

Chapter 5

The Sixth Seal

The end-times begin with seven seals.
The initial five seals are invisible to people on earth.
However, the sixth seal is an authentic attention-grabber!

End-time events begin with the opening of a document that was supernaturally closed with seven seals. The opening of the initial four seals brings four angels riding horses. These are commonly called “the four horsemen of the apocalypse.” People on earth cannot see these four angels or their horses.

With the release of each of these four angels, carefully note the words that describe each event. For example, one angel was given *power ... to take peace* (Revelation 6:4) and another angel *power ... to kill*. (Revelation 6:8) Note that having *power ... to kill*—does not mean that the corresponding deaths occur at the exact moment the seal is broken. Deaths from the effects brought by each angel occur throughout the entire seven-year period. Death due to *conquest, war, and famine* occur over the entire seven-year period.

TABLE 5-1: INVISIBLE SEALS

| Seal | Event | | Scripture |
|------|--|--------------------|-------------------|
| #1 | Angel riding white horse | Spirit of CONQUEST | Revelation 6:1-2 |
| #2 | Angel riding a red horse | Spirit of WAR | Revelation 6:3-4 |
| #3 | Angel riding a black horse | Spirit of FAMINE | Revelation 6:5-6 |
| #4 | Angel riding a pale horse | Spirit of DEATH | Revelation 6:7-8 |
| #5 | Martyrs ask God to avenge their deaths | | Revelation 6:9-11 |

People on earth will not see the fifth seal either. At that time martyred saints in heaven call for God to avenge their deaths—it is a call for justice.

Signs in the Sky

Scriptures describe sixth seal events in detail. There is a worldwide disturbance—likely asteroids slamming into the earth. This disturbance occurs during some sort of lunar eclipse.

I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. (Revelation 6:12-13)

Next God protects selected believers, *seals* those who are *servants of our God*—sealed for an impending rapture.

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: “Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.” (Revelation 7:1-3)

At the time God will provide this protection, the earth will have remained largely unharmed. After the start of the sixth seal, neither the *land* nor the *sea* have been harmed—even the *trees* are unharmed.

Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel. (Revelation 7:4) The Philadelphia rapture includes 144,000 Jewish believers. Angels seal these believers—identifying them for immediate rapture into heaven.

DISPENSATIONAL ERROR

Traditional interpretation states that countless millions of people die during the first four seals—yet clearly *the land*, *the sea*, and even *trees* remain under God’s protection starting into the sixth seal. Therefore, the first five seals must be invisible to people on earth.

In Heaven, John Sees Countless Millions of Newly Raptured People

The protection from God's sealing culminates with the early rapture. Then surprise! This great multitude of raptured believers, all members of the Philadelphia church, suddenly appears in heaven.

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. (Revelation 7:9)

A question is asked about the identity of those who suddenly appear in heaven—who are they?—and where they came from?

Then one of the elders asked me “These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?” I answered, “Sir, you know.” And he said, *“These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* (Revelation 7:13-14)

This *great multitude* has come out of the great tribulation. This answer clears any questions about the early rapture—period. The great multitude is the arrival in heaven of the newly raptured church. This multitude includes 144,000 Israeli believers; this group of 144,000 is never again seen on earth, but are later found on *Mount Zion*—an ancient term for “heaven.” (Revelation 7:4, 14:1)

This rapture must occur at this point—after the sun is blotted out, the moon turns blood red, and a worldwide earthquake occurs—because this sequence of events matches what Jesus taught.

Jesus' Commentary

On earth, end-time events begin at the sixth seal.

I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. (Revelation 6:12-13)

Jesus also described these sixth seal events, and the rapture that immediately follows.

'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' ... he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.' (see Matthew 24:29-31)

"There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars.

← SIXTH SEAL

On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

← RAPTURE

When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

← CONFIDENCE

← RAPTURE

(Luke 21:25-28)

When believers see peculiar signs in the *sun*, the *moon*, and the *stars*, it is time to react with confidence—*stand up and lift up your heads*. Believers can act with confidence because God's rescue—the rapture—is eminent! This terrifying moment will test every believer on earth. While most will panic—others will stand firm in brotherly (adelphía) love (phil).

Compare Jesus' end-time commentary recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke—with the same events in Revelation. Put aside what you may have learned from dispensational instructors—listen to Jesus—**THE SEQUENCE IS CLEAR!**

TABLE 5-2: THE EARLY (PHILADELPHIA) RAPTURE

| Matthew 24:29-31 | Mark 13: 24-27 | Luke 21: 26-28 | Revelation 6:12 – 7:14 |
|---|--|---|---|
| WORLDWIDE DISTRESS | | | |
| <i>Immediately after the distress of those days... (v29)</i> | <i>But in those days, following that distress, ... (v24)</i> | <i>Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world ... (v26)</i> | |
| <p>SIGNS IN THE SKY accompanied by EARTHQUAKES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The <i>sun</i> is darkened and the <i>moon</i> turns <i>blood red</i>. - Worldwide <i>earthquake</i> causes <i>the heavenly bodies</i> to appear <i>shaken</i>. - <i>Stars</i> (likely asteroids) slam into earth, one after another. | | | |
| <i>...”the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be <u>shaken</u>.” (v29)</i> | <i>...”the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be <u>shaken</u>. (v24,25)</i> | <i>...for the heavenly bodies will be <u>shaken</u>. (v26)</i> | <i>I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when <u>shaken</u> by a strong wind. (6:12-13) ... and every mountain and island was <u>removed from its place</u>. (v14)</i> |
| JESUS IN THE CLOUDS | | | |
| <i>At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the <u>clouds of the sky</u>, with power and great glory. (v30)</i> | <i>At that time men will see the Son of Man <u>coming in clouds</u> with great power and glory. (v26)</i> | <i>At that time they will see the Son of Man <u>coming in a cloud</u> with power and great glory. (v27)</i> | Described as: <i>The <u>sky</u> receded like a scroll, rolling up, (v14)</i> <i>This would unveil a view of Jesus, in the <u>sky</u>, <u>coming in clouds</u></i> |
| WORLDWIDE DISTRESS | | | |
| | | | <i>Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains.</i> |

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| | <p><i>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! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can <u>stand?</u>” (v15-17)</i></p> |
|--|--|

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR BELIEVERS

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| | <p><i>When these things begin to take place, <u>stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is <u>drawing near.</u></u></i> (v28)</p> |
|--|--|

PHILADELPHIA - HARVESTED FROM EARTH

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p><i>And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the <u>four</u> winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. (v31)</i></p> | <p><i>And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the <u>four</u> winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens. (v27)</i></p> | <p><i>After this I saw <u>four</u> angels standing at the <u>four</u> corners of the earth... (7:1)</i></p> |
|--|---|---|

PHILADELPHIA MEMBERS ARRIVE IN HEAVEN

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p><i>After this I looked and there before me was a <u>great multitude</u> that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb ... (7:9) Then one of the elders asked me “<u>These in white robes--who are they, and where did they come from?</u>” I answered, “Sir, you know.” And he said, “<u>These are they who have come out of the great tribulation...</u> (7:13-14)</i></p> |
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More Evidence

An event from Israel's history foreshadowed the early rapture. At the early rapture, God will protect passionate believers. In the following story, the Israelis protected were passionate—known to *grieve and lament over all the detestable things*. Those protected in ancient Jerusalem first received a *mark on the forehead*. This corresponds with what happens to 144,000 end-time Israelis who will participate in the early rapture as members of the Philadelphia church.

The LORD gave an angel these instructions: *and said to him, "Go throughout the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it."* As I listened, he said to the others, *"Follow him through the city and kill, without showing pity or compassion. Slaughter old men, young men and maidens, women and children, but do not touch anyone who has the mark. Begin at my sanctuary."* So they began with the elders who were in front of the temple. (Ezekiel 9:4-6)

Another Match

Those who *escape*—will *stand before* Jesus. Upon the appearance of the great multitude, John immediately noted that they were standing before Jesus: *After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.* (see Revelation 7:9)

Jesus had earlier stated that those who escaped through rapture would stand before him: *Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.* (Luke 21:36)

Another Match

At the sixth seal, believers are raptured to the *temple* in heaven. Their arrival in heaven describes a long-term stay at the temple, since they are to remain in the temple *day and night*. (Revelation 7:15) This is consistent with the earlier promise given Philadelphia believers—that they will *never again leave* the temple. (Revelation 3:12)