

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, March 29, 2020

“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 casteth 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 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 6:12-17)

In six verses, those items expressly identified as flowing from the opening of the sixth seal from off the Book of Redemption include seven:

1. Great earthquake,
2. Sun becomes black,
3. Moon becomes blood red,
4. Stars of heaven fall to the earth,
5. Heaven departs as a scroll,
6. Mountains and islands are moved out of their places,
7. Men hide in the mountains and call to them to hide them from the face of the Lamb.

Two additional events occur before the seventh seal is removed, but they are presented independent of the immediate wake of the sixth seal, as it says expressly that the Revelator saw that vision ***“after these things”*** suggesting they are distinct from the initial events under the seal’s removal. I’ve addressed those two previously, so, we will concentrate on examining these disruptions of nature and the response of the reprobate of mankind, taking each of the expressions and diving into the subject.

“Earthquake”, in each of the places it is discussed in the Revelation, refers to the Greek word ***“seismos”*** (***“sice-mos’”***). The English word ***seismology***, referring to the study of earthquakes, derives from this Greek word. It means ***“a shaking, a commotion; a tempest; an earthquake”***, and comes from a root word ***“seio”*** (***“si’-o”***) that emphasizes the shaking, agitation, or trembling effect that is brought upon the body or mind of a human being. The word is used seven times within five verses in the Revelation, referring (I believe) to three distinct events: The earth’s shaking under the sixth seal, the earthquake in Jerusalem just before Christ’s second adventⁱ, and the earth’s final and greatest shaking under the seventh bowl being poured out on the earth at the time of the battle of Armageddon.ⁱⁱ

In the strictest sense, earthquakes are happening all the time, estimated to be about a million a year, somewhere in the world. Most of them too small to be detected except for perhaps some gentle movement under the feet of those right near the epicenter. Humans didn't start doing any precise measuring of earthquakes until late 19th and into the 20th centuries. Before then, the magnitude of an earthquake was a subjective account from the event, which means the only earthquakes being discussed were those that caused sufficient damage and terror to draw large amounts of attention, like the event that receives referential attention in the books of Amos and Zechariah:

“The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.” (Amos 1:1)

&

“And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.” (Zechariah 14:5)

Dr. Gill has this to offer about the earthquake mentioned which: *“according to Josephus, was at the time when King Uzziah was stricken with a leprosy for invading the priest's office; when, as he says, at a place before the city called Eroge, half part of the mountain towards the west was broken, and rolled half a mile towards the eastern part, and there stood; so that the ways were stopped up to the king's gardens”*. So, without dispute it was an earthquake so destructive as to receive notoriety among men, including that it had with it the present indicia of an angry God responding to some grand insult to His honor. The subject of earthquakes can become meaningless to us beyond the notion that it is cool to watch, or feel, or hear about in the earth. But to draw anything of value in our understanding of the sixth seal, we must look deeper into the use of this subject in Scripture. I mentioned earlier that the word “earthquake” is used seven times in the Revelation. Looking broader, it is only used 16 times in all the Bible. Three earthquakes are mentioned in the Revelation, and only five other instances in Scripture where an event of an earthquake is reported as such.ⁱⁱⁱ As common as the subject feels to us in conversation – and as common as we in our generation know literal earthquakes to be in scientific reality – that's actually a pretty remarkable number. So, what do we learn from all of this, when we come upon the first remarkable use of this weapon within the Day of the Lord?

Let's begin with this. When the expository group Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown are discussing the earthquake remarked about in Zechariah 14:5, he says this: *“The earthquake in Uzziah's days is mentioned [] as a recognized epoch in Jewish history [where] an earthquake in the physical world, as often happens [] marked momentous movements in the unseen spiritual world.”* This is a good

expression of the thought. When God was speaking with Elijah fleeing the wicked Jezebel, he sent an earthquake and ***“rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks”*** (1 Kings 19:11). When He moved to unseat an insulting king Uzziah and establish the authenticity of his prophet Isaiah, He sent a great earthquake. When the Christ was slain in fulfillment of the Covenant, ***“the earth did quake, and the rocks rent”*** (Matthew 27:51). When He would have the crucified body brought forth alive, ***“there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it”*** (Matthew 28:2). When He would have His imprisoned friends to know the power He holds over every detail of the physical world, He sent ***“a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken”*** (Acts 16:26). So we must see that if the preaching of the first seal, the war of the second, the dearth of the third, the death of the fourth, or the distinct dispensation of prophecy of the fifth seals were insufficient for the earth dwellers to understand by whose power these torments were inflicted, a disruption of their physical world would begin with the earth quaking, as the prophet Isaiah warns specifically of this period:

“And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.” (Isaiah 2:19)

I love that phrase ***“when he ariseth”***, because it reminds me of when my father used to say (sometimes when talking, often when praying) that what we need is for the Lord to come upon the scene and help us. The primitive root Hebrew word for this English three-word clause is *“quwm”* (*“koom”*), the definition of which includes *“to arise, come on the scene”*. Christ, through this opening piece of magnificence in disrupting the physical world, has come upon the scene to stake His blessed claim, causing the rebels to declare in their shaken and horrified selves ***“the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”*** He starts with an earthquake!

The ***“sun became black as sackcloth of hair”***. Like with the earthquakes of Revelation, at first look there appear also to be three distinct references to the light of the earth’s sun being impacted. Here under the sixth seal’s removal; during the fourth trumpet sounding^{iv}; and finally under the fifth angel pouring out his vial on Antichrist’s kingdom, making it ***“full of darkness”*** (Revelation 16:10). It is clearly a weapon in the arsenal of God to ***“cloth the heavens with blackness, and [] make sackcloth their covering”*** (Isaiah 50:1), -- and what a glorious weapon it is -- but that alone doesn’t help us to see the import of what is unfolding under the removal of this seal.

Some expositors, including Dr. Gill, toy with the notion that both this darkening of the sun and the subsequent obscuring of the moon, such that it turns from pale to blood red, references a judicial interference with the tendency of mankind to worship these heavenly bodies as deities in conflict with the worship of the one true and living God. Of course there is such idolatry in the earth, but that is not as fitting to *this* generation ... as much as a *scientific* adoration of the sun and moon would be. So, I don’t reject wholly the notion that a component of the effect this action we see is to create

wonder and amazement at how easily the obscuring of that sun and the altering of the moon is achieved. Much like how amazed our generation now looks upon this silent and invisible plague that is marching across the globe and destroying the economies of the nations. When the wisdom of mankind is demonstrated to be insufficient to answer the slightest work of the Lord God, we would expect some rational *humility* from the earth dwellers. But, alas, they are robbed of it.

Remember, we're being introduced to a champion, King of kings and Lord of lords with this work of Revelation six. We should keep our minds on that amazing truth and give an answer to the work that is worthy of His name and His honor. So, the first thing we have to do is understand that darkness of the sun – however it is physically achieved – is part of how God's presence is shown in the earth. When Christ was crucified, ***"it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened...."*** (Luke 23:44-45). Our prophet friend Amos says:

"For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The LORD, The God of hosts, is his name." (Amos 4:13)

The context of the passage in Amos is when the commandment comes from God in execution of His wrath and against the Jewish people, reminding them for whose honor they showed no concern and said as a result, ***"prepare to meet thy God, O Israel"*** (Amos 4:12)! It is part of His avenging pattern when He comes to His day, that he come ***"cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the earth desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. The sun shall be darkened in his going forth.*** (Isaiah 33:9-10) Many other expressions of God's use of darkness as a weapon in His arsenal can be brought to bear. Yet, we still seek the best understanding of what we're being shown under this seal. Can we discern from the reference how it will look in application? Two final thoughts for consideration, because I would hate to limit the lesson of this amazing work coming from our God.

First, if you were to conduct a little bit of research on the internet, you would find a full body of information about what would happen if we were to experience a major earthquake that disrupted a pocket of magma (a *Caldera*), opening a massive volcanic structure (like in Yellowstone National Park). The resulting explosion could easily put so much smoke into the atmosphere that it obscures the sun's rays for the whole of the earth. Explanations can be spun out from that physical reality that meets the horrific tone of the events under the sixth seal's removal including ***"every mountain and island [being] moved out of their places"*** (v. 14) with the intensity of the blast and the crust of the earth being so disrupted. That would mean that to the eyes of mankind the sun is blackened and the moon turns into a "blood moon" from the impact on light refraction. The passage doesn't squarely require the action be taken against the heavenly bodies (sun and moon). The language ***"the sun became black"*** and ***"the moon became as blood"*** may be translated as an action *on* the sun and moon or merely *on* the perception of human beings of the sun and moon. While I do not reject the notion altogether, because it certainly could explain the *how* of these two phenomenon

and remain consistent with an earthquake ... it may strike some of you as a forced analysis rather than a clear spiritual one. Let's move to the second final consideration about this sixth seal's removal.

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!” (Isaiah 14:12)

This is a little bit of a delicate piece of expository work, so please understand that my first purpose is in that I want to be sufficiently thorough as to not reject what may be credible without offending the nature or majesty of God in directing providence. What I'm about to articulate is consistent with an understanding of three parts of this vision: The darkening of the sun, the transition of the moon, and the falling of the stars unto the earth. That is why I present it here for consideration.

Revelation 12 makes reference to an event as follows:

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” (Revelation 12:7-9)

I think this passage makes clear that Satan and his angels are removed from their capacity to act in the first and second heavens, as Gill indicates in discussing the Revelation six passage: *“Satan, the god of this world, who was worshipped in different forms, now fell, as Lucifer, the son of the morning, and as lightning from heaven, and was cast down from all his dignity, influence, and power, to the earth; for the casting out of the red dragon, the old serpent, and Satan, after his combat with Michael and his angels, in Re 12:3,7-9, refers to this very time;”*

In my treatment of the Revelation 12 passage, while discussing the sixth angel's vial being poured out, I have intimated that it is made clear that our great adversary Satan is cast into the earth and must work from that limited vantage point.^v But what is less clear from the Revelation 12 passage is the timeline of this action. The language ***“and there was war in heaven”*** can be viewed to be expressing a timeframe in immediate proximity to the other components of that passage – which is at the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Alternatively, it *could* be expressing that John is reminding the reader of an event that occurred prior to this point, so that we understand that what began earlier (perhaps under the seals) – the ***war in heaven*** – has *prepared* the conflict that will thereafter play out between the Antichrist and the Jewish saints who remain in the earth. In the *latter* view, we may find a satisfying answer to the curious expression under the sixth seal ***“the stars of heaven fell unto the earth”*** (Revelation 6:13) as well. Let's look at the words of Christ during his first advent:

“But in those days, after that tribulation [referring to seals 1-5], the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.” (Mark 13:24-25)

There’s a thing at work in these passages. The ***“powers that are in heaven”*** are impacted by the events. The powers that are in heaven *are not* the events, they ***“shall be shaken”*** by the events, Christ said. What are the powers? The Greek word here is *“dunamis”* (*“doo’-nam-is”*), and among it’s meaning we find *“power consisting in or resting upon armies, forces, hosts”*. The sun (which is a small star), the moon, and the stars *do* have physical power – as ascribed to all heavenly bodies. And those powers can indeed be shaken when God determines to do so ... or they can be undone altogether. But we have a sincere and unanswerable incongruity if we insist that the vision here refers to the physical stars. We know that the earth’s sun is a small star. We cannot pretend not to know a thing that the Lord God has shown us in the physical realm of our knowledge. We know that the sun – as a small star – is still more than one million times the size of the earth. We also know that there are billions of stars. If billions of stars the size of our sun somehow fall ***“unto the earth”*** as Revelation 6:13 plainly states, then there will be no earth remaining. That harsh and unmovable truth will not alter for any human being. There is no way to make that a physical possibility. And if we cannot make *that* a physical possibility, are we doing violence to grammar and reason to insist that we treat the language about the sun and the moon differently? I don’t think the conclusion is required in the language of the passage. Let’s close the analysis of these three components of the sixth seal being opened with these thoughts.

God bringing darkness to the sun and ensanguinity to the moon are a distinct operation from the work He has prepared for these that are called ***“stars”*** in the passage. Either His presence comes with the literal alteration of the heavenly bodies to demonstrate his intimate power over their substance and radiance; or we are having described the effects on the view of those bodies by the violent physical upheaval of the earth and the resulting blackening of the atmosphere with sulfurous smoke and fire. Either way, we have the word of Scripture to tell us that as part of this momentous act that humans will experience a cataclysmic change in the earth’s relationship with the two primary lights from heaven, the sun and moon.

The word used here for ***“stars”***, however, is sometimes used in Scripture when referencing created things other than the celestial bodies that are scattered among the galaxies. When Joseph has a dream, ***“the eleven stars made obeisance to [him]”*** (Genesis 37:9), referencing his eleven brothers. Job articulates the reaction of the angels of God to the creation of the earth, ***“when the morning stars sang together”*** (Job 38:7). Gill says: *“angels, as most interpret them, comparable to stars for their glory, purity, and light, for their constancy, permanency, and numbers:”* In Isaiah, Satan is said to proclaim ***“I will exalt my throne above the stars of God”*** (Isaiah 14:13), referring to the other angels as he plans to unseat God Himself. When Daniel sees a vision of the work of the ***“little horn”*** discussed in last week’s sermon, he says:

“And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.” (Daniel 8:10)

So in this verse we have the very expression of the events referred to in Revelation 12 being articulated in the removal of ***“stars”***, or ***“the host of heaven”*** to the ground. So it is fully supported in Scripture to conclude that the reference to ***“the stars of heaven [being fallen] unto the earth”*** it is referring to the great battle between Michael and Satan, together with their armies of angels, when the fallen angels are removed from the first and second heaven – ***“even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.” (v. 13)*** All as part of Christ bringing the proverbial fight to this planet, or when our friend Paul records Him saying: ***“Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.” (Hebrews 12:26).***

What is this that next happens: ***“the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together”***? The visual is clear enough. As if what we presently lived under was an open book – a scroll spread open as if from sky to sky, the page prepared for writing and documenting the events of the world. Then, alas, with a mighty rush of noise it rolls together as if the book is ended ... the volume no longer open ... tightly rolled together and ready for its seals to be placed upon it for storage. But what does that mean in any physical sense? Does it mean the first heaven departs – goes away – is fully and finally removed from above our heads, exposing the inhabitants to all the dangerous effects presently held at bay by the sphere of gases that surround the planet? Does it mean that the heaven closes in a way that prevents all access between the earth and the heavens? No more capacity to move beyond the earth ... for everyone, or just for some? This is very interesting language and most expositors do not help with this, other than to place a heavy layer of speculative metaphor on the passage and then move on to what they find at least more recognizable with the mountains and islands moving out of their places.

“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.” (2 Peter 3:10)

This passage from Peter’s prophecy is raised by the expositor Seiss as helping with our examination of the events of the sixth seal being removed. Those listening who have a sufficient grasp of Scripture may naturally look to this verse as Seiss does, and focus in on the underlined words ***“in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise”***. But a careful analysis of both this passage and the words of the Revelation will teach us that we may be looking where there is little help. The passage in Peter also says that this passing away referred to is in connection with the elements melting with fervent heat and the all the works of the earth being burned up with the earth. Those things indeed happen ... the passing away, the melting, and the burning up ... but not under the sixth seal. For we know there is a seventh seal and seven trumpets and seven vials, and a battle of Armageddon, and a millennial reign of Christ – all occurring on the earth with the men

and works dwelling upon that earth, and all after this event we're examining today. So the passage from Peter *does* show us how God is plenary able to make the heavens pass away, together with the earth and the sea – but that is all what comes when God sits on His throne and these all flee away from Him before the Great Assize! (Revelation 20:11)

“The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.” (Proverbs 3:19)

Let's start here. The Lord God made the earth and the heavens in all of His eternal wisdom and provided all of the glories of them in the way they sweetly commune and support each other. The fabrics of both, and how those compliment and depend upon each the other is commanded in His perfect decrees of creation and providence. This necessarily includes those paltry grasps that human scientific development has attained to, though that grasp does not in any way shorten the hand of God to dispose of or modify the elemental function of any component within that creation as He sees fit. Starting there, we can recognize that the *physicality* involved in what is determined in the words of John the Revelator is not as important to us as understanding the spiritual message to be obtained by reading of it.

“It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:”
(Isaiah 40:22)

This beautiful expression of God's sovereign authority over the creation expresses a two-fold purpose of the heavens ... ***“a curtain”*** and ***“a tent”***. A curtain to obscure the capacity of men to understand the intricate and magnificent nature of God, His creation above our earth, and His management of all things from His throne. A tent to provide a level of protection to the created race from the potentially damaging effects of celestial bodies and the energies that surround and bind them according to God's immutable laws of physics. Both of these purposes are at His disposal as He declares:

“Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together.” (Isaiah 48:13).

So many verses identify Him as the unique Creator and ruler over all of these components and their purposes and their disposal. He, therefore, has plenary power to say when that canopy ... that curtain ... that tent ... will be removed and the inhabitants of the earth will be required to deal with the raw power of His creation and the proof that He alone disposes of every aspect of it. The earth dwellers believe they are protected ... they are cocooned away on this earth to do what they desire in their wicked wills. But when the covering is ripped away ... the earth and heaven are shaken so violently ... they see what it is they have mocked and vilified and hated. Stark fear falls upon them, yet they still haven't the faith to see God as their only Redeemer.

We next address a subject that takes little really for us to expound regarding the description that ***“every mountain and island were moved out of their places”***. With the earth shaking so violently, from the earthquake that initiated this amazing introductory work of Christ’s Day, we do not have to push our minds or hearts too far to understand what a natural consequence can be of so violent a shaking. As a later part of this grand Day of the Lord, an earthquake breaks the Mount of Olives into two, with the suggested impact of a valley springing forth that allows waters to flow for miles to make the valley of Sodom a great river again. (Ezekiel 47:1-12; Zechariah 14:4-8). When Jeremiah sees this scene, he says ***“I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and the all the hills moved lightly”*** (Jeremiah 4:24). By ***“lightly”***, is expressed the idea that the trembling is so great that the mountains and hills move like they have no weight to them ... as though they’re just cardboard pieces to move around on the map. To close this relatively simple part of the scene to grasp – though it is a most horrifying thing to experience – here are the colorful words of the expositor Seiss:

“These are but the natural effects of the terrible convulsions that shake everything. On a smaller scale, the same has often happened. Within the space of a month past, the world has been astounded with accounts of an earthquake along the Pacific coast of South America, by which cities and villages by the score have been blotted from the earth, islands moved in their places, mountains shaken, vast districts of shore engulfed in the sea, thousands and thousands of lives lost, and hundreds of millions of treasure destroyed. Extend the same to every country and every sea; let all the dwellers on earth be made to feel such a shock, intensified so as to hurl the mountains from their seats, and wrench the islands from their roots, and convulse each ocean from centre to circumference; let the hills exchange places with the waters, and all the consequences of such vast and sudden transformations be spread over the face of the world, with their natural effects upon its cities, its traffic, and its thronging populations, and you may have some idea of the dreadfulness of what John beheld as ordained to come to pass under the opening of this seal.”

“I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.” (Ecclesiastes 3:14)

I saw a tweet recently that expressed what I see in this passage. It was something to the effect of that nothing that befalls us in this life would have the ability to disquiet us if we would simply and fully resolve ourselves that it was God’s immediate hand at work and it is in all respects for the highest and best good for the elect (Jeremiah 32:39). This understanding is not, nor can it ever be, what falls upon the whole of the reprobate human horde when these violent events get unleashed at the sixth seal being removed. There is no capacity for reverential fear of God. That is a gift that is bestowed upon the elect alone. This is a servile fear ... a superstitious fear ... a meaningless and spiritually insincere fear, like what Esau showed when he wanted Isaac to change his mind about

the birthright that he sold to Jacob (Hebrews 12:17). The elect hide in their Savior and Friend (Psalms 32:7); these hide in the ***“dens and the rocks of the mountains”***.

“And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.” (Isaiah 2:19-21)

In this passage, the idolatrous hordes stupidly exchange one form of idolatry for another. Rather than continuing to worship the idols ***“which they made”***, and which were rendered impotent through the tremendous plagues of the second, third, and fourth seals, now start worshipping the places where they think they may go for refuge. These parts of the earth, that have been unhinged and moved about like so much cord wood floating on the water, are used by the desperate and terrified population as a refuge. They don't simply make use, they call upon these moving mountains to fall on them and hide them from the naked face of ***“him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb”***.

It is a remarkable thing for me to contemplate that this world filled with humanity so consumed with their own wisdom and strength and creativity and scientific advance. Such cleverness, being reduced to worshipping stones and rocks and dolling out superstitiously to ***“the moles and [] the bats”*** like those creatures are somehow endowed with the capacity to restrict the power of the eternal God. Seiss uses some very creative language here:

“When the sixth seal breaks, and the vibrations of it are upon the universe, turning sun and moon to darkness and blood, convulsing the firmament, [casting down of rebel angels], and moving mountains and islands from their places, not the ignorant only, but the philosophic and the learned — kings and magnates of science and state, and all classes and kinds of men together, rush from their dwellings, strike for the caverns, cry out like terrified babes, confess to the presence of a Divine Power whose existence their superior learning had put down as a fable, and with one accord now preach and proclaim the advent of a day which they had pronounced impossible! Why this consternation — this change in their way of regarding and treating these advent doctrines — this preaching of the judgment — this trepidation and horror about the day of wrath now?”

The proclamation ***“For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”*** is not one that I take as indicative that this earth's inhabitants own Christ as King. It is, rather, a declaration of a host that has been brought to temporary heel by the expression of a much, much greater power! Humans believe now, and will believe then, that they are still superior – only that they must employ their creative powers, their intellects, their prowess in mastering every obstacle, and then they will take on this new challenge to their eternal right of self-determination. This conflict is far from over,

and these humans have no interest in any notion that they should **“give him glory” (Revelation 16:9)**. This is a temporary declaration of fear at the appearance of this Majesty that has declared His great day. This is a recognition that the battle has been joined upon the earth, and the competing parties will need to muster forces.

I have done sermons on the remaining parts of the events under the sixth seal. The calling forth of the redeemed Jews is a comprehensive work all in itself since it draws so many critical and relevant aspects into the vortex. Much has been written of that work, so we must treat it with the gravity it deserves. I have also articulated the beauty of the scene where this **“great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues stood before the throne” (Revelation 7:9)**. These who have been sleeping in Jesus for hundreds and thousands of years, awaiting the redemption of their bodies at the sounding of the seventh trumpet. We see in these the two groups identified in addition to those Gentile saints who still occupy life in the earth and who are dealing with the disruptions under the seals and the trumpets with great joy, trembling, and anticipation of completing the course until the return of the Messiah.

As we go forward, I will begin work on another aspect of the Revelation, Lord willing. I am moved to take up work on the period of time identified after Christ’s millennial reign, in Revelation 20-22. I pray the Lord will give us all strength and wisdom to consider His return and the great matters of that time, if we are to be among those who will be blessed with it. God’s will be done.

I love you.

Amen

ⁱ Two separate verses in Revelation discuss this subject of the earthquake that kills 7,000 men of Jerusalem. Two in Revelation 11:13, and one in Revelation 8:5. The latter passage is including that event in a listing of the matters scheduled to flow from Christ, in the form of an angel, taking fire from the altar seen in heaven, and casting it into the earth, at which time four distinct descriptors of the carnage; **“voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.”** The earthquake in Jerusalem is just before the seventh trumpet blows and Christ returns. The **“voices”**, interestingly, are the seven trumpets that begin to sound in the next verse of the chapter.

ⁱⁱ Two separate verses in Revelation discuss this subject of the earthquake related to Armageddon. Two in Revelation 16:18, and one in Revelation 11:19. The latter passage is including that event in a listing of the matters scheduled to flow from Christ’s second advent which describes the things that will flow directly from the temple of God opening in heaven, including **“lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”** The same passage in Revelation 16 that describes the earthquake articulates the falling of great hail upon the heads of men (v. 21), just after it describes the effects of the earthquake.

ⁱⁱⁱ The five additional earthquakes discussed specifically in Scripture are: The earthquake that shook the mountain on which Elijah found refuge after running from the face of Jezebel (1 Kings 19:11-12); the earthquake discussed at the time of King Uzziah (Amos 1:1, Zechariah 14:5); the earthquake that broke open the ground and the graves at the death of Christ on the cross (Matthew 27:54); the earthquake that occurred when the angel came down to remove the door from the place they buried Christ’s body (Matthew 28:2); and the earthquake that opened the doors of the prison where Paul and Silas were being held (Acts 16:26).

^{iv} ***“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.”***
(Revelation 8:12)

^v In Tim’s sermon of August 6, 2017 it states:

“[O]nce Christ has come and taken possession of the heaven the only jurisdiction of Satan to operate is the physical earth and sea (Revelation 12:9). No more can he send forth his army of cursed demon spirits through flight ... they must travel forth leaping like the frogs of Egypt’s plague!