***All Categories of Men Hide Themselves

RV126-02***

We are studying the sixth seal in Revelation 6:12-17. This is segment number two.

**The Sixth Seal**

The sixth seal on the scroll which is held in the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ reveals a series of disasters in nature during the second half of the tribulation era. First, there was a gigantic earthquake of worldwide proportions described. Then the light and the heat of the sun is obliterated for a period of time. Then the moon takes on the red coloring of blood, perhaps from the dust and debris cast up into the atmosphere from the earthquakes and the possible volcanic eruptions. Then the stars were seen to fall to the earth like fruit from a shaking tree. Then, suddenly, the sky was rolled up in some fashion upon itself, like a window curtain that had been let loose, and when suddenly wrapping around itself. Then we were told that every mountain range and island was moved out of position.

All of that, you can obviously see, represents enormous natural disruptions on the face of the earth. These disasters in nature are actually predicted in the Old Testament as signaling the arrival of God's judgment upon the world at the end time. So, this is interesting to read – that John sees these very things which the Old Testament says are going to be the signs that God is at the threshold, and about ready to come to judge the world. God's appearances in the Old Testament thus were accompanied by these phenomena in nature. Such events clearly proclaim that God is sovereign, and they clearly proclaim His omnipotence over creation.

Satan and his man, the antichrist, on the other hand, are completely helpless to stop these frightening calamities. This really shows who is in charge. God's love always gives sinners warning and opportunity to repent. But His Holiness then executes justice upon the rebellious.

So, these cosmic catastrophes in the tribulation era reflect God's wrath against rebellious humanity. The Old Testament prophet Isaiah described these things precisely in this way. And when John saw these things taking place in the vision in heaven, as he looked down upon the earth, undoubtedly, this passage in Isaiah flashed through his mind.

Isaiah 13:6-13 says, "Wail, for the day of the Lord is at hand. It shall come as the destruction from the Almighty. Therefore, shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt. And they shall be afraid. Pangs and sorrow shall take hold of them. They shall be in pain like a woman that travails. They shall be amazed one at another. Their faces shall be as flames. Behold the day of the Lord comes, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate, and He shall destroy the sinners out of it. For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof shall not give their light. The sun shall be darkened and His going forth, and the moon shall not cause its light to shine. And I'll punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity. And I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more rare than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore, I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of its place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger."

That passage in Isaiah is speaking precisely about the Tribulation era. It is describing exactly what John sees taking place. The orderliness of the heavenly bodies and of the earth's surface is essential to human survival. So, when things start going askew out in outer space, and when the earth's surface starts convulsing in one way or another, human beings die. It is not possible without the orderly arrangement (the orderly progress) of space (the bodies out in space) and of the surface of the earth, for human beings to survive. The vast disruptions that John sees demonstrate again the utter helplessness of arrogant man before an angry creator God.

Ultimately, of course, out of these judgments in nature, we are told that there will come a new heaven and a new earth. 2 Peter 3:10-13 tell us that, as well as Revelation 21:1. The dramatic disruptions in nature, which are seen by John, are indeed a sign to tribulation humanity that the end is near, and that God is approaching to express his righteous wrath upon them. Society at this time will have degenerated into total chaos, probably very much like the condition that existed before the Noahic Flood. This condition is described in Genesis 6:5, where we read, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." That, by and large, is the case with people today. The imagination of the thoughts of men's minds is basically continually evil today.

So, the whole fabric of human government is going to be torn to shreds in the tribulation era when God begins these dramatic natural catastrophes. That includes the United States.

**The United States in the End Times**

This past week, I heard the famous prophecy teacher and author Hal Lindsey being interviewed on the radio, and I was interested to hear him make two observations as the lady who was interviewing said, "Summarize it." He said two things that I have also concluded are true. Number one, he said, "There is no evidence in the Bible that the United States will be in existence after the rapture – that the United States, when the tribulation begins, will be any kind of a significant power on the face of the earth." That is important because the Bible is very explicit on other nations being significant powers on the face of the earth. For the United States to be passed over in silence indicates that it does not come into the picture.

**The U. S. Presidential Election**

Secondly, he said, "This presidential election, which is before us, will determine how close the end is. If President Reagan is not reelected, then," in his opinion, "we may expect a short period of time before worldwide disaster descends, and probably the beginning of the tribulation era itself." In any case, I think he's right on the button in saying that one of the most important features of this election will be the indication that it has to us as Christians as to how we should go about doing the Lord's business. It is of great personal concern to me that we should always be sensitive to the leading of the Lord, such that, at some point in time, because we don't know where the end point is in time, that we should cease and desist from doing certain things, and pass our maximum effort in other things that are going to bear maximum fruit in the short haul that we may have left. On the long haul, there are certain things that a ministry should do. If we're on the short haul, those things are no longer of major value and importance, while other things, in terms of a residue of the Word of God left behind in some form (a separation of the people of God for maximum effort in testifying and witnessing to our generation) are far more important then.

So, whatever the picture is, certainly the world is going to know that God has finally come to judge its evil. And, the United States, one of the leading nations in evil, will undoubtedly come under a major portion of that divine judgment.

So, the earth is going to become a jungle of violence and of desperation on the part of people to escape the wrath of God. These terrifying events, however, I want to remind you, that we read of under the sixth seal, do not end human history, because as we shall find later, there are worse judgments coming into even the natural realm than these that we read of here. Furthermore, we see that believers are still alive on earth during the tribulation. Those who are can rejoice in these very horrible natural catastrophes, because if they know the Bible, they will know that these signal that the end is near; that these signal the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, that He is about to make His entrance to this earthly scene in order to rescue them.

For example, the Lord indicated that in Mark 13:24-29: "But in those days (after that tribulation), the sun shall be darkened; the moon shall not give its light; the stars of heaven shall fall; and, the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken." This is again describing again what John sees: "Then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. Then shall He send His angels, and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the outermost part of heaven. Now, learn a parable from the fig tree. When its branch is yet tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So, you, in like manner, when you shall see these things come to pass, know that it is near, even at the door." The Lord is stressing that these things will all signal the return of the Lord, and of the vengeance of God. You may add Luke 21:25-28 to that.

Believers, during this period of tribulation, will be under mounting brutal persecution. But at the end of the tribulation, some of them will have survived. Notice again, Mark 13:9: "But take heed to yourself, for they shall deliver you up to councils." This is the tribulation era of saints: "And in the synagogues, you shall be beaten, and you shall be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony against them. And the gospel must first be proclaimed among all nations." Now, since this is the tribulation era, this is not the gospel of the grace of God. This is the gospel that John the Baptist was preaching. This is the gospel that the apostles were preaching. This is the gospel of Jesus was preaching – the good news about the Messianic Kingdom having arrived. That's the gospel they're going to be preaching, and calling upon people now to accept this king that God has brought them.

Mark 13:11 says, "But when they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what you shall speak. Neither do you premeditate. But whatever shall be given you in that hour, speak that, for it is not you that speak, but the Holy Spirit. Now brother shall betray brother to death, and the father his son, and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death." There is great disloyalty within family members in the tribulation era. Everybody is trying to save his hide.

Verse 13: "And you shall be hated of all men for My namesake. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." What does that mean? "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." That sounds like you can lose your salvation after all. If you don't hang in there straight and right, you're not going to be saved. That's what it says: "He that endures to the end shall be saved." But you have to read that sentence, of course, in the context of what he's been talking about. What end is in view here? He's talking about the end of the tribulation persecutions, and the end of the tribulation sufferings. He says, "Those of you who are believers, who survive physically alive until the very end, you will be saved from physical death." That's what He has in mind. The idea is that you will be preserved out of the tribulation.

So, that tells us that some believers, people who have been born-again during the tribulation, will come out of it alive. That won't be a large number, but there will be some who come out of it alive. That's what he is referring to at that point.

You may add to this Matthew 24:4-14. These verses, of course, do not indicate loss of salvation whatsoever.

**Governmental Leaders**

So, we now come to Revelation 6:15 with that background. Now we have the response of the rebels to what God is doing. The first thing we notice is that all segments of human society try to escape. So, verse 15 says, "And the kings of the earth." The word "kings" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's "basileus." "Basileus" is the word for "a governmental authority." It just means "a king." Furthermore, it is kings on the "earth" (the "ge"). So, what we are talking about here are the heads of nations. It is the leaders of the various nations which will be existing in the tribulation period who will bear the greatest responsibility to cope with the events that are taking place. To whom will people naturally look to deal with these great catastrophe but the government? And who, but the heads of those governments, will be expected to come up with an answer? But the politicians will be totally demoralized, and they will be incapable of governing. So, category number one of human beings who are going to try to escape what is happening, our governmental leaders.

**Great Men**

Category number two, he calls "great men." That looks like this in the Greek Bible: "megistan." "Megistan" is a word that refers to socially important people in society: the scientists; the educators; the medical people; the sociologists; the theologians; and the psychiatrists – people who bear a great deal of influence through their opinions on the thinking of other people. Now these authorities are going to be helpless to assist mankind. They're going to be occupied with their own traumas and their own difficulties, let alone that they should be able to give counsel to other people as normally they would be able to do. So, these VIPs within society are going to be in desperate straits.

**The Rich**

Then he says that there is a third category. He calls this "the rich men." If you have money, you have power. If there's anybody that should be able to cope with the problems, it should be the "plousios." Money can buy anything. When food becomes a problem, as it will in the tribulation, medical care becomes a problem, as well as a place to live; a place to sleep; and, a means of transportation – all the things that are necessary for mobility and survival. The people who have money certainly should be in the best position to be able to make it. This word simply describes "material wealth." That's what "plousios" means. We're talking about the financiers of society, as well as the heads of corporations and various wealthy individuals.

However, the possessors of great wealth will be impotent before the wrath of God. The world of nature is in a cauldron of turmoil around them, and their money will not buy them protection.

**Military Officers**

Furthermore, there is a fourth category of very important people. He calls them the chief captains. The Greek Bible lists them as the "chiliarchos." The "chiliarchos" was an officer in the Roman army. He was a military commander of a cohort which consisted of about 1,000 men. Comparable to our military services today, that would be a battalion level. This refers then to military officers of considerable rank. They are unable to influence what is taking place in the tribulation. With all of their power, and with all of their sophisticated nuclear space-age weapons, they are helpless. These are probably men who have faced combat, and who have known the terror and the stress of that. Now they're totally demoralized themselves before God's anger. The military leaders can't cut it either.

**The Mighty Men**

There there's a fifth category as well. He calls these "the mighty men." This is a significant word. The Greek word is the "ischuros." This word refers to physical, muscular strength. The "ischuros" are that whole gang in the tribulation that has been on health foods; vitamins; jogging; pressing iron; and, all the other stuff. They're in good physical condition. They always went to the ski slopes. They did all that summer camp stuff. They did all the things that kept them in good shape. Now they enter this terrible period, and they're in top physical condition. Well, certainly, in a time of turmoil like this, the people who are in good condition are the ones who most likely will survive, and who probably would be in a position, one would expect, of some stability and calm. They're the physically fit. They should take the crisis in their stride. But the strong are as helpless as those who are sick and weak. They are just as helpless in trying to take care of themselves in the face of God's wrath. They cannot deal with it either. Their strength and their capacity is sapped just as much as those who are weaker.

**The Slaves**

Furthermore, he says, "There is the category number six of the slaves: the "doulos." This is the word for people whose volition is restricted. You know what a slave is. Now, who would be a slave in today's world? Well, obviously, we might put into this category people who are in prison, whose volition has been restricted. But certainly there are some in some of the Arabian countries (some of the Muslim countries) where there is slavery. There are people who indeed are held in the position of a slave. But, by and large, in the world today, the slaves would be found in the communist countries where people do not have the freedom of volition. They, in some way, have their capacity to come and go as they please restricted. So, these people are a vast number of human beings who are in the category of the lowest echelons of society. These are just the common ordinary people, but who do not possess freedom. They cannot help themselves in the face of God's wrath.

**The Free Man**

Then closing it with the perfect number of categories is the one called "the free man." This is the "eleutheros. The "eleutheros" refers to a person who is free to exercise his will. This is the person who can come and go as he chooses. This would represent what segments of the free world are still left at the time. But these people, again, the ordinary common person, but who have the category of freedom, cannot deal with the issue of the wrath of God. All of them are in the same boat. Whoever they are in the boat is simply that they cannot escape the wrath of God, which is coming down upon them.

**They Hide Themselves**

So, verse 15 says, "They seek to deal with these judgments in nature, reflecting the imminency of the appearance of the enraged wrathful righteous God, by hiding themselves. The word "hide" is the Greek word "krupto." "Krupto" means "to conceal," Here at this point in the tribulation era, its active voice. The people themselves are trying to figure out a way to hide. And what are they trying to hide in? They look around and say, "How can we escape the wrath of that person who is out there? We've been joking about there being no God out there. Sometimes we have shaken our fists at Him, as the Russians have done, and said, 'We're going to bring Him down out of His heaven."

Suddenly they find that He is there. So, they look for the "spelaion." The "spelaion" refers to dens – holes in the sides of mountains. This is the word that is used in John 8:38 to describe the tomb of Lazarus. It was just a hole in the side of a cliff. So, these people look for someplace dark and off the surface of the earth in order to try to escape from God.

Furthermore, they look for boulders ("petra"). This is the word for a large, massive boulders. It is debris which is accumulated from the mountains, either by avalanches or by glacial deposits. So, they have piled up a huge boulder field. Those of you who have been through national parks, from time to time, you've crossed a huge boulder fields like this – remnants of glacial action. You can actually crawl in and out between these boulders in one way or another, and you can make your way down underneath and actually hide there. That's what these people are doing. They're trying to crawl through all the spaces between the boulders in order to get under the pile, and to hide themselves from the God of wrath. That's kind of a dumb thing to do, but in their desperation, that is about all that all these seven categories of human beings can think of in trying to escape the wrath that God is bringing upon them.

Here, again, are the marvels of the accuracy of the Word of God which make you so respect the Bible. Hundreds of years before John wrote, Isaiah 2:10-12 recorded that they would do exactly this in the tribulation era: "Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, for fear of the Lord and for the glory of His Majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of Hosts (that day of great judgment) shall be upon everyone who is proud and lofty, and upon everyone who is lifted up, and he shall be brought low." You couldn't have a more accurate description of the New Age humanity of the tribulation than in that verse 12: the arrogant; the lofty; the proud; and, the lifted up.

Drop down to Isaiah 2:17: "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And He shall utterly abolish the idols. And you shall go into the caves of the rocks, and into the holes of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His Majesty when he arises to terribly shake the earth. In that day, a man shall cast his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship to the moles (that is, to the rodents), and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for the fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His Majesty when he arises to terribly shake the earth. Cease from man (stop paying attention and listening to men, he is saying), whose breath is in his nostrils (He is mortal, just as you are. Why are you listening to other people instead of to the God who has spoken in Scripture): for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Why are you taking into account what people say?

Then we may add another description of this action that John is seen in Joel 2:30: "I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood; and fire; and, pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes." And notice that in the midst of the tribulation: "It shall come to pass that whoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered." Yes, there are going to be some people who are going to make the connection. They're going to see what is happening; they're going to remember the Scripture; they've got to remember that Berean tape that they listened to, or some other tape; and, they're going to remember that book they read on prophecy, and they're going to say, "Aha, I know what is happening. The God that we were told is out there: He is out there; He is not silent; and, I'm believing. I'm going with Him." And the rebel turns to the living God. What will happen? He'll be born again?

"It shall come to pass that whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance as the Lord has said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." There is going to be a group of people who will be left over and who will respond.

Now, of course, all of these attempts to hide within caves and under piles of rock is really quite stupid, because it is totally fruitless and pointless. You can't do it. One of the great declarations of that is Psalm 139. I'd like you to turn to that because we've got some very important information in this psalm that you should observe. Here is the observation of the psalmist of the omnipresence of God, and how foolish these people are to think that they can escape God by falling into a cave or under a pile of rocks.

Psalm 139 says, "Oh, Lord, You have searched me, and known me. You know my down sitting, and my uprising. You understand my thoughts afar off. You compass my path, and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there's not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, You know it altogether. You have beset me behind them before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high. I cannot attain unto it. Where shall I go from Your spirit, or where shall I flee from Your presence? If I ascend up into heaven, You are there. If I make my bed in Sheol (or Hades), behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uppermost parts of the sea, even there shall Your hand lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me – even the night shall be light about me," God can see through the darkness. Yea, the darkness does not hide from You, but the night shines as the day. The darkness and the light are both alike to You."

**Abortion**

All of that summarizes the tremendous point that there is no place that you can go to escape from God. Even interestingly enough, the psalmist then goes on to say, within your mother's womb. Here is the primary fundamental scriptural law against abortion. Please make a note of it for the next time that some idiot talks to you about abortion, and a woman's right to her body, and all that. That's man's law. The subtle suggestion that you can't decide this from the Bible is wrong. The Bible is explicitly clear on the issue of when a conception becomes a human being, which means the point in time when God has a plan for that individual. God does not have a plan for human beings that do not exist. He has plans for those that exist.

In this passage (in this psalm), where he's talking about there being no place you can escape from the presence and the functioning of God's hand, he brings it right down to the innermost caverns of the mother's body in the womb. Psalm 139:13 says, "For You have possessed my inward parts. You have covered in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." That is easily understood if you know anything about the structure of human anatomy, and the way the human body works: "Your works are marvelous, and that my soul knows right well. My substance was not hidden from You when I was made in secret (here in the mother's womb), and intricately wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." This is using the word "earth" as a poetic expression of the innermost recesses of the mother's body: "Your eyes did see my substance, yet being unformed. And in Your book, all my members were written."

Yes, God has a book. In it, He says, "At the moment of conception, I have a human being to deal with. And in My book, I have recorded all the details concerning the physical structure and development of this human being. His hair is going to be blond; his eyes are going to be brown; his nose is going to be this shape; his body will be this shape; he's going to be barrel-chested; he's going to be slender; he's going to be a male, or she's going to be a female; he's going to be so tall; and, he's going to have all these particular temperament characteristics as well. It's all written down in God's book, because it is God who is putting all this together inside the womb.

Verse 16: "Your eyes did see my substance, yet being unformed. And in Your book, all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Before all these little parts developed, and before all of my characteristics and qualities of temperament developed, it was all there in reality with You, because I was there at that point.

So, in verse 17, the psalmist says, "How precious also are Your thoughts unto me, O, God? How great is the sum of them?" He says, "I love the thinking of God. I love the fact that he has a plan for me, and that He has created me. Furthermore, He did not leave me as a helpless creature without information. His words have given me direction, and I love that about Him."

Verse 18: "If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand. When I awake, I am still with You. Surely You will slay the wicked, O God. Depart from me, therefore, you bloody men, for they speak against You wickedly and Your enemies take Your name in vain." Have you heard the enemies of God take God's name in vain? Just attend any movie. Just listen to any television program, and see how often the name of God is taken in a loathsome fashion, totally in vain, in spite the fact that God's law says, "Don't do it." But the Old sin nature says, "Oh sure, use the name of Jesus Christ in swearwords. Use the name of anything that has to do with the living deity, and make an emphasis of your point:" "They speak wickedly. They take Your name in vain," and that's a very serious, serious sin.

So, in verse 21, he says, "Do I not hate them, O Lord, that hate You?" Man, that is strong language! And I'm going to tell you right now: don't try to wiggle out of it. He means "hate." He means deep, gut-felt hatred toward those who hate God. They are the enemies of God. And when they are the enemies of God, because how they act and how they believe, they're my enemies as well, he says: "And am I not grieved with those who rise up against You?" "When I hear the name of my Lord taken in vain, it grieves me. When I hear somebody promoting abortion against the Word of God, it grieves me. When I hear curse words used, it grieves me. When I hear government being used in a way that the Word of God does not authorize it to be used, let alone our Constitution, it grieves me.

So, in verse 22, he says, "I hate them with a perfect hatred." That means a godly hatred: "I count them my enemies."

Then the last two verses add one more dramatic truth about the God who knows it all, and who sees it all. It is He who can discover in us the hidden evils which He sees so clearly, and of which we have the blind spots. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer at Dallas Seminary, when we used to discuss this chapter, said, "Here, men, is a prayer worthy of your daily enunciation, in these last two verses of Psalm 139: "Search me, O God, and know my heart (that is, my mind). Try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." This is the prayer of the Psalms for God, who knows it all, and who sees in the inner most bowels of the earth, into the mother's womb, and to wherever we are – that God can also see the problems of sin that abide and reside within us.

Well, all of mankind's self-confidence and self-security will be shattered as these natural disasters clearly proclaim the reality of God. God clearly then will be seen as a transcendent being; that is, one separate from creation, and in control of it all.

Now, what can the atheist say in the tribulation when he sees this happening? What can the indifferent person, the one who is indifferent toward the Bible, say at that point? If God demonstrates such anger through nature, what will He do to a human being in the lake of fire? And all will see then that sin is a reality, and that God has the standard of absolute righteousness which all must possess, or they are to be doomed forever.

So, we have, in Revelation 6:15, as these seek to hide themselves from this God, who knows it all, in the caves and in rock boulder piles. Verse 16 expresses a prayer. The word "said" is the word "lego:" "And said to the mountains and rocks." This is the word for a verbal expression. It's in the present tense. They are constantly saying this. It's active. All these segments of society are uttering this – what is, in effect, a prayer. It's a statement of fact. And to whom are they speaking? They're speaking again to the mountains. They're speaking to the rocks – these huge boulders, and they're asking these to fall upon them. The Greek word is "pipto." This word means "to drop down upon." They're urgently pleading with the mountains and the rocks. They are personally doing this. Furthermore, this word is a command. It's imperative. They're commanding these mountains to fall upon them.

It is interesting that people who once sneered at prayer; people who were once indifferent toward prayer; people who made light of those who pray; and, people who didn't care whether kids in public schools could gather in prayer or not, now they're on their knees, shrieking out their terror, and whom are they addressing? You would think that, at this point, in heaven's name, they would turn to the living God. No. They speak to inanimate dumb rocks. They speak to the caves to come to the rescue in their behalf. Once they denied prayer. Now they resort to it, in the foolish thought that they can get the help. And still they do not humble themselves before the God whose wrath they fear. They want these dens; these rocks; and, these mountains to fall upon them so as to hide them. The word is "krupto." It means "to conceal from sight." Again, it's a command. They're commanding that this should happen to them. This is indeed a vain hope.

In Amos 9:1-4, the same vain hope was expressed by Israel in its rebellion against God – that it could be hidden: "I saw the Lord standing upon the altar, and He said, 'Smite the capitals of the door, that the posts may shake, and cut them in the head, all of them. And I will slay the last of them with the sword. He of them that flees shall not flee away. He of them that escapes shall not be delivered. Though they dig into Sheol, there My hand shall take them. Though they climb up to heaven, from there I'll bring them down. Though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out from there. Though they be hidden from My sight in the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent, and he shall bite them. Though they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command the sword, and it shall slay them, and I will set My eyes upon them for evil, and not for good." God is saying, "This is what I'm going to do to Israel as they try in various ways to escape the judgment that God was bringing upon them in their day. This is the same picture. There is no escape.

However, notice what they are praying for the rocks; the dens; and, the caves to hide them from: "To fall down upon them, to hide them from the face." This is the Greek word "prosopon." "Prosopon" means "from the eyes." The tribulation centers do not fear having a cave collapse upon them. They do not bear having this pile of rocks move and crush them to death. But what do they fear? Standing up, eyeball-to-eyeball, to face this righteous God. They learn something at that point indeed. That is a fear that is well-taken. But unfortunately, as you know, that even if their physical bodies are crushed and they are killed, the soul continues in existence, and it continues there: "to face Him that sits upon the throne from whom they seek to flee." Him that sits upon the throne," of course, refers to that throne that we have seen earlier in the book of the Revelation. That is the throne of God the Father who is now sitting there exercising this judgment.

Furthermore, verse 16 says, "From the wrath." That is the "orge:" "From the wrath of the Lamb" (of the Lord Jesus Christ). This great word "orge" means "anger," which is a settled attitude of mind. It is not something that's a spur-of-the-moment. It is not an anger such that we would say, "This character is short-tempered. He's popping off." This is something that has a basis. It's not something that's just developed. It's something that is continuous with God. It is the response of the Father's holiness against the violators of His standard of righteousness.

This same thought is expressed in Romans 1:18: "For the 'orge' God (the settled anger of God) is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." If there's anything that you want to do to anger God, just hold the Bible in contempt, and you'll do a good job of it. That is the thing that God has said: "*I have put My Word above My Name*." The name of God represents everything that He is. If you go cutting down the Bible, you will have the "orge" and the anger of God.

This specifically is the "orge" of the "arnion." This refer to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God, the sacrificial lamb, to pay for the sins of the world. The tribulation rebels failed to obey as Psalm 2:12 describes. At this point in the tribulation, the Lord Jesus Christ now becomes the executor of this divine wrath. He is no longer, as He is today, the one who is extending the grace of forgiveness.

In John, 5:22, the Lord said, "For the Father judges no man, but He commits all judgment unto the Son." And here you see it happening before your very eyes. Those who had spurned divine love are now faced with the horror of divine justice. Sin causes us to try to hide from God. The classic example, of course, is Adam and Eve, and it's foolishness. Man fears facing a holy God more than he fears death itself.

So, they call this physical death upon them. Verse 17 tells us why. It says, "For (meaning 'because' – the Greek conjunction 'hoti,' giving the reason – because) the great day of wrath." This is referring to what the Old Testament calls "the day of the Lord," such as you read about in Zephaniah 1:14-18. The great day of wrath is the great day of the Lord: "The great day of judgment is come." It has actually arrived. It was long-predicted in Scripture, and here it is.

And then we have the question: "Who (referring to any person) can (who shall be able to) stand?" Compare Nahum 1:6 with Malachi 3:2. We have this same question in the Old Testament: Who shall be able? Who will have the capacity? The word "able" is "dunami." It means the capacity to be able to resist this. It is the capacity to do what? To stand ("histemi"). It means, "Who can survive the wrath of this God? Who can stand before Him? Who can achieve the purpose of surviving?

**Moses**

So, the cost of worshiping the antichrist now comes home to the tribulation society. How much better indeed to flee to the rock of ages today, than to appeal to the rocks to hide you from His wrath and His justice? Today, people smugly ignore the Bible for short-term gratifications. Moses was smarter than that. Moses did not compromise with the truth. Moses did not go along in order to gain some benefit when he knew he was dealing with a society that was wrong. We had that wonderful statement made about him in Hebrews 11:24, where we read, "By Faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."

So, Christian, what is your Egypt that you are tempted to place in higher esteem than the Word of God? John 3:16 makes it clear. Either believe, or perish. There is no alternative.

So, the turmoil in the world of nature, that the tribulation people see, will cast great fear into their hearts. But as I say, it will stop. There will be survivors. What will they do? Will they then turn to God, and say, "He has given us a breather? Now it's believed or perish. We know it now. God is there. We better learn the Scriptures and obey." No. Instead, they say, "We were too quick. There are scientific explanations for these things that have happened." And they begin to clean up the debris; to fix their damaged structures; and, they become more hardened against God in the pattern of barrel of Pharaoh of old. When the pressure was removed, he hardened his heart, and went back to his evil way. That's what they're going to do. As soon as the pressure is off; the sun starts shining; the moon comes back to its regular color; and, the turmoils on the surface of the earth settle down, they're going to begin to plan how to make it without God again. Don't tell me that the sin nature of man is not a grossly evil thing. It is the absolute, most unbelievably degraded thing that was ever experienced in the human race. For those people, the worst is yet to come. I trust that for you, it is nothing but the best still ahead.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1984

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