

Timing

- Is this all in the future or taking place now?
- At least the first four seals can be seen to take place at this moment, or anytime after the death of Christ.
- It does appear to take place before Christ's return, the appearance of the antichrist, rapture, or the beginnings of a tribulation.
- A futurist interpretation can interpret these seals as now and the rest as the future.
- The 7th seal, which comes after a break, appears to be in the future.

Ezekiel 14

- These judgments are similar to what God brings at the end.
- Jerusalem shall face sword, famine, wild beasts, and pestilence.
- Even if Daniel, Job, and Noah preached no one would respond to God.
- No one in Revelation responds rightly to the judgment of God.
- The seal judgments are not new but have been foreshadowed from the beginning.

Zechariah 6

- Zechariah begins by seeing a man riding a red horse, with other horses.
- These horses patrol the earth and wonder when God will show mercy to Israel.
- Zechariah sees four chariots with different colored horses: red, black, white, and white and black spots (Zech 6).
- They patrol the earth with the four winds in every direction.
- There are some obvious similarities between these and the riders from the seals.
- I am not sure that they are the same, although God uses lots of horses in the heavens and spiritual realm.

1st Seal

- It is the gospel going forth into the whole world.
- Christ rides a white horse at the end, white is always positive in Revelation.
- Everyone thought this was Jesus until the 13th century.
- Some see it as the antichrist parodying Christ and conquering the kingdoms.
- It could describe the antichrist conquering the world, but that doesn't come until halfway through the tribulation.
- The horse archer would have reminded the Romans of Parthia, who beat back the Roman expansion of their empire several times.

2nd Seal

- Some see this as a reference to civil war because they kill "one another."
- Jesus promised wars and rumors of wars would precede his coming.

3rd Seal

- Some see the oil and wine as luxury goods as if this judgment misses the rich.
- However, oil and wine are regular staples of their diet.
- The lack of oil and wine is a condition of famine (1 Kings 17:12, Joel 1:10, Lam 2:12).
- The price of flour and barley is low to show the reverse of a famine (2 Kings 7:16).
- This could mean famine and hunger are staples of life until Christ returns.
- This could refer to the famine during the siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
- Does not mean the whole world is in famine, but that it is common.
- Jesus warns that famines will come as a "sign of coming and end" (Matt 24:7)

4th Seal

- Death and Hades are personified by individuals.
- They are both cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:13-14, Isaiah 25:8).
- I am not sure we should see them as spiritual beings, but maybe they are.
- They overlap with the second and third horses/seals.

5th Seal

- The current state of the martyrs is a reminder of the intermediate state.
- Heaven is an intermediate state, or place between the suffering of life and the resurrection of the new heavens and earth.
- Those in the heavenly places, long for Christ to come to earth and finish His work.
- It is a blessing to be martyred.

6th Seal

- The cosmic imagery comes from the Old Testament (Isaiah 34:4; Joel 2:30; Amos 8:9)
- I think this seal will be fulfilled in the future.

Application

- The timing of the judgments is significant, but the largest idea is that Jesus Christ is in control of every judgment that falls on the earth.
- I think we need to avoid trying to identify the seals in an exact order in our present day.
- We are never commanded to figure out Revelation, but we are commanded to read and obey it.