



Revelation 6:12-17

The previous five seal judgments were largely brought about by the activities of man. However, this is not the case here. Because of this, some have taken the position that it is only with the sixth seal that we have the wrath of God. Until this point, it is merely the wrath of man. Because of this, they have also taken the position that the church will go into the Tribulation and will not be raptured until about midway through the last half of the Tribulation, just before this time of God's wrath.

They believe the church has been promised deliverance from God's wrath, but since the first three quarters of the Tribulation is not God's wrath, but man's, the church will not be raptured until just prior to the sixth seal which alone constitutes the wrath of God.

According to what is recorded in chapters 4-5, all the seals constitute an outpouring of God's wrath and are unleashed by the Lord Himself. Further, they are all seen as the means or instruments by which He establishes His rule on earth.

Finally, just because the first five seals employ a human agent, that does not mean this is not part of the outpouring of God's wrath. The only difference in the sixth seal and the first five is the degree and magnitude of His wrath.

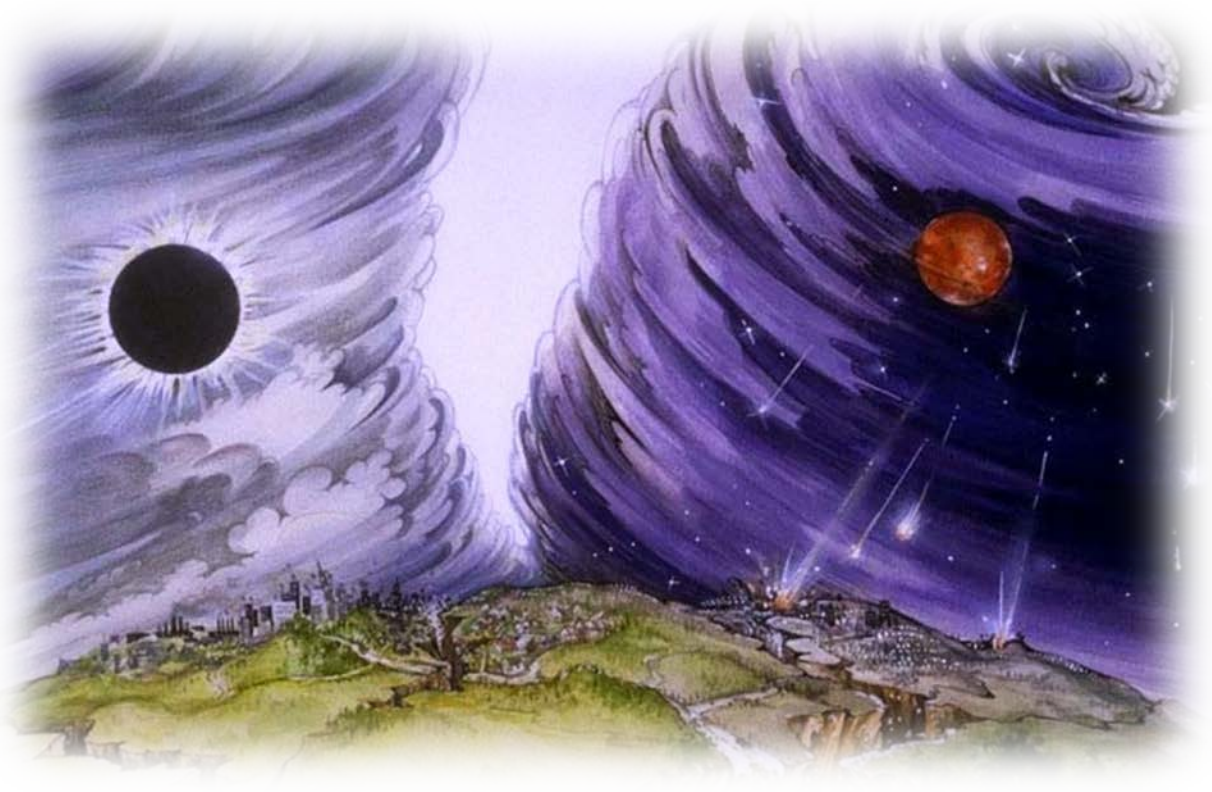
A good passage to illustrate this fact is **Isaiah 10:5-12**. Note that in this passage, Assyria is called *"the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hands is My indignation"* (vs. 5). Assyria was a human agent commissioned by God (vs. 6) to execute His wrath or judgment against Israel for her rebellion. The fact God used a human agency does not remove the fact this was God's wrath in action.

The sixth seal is the direct intervention of the Creator upsetting the normal order of His creation. The nature and effect of this judgment is such that it causes all of humanity from kings to slaves to recognize that God the Creator is acting in human history in divine wrath. If the six things that occur here were set off or caused by something which man does, as a nuclear explosion, then it could be attributed to man's foolishness causing universal ecological destruction. It should also be noted that the magnitude of this is far above what even nuclear fission could accomplish.

This is an act, a direct intervention of God in history. The passage stresses that men see it as the direct hand and action of God.

When the sixth seal occurs, God shakes the universe like a rag doll and all the world will know without a doubt not only that there is a God, but that He is acting in divine wrath against man's rebellion. It is interesting to note that this judgment affects the creation, that which from the beginning of time has spoken of God, an evidence of His being and of His nature, an evidence of His divine essence, but also an evidence that modern man has rejected and attributed to evolution (**Romans 1:19-22**).

This shaking affects the sun, moon, stars, atmosphere, and earth, bringing about a tremendous quake all over the earth.



The devastation of this is beyond our imagination, though many scientists today are actually trying to evaluate by scientific data how much devastation would occur if a meteor of various sizes were to hit the earth. Some actually think that this is inevitable and that if large enough, it will destroy the earth.

The sun is the most distinct of the heavenly bodies and the most important to earth because of its warmth and light. Note its use in Scripture, mark the time of day (**Mark 1:32; Luke 4:40**), it rules the day and separates the light from darkness or night (**Genesis 1:14, 16**). In addition, it is for signs and for seasons; an indicator of seasons, and days, and years (**Genesis 1:14**). Very important to the sun's function is the sign aspect. The word sign brings to mind some spectacular display in the sun or moon, something foreign to normal experience.

What is true concerning the sun in its function as a sign is also true of the moon.

“Became like blood” means the moon will take on a blood red color. As a sign, this speaks of the loss of life and death. How eerie this all will be to look up at night and see a blood red moon. Evidently, through the atmospheric changes brought about by the shaking of the earth and the heavens, particles or substances will be in the air that will cause the moon to take on a red cast.

“And the stars of the sky fell to earth.” The stars that John tells us will fall from the sky to earth and compares them to unripe figs falling to earth from a fig tree when shaken by a great wind. Here, because of their size, likened to unripe figs, these are apparently meteorites or perhaps asteroids.

“And every mountain and island were moved out of their places” (v 14). The earth today has many geological faults, cracks below and in the crust of the earth. Through this worldwide earthquake, these faults will be undoubtedly set in motion causing the mountains and islands to be moved out of their present places.

In verses 15-17, we see who will be affected and their response.

(1) Those affected:

- Every class of society.
- No one is exempt.
- Money or status cannot protect one from these judgments.

(2) Their actions:

- Man not only know that the end is near, but they act like it.
- They will hide themselves among the caves and rocks of the earth.

(3) Their attitude. (Three things will characterize their attitude):

1. They want to die.
2. They are struck with terror.
3. They are, in spite of this, unrepentant even though they know they are facing the day of God's wrath poured out against sin.

Note their words, "***who is able to stand?***" The idea here is not who can make it through alive, because they want to die.

They sense God's perfect righteousness and know they cannot stand before Him.

They must be judged, yet no note of repentance is heard. This shows just how hard the soul of man can become.