

GOSPEL COMMUNITY GUIDE

The Revelation of Jesus Christ
The Seals (Rev. 6) | January 18, 2026



REDEEMER
ROUND ROCK

QUICK UPDATES

Share any upcoming church events and handle housekeeping for the Gospel Community.

CONNECT

As you reflect on Revelation 6, what words or emotions come to mind as you picture the Lamb opening the seals?

REVIEW

Have someone read the passage out loud from the ESV translation or something similar. Reflect on any insights, questions, or parts that stood out from the text or the sermon. Then read the summary below.

Revelation 6 reveals the Lamb opening the seals of history, showing that conquest, war, famine, death, suffering, and judgment unfold under Christ's sovereign rule. The first four seals show the painful realities of life in a fallen world; but they are restrained, permitted, and governed by the Lamb who reigns. The fifth seal reveals that faithful endurance leads to nearness with God, as suffering saints rest securely under His altar. The sixth seal reminds us that God's justice is delayed by His mercy, culminating in the searching question: "Who can stand?"

LEARN & LIVE

These questions help us grasp the truth of the passage and consider how to live it out.

- What does it mean that the Lamb (not chaos or evil) opens each seal in Revelation 6?
- How do the limits placed on the horsemen shape our understanding of suffering and God's sovereignty?
- What do the first four seals reveal about life in a world resisting God's reign?
- Why is it significant that suffering and judgment are shown as restrained, not random?
- How does the fifth seal reframe what "faithfulness" looks like in a suffering world?
- What does the location of the saints "under the altar" communicate about God's care for His people?
- What does it communicate to you that the martyrs cry out "How long?", rather than seeking comfort or escape?
- What does God's command to "rest" reveal about His priorities for suffering believers?
- How does the sixth seal challenge false securities like power, wealth, or status?
- What does the final question, "Who can stand?", invite us to examine about our own lives?

GO DEEPER

These questions invite us to slow down and wrestle with what's going on beneath the surface. Use these to go a little deeper or in your Huddle Groups.

- Where do you most feel the instability of the world right now, and how does Revelation 6 speak into that experience?
- What emotions surface when you consider that suffering unfolds under Christ's rule rather than outside it?
- Are you ever tempted to interpret hardship as evidence that God is absent or disengaged? Share how so.
- What does faithful waiting look like for you in this season of life?
- Where do you sense God inviting you to trust His timing rather than demand immediate answers?
- What "false refuges" do you rely on for security when life feels unsteady? How do you need help leaving them?
- How does the contrast between those under the altar and those hiding in caves challenge you personally?
- What does it look like for you to "stay near the Lamb" in ordinary rhythms this week?
- If the question "Who can stand?" were asked of your life today, what would your answer reveal about your life?
- **How is the Holy Spirit comforting you or challenging you personally from this discussion? How will you respond and what will you do differently this week? Is there anywhere you need help to make that happen?**

PRAY FOR NEEDS in the GROUP

- Some other ways to pray:
 - Pray about one way God spoke to you tonight through His Word.
 - Pray by name for someone in your life who doesn't yet know Jesus.
- Pray for this ministry area of Redeemer: [Pray for those Christians in different parts of the world who are being persecuted for their faith.](#)

5 GROUP DISCUSSION RULES

We want to be full of grace as we meet, deepening our relationship with one another and with Christ. These five values help us know our **P.L.A.C.E.** in our GC's and Huddles.

1. **Pray** - Prayer is a space for confession, struggle, and praise. Keep requests focused on yourself and your immediate family, so we can pray specifically and personally.
2. **Listen** - Be present and attentive. Share with humility, be mindful of time, and remember: silence is okay.
3. **Apply** - Answer honestly. Consider how God's Word speaks into your life, and what it might look like to respond.
4. **Confess** - Confession and repentance are signs of maturity. We meet one another with grace, not shame.
5. **Encourage** - Practical advice is helpful, but truth is better. Speak the gospel into each other's hearts and stories.

COMMENTARY EXCERPT:

Six Seals Opened (6:1-17)

6:1-8 The four living creatures respond "come" when the Lamb opens the first four seals, summoning the riders of four colored horses (6:2, 4, 5, 8). Thus, while the four living creatures unceasingly praise the Almighty and the worthy Lamb (4:8-9; 5:8-10, 14), they also call forth God's judgments on the earth and worship God for these mighty acts (see 15:7; 19:4).

The four horses in 6:1-8 allude to Zechariah's prophecies of four colored horses and chariots led by red, black, white, and dapple-gray horses sent to patrol the earth (Zech 1:8-11; 6:1-8). Revelation's first seal reveals the rider of a white horse with a bow and crown who comes "conquering and to conquer" (6:2). Interpreters are sharply divided about the meaning of this symbolism. Some identify this rider as Christ, since he comes on a white horse "to judge and make war" in 19:11. In this reading, the first seal offers a positive picture of Christ "conquering" through the gospel's spread among the nations. More likely, this rider's crown and white horse portray military might and anticipate the beast's aggression towards Christ's followers (11:7; 13:7), parodying the later picture of Christ's victory (19:11).

The second seal reveals a rider of the red horse who takes peace from the earth (6:4). His "great sword" conveys violent bloodshed and anticipates the sober call for the saints' endurance in 13:10. The third horseman, mounted on a black horse, holds a pair of scales signifying commerce (6:5). The significantly inflated prices for food staples (a quart of wheat and three quarts of barley) suggest scarcity or even famine conditions, perhaps due to war (6:6; cf. 2Kgs 6:24-33), though the protection of oil and wine sets limits on this destruction. The fourth rider sits atop a pale horse and is called "Death" (6:8). Death and Hades violently kill with the sword, famine,

pestilence, and wild beasts. This scene alludes to the “four dreadful judgments” that God threatened to send against unfaithful Israel (Ezek 14:21 NIV; cf. 14:12–20; Lev 26:22–26; Deut 32:23–27; Jer 24:10).

6:9–11 The fifth seal reveals the martyrs crying out for divine justice after they were “slain” like the Lamb (5:6, 9, 12), perhaps as a result of the violence and bloodshed of the first four seals (6:4, 8). John’s reference to their “souls” suggests that these martyrs await the resurrection (cf. 20:4), while their position “under the altar” expresses the sacrificial nature of their deaths and may recall the OT altar of incense or the altar of burnt offering (cf. Lev 4:7). They are slain because of “the word of God” and their faithful “witness,” echoing the reasons for John’s exile (Rev 1:9). The martyrs appeal to the Sovereign Lord to vindicate them and judge the inhabitants of the earth. This prayer is answered when Christ opens the sixth seal (6:12–17), and the multitude later worships God for judging his enemies and avenging the martyrs’ blood (16:5; 19:2). While awaiting final vindication, the martyrs are given assurance and called to patience. Each receives “a white robe,” attesting to their cleansing from sin and moral purity in God’s sight (cf. 3:4–5; 7:9, 14), even as they must “wait” (NIV), or “rest a little longer” (ESV), as God has ordained other Christians to suffer the same fate before the final judgment.

6:12–17 When the Lamb opens the penultimate seal, John sees cosmic upheaval associated with “the day of the Lord” (cf. 13:9–13; 34:4, 8; Joel 2:10–11, 31; Matt 24:29) and utter terror for the earth’s rulers and other groups of people who hide from the wrath of God and the Lamb (cf. Isa 2:19–21; Hos 10:8; Luke 23:30). The “great earthquake” recalls prophecies of divine judgment (Isa 29:6; Ezek 38:19; cf. Matt 24:7) and anticipates other scenes of God’s awesome presence and consummate judgment in this book (see Rev 8:5; 11:13, 19; 16:18). The removal of mountains and islands (6:14) parallels the scenes of cosmic destruction in 16:20 (the seventh bowl) and 20:11 (the white throne judgment). The sixth seal concludes with the desperate cry of unrepentant humanity: “who can stand” in the great day of divine wrath (6:17)? While this rhetorical question carries the force “No one can stand in that day,” it also anticipates John’s vision of the saints “standing before the throne and before the Lamb” (7:9, emphasis added).

Brian Tabb, *Revelation*, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/revelation>