

Message #21

Revelation 6:12-17

In Revelation 6, Jesus Christ begins to pour out the Great Tribulation judgments on this God-mocking, Christ-rejecting, Bible-hating, holiness-lacking world. All throughout time there have been various disasters that have hit various locations. There have been hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, floods and various destructive things God has authorized, but **there has never been a time when He has unleashed His entire destructive wrath on the world.**

In fact, when Jesus Christ was here on earth, He said, “For then there will be a great tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will” (Matt. 24:21). He went on to say that “unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved...” (Matt. 24:22).

Of all of the cosmological disasters that have ever hit the world in its history and of all the ferocious storms that have ever come from the sky or sea or air, nothing has ever or will ever reach the magnitude of Tribulation Seal Judgment #6.

Tribulation seal judgment #6 will affect everyone in the world, no matter where they live, and everyone in the world will know exactly who this judgment is from and why it is happening. What we see here is this:

WHEN JESUS CHRIST BREAKS THE SIXTH SEAL FOR THE GREAT TRIBULATION JUDGMENT NUMBER SIX, HE WILL UNLEASH THE MOST FEROCIOUS SERIES OF COSMOLOGICAL DISASTERS TO EVER HIT THE WORLD.

When Jesus Christ actually spoke of this specific judgment, He said, “...and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven” (Luke 21:11).

It would appear from what is described here in Revelation that the main purpose of the sixth seal judgment is not to instantly destroy the rest of the people who are living on this earth at this point in the Tribulation, but the main purpose is to specifically terrorize the rest of the people who are living on this earth at this point in the Tribulation.

We may be sure that there will be many who will die all throughout the Great Tribulation. In fact, by this early point in the Tribulation millions and millions of people are already dead. However, those who haven’t died to this point are going to come to terms with the fact that they are experiencing the wrath of God and they will be terrified.

This is the time in the program of God when God wants people on earth living in total terror every day of their lives. They did not choose to fear Him so He will cause them to be terrified of Him.

There are three main seal judgment facts that are brought out in this judgment:

SIXTH SEAL JUDGMENT FACT #1 – The judgment begins when Jesus Christ breaks the sixth seal. **6:12a**

Jesus Christ is in control of the Great Tribulation wrath judgments and the authorization of a wrath judgment on this earth does not begin until He breaks the seal to start it.

The wrath of God is not some sentimental temper tantrum. It is very carefully and systematically measured and then it is authorized and delivered.

It is true that God is sovereign whenever some terrible destructive judgment hits. God is in sovereign control of cosmological disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, hail storms, thunder and lightning.

When we read a text such as Psalm 83:15 that says, “so pursue them with Your tempest and terrify them with Your storm.”

When we read a text such as Nahum 1:3-6 that says, “And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, in whirlwind and storm is His way, and clouds are the dust beneath His feet. He rebukes the sea and makes it dry; He dries up all the rivers...Mountains quake because of Him and hills dissolve; indeed the earth is upheaved by His presence, the world and all the inhabitants in it. Who can stand before His Indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath is poured out like fire and the rocks are broken up by Him.”

When we read a text such as Matthew 8:27 that says, “What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”

It is very clear that God controls the weather and Jesus Christ is God and He is the One who will authorize His weather to begin a worldwide Tribulation judgment the likes of which has never been seen before.

SIXTH SEAL JUDGMENT FACT #2 – The sixth seal Great Tribulation Judgment will specifically contain a ferocious worldwide cosmological destruction. **6:12b-14**

The things that are seen here in this list of events are more fearful than anything that has ever been seen or that could even be invented by a science fiction book or movie. This is real judgment of God coming straight out of heaven and when it hits, everyone in the world will know this and admit this.

There are seven specific cosmological events that will take place during this one seal judgment:

Cosmological Event #1 - There will be a great earthquake. **6:12b**

There have been many earthquakes throughout time. There have been nearly 4,000 earthquakes so far in 2022.

God has used earthquakes many times for His purposes which we know:

- 1) God used an earthquake to show that it was His Son who died on the cross. Matt. 27:50-51
- 2) God used an earthquake to show that His Son was raised from the dead. Matt. 28:2
- 3) God used an earthquake to free Paul and Silas from jail for the Grace Gospel. Acts 16:26

So there have been many times when God has used earthquakes for purposes we know.

In the Great Tribulation, God is going to send many earthquakes. The Greek word “earthquake” is “seismos” (seismoc) from which we get our English word “seismic” which relates to the intensity of an earthquake and the seismograph that is used to measure it.

The Greek adjective “great” used before the noun “earthquake” indicates that this will be a mega level earthquake. It will be at a mega magnitude in intensity and degree. This will be a world-wide earthquake that will be accompanied with some major heavenly signs.

We know that during the Tribulation God is going to use earthquakes. According to Matthew 24:7, earthquakes will be a key feature of the early days of the Tribulation.

We also learn that when Russia moves against Israel later in the Tribulation, God will send another great earthquake (Ezekiel 38:19-23). We also learn that in the later stages of the Tribulation, there will even be a worse earthquake than the one here (Rev. 16:18).

But this earthquake at this point in the Great Tribulation will literally shake up and terrify the world. This earthquake will not be limited to one geographical location; this one will shake the world.

Cosmological Event #2 - The sun will become black. 6:12c

In the very context of this mega earthquake, people will look in the sky and see the sun become black. The text says it will be “black as sackcloth made of hair.”

Now this will be a very black color and apparently will have somewhat of a stringy substance look to it. Sack cloth was a very coarse black cloth that was made from hair. It was used for making sacks, strainers, mourning garments and event tents.

When this moment comes in the Tribulation, God will cause the sun to have a black, eerie darkness to it, the likes of which has never been seen before. This will be part of the message He sends to the world that His shining favor is no longer on this world, but His judgment wrath is.

Cosmological Event #3 - The whole moon became like blood. **6:12d**

At the same time the sun becomes black, the moon will become like blood. It will have some reddish color but not the normal red moon color. Joel predicted that this would be a part of judgment (Joel 2:31) before Jesus Christ would actually return.

There will be something about this that will have a bloody look to it. That will certainly say to the world that God's program is sending a bloody wrath judgment to this world.

Cosmological Event #4 - The stars will fall to the earth. **6:13a**

God will cause stars to literally fall into the earth. The preposition "into" literally does suggest this will be slamming into the earth. We suspect the impact will go deep into the ground. As one writer said, this will become even more "cataclysmic." This will be bigger than any meteor that has ever hit this earth. This will be a series of meteoric showers the likes of which has never been seen before.

So the earth is shaking and the sun and moon have changed their look and then stars are catapulting to the earth and hitting from all directions out of the sky.

Cosmological Event #5 - The sky will be split apart like a scroll. **6:14a**

Some have suggested this is symbolic language, but we do not see that here at all. In fact, the prophet Isaiah specifically described this very event as being part of the Tribulation wrath (Isaiah 34:1-4).

The fact that there is a scroll look here would certainly suggest that when people look into the sky, they will realize that this judgment is coming from the Throne of God and is based on the Word of God.

The sky will visibly be ripped apart and there will be a scroll look to it. While this is taking place, the earth is shaking and the sun is black and the moon is red and stars are slamming into the earth.

People will have a very real awareness of the fact that this judgment is coming directly from God and from Jesus Christ.

Cosmological Event #6 - The mountains and islands will be moved. **6:14b**

Now this describes an actually moving of mountains and islands. This in my opinion clearly explains Matthew 17:20 and Matthew 21:21. This is an eschatological event that is a prelude to Christ coming and reigning on this earth. Had Israel accepted Jesus Christ when He was here on earth, the mountains would have been literally moved rather than at this point in the Tribulation.

It seems to me that the Greek is communicating the fact that God will literally move every mountain and every island at this point in the Great Tribulation. The preposition phrase “out of their places” (ek tw̄n topwn autwn) seems to suggest that God will literally pick them up from their places and relocate them as the people look into the sky and see it. This is not simply a shaking and shuffling, this is a removal and relocation.

The mountain ranges are going to be moved in the first part of the Great Tribulation and will be obliterated in the last part of the Great Tribulation (Rev. 16:20).

Cosmological Event #7 - All people will try to hide in total terror. 6:15a

Carefully observe that this judgment affects all people on earth, not just an isolated area. All people everywhere will be terrified when this occurs. It does not matter if one is a king, president, prime minister or pauper. It does not matter if one is a rich man or a poor man or a free man or a slave. All will be terrified, rank will mean nothing.

In fact, there is a breakdown of seven classes of people mentioned in **verse 15** that does give us a glimpse of world government during the Great Tribulation:

- 1) The kings of the earth seem to suggest that the world is under a king control.
- 2) The great men of the earth indicate these are powerful, high ranking political and civil leaders.
- 3) The commanders of the earth indicate that these are military leaders.
- 4) The rich of the earth indicate that these are very wealthy people.
- 5) The strong of the earth indicate that these are very powerful and dominant people.
- 6) The slave of the earth indicates that these are slave servants.
- 7) The free man of the earth indicates that these are not slave servants.

Now we want to make one more grammatical observation here about this list. The thing that caught my eye in the Greek text is that the nouns are masculine and not feminine in Greek. In fact, the nouns kings, great men, commanders, rich men and strong contain a specific masculine article (oi), as does the noun slave and free man (paç).

We suspect that during the Great Tribulation women will lose their rights to a male dominated world. We must remember that the Antichrist will be the most vicious and brutal beast and leader to ever exist (Dan. 7:7, 19). Daniel predicts that the Antichrist has no regard or desire for women (Dan. 11:37).

Now the cruelest Roman Emperor, when it came to women, was Caligula. He was a ruthless killer. He raped women in front of their husbands. He would tell women that he could have their throat cut anytime he wanted. He was a ruthless, immoral killer. The Antichrist will be worse than this. Women who are in the Tribulation are not going to be ruling in politics, they will be running for their lives.

What most women don't realize is that it was Biblical Christianity that raised the rights and status of a woman. During the Great Tribulation the women are going to be brutalized.

Once the Rapture has occurred and all Christians have been removed, the women will suffer as never before.

Satan will be dominating the world and the women will be slaughtered. This is why Jesus specifically mentioned women in His Tribulation warning in connection with the Antichrist and the Abomination of Desolation, in which the Antichrist demands to be worshipped as God in the Temple of Jerusalem. Jesus said woe to those who are pregnant women or who are nursing babies when the Tribulation is underway (Matt. 24:19-21).

Those women who reject Jesus Christ and the Scriptures are putting themselves on a course of horrible futuristic judgment. The masculine articles indicate that by this point in the Tribulation, men are dominating and destroying the women.

SIXTH SEAL JUDGMENT FACT #3 – All people of the world will respond to this judgment.
6:15b-17

There will be four responses to this Tribulation judgment:

Response #1 - All people will try to hide. **6:15b**

When God is pouring out judgment, there is nowhere to run and nowhere to hide. People will be seeing things and experiencing things that will terrify them. They will try to hide themselves in caves or up on mountains which are extreme places, but they cannot hide from God.

The Great Tribulation will demolish houses and cities. The wars and the earthquake of this judgment will cause people to panic and seek someplace to get away to hide. But it will be to no avail.

Response #2 - All people would rather die. **6:16a**

People would rather die than repent. Instead of people falling down before God and admitting their sin and crying out for His forgiveness and grace and mercy, which would be their only chance, they would rather die.

Now this is some kind of nature prayer meeting in which the people are praying to mountains and rocks. This fact that they are praying that the mountains and rocks fall on them certainly indicates they are looking into the sky and seeing the mountains being relocated.

These people are so sad; they would rather die and go to hell than cry out to God for His forgiveness. Many who commit suicide do exactly the same thing today.

Response #3 - All people know this is God's judgment. **6:16b-17a**

All people of the earth know that this is a judgment from God and that this is the wrath of God.

In fact, they know and admit that this is a judgment from Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God. These people all know that this is the Great Tribulation time of wrath.

They even admit a Trinitarian theology. They know there is a God sitting on His Throne and they know this is the wrath of the Lamb, the Son of God. They know this, but do not seek to be right with Him in any way.

Response #4 - All people know they cannot win. **6:17b**

All people of this world know at this point they cannot stand up against God and His judgment.

This is what all people know in the first part of the Great Tribulation. What they don't know is that this is just the beginning part. They haven't even begun to realize how bad it will get. There is plenty more wrath to come in the seventh seal judgment and there will be millions more that will die.

The way to escape the wrath of God is to believe on Jesus Christ. Those who do that will be safe and secure.