

Revelation 6: The Sixth Seal and the Wrath of the Lamb

Revelation 6:12–17 | Sunday, May 10 | Revelation Series

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OVERVIEW

The recording finishes the fifth seal and then gives the rest of the hour to the sixth. Hal's name for it is his own: the first global icbm nuclear exchange. Before he reads it he lays down the rule he says the passage cannot be read without — that John was a first-century man propelled forward, made to stand and witness events with weapons beyond his imagination, then brought back to the isle of Patmos and told to write what he had seen. So the great shaking is what an explosion felt like underfoot; the sun black as sackcloth is debris thrown into the air; the moon like blood is the moon seen through pollution, which he says anyone who has lived in Los Angeles has seen; the falling stars are not stars at all but asteroids or meteors, which he takes to be warheads reentering; and the sky rolled up like a scroll is the overpressure of a thermonuclear blast. He ends where the passage ends, with people who know exactly whose wrath this is and still will not believe.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Verse 12 — The sixth seal opens — a great shaking, the sun black as sackcloth of hair, the whole moon like blood

Verse 14 — The sky split apart like a scroll; every mountain and island moved out of its place

Verse 15 — Kings, great men, commanders, the rich, the strong, every slave and every free man hidden in the caves

Ezekiel 38 — Fire and ice killing hundreds of thousands of people

Revelation 7 — The chapter that tells us who will be able to stand

Revelation — The one book for which God gives an extra promise of blessing to those who read it continually

KEY TERMS

The sixth seal — what Hal calls the first global icbm nuclear exchange

A violent shaking — what the Greek word behind “earthquake” actually means; an earthquake can do it, but so can other things

Overpressure — the enormous release of pressure in a thermonuclear explosion, which pushes the atmosphere back so fast that it compacts and rolls up on itself, then rushes back into the vacuum

Eye witness on the scene — the rule Hal says the book cannot be read without — John was told to write only what he had seen and heard, and the word used means eye witness on the scene

Fire and ice — the pairing in Ezekiel 38 that Hal ties to humidity compressed above the stratosphere, frozen, and falling back in great chunks

The mark — a number in the forehead or in the hand, with the prefix 666, without which a person cannot buy, sell or hold a job

Swearing allegiance — what Hal says is actually at issue in the mark — not the mark itself, but what a person has to do to get it

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer from the message itself. Every answer is in the teaching.

1. What rule does Hal say you have to apply to understand these prophecies?

2. What does the word translated “earthquake” actually mean, and why does that matter here?

3. How does Hal read the black sun and the blood-red moon?

4. What does Hal say about the word translated “stars,” and what does he take the falling objects to be?

5. What does Hal believe John is actually watching?

6. How does Hal explain the sky being split apart like a scroll?

7. What else does that overpressure do?

8. Where does the mushroom cloud come from, and what does Hal connect it to?

9. In verse 15, who hides, and what do they ask for?

10. What is Hal’s own observation about these people?

11. What does Hal say the mark is, and why can a person who takes it never change?

12. What does Hal say about being afraid of the number now, and what line of Billy Graham's does he quote?
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DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

1. Hal reads this passage by asking what a first-century man would have called what he was seeing. What are the risks and the rewards of reading a vision that way?

2. The people in verse 15 know whose wrath it is and hide instead of repenting. What makes hiding feel safer than turning around?

3. "The same sun that melts butter hardens clay." Where have you seen the same event soften one person and harden another?

4. Hal says what dooms a person is not the mark but what he must do to get it. What are the small allegiances that get asked of you in exchange for being able to work and buy?

5. This is grim material, and Hal notices people getting up to leave. What do you do with a part of Scripture you would rather not have read?

6. He says God promises a blessing to those who keep reading this book. Why do you think that promise is attached to this book in particular?

MEMORY VERSE

"Fall on us and hide us from the presence of him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come; and who is able to stand?"

— Revelation 6:16–17, as Hal reads it in this message