

TEXT Revelation 6:12-17

REVIEW

What do the seven seals tell us?

It is the Lord Jesus who opens the seals. He is the executor of God's will. He is Lord! He sits enthroned over all.

First four seals: The pagan Roman Empire would go through four kinds of experiences.

Rev 6:1-2 military conquest and resulting peace (verse 4 "take peace...")

Rev 6:3-4 civil war

Rev 6:5-7 shortages

-high taxes, ruthlessly exacted

-either resulting from or causing severe shortages of necessities

Rev 6:7-8 widespread death from many causes; vast depopulation

All of these things will happen, as they almost always do everywhere, but these things will predominate in this order.

Fifth seal: The pagan Roman Empire would make a last great persecution of Christians (6:9)

Rev 6:10 the saints will pray

Rev 6:11 the Lord will comfort the saints, telling them to wait just a little longer

Sixth seal: The pagan Roman Empire would be overthrown in a great convulsion (6:12-17)

The Christians first receiving the Revelation could not know what period of time into the future this all would take. But they could know it would be starting then.

We now know in history that this was about the next 200 years from when John wrote, the 2nd and 3rd centuries, plus a little more. Approximately from the death of Domitian a.d. 96 to the reign of Constantine w/ Edict of Milan a.d. 313, and his victory in civil war 322.

The sixth seal show that Rome pagan would be overthrown in a great convulsion by the wrath of God and of the Lamb coming on those who have been persecuting the saints.

Striking language: earthquake, sun black, moon blood, stars fell, heaven rolled up, mountains and islands moved; Misinterpreting this language is one of the most common interpretive tasks to get wrong, but one of the easiest interpretive tasks to get right

From the context, the verses that follow, we get the idea that it has to do with the wrath of God coming upon kings, and the people of their kingdoms with them.

We're looking at these figures used in the OT, to see what help we can get in interpreting them correctly.

- Ezekiel 32 about the Babylonians overthrowing the Egyptians
- Isaiah 13 about the Medes overthrowing the Babylonians

LESSON

This evening, we look at how our Lord Jesus used these figures of the sun, moon, and stars in what He prophesied.

Read Matthew 24:1-34

note from chart comparing Matthew and Luke

- Luke 21:20, "armies" and 21:23 "the sword" that this will be a military action
- Matthew 24:34 and Luke 21:32 that this was to take place within the time of that generation

This event is now history to us, which we can read from an author named Flavius Josephus, who was present in A.D. 70 when the Romans besieged Jerusalem and utterly destroyed the temple.

Sun, Moon, Stars Prophecy	Date of Prophecy	Date of Fulfillment	Time to Elapse
Isaiah 13:10	712 B.C.	539 B.C. and following	173 years, then continuing long
Ezekiel 32:7-8	589 B.C.	c. 570 B.C.	about 20 years
Mt 24, Luke 21	A.D. 30	A.D. 70	40 years

Our Lord Jesus used these terms, about the sun, moon, stars, and heavens, and the people being greatly upset, to prophesy a coming military conquest, where a power that had been troubling the saints would be overthrown. That is the use the Holy Spirit had caused Isaiah and Ezekiel to make of this language, also.

So, in Revelation 6, under the sixth seal, we are reading prophecy about a powerful king or kingdom or city, which had been troubling the saints, being overthrown by some rising king or kingdom, whose army is given power by God to punish those who have been persecuting His people.

When the congregations received this book originally, they could have, by doing the same kind of study we have done, concluded that Rome pagan, the great power of their day, which had been persecuting them, would be overthrown, in something between a few decades and a few centuries. Let us have full confidence in God's providence, as executed by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb sitting at the right hand of God the Father in heaven.

Know that whatever country becomes powerful, whatever city, whatever ruler, when it troubles us, God's saints, its days are numbered. We pray for help, and help is on the way. It might be a few years, or even a few decades, but God will overthrow those who persecute us.

Matthew 24:1-34 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. 3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and

what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? 4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8 All these are the beginning of sorrows. 9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. 15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Luke 21:20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. 23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they

shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. 27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. 29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

Luke 21:25-26 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. 32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: 33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. 34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

Luke 21:32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

Luke 21:5-32 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, 6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. 7 And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? 8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. 9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. 10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: 11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. 12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. 13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony. 14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: 15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. 16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. 17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. 18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish. 19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. 22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be

led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. 25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. 29 And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; 30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. 31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

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Isaiah 13:10	712 B.C.	539 B.C. and following
Ezekiel 32:7-8	589 B.C.	c. 570 B.C.
Matthew 24, Luke 21	A.D. 30	A.D. 70

