

Sign of Last Days? NASA Discovers Moon Shrinking, Shaking

NASA recently issued a press release saying our Earth's moon is shrinking and shaking!

Apparently, as the moon's core continues to cool, it is causing the shifting of tectonic plates near its surface. Measured by seismometers left behind from the Apollo 11, 12, 14, 15 and 16 missions, NASA's recent report indicates the seismic activity occurs most often when the lunar orbit is farthest from Earth.

This suggests the earth's gravitational pull helps maintain the moon's equilibrium. If either the Earth or its moon were hit by large asteroids, comets or swarms of meteors and had their orbits affected by such cosmic collisions, it is possible this lunar satellite of Earth would further shrink and shake erratically while, also, negatively affecting tidal effects upon Earth's oceans.

Such cosmic disturbances might cause Earth's orbit to move closer to the sun, making human existence on this planet uncomfortable or worse.

Already, electrical grids, telecommunications and control systems can be taken down by electromagnetic pulses (EMPs) from solar storms or nefarious or nuclear actions of certain countries.

And then, there are the more than 19,000 asteroids, already being tracked by NASA and other security groups worldwide, which orbit the sun and come close to Earth's orbit.

Interestingly, the Bible warns of cosmic disturbances with the

“sun and moon and stars” during the last days (Matt. 24:29, 30; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 21:25-27). Jesus said that in addition to wonders in the sky, there will be certain signs on earth.

In Jesus’ prophetic discussion with His disciples on the Mount of Olives, during the final week before His death, He warned them of the temple’s future destruction (Matt. 24:2) and drew their attention to familiar Old Testament predictions:

- The sun will be temporarily shrouded in darkness.
- The moon will be clouded and give the appearance of blood.
- The earth will shudder from massive earthquakes.
- “Stars” will strike the earth.
- “Powers of heaven will be shaken.”
- The sky will be rolled up like a scroll.

Jewish boys would have learned of these predictions in their studies of Old Testament prophets in Isaiah 13:9-10, 34:4; Ezekiel 32:7 and Joel 2:30-31. Quite possibly they would have memorized key prophetic passages like these. On the Day of Pentecost, in Acts 2, Peter’s sermon included a spontaneously recited passage from the Prophet Joel, also predicting these same cosmic disturbances:

“The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and glorious day of the Lord shall come” (Acts 2:20).

Jesus explained that these events will occur “after the tribulation of those days” (Matt. 24:29a) and before He comes again “on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (v. 30b).

Earlier in Matthew’s version of this teaching, Jesus described

the extreme persecution as being “great tribulation, such as has not happened since the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be. Unless those days were shortened, no one would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened” (Matt. 24:21-22).

Indeed, as Jesus explained the sequence of signs regarding His second coming in Matt. 24:29-31, first comes the “tribulation of those days,” then the cosmic disturbances, followed by “the sign of the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” Seemingly at the same time, there is a great gathering of souls:

“He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other” (Matt. 24:31).

Revelation 14 gives added insights regarding the “harvest of the earth” in these final days, at the return of Christ. Verse six explains that in the final days, an angel is assigned to preach “an eternal gospel” to everyone on earth. With a loud voice this angel pleads:

“Fear God and give Him glory, for the hour of His judgment has come. Worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.” (Rev. 14:7).

Is it possible that the days of great and terrible tribulation (Matt. 24:21) will be shortened by this angelic assistance? Is this predicted proclamation an act of divine grace, which completes the unfinished task of the Great Commission (Matt. 24:14; Mark 16:15-18) to preach the gospel to all nations, before the end shall come?

The passage goes on to connect the judgments and wrath of God against those who “worship the beast and his image and whoever receives the mark of his name” (Rev. 14:11b). Whereas, the saints of this period “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (v. 12b). These saints, at the “end of the

age,” are sustained and able to endure, knowing that God will punish their persecutors (Rev. 13:10; 14:9-11).

Then, verses 14-16 concern the harvest of the earth at the command of “One like a Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle ... So He who sat on the cloud thrust His sickle on the earth, and the earth was harvested.”

However, verses 17-20 depict the harvesting of clusters of overripe grapes, which were thrown “into the great winepress of the wrath of God.” Notice that the “One like the Son of Man” harvested the first group from the earth Himself, while an assigned “angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God” (Rev. 14:19).

These angelic-assisted harvestings of Revelation 14 may remind us of the parables of the wheat and weeds (Matt. 13: 24-30) and are a prelude to the bowl judgments of the wrath of God (chapters 15 and 16). This is the “wrath” of the long-awaited “Day of the Lord,” for which the apostle Paul declared God has not destined true believers (1 Thess. 5:9): “For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.”

We have been saved from the guilt of sin in the past (justification) and are being saved from the power of sin in the present (sanctification). But in this future day of deliverance from the wrath of God, we are saved from the very presence of sin, as we are transferred into the heavenly realm and our future rewards (glorification).

Stuart Hamblen wrote in his gospel song “Until Then,” “The soul of man is like a waiting falcon/ When it’s released, it’s destined for the skies!” The chorus encourages our perseverance:

“But until then, my heart will go on singing/ Until then, with

joy, I'll carry on/ Until the day my eyes behold the city/
Until the day God calls me home."

Let us encourage one another with these truths and this one from James 5:8: "You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord, is drawing near." {eoa}

*Ordained to the ministry in 1969, **Gary Curtis** is a graduate of LIFE Bible College at Los Angeles (soon to become Life Pacific University at San Dimas, California). He has taken graduate courses at Trinity College in Deerfield, Illinois and Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. Gary served as part of the pastoral staff of The Church on The Way, the First Foursquare Church of Van Nuys, California, for 27 years (1988-2015), the last 13 years as the vice president of Life on The Way Communications Inc., the church's not-for-profit media outreach. Now retired, Gary and his wife have been married for 50 years and live in Southern California. They have two married daughters and five grandchildren.*