REVELATION 6

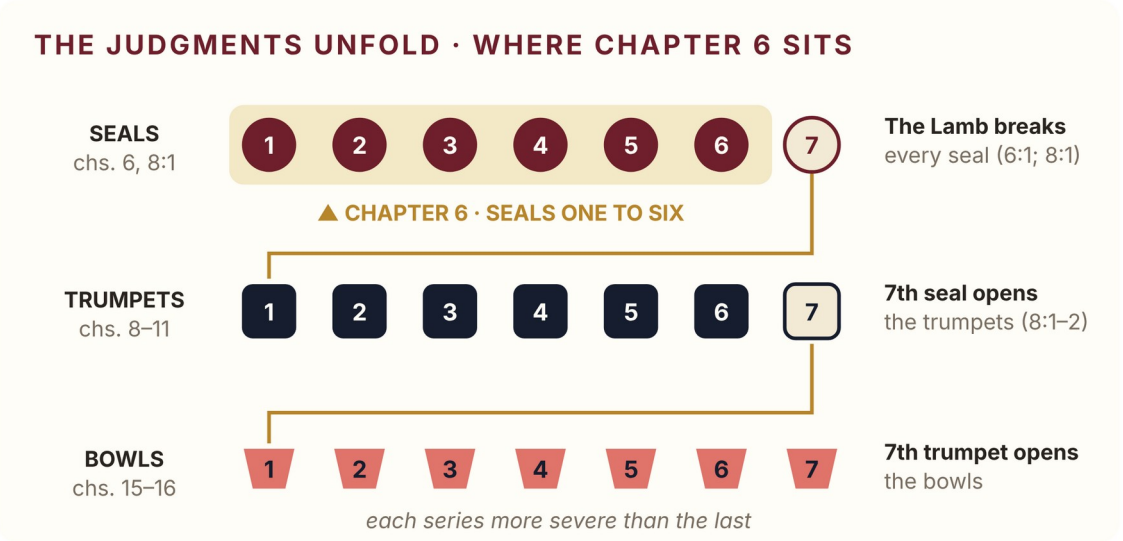
Seals Opened: Who Is Able to Stand?

“Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”
REVELATION 6:16–17

Where John has brought us

1. In chapter 5 the Lamb took the sealed book from the right hand of the One on the throne, and all of heaven sang that He was worthy to break its seals.

2. With my teachers I read the seals as the opening of the future seven years, Daniel's seventieth week, after the Lord has taken His church home.



The White Horse and the Red

A rider with a bow and a given crown, then a rider who takes peace from the earth.

REVELATION 6:1

Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come."

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik holds a futurist view: the seals begin the judgments of Daniel's seventieth week (Daniel 9:24–27), and he speaks of the antichrist's rise coming after the Lord takes His church from this earth (2…

DAVID GUZIK

Some have seen Christ in the first rider, since Jesus rides a white horse in 19:11.

νικάω

NIKAŌ · "CONQUERING"

Nikaō means to conquer, to overcome, to win the victory. The rider on the white horse goes out "conquering and to conquer," and it is the very verb used of the Lamb in 5:5, who "has overcome so as to open the book."

Two Riders on White Horses

TWO RIDERS ON WHITE HORSES

REVELATION 6:2 · THE IMITATION

WEAPON
"had a bow"

CROWN
"a crown was given to him"

WHO FOLLOWS
a red horse, a black horse, Death

WHO HE IS
Guzik: the antichrist

REVELATION 19:11 · THE ORIGINAL

WEAPON
"From His mouth comes a sharp sword"

CROWN
"on His head are many diadems"

WHO FOLLOWS
the armies of heaven, in white

WHO HE IS
"Faithful and True"

The rider of the first seal imitates the true Rider of chapter 19; Guzik shows why they are not the same.

The Black Horse and the Ashen

Scales and rationed bread, then Death itself, with Hades following.

REVELATION 6:5

When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes that a denarius was a day's wage (Matthew 20:2) and the prices are about twelve times normal: a whole day's work buys bread for one person.

WHAT IT MEANS

These two seals are hard to read slowly. Famine first: a day's work for a day's bread, while the oil and wine, the luxuries, are left untouched for those who can pay.

χλωρός
CHLŌROS · "ASHEN"

Chlōros is pale green, the sickly green-gray of a corpse. It is the color of the fourth horse, and its rider has a name: Death.

The Six Seals

THE SIX SEALS · REVELATION 6

SEAL	IMAGE	WHAT IT BRINGS	OLIVET (MATT 24)
1	**White horse, bow**	a conqueror with a given crown	false christs
2	**Red horse, sword**	peace taken from the earth	wars
3	**Black horse, scales**	famine: a day's wage for bread	famines
4	**Ashen horse, Death**	a fourth of the earth dies	wars and famines
5	**Souls under altar**	martyrs cry “How long?”	persecution
6	**Earthquake, sky**	sun black, moon like blood	earthquakes, signs

What each seal brings, set beside the order of Jesus' words on the Mount of Olives (Matthew 24:4–29).

Souls Under the Altar

The martyrs cry "How long?" and are given white robes and a little more time.

REVELATION 6:9

When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained;

DAVID GUZIK

Under the altar is where the blood of sacrifices was poured (Leviticus 4:7), and these lives were poured out for God. Guzik reads the souls as all who have died for the word of God.

WHAT IT MEANS

The martyrs do not take revenge. They take their cry to the throne: "How long, O Lord, holy and true?"

μαρτυρία
MARTYRIA · "TESTIMONY"

Martyria means witness or testimony, and it is the root of our word martyr. The souls under the altar were slain "because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained."

The Wrath of the Lamb

The sky rolls up, everyone hides, and the last question is asked.

REVELATION 6:12

I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood;

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik calls the images of the sixth seal real, but poetic.

DAVID GUZIK

To the closing question, who is able to stand, Guzik gives his answer: only the one who is justified, who stands in grace by faith (Romans 5:1–2; 1 Corinthians 15:1; 1 Peter 5:12).

ὀργή
ORGĒ · "WRATH"

Orgē is settled, righteous anger, not a sudden temper. It appears twice at the end of the chapter: "the wrath of the Lamb" and "the great day of their wrath."

What to carry from this chapter

1

Every judgment starts with the Lamb.

“The Lamb broke one of the seven seals”: nothing in chapter 6 happens outside His hand.

2

Two conquerors, one verb.

Nikaō is used of the Lamb in 5:5 and of the white rider in 6:2; only one overcame by dying.

3

A counterfeit Christ.

Guzik: the first rider carries a bow, not the sword of the Word, and his crown is given to him.

4

Peace is a gift.

Guzik: peace is God's gift, not the natural state of the world.

More to carry

5

A day's wage for a day's bread.

Guzik estimates the prices of verse 6 at about twelve times normal.

6

The color of a corpse.

Chlōros, ashen, is the sickly green-gray of death.

7

Character makes a martyr.

Guzik: it is the way one lives, not the way one dies, that makes a martyr.

8

The wrath of the Lamb.

The gentlest image in the book is joined to its most terrifying word.

Talk it through

1. The first rider looks like a savior. What counterfeit saviors have promised you peace and then brought ruin?

2. The phrases “was given” and “was granted” keep returning. How does that change the way you read this chapter?

3. The martyrs took their cry for justice to God instead of taking revenge. Where do you need to do the same?

4. Kings and slaves hide side by side. What does it tell you that rank means nothing on that day?

5. How would you answer the question of verse 17 for yourself, and for a man who asked you?

CLOSING

The seals are in the Lamb's hand, and even death rides only as far as it is permitted. The same Lamb who will judge was slain for you. Do not run to the rocks; run to Him, and you will be able to stand.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides, reflection journal and film: see the Revelation study page.