

*JUST METAPHORS,
OR EXTRAORDINARY
EVENTS?*



Luke 21

CATHOLIC BIBLICAL PROPHECY

Just Metaphors, or Extraordinary Events?

Luke 21:25 "And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves,
26 men fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

27 And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 Now when these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Luke 21:29 And he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees; 30 as soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. 31 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all has taken place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"The moment which we are living ... is maybe very similar to the moment described in today's gospel reading (Luke 21:25-33)." - Karol Wojtyla, (the future St. John Paul II) 1974.

Just How Powerful is Our Omnipotent God?

It's easy for people attempting to imagine God's omnipotence as an extension of what we know. Therefore, God may be conceived as some type of extreme superman, perhaps coupled with our most powerful technology. Such conceptions don't even begin to conceptualize the assume power of God that extends from the greatest planet to the tiniest atom.

Colossians 1:16 for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. **17** He is before all things, and **in him all things hold together.**

Sirach 43:26b ... by his word all things hold together.

Hebrews 1:3 He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, **upholding the universe by his word of power.**

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up.

*God is infinitely more powerful than what most moderns imagine.
Shaking the earth or moving a few planets isn't beyond his ability.*

The Physical Creation is Dynamically Impacted by Human Sin

Romans 8:19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; **20** for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; **21** because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. **22** We know that the whole creation has been groaning with labor pains together until now.

Isaiah 24:3 The earth shall be utterly laid waste and utterly despoiled; for the LORD has spoken this word. **4** The earth mourns and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. **5** The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. **6** Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men are left.

Old & New Testament Descriptions of Extraordinary Events

Job 9:5 he who removes mountains, and they know it not, when he overturns them in his anger; **6** who shakes the earth out of its place, and its pillars tremble; **7** who commands the sun, and it does not rise; who seals up the stars; **8** who alone stretched out the heavens, and trampled the waves of the sea; **9** who made the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the chambers of the south; **10** who does great things beyond understanding, and marvelous things without number.

Isaiah 24:19 **The earth is utterly broken, the earth is rent asunder, the earth is violently shaken.** **20** The earth staggers like a drunken man, it sways like a hut; its transgression lies heavy upon it, and it falls, and will not rise again. **21** On that day the LORD will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth. **23** Then the moon will be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before his elders he will manifest his glory.

Revelation 6:12 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, **13** and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale; **14** the sky vanished like a scroll that is rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. **15** Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the generals and the rich and the strong, and every one, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, **16** 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; **17** for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand before it?"

Revelation 8:12 The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light was darkened; a third of the day was kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night.

Revelation 16:17 The seventh angel poured his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!"

18 And there were flashes of lightning, voices, peals of thunder, and **a great earthquake such as had never been since men were on the earth, so great was that earthquake.**

19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered great Babylon, to make her drain the cup of the fury of his wrath.

20 And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found;

21 and great hailstones, heavy as a hundred-weight, dropped on men from heaven, till men cursed God for the plague of the hail, so fearful was that plague.

Hebrews 12:26 His voice then shook the earth; but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven."

27 This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken, as of what has been made, in order that what cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe;

29 for our God is a consuming fire.

Isaiah 13:10 For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising and the moon will not shed its light.

11 I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant, and lay low the haughtiness of the ruthless.

12 I will make men more rare than fine gold, and mankind than the gold of Ophir.

13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, and **the earth will be shaken out of its place**, at the wrath of the LORD of hosts in the day of his fierce anger.

Isaiah 34:1 Draw near, O nations, to hear, and hearken, O peoples! Let the earth listen, and all that fills it; the world, and all that comes from it.

2 For the LORD is enraged against all the nations, and furious against all their host, he has doomed them, has given them over for slaughter.

3 Their slain shall be cast out, and the stench of their corpses shall rise; the mountains shall flow with their blood.

4 All the host of heaven shall rot away, and the skies roll up like a scroll. All their host shall fall, as leaves fall from the vine, like leaves falling from the fig tree.

Joel 2:10 The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining.

11 The LORD utters his voice before his army, for his host is exceedingly great; he that executes his word is powerful. For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; who can endure it?

Joel 2:30 "And I will give portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes.

Joel 3: 15 The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. 16 And the LORD roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shake. But the LORD is a refuge to his people, a stronghold to the people of Israel.

Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

Mark 13:24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, 25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. 26 And then they will see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

Acts 2:19 And I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; 20 the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and manifest day.

Isaiah 2:12 For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: 13 And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, 14 And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, 15 And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, 16 And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. 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. 18 And the idols he shall utterly abolish. 19 And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, **when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.** 20 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 and to the bats; 21 To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, **when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.**

Psalms 18:7 Then the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations also of the mountains trembled and quaked, because he was angry.

8 Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him. 9 He bowed the heavens, and came down; thick darkness was under his feet. 10 He rode on a cherub, and flew; he came swiftly upon the wings of the wind. 11 He made darkness his covering around him, his canopy thick clouds dark with water. 12 Out of the brightness before him there broke through his clouds hailstones and coals of fire. 13 The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Most High uttered his voice, hailstones and coals of fire. 14 And he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; he flashed forth lightnings,

and routed them. 15 Then the channels of the sea were seen, and the foundations of the world were laid bare, at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

Just metaphors without any historical, or futuristic basis?

The metaphor interpretation of these verses is adopted by most scripture scholars. This is a reasonable assumption given the fact that such descriptions seem impossible based on the widely-held assumptions by astrophysicists, geologists, astronomers, and others, that we live in a fixed and stable universe primarily governed by gravity. Therefore, all the cosmic descriptions are assumed metaphors of for “earth-shaking” historical events, like the fall of an empire.

What if there really were literal “earth-shaking” events that coincided with the fall of ancient empires? If that were the case, then historians and experts in mythology would need to pay much closer attention to the descriptions left to us by the ancients both in the scriptures and in ancient writings, including pictographs and petroglyphs.

If the case for an electric universe is true, then Newtonian physics, our understanding of astrophysics, ancient earth, human history, the theory of evolution and uniformitarianism, along with the biblically prophesied future would need comprehensive re-evaluation. Unfortunately, the information on the possibility of an electric universe is often ignored.

Resources for Investigating Ancient & Future Catastrophic Events

I am far from agreeing with everything from Velikovsky or the Thunderbolt Project. Yet, they are informative enough to prompt open-mindedness as future research and space explorations reveal more precise information about the structure and history of our universe. Our biblical interpretations may need updating in light of more accurate scientific theories.

Worlds in Collision (2009 version) and Earth in Upheaval by Immanuel Velikovsky
Velikovsky engaged in a ten-year interdisciplinary study of ancient catastrophism, which was documented in ancient historical documents. As a Jew, he was interested in comparing the history of Israel in the Old Testament writings and the Talmud with documents in multiple languages worldwide.

He claimed that the real meaning of the Hebrew prophets Isaiah, Amos, Joel, and Micah refer to an actual cosmic catastrophe, including a polar reversal and movement of the terrestrial axis. After Albert Einstein’s death, Velikovsky’s book was found open on his desk. Velikovsky discussed his theories with Einstein on several occasions.

Archbishop Fulton Sheen, *On the Demonic*

“Darwin saw catastrophe as the chief adversary of his theory of new species. Scientists today generally agree that there have been catastrophes in the evolution of the planets as well as life.

Immanuel Velikovsky, in his *Earth in Upheaval*, put it in picturesque language: ‘The past of mankind must now be viewed in the light of the experience of Hiroshima and no longer from the portholes of the Beagle.’

The universe, as well as man on this tiny earth, are not as they ought to be. Something has happened to both. There are discords in the universe just as there are complexes in the heart of man. **Planets bombard one another** as man does violence to this brother.”

Thunderbolts of the Gods Perfect Paperback by Wallace Thornhill and David Talbott, 2005.

The Electric Universe Paperback by Wallace Thornhill and David Talbott, 2007.

Several YouTube Videos by the above authors and the **Thunderbolt Project** are available.

Historical Voices

Plato, *Timaeus*

“There have been, and will be again, many destructions of mankind arising out of many causes; the greatest have been brought about by the agencies of fire and water, and other lesser ones by innumerable other causes. There is a story, which even you have preserved, that once upon a time Phaethon, the son of Helios, having yoked the steeds **in his father's chariot, because he was not able to drive them in the path of his father, burnt up all that was upon the earth, and was himself destroyed by a thunderbolt.**

Now this has the form of a myth, but really signifies **a declination of the bodies moving in the heavens around the earth, and a great conflagration of things upon the earth, which recurs after long intervals;**”

Plato’s succinct comments provide an often overlooked example of how to deconstruct and interpret myths to discern the thoughts and events that gave stimulus to create the legends,

St. Augustine, *City of God*, chapter 8

“Who can number the multitude of portents recorded in profane histories? ... when it pleased Him who with sovereignty and supreme power regulates all He has created, a star conspicuous among the rest by its size and splendor changed ... the order and law of its course! Certainly that phenomenon disturbed the canons of the astronomers.”

Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 9.7.2 (Copy of a message from a Roman Emperor)

“the earth .. is shaken from its lowest depths with a terrible tremor, and that the mountains upon it ... sink into the opening chasms. No one is ignorant that all these, and evils still worse than these, have oftentimes happened hitherto.”

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Supplementum (Supplement)* q.73 article 2

WHETHER TOWARDS THE TIME OF THE JUDGMENT THE SUN AND MOON WILL BE DARKENED IN VERY TRUTH?

IF, HOWEVER, WE SPEAK OF THEM IN RESPECT OF THE TIME IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE JUDGMENT, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT BY THE DIVINE POWER THE SUN, MOON, AND OTHER LUMINARIES OF THE HEAVENS WILL BE DARKENED, EITHER AT VARIOUS TIMES OR ALL TOGETHER, IN ORDER TO INSPIRE MEN WITH FEAR.

***Summa Contra Gentiles* 3.80**

They are called powers of heaven (Lk. 21:26), where it is said: The powers of heaven shall be moved. To the same spirits apparently belongs the execution of those divine works which are done outside the order of nature; for these are the highest of God's ministries.

St. Hildegard, *The Book of Divine Works*

"A great many signs will appear in the sun and moon, and in the stars and waters and other elements, and in all creation, so that they too will foretell with their portents, as with a picture, evils still to come."

Sister Lucy: An Important Contemporary Voice

Antonio Socci, the author of *The Fourth Secret of Fatima*, notes the importance of a recently published official biography of Sr. Lucia from the Carmelites of Coimbra (the convent where the Portuguese nun lived and died). This biography contains several unpublished texts of Sister Lucia.

On January 3, 1944, Our Lady addressed prophetic words to her, in prayer before the Tabernacle. Sister Lucy describes:

"I felt my spirit inundated by a mystery of light that is God and in Him I saw and heard the point of a lance like a flame that is detached touch the axis of the earth and it trembles: mountains, cities, towns and villages with their inhabitants are buried. The sea, the rivers and clouds exceed their boundaries, inundating and dragging with them in a vortex, houses and people in a number that cannot be counted; it is the purification of the world from the sin in which it is immersed. Hatred, ambitions, provoke the destructive war."

Peace for Believers and Stark Terror Among Unbelievers

Luke 21:25 “And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, 26 men fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 Now when these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore we will not fear though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;

3 though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. Selah

4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.

5 God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God will help her right early.

6 The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.

7 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah

8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, how he has wrought desolations in the earth.

9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, he burns the chariots with fire!

10 "Be still, and know that I am God. I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth!"

11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah

Psalm 91:1 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, who abides in the shadow of the Almighty,

2 will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."

3 For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence;

4 he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

5 You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day,

6 nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand; but it will not come near you.

8 You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked.

9 Because you have made the LORD your refuge, the Most High your habitation,

10 no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

11 For he will give his angels charge of you to guard you in all your ways.

12 On their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

13 You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

14 Because he cleaves to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name.

15 When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will rescue him and honor him.

16 With long life I will satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

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Biblical Prophecy Explained

Luke21 broadcasts and podcasts engage in the serious study of biblical prophecy that the average person can understand.

Scripture quotations are from the Revised Standard Version (RSC) and the Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition (RSVCE).

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