

The four riders of



Among the many symbols that describe the development of history in the book of Revelation, there are the seven seals. The four riders, that for many persons are metaphors of calamities, are a part of this history and describe basic characteristics of seven periods of the Christian era.

John was in exile in the island of Patmos in the days of emperor Domitianus. We have already seen the vision he had of the throne of God and its magnificence. On the right hand of Him that sat on the throne, there was a book sealed with seven seals. (Revelation 5:1-5). Nobody was worth to open it and undo the seals, only *“the lion of the tribe of Judah”*, a symbol of Jesus Christ. He begins to open the seals and describes the history of the Christian church from His ascension to heaven till His second coming.

1. What were the characteristics of the first horse and its rider? Revelation 6:1-2.

A white: and he that sat on him was given unto him and to conquer.

✓ The symbol shown here represents the period of the origin of Christianity, from the ascension of our Lord in the year 31 up until the year 100, when the last apostle died. The white color is a symbol of purity, since the message of God was preached in that time just as Jesus Himself taught it. Christianity was authentic, without any changes, just as it appears in the Bible. The bow represents the gospel of salvation, (2 Kings 13:15-17) and the aggressive way in which it was preached. The rider, Christ (Revelation 19:11) *“went forth conquering, and to conquer”* referring to the triumph obtained through His death and resurrection, as founder of the church and the way in which the gospel spread out in a short time in all the known world. (Colossians 1:6, 23) The historian Gibbons, says that in Rome there were already 50.000 Christians and in Antioch 100.000.

2. What color was the second horse and what did the rider have in his hand? Revelation 6:4.

And there went out another horse The rider had a in his hand. He had to from the earth.





- ✓ Red is the color of blood. This was the time of the church of Smyrna, during the years 100-313, that Christians were persecuted by pagan Rome. There were 10 years of terrible persecution. Christians were thrown to the arena and had to find refuge in the catacombs. The sword is a symbol of destruction (Psalms 63:10) and of the word of God (Ephesians 6:17). The preaching of the word brought about terrible persecution and many were killed because of it (Revelation 6:9). The existing purity is slowly deteriorated after the death of the apostles.

3. How was the third horse and what did the rider have in his hand? Revelation 6:5-6.

"And I beheld, and lo a in his hand."



- ✓ This picture represents Christianity from the year 313 to 538, the time of the church of Pergamos. The emperor Constantine saw that persecution only brought division of the empire and endangered his political power. Through the edict of tolerance signed in Milan, he granted religious liberty to Christians and gained their favor. Masses of pagans became Christians and they introduced numberless pagan customs related to the cult of the sun into the church. Christianity was mixed with paganism; it was not longer pure, white, but black, corrupted. The church united with the state. The scale in one hand means that civil and religious power were in the hand of the emperor who was called "Pontifex Maximus". It was in that period that the law of God was falsified and forms of cult that are not biblical were introduced in the church. This was already foreseen in Acts 20:27-31; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-6 and 2 Peter 2:1-3.

- ✓ The price mentioned (verse 6), shows how scarce and expensive were both wheat and barley, cereals with which bread is made, a symbol of God's word.

A worker used to earn a denar per day. In normal conditions, he could buy 10 Kg. of wheat and 25 of barley to feed his family, but now he could only buy 650 grs. of wheat and about 2 Kg. of barley. But oil, which is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, could not be harmed (Zechariah 4:2-6) neither could the wine, a symbol of Jesus' blood and the right doctrine. God made provisions that a small remnant remained so that the truth was not completely lost.

4. What was the aspect and mission of the fourth horse and its rider? Revelation 6:7-8.

And I looked and behold a sat on him..... followed him.

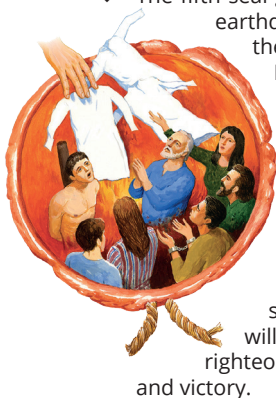


- ✓ This horse and its rider symbolizes the Middle Ages and the time of the Inquisition, from the year 538, when the decree of Justinian was issued to the Reform in 1517. The white color becomes red, then black and now pale, showing the gradual apostasy. The pure doctrines are gradually trodden under the feet. It corresponds to the time of the church of Thyatira, which tolerated Jezebel, king's Achab wicked wife, who in the time of Elijah killed the prophets of God. In the same way, Christians who mixed with pagans would persecute the remnant of faithful Christians, therefore the color of the horse and the name of its rider: Death. Hell or the grave, followed. At the time of the Inquisition, led by the Dominican priests, 55 million people who would not submit to the official church were killed in the most atrocious way. Several times does prophecy mention this period and the one who brought it about as a dark and tremendous time. (Daniel 7:21, 25; 8:25; Revelation 13:7).

5. What did the prophet see when the fifth seal was opened? Revelation 6:9-11

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them;"

- ✓ The fifth seal goes from the year 1517 to 1755 when the sixth seal is opened with a big earthquake. In the same way that in the sanctuary lambs were being sacrificed on the altar and their blood was poured at its foot, Christ died on this earth and His blood was poured for us. The symbol shows that the blood of martyrs, that remnant of believers who remained faithful to the teachings of the Bible was poured on the earth as a sacrifice and demands justice.



- ✓ Since we know that the dead know nothing, as it is written in Ecclesiastes 9:6, we understand that this cry is symbolic: Righteousness is claimed in the same way that Abel's blood cried (Genesis 4:10), the hire of the laborers cry (James 5:4), "the stone shall cry", (Habakkuk 2:11) or the whole creation groans (Romans 8:22-23).

- ✓ The cry was, How long, o Lord? *"The number should be fulfilled"*. The persecution lasted until 1798. On the glorious day of Christ's second coming, they will all take part of His resurrection. The white raiment are a symbol of Christ's righteousness which those martyrs received and a sign of their acknowledgement and victory.

6. With what event is the sixth seal opened? Revelation 6:12-13.

"There was a great"

"..... became black as sackcloth of hair; and the moon....."

"And.....fell unto the earth even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs."

- ✓ Here it refers to three prophecies that mark the beginning of the time of the end. History registers the earthquake of Lisbon on November 1st, 1755 as one of the greatest earthquakes ever registered which was felt in a large part of the world, even in the Caribbean. This event opens the sixth seal.



- ✓ The famous dark day on May 19th, 1780 is mentioned. This event was mentioned in the Old Testament (Isaiah 13:10) and Jesus predicted it as sign that His coming was near and the time of the great tribulation was coming (Matthew 24:29, 33). It was not an eclipse but an extraordinary event. The newspapers chronicles describe that the sunlight was gone at 11 am and the moon turned black, although it was time of full moon.

- ✓ The third event was the falling of the stars or meteorites, the most spectacular event in history. It took place on November 13th, 1833. For 9 hours the sky was lit up by a constant fall of meteorites and falling stars. No other phenomenon fits better the details of this prophecy.

7. What other great event is foreseen in the sixth seal? Revelation 6:14-17.

"And the heaven departed as a when it is rolled together and island were moved out of their places".

"And said to the mountains and rocks"

- ✓ Here, reference is made to our Lord Jesus Christ's second coming. Jesus said: "The powers of the heavens shall be shaken." (Matthew 24:29) In an incredible cataclysm will the islands and mountains disappear. The earth will remain void, because Jesus will take the redeemed ones to heaven, to eternal joy. This will be their delivery.

- ✓ For those who did not make any preparation, those who did not accept Jesus as their Saviour and Lord, it will be a time of terrible despair. They will call the mountains to fall upon them and hide them from the presence of the Judge. The end has come.



8. What other signs were predicted to announce the imminent second coming of Jesus?

- a) *Matthew 24:6-7. And you shall hear of*
- b) *Verse 7 last part. And there shall be famines,*
.....,
- c) *Verses 5, 11 y 24. "many false false"*
- d) *Verse 12. "the of many shall wax cold."*
- e) *Verse 14. "And this gospel of the kingdom*
in all the world."
- f) *Luke 21:25 "And upon the earth of nations."*
- g) *Daniel 12:4. "Many shall run to and fro,"*
- h) *2 Timothy 3:1-5 How will people be in the last days? Mention 3 characteristics:*
.....

9. What happened in heaven when the seventh seal was opened? Revelation 8:1.

"..... about the space of half an hour"

- ✓ When Jesus comes to take the redeemed, there will be silence in heaven for half an hour. Since Jesus will come with all the angels, heaven will remain empty. (Matthew 25:31) We apply the prophetic measure: 1 prophetic day = 1 year would be 7 days. That time corresponds the coming of Christ and the journey of the saved to eternal mansions.

10. What invitation does Jesus give us? Matthew 24:44; Isaiah 55: 6-7.

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