



### The White Horse – The First Seal

**A**ND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. 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. (Rev 6:1-2)

Throughout the ages, scholars of God's Word have attempted to conjecture the identity and meaning of this personage on the White Horse. Many commendably reformed theologians have suggested that it is the Lord Jesus Christ. Others have averred that it could not be Christ for reasons discussed herein at a later point. One problem in arriving at any consensus on the matter is harbored in one's view of Eschatology (doctrine of last things). We often stake out a position based on only those parts of Scripture that support our view of last things. I refute any sense of dispensationalism as regards the sovereignty and works of God in His plan for mankind. He is the same God of Abraham in the Old Testament Church as in the modern New Testament Church. He has not changed in His nature or mode of operation. He is no respecter of persons – He does not discriminate by race or gender involving salvation. (Of course, man's attempts at surgical manipulation of gender does not alter the gender revealed in one's chromosomal makeup). Abraham was a Christian by forward-looking faith. We are Christian by faith that looks back on the accomplished fact of salvation.

My view of the Rider on the White Horse differs from some traditional theories of his identity. I do not believe this is Christ as many other sound men believe. If I was not privy to more modern events in history, as were good men of old, I may have considered this Rider to be Christ; however, the trends in history point to a different conclusion than that which may have seemed reasonable to Godly men of two hundred years ago. I do not presume to know precisely these shadows and meanings presented in this chapter, but allow me to reveal my impressions and conclusions of those impressions.

First of all, be aware that Christ has already completed His redemptive work at the time of these visions to St. John. Observe the words of Jesus just before His ascension from the mountain: *"18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."* (Matt 28:18) *"All power in Heaven and earth"* means exactly that – ALL POWER! We can see that confirmed as well in the preceding chapter: *"11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."* (Rev 5:11-13)

In fulfilling His redemptive work on the cross, and conquering death and Hell (man's certain enemy), our Lord received all power, and the crowns of a thousand kingdoms (and more if they existed). So now, we read that the Lamb of God is seen by St. John in his vision. *"And I saw when the LAMB opened one of the seals."*

Who opened the seals? It is the Lamb of God. This suggests to me the Rider on the White Horse envisioned could not be our Lord as He stood without the seals to open them.

Immediately following the opening of the seals, one of the four beasts (perhaps the Gospel messengers who had proclaimed the Gospel broadly), speaks with a thunderous voice, *"I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see."* These are servants of God who do the bidding of the Lord. They do not act on their own volition, but by commandment. The Lamb opens the seals because He is the only one worthy to do so, and His messengers invite John to come and see what is behind the seals. James and John, too, were zealous in proclaiming the Gospel message so Christ referred to the two as the *"Sons of Thunder."* All true ministers will desire to thunder the Gospel message to all who will hear. So, a voice of thunder is no uncertain sound of the trumpet. It does not seem to fit the literary narrative for Christ to be called forth by the beast. The Lamb today opens our eyes to the beauty of God's Word, and His ministers only proclaim it.

Yes, it is true that WHITE most often signifies purity and righteousness; however, Satan has a counterfeit for every aspect of the work of God. The horses depicted do not define the power of the riders upon them. They go where the Rider directs. This White Horse may symbolize a counterfeit Gospel. Why do I say this? It is because the Rider does not meet a known description of Christ. The favored weapon of the Lord is a Two-edged Sword which symbolizes His Word. But this rider on the White Horse has no sword. Neither did the Roman Church of that period to follow. This

Rider has only a bow – no arrows even mentioned. His spiritual power is a proud presumption. Consider carefully the true Lord in His coming:

*“11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” (Rev 19:11-16)*

I agree with my friend, Bishop Dennis Campbell of Virginia, who, in his book titled, “He Shall Reign,” comments: *“Everything about him seems to symbolize the pride and arrogance of the conquering Romans gloating over their vanquished foe. He represents military conquest and shows the fast approaching defeat of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD.”* Jerusalem fell almost contemporary, but shortly after, St. John penned his writings on Revelation. I believe there is, like the youth, Isaac, and the ram whose horns were caught in the thicket, represent in each case our Lord as the Lamb of God, represent a double application to this Rider.

I do agree it symbolizes the Roman legions of Titus who surrounded and wasted the City of Jerusalem in 70 AD., but also the greater Roman Church that sought out believers to persecute them. (see Rev. 17) *“I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: 5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.” (Rev 17:3-6)*

The Roman pontiff, if you hadn't noticed, also carries a crucifix that is bowed at the top. He has no spiritual power such as the Son of God has in the Sword which is the Word of God. There is no mention of arrows or a quiver in which to place them.

One final point: If this is the resurrected Christ depicted on the White Horse, why does he have only ONE crown? He may be a despotic ruler, but his kingdom is only of this world and a limited and temporary kingdom; but our Lord Jesus Christ is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. He has *“on his head.... many crowns.”* His vesture appears crimson as dipped in blood. None of the descriptive adjectives of Revelation 19 describing Christ seems to apply to the Rider on the White Horse. If they did apply, it would have warranted John's making mention of it.

In my view, the Rider on the White Horse was an anti-Christ whose deceitful works began early in the Gospel age and continue even to our age. The spirit of anti-Christ has been evident in every age of the Church; and he is having a ball in this latter stage of the Church. *“8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. 9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are*

*seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth."* (Rev 17:8-9) Whether Imperial Rome, or the False Roman Church (or both) each did persecute the true Christian believers.

We will undertake a study of the remaining Horsemen of the Apocalypse in our next devotion.