

## **The Soundtrack to the End of the World**

Revelation 6

January 27, 2018

#13 in our series “The Gospel According to Jesus: The Revelation”

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### **Introduction**

Before we begin, I'd like to make an announcement. As you know, God is Love and Jesus is the Prince of Peace . . . And yet, Hollywood movies are laced with violence and suffering. So, I've formulated a petition for the production of wholesome movies and I've even provided some suggestions . . . for example:

1. Instead of *The Dark Knight*, how about the *Joy of Batman*, which focuses on Bruce Wayne's effort to sponsor a showing of Thomas Kinkaid paintings at the Gotham Art Museum.
2. Or how about *Thor: The Carpenter*, how to build things with a hammer, rather than tear them down.
3. We've been subjected to an endless string of Rocky movies in which we watch grown men pummel each other. How about, *Rocky Retires* and offers free yoga classes in a non-judgmental and inclusive atmosphere.

Now wouldn't you love to see those movies this summer?

Contact me if you'd like to sign the petition.

Let's Pray!

### **Prayer**

Father, we ask that you would help us to preach your Word, in the name of Jesus through the power of your Word transform us with your Word, Amen.

### **Message**

Revelation 6

*Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer.*

*When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword.*

*When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!"*

*When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.*

*When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.*

*When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"*

Well, Revelation Chapter 6 makes Hollywood movies look pretty mild.

So, how do you feel? Do you have some questions?

Perhaps:

- What happened to Jesus? Or...
- Why would Jesus do that? Or...
- And doesn't He love us?

Many folks say, "Well, of course, He loves us . . . so this isn't about us. We're good and this is God's judgment on those that are bad—this is the Great Tribulation."

In Matthew 24, Jesus warned of a time of great tribulation, but then in verse 24 He says, "*This generation will not pass away until all these things take place.*" If you read the text carefully, I think you'll find that everything He describes before verse 24 happened just like He said it would, and culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the temple, in 70 AD.

But then, after verse 24, Jesus says, "*Of that day and hour, no one knows...*"

I think "*that day and hour*" is the end of all things.

Well, many have said that Revelation 6 and most of the Revelation describes the forty years after Jesus' death and the destruction of the temple, which was the end of the Old Covenant Age. "Christ is the end of the law" (Romans 10:4).

These folks are called "Preterists." And I think they're right—  
The Revelation is about that, but not only that.

Jesus promised tribulation for everyone: "*In this world you will have tribulation.*"

And John writes, *“Blessed are those that hear the words of this prophecy.”* I think that must be because it’s not only about folks in 70 AD; it’s about you in 2018.

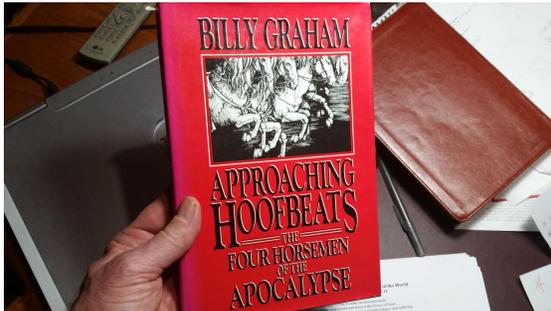
Well, some say the Revelation is *only* about the past.  
Some say it’s *only* about the future.

In 19<sup>th</sup> century England, a fellow named John Darby used the works of an obscure Jesuit priest to argue that the prophecies of Daniel 9 and Matthew 24 had been postponed by about 2000 years. And he formulated a previously unheard-of doctrine called the “Pre-tribulation Rapture.”

The doctrine was popularized in America by a rather questionable figure named Cyrus I Schofield who published the *Schofield Reference Bible* in 1909. His End Times scenario took America by storm in the last century, such that folks can now write books like *The Left Behind Series*, and Americans think that this stuff is what Christians have always believed, when in reality no one had ever even heard of it 150 years ago.

The doctrine has proved to be a very effective tool for “evangelists,” trying to get people to come forward at meetings. However, I don’t think it’s proved to be such a great tool for getting folks to trust Jesus—the Lamb on the throne.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, pastors would read Revelation 6 and preach about the *“Approaching Hoofbeats of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.”*



They would say:

- *“This is God’s Judgment against a disobedient creation...”*
- *“And it could be God’s judgment against you unless you raise your hand and come forward...”*
- *“In which case, you’ll be raptured before the Great Tribulation...”*
- *“Which means, you’ll be saved from the Judgment of God...in the future by your good judgment now.”*
- *“You’ll be saved from the Judgment of God because you won’t be around when the Lamb of God turns into the Lion of Judah...”*
- *“You wouldn’t like Jesus when he’s angry.”*

[Image of a Jesus-looking Hulk breaking away from the cross]

See? With our End Times theology and our lust for growing institutions, we have painted a really weird picture of the Savior.

You may say, "Fine Peter, but look at what we just read: *'Everyone runs screaming, "Hide us from the wrath of the lamb...'"*"

That's right! That is what they say . . . but did you notice?

The Lamb hasn't turned into a Lion—He's still a Lamb.

They're running from the Lamb, not the Lion.

Sorry to do this to you, but to the world, we modern American Christians must sound just like Tim The Enchanter in Monte Python and the Holy Grail.

Clip from *Monte Python and the Holy Grail*

Tim the Enchanter points a group of knights in search of the king toward a cave where he claims the king is. Hiding in the rocks, the knights tentatively look towards the cave in search of the king. They see nothing. Tim points at a small white rabbit declaring the white rabbit as the king. The knights get angry with Tim for trying to make them believe the king is a rabbit. Tim the Enchanter explains it is no ordinary rabbit: "That's the most foul, rude, and cruel rabbit you've ever set eyes on...it's a killer!" The knights respond in disbelief. Looking at the tiny "innocent" white rabbit, they determine he is not a king. Having no fear of the rabbit, the knight approaches the rabbit in order to turn him into soup. Within seconds of moving towards the rabbit, the rabbit ferociously attacks the knight removing his head. The clip ends with one of the knights gasping out in disbelief: "Jesus Christ!" Tim the Enchanter replies, "I warned you!"

*"Jesus Christ!"*

*"I warned you..."* Is that the Gospel?

Is this Evangelism: *"Jesus looks like a lamb, but bites like a lion, so you better join our group???"* Something is not quite right with the way we've preached the Good News.

And yet, it is Jesus that opens the seven seals.

So of course, we want to ask, "Why would Jesus do that?"

Well, maybe because John asked him to do that... Remember?

It's what we've been preaching on the last several weeks:

After the letter to the angels of the seven churches and the call to conquer, Jesus calls to John saying, *"Come up here."* John sees the throne of God, which is the judgment seat of God and someone seated on the throne, someone who holds in his hand, a scroll, sealed with seven seals—seven seals, like the seven days of creation.

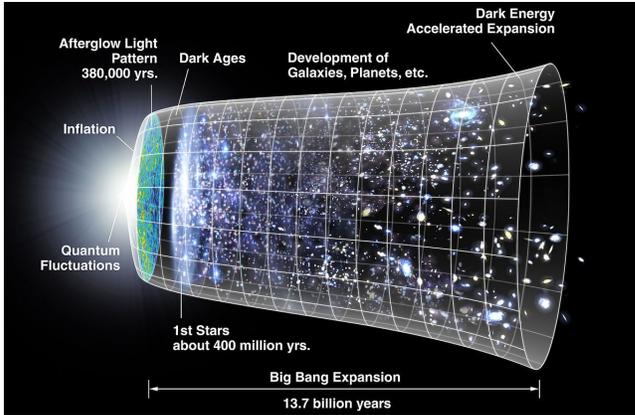
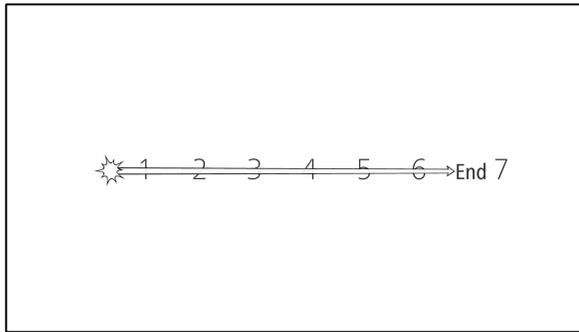


Figure 1 Image credit: NASA / WMAP science team

It is the Cosmos.

Jesus even said, *“In this cosmos, you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer I have conquered the cosmos.”*



Ancients divided the Cosmos into six or seven “*aion*”s in Greek, seven eons, which Genesis refers to as seven “*yom*”s—translated *seven days*.



So the sealed scroll is like the seven “*aions*” of creation in the strong right hand of God who is “*aionios*”—that is, eternal.

John has been out-carnated into eternity, where he sees all of creation in the strong right hand of God and yet, He doesn't know what any of it means.

The scroll is creation and the scroll is the Judgment of God.  
Creation is the Judgment of God. Judgment means "decision."  
In Genesis chapter one God decides; God speaks a Word; creation happens...  
And on the Seventh Day, absolutely everything is Good & everyone worships.

AND YET... when John looks at the scroll, it's sealed

Why does Jesus open the scroll?

Maybe because John asked Him to open the scroll...

Maybe we all ask Him to open the scroll...

Maybe Eve and that first Adam asked Him to open the scroll...

They wanted the knowledge of Good and evil.

And now, in this world, we are coming to know evil . . .

Perhaps we'll also come to know or be known, by the Good.

"The Light shines in the darkness," wrote John

- We look for the Way when we realize that we're lost.
- We long for the Truth when we've been assaulted by lies.
- We learn to love the Life when we discover that we're good as dead.

God told them, "*The day you eat of it you will surely die . . .*"

You are, or were, "*dead in your trespasses and sins,*" according to Scripture.

The Way, the Truth, and the Life shine in death, lies, and darkness.

- We look to the Light in the darkness.
- We come to know the Savior when we know we need saving.

Well, John weeps. And Jesus opens the Scroll, as *every creature in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, and all this in them,* sings His praise to the One on the throne.

It's quite a picture:

The first four seals release four horsemen.

Seven is the number of creation and four often refers to this world: four seasons, four directions, the four winds. The four horsemen are not unfamiliar. Zechariah saw four horsemen. They patrol the earth (Zech. 1:10. 6:7).

The first horsemen is crowned and seated on a white horse. He rides out conquering and to conquer, but we don't know what kind of conquering is implied.

- So, some have argued that this is a picture of Christ, for after all He is the Light and the very Word, which creates all things, that God speaks into the void in the beginning.
- But because He's part of the four horsemen, others have argued that He's not the Christ but the imitation Christ—the antichrist—not the Truth but the lie. And that

makes some sense for all earthly conquerors advertise themselves as the savior in one form or another.

The second rider takes peace from the earth. He is chaos.  
But now ask yourself,

*“Is God’s Judgment chaos or Logos?”*

*“Is God’s Judgment Truth or Lies?”*

The third rider brings famine.

A quart of wheat was considered sustenance for a day.

And a Denarius was a day’s wage for a laborer.

There is enough, but only if no one hoards it, refusing to share—refusing to love.

Ask yourself, *“Is selfishness God’s Judgment or is Love?”*

The fourth rider is Death followed by Hades—Hades is where people hide.

*“Is darkness God’s Judgment?”*

Was it God’s Judgment that made Adam and Eve Hide in the Garden?

Or was it fear of God’s Judgment that made them hide?)

*“Is God’s judgment darkness or Light?”*

*“Is God’s judgment death or Life?”*

The four horsemen are deception, warfare, poverty, and death.

Jesus releases these “things,” but He is not these things.

Modern Americans seem to be utterly terrified that these horsemen might come riding in our country one day . . . But most people for most of time, and in most of the world, would probably say, “I’ve seen the horsemen—they rode through my village last week. Who hasn’t seen deception, warfare, poverty, and death?”

You know, if they are just a threat in our future, they fill us with terror. But if this is a description of what we experience now, it might fill us with something else.

At the opening of the fifth seal, John sees martyrs under the altar where the priests threw the blood of sacrifice. These witnesses have been slaughtered like lambs, on the altar, in the temple.

In Matthew 23 right before Jesus prophesies the destruction of the temple, He says to the Scribes and Pharisees, *“I send you prophets... whom you kill and crucify... so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth... from Abel... to Zechariah, who you murdered between the Sanctuary and the altar.”* These martyrs are already literally under the altar.

Then, in Matthew 27, as Jesus yielded up His Spirit, there was a great earthquake, tombs were opened and the bodies of saints were raised from the dead. I think these

witnesses are those that had died for the Word of God, before the Word of God, yielded up His life on the tree.

Whatever the case they cried out, *“How long oh Lord?”*

Which means they must not have read *The Left Behind Series* or had access to one of those end times charts... or maybe that’s all a bunch of bunk.

They cry, *“How long before you will judge?”* Which means, the horsemen must not be the Judgment. If they ask, *“How long until you judge?”* then, what *has happened* must not be “The Judgment,” or they can’t yet see the meaning of the Judgment.

Take a look at this scroll:



Anyone in John’s day would know that if a judge were sitting on a judgment seat holding a sealed scroll in his hand, opening the seals would not be the judgment; opening the seals would be a necessary step in order to reveal His Judgment.

If it was a seven-sealed scroll, and you got six seals open, you might begin to see the Judgment, but you probably wouldn’t understand it’s meaning.

The martyrs cry out, “How long until you judge . . . and avenge.”

Avenge is this fascinating Greek verb, *ekdikeo*.

*Ek* means “out” and *dikaio* means “make right.”

*Ekdikeo* means something like “bring our righteousness.”

We usually translate it with the English word, “vengeance.”

Scripture makes it clear, that vengeance belongs to God. Paul quotes that scripture in Romans 12 and then adds, *“So be kind to your enemy and in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head”* (See Is. 61:2, Luke 4:19, Romans 12:19ff). We don’t understand God’s vengeance or His Judgment.

In John’s Gospel (John 3:19), Jesus says, *“...This is the judgment:* There’s one judgment just as there is One Word, which means every judgment scene in Scripture is the same Judgment described from a different angle.

*“... This is THE judgment: the light has come into the world...”*

John 8:12 Jesus says, "I AM the Light of the world." Light is eternal. Jesus is the Eternal Judgment. He is the Light, the Word, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

*... This is the judgment: the light has come into the world and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been done by God" (John 3:19-21).*

At the sixth seal, behold there is an earthquake, the sun's light fails and the full moon became like blood. On the sixth day of creation, on the sixth day of the week, at the sixth hour of the day, Jesus is crucified on the tree in the garden on Calvary.

The Gospels record that there was a great earthquake, the sun's light failed . . . and according to Peter in Acts chapter 2, and according to modern astronomers, the moon rose blood red in full eclipse that night.

As we preached: Jesus is the Faithful Witness & the faithful witness is the moon. On Good Friday, John saw the Faithful Witness rise from the earth blood red.

A clip from *The Passion*

[Jesus, covered in blood—"blood red," is lifted up on a cross.]

John saw the Judgment of God, and he wept for he didn't know what it means.

Now you might say, "Well, I want to know about *final* judgment—the *End*." Jesus already told us, "*I am the End*"... and on the cross, He said, "*It is finished*."

And yet in Matthew 24, when Jesus describes the fall of Jerusalem, and the destruction of the temple, He paints the same picture:

- Sun and moon will be darkened and the stars will fall from the sky.  
(And please note: the stars fall several times in the Revelation.)  
Sun, moon, and stars, and "*you will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven*," says Jesus... verse 34, "*This will happen in your lifetime*."

Then in Matthew 27:64, At His trial Jesus says, "*From now on, you will see the son of man seated at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven*."

Do you understand? Since His crucifixion, Jesus, who is the End, has been coming all the time.

Remember how we talked about Flatland in a former sermon? Remember we live on this timeline? Jesus can say, "*Behold I come on the clouds of heaven*."



And His coming is one moment from the standpoint of eternity . . . and yet, billions and trillions of moments from the standpoint of space and time.

So that could look like this with the scroll:



“Behold I come.” And one event in eternity would be all of these different experiences in space and time.

Or maybe it could be like this:



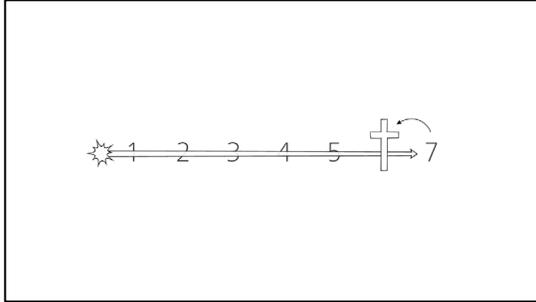
“Behold I come.” And He could come at like, the sixth seal to the seventh seal, but one event would be experienced in all these different ways.

- So on Good Friday, He descended into Hades, Old Testament saints and martyrs saw Him; tombs were opened and they came out.
- In 70 AD, He came to Jews in Jerusalem who didn’t receive Him forty years before, the sun and moon went black, the stars fell, and they saw Him as He is.
- And the day you die you will see Him coming on the clouds of Heaven.

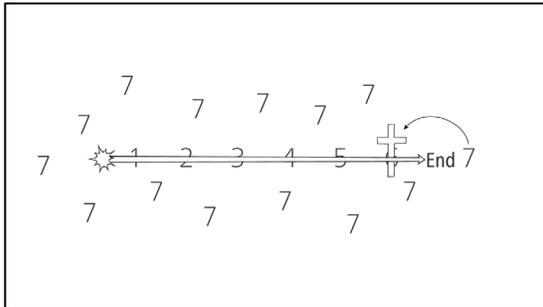
It’s all one event experienced at a Gazillion points in space and time.<sup>1</sup> It’s so important that you come to know who He is—which is what God means—before you see Him coming OR you might run in terror and try to hide in the depths of space and time.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. 4:17—It’s one Judgment and one rapture, from a gazillion points in space and time.



Understand? At the cross, God's Eternal Judgment invaded time.



It is the End and it is the Beginning.

Jesus was crucified at the end of the sixth day and raised on the eighth, which in Hebrew thought is an eternal seventh—the endless Sabbath that is the End

In Genesis 1, at the end of the sixth day of creation, which is the beginning of the seventh day of creation, "everything is very good." Everything!  
 And that's exactly what John saw before Jesus began to open the scroll. The End is the Beginning and we are surrounded by the Judgment, which is everything filled with the Good—the Good, that is God.

God's Judgment is "Everything good!"

And God's Judgment is how God makes everything good.

God's Judgment in His Word. And His Word is Jesus.

God's Judgment is Good and God's Judgment is Life.

*"I know that His commandment is Eternal Life,"* said Jesus.

God's Judgment is creation, salvation and absolute Grace!

Now, listen very closely for I'm about to expose a lie from the pit of Hell:

Jesus did not save us *from* God's Judgment.

Jesus *is* God's Judgment that saves us from our own judgment—what the Bible calls "sin".

Our judgment is to take the Life of the Good on the tree.

Our judgment is deception, warfare, greed, and death.

Our judgment is to choose darkness, and so we run from the Light Eternal.

- We run from the light, to save our judgment, which is our ego, which becomes a prison of pride and shame in which we hide.
- We hide, like Eve and Adam hid, from the judgment of God that came walking in the cool of the day, calling to us, "Where are you?"

At the sixth seal, everyone cries the great day of their wrath has come.  
Well, if God is angry, He's angry at the place in which you hide.

At the sixth seal, everyone runs from the face of Him who is seated on the throne.

[“We’ve seen the glory of God shining in the face of Christ,” writes Paul.]

At the sixth seal, everyone runs from the slaughtered lamb and begs the mountains and hills to hide them in the depths of the earth.

Scripture refers to that place as *Hades*.

English Bibles often translate that word as “Hell.”

Hell, is trusting nothing but your own judgment.

God hates Hell—And so Revelation 20:14, He destroys it with Holy Fire.

That’s His Judgment.

Well, chapter six ends with this question, “*Who can stand?*”

In the next chapter, we find out:

- It’s people that have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.
- It’s people that cry out, “Salvation belongs to our God.”
- It’s people that have confessed their judgment—which is sin—and received God’s Judgment, which is Absolute Grace.
- It’s people that have come through the Great Tribulation.
- It’s people that have died to their own ego and begun to live to the Glory of God
- It’s people that have joined the eternal symphony around the throne as all creation worships God for His Judgment is Good—Jesus is the Good hanging on the tree.

They know the Good, but only because the Good knew them in this world that is evil . . .  
“*The Light shines in the darkness,*” wrote John in His Gospel. God’s Judgment is not darkness, lies, chaos, greed, and death. But perhaps darkness, lies, chaos, greed, and death, reveal the Glory of the Light, who is Truth, Logos, Love and Life—our Savior, the Judgment of God.

In Chapter 8, the Lamb opens the seventh and final seal.

- Seven angels begin to blow seven trumpets.
- I think it means that the End is proclaimed throughout space and time.
- It means the Judgment is proclaimed throughout space and time.
- It’s Hope, and it’s why people hope: they hear the trumpets.

This may not have occurred to you, but the entire time that John is watching Jesus open the scrolls, all of Heaven is singing.

- Revelation 4:8, they never cease to say “Holy, Holy, Holy.”
- Revelation 5:8, the elders have harps and sing an eternally new song.
- Revelation 5:13, all creation joins in.

The Revelation is like a great symphony of Logos being sung into chaos, until at last the last trumpet sounds and the Heaven that John saw in the beginning, descends to earth as the end. But the entire time, even in moments of silence, there is an eternal symphony of praise . . . a soundtrack, if you will, from the beginning to the end . . . of space and time.

I remember sitting in a movie theatre as a young man watching incredible violence on the movie screen; it really disturbed me; in fact, it scared me:

- There was a man on the screen with dark hair and dark eyes . . .
- He looked as if he were of Mediterranean descent . . .
- He was covered in blood, near naked...
- An angry mob thirsty for violence cheered as he was beaten beyond recognition—He was *“as one from whom men hide their faces.”*
- In his pain, he cried out for his beloved—*“Adrian, Adrian, I did it for you Adrian.”*  
And just when I thought chaos, death, and destruction had won.  
Just when I thought he was dead for sure, I heard trumpets.  
I heard this: [The Rocky theme song is played]  
I heard the *soundtrack*. I heard the *theme song*.

When you hear the theme song that changes things.

It tells you:

- This is a story. There is an author. All the suffering serves a purpose.
- All the suffering is worth suffering, for it reveals the beauty of the Plot—and once you trust the Plot it transforms the meaning of all the suffering.
- In other words, the theme song tells you: *You are about to receive a revelation of glory, the glory of Rocky Balboa!*
- The theme song tells you: *“It’s about to get good. It’s glory time!”*

*It’s about to get Good*, BUT you couldn’t even recognize the Good,  
*Unless* you had first encountered the bad.

Without Apollo Creed, we would never see the glory of Rocky Balboa.  
Without the Joker, we would never know Batman. (We’d only know Bruce Wayne).  
Without evil infecting the Cosmos, we’d never sing the praises of Thor & his hammer.  
Without the fall, we could never be saved, and come to know the Savior.  
Without the cross, we’d never know Easter.  
Without those horsemen, we’d never know the meaning of the scroll.

Romans 8: *God subjected creation to futility in hope... the Hope of Glory.*  
Romans 11: *He consigned all to disobedience that he may have Mercy on all.*  
That’s His Judgment; that’s the new and eternal song.

But without tribulation, we’d never learn the song.

Our hearts know this. That’s why we go to movies.

We just don’t have the stomach for it in real life.

So, we become voyeurs of other people's sufferings in movies, Scripture, and theology. But voyeurs of suffering can only be voyeurs of glory. And Jesus, the Rock, wants you to share His glory. (In Revelation 21:11 His Bride has the Glory of God.)

You were born into this fallen world to see the Judgment of God, learn to trust the Judgment of God, fall in love with the Judgment of God, and become the very Body of the Judgment of God, such that His Judgment and your Judgment would be the very same Judgment . . . not because they have to be, but because you want them to be.

After a great movie, you don't have to try to change, you just do change.  
After watching Rocky you just go around punching stuff 'cause you want to.  
And after watching Jesus you begin to Love in Freedom.  
That means you love because you want to love.

Well, He isn't calling you to just watch His movie.  
You *are* His movie.

At the third seal, there is a famine, and a voice says, "*A quart of wheat for a Denarius... But, do not harm oil and wine.*" Did you notice that? The voice comes from the middle of the four living creatures and it must be Jesus. The only other place "*Oil and wine*" appears as a phrase in the New Testament, is in the story of the Good Samaritan, who pours oil and wine, upon a wounded Jew that must've hated him.

Read it closely and you'll realize that the Good Samaritan is Jesus.  
And He wants us to be Good Samaritans too—actually, His Body.

The voice says, "There will be a famine, but I will always provide the equipment for Love." ("my Spirit and my Blood") for my Body.

Some think our job is to eliminate all suffering.  
But we are here to learn love, and then, live Love, in the midst of suffering.  
Love is the Judgment of God.

Our job is not to eliminate crosses but to learn to carry them.  
No one ever suffered as much as Jesus suffered when He bore the sins and sorrows of this World on the tree... my sins and sorrows upon the tree.

The Slaughtered Lamb reveals the meaning of *History*, and the meaning of my history, and your history. And . . .

*History* and your history, and my history reveal the Glory of the Slaughtered Lamb.

He suffers your history and makes it His Story on his tree.  
He suffers your darkness and reveals His Light.  
He suffers your chaos and to fill it with Logos.  
He suffers your evil and so reveals the Good  
He suffers your sin and gives you himself—He is Grace.

He suffers your judgment and gives you God's Judgment, such that when you finally believe it, you will no longer *try* to be good, you just *will* be good—you'll start singing because you want to more than anything in this world.

I'm saying that at the cross you learn the soundtrack to the end of the world . . . and your particular part in the symphony of unending Glory that is eternal Life.

You know John had been at the cross and he wept for he didn't know what it meant. Jesus appeared to John, and said, "Come up here and listen to the sound track."  
It changes things.

A clip from *The Passion* (but accompanied by music inserted by Peter Hiatt)  
[Jesus, covered in blood, is lifted up on the cross. John watches in wonder. Suddenly the theme Song from *Rocky* begins to play while various scenes of Jesus enduring the cross play out before our eyes.]

We come to worship in the midst of tribulation to listen to the soundtrack of Heaven, find courage, and begin to sing along . . .  
AND YET . . . That didn't feel quite right, did it?  
- I mean that wasn't really the correct theme song...  
- I mean Rocky Balboa was like a lamb that would turn into a lion and pummel his enemies—that's how he conquered. He was like the rabbit in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*.

*But* in Revelation chapter six, they don't run from the Judgment of God because the Lamb has turned into Lion. They run from the Judgment of God because the Lion is a slaughtered lamb. They run from the Lamb... and the Lamb's not chasing them!

They don't run from the horsemen, from warfare, greed, death, and hell.  
They're not terrified of them; we're very familiar with them; they are *our* judgment.

They run from the Prince of Peace, who is Love, and Life, and Light.  
He is God's judgment.  
They run from the slaughtered Lamb... and hide in "Hell."  
Not because God's Judgment is evil, but because God's Judgment is Good.

They run from the slaughtered Lamb...  
Who do you suppose slaughtered that Lamb? We all did.  
"Everyone slave and free" run from the lamb (Rev. 6:15).  
We run because He is categorically different. In Biblical terms: He is Holy.

So "Rocky" isn't the right theme song, but maybe this is.

A clip from *The Passion* (but accompanied by music inserted by Peter Hiatt)

[Jesus, covered in blood, is lifted up on the cross. John watches in wonder. Suddenly, the hymn “Holy, Holy, Holy” by Reginald Heber begins to play in the background while various scenes of Jesus enduring the cross play out before our eyes.]

*“Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
All Thy works shall praise Thy Name, in  
earth, and sky, and sea;  
Holy, holy, holy; merciful and mighty!  
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!”*

That is God! If most of us suddenly saw Him as He is, I think we’d drop like flies or go up in a puff of smoke... for we’d see:

Although we’ve always tried to be first, the first are last and last are first.

Although we’ve always tried to exalt ourselves, the humble are exalted and the exalted are humbled.

Although we’ve always tried to save our lives, we must lose our lives to find them.

We’ll see that with every bad choice we crucified the Good.

And every good choice was not our choice, but His.

We’ll see that whenever we think, “This is my life,” we take His Life.

He is the Good and He is the Life, hanging on the tree in the Garden.

We’ll see our sin; our sin is our Judgment.

And unless we’ve learned to trust God’s Judgment—we’ll run.

We’ll see that we’ve always crucified the Good and taken His life.

And unless we trust that He’s always *given* His Life, and that’s the Good—we’ll call to the mountains and hills to cover us in darkness,<sup>2</sup> but unless we’ve learned what He means—I think we’ll try to hide in Hell.

God’s Judgment is Jesus, and it means: “I create you, I save you, I redeem you, and I love you for I Am Love.” Salvation is agreeing with the Judgment of God—not avoiding the Judgment of God.

The Good News is that although . . .

- Rev. 6:15—every person hides from the Judgment of God and although,
- Rev. 19:18—every person will be cut by the Judgment of God and have their flesh consumed according to the Judgment of God.

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<sup>2</sup> We will all see God’s Judgment. Scripture says, “All eyes will see him.”

Every person will worship the Judgment of God standing on the throne (Rev. 5:13), for this is the Judgment of God, “Behold I make all things new” (Rev. 21:5).

Like I said, the Judgment of God is Creation, Salvation, and Eternal Life. But wouldn't it be best if you learned to love the Judgment of God right now?

Listen closely: within one generation (within your lifetime), the sun will fail, the moon will turn red, the stars will fall and the sky will roll up like a scroll. Within one generation, you will see the Judgment of God coming on the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory. And yet, you can see Him and fall in love with Him right now.

### **Communion**

For on the night He was betrayed by us “He took bread and broke it saying, “This is my body given to you.” And in the same way, He took the cup saying, “This is the covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you.”

This is the Judgment of God. And now, I know, Jesus definitely knows: life in this world is very hard. Don't run and hide, come to the Judgment, walk into the Judgment. Listen for the music. What does all this drama mean? It's time . . . for the Revelation of Glory.

All I'm saying is believe the Gospel. Amen.

Listen children of God. Fear does not save you; Love saves you from fear. God is Love and another word for fear is faithlessness. So, in the name of God, in the power of His Spirit, through the authority of His shed blood no more fear. Have faith. In other words, believe the Gospel—in a Word Jesus, which means God is Salvation. That's Good News! Believe it. Amen.

*Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio or video version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*