



## The Sixth Seal Physical Changes



### Physical Changes

(Rev. 6:12-17)

Revelation 6:12-17 “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. 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 sits 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?”

**B**elieve that this seal is not broken unto the end of the tribulation and Jesus is sitting on the throne. Notice the great and powerful men of the world hid themselves from “the face of him that sits on the throne.” That can be no one else but Jesus. They are trying to hide from Jesus and his great wrath. Let’s look a little closer at what this one judgment entails.

Isaiah 2:17-22 (NASB), <sup>17</sup> “The pride of man will be humbled and the loftiness of men will be abased; and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day, <sup>18</sup> But the idols will completely vanish. <sup>19</sup> Men will go into caves of the rocks and into holes of the ground before the terror of the LORD and the splendor of His majesty, when He arises to make the earth tremble. <sup>20</sup> In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship, <sup>21</sup> In order to go into the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs before the terror of the LORD and the splendor of His majesty, when He arises to make the earth tremble. <sup>22</sup> Stop regarding man, whose breath of life is in his nostrils; for why should he be esteemed?

Joel 2:30-31, <sup>30</sup>“And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. <sup>31</sup>The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.”

The first four of these events deal with the earth and the heavens. The last three deal with either His return (#5) or the results of His return (#6, #7)

#### Characteristics of this 6th Seal Judgment

1. Great earthquake
2. Sun black as sackcloth
3. Moon becomes as blood
4. Stars of heaven fall onto the earth
5. Heavens separate like a scroll being rolled up
6. Every mountain and island moved out of their place
7. Men hide themselves in fear of the one sitting on the throne and His wrath.

**1. Earth Quakes, Heaven Shakes:** The seal opens with "a **GREAT EARTHQUAKE**", <sup>1</sup> a common indicator of God appearing, <sup>2</sup> working out His purpose, <sup>3</sup> and/or striking out in displeasure and judgment. In terms of anger and punishment, God caused an earthquake to open the ground in the wilderness and swallow Korah and his fellow rebels. <sup>4</sup> In Psalm 18:7, David writes, "Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of the hills also quaked and were shaken, because He was angry." <sup>5</sup> God prophesies

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 6:12

<sup>2</sup> Judges 5:4; Psalm 68:8; 77:18; 97:4; Habakkuk 3:10; Haggai 2:6-7

<sup>3</sup> Exodus 19:18; Matthew 27:51-54; 28:2; Acts 16:26

<sup>4</sup> Numbers 16:31-32

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah 5:25; Nahum 1:2-5

in [Isaiah 13:11, 13](#), "I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity. . . Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth will move out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the **DAY of HIS FIERCE ANGER.**"

Certainly, the heavenly signs that occur in tandem with the great earthquake are astounding, especially if all of them should occur within a short span of time. [Joel 2:30-31](#) describes the same event: "And I will show 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 coming of the **GREAT and TERRIBLE DAY of the LORD.**" In the Olivet Prophecy, Jesus repeats the warning: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."<sup>6</sup> Luke's rendition adds a few details:

Luke 21:25-27, "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; 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.<sup>27</sup> Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory.<sup>28</sup> But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

**2. The Sun Darkened:** John describes the darkness of the sun as "black as sackcloth of hair" ([Rev. 6:12](#)), comparing it to the black goat hair used to make sackcloth and tents in his day. This may depict a solar eclipse or possibly a massive dust storm caused by a volcanic explosion. The Ninth Plague covered Egypt with a "darkness which may even be felt," a "thick darkness" ([Ex. 10:21-22](#)), and perhaps God will repeat it on an even grander scale. Whatever the case, visibility will be severely limited, even during the daylight hours.

**3. The Moon like Blood:** This chilling sight signals calamity and death, particularly in war, as in the color of the second horse ([Rev.6:4](#)). Sometimes lunar discoloration occurs naturally when unusual amounts of dust are suspended in the atmosphere, particularly after a volcanic eruption or an earthquake. Incidentally, many manuscripts read "full moon" rather than simply "moon" (Blood Moons).

**4. The Stars Fall:** This seems most likely to predict a meteor shower of immense proportions, possibly containing larger-than-normal meteorites, thus increasing the effect and making it seem as if the stars themselves are falling.

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<sup>6</sup> [Matthew 24:29](#); [Mark 13:24-25](#)

**5. The Sky Recedes:** Of the events of this verse this one is the most puzzling (Rev.6:14). The apostle compares the heavens to a scroll rolling up.

Revelation 19:11 “Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, ...”

Luke tells us (Luke 21:25-27), that when all these events happen then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds (Jesus returns).

**6. The Mountains and Islands Move:** As a result of the great convulsion of the earth, massive land transformations occur, shifting mountains on land and undersea. Obviously, such a violent shaking will create unprecedented destruction and loss of life. As the conclusion of the sixth seal's disturbances, this displacement of *terra firma* is the calamity that most terrifies earth's inhabitants. Suddenly, nothing is stable—not even the earth under their feet! Finally, God has their attention!

When Jesus comes back and sets his feet on the Mount of Olives, it will split in two. This will create an enormous valley. Since none of this has taken place yet, the prophecy points to a future time.

<sup>7</sup>The earthquake in Revelation could very well speak of the event described in Zechariah<sup>8</sup> when the Mount of Olives splits in two. Jesus the Messiah will cause an earthquake at His second coming that will serve as part of the destruction of God's enemies. The outcome of this battle is never in doubt: Christ will be the victor, Israel's enemies will be destroyed, and the beast who is the Antichrist and false prophet will be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:11-21).

This event also parallels the seventh Bowl Judgment of Revelation 16:18-21,

Revelation 16: 18-21, <sup>18</sup> And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake *was it, and* so mighty. <sup>19</sup> The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. <sup>20</sup> And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. <sup>21</sup> And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, \*came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague \*was extremely severe.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/Zechariah-14-4-second-coming.html>

<sup>8</sup> Zechariah 14:4

**7. Fall on Us!** The effect of these cosmic signs from God is to produce terror in earth's populace, triggering humanity's strong drive to preserve itself. Despite mountains moving, men and women of every origin, status, and creed—from king to slave flee for the caves under the mountains in a vain attempt to hide themselves from God (Revelation 6:15). This is reminiscent of Isaiah 2:19, a prophecy of the Day of the Lord: "They shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, from the terror of the Lord and the glory of His majesty, when He arises to shake the earth mightily."

John sees these fearful people speaking to the mountains and rocks, commanding them to hide them from the sight of God the Father and from the "wrath of the Lamb" (verse 16). Their cry, "Fall on us!" is not a death wish or a suicidal means to avoid God's judgment but a hope that the mountains will cover and conceal them. "Fall on us and hide us" is typical Hebrew parallelism, as can be seen from an Old Testament parallel in which Israelites "shall say to the mountains, 'Cover us!' and to the hills, 'Fall on us!'" (Hosea 10:8).

It is somewhat startling that earth's sinners correctly identify these catastrophic events as evidences of God's wrath. We are used to them being termed "natural disasters" and in no way a result of God's intervention in humanity's affairs. Yet, this time, these cataclysmic signs are indeed "acts of God," and men know it. Such a succession of disturbances can be nothing other than divine anger.

**"Who Is Able To Stand?"** The sixth seal announces in unmistakable fashion that "the great day of the Lord is near; it is near and hastens quickly" (Zephaniah 1:14).

The prophet Joel describes it:

Joel 2:1-2, 10-11, <sup>1</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all of the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord is coming, for it is at hand: <sup>2</sup>A day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, like the morning clouds spread over the mountains. . . . <sup>10</sup>The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble; the sun and moon grow dark, and the stars diminish their brightness. <sup>11</sup>The Lord gives voice before His army, for His camp is very great; for strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it?

This is the question: Who will survive it? Who will pass God's judgment? The answer seems to be, "No one." But there is hope, as Joel 2:12-14 instructs:

Joel 2:12-14, <sup>12</sup>"Now, therefore," says the Lord, "turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." <sup>13</sup>So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents

from doing harm. <sup>14</sup>Who knows if He will turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him . . .?

Jesus gives us His answer in the book of Luke:

Luke 21:36: "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."

We must be alert and prepared for what may come, and the most important part of our preparation is the strengthening of our relationships with the Father and the Son through prayer, study, meditation, and obedience to His instructions. This is the only means to escape God's wrath.



**The Olivet discourse corresponding prophecy:**

Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.