



### Seals 5 and 6 Opened

**A**ND when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? 11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. 12 And I beheld 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; 13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. 14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. 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 free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; 16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? (Rev 6:9-17)

The living essences of all who die in the Lord are transformed at physical death and are transported by the angels to Heaven. (see the account of the beggar, Lazarus, and the Rich Man – (Luke 16:20-22) When the body dies, the spirit returns to God who gave it. "5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: 6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. 7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the SPIRIT SHALL RETURN TO GOD WHO GAVE IT." (Eccl 12:5-7)

Just as the first four seals relate to the visible manifestations of fulfilled prophecy, the latter three reveal the invisible. John SAW the souls under the altar in spirit since souls are not visible to the naked eye. The focus of the opening of the Fifth Seal is centered on those who die with the testimony of Jesus. They are under the Altar (which represents the shed blood of Christ) and it is the Altar that sanctifies the gift, and not the gift the Altar. These long for the Justice of God to be meted out on their behalf on those who persecuted and murdered them for their faith in Christ and the testimony which they lived out in their lives.

Many of these doubtless are those who were crucified, fed to wild beasts in the Roman coliseums, or killed in a hundred other merciless ways by wicked men of the world. These were already under the altar of the Lord in Heaven at John's writing, but note that the prophecy also has a future tense of such horrendous persecutions to come. *"And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"* There is no question concerning whether God will avenge the blood of His saints – the only variable is WHEN. In the mandate of Eternity, such judgment is a foregone conclusion. These call out to the Lord for judgment. Dead men do not speak or cry out, but these have a voice just as does every saint of God who has ever died in the faith has a voice and a conscious being.

The Heavenly Vault of martyred souls has yet space for more to be added. I am amazed at the faithful courage of young Christian children in Syria and Iraq who refuse to renounce their faith under threat of beheadings. Many have died with greater courage and grace than a thousand modern professing Christians might muster, especially of the politically influenced churches. It does not seem reasonable that this passage would not have a parallel and direct reference to those good Christians who are suffering beheadings and other atrocities at the hands of satanic religious factions both in the Middle East and in Africa. *"it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that SHOULD BE KILLED as they were, should be fulfilled."* But those who are admitted to that great congregation are covered under the Altar by the blood of Christ once sacrificed, and are given White Robes - a raiment for the covering of any spot or blemish from their past walk on earth.

The opening of the Sixth Seal heralds a coming apocalyptic event of tremendous proportion. It is preparatory to the opening of the Seventh Seal which will be discussed later. *"And I beheld 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."* This hails back to verses 4 & 8 of this chapter in which the sword, pestilence, and famine held sway following the Rider on the Red Horse and that on the Pale Horse. Our Lord Jesus Christ made reference to these events in Matthew 24. Of the coming sword, Jesus says: *"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."* (Matt 24:6-7)

The widespread martyrdom that was witnessed contemporary to John's visions and which we observe today, perhaps in greater measure than ever before, are also described by our Lord: *"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."* (Matt 24:9-10) Both this Book of Revelation and the very Word of our Lord in the Gospels combine to describe these tumultuous occurrences. For those who are deceived into expecting a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> return of Christ, be

advised that He will only return ONCE and for all. His arm is not shortened that He is unable to do all at the great return with the Holy Angels leading the armies of Heaven. Those who have believed the deception of the so-called Rapture Theory will be left disillusioned and without hope when their perceived fantasies fail them. Those who are being beheaded in Islamic countries, or riddled with bulletins in Communist nations such as North Korea, did not witness an acquittal of their suffering by being raptured, and neither will any others. Being a member of the true Elect of God has never guaranteed any of exemption from persecution and suffering.

Yes, *“and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.”* Our Lord warned us of these things as well: *“<sup>29</sup> 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: <sup>30</sup> 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.”* (Matt 24:29-30)

During the bombardment of Bagdad under Saddam Hussein, I remember missiles falling like stars from Heaven. It also reminded me of an account illustrating the same from one of the non-canonical apocryphal books, *“They shall come to her, and besiege her, the star and all wrath shall they pour out upon her: then shall the dust and smoke go up unto the heaven, and all they that be about her shall bewail her.”* (2 Esdras 16:44). John is recording things as he sees them in human terms known in that day. But the advance of science in our day may also be represented by some of his descriptive terms. *“<sup>13</sup> And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. <sup>14</sup> And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.”* (Rev 6:13-14)

*“<sup>14</sup> And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. <sup>15</sup> 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 free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; <sup>16</sup> And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: <sup>17</sup> For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”* (Rev 6:13-17) These cataclysmic happenings must surely have resembled, and WILL resemble, the time of the pre-Adamic Deluge as the hordes of men, women, children, lions, elephants, snakes, and all manner of beast competed for the highest branch and mountain peak as the flood waters rose. This great Day is that Last Day of the Lord proclaimed throughout Scripture. It is a Great Day because it introduces the Eternal Day of Christ without end. All will tremble and seek a hiding place. The great kings will no longer be high and mighty. This is descriptive of events just preceding the return of Christ. *“Who shall be able to stand”* in that day? Of course, only the Elect shall stand. Christ will not make a final end until the Elect are sealed and gathered out of the earth – NEXT!