

Do not harm the oil and the wine: Yet, the nicer things will be available for those who can afford them. There will still be the oil and the wine that should not be harmed.

A pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death: This last rider shows that there will be a tremendous death toll from the dictatorship, war, famine and other calamities described by the previous three horsemen.

Our modern age has seen hundreds of millions killed by dictators, war, and famine. Yet all that will pale in comparison to the death toll coming in the wake of this ultimate dictator. No wonder Jesus said of this time *For there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again.* (Matthew 24:21)

Power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill: Power was given to the horseman, and given by God. Though all hell breaks loose on the earth, God is very much in control. He still holds the scroll and opens the seals.

I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God: That these souls were under the altar emphasizes that their life blood was poured out as an offering to God. The idea is drawn from Leviticus 4:7: And he shall pour the remaining blood at the base of the altar of the burnt offering.

And they cried with a loud voice: When God's people are persecuted, He will set it right. It isn't wrong for God's people to ask Him to do what He promised to do. In this way the blood of Abel cried out from the ground for vengeance (Genesis 4:10), as did the blood of unavenged murders in the land of Israel (Numbers 35:33).

A great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.

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FOR THERE WILL BE GREATER ANGUISH THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN. AND IT WILL NEVER BE SO GREAT AGAIN.

- MATTHEW 24:21

And the stars of heaven fell to the earth: It is best to regard these pictures as *real*, but *poetic*. John did not use technically precise scientific language, but he simply described what he saw. In the Bible, celestial disturbances are often connected with the coming of the Messiah. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Zephaniah and Jesus Himself all described such things. *The sun and moon grow dark, and stars diminish their brightness... for the day of the LORD is great and terrible; who can endure it?* (Joel 2:10-11)

And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves: All people are equally brought low by God's wrath. The judgment is all the more profound because it is the **wrath of the Lamb**.

"It is the wrath of love, the wrath of sacrificial love which, having done the absolute utmost for us and our salvation, tells us as nothing else could the certainty with which evil awaits its doom at the hand of God." (Torrance)

Hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne: They hid not only from the terror of the judgments, but **from the face of Him who sits on the throne**. "What sinners dread most is not death, but the revealed presence of God." (Swete)

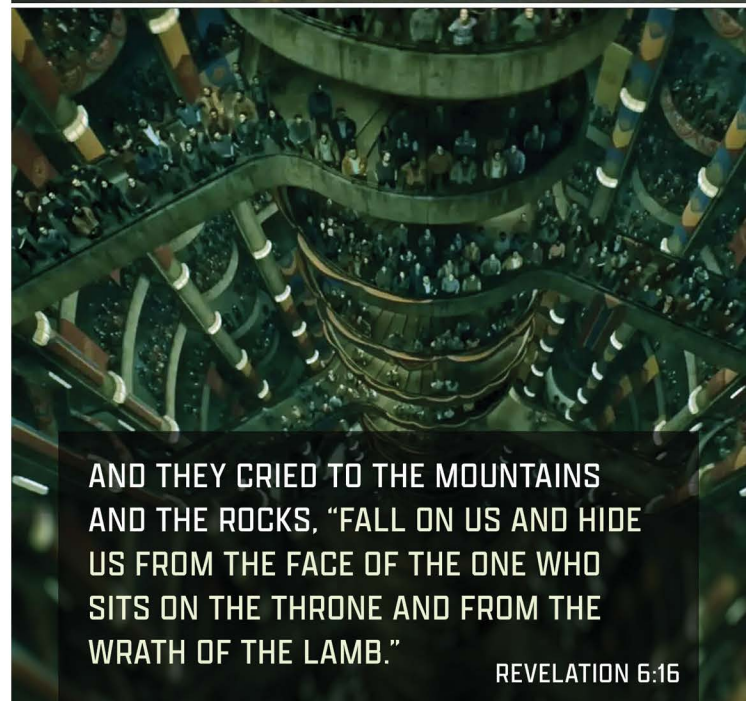
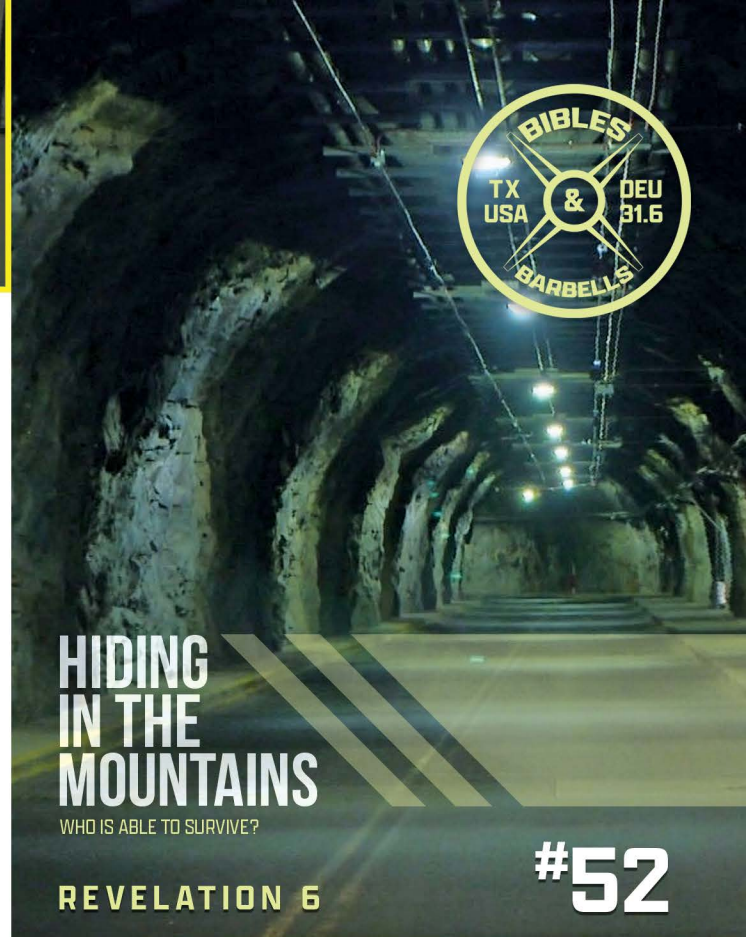
The sixth seal concludes with a valid question: Who is able to stand? Only the believer can stand before this great judgment, the one who is justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

a. *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand.* (Romans 5:1-2)

b. *I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received and in which you stand.* (1 Corinthians 15:1)

c. *Testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.* (1 Peter 5:12)

d. The believer can stand in the face of this great wrath of God because Jesus already bore the wrath the believer deserved.



REVELATION 6

HIDING IN THE MOUNTAINS

OUNTAIN COMPLEX

Doomsday bunkers range from prepper hobbies to military installations. The TV shows "Silo" and "Paradise" tell stories of global catastrophes, where groups survive by fleeing deep underground. We hear of the ultra rich building huge, secret bunkers. In Revelation 6, everyone hides in the mountains, but then beg to be crushed! They hope to hide themselves from God's wrath. God has provided a path to safety through his son Jesus, and no doomsday bunker in the mountains can replace that. -JT

1 As I watched, the Lamb broke the first of the seven seals on the scroll. Then I heard one of the four living beings say with a voice like thunder, "Come!" 2 I looked up and saw a white horse standing there. Its rider carried a bow, and a crown was placed on his head. He rode out to win many battles and gain the victory.

3 When the Lamb broke the second seal, I heard the second living being say, "Come!" 4 Then another horse appeared, a red one. Its rider was given a mighty sword and the authority to take peace from the earth. And there was war and slaughter everywhere.

5 When the Lamb broke the third seal, I heard the third living being say, "Come!" I looked up and saw a black horse, and its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice from among the four living

beings say, "A loaf of wheat bread or three loaves of barley will cost a day's pay. And don't waste the olive oil and wine."

7 When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the fourth living being say, "Come!" 8 I looked up and saw a horse whose color was pale green. Its rider was named Death, and his companion was the Grave. These two were given authority over one-fourth of the earth, to kill with the sword and famine and disease and wild animals.

9 When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of all who had been martyred for the word of God and for being faithful in their testimony. 10 They shouted to the Lord and said, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you judge the people who belong to this world and avenge our blood for what they have done to us?" 11 Then a white robe was given to each of them. And they were told to rest a little longer until the full number of their brothers and sisters—their fellow servants of Jesus who were to be martyred—had joined them.

12 I watched as the Lamb broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake. The sun became as dark as black cloth, and the moon became as red as blood. 13 Then the stars of the sky fell to the earth like green figs falling from a tree shaken by a strong wind. 14 The sky was rolled up like a scroll, and all of the mountains and islands were moved from their places.

15 Then everyone—the kings of the earth, the rulers, the generals, the wealthy, the powerful, and every slave and free person—all hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. 16 And they cried to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. 17 For the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to survive?"

EnduringWord.com Commentary

I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals: From the previous chapter, we understand this scroll is the history and destiny of mankind and creation, and only Jesus – **the Lamb** – had the right to loosen the seals on this scroll of the culmination of history.

"It is worthy of remark that the opening of the seals is not merely a declaration of what God will do, but is the exhibition of a purpose then accomplished; for whenever the seal is opened, the sentence appears to be executed." (Clarke)

Behold, a white horse: If one were to take their interpretive clues more from cowboy movies than from the Bible, it would be easy to believe the rider on the white horse is Jesus. Jesus does return on a white horse in Revelation 19:11-16; but this is a satanic dictator who imitates Jesus.

He went out conquering and to conquer: Taking this to be the final satanic dictator over men, we see that he will be more terrible than all previous dictators were. He will rule over men as a false messiah, and lead man in organized rebellion against God, in the pattern of Nimrod, his first predecessor. He is the one often called the antichrist. The idea of a satanic dictator over men goes back all the way to Nimrod, the ruler over Babel in Genesis 10:8-14, where it says he was a *mighty hunter before the LORD*. This has the sense that he was a mighty hunter of *men*, and that this was offensive to the face of God.

Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth: This rider didn't need to *bring* war and destruction. All he needed to do was **take peace from the earth**. Once this **peace** – God's gift to man – was taken, men quickly rush in with war and destruction.

A black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand: The scales symbolized the need to carefully measure and ration food. This speaks of a time of *scarcity*.