

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon February 7, 2021

Luke 21:11 "The First Century Earthly Disasters and Heavenly Signs of Palestine"

5 Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, 6 "These things which you see--the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down." 7 So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign will there be when these things are about to take place?" 8 And He said: "Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore do not go after them. 9 But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately."

10 Then He said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. 11 And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

12 But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. 13 But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. 14 Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; 15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. 16 You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. 17 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. 18 But not a hair of your head shall be lost. 19 By your patience possess your souls.

20 "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 24 And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

25 "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. 27 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."

29 Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. 30 When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. 31 So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

34 "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. 35 For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 Watch therefore, and pray

always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

37 And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet. 38 Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.

I. Introduction

- a. We continue with our study and meditations of Christ's Words to His disciples regarding the coming 1st century destruction of that very temple, with its massive stones and ornate decorations, its unspeakable opulence. Christ our Lord points their hearts, and ours, away from the transient temple/apostate Israel (seems so permanent!) to the Unshakeable Kingdom. The old, shakeable, puny system gives way to the Kingdom of Christ, our Rock. The vanishing, weak kingdom of confusion and fear, founded upon ignorance and unbelief, crumbles and washes away under God's storm of wrath, giving way to the Unshakeable Kingdom of Christ.
- b. We've seen that all these predictions in this section of Luke occur prior to and leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70, as signs to the disciples of how they can know the destruction of the temple is at hand. Our Lord gives them the signs they will see in order to know when to flee away from the wrath of God upon apostate Israel. Last week, we saw that wars, uprisings, anarchy and general violence and fear would emerge prior to the temple's destruction. In today's text, Christ speaks of earthly and heavenly events that serve as signs of the coming destruction of the temple. And, while the focus is upon Roman Palestine/Israel/Judah/Jerusalem, these events are also fulfilled by occurrences throughout the Roman empire, "various places". Jesus says these events will occur prior to the destruction of the temple, so we know they occurred even if we can't find evidence in non-inspired history books. But, praise be to God, we find fulfillment of these prophecies both in Scripture and in history.
- c. The Signs of the coming destruction of the Temple
 - i. False Messiahs/False Movements v8
 - ii. Wars/Uprisings v9-10
 - iii. Great Earthquakes v11
 - iv. Famines v11
 - v. Pestilences v11
 - vi. Fearful Sights and Great Signs in the heavens v11
 - vii. Persecution by Jews and Romans v12-19
 - viii. Jerusalem surrounded by armies/time to flee v20-24
 - ix. Signs in heavens/distress on earth- v25,26
 - x. Then comes the Son of Man's Redemptive Judgment v27,28
- d. Luke 21:11 "The First Century Earthly Disasters and Heavenly Signs of Palestine"
 - i. Great Earthquakes in Various Places
 - ii. Famines
 - iii. Pestilences
 - iv. How to respond?

II. Great Earthquakes in Various Places

- a. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.
- b. Great = large, big. Very unlikely to go unobserved.
- c. Earthquakes = a sudden and severe movement of the earth¹
- d. Some OT Earthquakes
 - i. 1 Sam 14 “That first slaughter which Jonathan and his armorbearer made was about twenty men within about half an acre of land. ¹⁵And there was trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. The garrison and the raiders also trembled; and the earth quaked, so that it was a very great trembling.”²
 1. This earthquake accompanied a battle victory over the Philistines.
 - ii. 1 Kings 19 “So [Elijah] said, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.” ¹¹Then He said, “Go out, and stand on the mountain before the Lord.” And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, *but* the Lord *was* not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, *but* the Lord *was* not in the earthquake”³ (and Jud 5:4)
 1. The earthquake precedes the Lord’s Presence with Elijah
 - iii. Psalm 60:1,2 “O God, You have cast us off; You have broken us down; You have been displeased; Oh, restore us again! ²You have made the earth tremble; You have broken it; Heal its breaches, for it is shaking.”⁴ (Ps 18:7, Numbers 16 also)
 1. God warns and punishes His own people with earthquakes.
 - iv. Is 29:6 “You will be punished by the Lord of hosts With thunder and earthquake and great noise, *With* storm and tempest And the flame of devouring fire.”⁵ (and Nahum 1:5)
 1. God punishes His enemies using earthquakes
 - v. Ez 38:19-21 “For in My jealousy *and* in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: ‘Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel, ²⁰so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who *are* on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall

¹ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 180). New York: United Bible Societies.

² [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (1 Sa 14:14–15). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

³ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (1 Ki 19:10–11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Ps 60:1–2). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁵ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Is 29:6). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

to the ground.’²¹ I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains,” says the Lord God.”⁶

1. God expresses His wrath and justice using earthquakes
- vi. Amos 1:1 “The words of Amos, who was among the sheep-breeders of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.”⁷ (also Zech 14:5)
 1. God uses severe earthquakes as a way to mark the years
- vii. So, when our Lord predicts great earthquakes as a part of the process leading to the outpouring of His wrath and judgment upon apostate Israel, faithful Jews would recall God’s prior earthquakes and their association with God’s Presence, warnings, wrath and punishments.
 1. And the faithful Jew, resting in Jehovah our refuge, would know there is no need to fear anything, not even an earthquake.
 - a. Ps 46 “God *is* our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. ²Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; ³Though its waters roar *and* be troubled, *Though* the mountains shake with its swelling.”⁸

e. The 1st Century Earthquakes

- i. Two earthquakes are mentioned by Matthew in conjunction with Christ’s death and His resurrection. Neither of these serve as fulfilments of these verses in Luke, but they do illuminate the importance of earthquakes accompanying God’s great works of deliverance.
 1. Mt 27 “And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, ⁵²and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; ⁵³and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, “Truly this was the Son of God!”⁹
 - a. This earthquake accompanies Christ’s death, the tearing of the veil of the temple, and the tearing open of graves. (But, note, none came out of their graves until AFTER Christ was resurrected. And since Christ is the firstborn

⁶ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Eze 38:19–21). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁷ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Am 1:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁸ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Ps 46:1–3). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁹ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Mt 27:51–54). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

from the dead, we can know none were resurrected until after Jesus was resurrected.)

2. Mt 28 “Now after the Sabbath, as the first *day* of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. ³ His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴ And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead *men*.”¹⁰
 - a. This earthquake accompanies Christ’s resurrection. Note also an angel accompanies this great earthquake. Revelation 6 also shows us angels accompanying great natural disasters.
- ii. The description of a great earthquake and terrors in the heavens in Revelation 6. The sixth seal.
 1. “I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. ¹³ And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴ Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. ¹⁵ 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 in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”¹¹
 - a. Note the similarities to Luke, including earthquakes, heavenly signs, the fig tree.
 - b. Also, note Christ opens the seals, Christ brings forth these judgments, not chance, not mere natural forces.
 - c. Take the time to study Revelation 6 and you will see the Ascended Christ bringing forth these 1st century events He predicts here in Luke 21. It’s all there. War. Earthquake. Famine. Death. Persecution.
- iii. Earthquakes after Christ’s ascension that are fulfilments of this prophecy.
 1. Acts 16:25 “But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations

¹⁰ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Mt 28:1–4). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹¹ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Re 6:12–17). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed."¹²

- a. This was a "great earthquake" at Philippi, a "place" the early church knew, a place within the Roman empire.
 - b. God used this earthquake to deliver Paul and Silas and all the prisoners.
2. Josephus "Moreover at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the] temple, as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise"¹³
- a. Josephus' writings date this as the Pentecost of AD 66.
3. Multiple seismology articles and texts describe a massive earthquake in AD 66 that shook vast regions of the Roman empire. Pastor Phil Kayser "I did a search of several dozen books on the history of seismology and even more articles on that subject, and did a search of an online database of over one million books (mostly focusing on science or history), and I came up with a rather well documented earthquake in AD 66 that was reported throughout the entire Roman empire. Keep in mind that we don't have a lot of history from this period, so I find it remarkable that there are as many references to this earthquake as there are. And this earthquake didn't just seem to follow one fault line. The little evidence that we have seems to indicate that there was at least an interaction of the Aegean and Anatolian micro-plates with the African and Eurasian tectonic plates. It was very widespread." (Sermon entitled "Cosmic Disturbances" - <https://media-cloud.sermonaudio.com/text/516161605010.pdf>)
- f. So, in addition to wars and anarchy and uprisings, the disciples would be on the lookout for great earthquakes in various places. We've seen from the book of Acts and from Josephus and seismology science that such great earthquakes were occurring in various places throughout the Roman empire, and the great quake of AD66 was felt in Jerusalem and over various places within the Roman empire. (As we will see, Josephus connects this quake with the terrors and signs in the heavens.)
 - i. "we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; *Though* its waters roar *and* be troubled, *Though* the mountains shake with its swelling." Ps 46

III. Famines

¹² [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Ac 16:25–26). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹³ Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1987). [The works of Josephus: complete and unabridged](#) (p. 742). Peabody: Hendrickson.

- a. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.
- b. Famine: “a widespread lack of food over a considerable period of time and resulting in hunger for many people”¹⁴
- c. Famine in the OT
 - i. 2 Chron 20 “If disaster comes upon us—sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine—we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name *is* in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.”¹⁵
 - 1. Famine, war, pestilence as signs God’s people need to cry out to Him in their affliction
 - ii. Jer 14 “When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. But I will consume them by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.”¹⁶
 - 1. Famine, war and pestilence as God’s judgment. (and Ez 6:11, etc)
- d. Famine in NT
 - i. Acts 11 “And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.”¹⁷
 - ii. Multiple historical sources show us Claudius using government regulations to control grain prices, in order to get more grain to Rome. As is always true, this creates significant market disturbances. Throughout the Roman empire, grain became scarce and very expensive because of the way Claudius interfered with natural market forces. This is why many Biblical interpreters see Claudius as the 3rd horsemen of Revelation 6.
 - 1. “When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come and see.” So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. ⁶And I heard 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 the wine.”¹⁸
 - a. Kayser “So those scales of commerce that are on all of his coins were symbols of statist control of the marketplace. That was considered a good thing, but it was really a

¹⁴ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). [*Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains*](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 252). New York: United Bible Societies.

¹⁵ [*The New King James Version*](#). (1982). (2 Ch 20:9). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹⁶ [*The New King James Version*](#). (1982). (Je 14:12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹⁷ [*The New King James Version*](#). (1982). (Ac 11:27–28). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹⁸ [*The New King James Version*](#). (1982). (Re 6:5–6). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

judgment, and it led to economic problems all over the empire, including several man-made famines.”

2. Claudius did not regulate the oil and the wine supply. So, it appears this famine of Acts 11 occurred as a result of foolish governmental actions. And, again, note Who opens the seal. Christ, our Lord, Ascended, the Sovereign over all things, opens the seal to fulfill the very prophecy He gave in Luke 21.
- iii. 1st century famines- Kayer “The man-made famines that were severe enough to be recorded in the Bible and by historians occurred in AD 41-42, AD 45 (that's Acts 11:48), AD 50, and AD 52. And when we looked at his economic policies we saw that the state was constantly trying to fix problems that their previous interventions had created in the first place.”
- e. How to respond? In the book of Romans, written ~mid AD 50s, Paul encourages the saints at Rome in chapter 8. Note the threats Paul enumerates. Note his awareness Christ controls all things. “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

IV. Pestilences

- a. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.
- b. “a widespread contagious disease, often associated with divine retribution— ‘plague, pestilence.’”¹⁹
- c. OT instances
 - i. Lev 26 “And I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant; when you are gathered together within your cities I will send pestilence among you; and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.”²⁰
 1. Like war, unrest, violence and famine, God uses plagues to execute His vengeance upon His unfaithful people.

¹⁹ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). [*Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains*](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 270). New York: United Bible Societies.

²⁰ [*The New King James Version*](#). (1982). (Le 26:25). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

- ii. 1 Kings 8 “When there is famine in the land, pestilence *or* blight *or* mildew, locusts *or* grasshoppers; when their enemy besieges them in the land of their cities; whatever plague or whatever sickness *there is*; ³⁸ whatever prayer, whatever supplication is made by anyone, *or* by all Your people Israel, when each one knows the plague of his own heart, and spreads out his hands toward this temple: ³⁹ then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and act, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men), ⁴⁰ that they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You gave to our fathers.”²¹
 - 1. The Lord sends bodily plagues upon His people so they may cry out to Him and repent of the plague of sin in their own hearts, and so they may be forgiven by God and be granted hearts that fear God always and thus granted security in the land.
- d. 1st Century plagues
 - i. The disciples would be vigilant to watch for plagues spreading through the Roman world. While there is no direct mention of a plague in the remainder of the NT (like we find with the famine of Claudius of Acts 11), there were noteworthy plagues that occurred prior to the destruction of the temple, especially during the reign of Nero, who is likely represented by the green 4th horse of Revelation 6. (Called a pale horse in most translations, but the Greek word is “green”.) Revelation 6:7,8 “When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come and see.” 8 So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.”
 - ii. Kayser, commenting on the judgments associated with Nero’s reign: “The next judgment is stated to be death. Death is taken by most commentators as death by natural causes such as disease, storm, earthquake, etc. And there was a great deal of this in Nero's reign. A massive plague struck the region of Turkey, especially where the church of Ephesus was located in AD 61. Earlier Nero's reign saw hurricanes devastating regions, numerous plagues and pestilences. Suetonius speaks of 30,000 dying of the plague during one of the Fall seasons during this period in the city of Rome alone. Death from natural causes significantly increased.”
 - iii. Also note how Nero’s reign brings together all three of the signs mentioned in Luke 21:11 – the sword (war, unrest), hunger (famine), death (includes pestilences). (As an aside, Nero was famous for enjoying killing people with wild beasts.)

²¹ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (1 Ki 8:37–40). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

- iv. Paul again “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”
- V. Fearful sights and great signs from heaven
 - a. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.
 - b. Fearful sights = “an object, event, or condition which causes fear—‘dreadful sight, terrifying happening, fearful thing.’”²² The structure of the language leaves room for fearful sights to be seen both in the heavens and on earth.
 - c. Great signs from heaven = of signs portending remarkable events soon to happen.
 - d. The disciples were to be on the watch for terrifying sights on earth and in the heavens that would serve as great signs the temple destruction is drawing near. Note, these would not be simple, common events not prone to frighten, but rather very great and extraordinary heavenly sights that would terrify or amaze the people.
 - e. Josephus “Thus there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year. (290) Thus also, before the Jews’ rebellion, and before those commotions which preceded the war, when the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus [Nisan], and at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which light lasted for half an hour. (291) This light seemed to be a good sign to the unskillful, but was so interpreted by the sacred scribes, as to portend those events that followed immediately upon it. (292) At the same festival also, a heifer, as she was led by the high priest to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple. (293) Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner [court of the] temple, which was of brass, and vastly heavy, and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron, and had bolts fastened very deep into the firm floor, which was there made of one entire stone, was seen to be opened of its own accord about the sixth hour of the night. (294) Now, those that kept watch in the temple came hereupon running to the captain of the temple, and told him of it: who then came up thither, and not without great difficulty, was able to shut the gate again. (295) This also appeared to the vulgar to be a very happy prodigy, as if God did thereby open them the gate of happiness. But the men of learning understood it, that the security of their holy house was dissolved of its own accord, and that the gate was opened for the advantage of their enemies. (296) So these publicly declared, that this signal foreshowed the desolation that was coming upon them. Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the twenty-first day of the month

²² Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). [*Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains*](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 316). New York: United Bible Societies.

Artemisius [Jyar], (297) a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared; I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it, (298) and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals; for, before sunsetting, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen (299) running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities. Moreover at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the] temple, as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, (300) and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, "Let us remove hence."²³

VI. Questions to know, love and obey God

²³ Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1987). [*The works of Josephus: complete and unabridged*](#) (p. 742). Peabody: Hendrickson.