

Doomsday Asteroid, Devil Rock and bright Morning Star

Did you know June 30th is International Asteroid Day? The UN chose this date in memory of the Tunguska asteroid that destroyed 2,000 square kilometres of forest on June 30th 1908. This obscure detail may be of interest to some scientists but why should ordinary citizens around the world be concerned? A hundred and five years after the Tunguska event a 20 metre asteroid exploded over Chelyabinsk, another city in Russia destroying 500 square kilometres. Seven years after the Chelyabinsk event a large [space rock flew close](#) by our planet in astronomical terms, indeed, “closer than even the Moon and astronomers didn’t detect it until two days later – the biggest asteroid to have come within one lunar distance of earth in 2020.” This ‘near miss’ occurred just a few days before June 30th Asteroid Day!

“[Experts estimate](#) that an impact of an object the size of the one that exploded over Chelyabinsk ... takes place once or twice a century. Impacts of larger objects are expected to be far less frequent (on the scale of centuries to millennia). However, given the current incompleteness of the NEO [Near Earth Objects] catalogue, an unpredicted impact – such as the Chelyabinsk event – could occur at any time.”

“Major asteroid impacts are the classic very low probability, very high consequence event.” This statement comes from an article published in [arstechnica](#) which then goes on to describe a high consequence event; “The Chicxulub impactor, an approximately 10km asteroid, struck Mexico ... [many] years ago. Such an event would wipe out human civilization, and indeed Chicxulub has been implicated in the worldwide extinction of non-avian dinosaurs.” The article concludes that mankind should not “play dice with fate.”

Researchers have identified nearly 200 impact craters showing that our planet has been hit by space rocks on many occasions. Therefore, scientists have been urging the world to protect our planet from the threat of doomsday asteroids. (Source [1,2](#)) [Alex Bevan](#) notes that Australia has a group of 13 craters “formed by an impact of a large iron meteorite around about five thousand years ago. Now, we know that aborigines were ... occupying Australia ... and their local mythology speaks of a very strange event... [They] talk about ‘Fire’ and ‘Devil Rock,’ [which] point(s) to the fact that these ancient aborigines actually witnessed the impact.”

Could the threat from an asteroid impact be a warning sign of pending judgment?

Of course, speaking of divine judgment against sin is not popular these days. Nevertheless, Scripture makes it clear that disastrous events like plagues, great earthquakes, wars and even falling stars (asteroids) are warning signs of an even greater judgment to come. King Solomon acknowledged the spiritual implication behind disasters in his prayer of dedication at the temple in Jerusalem, “When I shut up the heavens so there is no rain or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will **humble** themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:13-14, bold added)

Jesus Christ foretold various catastrophes as signs foreshadowing the end of the world such as plagues, earthquakes, wars and asteroids. He warned they would grow worse, so much so, that “there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again.” (Matthew 24:21,22,29; Luke 21:10,11,22; cf. Jeremiah 30:7) Moreover, the apocalyptic vision of John describes a disaster which corresponds precisely with modern descriptions of a catastrophic asteroid impact, not unlike the one depicted in the 1996 movie, titled, *Deep Impact*. We read in Revelation 8:11 “something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea ... a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.” (Revelation 8:8,9) Note that the English word *star* derives from the Greek ‘*aster*,’ hence, asteroid.

Can a “star” signify hope?

The first chapter of the Bible declares that God made the sun, moon and stars to “serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years” (Genesis 1:14) While stars (asteroids-comets) sometimes foreshadow judgment, there are many examples in the Bible where stars have a positive, hopeful meaning. For example, we read in Daniel 12:2-3, “Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to ever-lasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the **stars** for ever and ever.” (bold font added) Similarly Philippians 2:14-16, “Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, ‘children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.’

Then you will shine among them like **stars** in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life.” (bold font added) These verses talk about godly people shining like **stars**, but Scripture also tells of a special **star**, a descendant of David, the Messiah.

We read in Revelation 22:16, “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the **bright Morning Star**.” (bold font added) Interestingly, fifteen hundred years before the apostle John wrote down this amazing declaration of Jesus claiming to be the bright **Morning Star**, Scripture reveals an oracle spoken by Balaam, a Gentile diviner, “A **star** will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel.” (Numbers 24:17, bold font added)

This heroic kingly figure was born many centuries later, signaled by a **star** as recorded in Matthew 2:1-10; “After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his **star** when it rose and have come to worship him.' ... they went on their way, and the **star** they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the **star**, they were overjoyed.” (bold font added)

Want to read more? Check out “Following the Star” and “Nearing the end?”

https://answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/following_star.html
https://www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/near_end.html

All Bible quotations are taken from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

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Endnotes

Disaster should prompt humility and repentance

We read earlier that Solomon urged humility in the face of disaster, but Jesus did too, although the disaster was on a smaller scale. For example, in Luke 13:1-9 he addressed concerns arising from two incidents involving the tragic death of a number of people. Undoubtedly, these 'disasters' weren't as devastating as an asteroid impact, yet Jesus warning still applies: “those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”

We also read in Revelation 11:13 about a severe earthquake that caused a tenth of the city of Jerusalem

to collapse. “Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.” The prophet Isaiah gives another example showing how God is glorified by judgment. Isaiah prayed, “your name and renown are the desire of our hearts ... When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness. But when grace is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness; even in a land of uprightness they go on doing evil and do not regard the majesty of the LORD. LORD, your hand is lifted high, but they do not see it. Let them see your zeal for your people and be put to shame; let the fire reserved for your enemies consume them. ... You punished them and brought them to ruin; ... You have **gained glory** for yourself.” (Isaiah 26:8-15, bold font added)

'Fate' versus 'warning signs'

The Bible says doomsday asteroids foreshadow Divine judgment. Does this mean it is wrong for followers of Jesus Christ to work with projects that are dedicated to detecting and warding off such threats? A similar dilemma goes like this, “Is it appropriate for a Christian researcher to work on devising vaccines against HIV-AIDS or Covid-19?” Another query skeptics may pose, “Should Christian doctors treat people infected with a plague like Ebola or Covid-19? The short answer is Mark 2:17 where Jesus answered skeptics of his day “Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.” (Mark 2:17, NLT)

The bottom line is: Christians are not fatalists. We understand the Divine purpose behind warning signs. As it is written, “When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it? Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets. The lion has roared—who will not fear? The Sovereign LORD has spoken—who can but prophesy?” (Amos 3:6-8) So when the prophet Jonah delivered a dire warning against the Ninevites and they repented, Divine judgment was averted.

Those of us who have already received God's gift of eternal life should appeal to unbelievers who are destined for judgment, whatever the current circumstances. As “Christ's ambassadors, God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, “Come back to God!” (2 Corinthians 5:20, NLT)