

The Great Quake

Opening the Sixth Seal – Revelation 6:12-17

Review

- The seals provide a skeletal outline of the entire 7-year Tribulation period (similar to Genesis 1 & 2)

- 1) 1st Seal: Deception (conquest through diplomacy)
- 2) 2nd Seal: War (change of strategy; persecution focused on Israel)
- 3) 3rd Seal: Famine (result of AntiChrist's policies toward Israel)
- 4) 4th Seal: Death. (result of AntiChrist's policies toward Israel)
- 5) 5th Seal: Tribulation Martyrs (intense persecution of believers)
- 6) 6th Seal: The Great Quake (events preceding the 2nd coming of Christ)
- 7) 7th Seal: Trumpet and Bowl Judgments (details of the Tribulation period)

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 6TH SEAL:

I. A great earthquake

- "Great": μέγας (*megas*) — a massive earthquake, likely global (not just local)
- Greek word: σεισμός (*seismos*) — "a shaking"
- May involve the heavens shaking, not just the earth.
- The effects of this quake will include volcanic activity & tsunamis
 - Geophysicists believe that the earth's crust is made up of massive plates ("tectonic plates")
 - 7 massive plates & several smaller plates
 - Movement of these plates can cause earthquakes, volcanoes, ocean trenches; mountain ranges
 - Example: Himalayan mountain range created from plate tectonics at the time of the global Flood.
 - Creationists believe that the earth's crust was cracked during the Flood — due to intense pressure mounting underneath the surface, causing large volumes of water to burst forth on the earth.
 - "the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." (Genesis 7:11)

II. Signs in the Heavens

A. The sun becomes black as sackcloth of hair.

- *Background:* Sackcloth was often made of black goat's hair or camel's hair.
- The sun will be darkened most likely due to all the ash, steam, gases, and debris that will be discharged into the atmosphere from the volcanic activity on earth.

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B. The moon becomes as a blood.

- The moon, which reflects the light of the sun, will appear reddish in color because the sun is darkened.
- These heavenly signs will accompany Jesus' 2nd coming.

➔ The 6th Seal is prophesied throughout the OT.**Joel 2:10-11, 30-31; 3:15-16**

"The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining; And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp *is* very great: for *he is* strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD *is* great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" (Joel 2:10–11)

"And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come." (Joel 2:30–31)

"The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD *will be* the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." (Joel 3:15–16)

Haggai 2:6-7

"For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, *it is* a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry *land*; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts." (Haggai 2:6–7)

Isaiah 13:9-10, 13

"Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger." (Isaiah 13:9-10, 13)

C. Stars fall to the earth.

"And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." (Revelation 6:13)

- This may be a reference to asteroids falling to the earth, that trigger the global earthquake.
- *"The word star refers to any luminous body in the sky other than the sun and the moon. Obviously the stars here are not the distant stellar objects that we today call stars, but the language of the text seems to denote more than meteorites commonly called today "falling stars." The most likely identification of these particular falling stars is that of a great swarm of asteroids that pummel the earth. Such an encounter is a real possibility. It might be even the trigger that will set off the global earthquake."* Dr. Henry Morris

D. The Heaven is rolled together as a scroll

“And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together;” (Revelation 6:14)

- These signs in the heaven may be more than just a physical, natural phenomena.
- These signs may refer to God’s judgment on the fallen angels; casting them out of the heavens, and consigning them to the bottomless pit with the devil (Rev. 20:2-3).
 - The “heavens being rolled together as a scroll” is prophesied in Isaiah 34:2-4.

“For the indignation of the LORD *is* upon all nations, and *his* fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling *fig* from the fig tree.” (Isaiah 34:2–4)

- God will “punish the host of the high ones” — Isaiah 24:21-22)

“And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones *that are* on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.” (Isaiah 24:21–22)

III. A Change in the Earth’s Topography

“and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.” (Revelation 6:14)

- The sixth seal prepares the earth for Christ’s Millennial Kingdom.
- The Millennial world will likely be much like the Pre-flood world.
- The earth’s topography will level out, much like it was before the Flood.
- Conditions will support a much healthier world:
 - Uniform temperatures
 - Uniform hydrologic cycle: little to no storm activity; no natural disasters
 - Water canopy around the earth will protect from the harmful radiation of the sun to cause mutations.
 - Oxygen levels will be much higher

IV. Timing of the 6th Seal

- ➔ **The 6th Seal is often associated with the Second Coming of Christ**
 - Matthew 24 & the OT prophecies in Joel and Haggai associate the tectonic activity on earth and signs in the heavens (as described in the sixth seal) with the 2nd coming of Christ.
 - Likely occurs just prior to the Battle Armageddon where Christ defeats AntiChrist and the Gentile armies and establishes His Millennial Kingdom on earth.

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” (Matthew 24:29–30)

V. The Ensuring Terror on the Earth

“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (Revelation 6:15–17)

- The 6th seal correlates with the drama at the Battle of Armageddon when AntiChrist’s armies try in vain to escape the wrath of the Lamb at His second coming.
- All men who oppose the Lamb will recognize the power of God, but they will refuse to repent!

VI. Parallels between the Seals in Revelation 6 and Jesus’ Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24.

- ➔ The 6th seal prepares the earth for the 2nd coming of Christ.
- ➔ The first 6 seals provide a skeletal outline of the entire Tribulation Period, while the seventh seal gives details. This follows a similar structure to the Creation account: Genesis 1 gives the outline of creation; Genesis 2 provides more details).

Seals (Revelation 6)	Matthew 24
1st Seal: Deception (2)	False Christs (4-5)
2nd Seal: War (3-4)	Wars (6-7)
3rd Seal: Famine (5-6)	Famines (7)
4th Seal: Death (7-8)	Pestilence (7)
5th Seal: Tribulation Martyrs (9-11)	Persecution (9-10)
6th Seal: Earthquake, sun darkened, blood-stained moon, stars falling (12-13)	Sun-darkened, stars falling, heavenly bodies shaken (29-30)

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