

 Properties

|         |                                             |
|---------|---------------------------------------------|
| title   | Revelation 6 — The Seven Seals Begin        |
| series  | Bible and Brew                              |
| passage | Revelation 6:1-6                            |
| tags    | revelation, seals, eschatology, bible-study |
| date    | 8/20/26                                     |

## Revelation 6 — The Seven Seals Begin

### Summary of Chapter 5 and Introduction

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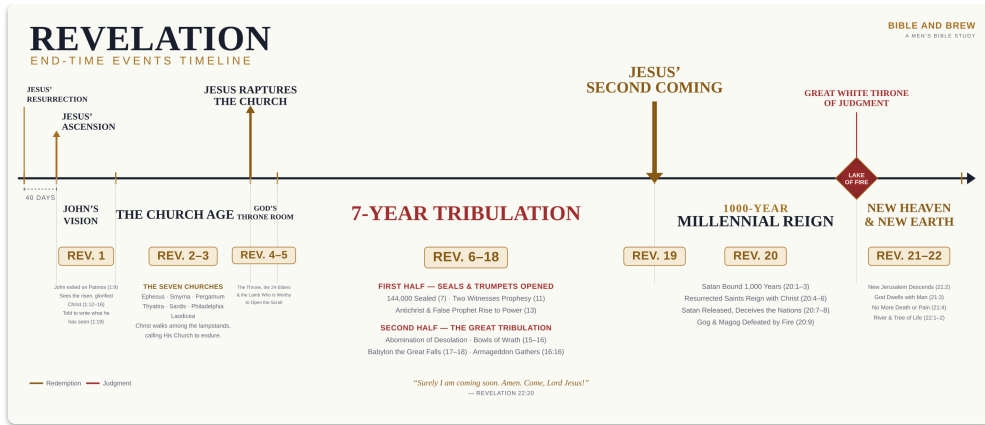
Review - Revelation 5 picks up right where chapter 4 left off — John is still standing before God's throne in heaven, and now he notices a scroll in God's right hand, sealed with seven seals. A mighty angel calls out, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?".

We found out and knew in our hearts that only one was worthy, "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ". John turns to look for a Lion — and instead sees a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne. This is the chapter's big turn: the way Jesus "conquers" is through sacrifice, not raw power. The Lamb takes the scroll, and heaven erupts in worship.

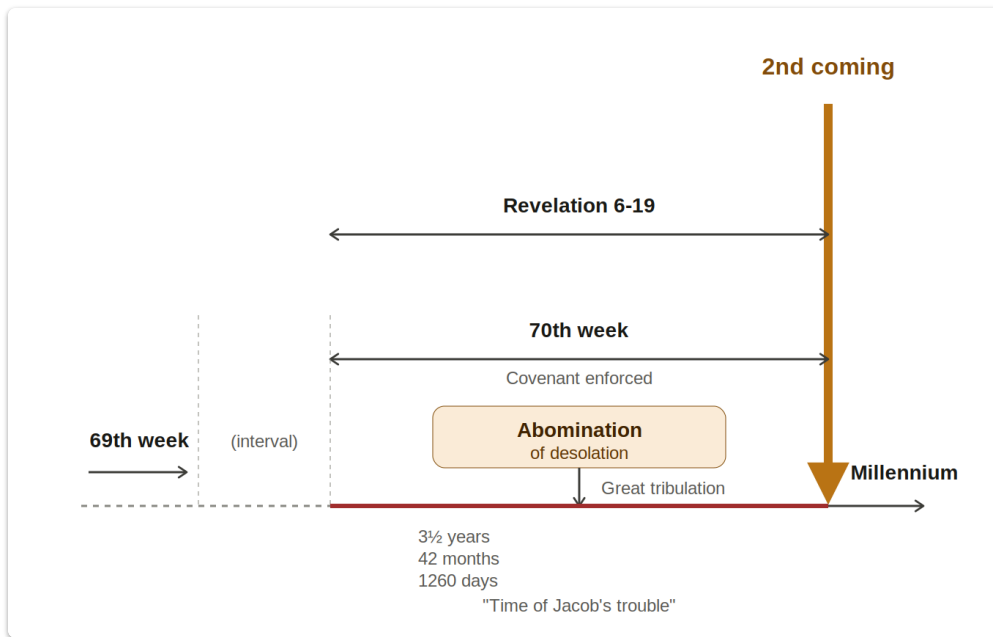
That's the setup you're walking into for chapter 6 - to see more sacrifice through judgement; the Lamb is now holding the scroll, worship has just crescendoed, and the very next verse is Him beginning to break the seals one by one.

It's worth noting the contrast here — the seals unleash conquest, war, famine, and death, but they're opened by a Lamb who was slain, not by anyone else who "earned" the right through strength, but through sacrifice. That framing matters a lot for how you read the judgments that follow.

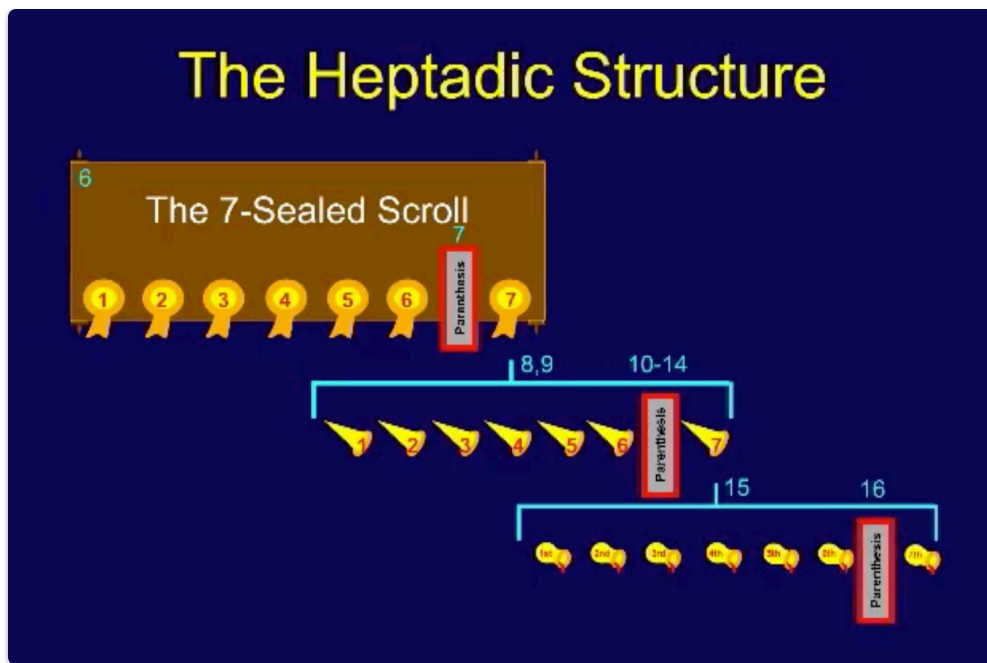
This chapter sets the tone for the rest of Revelation: Christ is sovereign over the past and the future, even its darkest chapters. But we must remember that nothing happens that He does not permit.



Chapter 1:19 -- lets read. We are in the third part now.



What should we expect? A formula, a structure, a build out and an emphasis!



And so we begin ... let's read Chapter 6.

## Seal One — The White Horse (Conquest)

*"Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, 'Come!' And I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering, and to conquer." (Revelation 6:1-2, ESV)*

**Explanation:** Who is speaking? Who was speaking in the throne room interacting with John?

- In Heaven the elders are describing everything.
- On Earth, the creatures are the voice.

Who is the rider? Not Jesus

Most people that read this immediately think that the white horse with a crown is Jesus ... reasons it is not.

- Who is opening the seals? The Lamb — not an angel, not a bystander — is the one opening the seals.
- This rider on a white horse carries a bow but is only given "a crown" (Greek *stephanos*, a victor's wreath, not the *diadema* worn by Christ later in

Revelation 19).

- What is he carrying? A bow not a sword, Jesus typically carries a sword in chapter 19.

So who is this person?

- Many scholars see this figure as a counterfeit conqueror — a spirit of conquest, empire, or an antichrist figure who imitates Christ's own white-horse appearance in Revelation 19:11-16 but without genuine authority or righteousness.
- He conquers by human ambition, not divine right.
- A false teacher ... deceiver.

Jesus shows up in chapter 19 at the end of this tribulation doctrine.

Overall question, what do horses represent in the bible?

“Horses” = judgments

2 Kgs 6:15-18; Jer 46:9-10;  
Joel 2:3-11; Nahum 3:1-7;  
Zech 1:8-11; 6:1-7

### Cross References:

- Revelation 19:11-16 (the true Rider on the white horse — Christ)
- Zechariah 6:1-8 (four chariots and horses as agents of judgment)
- Matthew 24:4-5 (Jesus warns of false christs before the end)

### Discussion Questions:

1. *Why do you think the first seal mirrors the appearance of Christ so closely? What does that tell us about how deception often works?*
2. Where do you see "conquering" ambition — political, personal, corporate — masquerading as good news in our world today?

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## Seal Two — The Red Horse (War)

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*"When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, 'Come!' And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword." (Revelation 6:3-4, ESV)*

**Explanation:** The Red Horse:

- The second rider removes peace from the earth, resulting in violence between people.
- This isn't merely international war — "slay one another" suggests societal breakdown, civil conflict, and interpersonal violence.
- The "great sword" (Greek *machaira*, a short sword for close combat) contrasts with the "sharp sword" that comes from Christ's mouth later (1:16, 19:15) —
- Much like the first horseman, this is a corrupted, human version of judgment.
- Why peace? Christ is the Prince of Peace

**Cross References:**

- Matthew 24:6-7 ("wars and rumors of wars")
- Ezekiel 14:17 (sword as an instrument of divine judgment)
- Isaiah 9:6-7 (contrast: Christ is the Prince of Peace)

**Discussion Questions:**

1. *Peace is described here as something that can be "taken" — not just absent, but actively removed. What robs peace in your own life or relationships?*
2. How should the reality of this seal shape the way we pray for peace — locally and globally?

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## Seal Three — The Black Horse (Famine/Economic Hardship)

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*"When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, 'Come!' And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, 'A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!'" (Revelation 6:5-6, ESV)*

**Explanation:** Color Black:

- Does Black have meaning in the bible?
- Lamentations 4, Jeremiah 14 = black is famine;

**Scales:**

- Scales signal careful rationing — this is famine and severe economic hardship, not total starvation.
- A denarius was a full day's wage
- A quart of wheat was roughly enough to feed one person for a day.
- Jewish expression that says "to eat bread by weight" meaning scarcity (Lev 26, Ez 4)

**Oil and Wine:**

- What's up with harming oil and wine?
- Luxury goods are protected - hinting an inequality in the population

In other words: a full day's labor buys barely enough food for yourself, with nothing left for a family. Staples become scarce while luxuries for the wealthy remain untouched.

**Cross References:**

- Leviticus 26:26 (bread rationed by weight as a covenant curse)
- Amos 8:4-6 (economic injustice condemned)
- James 5:1-6 (warning to the rich who hoard while others suffer)

**Discussion Questions:**

1. *This seal highlights economic inequality even in judgment — luxury protected while staples run short. Does that convict you about how you view wealth and generosity?*

2. How does scarcity (real or perceived) tend to bring out the worst — or the best — in people?
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Time for prayer ... Next week we continue with the final horsemen and the other seals in the chapter!