



*[16] 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:*

*[17] For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*

Okay, let's dig in, slow down, and break this down to see what treasure we can find today:

*[12] And*

The narrative continues directly from our story of the martyrs we looked at last time.

*I beheld*

John in heaven is able to see.

*when*

Notice time moves forward in heaven.

*he*

He is the Lamb of God standing before the throne of God with a scroll in His hand.

*had opened*

He is the only one worthy to open the seals of that scroll.

*the sixth seal,*

We mentioned the five that precede this. One seal remains after the sixth.

*and, lo,*

That is, *behold*.

*there was*

*a great earthquake;*

*and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair,*

*and the moon became as blood;*

*[13] 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.*

Besides this reference, the words *sun*, *moon*, and *stars* appear together sixteen other times in the Bible – mostly in prophetic passages. You may recall the first as Joseph's dream (Genesis 37:9). There seems to be no correlation between that reference and the one we have here in Revelation chapter 6.

But from the Old Testament we do have the following:

Isaiah 13

*[10] 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.***

Ezekiel 32

*[7] And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light.*

Joel 2

*[10] 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:*

Joel 3

*[15] The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.*

Do you see the correlation with our passage in Revelation 6? They seem to be talking about the same event.

And in the New Testament, the apostle **Peter** spoke of this time both in Acts and in 2 Peter:

Acts 2

*[16] But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;*

*[17] And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, ...*

*[19] ... I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:*

*[20] The **sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:***

*[21] And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

This is the one true escape path from the wrath of God. God holds open the door for men to come to Him even during this time.

2 Peter 3

*[9] The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

*[10] But **the day of the Lord** will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

*[11] Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,*

This too sounds like the events in our text for today. It's critical that we distinguish between the Day of the Lord and the rapture of the church. The rapture comes before the Day of the Lord's wrath.

Matthew 24

*[29] 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:***

*[30] **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.*

That was Matthew's account of Jesus' teaching in the Olivet Discourse. Now here's Mark's:

Mark 13

*[24] But in those days, **after that tribulation**, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,*

*[25] And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.*

*[26] And **then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.***

Finally, we have Luke's account of the same teaching from Jesus:

Luke 21

*[25] And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;*

*[26] Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.*

*[27] And **then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.***

Now interestingly, despite what sounds like cataclysmic destruction of heaven and earth, just two chapters ahead we have the following:

Revelation 8

*[12] And the fourth angel sounded, and the **third part of the sun** was smitten, and the **third part of the moon**, and the **third part of the stars**; so as the third part of them was darkened, and **the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.***

So that's a bit odd. After our account of heaven apparently being destroyed, we read of them again still hanging around. Now let's return to our text:

*[14] And **the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together;***

We see this same description of events in the Old Testament:

Isaiah 34

*[4] 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.*

Notice here we have the same analogy that we see in our text of figs falling from a fig tree. So continuing with our text now:

*and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.*

That sounds like a massive earthquake unlike any the world has ever known.

*[15] 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;*

You may have heard that President Trump is renovating the East Wing of the White House to add a ballroom for entertaining large groups of people. You may have also heard that the renovation includes upgrades to the underground bunker called the Presidential Emergency Operations Center.

It seems like if you're important enough or have enough money you can build or have access to bomb shelters. *Preppers* as they are called build these places and stock them with stores of essentials of life to ride out events like this.

*[16] 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:*

*[17] For the great day of his wrath is come;*

This great day of His wrath is the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel that we learned about last time. It is a seven-year period of time spoken of by the prophets and Jesus Himself as He called it the Great Tribulation. Here's how He put it:

Matthew 24

*[21] For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

*and who shall be able to stand?*

This is a rhetorical question. None can stand before Him.

Philippians 2

*[10] That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;*

Let's return to that question. You may recall that this time involves seven seal judgments followed by seven trumpet judgments, followed by seven bowl judgments. Then comes the Lamb conquering the earth and coming with power and glory with His bride the church. This is described in Revelation chapter 19. But what we see with this sixth seal sounds like everything is swallowed up in calamity. What follows His coming and his thousand-year reign is the dissolving of heaven and earth:

Revelation 20

*[11] And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.*

And then in the last chapter of the Bible we have this:

Revelation 21

*[1] And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*

Now, a bit of context would be useful here.

1. Jesus returns to the clouds and calls His own home (**rapture** of the church) can happen at any moment.
2. Next comes the seven-year **Tribulation** – a time of God’s wrath against people and nations.
3. **Jesus returns in glory** with His bride and with a word conquers the armies of nations opposed to Him ending the seven-year period of the Tribulation.
4. Jesus rules and reigns over the earth for one thousand years – the **Millennium**.
5. Satan is loosed and leads a **final rebellion** against Jesus. Jesus defeats those armies with fire from heaven.
6. The lost are judged at the **Great White Throne Judgment** and cast into the Lake of Fire.
7. The old heaven and earth will be dissolved and replaced with a **new heaven and new earth**.

So the problem becomes, we have many more judgments to come in Revelation, and yet this sixth seal *sounds like* the final calamity. How do we reconcile this? Much like working on a puzzle, we must fit these verses into the structure of end-times events.

The teaching of Jesus in the Olivet Discourse seems to hold the greatest weight here. As we saw, He clearly said major signs in heaven would occur before He returns to set up His Millennial kingdom. To harmonize that with our passage, we need to relegate the greater calamity language in Revelation 6 to hyperbole.

This is not an arbitrary decision. As we saw, two chapters after our current one describes heaven and earth still in existence. Other passages themselves speak of people doing various things on the earth after these cataclysmic events. Indeed even our text for today does exactly that. It describes events that would render heaven and earth destroyed (vv. 12-14) but then proceeds immediately to describe people on the earth crying out for the mountains to fall on them (vv. 15-17) so the destruction language was figurative and not literal.

### Application

Knowing that the Great Tribulation is coming ever nearer, do we need to become *preppers*? Of course, the answer is no – at least not to avoid this wrath of God. While there’s no escaping His judgment, there is escape from this wrath. As Christians, we know that we will be caught up and taken away to be with the LORD **before** all of this happens.

1 Thessalonians 4

*[16] For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*

*[17] Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

*[18] Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

And for that promise, after considering all of this calamity, we can be very thankful indeed!

**Benediction**

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen (Revelation 22:21).*

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