Thus again we see the carrying out of the Saviour’s  
prediction concerning His return. After His prediction  
of wars and famines, He adds, “and *pestilences*” (Matt.  
xxiv. 7). Each blow struck by the Most High is  
heavier than the last.  
 Pestilence on the horse goes forth first. “Hades followed after him,” whether on foot or no, is not said. The  
place in which departed souls 1 are gathered is personified: so great is to be the deadliness of the plague,  
that Hades follows as the reaper to gather up the fallen  
ears. Such a scene Isaiah foretold. Isa. v. 14.  
 “Authority was given them over the fourth of the  
earth.” The second horseman had power over the  
earth; these, over but a fourth part of it. Why, it is  
not easy to say. But the depopulation here is the  
more terrible, the fourth portion being assailed by four  
plagues in united operation.  
 Mystery is disappearing. The name of the horseman  
is, in this fourth seal, first given. And now the object of  
the mission of the previous horsemen is manifestly intimated. The second rider is War, who is to “kill with  
*sword*.” The third is Famine, who is to slay “with  
*famine*.” The fourth is Pestilence, as we have just  
seen. But there is a further power of death annexed,  
in “the wild beasts of the earth.” God’s creatures  
fight on his side, whether birds or beasts. In former  
days, God has made use of this or a similar scourge.  
On the refractory Pharaoh and his servants He sent  
locusts, and other troublesome animals. Against the  
murmuring Israelites He commissioned the fiery serpents:  
Num. xxi. 6. On the Canaanites He sent  
hornets: Exod. xxiii. 28; Josh. xxiv. 12. Lions slew  
  
1 “That ᾅδης [Hades] has reference to *the world of the dead*,  
lit. *the invisible world, the under-world*, like שׁאול, there can, of  
course, be no doubt.” Stuart, 544.