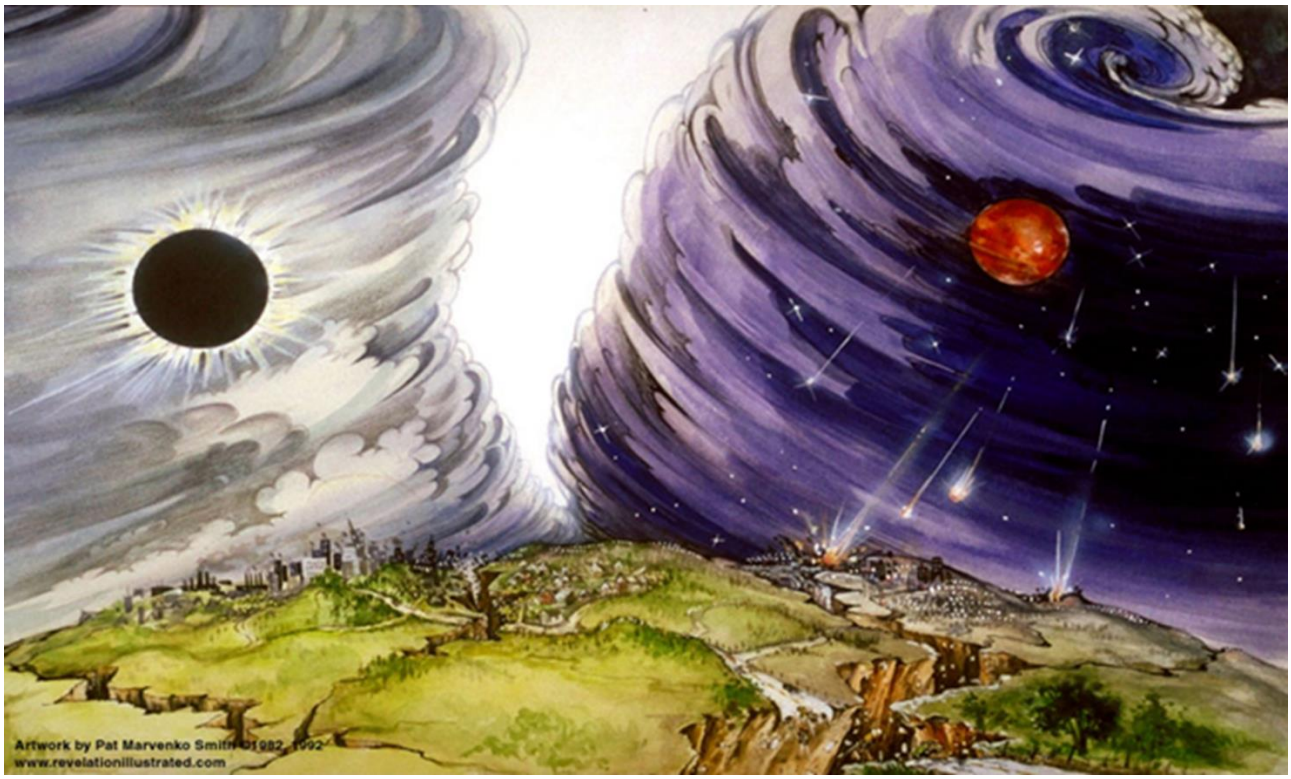
Thursday Bible Class **27th November 2025**

Sixth Seal **Revelation 6: 12-17**



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.

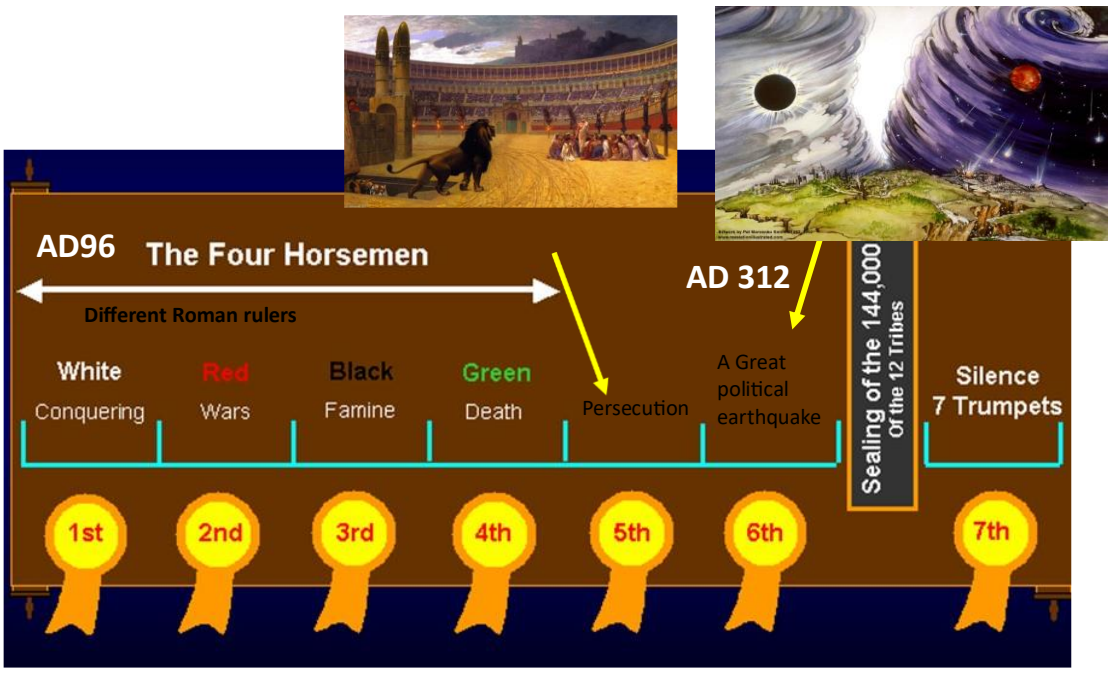
14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

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?

We recall how the first four seals being opened, revealed different coloured horses with riders holding various implements, which represented successive stages of the development of the Roman Empire, and the way it affected the Ecclesia, and the growth of Christianity. The Fifth Seal showed a significant change and the symbology in the vision reflects that, with an altar with voices crying out from underneath, denoting the severe oppression, and persecution which befell all who claimed to be Christians, true and false alike. The continuing growth of the influence of Christianity throughout the Empire showed no sign of decreasing despite the persecution, and the Empire was reaching crisis point.



The opening of the Sixth seal reveals the accurate prophecy which was given by the Lord Jesus in respect of this period of history from AD 312 - 324

John decribes in vision how he saw a great earthquake, with the sun becoming black as sackcloth, the moon as blood, and stars falling from heaven like figs. These are Divine symbols already used in scripture. Nahum 1:5 specifically tells us that the earthquaking in symbolic language represnts people and nations – yes, *the world and all that dwell therein*. Furthermore Joel 2:10: *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: We note the similarity in language, how the Revelation is using Old Testament symbols. Joel was not using literal language. Isaiah 1:2 and Jeremiah 51:24-25 describe 'earth' as people and nations. So the earth quaking is representative of a very big change – a political or military revolution of some kind affecting many peoples.

The Lord Jesus also borrows the words of Joel in Matthew 24:29-30, where he describes the sun being darkened and the moon not giving light. The sun and moon again here are not literal. In the same way Joseph dreamed of the sun and moon bowing down to him in Genesis 37:9 was not literal, it spoke of ruling powers being subservient, so as the Sun is often represented in scripture as the supreme ruler, so here in the vision given to John.

The moon likewise a power in the political heavens which reflects the glory of the supreme ruler. As the moon literally was given for signs, seasons, days and years (Genesis 1:14) so in symbolic language, it is the power which governs the everyday life of the earth – the common people. That is religion. The priesthood, the customs of the empire.

The stars falling – again minor rulers in the political heavens, losing their influence, falling like early figs being blown of a tree in a storm, rulers displaced from their perches, when their hold on power was already dubious, and weak.

In verse 14, we can read of mountains and islands being moved about! Again Jeremiah 51:24-25 shows how such symbols are used to describe powerful military jurisdictions and domains.

Also heaven departing as a scroll, when rolled together. The earlier picture is designed to show all these symbols. A roll of parchment, paper or vellum, when rolled tightly, to be stored, retains a springiness, so when rolled out on the ground for everyone to read, has to be held down, but as soon as one end is let go, it immediatly

rolls up again by itself. This explains the temporay nature of the kingdoms, and empires of men. Elevated on high, these ruling powers in the political heavens are only permitted to be there, by the hand of God, which allows them some time to be inspected, before His power is withdrawn, and – ping – the whole basis of society just winds itself up, and the arrangement is no more.

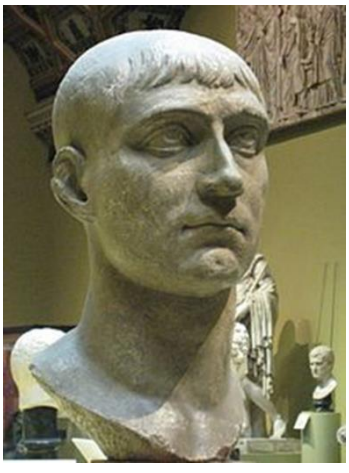
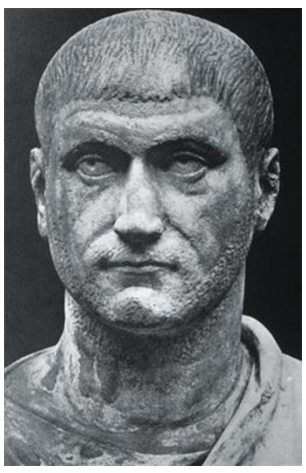
Verse 15 confirms this understanding, that John was seeing the complete overhaul of a political and religious system, and not literal sun and moon and earth disappearing, (as some cranks would have us believe) but the downfall of the rich and powerful, and turning upside down of the status quo.

This is the prophetic picture that John saw which was revealed and followed that of the period of severe persecution and attempt to eradicate Christianity from the Roman empire.

We recall from the time of the fifth seal, that the emperor Diocletian who was responsible for so much of the persecution, that he introduced a system of government which involved tetrarchs, that is he divided the empire into four, with himself being the main ruler (the sun).

After the end of Diocletians reign, the system of rulership broke down. Ruling over the empire were four rulers who all wanted complete control. This kick-started a massive civil war across the empire.

Maxentius Maximin Licinius Constantine



Of these four emperors all ruling as tetrarchs, Constanitine was made emperor in York in England in AD306. He decriminalised Christianity amongst his subjects, as he was heavily influenced by his mother Helena. Very quickly these four Pagan emperors fell out with each other, and what followed was a series of wars. In a very significant battle Constantine faced Maxentius with an army which was twice the size as his.

The Roman author Lactantius wrote the following:"Constantine was directed in a dream to cause the heavenly sign to be delineated on the shields of his soldiers, and so to proceed to battle. He did as he had been commanded, and he marked on their shields the letter X, with a perpendicular line drawn through it and turned round thus at the top, being the cipher of Christ. Having this sign (☧), his troops stood to arms." Furthermore another early Catholic Eusebius claimed that Constantine had a vision while marching at midday in which "he saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, above the sun, and bearing the inscription, In Hoc Signo Vinces" ("In this sign thou shalt conquer")

It is not known if these claims are true, but the Almighty ruler in Heaven the God of Israel, by these events opened His hand to release the open scroll, to enable a new political arrangement.

The battle which became later known as the Battle of Milvian Bridge was a victory for Constantine, who then proceeded to overcome Licinius, and became the sole Emperor of the Roman empire, overturning the Roman heavens, and causing the fall of many Roman super-stars, he revolutionised the empire in many ways. At the age of 40 he declared himself a christian, although he waited until his deathbed to be baptised.

In line with his visions Constantine elevated Chriostianity to become the state religion, and no longer was Paganism the religion of Rome, the moon had been turned to red – so much blood had been shed. He minted this coin which he showed the victory of Christ over paganism.



He completely transformed the Roman empire, and consolidated power, being a great administrator. He moved his seat of power to the Greek city of Byzantium, as a symbol of the victory over paganism, and renamed it Constantinople.

This is the revolution that John foresaw as he in vision opened the sixth seal of the scroll, and we can see how history unfolded exactly as predicted by the Lord Jesus, with all the details there in symbolic form.

The victory of christianity over paganism was a false dawn. Constantine was a politician, and he mixed the truth of God with a lie, to ensure all his subjects got on with each other, mixing christianity with paganism from which many modern customs originate, and of course the beginning of the Roman Catholic Church.

This is what the Apostle Paul was talih about when he wrote: 2 Thess 2:3-8: *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*

Brother Terry