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La Jolla Christian Fellowship

SEVEN // A Study of the Book of Revelation Episode 2: The Four Horsemen

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Revelation 6:1-8

1 I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, "Come!" I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest. 3 When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make people kill each other. To him was given a large sword. 5 When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, "Two pounds of wheat for a day's wages, and six pounds of barley for a day's wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!" When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" 8 I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

The opening of the seals begins the tribulation period.

**The entire tribulation is under the control of God.
Satan and his minions can only do what they are allowed and given authority to do.**

The four living creatures:

- The four living creatures in Revelation are special among the angelic beings.
- They exist to praise God forever before His throne, and they hold "golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" ([Revelation 5:6-14](#)).
- They are said to be "full of eyes in front and behind" and look to John like a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle in flight. They each have six wings and are always saying "holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come."
- One of the most interesting aspects of the four living creatures is that they demonstrate that Jesus, the Lamb of God, is equal to God Himself. Their worship of the Lamb in [Revelation 5:6-14](#) is clearly directed towards Jesus Christ ([Revelation 5:5; 9-10](#)).

The first 4 seals are a grouping which release 4 horsemen of judgment onto the earth from heaven.

"The four Horsemen of the Apocalypse symbolize various plagues: [1.] War, [2.] Civil War, [3.] famine and inflation, [4.] pestilence and death."

The First Horseman-White: This rider represents the Antichrist.

- **Whitehorse:** White in the bible symbolizes peace.
 - **Crown:** Political figure
 - **Bow:** Willing to use death to accomplish his ends.
 - **Bent on conquest**

The Second Horseman - Red: This rider represents war.

- **The Red Horse:** Red in the bible often symbolizes blood.
 - 75% of the world's flags contain the color red.
 - The dragon in Revelation 12 which is Satan is red.
 - The sea in which the Egyptians died chasing the Israelites is called the red sea.
- **War** "Its rider **was given power** to take peace from the earth and to make people kill each other."
- **Was given a sword**, but it seems that he was not the one to do the killing

The Third Horseman - Black: This rider represents famine.

- Black in the bible often represents lack.
- The scales represent the weighing of grain as well as justice being weighed out.
 - **Famine and Inflation:** In the passage, it is read that the indicated price of grain is about ten times normal.

The Fourth Horseman - Pale: This rider represents death.

- This is the only horseman with a name: Known as Θάνατος (**Thanatos**) or death
- **No Weapon:** Death is the weapon.

- The word "Hades" appears in Jesus' promise to Peter: "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

Small Group Questions:

1. The scripture makes it clear that the entire tribulation is under the control of God. Does this comfort you?
2. Why do you think God let's character's other than Himself dole out the judgements?
3. What do the four living creatures reveal about God?
4. None of the horseman can *actually* kill humans without the use of some other agent like humans, famine or war. Why do you think this is?
5. Do you think that we could currently be in the 7 years of tribulation? Why or why not?