

Six Seals in Are Opened (6:1-17)

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

Revelation 6:1–2 (CSB)

Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, “Come!”² I looked, and there was a white horse. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

Revelation 6:3-4 (CSB)

³ When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!” ⁴ Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

Revelation 6:5–6 (CSB)

⁵ When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” And I looked, and there was a black horse. Its rider held a set of scales in his hand. ⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

Revelation 6:7–8 (CSB)

⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!” ⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

¹ Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!"

In opening the scroll, the Lamb does what he is said to have been able to do in the previous chapter.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

¹ Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!"

Of all the host in heaven, it is one of the four living creatures who summons judgment.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

¹ Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!"

the first of the four living creatures has the face of a lion (4:7) and it roars like thunder.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

¹ Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!"

the living creature is calling forth the first of the four apocalyptic horsemen.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

² I looked, and there was a white horse. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

² *I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Horses mean warfare.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Isaiah 31:1 (CSB)

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and who depend on horses! They trust in the abundance of chariots and in the large number of horsemen. They do not look to the Holy One of Israel, and they do not seek the Lord.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Jeremiah 8:6 (CSB)

⁶ I have paid careful attention. They do not speak what is right. No one regrets his evil, asking, 'What have I done?' Everyone has stayed his course like a horse rushing into battle.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

We see horses in battle scenes in Revelation

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Revelation 9:7–9 (CSB)

⁷ The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. Something like golden crowns was on their heads; their faces were like human faces; ⁸ they had hair like women's hair; their teeth were like lions' teeth; ⁹ they had chests like iron breastplates; the sound of their wings was like the sound of many chariots with horses rushing into battle...

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Revelation 19:11–14 (CSB)

¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True, and with justice he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes were like a fiery flame, and many crowns were on his head. He had a name written that no one knows except himself. ¹³ He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies that were in heaven followed him on white horses, wearing pure white linen.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

The colors of the horses recall those in Zechariah.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

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*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Zechariah 1:8 (CSB)

⁸ I looked out in the night and saw a man riding on a chestnut horse. He was standing among the myrtle trees in the valley. Behind him were chestnut, brown, and white horses.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

² *I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Zechariah 6:3 (CSB)

³ the third chariot white horses, and the fourth chariot dappled horses—all strong horses.

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The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

the meaning of the various
colors of the horses is
unclear.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Historically two proposals
for the white horse and its
rider:

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

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² *I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

1. Christ is the rider and the white horse is the victorious progress of the gospel. (Irenaeus, 2nd cent. ad)

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

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*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Support for this view comes
from Rev. 19:11ff

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Revelation 19:11–16 (CSB)

¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True, and with justice he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes were like a fiery flame, and many crowns were on his head. He had a name written that no one knows except himself. ¹³ He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies that were in heaven followed him on white horses, wearing pure white linen. ¹⁵ A sharp sword came from his mouth, so that he might strike the nations with it. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will also trample the winepress of the fierce anger of God, the Almighty. ¹⁶ And he has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

The weakness of this interpretation is that there's nothing in common between here and ch. 19 other than the white horse.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

The emphasis here is on
conquest and in ch. 19
“righteous retribution.”
(Mounce)

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

More than this, this rider holds a bow and the “Christ Rider” of ch. 19 fights with the sword of his mouth.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Furthermore, the four horsemen are taken as a group, while the rider in ch. 19 is singular.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

2. *An evil figure*

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

**This figure conquers violently
like the beast (11:7; 13:7)**

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Revelation 11:7 (CSB)

⁷ When they finish their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war on them, conquer them, and kill them.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Revelation 13:7 (CSB)

⁷ And it was permitted to wage war against the saints and to conquer them. It was also given authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation.

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The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

The demonic horselike figures
in 9:7 wear crowns/wreaths

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Revelation 9:7–11 (CSB)

⁷ The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. Something like golden crowns was on their heads; their faces were like human faces; ⁸ they had hair like women's hair; their teeth were like lions' teeth; ⁹ they had chests like iron breastplates; the sound of their wings was like the sound of many chariots with horses rushing into battle; ¹⁰ and they had tails with stingers like scorpions, so that with their tails they had the power to harm people for five months. ¹¹ They had as their king the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Strongest argument for this being an enemy of God is the *bow*.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

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*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Ezekiel 39:1–5 (CSB)

“As for you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, ‘This is what the Lord God says: Look, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. ² I will turn you around, drive you on, and lead you up from the remotest parts of the north. I will bring you against the mountains of Israel. ³ **Then I will knock your bow from your left hand and make your arrows drop from your right hand.** ⁴ You, all your troops, and the peoples who are with you will fall on the mountains of Israel. I will give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and to the wild animals. ⁵ You will fall on the open field, for I have spoken. This is the declaration of the Lord God.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

² *I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Hosea 1:5 (CSB)

⁵ On that day I will break the bow of Israel in Jezreel Valley.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Jeremiah 51:56 (CSB)

⁵⁶ for a destroyer is coming against her, against Babylon. Her warriors will be captured, their bows shattered, for the Lord is a God of retribution; he will certainly repay.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

² *I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

3. *Human conquest*

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and **there was a white horse**. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

The most plausible view is that the horseman signifies the threat of human wars of conquest. This approach considers all four riders as a set, like the four groups of horses and riders in Zech 1:8–15 and 6:1–8, and it recognizes that all the horsemen are ominous. Like the violence, food shortages, and death represented by the other horsemen, the first rider points to a threat posed by the violent forces operative within human society.

Koester

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and there was a white horse. Its rider held **a bow**; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Not just warfare but
conquer from an outside
foe.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*² I looked, and there was a white horse. Its rider held **a bow**; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.*

Israel's armies move on foot or on chariots, but not as mounted archers.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

² I looked, and there was a white horse. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.

Victorious in battle

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

³ When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" ⁴ Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

³ *When he opened the second seal, I heard **the second living creature** say, "Come!"* ⁴ *Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.*

Second living creature has
the face of an ox (4:7)

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

³ When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" ⁴ Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.

Fiery red was a known color for horses, cattle and other animals.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

³ *When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!”* ⁴ *Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.*

Numbers 19:2 (CSB)

² “This is the legal statute that the Lord has commanded: Instruct the Israelites to bring you an unblemished **red cow** that has no defect and has never been yoked.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

³ When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" ⁴ Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.

No special significance in Zech or Numbers, but in Rev. 6:4 it is linked to bloodshed.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

³ When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" ⁴ Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.

Peace is usually a blessing, but when peace masks oppression, removing it can be a form of judgment.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

³ *When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!"* ⁴ *Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.*

1 Thessalonians 5:3 (CSB)

³ When they say, "Peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, like labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

³ *When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!"* ⁴ *Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.*

Jeremiah 6:14 (CSB)

¹⁴ They have treated my people's brokenness superficially, claiming, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*³ When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" ⁴ Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, **so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.***

If the mounted archer is attack from the outside, then this could be violence breaking out from within (anarchy, rebellion, and civil disorder).

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁵ When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” And I looked, and there was a black horse. Its rider held a set of scales in his hand.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*⁵ When he opened the third seal, I heard **the third living creature** say, “Come!” And I looked, and there was a black horse. Its rider held a set of scales in his hand.*

The third creature has the face of a human.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁵ When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” And I looked, and there was a black horse. Its rider held a set of scales in his hand.

Black is ominous in Revelation.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁵ When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” And I looked, and there was a black horse. Its rider held a set of scales in his hand.

Revelation 6:12 (CSB)

¹² Then I saw him open the sixth seal. A violent earthquake occurred; the sun turned black like sackcloth made of hair; the entire moon became like blood...

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁵ When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” And I looked, and there was a black horse. Its rider held a set of scales in his hand.

Revelation 9:2 (CSB)

² He opened the shaft to the abyss, and smoke came up out of the shaft like smoke from a great furnace so that the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the shaft.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁵ When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” And I looked, and there was a black horse. Its rider held a set of scales in his hand.

the next verse (v. 6) explains
the scales.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

Seems it's God's voice as it comes from “among the four living creatures.”

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

Wheat for bread
Barley, cheaper bread or
porridge

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

Denarius was a silver Roman coin equivalent and equal a day's wage.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

\$25 for a loaf of bread.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”



Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

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⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

In Asian cities a denarius would ordinarily buy about 16 quarts of wheat.

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⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

1 quart of wheat yields
approximately 1 loaf of bread.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

This means one day's work yields one loaf of bread.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

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⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

The prices in Revelation are eight to sixteen times higher than usual. These are rates associated with severe shortages.

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⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

This is famine.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ *Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”*

Oil and wine are *not* luxury items in this time in history.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

It could be that this is a warning to merchants not to charge more for oil and wine just because there is a wheat shortage.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

Drought would affect wheat and barely more than vines and olive trees.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ *Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.””*

This is a *limited* famine.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

The famine certainly results from warfare from the previous horses.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

The famine certainly results from warfare from the previous horses.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

The warning about the oil and wine has been variously interpreted. Some feel that it was added to underscore the social inequity existing in a time of scarcity. It is the poor, not the rich, who suffer. But in that case it would also be difficult to understand why the Lamb—the voice “among the four living creatures” (v. 6; cf. 5:6)—would issue an order favoring the rich and aggravating the plight of the poor. Others see in the oil and wine a reference to the sacrament (cf. Jas 5:14) and understand the clause to promise that believers will not suffer from the famine. It is simpler to take the phrase as indicating a natural limitation to the famine.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" ⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of **the fourth living creature** say, "Come!" ⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.*

Eagle.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

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The colors of the first three horses correspond to Zech 6:2-3.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

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This “pale green” is the greenish-gray color of a person who is sick, dying, or terrified.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

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The horse is the color of a
corpse. (Mounce)

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

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“Death and Hades” first appeared in 1:18 as the underworld (sheol). There it was a place or a condition. Here, Death and Hades are being brought to the earth.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

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Here they are being personified to be able to grasp people.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

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2 Samuel 22:6 (CSB)

⁶ The ropes of Sheol entangled me;
the snares of death confronted me.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" ⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. **Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him.** They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.*

Isaiah 5:14 (CSB)

¹⁴ Therefore Sheol enlarges its throat and opens wide its enormous jaws, and down go Zion's dignitaries, her masses, her crowds, and those who celebrate in her!

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" ⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him. **They were given authority over a fourth of the earth**, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.*

Demonstrates both the magnitude of the threat, but also its limit (one fourth! but not more)

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

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In the trumpet visions the scale increases to that a third of humanity is killed (Rev. 8:1-12)

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" ⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him. **They were given authority over a fourth of the earth**, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.*

In the end, however, Death and Hades surrender their captives to God.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

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Revelation 20:13–15 (CSB)

¹³ Then the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them; each one was judged according to their works. ¹⁴ Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

*⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" ⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him. **They were given authority over a fourth of the earth**, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.*

Revelation 21:4 (CSB)

⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" ⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.

The list is in part traditional.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!” ⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.

2 Chronicles 20:9 (CSB)

⁹ “If disaster comes on us—sword or judgment, pestilence or famine—we will stand before this temple and before you, for your name is in this temple. We will cry out to you because of our distress, and you will hear and deliver.”

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" ⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.

“wild animals” added to the list.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

Revelation 6:1–2 (CSB)

Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, “Come!” I looked, and there was a white horse. Its rider held a bow; a crown was given to him, and he went out as a conqueror in order to conquer.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

Revelation 6:3-4 (CSB)

³ When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!”

⁴ Then another horse went out, a fiery red one, and its rider was allowed to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. And a large sword was given to him.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

Revelation 6:5–6 (CSB)

⁵ When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” And I looked, and there was a black horse. Its rider held a set of scales in his hand. ⁶ Then I heard something like a voice among the four living creatures say, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, but do not harm the oil and the wine.”

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

Revelation 6:7–8 (CSB)

⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!”

⁸ And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following after him. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.

Six Seals are Opened (6:1-17)

Structure and Content

A. The Four Horsemen (6:1-8)

B. The Fifth Seal: Martyrs at Rest
(6:9-11)

C. The Sixth Seal: The World is
Shaken (6:12-17)

Six Seals in Are Opened (6:1-17)