

# End of Time Study

## God's call to urgency

### THE SCROLL WITH SEVEN SEALS

We have looked at the times leading up to the Rapture of the Church, a time that we believe is now. We also looked at the Rapture, itself. We talked about the rise of the antichrist and his one world church. Now, let's step back and see what the Apostle John is shown is going on in Heaven and how God will begin to pour out His wrath on the earth in response to the rebellion of those left behind.

We must recognize that God will not tolerate rebellion, sin and evilness. Not only does sin have consequences of results, it kindles God's wrath.

Wrath is not just being angry or mad. Wrath is the action set about by sin and rebellion. Wrath involves setting the books straight...balancing. It is the carrying out of judgment. The Tribulation era is God's judgment. In Jeremiah 30 this seven-year tribulation period is called "the time of Jacob's trouble." In Daniel it is spoken of as his "70th week."

Jeremiah 30:7 Alas! for that day [is] great, so that none [is] like it: it [is] even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

Daniel 9:21-26 Yea, while I [was] speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. 22 And he informed [me], and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. 23 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew [thee]; for thou [art] greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. 24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, [that] from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince [shall be] seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof [shall be] with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

Seven plus sixty, plus two, equal sixty nine weeks, leaving the seventieth week. The time between the sixty ninth week and seventieth week is the Age of Grace, also called the Church Age. So, what is the time of tribulation? Technically speaking, the Tribulation era officially begins when the spiritual seals on this Divine Scroll are loosed. The Age of Grace is closed and the Age of Judgment begins.

## The Scroll

[Revelation 5:1](#) And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

On ancient scrolls, the writing was in narrow columns about three inches wide. A scroll was held in the left hand, and unrolled with the right, and as the reading went on, the previously read portion would be re-rolled. The reading was from right to left, opposite of the way we read. It was not normal, but not unusual, to write on both sides of a scroll when there was a great deal of material to write.

God holds this scroll. Notice that these are not seven writings, each separated by a seal; but seven seals all set upon one scroll. The seals must be opened before any of the contents can be revealed. But it must be opened, it's contents must be revealed.

What is in the scroll? Some think it is the Book of Life. But, I think the best answer is to see the scroll as ***God's will, His final settlement of the affairs of the universe, and His deed.*** In a sense, it is the title deed to the Creation or it represents the title deed to the redemption of the earth which was forfeited by Adam. This is based on the idea that customarily, under Roman law, wills and deeds were sealed with seven seals, each from a witness to the validity of the document.

The seven sealed book therefore is the comprehensive history of Creation, including the Lamb's Book of Life, culminating in the second coming of Christ. The idea here is that God has a book in which the history of the universe is already written. He holds in His hand the history of the world in advance, and He initiates the consummation of all history. Only God can hold this scroll. Remember the emphasis is not on the content of the scroll, but on its seals and the One who worthy to take it, His son, Jesus Christ.

[Revelation 5:2-3](#) And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? 3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

It is not a matter of who is willing to open the book and to loose the seals. It is a matter of who is worthy. There have been many who were willing, those who would conquer the earth and subjugate the people. But, none have been worthy.

Revelation 5:4-5 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. 5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

His eyes now filled with tears, John sees a seven-sealed scroll being held by Him, God the Father, who is sitting on the throne. Neither man nor angel is worthy to open the book. Only Jesus, our Kinsman-Redeemer, is both willing and able to redeem creation from its bondage. Only He is worthy to open the seven-sealed scroll. Christ is described as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the root of David.

Revelation 5:6-7 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. 7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

He is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. He is all-powerful (seven horns), all-knowing (seven eyes), and ever present (seven Spirits).

Revelation 5:8-14 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four [and] twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. 9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. 11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, [be] unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. 14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four [and] twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

All heaven is silent as He steps forward to take the scroll. It would be hard to imagine a more majestic scene as the living creatures and twenty-four elders prostrate themselves before the throne and attribute praise and glory to the Son. The church sings a new song exalting Christ and His redemption of a fallen creation. The bowls of incense symbolize the prayers of the saints as God's people eagerly anticipate their reign and rule with Him! Finally all creation joins in the worship and proclaims-- *Worthy is the Lamb!*

## The Seven Seals

The order and magnitude of events during the first half of the tribulation is foretold in the Book of Revelation. During this first half initially there will be the following sequence of events, as represented by the Seals of the Scroll:

1. An agreement of false peace, negotiated by the antichrist.
2. War.
3. Famine.
4. Death to 1/4 of the earth's population due to famine, war and wild animals.
5. Christians being martyred for their beliefs.
6. A great earthquake where the moon turns red and sun goes black. The sky appears to roll up with falling stars. Every mountain and island moves from its place, with people so afraid that they hide themselves in caves and amongst rocks from God.
7. Breathless silence, preceding the horrible events of the second half to the Tribulation Period.

1. [Revelation 6:1-2](#) And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. 2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

**The White Horse. The Antichrist** comes forth. He has a bow, but no arrows are mentioned. A crown is given to him. He goes forth conquering and to conquer. The antichrist is the false imitator of the true Christ, who will also return on a white horse.

2. Revelation 6:3-4 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. 4 And there went out another horse [that was] red: and [power] was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

**The Red Horse. War.** The second horseman refers to terrible warfare that will break out in the end times. Peace will be taken from the earth. The rider has a great sword, indicating his ability to fight and to kill. God will step back and people will kill one another unlike anything we've ever seen. Even the carnage of the Holocaust will pale by comparison. This horse is red to represent blood that will be shed.

3. Revelation 6:5-6 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and [see] thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

**The Black Horse. Famine.** Black signifies gloom, mourning, evil, judgment, and death. the image drawn in one's mind is often one of dense, impenetrable darkness. The third horseman of the Apocalypse refers to a great famine that will take place, perhaps as a result of the wars from the second horseman. During the Tribulation the inequality between the rich and poor will be increasingly dramatic. Basic sustenance items like bread ("wheat" and "barley") will be in short supply and only the rich will be able to afford to buy them. Food products that sustain life will be the hardest to get.

Scripture tells us that a penny was a days wages, "And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into the vineyard," Matthew 20:2. Add to that, the fact that a measure of wheat was the amount that one person would eat in one day or three measures of barley (since it was cheaper), then we can see that the merchant would take the entire wage which this man had earned and give him in return just enough for him to consume that day. He was literally living from hand to mouth. Without the charity of Christian organizations and individuals (since they are now gone) famine will run rampant and many will die of starvation and malnutrition.

A pair of scales are seen in the hand of this third rider. The picture is of rationing of food that results from this famine. People will be standing in food lines due to the scarcity of food that exists or is available.

Some can remember the rationing of food and items during WWII. After Roosevelt declared war, the need for war materials increased, and consumer goods took a back seat to military production. Rationing began on such things as

meat, cheese, canned goods, sugar, butter, shoes and gasoline. The typical allocation of sugar was 12 ounces per week. Coffee had an allowance of 1 pound for a 5-week period. One pair of shoes was the norm between February 1943 and October 1945.

In order to purchase food, a point system was created. Ration books were distributed. Each coupon in the ration book entitled its owner to buy a specific number of gallons of gasoline (average of 3 gallons a week). Once all the coupons were used, no more gasoline could be purchased until the beginning of the next designated period.

Oil and wine, throughout the Scriptures, symbolize abundance or luxury. The fact that the oil and wine were "hurt not" indicates a situation where wealth and luxury exist alongside famine and poverty--and the gulf between rich and poor will grow.

4. Revelation 6:7-8 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. 8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

**The Pale Horse. Death.** Only the fourth horseman is named. His name is Death. He seems to be a combination of the previous horsemen. The fourth horseman of the Apocalypse will bring further warfare and terrible famines along with awful plagues and diseases. This is not Clint Eastwood as the Pale Rider. The word "pale" here means "ashen." We get our words "chlorophyll" and "chlorine" from the word which refers to a sickly, pale, yellow-green color.

The rider is clearly identified as Death. The world-wide events lead to widespread death. A "fourth part of the earth" dies. We see death on a massive scale.

Death used four tools or means. First, there is the "sword" which speaks of war. Then there is "famine" which indicates that many will die of starvation. The word "death" refers to disease as the cause of death. Many will die from diseases of various sorts. It is interesting that during times of war, disease has killed more people than war itself. During the Civil War more soldiers died from disease than were killed in battle. During the great influenza epidemic of 1918-19 30 million people died – more than 3 times the estimated 8.5 million soldiers who died in battle during WWI. Disease will be a great instrument of the rider of the pale horse. "Beasts" will also be one of the methods by which he will bring death upon the earth. Many believe this is a reference to rats. Rats have been responsible for uncounted millions of deaths throughout history, both by eating food supplies and spreading disease. There is the Black-Death of the fourteenth

century, an outbreak of bubonic plague that wiped out one-third to one-fourth of Europe which was a rat-borne disease.

What is most amazing, or perhaps terrifying, is that the four horsemen of the Apocalypse are just “precursors” of even worse judgments that come later in the tribulation.

5. Revelation 6:9-11 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? 11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they [were], should be fulfilled.

**Martyrdom.** Throughout history up to the present day, Christians have been persecuted and murdered for their testimony.

These are they that were slain for the Word of God and for their testimony. Under the altar means they are under the Blood of Christ. They are given white robes to indicate cleanness and, therefore, their forgiveness and honor. They long for the balancing of the books with God's judgment. Eventually, Christ will avenge their deaths. Before that though, many who will come to the correct conclusion that Jesus is the Christ during the Tribulation period will reject the Antichrist and refuse to worship him or his image or take his mark. These "Tribulation Saints" will be killed for their testimony during the reign of the Antichrist. This must be fulfilled before God avenges the deaths of all Christians who have been persecuted throughout history.

6. Revelation 6:12-17 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?

**Great Earthquake.** As strange as the weather and nature has been these past years in history, none of the earthquakes, meteor showers or other natural phenomenon can compare to what is in store when the "great day of his wrath is come". It would be difficult to paint any scene more moving or more terrible than that described at the opening of the sixth seal. All the elements of a great catastrophic judgment of God are here present, namely, a great earthquake, the sun becoming black, the moon becoming as blood, the stars of heaven falling like ripe figs, the heaven departing as a scroll, and every mountain and island moving. Brave men of power will cower in fear and realization that these awful disasters are from God. They will be ashamed and not want to face God. Anyone who had previously attributed the disappearance of Christians from the earth to aliens will now know that there is a God and He has come in wrath! They will not realize, however, that death won't spare them from His judgment.

The elements of divine judgment pictured here are common in the prophecies pertaining to the end of the age. Christ Himself predicted earthquakes. [Matthew 24:7](#) For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

Both earthquakes and the sun becoming black at the end times are spoken of by Joel. [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: [Joel 2:30-31](#) And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

The heavens departing as a scroll are mentioned in Isaiah. [Isaiah 34:4](#) And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling [fig] from the fig tree.

The resulting impression upon the unbelieving world is that the time of the judgment of God has come. They themselves say 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: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

[7. Revelation 8:1-2](#) And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. 2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

**Silence in Heaven**— about the space of half an hour. Though heaven rings with the praises of angels, the day comes when that noise is silenced. This seventh seal announces the beginning of God's wrath and the destruction of the present world. There has been a great effort among commentators to interpret the meaning of this silence. I think that it is a hush of awe before the march of the awful judgments about to come. the oppressive silence before the burst of battle. It is designed to emphasize the events that follow. a dramatic pause to symbolize the awe and dread with which the heavenly hosts await the events about to occur. This seal introduces the second set of seven judgments called The Seven Trumpet Judgments. The trumpet judgments are so horrendous that all heaven sits in awesome silence before the judgments begins. The magnitude of human suffering to be announced is about to graduate to a significantly higher level. This cessation of the sound of praise and worship activity serves notice of that intensification in judgmental action. The 7th seal depicts the calm before the storm.