

Chapter 1

First Six Seals, “The Beginning of Birth Pains” (6:1-17)

1.1 Five important questions related to chapter 6

1. Are the events which begin with the breaking of the first seal past or future?

Though many have tried to find fulfillment in the past, there are solid reasons for believing that the revelation concerns events yet future. after this Rev 4:1 what will take place later Rev 1:19 We cannot prove these events from history. So, the seven seals are future events.

2. **What is the relationship of the seals to the Rapture of the church?**

Rapture is a future event in Ch 2 & 3 Rev 2:25, 28; Rev 3:10–11 Since neither the Rapture nor the church are the subject of Revelation 6–18, then Rapture of the church takes place before chapter 4 (pre-tribulation)

3. **What is the relationship of the seals to Daniel 9:27?**

Israel's program, concluding in the 70th week of Daniel, is related to the events described in chapter 6 onwards leading up to the Second Coming.

4. **Does Rev 6 deal with the 7 years or 3.5 years of Daniel 9:27**

The last three and one-half years is referred to as “the Great Tribulation” or “a time of great distress”? (Jer. 30:7; Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21)

The Book of Revelation never uses a seven-year figure but frequently refers to three and one-half years or 42 months (11:2; 13:5). Because the events of chapter 6 and afterward seem to coincide with the Great Tribulation rather than with the time of peace in the first half of the seven years (1 Thes. 5:3), there are

good reasons for concluding that these great events are compacted in the last three and one-half years before Christ's return to the earth.

5. **What is the relationship of the events of Revelation to Christ's sermon on the end times? (Mat 24–25)**

Event	Olivet Discourse	Revelation
War	Mat 24:6–7	Rev 6:3–4
Famine	Mat 24:7	Rev 6:5–6
Death	Mat 24:7–9	Rev 6:7–8
Martyrdom	Mat 24:9–10, 16–22	Rev 6:9–11
Sun and moon darkened with stars falling	Mat 24:29	Rev 6:12–14
Divine judgment	Mat 24:32–25:26	Rev 6:15–17

1.2 First seal: peaceful conquest (6:1–2)

Revelation 6:1

Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.”

1. **And I looked (I saw)** points to the new aspect of the ongoing revelation. In one sense the core of the revelation begins here. It also show the active role of John. Note: the first four seal openings have similar feature making them as one group. Features include (i) utterance from one of the four living beings and (ii) followed by the appearance of a colored horse and (iii) his rider who has some sort of power over the earth.
2. **Lamp (*arnion*)** is the opener of the seal for He alone is worthy
3. **One (first) of the seven seals** which protects the contents of the scroll. The seven seals parallels Mat 24 and happens at the beginning of tribulation (Some call Mt 24-25, Mk 13, and Luke 21 as Little Apocalypse given by Jesus on Tue before His Crucifixion). Jesus divides the period into two: beginning of the birth pangs (Mt 24:8) and the Great Tribulation (Mt 24:21). The former parallels the first four signs.

Mt 24:4-14. 4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. 6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

4. **Voice of the thunder** is an indication of judgment (Mk 3:17, Jh 12:28-29, Ex 20:18).
5. **Come (and see)** is an invitation to the first horseman as evidenced by the response below where the horseman arrived. The same is true for the other three commands in V 4, 5, and 8.

Revelation 6:2

And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

1. **I looked, and behold** does not indicate the content of scroll is shown or read, instead it was enacted in the following events.

2. **White horse:** Imagery of the four horses in 6:1-8 is similar to the prophecy of Zechariah, and the afflictions resemble those predicted by Jeremiah. The color and the purpose of horses in Zech are slightly different here. Horses are generally associated with war and judgment

Zech 1:7-11. On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet: 8 I saw by night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him were horses: red, sorrel, and white. 9 Then I said, "My lord, what are these?" So the angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they are." 10 And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, "These are the ones whom the Lord has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth." 11 So they answered the Angel of the Lord, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, "We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly."

Zech 6:1-8. Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of bronze. 2 With the first chariot were red horses, with the second chariot black horses, 3 with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses—strong steeds. 4 Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" 5 And the angel answered and said to me,

“These are four spirits of heaven, who go out from their station before the Lord of all the earth. 6 The one with the black horses is going to the north country, the white are going after them, and the dappled are going toward the south country.” 7 Then the strong steeds went out, eager to go, that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth. And He said, “Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth.” So they walked to and fro throughout the earth. 8 And He called to me, and spoke to me, saying, “See, those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country.”

Jer 14:12. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. But I will consume them by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.”

Jer 24:10. And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence among them, till they are consumed from the land that I gave to them and their fathers.”

Jer 42:17. So shall it be with all the men who set their faces to go to Egypt to dwell there. They shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. And none of them shall remain or escape from the disaster that I will bring upon them.

Job 39:19-25. "Have you given the horse strength? Have you clothed his neck with thunder? Can you frighten him like a locust? His majestic snorting strikes terror. He paws in the valley, and rejoices in his strength; He gallops into the clash of arms. He mocks at fear, and is not frightened; Nor does he turn back from the sword. The quiver rattles against him, The glittering spear and javelin. He devours the distance with fierceness and rage; Nor does he come to a halt because the trumpet has sounded. At the blast of the trumpet he says, 'Aha!' He smells the battle from afar, The thunder of captains and shouting.

Ps 76:5-6. The stouthearted were plundered; They have sunk into their sleep; And none of the mighty men have found the use of their hands. At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob, Both the chariot and horse were cast into a dead sleep.

Prov 21:31. The horse is prepared for the day of battle, But deliverance is of the Lord.

3. **He who sat on it:** Several proposals are put forth for the identity of the rider which includes Christ, Word, Gospel, Anti-Christ, Roman emperor, Parthians, etc. What is consistent with the OT imagery and the rest of the three horses is that the rider is not an individual but personification of a movement that will work against Christ and His Kingdom. Although He has resemblance to Jesus Christ, however, several reasons rejects the idea: (i) here it is Jesus who breaks the seal and it is unlikely He is the rider, (ii) this happens at

the beginning of the tribulation period where as Jesus comes at the end of the tribulation period, (iii) it is unlikely that Jesus is called into action by a living being, (iv) the rest of the three horses are associated with negative, and (v) treat the Jesus at par with the rest of the riders.

Rev 19:11-16. Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. 13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. 15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

4. Had a bow (*echon toxon*): bow is associated with warrior and victory

Zech 9:13-14. For I have bent Judah, My bow, Fitted the bow with Ephraim, And raised up your sons, O Zion, Against your sons, O Greece, And made you like the sword of a mighty man." 14 Then the Lord will be seen over them, And His arrow will go forth like lightning. The Lord God will blow the trumpet, And go with whirlwinds from the south

Here arrow is not mentioned, and hence it is reasonable to conclude although there is potential of war, the victory was obtained with out war. World-wide pseudo peace is characteristic of the first seal.

5. **A crown was given to him (*edothe auto stephanos*):** The crown was not acquired by the merit of the rider, but it was given divinely to him. Crown is an indicator of authority or victory and here the movement represented by the rider was vicarious in establishing authority and world wide peace, though it is for short as we see below. The word em was given is used in the book as the divine permission for evil powers to carry out their wicked mission (9:1, 3, 3; 13:5, 7, 14, 15).
6. **Conquering and to conquer** The victory was brought through peaceful means and was marked by a long series of victories. The victory seems complete world-wide although temporary.

1.3 Second seal: warfare and bloodshed (6:3–4)

- (a) **Second seal** happens after the *beginnings of birth-pains* (Mat. 24:8, 2 The 1:6).
- (b) This is fixed based on the parallel between *tribulation* period mentioned by Jesus in Mt. 24:6-7.
- (c) Again this will happen in the first half of the seven year period as indicated by Mt. 24:15; Mk 13:14.
- (d) It is further confirmed by the rider carrying the sword pointing to war.

(e) Most likely the sword is given to the enemies of God so that they might destroy one another.

Revelation 6:4

Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.

1. **Another** indicates another of the same kind as that of the first horse.
2. **Fiery red** points to the affliction due to bloodshed in its maximum intensity.
3. **One who sat on it** can be best understood as the personified representative of the war.
4. **It was given to him** shows that he is an agent appointed by God.
5. **Peace** refers to the normal state of affairs of the whole world. Of course this peace was a false one unlike the eternal peace that is going to come. The peace and war in the first and second seal indicated they are happening sequentially.
6. **Earth** denote that the impact of the seal is world wide and not limited to the Jewish world.

7. **People should kill one another:** One form of judgment; that people are the instruments in the hand of God.
8. **Sword** here is long one carried in battle and symbolically it spoke of bloodshed, violent death, war, etc (Rom 8:35; 13:4; Mt. 10:34).

1.4 Third seal: widespread famine (6:5–6)

Revelation 6:5

When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come and see.” So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.

1. **Black horse** suggests a time of lamentation and mourning resulting from scarcity of food and anxiety created by this shortage. The rider is the personification of the famine. It is also possible to have the famine as the effect of the war under the second seal

La 4:8-9. Now their appearance is blacker than soot; They go unrecognized in the streets; Their skin clings to their bones, It has become as dry as wood. 9 Those slain by the sword are better off Than those who die of hunger; For these pine away, Stricken for lack of the fruits of the field.

2Ki 6:25. And there was a great famine in Samaria; and indeed they besieged it until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove droppings for five shekels of silver

Act 11:28. Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.

2. **Balance (*zygon*)** indicate careful weighing of food as its supply is short. Eating food by weight denotes condition of famine

Ezk 4:16-17. Moreover He said to me, "Son of man, surely I will cut off the supply of bread in Jerusalem; they shall eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and shall drink water by measure and with dread, 17 that they may lack bread and water, and be dismayed with one another, and waste away because of their iniquity

Revelation 6:6

And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine."

1. **Voice:** source of the voice who gave this announcement seems mysterious; but that should not discourage inquiry. Since the voice came from the midst, it is either the Lamb or God. God seem likely as He sent similar famines earlier

2Ki 8:1. Then Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Arise and go, you and your household, and stay wherever you can; for the Lord has called for a famine, and furthermore, it will come upon the land for seven years."

Hag 1:11; 2:16-17. For I called for a drought on the land and the mountains, on the grain and the new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands." ... 2:16. since those days, when one came to a heap of twenty ephahs, there were but ten; when one came to the wine vat to draw out fifty baths from the press, there were but twenty. 17 I struck you with blight and mildew and hail in all the labors of your hands; yet you did not turn to Me,' says the Lord

2. **A quart (measure) of barley** is quantity of daily food just sufficient to keep one person's life. Barley is considered to be poor man diet.
3. **Denarius** was the average day's wage for working man. A person can earn three measure of barley for his family.

4. **Do not harm oil and wine:** Oil and wine are very common food along with grain

Deut 11:14. then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil

Joel 2:19. The Lord will answer and say to His people, “Behold, I will send you grain and new wine and oil, And you will be satisfied by them; I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations

Hag 1:11. For I called for a drought on the land and the mountains, on the grain and the new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands.”

However, oil and wine are expensive and restrain on it indicates that although the famine is extensive, the rich is less affected. However, this will be the most severe famine ever to grip the world up to that time.

1.5 Fourth seal: death to a fourth of earth's inhabitants (6:7–8)

Revelation 6:7

When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come and see.”

1. **Fourth seal:** This again happens in the first half of the tribulation and all the four afflictions happens simultaneously.

Revelation 6:8

So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.

1. **Pale** is the colour of death and decay. It images a face bleached because of terror or a corpse in the advanced state of corruption.
2. **Rider** on the horse is the personification of death or pestilence.

3. **Hades** is the inseparable companion of death and condition into which all humans pass at the time of physical death. Note: believers will go immediately into the presence of the Lord.
4. **Fourth of the earth**: The impact of this seal is beyond imagination. Taking current world population of 7 billion, this number is nearly 1.75 billion (20 times the world war II)! World war II took maximum about 8.5 crores, which was less than 4 percent of then world population.
5. **Sword, hunger, death, beasts**: Recall Ezekiel's warning to Jerusalem in

Ezk 4:12-21. ... For thus says the Lord God: "How much more it shall be when I send My four severe judgments on Jerusalem—the sword and famine and wild beasts and pestilence—to cut off man and beast from it?"

Sword is a symbol of death by violent means. Famine will be more severe. Death may also be due to deadly diseases. Lastly, the wild beasts will take the life of defenceless. Remember, these are only the beginning of the birth pains! Things are going to be worse.

1.6 Fifth seal: prayers for divine vengeance (6:9–11)

Revelation 6:9

When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

1. **Fifth seal** differs from the rest. There is no call from the living being, there neither any horse or any rider. The first four affected the political, economic and social realm causing great chaos. And a natural offshoot is martyrdom. Jesus also warned about in Olivet discourse

Mat 24:9-10. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another

Mark 13:9-13; Luke 21:12-17). Fifth seal is not martyrdom, for seals are judgment of God against enemies of God and not against the redeemed. Instead, the fifth seal is the cry of the martyrs for God's judgment, God hears their prayer, and vindicates them. God will definitely punish, but the prayers confirm this. The future of the humanity is getting worse only.

2. **Note:** The timing of the opening of the seals is after the fourth as they follow strict sequence. Hence, the prayers are by those martyred during the tribulation and their murderers still alive.
3. **Alter:** Since dead people don't pray on the earth, the alter point to the throne of God which is both the kingly place and temple of prayer.
4. **Soul:** the souls of the martyred believers in heaven and their bodies will be resurrected only in Rev 20:4. They gave their lives for their faith during the first half of the seven year period because those killed them still alive.
5. **Because of the Word of God** is the reason why they gave up their life, that is their testimony or public allegiance to Jesus Christ

Revelation 6:10

And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

1. **Cry:** Their plea to God is in the form of a question. This contrast the prayer of Stephen

Act 7:10. Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep

How do we understand this prayer of vengeance, like the one in

Ps 74:10. O God, how long will the adversary reproach? Will the enemy blaspheme Your name forever?

A prayer for pardon is more appropriate during the age of Grace. But when grace has exhausted and the long-suffering is ended, then what is left is only the judgment. It is not just a thirst for vengeance with an evil mind, but a protest against the iniquity for upholding the righteousness.

2. **Loud voice** is an indication of the fervent prayer

Rom 9:27. Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, The remnant will be saved

Gal 4:6. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"

3. **How long** is a well know cry of those undergoing suffering. This question is there in the lips of the righteous since the days of Abel.
4. **Holy and true**: God is Holy and hence He cannot tolerate sin. He is faithful to His Word and He has to do justice. Note however, they are not telling God what to do, how to do, and when to do.
5. **Those who dwell on the earth**: They are not merely people on the earth, but those who rebel against God and His purposes. They are ungodly and they have all their agenda confined to this earth. Revelation consistently uses this terminology (Rev 3:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8; 13:12; 17:2; 17:8)

Revelation 6:11

Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

1. **White robe** is an indication of reward which pictures blessedness and beauty of holiness and glory (Rev 3:5, 7:9, 14). This does not mean that they already have glorified body (1Co 15:35ff, 2Cor 5:1ff, Phil 3:21), which will be received only at the return of Christ

Rev 20:4-5. And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection

2. **They should rest** is an exhortation to stop their cry and enjoy the heaven which is part of their state in heaven.
3. **Little while longer:** It is an indication of short time

Jh 7:33. Then Jesus said to them, "I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me

Jh 12:35. Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you . . .

Rev 10:6. and swore by Him who lives forever and ever . . .that there should be delay no longer

The angel announces there is no delay indicating the waiting period is over as God promised. Here, it could be the intense period of persecution by Satan

Rev 12:12. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time

Rev 20:1-3. Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while

4. **Until:** The reason for waiting is more martyrs to join the lot. It appears that God has pre-determined some number of martyrs.
5. **Servant and (even) brothers** are not two class of believer, the latter make it specific.

1.7 Sixth seal: cosmic and terrestrial disturbances (6:12–17)

Revelation 6:12

I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.

1. **Note:** Two relevant questions: (1) whether these events are to be understood literally or symbolically, and (2) the timing of these events in the seven year tribulation period.
2. **Question 1.** Some argue that OT uses figurative language

Is 2:12-19. For the day of the Lord of hosts Shall come upon everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up . . . 13 Upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, And upon all the oaks of Bashan; 14 Upon all the high mountains, And upon all the hills that are lifted up; Upon every high tower, And upon every fortified wall; . . . 19 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

and rolling up of the sky and the shaking of the stars picture the punishment of the fallen angels and enemies of Jesus

Is 34:2-4. For the indignation of the Lord is against all nations, And His fury against all their armies; . . . And the mountains shall be melted with their blood. . . . And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; All their host shall fall down As the leaf falls from the vine, And as fruit falling from a fig tree

and Jesus applied

Hos 10:8. . . . They shall say to the mountains, "Cover us!" And to the hills, "Fall on us!"

to the Jerusalem destruction and not the cosmic catastrophes

Luk 23:28-31. But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!' 30 Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"'

However, these should be taken literally due to the following reasons:

- (a) Rev 6:15-17 is literal, and hence 6:12-14 should be literal;
- (b) Similar distinctions are made in

Hag 2:21-22. "Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying: 'I will shake heaven and earth. 22 I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms. I will overthrow the chariots And those who ride in them; The horses and their riders shall come down, Every one by the sword of his brother

The seal would hardly contain two descriptions of the same thing;

(c) Jesus took the words literally as evident from Mt 24:7; Mk 13:8;

Lk 21:11. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven

(d) The response of the people demands awesome things are happened and a literal understating only make sense here. Hence, these things needs to be understood literally.

However, two precautions:

(a) combining symbolic and literal is inconsistent and hence to be avoided,

(b) resist hyper-literalness, that is the language is semi-poetic or hyperbole. Falling of the stars, rolling of heaven are apparent. Moving of mountains and island from their places (6:14) were universal and complete, there would be no hiding places left for men to seek (6:15-16).

At the same time, these events are severe, unparalleled and shattering enough to points to the end. Human life continues after these disruptions.

3. **Question 2.** Time of its fulfillment.

- (a) It is unlikely that it is just before the coming of the Lord since people have time to hide which not possible just before His coming. Further, seventh seal has not opened, great persecution and devastation is coming later only

Mt 24:29. 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

Rev 16:18. And there were noises and thundering and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth

Hence, these events should be around the middle of the tribulation period.

- (b) Comparing Mat 24:7 and 24:15, these earthquakes are in the first half of tribulation.

4. **A great earth-quake (*seismos megas*):** These are the forerunner of the great earth quake that is going to come at the end (Is 2:19; 29:6; Hag 2:6, 7;

Zech 14:4,5. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south

Trauma of earthquake is severe. NCTSN, a medical agency of US govt says: Because earthquakes are unexpected and can be very destructive, being in one can be terrifying. People fear they will be injured or killed. They may be separated from family, with hours passing before knowing if their loved ones are safe. They may see collapsed buildings or other destruction and experience the horror of seeing severely injured people or even dead bodies. As they assess the damage, people may find that a relative or close friend has been killed or that their home has been destroyed. Earthquakes are particularly difficult physically and emotionally for people who are disabled or have special needs. In the aftermath, people may continue to encounter sights, sounds, smells, sensations, and inner feelings that remind them-even years after-of the earthquake. These traumatic reminders can bring on distressing mental images, thoughts, and emotional/physical reactions. Common reminders include aftershocks, cracks in the wall, rumbling noises, destroyed buildings, smells of fire and smoke, the place where they experienced the earthquake, seeing people with disabilities, funerals, anniversaries of the date, and television or radio news about earthquakes (www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/natural-disasters/earthquakes)

5. **Sun became black:** Literal darkness of the sun is common (Is 13:10; 50:3; Ezk 32:7-8; Joel 2:10, 31; Amos 8:9; Mt 24:29, Mk 13:24-25; Luke 21:25)

6. **Moon became like blood** is a kind of total eclipse

Joel 2:31. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord

Act 2:20. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord

Revelation 6:13

And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.

1. **Stars (*asteres*)** has a broad meaning covering large heavenly bodies such as sun to small meteoroids. Here, it is unparalleled outbreak of meteors and comets. This will be a fearful sign causing terror in the hearts of the people. These astral movement is so violent that it is likened to a fig tree that loses its unripe figs in a severe wind storm. The sight will be awe-inspiring because these heavenly bodies will appear to be dropping like figs from a tree.

Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

1. **Sky receded:** Fourth disturbance affect the whole expanse of heaven as man sees it. However, this is not the ultimate passage of heavens which comes later. (Rev 20:11; Rev 21:1; Ps 102:25-26; Mat 24:35; Mark 13:31; Heb 1:10-12; 2 Pet 3:10;

Rev 20:11. Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them

Heb 1:10-12. You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail

This sign will give an impression that the universe is coming to an end.

2. **Mountain and island moved:** Attention now turns to the earth. There is not OT parallel to this. Since Jesus used moving mountain in a figurative way to challenge disciple's faith (Mat 21:21; Mk 11:23; 1 Cor 13:2), this need not be figurative. The non-literal part is clearly indicated using the words *as* or *like*. Every mountain and shifting up of the earth's crust etc. are hyperbolic; meaning it was not a complete removal since human life was possible even after that. Further, complete abolition is going to happen later at the seventh bowl judgment of

Rev 16:20. Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found

Revelation 6:15

And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,

1. The impact of all these on humans is devastating and all class of human are affected. Here, a seven fold classification is given.
2. **Kings** are highest rules or heads of state like the ministers.
3. **Great men** or chief ones are high officials like the bureaucrats.

4. **Commanders** are officers in charge of thousand soldiers in Roman army and refers to the top military leaders.
5. **Mighty** are those who exercised great influence over significant number of people whether through force or personality or any other means (Like SriSriRavishankar or Tendular etc.).
6. **Rich** are the ones control the trade and economy.
7. **Slave** are the working class of the society.
8. **Free** are the common people who have no special influence on the society.
9. **Hide themselves**: All divisions of the people responded in the same way. Frightened by the impression of the end of the natural world, the only alternative available to the natural man was to hide. Look how irrational was the working of the natural mind: taking refuge on the same mountains that are shaky.

Revelation 6:16

and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

1. **Fall on us:** The desperate thinking of the humanity was to think it better to perish here than to remain and face the one sitting upon the throne and wrath of the Lamb. Similar cries are recorded earlier in the Scripture (Is 2:10,19,21; Hos 10:8; Lk 23:30). Although these are national calamity of Israel, they are to some degree prophetic of the sixth seal. *Note* that what sinner dread most is not death, but to stand before a holy and righteous God

Hos 10:8. Also the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, Shall be destroyed. The thorn and thistle shall grow on their altars; They shall say to the mountains, "Cover us!" And to the hills, "Fall on us!"

2. **Wrath of the Lamb:** Lamb is normally harmless and quiet, and that is true with Jesus in His incarnation. However, we see Him different at the temple cleansing (Mk 3:5). But we see the this Lamb different in this book (Rev 5:6). He is compared to Lion in Rev 5:5. Paradoxically the contrasting characters merge in one person. This is the wrath of sacrificial love whose only option after rejection is to punish evil with utmost severity. Interestingly people will realize the catastrophes are from the Lamb.

Revelation 6:17

For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

1. **Great day** is a title borrowed from OT

Joel 2:11, 31. 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? 31. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord

Zeph 1:14. The great day of the Lord is near; It is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the Lord is bitter; There the mighty men shall cry out

Mal 4:5. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord

Mat 7:22. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'

1 Thes 5:2. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night

2 Pet 3:10. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up

2. **His wrath:** mankind now only correctly concluded that all these catastrophe's of this and earlier seals are the wrath of God and the Lord Jesus. Note that this word is used in a *broad* sense covering the entire end time plan commencing from the rapture, the seven year period, the second coming of the Lord and establishment of the millennium (Isa 30:23-25; Isa 35:1-10; Joel 3:18; Zech 14:6-11). The climax of this day is the battle of Armageddon and the bodily return of Jesus to the earth

Joel 3:18. And it will come to pass in that day That the mountains shall drip with new wine, The hills shall flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water; A fountain shall flow from the house of the Lord And water the Valley of Acacias

3. **His wrath:** Who can survive on this earth if this is the situation. Answer is no one. The despair of the mankind is complete.

Nah 1:6. Who can stand before His indignation? And who can endure the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, And the rocks are thrown down by Him

Applications

- (a) Effect of Prayer
- (b) Transience of Cosmic bodies
- (c) Wrath of the Lamb

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