

Cataclysm

Long Beach Alliance Church • March 10th, 2013 • Pastor Chris Lankford

They called to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!”
~Revelation 6:16 (ESV)

1) The Final Events Of The Apocalypse

- A) Two more seal judgments (#5 & #6) are broken open by Christ and described in the next nine verses (Revelation 6:9-17). These two “seals” are set apart from the previous judgments with more explanation and description.
- B) Each of the seal judgments represent an initiation of a “judgment category” which amplifies through Revelation. These two judgments also inform us of critical themes in Revelation, and a shocking vision of how things will end.

2) The Cry For Justice From The Martyred

- A) As the fifth seal opens (6:9), “the souls of the slain” (cf. 5:6) cry out for justice and vengeance from Christ (6:10). The picture of these martyrs is one of sacrifice poured out onto the altar (a mixture of Old Testament sacrificial altars), an aroma of blessing to God.

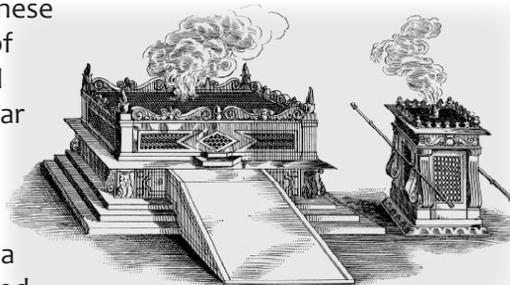


FIG. 2.—ALTAR OF BURNED OFFERING AND ALTAR OF INCENSE.

- B) But the martyrs are told to “wait/rest a while longer,” until their full number has been fulfilled (6:11). This odd concept is meant to illustrate two truths. First, God is in complete control, even of those slaughtered for Him. Second, we are “servants/slaves.” We do not control our own lives. We are in the best hands, those of the Lamb.
- C) Note that the normal activity of the church (Revelation 2-3) is one of witness, despite the opposition. Living a faithful life means total dependence on the Gospel, no matter the difficulty, persecution, or threat to life (6:11).

3) The Unravelling Of The Universe

- A) Dramatically, the sixth seal is broken open, triggering the “BIG ONE!” This will truly be the most terrifying and cataclysmic of all great earthquakes (6:12, *seismos megas*).
- B) The sky suddenly blankets the earth in darkness (6:12). Notably, the “black sackcloth” was worn by those who were in mourning. It is as if the earth has covered herself with mourning and sorrow, buckling under God’s wrath.
- C) Nighttime provides no relief, with disturbing imagery of dark blood-red moonlight covering the earth. Then, shockingly, the universe shudders and shakes, cascading stars from the heavens like streaking meteors (6:13).
- D) The earthquake fiercely topples mountains and swallows islands (6:14). There is nowhere to hide from God’s wrath, shredding the fabric of the universe apart, all in judgment for mankind’s rebellion against God.
- E) People, from the greatest/most powerful to the lowest class, will be joined together in terror (6:15), fleeing to hide in “caves and among rocks” (places of darkness).
- F) People will lose hope (suicidal), hiding themselves (Adam & Eve hiding from God). The final helpless, terrifying truth will be sadly realized. This is the God we rejected, and we are hopeless in the face of His great wrath (6:16-17).