

Stand Fast - Revelation 6:9-17

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Preacher: Pastor Jared Bromka

[0 : 00] You can open your Bibles to Revelation chapter 6. If you need a sheet, one of these that we handed out last week.

! If you don't have one, just raise your hand and we'll get you one. Or if you need a Bible. Revelation 6. Okay. Alright, we've got through, let's see, the first four seals.

We're up to verse 9. If you remember last time, so we're on our chart here. We're up to seal number 5 and 6. And then chapter 7 will be the seventh seal.

And the seventh seal kind of opens up all of the next set of judgments. But there's also a pause. And as we see from chapter 7, is where we kind of begin to really get into our first, almost like overlap of our chronology.

Because as we saw last time, the four horsemen, the white horse, the red horse, the black horse, and the pale horse, or like the sickly green color horse, indicating the setting up of a kingdom.

[1 : 12] We had authority. We had power. We had conquering. We're on the horses. We're going forth to conquer. We saw the Antichrist kingdom being set up. So that kingdom is going to continue through the rest of this book.

Well, not the rest of it. Until Jesus comes and puts an end to it. But through these seven years. So there is some overlap. As we go chronologically, in a sense, through this, as John sees these things reveal, it's not like, well, now that we're done with those four horsemen, we're on to the next thing and they're gone.

No, they're still there. The repercussions of them are still there. The other thing to remember is who initiated this? Well, this is all at the initiation of the lamb. The lamb did it by taking the scroll and opening it.

So you say, okay, so tonight we're going to look at the martyrdom of the saints. Is that God's judgment on the believing saints in the world at the time of Jacob's trouble?

Is that what's going on? If that's one of the seals, is his seal his judgment? If you remember, the seals represented God's will, his will for the end. So as he's popping open these seals and this will, God's judgment, I think his greatest judgment that's taken place upon this earth, first was the cross, which he took upon himself.

[2 : 23] Second is the rapture of the church. I think that is the greatest judgment upon unbelieving man because the restrainer is gone. That which restrains is no longer here in the presence of the church.

We are salt, we are light. So much that is being restrained in this world is because of you, because of your daily lives, because of your presence, because of the Holy Spirit. When that leaves, in a sense, God is saying, okay, have at it.

Make your system. I'm going to release you to your ultimate end. We look back in the garden, the first thing God does after they sin, after they fall, is he puts boundaries on it. He says, hey, we're going to put boundaries on this.

We're going to talk about, you know, what the curse is. Adam, here's your boundary. Eve, here's your boundary. Satan, here's your boundary. Well, with the church being removed, bam, all these things begin to happen.

Is God forcing these people? Like, is he forcing the Antichrist? Okay, you shall now go and be the Antichrist and that'll be my judgment on the world. No, not at all. Not at all. It is neither man, just coincidentally, well, it just looks like, you know, God's doing this, but it's really man's system.

[3 : 30] It's not that alone. And neither is it God just sovereignly saying, well, you shall now be the Antichrist and these things shall now take place. His foreknowledge is working with the free will of man, right?

So as God allows man to set up his kingdom, his foreknowledge working in conjunction with that to bring judgment upon this world, why? Well, for the same reason as we're going to see today, tonight, that men and women would continue to turn to Jesus.

That is the hope. So he's not just looking to, you know, wipe out this earth. So as we get into these next seals, we're recognizing that God's judgment in part is just allowing man right now to have at it.

And now we're going to see almost in sequence here as God begins to step in in a way beyond just a system built by man. We saw last time the rider on the white horse identifying him as the Antichrist.

He looks familiar, but looks can be deceiving, right? And he didn't sound the part because we know that out of his mouth will come blasphemies. And we saw that man was given authority over what?

[4 : 37] Over death. Man has no capacity to maintain peace because man is not innately peaceful. We saw a false peace led to war, war led to famine, and famine led to death.

Now on man's side, that's all just in sequence of how the choices they are making in conjunction with what God is allowing. And it's God's will and judgment. On God's side, from heaven's perspective, it is, yeah, I planned for this.

I know exactly what's happening here. Yep, that's the horseman. Yep, number one, number two, number three, number four. Here comes the next seal as God allows these things to be released. But only the one who has the authority over peace, only that one has the ability to maintain a lasting peace.

We saw that God would invite all to come and see the future that he's revealed for this world and for anyone who would partake. We can all see our future, in a sense, if we would like to, in his word.

Psalms 24, beginning in verse three says, who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord or who shall stand in his holy place? He that has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

[5 : 51] He shall receive the blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation. Look a lot at what it is to stand. How do we stand? And as there are these tribulation states, standing and what it costs them.

But who is he? Who shall ascend? Who shall stand in the holy place? Who can stand before God? Only one who has clean hands and a pure heart. Anybody raising their hand for that? Oh no, my hands aren't clean.

My heart's not pure. But I know someone whose hands are clean and his heart is pure. And he offers to stand in my place so that I can stand in his place, right?

In that hill. So as we begin in verse nine, we're picking up with the fifth seal, where John says, and when he'd open the fifth seal, that's the lamb, that's Jesus, he opens it. John says, I saw under the altar.

Put a little question mark by that. Under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, for the testimony which they held. Under what altar? Where's this altar?

[6 : 51] I didn't know there was an altar. An altar in heaven? Is there sacrifices in heaven? Well, eternity is not entered without sacrifice. Nobody will enter eternity without sacrifice.

No, you can enter into eternal separation, but nobody will enter into eternal life without sacrifice. Eternity was first opened by sacrifice as Jesus opened it with his sacrifice.

It's accessed by sacrifice. We have to come through that sacrifice. It's not just he opened it and now anybody can just go into eternity. Come on in. It's only those who access it by sacrifice.

And I would say also our sacrifice. Say, wait a minute, what is this, a workspace salvation? You know, I'm gonna go find another church. No, no, no. But there is. As we choose to put our faith in Christ, what are we doing?

We're sacrificing ourselves, our pride, recognizing I'm a sinner. I can't do this. I have to let go of my own pride and ability. And eternity is a place where sacrifice is honored and remembered.

[7 : 56] This do in remembrance of me. In Mark chapter 10, the apostles, Jesus has just given this teaching on being rich.

And he says, oh, how hard it is for the rich to enter into heaven. Hardly shall a rich man enter into heaven. And at that time, the thinking was that, well, if you're rich, God's blessed you. I mean, you have God's favor on your life.

And the apostles respond and they're like, well, Lord, who can be saved? And in Mark 10, Peter says, he began to say unto the Lord, lo, we have left all and followed you.

Like, okay, what about us? If it's hard for a rich man, what about those of us who've left everything? Jesus answered and said, truly I say unto you, there is no man that has left house or brethren or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for my sake in the gospels.

But he shall receive a hundredfold. Now in this time, houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions. Which we could scratch that out. And in the world to come, eternal life.

[9 : 09] You see, you're not going to enter in except by sacrifice. Through Jesus' sacrifice. But as we own his sacrifice, we find it working out in our life. But sacrifice doesn't just end with what's lost.

The whole point of sacrifice is to give up so that you can gain. And in the world to come, eternal life. But many that are first shall be last. And the last shall be first.

In other words, those that seem to give up a lot, well, maybe they've got a lot in the end to gain. And those that seem to have gained a lot, maybe they've really lost in the end. But here we see in verse 9, this specific group of people where John says, I saw under the altar.

So there's an altar in heaven. And there's this specific group of people here that says that they were slain for the word of God. They were put to death. These martyred souls are privileged to be in a place of blood and sacrifice.

Their sacrifice was counted worthy to be mingled with the heavenly sacrifice. Say, Jared, what are you talking about? Well, we'll get to it eventually in Exodus 29 when the altar's being set up.

[10 : 20] The Lord says, through Moses, and thou shalt cause a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the bullock.

And thou shalt kill the bullock before the Lord by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. Thou shalt take the blood of the bullock and put it upon the horns of the altar with your finger. And what do you do with the rest of the blood?

And pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar. And where are these tribulation saints? Where are these martyrs? They're under the altar. They're in the place of blood.

That their blood has been counted worthy as a worthy sacrifice to God, but also a worthy sacrifice to be mingled with the eternal sacrifice. We know that in Hebrews 9, 12, it says, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, Jesus' own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Hebrews also tells us in verse 5 of chapter 8 that Moses specifically made the things on earth after this pattern of what's already in heaven. That who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle.

[11 : 41] For, the Lord says, you shall make all things according to the pattern that Moses made the earth. He said, you shall make it in the mount. A heavenly example. So this altar in heaven, as Moses makes one on earth, this altar in heaven had one sacrifice on it, one offering of blood, Jesus'.

But here, here are these tribulation saints in this place where the blood was poured out, that they are under blood. So I think for the Antichrist, he can't take out his wrath on the Lamb.

So he's taking it out on his people, right? These souls were slain for the Word because the Word was first slain for them, right? Jesus, the Word, made flesh.

They then were slain for him. This is not just, oh, they died during these wars as we saw last time at the beginning of chapter 6. This is a hunted down.

This is, the idea here is, it's not just an awkward experience among your coworkers to acknowledge you're a Christian. It's a death sentence to be one who counts yourself a believer.

[12 : 49] For these believers, they held on during the most difficult time in history to hold on. As difficult as it might have been under Roman persecution. It's difficult for a believer during, Hitler's reign, Hitler's rule there.

There is going to be no more difficult time for a believer to hold on than during this season. And the word here where it says they were slain literally means to be butchered.

They, this was almost, you can almost look at it like a sport. Like, all right, let's find them and let's kill them. In Revelation 3, we read regarding the church to one of the letters of the churches.

In verse 10, he said, because you have kept the word of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon the whole world to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Behold, I come quickly, hold fast that which thou hast, then no man take your crown. And who is he talking to? The church. And he tells us, I'm going to keep you from the hour of temptation.

[13 : 59] What we're reading about right here in Revelation 6, verse 9, these believers are going through that hour of temptation. And if they can hold fast to the word of God and his testimony, how much more can we hold fast?

Hold fast. Don't let anyone take what you have been given so freely. It's not worth it. Hold on to that crown. That which they held on to through trials and death is now what?

It's now theirs for eternity. They own this. He says, when I opened it, I saw unto the altar the souls of them slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. They held on and now that's theirs to hold for eternity.

They have that. No one's going to take that from them. No one's going to take our crown. No one's going to take from them what they have. For us, we need to make sure that what we're holding on to, it's worth holding on to for eternity.

What are you holding on to? What am I holding on to that's not worth holding on to for eternity? You know, here are these believers that have come through this great hour of tribulation and they're like, we held on and look what we have and I'm like, yeah, look what I brought.

[15 : 08] I've been holding on to this my whole life and I need to let it go because it's not eternal. Matthew 24, 34, 5, we read, heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away.

We can't hold on to something that will last into eternity. It will be our possession for all of eternity. You know, as God works in our life through his word and by his Holy Spirit, there are scriptures that he gives us that he speaks to us.

Remember, Jesus says though, the words that I speak unto you, they're spirit and they're life. They're alive, they're living. It's not just a history. And there are scriptures God speaks to us that are ours, that he speaks directly to us, that we hold on to.

Those will last with us. There'll be fruit from that into eternity. You know, I don't think it'll be like, well, what's your verse you brought with? This one's mine. But there'll be fruit from the fact that we have eternal things that God's spoken into our lives that we've chosen to hold on to.

Here for these people, it cost them their life and they knew it was going to cost them their life going into this. And they cry out now from under the altar. Notice it says, souls, not ghosts.

[16 : 17] It also doesn't say bodies. They're not ghosts. They're just, you know, we're going to see that they have white robes. They're clothed. So we know that being absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

And then it looks like that there's some form of God where he clothes them and keeps them until it's time for them to receive their resurrected body. But they cry out with a loud voice saying, how long, O Lord, holy and true, does thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

I don't think they're complaining. I don't think, I don't think there's complaining in heaven. Oh, Lord, how long? We complain like that. Lord, when are you going to return?

I don't think it's so much complaining, it's a longing. But I think what they're saying here is, how long will the holy and true one not fulfill redemption? God, fulfill redemption.

Redemption isn't just salvation. Redemption encompasses salvation and judgment. There's no judgment, there's no salvation. Redemption can't exist without judgment. It's not just salvation, it's also judgment.

[17 : 22] Final redemption will be a final judgment. In heaven, here we see whatever time it has, it's marking time by redemption. How long, oh Lord, whatever this time sequence is in heaven until redemption is completed?

Redemption does not just encompass salvation, it encompasses judgment as well. It's easy just to think of, well, God's just so loving and he just wants to save.

And he does, he does, but recognize that came through judgment because he went through judgment. Recognize that we are still under, in a sense, God's judgment in Christ, right?

We enter into that judgment where he was counted worthy, where he was counted sin for us. That's not something to be taking lightly. Recognizing that all of that judgment was poured out on Christ so that I could be counted worthy.

That's a heavy load. I don't think they're complaining. I think they're just calling for fulfillment of righteousness. They say, how long holy and true.

[18 : 28] They recognize that redemption would not be complete without a final judgment. Then white robes are given unto them and it was said unto them that they should rest for a little season until their fellow servants also and their brethren that should be killed as they were should be fulfilled.

You know, we live in an age of grace. You may have heard it. You know, Jesus said that this gospel, it said that this gospel will not, I think it's in Revelation, will not, it will be preached in all the world and then shall be the end.

Something like that. And people think, well, that means that every single person, there's one person out there when that's the last person to hear the gospel, then Jesus comes. It's not actually what it means. Jesus can come at any time.

There's nothing withholding him at all right now. and the gospel will be preached in all the world but the end is according to his plan, not ours.

And where he says to them here that hey, there's a fulfillment that needs to take place. You know, we look at the fulfillment of grace. Lord, who's left? Who's going to be that last person though? You know, you know who that last person is.

[19 : 39] Who's that last person who's going to receive it? I mean, that's a kind of cool thing to be known for for all of eternity. Hey, there he is. That was the last. You were the, before the rapture, you were the last.

What took you so long? You know, that's going to be pretty cool. But here, these saints are being told, hey, who's the last one to die? Who's the last one to be martyred? Who's the last one whose blood will be shed?

Whose head will be cut off to suffer that persecution? Paul would write in Romans 8, he says, I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

I'd have to agree with him. I'd rather suffer in this present time than in the suffering we're seeing of these saints during the seven-year tribulation. I'd have to agree with him. If they can say the suffering that we're going to go through in death isn't worthy to be compared to what the glory is that will be revealed to us, then how much more should I be willing to?

But who are these people? Well, as we said, chapter seven, when we open the seventh seal, not we open it, but when the seventh seal is opened, there's kind of a pause. We get this interlude where the next set of judgments are opened in chapter eight and when they open the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

[20 : 59] If I wanted to make a really bad pastor joke, I'd say that's because the men got there first and it was a half hour later the women got there. Isn't that terrible? I heard that as a kid. And then he's going to go into the next seals, but here in chapter seven, he says, after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth where we go into this whole like interlude before, there's like this parentheses before we dive into the seventh seal, which then opens up the trumpet judgments.

So, chapter seven, I believe, is giving us partially a look ahead and also a reflection of kind of what's happening right here in all of these seals. And if you looked at verse nine in Revelation seven, we read, and after this, I beheld, John behold, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues stood before the throne and before the lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands.

And here are these people under the altar, clothed with white robes. We know that in chapter seven, we're going to see the 144,000 being sent forth. I think they're being sent forth during this time as the seals are being opened.

As the Antichrist begins his kingdom, here goes these 144,000. And so we see that they're clothed with these white robes. If you would turn to Matthew 22, shedding some light on these white robes.

Matthew 22, we'll begin in verse one. And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables. And he said this, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king and which made a marriage for his son.

[22 : 42] And he sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding. They had a standing invitation and they would not come. So we're going to see here where he's likening that to Israel.

They had a standing invitation, but they wouldn't come. Again, he sent forth other servants saying, tell them what you're bidden. Behold, I prepared my dinner. My oxen and my fatlings are killed and all things are ready.

Come to the marriage. There's nothing you need to do. All you need to do is show up here. But they made light of it.

And they went their ways, one to his farm and another to his merchandise. They weren't focused on those eternal things they could hold on to. And the remnant took his servants and entreated them spitefully and killed them.

I don't want to come to your wedding and I'm going to kill you. Okay. But when the king heard their of you was angry, he sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers and burned up their city.

[23 : 45] Then said he to his servants, the wedding is ready. It did not forestall the wedding. It's still coming. It's still coming. The response of those invited does not affect the one who's doing the invitation, who's giving the invitation.

But they which were bidden were not worthy. So go you therefore in the highways and as many as you shall find, bid them to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all and as many as may be found, both bad and good.

The wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not a wedding garment. He said unto him, friend, how came you hither not having a wedding garment?

And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, bind him hand and foot and take him away and cast him into outer darkness and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth for many are called but few are chosen.

So here we have this picture Jesus gives of this invitation. Jesus gives of those who are clothed and prepared and at this place. Notice the invitation was by calling, not by character.

[24 : 56] They're good and bad. Anybody can come. You just respond. It's just by invitation is by calling. I've called you to come. It doesn't matter your character. The wedding participation was not by worth.

Are you worthy to be here? No, it was by what? It was by what they were clothed in. It was by whiteness, essentially. Did they have a robe? And so here we see back in Revelation these people clothed.

Well, they're invited, they're called and they're prepared. Not by what they've done. It's not about if they're good or bad but about what they've been given. They've received that. It tells us that they're told they can rest.

Rest for a season. The word rest means calm, quiet and patient expectation. Just be calm. Just be quiet. Have a patient expectation. Because of sin, man's final resting place is now determined by death.

You know, you hear people say, oh, they've gone to their rest. Maybe they have, maybe they haven't. But our final resting place because of sin is determined by death. We can't escape that. It's either determined by our death or the death of another.

[26 : 06] I will enter into my rest either through my own death, my own whiteness, my own preparedness, or by death of another. Psalm 116, verse 15 says, precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

The Lord looks at this where he says, hey, just rest a little while until it be fulfilled those others as well that should be killed. That's a precious thing to him.

It's not something he takes lightly. The death of each and every saint is precious to the Lord. It's a privilege to the saint. You know that? It's a privilege for us to die. It's a privilege to enter through that doorway and into eternity.

It's precious to the Lord, a privilege to the saint, and it's a proclamation to the world. Every death of the believer proclaims to the world, this world's not the end. There's something beyond it.

Every believer who dies in the Lord proclaims to this world, hey, be prepared, be ready, respond to that invitation. The death of God's people is not happenstance either.

[27 : 13] It's a fulfillment of God's timing, God's will, and God's rest as God brings his believer, his people, into that precious place. And here we see in the scripture where he calls those that he's referring to, he says, until their fellow servants also and their brethren.

He says, man, you have a like relationship, you have a like occupation, a like calling. Fellow servants and brethren, we all are participants in the same family, in the same occupation.

why does the world want to kill the brethren so badly? Why? What is it that they just want them dead so badly?

Well, in Hebrews, verse 11, we read about those that are walking by faith in this world and it tells us, and truly, if they had been mindful of the country from whence they came out, if they had been mindful.

In other words, they are not mindful of the country from which they came out of. That's what sets them apart. If you, today, are not mindful of the country that you came out of as a Christian, you'll probably be marginalized by many other believers who are very mindful of the country they came out of.

[28 : 33] They might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one, where God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he's prepared for them a city and they are prepared to go to that city.

Why does the world want to kill the brethren so badly? Because there's no restraint to the sinful heart of man anymore. Man's heart has no restraint. We cannot restrain our sin.

We can't. We were going through James, the little booklets of James, last night. And it talks about that when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin and sin, when it has, when it has fully matured, you know, it brings forth death.

And it starts with our desires. It says our lustful desires. And something so small and seemingly so insignificant leads to something so huge as death. Just because I had a desire in my flesh, I wanted fulfilled.

I thought, maybe this is God's will. Maybe it's a good thing. Maybe he can bless me through this. It'd make me happy. And then it's so quickly, before you know it, it seemed like such a good desire and it leads to death because there's no restraint to the sinful heart of man.

[29 : 46] In Revelation 20, we're going to get a further picture of kind of who these people are. In verse 4, as Jesus returns at the end of these seven years to the earth, John says, and I saw thrones and they that sat upon them and judgment was given unto them.

That's you and me. That's the believers, the church. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God. Those are who we're reading about right now.

And which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. So the tribulation saints will have their resurrection as well.

But at this time, when all restraint is gone, when sin is given a full-fledged access to whatever it wants to do, it's going to cost something for these tribulation saints.

Ezekiel says in 36, verse 26, a new heart also will I give you. A new spirit will I put within you. And I'll take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I'll give you a new heart.

[30 : 59] It doesn't need vibrations. It's got vitality, right? So that's, I think, one of the whys when you say, why is it so, why is the world so out to get the believer at this time?

Well, because of things like that. Because people believe that type of stuff. Because they're practicing that type of thing. And they're trying to bring this commonality among all the religions. There'll be a one-world religion that'll say, you either join us or you're out because the problem is you're working against us.

We need all these hearts to be in line so we all vibrate according to the earth's magnetic, oh my word. But I just love the end though where it's like, and there's an app for that.

Of course there is. Of course there is. Oh, well. Anyway, continuing on in Revelation. So that was the, we just looked at now after the end of these four seals, the four horsemen, which was war and all of this, what comes right on the heels of that?

Well, maybe what they're doing is they're blaming all the believers that are there at the time. Well, the Antichrist had this system of peace, but you were just so out of tune with the earth's magnetic field that now war happened.

[32 : 09] And we're going to blame you along with the Jews. And so we're going to kill you. Look what comes right on the heels of that. This now we see is the first time where we see almost the supernatural hand of God stepping in in a way that is outside of man's contribution.

And notice that it's right after these saints have been put to death. And behold, 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 the heaven of the heaven fell into the earth even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind and the heaven departed as a scroll when it's rolled together and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

So here we have the sixth seal being open. We have an earthquake and all kinds of atmospheric disturbances. Makes sense. Notice it says as. Doesn't say the sun became sackcloth and hair.

You know, it wasn't a hairy sun. As. So as there's this earthquake, you've got all these wars. There seems to be this extreme atmospheric pollution that's happened where the sun, it's almost like looking through like hair, dark hair.

You can get a little light filtered through, but it's very dark. Literally just read today an article where some legislation, they're trying to push where they want planes to spray.

[33 : 38] I can't remember what the chemical was in the lower atmosphere to hopefully, it might have been sulfur dioxide, to hopefully create a layer to block the sunshine so that we can prevent, you know, global warming and climate change, but it would also directly contribute because it's in the lower atmosphere instantly to acid rain.

It's like professing themselves to be wise. Joel prophesies of this, not of the the guy's spraying stuff, but of the earthquake, he says in Joel 2, verse 10, the earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble, the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army, for his camp is very great, for he is strong that executes his word. The day of the Lord is great and very terrible. Who can abide it?

Seven years isn't very long. Less than two terms of a presidency. You know, from Joel's perspective, it's like, there's an earthquake and the Lord comes and takes care of everything with his armies.

But it's as if creation is responding to the evil that's being practiced within it. We know Romans 8.22 tells us that the whole creation groans and travails with pain together. But it seems as if creation right now is just responding, is just being rocked by the evil that's being perpetrated within it.

[35 : 02] Where it says that the mountain and islands were moved out of their places means literally to be set in motion. So, this worldwide earthquake that takes place.

The heavens roll back as a scroll. Well, you know, there are instances where high-level nuclear testing in the 60s over Hawaii, it set the ozone on fire and it looked literally like, it just rolled back like a scroll.

So, whatever's happening in the atmosphere at this time is very catastrophic. It'll get worse as we go through Revelation. When we get to Revelation 16, it's even worse than what we see here where the mountains and the islands are not only just moved, but they are moved out of their place.

Every mountain's low and every island disappears. But anyway, God's judgment, it's going to intensify as the hardness of man's heart intensifies. God isn't doing this arbitrarily, but as man responds by hardening his heart, God's judgment intensifies to attempt to reach that heart.

But the world will finally get their climate change. They'll finally be like, see, we told you. I'm sure there'll be those that'll try and pass it off as that.

[36 : 15] Romans 1, 28, and even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind. Whatever reprobates think that it'd be a good idea to blanket the earth's atmosphere and something that blocks sunlight and it's crazy.

Verse 15, 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 freeman hid themselves in dens and the rocks and the mountains.

Emphasis is very weighted towards the world's elite right here. Notice it is kings, great men, rich men, chief captains, mighty men. And then we have every bondman and every free man.

It's very heavily weighted that are being pointed to these elites. They hid themselves in the dens. A den is a hidden place of rock. It's what it is.

There's an article in CNN, and I don't generally peruse CNN, but I figure if they're putting it up there, it must be, where it says that operating theaters, bowling alleys, and home cinemas, not happy with just safe rooms, the super rich are building luxury fortresses.

[37 : 25] This is happening around the world. I think Zuckerberg has one in Hawaii, a massive underground fortress. The billionaires have always been wise to danger, but now, the billionaire today has now noticed far more, they've had far more, this company has had far more inquiries from millionaires who might traditionally have been content with standard security measures, but for this market, existing rooms today can be secured for a few thousand dollars.

If you want a secure room, you can pay a few thousand dollars. For a few hundred thousand dollars, you can have a prefabricated modular steel bunker that can be dropped under the house that you then build.

And some of the rooms are being created that are so well equipped that they are better than operating theaters at the best hospitals. They have decontamination chambers, they have wardrobes of personal protective equipment, pharmaceuticals, emergency medicines, as well as vitamins, and other things tailored to the residents to help them withstand long periods in isolation.

So they're literally making like a place where like, hey, I can escape and have everything I need to keep myself alive. Psalm 27 verse 5 says, For in the time of trouble, he shall hide me in his pavilion.

The secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me. He shall set me upon a rock. So here we continue reading and see in Revelation, and they said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us.

[38 : 52] That word fall on us literally means descend down from above. Fall on us. We will descend down from above to our dens, our safe places in the rocks, to our bunkers, to hide from the Lamb.

It's happening today, guys. It's all around us. The people are doing this. All of creation is being shaken at this point. But the hearts of men remain unmoved.

Heart of man is immovable. As all of creation is shaking, instead of repenting, they say, well, we're going to go in our bunkers. We're going to go hide. That's what we're going to do. Hide us, they say.

Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, from the wrath of the Lamb. Rebellious man would rather continue to face God's judgment than face the God of judgment.

Just give us your judgment, God. We don't want to face you. Wrath of the Lamb. Guys, I don't care how wrathful they are.

[39 : 53] I just am not going to be scared of a lamb. We saw Jesus in Revelation 1 as the lion. Not Revelation 1, in Revelation 4 where he opened the scrolls.

Nope, Revelation 5. The lion of the tribe of Judah. They didn't say, hide us from the face of the lion. It's the lamb. God is, he's presenting himself still as the lamb. A wrathful lamb. I mean, that thing could get really angry and attack me but it's like, I'm probably not going to feel that threatened.

How wrathful is a lamb? If this is the lamb's wrath, what would the lion's wrath be? Right? Wrath has come for all those that are under wrath.

1 Thessalonians 1.10 says, Romans 5.9 tells us that we're now justified by his blood and we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Wrath has come for all those that are under wrath. 1 Thessalonians 5.9 for God has not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

[41 : 08] For the great day of his wrath is come and who shall be able to stand? You know, there are those who say, I think it's Revelation 19 where it talks about his wrath again. Say, well, see that the church is still here because it's not God's wrath.

what says right here the great day of his wrath is come. The word is come in the Greek that word means appear and arrive. Wrath has arrived. Wrath has appeared now for all those that are under wrath.

Who shall be able to stand? Who shall be able to stand? To appear before the judge is what it means. To stand to like, almost like to appear before your trial. Those who are under the wrath of the Lamb those who are under the wrath of the Lamb will stand before the throne of judgment.

Revelation 20 tells us about the great white throne where the dead are raised. The sea gives up its dead. The books are open and they're judged. Those who are under the wrath of the Lamb will stand before his throne of judgment.

But those who are under the wrath or those who are under the Lamb who the wrath was upon will stand before the throne of grace. See, we're not under wrath but we are under the Lamb who the wrath was upon.

[42 : 21] Right? So in a sense, we're under wrath but not ours. Not towards us. It was directed towards the Lamb. And now we stand before a throne of grace where in this time the people will eventually stand before a throne of judgment.

Hebrews 4.16 Let us therefore come boldly under the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Who shall be able to stand?

Go ahead. Last slide. I don't... 1 Corinthians 15.1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you which also you have received and wherein you stand.

1 Peter 5.12 I have written briefly exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein you stand. Who shall be able to stand?

All those under grace not under wrath. Jesus stood in the face of wrath so that we might stand in grace before the face of God.

[43 : 30] Hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the Lamb. Well, Jesus stood in that place for us so that now we stand in grace and we stand before the face of God because Jesus stood in the face of wrath.

Man, we've gone a while. Guys, just indulge me a minute. Turn over to Luke 21. I just want to end with this. I think it'll be kind of cool. Luke 21 is a parallel to Matthew 24 where the disciples ask him, hey, what shall be the time of the end and the signs of the end?

And begins in verse 5. Some of them begin to talk about how amazing the temple is and Jesus said, hey, the days are coming when there shall not be one stone left standing.

And they said, Master, they asked him two questions. When shall these things be and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? And we can go through that and we can see the different tenses where he talks about they and he talks about you and there's times where it seems like he's talking about the future and there's times where it seems like he's talking about the church, the apostles.

But I want us to do, we're going to read, just read through this, but put yourself in the mindset of Revelation 6 verse 9 of those that have been slain. Put yourself in the mindset of those that have been hunted down to be beheaded.

[44 : 55] Put yourself in the mindset of if the raptures happened and we got left behind, we didn't get left behind because we know the Lord, but if we didn't know the Lord and we're left behind and you come to faith in Christ and you're reading now as you're watching this happen around you and you're reading your Bible in Luke 21.

verse 8, and he said, take heed that you be not deceived for many shall come in my name saying, I am Christ and the time draws near, go you not therefore after them.

Imagine the context of that as you look around you as a tribulation saying, go, oh my word, but when you 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, not straight away.

Then said he unto them, nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and great earthquakes shall be in diverse places, and famines and pestilences and fearful sights and great signs shall be from heaven.

And what have you just witnessed as a tribulation saying, oh, we've seen all of these things come to pass. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake, as you realize the cost of what it is to be a believer.

[46 : 15] And they shall turn to you for testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what you shall answer, for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

Imagine the comfort that would give you at that time when you read that and you go, God, am I going to stand? Am I going to make it? When they come to get me, when they finally get me with their heat seeking drones and whatever, they track my phone and they finally come and get me and they're going to behead me, am I going to stand, God?

Am I going to make it? I love you, Jesus. I believe in you. I wish I had made it with the church. I don't have the experience. It's not the same. He says, settle it in your hearts. I will give you a mouth and wisdom.

I'll be with you. You shall be betrayed. I'm sure they will see this all the time all around them. Both by parents and brethren and kinfolks and friends and some of you, they shall cause to be put to death and you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

But there shall not a hair of your head perish. In your patience, possess you your souls, not your bodies. Possess your souls in patience because they're going to end up under that altar.

[47 : 23] And when you shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then they'll know, oh, we only got three and a half years left and he's coming. Then let them which are in Judea 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 therein.

For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Not vengeance of man, but the vengeance of God upon man. 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. You see Jesus is heartbreaking for the children, the women, and for his people Israel. 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.

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. I imagine when there's a worldwide earthquake, the tsunamis are going to be insane.

Men's hearts failing them for fear. Fall on us, rocks. Look for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. For the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

[48 : 44] We look for the rapture. We look for the return of Christ for his church. These tribulation saints in Revelation 6 verse 9, when they read that, if we can make it, we're going to see him come back.

We're going to see him coming in his power, in the clouds with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up whose heads? Your heads.

That's where he's saying it to the disciples. Fear redemption draws nigh. We are seeing so much begin to come to pass. The technology and the setup and the world system that will be in the seven years is how much closer must the rapture be.

But how encouraging it will be for these people that time. Lift up your heads, your redemption's very near. Lord, we thank you that the redemption we've experienced is very near.

A redemption that encompasses salvation, but also judgment. Wrath, but also grace. A lamb, the fierceness and wrath of that beautiful lamb, slain.

[49 : 48] Lord, I think of in Psalm 23, where you tell us that you are our good shepherd. That you are, David says, the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. And he ends it by saying, and surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

And the wording there is that mercy and goodness are going to hunt me down. They're the hounds of heaven sent out to hunt us down. And Lord, we can look at that as a terrifying thing, to be chased and hunted and haunted by you, until we realize that you just want to get a hold of us, so that we can get a hold of your mercy.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. Lord, we want to pray if our prayers, Lord, could be offered ahead of time, Lord, for our brothers and sisters, Lord, who will go through that day, Lord, who will be part of Revelation 6, verse 9, who will have to experience what it is to stand in the face of such overwhelming hatred and death.

We pray that they would be strong, Lord. Lord, we pray for the revival that is going to take place at that time, Lord, where as we read innumerable company in the scriptures, Lord, we come to know you.

So, Lord, today we would just ask, Lord, that give us fresh vision, Lord, to lift up our eyes and to realize, Lord, as we see these things begin to take place, as we see the silliness of a world that thinks that they can do it, that through humanism, through aligning all our hearts, we're going to bring peace and harmony, through a world that thinks they can solve all the problems of this world, of sin, and all they're doing is going to make it worse by spraying the air and silly things like that.

[51 : 32] Lord, as we see these things begin to come to pass, we don't want to grow fearful by looking at what comes upon the world, we want to lift up our heads because you draw near. And then, Lord, if those tribulation saints can stand without the same inward experience of the presence of the Holy Spirit, without the enabling and empowering of the presence of God, Lord, can't we stand, Lord?

Help us to stand in your grace and in your love and in Jesus' name. Amen.