind. Both John and Zak described them as 4 of a kind: Zak. 6:5 [these] and so did John 6:8 [them]. The Lord Jesus is unique:

Jesus is the only way to the Father John 14:6

In the beginning was the Word. John 1:1-3

Only Jesus is equal with the Father. Phil. 2:6

Only Jesus can command the dead to live. There are so many examples in scripture that show us the divinity of Jesus, He is not one of four. Never.

The Conqueror is the antichrist

Many dispensationalists teach the Conqueror is the antichrist. And his conquest marks the beginning of the Great Tribulation. This theory has some support from the scripture but it also has some problems:

a) Zek identified the horses as spirits or winds. We know the antichrist will be an individual [2Thess. 2:3] But the four horsemen are not individuals, are war, famine and death individuals?

Why would the first rider be an individual if the others aren't?

b) If you see the book of Revelation as chronological then the timing is wrong. The antichrist does not appear until the beast from the sea is established as a government on earth. That happens at the end of the Trumpets Rev.13:1, not at the opening of the Seals.

c) Pin the tail on the antichrist. This is a game played by all who subscribe to this doctrine. They scan the geopolitical horizon looking for any powerful charismatic person who could fit-the-bill. This game is fun to play but fruitless.

There are a number of persons in Genesis associated with the bow as a weapon. The first is Nimrod, Gen.10:8-9. Nimrod was an ambitious man, the names of the cities he built reveal his ambitions. I suspect he wanted to be king of the world, but there is no mention of any crown or conquest. Just the opposite.

Next is Ishmael, it was said of him: Gen 16:12 *And he shall be as a wild ass among men; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him...*[ASV]. Ishmael has the same problem as does Nimrod, a good archer but that is all. Ishmael's descendants, or those who identify with him are conquerors [the Muslims], but their conquest is by the sword, and their ancestor was not crowned in any way, shape or form.

The Conqueror is revival in the church

Others [Later Rain Pentacostals] Say the conqueror represents revival in the church, and use much the same arguments as do the Conqueror-is-Christ crowd.

They say the stephanous [martyrs] crown represents the martyrs and the saints. This doctrine is supported by Steven's martyrdom. But I believe the crown represents the success of the conquest, not the righteousness of the rider. Paul described it as a corruptible crown in 1Cor. 9:25 . It is possible to be corrupt and successful. The monsters from the bottomless pit also wear this crown. Rev. 9:7. It adds to the deception along with the white horse. White is no guarantee of righteousness, as previously mentioned it is also the colour of leprosy Lev.13:3. And deception is an effective tool in the successful conquest of the world.

They can claim first mention of the bow to support their position, as in rainbow, not as a weapon, and it therefore represents God's covenant. But this contradicts the context, how does the conqueror kill with a rainbow? Maybe he has a super-soaker in his saddle?

4 Periods of Church History

Some [Seventh Day Adventists] say the 4 horsemen represent 4 periods of church history. But there are two problems with this theory: The scripture clearly states many times these horsemen deal with the earth:

- a) Rev.6:4 *...and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the **earth**...*
- b) Rev.6:8 *...And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the **earth**...*
- c) Zek. 6:7 *And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the **earth**: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the **earth**. So they walked to and fro through the **earth**.*
- d) Zek 1:10...*These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the **earth**.*

God's people may be affected by prosperity, war, famine and death but these horses are not mentioned as the means of such, the scripture says:

John 17:12 *While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*

Rev. 2:1 *Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand...*

Jude 24 *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.*

The Lord Jesus Himself holds the Church in His hand, and orders / allows all the dealings she has. Paul said; *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

2) There is little evidence from the scripture that the horsemen represent periods of church history, exactly the opposite. The only support comes from historical records, and this is vague at best. If we rely on empirical evidence to support a doctrine it should be written loud and clear in all the history books. But this is not the case.

Multiple Camera Angles explanation

The seals, trumpets, and vials are the same events viewed from different angles. This is popular in some circles, but it too has problems. I am yet to see anyone present a reasonable reconciliation between the seals, trumpets and vials.

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MONEY DECEPTION AND CHURCH

The following doctrine is an attempt to illustrate the correlation between money, deception, and church. And it contends that the forces of evil play an active roll in the process of deception.

If we read Joshua 9:1-25 we see here the Gibeonites deceive the children of Israel into a peace agreement by telling lies and offering them a good bargain. In verse 9 we see that they came in the name of the Lord and in verse 14 they didn't seek God's counsel because they assumed such a blessing came from the Lord. These same tactics are used by the devil to get Christians into compromise and the same 3 Factors always apply:

1 A peace agreement...("make a league with us" v.6)

2 A good bargain...("we are your servants" v.8)

3 Deception...(*they did work wilily*, v.4)

The children of Israel knew how to overcome their enemies when they attacked in battle, but when the enemy came to them offering themselves and telling lies they were defeated in their cause. An example of this in the New Testament is found in the Laodicean church:

Rev. 3:14-18. *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;*

v15 *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot.*

v16 *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.*

v17 *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*

v18 *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.*

The three factors present in Joshua 9 are present in the Laodicean church:

1 A peace agreement...("thou art lukewarm v16")

2 A good bargain...("I am rich and increased with goods" v17)

3 Deception...("anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." v18)

Jesus told them to anoint their eyes with eye-salve because they saw things differently to him...

They attributed all their wealth as coming from the hand of God, when in fact they were deceived.

The fact is the devil doesn't want to invest in God's people but when the conditions are right he will.

What are the conditions? There is an old saying that goes, "You can tell which way the wind has blown, by the way that the tree has grown." And the Laodicean church had obviously been enjoying the cool breeze of prosperity, so much so the effect was not good.

First Condition

First condition: To save his own concerns. e.g. Luke 14:31-32. It is a fact of war.

v31 *Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?*

v32 *Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace.*

When God's people are obedient there is no limit to what they can achieve; just look at what Joshua's army was doing at that point in time. And today the same opportunities exist for anyone who is prepared to obey God. The devil is scared of such obedient Christians and will seek peace by way of an investment. But in order to do this he must convince them that it is God at work and not him. (He does some dressing up for the occasion like the Gibeonites in our example and tells some lies.) In the explanation of the "parable of the sower," Jesus reveals the three tricks the devil uses to accomplish his work. Matt. 13:19-22

1st - He snatches away the word from people's hearts so they can't be born again. v19.

2nd - Tribulation and persecution. v20-21. (Many fall away)

3rd - He deceives using riches and chokes the word. v22.

Millions, perhaps billions of people hear the word, but only a small percentage believe and get their sins forgiven. 1st round won.

Upon this small percentage the devil brings all types of trials, tribulations and persecutions and many fall away. 2nd round has many casualties.

But the ones left still serving the Lord after all this are in a similar position to Joshua's, (in our example) and these will be tempted in a similar way. Joshua had come out of Egypt. 1st round. Then endured 40 hard years in the wilderness. 2nd round (Heb. 3:17 many casualties). As he entered Canaan his enemies knew there was no chance to defeat his army in battle so they tried something else.

So the answer to the question "What are the conditions?" is: The devil is forced into investing in God's people. It's his final option.

Another example of this truth is found in King Solomon's life, at the height of his prosperity he received 666 talents of gold.

1Kings 10:14 *Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold.* The signature is unmistakable, and the effects undeniable. Getting back to the previous question, "What are the conditions?" I think there are other factors involved not easily defined.

Second Condition

You asked for it. Loosely speaking, I will try to explain that from a different approach. In pursuing these thoughts the question arises: what happens when a good bargain comes along? Is it from the devil or is it from God? Sounds strange doesn't it. Most of us are just ready to jump at bargains. The Bible says lots of things that are relevant to this let's look at some.

The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it. Prov.10:22

The blessing of the devil, it maketh rich, and it cometh with three strings attached designed to undo and destroy the work of God in us and around us. (The moth, rust and the thief. More on this in a minute) God's blessings *maketh rich and add no sorrow* for us to enjoy and to share with others, and all partakers are blessed. Solomon said it is the gift of God Ecc.3:13. But if we step outside of God's boundaries we enter into dangerous territory. And if we cross God's limits in material things we get tempted and caught in sin.

Question) What are the material boundary's set by God for his people?

Answer) 1Tim.6:8 *And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

God has made it possible for us to be content with only food and clothing, but it's no sin to have extra. However, sometimes the extra creates discontentment...That's dangerous. The point is this. We always have more food than we can eat, and we always have more clothes than we can wear, but we are not always contented.

Question) So where does discontentment come from in a child of God?

Answer) Uncrucified self.

The more we accumulate the harder it seems to crucify self. Self becomes like a vacuum that is never satisfied. How hard it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. If we profess to be crucified with Christ and are in a state of discontentment then we become possible targets of the temptation we are looking at. I said possible...

Eph.2:2 This verse reveals a universal truth: *...the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.* To this I say, any Christian that has an area of disobedience in their lives has a spirit at work in that particular area although they may not be aware of it. The devil knows a good investment when he sees one and may choose this option. The devil knows our blind spots, we don't. As we progress in our pilgrimage we discover our own blind spots. This is one thing the Holy Spirit does, as He brings us into all truth. If we ignore or disobey the revelation of God in our lives we become easy targets for a good marksman.

And in summing up the question, what conditions are necessary to make the devil invest in God's people? The conclusions are:

First Condition: Forced into it.

Second Condition: You asked for it.

A Good Bargain?

The thorns that choke the word are sown in the fertile ground of discontentment and for many, getting a loan is like sowing the seed that chokes the word. (Did I say loan?) Back to the question about good bargains, where from? The ~blessing~ of the devil comes with three strings attached. Matt. 6:19 *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.* Just to be clear, the three strings I mentioned are the moth, the rust, and the thief.

It doesn't require much effort on the devil's behalf to convince most Christians to start *laying up treasures*. However, in doing this the heart becomes attached to them and becomes exposed to the same corruptions as the treasure. Our hearts become moth-eaten and rusty at first and eventually, if nothing is done, the thief makes his mark. (This process may take many years.) The apostle Paul described this condition in 1Tim. 6:10:

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. What are the "many sorrows" that have pierced them? It's their attachment to their possessions and their inability to part with them. A classic example of this is found in Matt: 19:16-22. The rich young man left Jesus very sorrowful because he couldn't leave his possessions. The prosperity message is so unbalanced because but no one mentions the dangers involved and Jesus said it is dangerous. Mar 8:36 *For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* We don't hear again from the rich young man in the gospel, I hope he saw the true riches in Jesus Christ and managed to do what the Lord said. Some warn of the perils of debt, but mostly they only warn against too much debt and the dangers of what can go wrong. Almost nobody warns against the dangers of what happens when the debt goes right. Your heart has become attached to the debt, and is exposed to the same perils.

"Take heed and beware" (Luke 12:15)

Luke 12:15 *And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*

Covetousness goes largely unchecked in many [western] churches today, it is tolerated and sometimes even encouraged. The prosperity-gospel seems to have gotten worse over the years. What I mean is that it has become more lop-sided over the years than when it began. And it seems to have found its way into many different denominations, just tailored differently. But by presenting only one side of a certain topic, an imbalance is created that if not corrected becomes very deceptive, as is the case today with many of the prosperity gospel's disciples and their doctrines.

It's interesting to note that Jesus never taught anyone to pay tithes, the only time[s] Jesus mentioned tithing was when rebuking the Pharisees for neglecting more important matters Matt. 23:23. Funny how some things stay the same.

Getting back to loans. 2Sam. 21:1 *Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. 2 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.)*

In these verses we find God honouring the agreement between the Gibeonites and the Israelites. It had nothing to do with David or Saul, but nevertheless God won't break our agreements with the world. We have to. Don't think that God will break the terms and conditions of the loan agreement

you have signed. A deal is a deal; many enter loan agreements without understanding that to be separate from the world must exclude such agreements. In general the Church doesn't teach this; however, careful study of the scripture reveals its truth. How sad it would be to miss out with God because of material things when God has already promised to supply all our needs.

Debt is always spoken poorly of in the Bible. There are many other examples in the OT about debt. Here is some of what Paul had to say:

Rom 13:8 *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

Charles Haddon Spurgeon on debt:

“Scripture says, Owe no man anything,” which does not mean pay your debts, but never have any to pay. My opinion is, that those who break this law ought to be turned out of the Christian church.”

If you understand redemption, and know that you have been bought with a [very high] price, how can you sign your life away to a mortgage?

Finally, if you made it this far you might be wondering what has all this to do with the conqueror. Allow me to explain the overlap here. Deception and wealth have a tendency to go hand in hand. I have attempted to document this, Bunyan did a better job than me. But in Bunyan's day [1628 - 1688] there was no such thing as fiat money. In Bunyan's day all the money was gold or silver, as it was for most of human history. Fiat money is created by bankers and politicians.

Today [2018] the current modern economic system is the bastard child of politicians and bankers, our money represents debt and it is backed by the enforcement of our legal tender laws, all errors of judgement are picked up by the tax-payer via inflation. If you wish to pursue this further I recommend you ignore the politics, and ignore the economics, and pursue the words of our Lord Jesus. This life is short, His promise is eternal. Politics is evil, and economics is boring. True riches are in Christ Jesus the soon coming King.

P.S. I've since discovered that some sacred cows in the Church had their beginnings as Trojan horses. For further reading on this topic I recommend the book Holy War by John Bunyan.

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QUOTES FROM JOHN BUNYAN

The following quotes are from John Bunyan's book "Holy War". The book is written in typical Bunyan allegorical style but the truth it reveals is no myth. Chapter 16 begins with "Diabolus" calling "for a council of war" with the "princes of the pit", to discuss how to be revenged on the city of

"Mansoul". The forces of evil were frustrated because all their efforts had so far failed. John Bunyan continues:

"Then Lucifer stood up and said, The counsel of Beelzebub is pertinent; now the way to bring this to pass, in mine opinion, is this: Let us withdraw our force from the town of Mansoul, let us do this and let us terrify them no more, either with summons or threats, or with the noise of our drum, or any other awakening means. Only let us lie in the field at a distance, and be as if we regarded them not; for frights I see do but awaken them, and make them stand more to their arms.

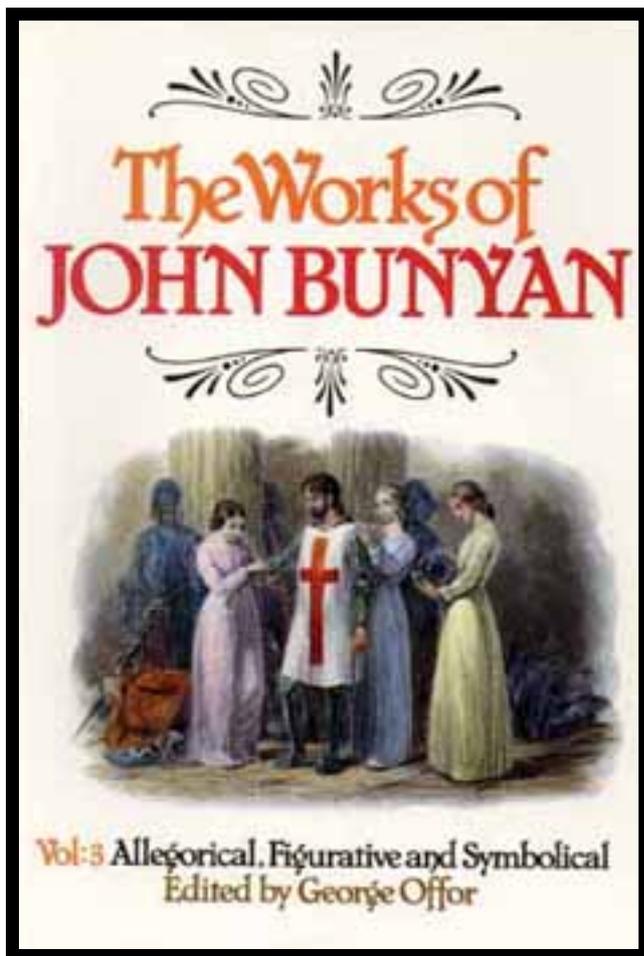
I have also another stratagem in my head: You know Mansoul is a market town; and a town that delights in commerce; what therefore if some of our Diabolonians shall feign themselves far countrymen, and shall go out and bring to the market of Mansoul some of our wares to sell; and what matter at what rates they sell their wares, though it be but for half the worth. Now, let those that thus shall trade in their market, be those that are witty and true to us, and I will lay my crown to pawn it will do. There are two that are come to my thoughts already, that I think will be arch at this work, and they are Mr. Penny-wise-pound-foolish, and Mr. Get-I'th'-hundred-and-lose-I'th'-shire* nor is this man with the long name at all inferior to the other. What also if you join with them Mr. Sweet-world, and Mr. Present-good; they are men that are civil and cunning, but out true friends and helpers. Let these with as many more engage in this business for us, and let Mansoul be taken up in much business, and let them grow full and rich, and this is the way to get ground of them; remember ye not that thus we prevailed upon Laodicea, and how many at present do we hold in this snare? (Rev3:17) Now when they begin to grow full, they will forget their misery, and if we shall not affright them they may happen to fall asleep, and so be got to neglect their town-watch, their castle-watch, as well as their watch at the gates. Yea, may we not by this means so cumber Mansoul with abundance, that they shall be forced to make of their castle a warehouse instead of a garrison fortified against us, and a receptacle for men of war. Thus if we get our goods, and commodities thither, I reckon that the castle is more than half ours. Besides, could we so order it, that it should be filled with such kind of wares, thin if we made a sudden assault upon them, ot would be hard for the captains to tale shelter there. Do you know that of the parable, *The deceitfulness of riches choke the word.* (Mark 4:19) And again, *When the heart is overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, all mischief comes upon them at unawares.* (Luke 21:34-36) Furthermore, my lords, quoth he, you very well know that it is not easy for a people to be filled with our things, and not to have some of our Diabolonians as retainers to their houses and services. Where is a Mansoul that is full of this world, that has not for his , and waiting-men Mr. Profuse, or Mr. Prodigality, or some other of our Diaboloian gang, as Mr. Voluptuous, Mr. Pragmatical, Mr. Ostentation, or the like? Now these can take the castle of Mansoul, or blow it up, or make it unfit for a garrison for Emmanuel; and any of these will do. Yea, these, for aught I know, may do it for us sooner than an army of twenty thousand men.

Wherefore, to end as I began, my advice is, that we quietly withdraw ourselves, not offering any further force, or forcible attempts upon the castle, at least at this time, and let us set on foot our new project, and lets see of that will not make then destroy themselves.

This advice was highly applauded by them all, and was accounted the **master-piece of hell**; (emphasis added) to wit, to choke Mansoul with a fullness of this world, and to surfeit her heart with the good things thereof".

*obsolete proverb

The above quotes are from the book "Holy War" by John Bunyan. This book is written in classic Bunyan allegorical style, and if you read and enjoyed Pilgrims Progress you will love this book. The truths it contains will bless you, and although this is not Bunyan's most popular book, I think it is his best. I give it 5 stars.



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