

The Time of the End

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ABSTRACT:

The Signs of the Times and fulfilled Biblical prophecies tell us that we are living in the very last days. And yet there is one significant problem. The most definitive sign that Jesus will return is when the Gospel has first gone to all the earth. The organizations that track the progress of world evangelism show huge population centers throughout the world that are categorized as "World A Populations". World 'A' Populations are those that have virtually no significant Christian presence. These studies show that there are literally billions of people throughout the world that have not heard the Gospel message.

So the Signs of the Times indicate that Jesus' Second Coming is imminent, but the rate of the progress of the Gospel tells us that Jesus' return could be centuries away. Well, which one is it? I believe the Bible tells us how God will intervene to accomplish in a period of months what the collective Christian Church has been unable to accomplish in just under 2000 years.

A period of months? Yes. Actually, a period of just under 4-1/2 years. The book of Revelation has an incredible number of references back to both New Testament and Old Testament scripture passages. Revelation will often allude to an Old Testament prophecy with just a few symbolic words or lines of text. The Old Testament prophecy itself may contain entire passages or chapters of description that give greater detail about that scene or image. If we allow Revelation to point us back to those Old and New Testament prophecies, we can get a much more complete picture of what Jesus was communicating to us through the visions He gave to John. By allowing Revelation to unlock and contextualize the ancient Biblical prophecies, we can get a clear picture of the sequence of end time events. We can also get a general idea of how long the last day events will last, from the Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit to Jesus Second Coming. We don't know exactly when the last day events will begin, but we can know approximately how long they will last and the order in which they will occur.

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Acknowledgement

Many of the ideas that I have shared here were sparked by a paper and a book by Marvin Moore. The paper is unpublished and is entitled, “*The Seven Trumpets of Revelation - A crisis about to happen?*” The book is entitled, *The Coming Great Calamity*. Although my ideas are not identical to his, they share many points in common. I have also read a number of other papers on the subject and have talked to many other people. My conclusions include a number of ideas from these other people, even though I have not referenced them directly.

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Could Jesus Come This Year?

No. There are still many events that have been described in the Bible which must occur prior to Jesus' return. However, the series of events that mark the very last days could begin this year.

Prologue

I want to begin by saying that I might be wrong. However, if these events do take place as I describe them here, I want us to be alerted to their significance and what they portend.

My ideas are not based on some personal revelation, but on an interpretation of Biblical prophecies, typology, and end time parallels. I have read a number of papers on the subject and have talked to many other people. My conclusions include a number of ideas from these other people, even though I have not referenced them directly. In some cases the details of this interpretation are based on some fairly circumstantial evidence. However, I believe that the overall concept is well founded in scripture.

I will begin by providing a short summary and then I will go into a greater amount of detail in following sections. Time and space do not permit me to present all of the evidence that exists in the Bible to support this concept. Overall, the description of events may appear very fantastic or sensational, yet this is not surprising or surreal. The power of God will be manifest in these last days in a way that is more extensive than that displayed during creation week. Greater things will happen than the parting of the Red Sea, the destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah, or the destruction of Jericho. If the events seem very fantastic, first remember the incredible ways that God has acted throughout Biblical history. Also read the detail sections to see where I have taken these descriptions out of the Bible itself.

It is most important for Christians to remember the words of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospel of Luke. "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken... **And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.**" Luke 21:25-26, 28. (KJV)

I am a Seventh Day Adventist Christian. Seventh Day Adventists have a well defined set of 27 fundamental doctrines, but freely acknowledge that there is room for more light to be given about the details of end time events. This study is fully consistent with the fundamental doctrines of the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

Background Reasoning

Almost all Christians look at the world around us and recognize the Biblical signs that indicate that Christ's return is imminent. Unfortunately, there is one significant problem. The most definitive sign that Jesus will return is when the Gospel has first gone to all the earth. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all, and then the end shall come." Matt 24:14. Actually, it is more specific than that. "And I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to **every nation and tribe and tongue and people**" Rev 14:6.

The organizations that track the progress of world evangelism show huge population centers throughout the world that are categorized as "World A Populations". World 'A' Populations are those that have virtually no significant Christian presence. These studies show that there are literally billions of people throughout the world that have not heard the Gospel message. Based on our progress so far, it would take Christians several more centuries to carry the Gospel to every nation, language, people and tongue. Even in our time of travel and communication technology, many of the barriers are cultural rather than technological. We might be able to go or to talk to everyone in the world, but not everyone will be willing to listen.

We are left with one of two conclusions. 1) Christ's return is not imminent, or 2) God will intervene in a very significant way to complete the spread of the Gospel message in a short period of time.

I believe the second conclusion based on the Biblical signs of Christ's return and because of the specific end time prophecies that have already been fulfilled. I also believe that the way in which God will act is described through the imagery of the 7 Seals and the 7 Trumpets of Revelation.

Summary of Events

Amid a growing number of catastrophic environmental and economic disasters, the world will be plunged into a rapidly escalating world war. Shortly after the war reaches its peak, God will intervene in a dramatic way. In the autumn of a year very soon (possibly even this year), a shower of small meteors will strike the earth. These meteors will cause global catastrophe, and will destroy a great deal of the forests, vegetation, and crops. Shortly thereafter, a larger meteor will fall into the ocean, causing

massive tidal waves, and destroying ships and sea life. Once again, a large meteor will strike the earth. The dust and debris kicked up by this meteor will darken the atmosphere and cause a prolonged period of darkness. All of these events will occur in a period of approximately 150 days or less.

People will soon realize that these catastrophes are acts of God, especially because they are described in detail in the book of Revelation in the Bible. The masses of people will look to the world religious leaders for an explanation of these events and for guidance as to how they can appease the wrath of God. The pope and the evangelical Christian leaders who have allied themselves together (beginning with the document entitled Evangelicals & Christians Together signed in 1994) will capitalize on the opportunity to unite the world under one system of religious worship. Support will not come instantaneously, but will begin to grow from the countries that are already nominally Christian, particularly the USA. However, another small group will arise with a powerful voice to speak out against the one world church.

In the USA, the new worldwide religious movement will unite upon points of doctrine that they hold in common. One of the first actions they will take is to institutionalize religious worship of God, and among other things, will ordain Sunday as a universal day of mandatory worship. In the USA, laws will be quickly passed to support this and other religious ordinances put forth by the religious leaders.

In the midst of this turmoil, Satan will appear on the earth in an attempt to impersonate Jesus at His Second Coming. Satan will appear in the likeness of Christ as the Bible describes Him, and he will be accompanied by his legions of fallen angels. Christ's true followers will heed their Savior's warning in Matt 24:23-27. *"Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' **do not believe him.** For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance. *If therefore they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' **do not go forth,** or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' **do not believe them.** For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be."* (NAS)*

Christ's followers will not be deceived by the imposter, but the masses will be convinced that he is Jesus. He and his demons will perform many miracles of apparent healing. Satan will add legitimacy to the false religious institutions established by the world religious leaders. The people will believe that this is the Millennium of Peace that they had been expecting. Eventually, all of the governments that had resisted the religious movement will fall in step. There will begin worldwide persecution of those who resist the false religious movement. Economic sanctions will be imposed on those who fail to obey and they will not be able to buy or sell. Initially people will only be imprisoned and tortured, but eventually many will be killed. The scenes will parallel those of the Catholic Inquisition of the Dark Ages. Satan and his minions will lead out in this devastation, and will blame the calamities on those who do not faithfully obey.

Eventually, everyone on the earth will make a personal decision to stand with or against the world religious movement. There will become two distinct groups. The larger one will capitulate to the pressures of the false Christ and the world religious movement. The other smaller group will retreat to the countryside and the mountains and will deny the false Christ.

Calamities will begin to fall on the earth. The people will break out with malignant sores. The fish in the sea will die, and the oceans will turn to blood. Satan will tell the masses that these are punishments from God the Father because of the sin of the small band of disbelievers. Yet, unknown to the masses, the smaller group of people will not be affected by these plagues. The masses will take action against the dissenters. They will proclaim a death decree against anyone who will not repent by a certain time (about 11 months). The catastrophes will continue. The rivers will be turned to blood. The atmosphere will be in a tumult. First it will thin and the sun will scorch men with its fierce heat. Then it will thicken again with dust and debris and darkness will overtake the earth.

Finally the execution day of the death decree will approach. The masses of the earth will gather into great military forces to round up and execute the dissenters in order to appease the wrath of their god. As they press forward into the wilderness and come upon the small clusters of rebels, suddenly the earth will quake, the heavens will shake and huge hailstones will rain down upon the attacking armies.

Shortly thereafter, a cloud will appear in the eastern sky. At first it will appear small, but it will grow in size and brilliance. The small group of holdouts will raise their voices in praise as they recognize their Redeemer and King coming in glory with all of His heavenly angels. The living wicked will be slain by the brightness of His righteousness. He will call out and the dead in Christ will rise from their graves. The living righteous will be transformed in the twinkling of an eye and they will all be caught up together in the air to be with Jesus.

From beginning to end these things occur in a time span of just under four years.

Explanations

I begin with the assumption that Jesus will come after the great tribulation to take His people with Him to heaven where they will reign with Him for 1000 years (pre-millennial, post-tribulation). I am also assuming a literal, personal return of Jesus that will be immediately visible to every inhabitant of the earth. I will not try to justify these assumptions here. There is more than enough documentation available on these issues. (See the Bible Truth Homepage at www.tagnet.org/newlifesda/bibletruth)

The Basic Structure of the Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation is organized in the structure of a Hebrew literary construct called a chiasm. In a chiasm, the climax is in the middle with parallel sections in the buildup and resolution phases. The diagram below will make it easier to recognize this structure. You can get a more complete discussion on the structure of the book of Revelation in C. Mervyn Maxwell's book, *God Cares Volume 2*. The following diagram is derived from one in that book.

7 Churches (1:10-3:22)						New Jerusalem (21:9-22:9)
Sanctuary Scene (1:10-1:20)	7 Seals (4:1-8:1)				Millennium (19:11-21:8)	
Messages to 7 Churches (2:1-3:22)	Sanctuary Scene (4:1-5:14)	7 Trumpets (8:2-11:18)		7 Last Plagues (15:1-16:21)	Fall of Babylon (17:1-19:10)	
	Seals 1-4 (6:1-8)	Sanctuary Scene (8:2-5)	Great Controversy (11:19-14:20)	Sanctuary Scene (15:1-8)		
	Seals 5-6 (6:9-17)	Trumpets 1-4 (8:6-12)		Plagues 1-3 (16:1-4)		
	Interlude (7:1-17)	Trumpets 5-6 (8:13-9:21)	Sanctuary Scene (11:19)	Interlude (16:5-7)		
	Seal #7 (8:1)	Interlude (10:1-11:13)	Scenes 1-4 (12:1-17)	Plagues 4-6 (16:8-12)		
	Trumpet #7 (11:14-11:18)	Scenes 5-6 (13:1-18☺)	Interlude (16:13-16)			
		Interlude (14:1-13)	Plague #7 (16:17-21)			
		Scene #7 (14:14-20)				

Notice in this diagram that the 7 Seals, the 7 Trumpets, and the 7 Plagues are further broken down into smaller sections. The same pattern occurs in all three of these sections. The first four of the seven are characterized similarly. Then the fifth and sixth are grouped together and are separated from the seventh by an interlude scene. The pattern for all three of these sections is 4-2-1. We will discuss this in some detail later, but watch for this pattern as you read about each of these sections. It is important to note that the sections of the Book of Revelation are divided by scenes from the heavenly sanctuary. Each section is introduced by a sanctuary scene. We will discuss the significance of this in a later section. Just note the pattern for now.

The Seven Trumpets

Although the 7 Seals actually come before the 7 Trumpets in the book of Revelation, we will look at the Trumpets first. The Trumpets most clearly reflect the principles that we will discuss. The Trumpets are also the most significant to people living at the end of time. The Trumpets are warnings from God that probation is closing and that the final judgement is to come. Let's look at the 7 Trumpets in detail.

The Purpose of Trumpets

In the old testament, trumpets had four primary purposes: 1) to warn the people about imminent danger; 2) to gather the people together for war or for a holy convocation; 3) to sound a battle cry; 4) to announce the beginning of a special event.

Num 10:1-10

- 1 The LORD spoke further to Moses, saying,
- 2 "Make yourself two trumpets of silver, of hammered work you shall make them; and you shall use them for summoning the congregation and for having the camps set out.
- 3 "And when both are blown, **all the congregation shall gather themselves** to you at the doorway of the tent of meeting.
- 4 "Yet if only one is blown, then the leaders, the heads of the divisions of Israel, shall assemble before you.
- 5 "**But when you blow an alarm**, the camps that are pitched on the east side shall set out.

7 Trumpets (8:2-11:18)
Trumpets 1-4
Trumpets 5-6
Interlude
Trumpet #7

6 "And when you blow an alarm the second time, the camps that are pitched on the south side shall set out; an alarm is to be blown for them to set out.
 7 "**When convening the assembly**, however, you shall blow without sounding an alarm.
 8 "The priestly sons of Aaron, moreover, shall blow the trumpets; and this shall be for you a perpetual statute throughout your generations.
 9 "**And when you go to war** in your land against the adversary who attacks you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, that you may be remembered before the LORD your God, and be saved from your enemies.
 10 "**Also in the day of your gladness and in your appointed feasts**, and on the first days of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be as a reminder of you before your God. I am the LORD your God." (NAS)

There is rich symbology in the annual feasts of the Old Testament sanctuary system as they relate to the plan of salvation. I cannot go into much detail here, but I will try to bring out some highlights. The Feast of Trumpets symbolized many of the purposes of the trumpets. It was one of the times when all Israel was to assemble together annually. It warned about the impending judgement of the Day of Atonement. Anyone who had unconfessed sins was to take this opportunity to offer the sacrifices that they had neglected. It also announced the coming Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement symbolized the final disposition of sin and the restoration of the tabernacle.

I believe that the 7 Trumpets of Revelation could begin on the day that the Jews celebrate Rosh Hashanah one year very soon as the antitypical fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets. You will remember that the first three ceremonial feasts of the Jewish year were fulfilled exactly and literally at the time of Jesus' crucifixion (Passover), Christ's resurrection (First Fruits Offering of the Feast of Unleavened Bread) and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (early rain of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost). I believe that there will be a similar literal fulfillment of the three fall feasts: the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Booths.

The 7 Trumpets of Revelation fulfill all of the functions of trumpets in the Old Testament. The first six are warning judgements that call the people's attention to the God that they have so neglected and the final judgement that is about to occur. These six also gather God's people and call them out of spiritual Babylon (REV 18:1-4). Furthermore, they are the battle cry for the 144,000 to take up the end-time spiritual warfare under the power of the latter rain of the Holy Spirit. The seventh trumpet announces the greatest single event in human history, the triumphal Second Coming of Jesus Christ (Matt. 24:31).

Other verses in the Old Testament support this concept. These are some of the clearest. "***If a trumpet is blown*** in a city will not the people tremble? ***If a calamity occurs*** in a city has not the LORD done it? Surely the Lord GOD does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets." Amos 3:6-7. "I have heard the sound of the trumpet...disaster follows disaster; the whole land lies in ruin." Jeremiah 4:19-21. "Flee for safety, people of Jerusalem! Sound the trumpet in Tekoa! Raise the signal over Beth Hakkerem! For disaster looms out of the North, even terrible destruction." Jeremiah 6:1.

The First Four Trumpets

Rev 8:6-12

6 And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them.
 7 And the first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.
 8 And the second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood;
 9 and a third of the creatures, which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.
 10 And the third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters;
 11 and the name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood; and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter.
 12 And the fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were smitten, so that a third of them might be darkened and the day might not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way. (NAS)

7 Trumpets (8:2-11:18)
Trumpets 1-4
Trumpets 5-6
Interlude
Trumpet #7

The first three of the 7 Trumpets describe what I believe to be impacts of meteors or comet fragments on the earth. The fourth describes the effects of the dust and debris thrust into the atmosphere due to these impacts. Up until about twenty years ago, these descriptions could really only have been interpreted as symbolic. But beginning in the 1980's several studies have been conducted to predict the effects of meteor impacts on the earth. The studies yielded results that closely parallel the Biblical descriptions of the first four trumpets. I believe that these descriptions should be interpreted literally unless there is overriding evidence to show that they are symbolic.

There is also certainly Biblical precedent for such an explanation. Christians do not doubt that the 10 plagues that were visited on Egypt were real, literal events. The waters of the Nile did indeed turn to blood. Locusts did indeed invade and destroy the food crops. The Angel of Death did indeed come and slay the firstborn of all Egypt. All this happened at God's direction. Probably the most vivid example is the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Bible says, "Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven" Gen 19:24 (NAS). This certainly could have been meteor or small comet impacts. There is no other natural phenomenon that could be described in this particular way. God has all the forces of nature at His disposal, and the Bible tells of many instances in which He used them to warn or punish.

Paradigm Shifts

Can you imagine the kinds of reactions that people would have to the kind of catastrophe depicted in the first four trumpets? Many terrible things would happen, like looting, killing, etc. The ecological effects would undoubtedly cause severe famines and plagues. But, most of all, people would begin to ask "why?". This kind of event sets the stage for a global paradigm shift in the way people think. Right now, the majority of the people in the world have a very materialistic secular outlook. The mindset of the people is very "worldly", as opposed to very spiritual. But a catastrophe, particularly one on a global scale, can cause people to think about things in a new way. In a catastrophe, people look for people with answers. The answers to this particular catastrophe will point to religion. Marvin Moore provides a wonderful treatment of the psychology and sociology of paradigm shifts in global thought in his book, *The Coming Great Calamity*.

Step in the pope and the ecumenical movement. Most of the Christian world, and virtually all of the non-Christian world, look to the pope as the most prominent world religious leader. He is certainly widely viewed as the world Christian leader by non-Christians. When he can start to pose answers to the questions that people have after the first four trumpets sound, people will be very open to his leadership. Unfortunately, just about any serious Bible student can tell you that the brand of Christianity espoused by the papacy is not the genuine article. Catholic theology is fraught with holes that leave its followers open to a host of deceptions by Satan. The Christ of Catholicism is not the Christ of the Bible. Furthermore, the answers that Catholicism has to offer for the meteor impacts will be derived from flawed Catholic theology and particularly from messages provided by the frequent modern apparitions of Mary seen throughout the world and endorsed by the church.

As the world begins to look to Catholicism to provide the answers they seek, the masses will take the answers at face value. The raw material for this global paradigm shift is already out there. The doctrines are developed. The people are programmed to look for quick, easy answers. People are programmed to believe the sensational. Moral values are at an all time low. All that is needed is the match to ignite the fire. As the Trumpets begin to sound, masses will begin to fall in line behind a unified world-wide religious system. This fact alone would alert even the casual Bible student, who would be suspicious of following the crowd. "...for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. "For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it." Matt 7:13-14.

The Latter Rain

One other group will be providing answers to the people who seek security amidst the disasters. This group will be empowered by God to spread the Gospel message through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles at Pentecost was the former rain. In Biblical tradition, the former rain was the rain that caused the newly planted seeds to germinate and begin to grow. The latter rain was a much more powerful rain that caused the grain to ripen for the harvest.

"So rejoice, O sons of Zion, and be glad in the LORD your God; for He has given you the early rain for your vindication. And He has poured down for you the rain, the early and latter rain as before. And the threshing floors will be full of grain, and the vats will overflow with the new wine and oil...And it will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. And even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days." Joel 2:23-24, 28-29 (NAS).

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power will far exceed that at Pentecost. God's faithful will receive this power to enable them to complete the Great Gospel Commission in the time of the first six trumpets. I believe that the latter rain of the Holy Spirit will happen concurrently with the sounding of the first trumpet and carry through the seventh trumpet and Christ's return. This can be seen in the sanctuary scene that introduces the 7 Trumpets in Revelation. (More on this in the section entitled "The Introductory Sanctuary Scene.") "And another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand." Rev 8:3-4 (NAS). I believe that when the angel adds "much incense" to the fire of the golden altar that it represents the latter rain of the Holy Spirit.

There is also a possibility that the latter rain could happen at Pentecost, thus tying together the spring feasts and the fall feasts. There is a passage in Jeremiah that links both the early and latter rains to the Feast of Weeks. "But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and departed. "They do not say in their heart, 'Let us now fear the LORD our God, who

gives rain in its season, **both the autumn rain and the spring rain, who keeps for us the appointed weeks of the harvest.**" Jer 5:23-24 (NAS). Note that Pentecost is the Feast of Weeks. This verse could indicate that the early and latter rains of the Hdy Spirit could both occur on the day of Pentecost at the beginning and end of the Christian eras. For a more complete study of the Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit, see the Bible Truth Homepage at www.tagnet.org/newlifesda/bibletruth.

The group of people who receive the latter rain of the Holy Spirit will stand in opposition to the message promulgated by the papacy and the ecumenical movement. This group will be proclaiming the Elijah message, or the forerunner message, of repentance and obedience to the God of the Bible, because the hour of His judgement has come upon the living. These people will immediately become the target of persecution by the larger ecumenical movement. Yet God is their shield and their strength. Those who have yielded their consciences to the will of God will hear the message of this smaller group and immediately recognize the voice of the Savior in their words.

It is during the aftermath of the first four trumpets that the religio-political "image of the beast" reaches its ultimate fulfillment. Beginning in the USA, the ecumenical movement will unite with the secular government to dictate matters of religious worship. During this time, the first laws will be set up that force religious observances – among which will be a law mandating observance of Sunday as the Sabbath. Not all nations will fall in step with this movement at first. More on this idea in a later section.

A Shift in Interpretation

Before we look at the fifth trumpet itself, let's look at the last verse of Chapter 8. This one verse separates the fourth and fifth trumpets. "And I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe, to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!" Rev. 8:13.

This verse draws a distinction between the first four trumpets and the last three. Actually, you will see that they are really grouped 4-2-1. There is an interlude that separates the fifth and sixth trumpets from the seventh. This same pattern occurs in the 7 Seals. In the case of the Trumpets, I believe that the last three trumpets have primarily spiritual meanings while the first four are more literal.

The descriptions of the events of the Trumpets support this view. A meteor could fall to the earth and literally cause the devastation that is described in any one of the first four trumpets. However the verse five of Revelation Chapter 9, referring to the fifth trumpet, describes a different kind of star. This star "had fallen" to the earth and a key was given to "him". These descriptions could not possibly apply to a meteor or any other celestial object that might be described as a star. We must therefore consider the description to be symbolic of events with a more spiritual significance. After describing the incredible devastation upon our physical world under the first four trumpets, the Bible refers to the last three as 'woes'. The spiritual warfare described by the fifth and sixth trumpets is much more significant because it is a battle for the souls of men. God is much more concerned about our eternal salvation than our temporal well-being.

The Fifth Trumpet

Rev 9:1-12

- 1 And the fifth angel sounded, and **I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth;** and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him.
 - 2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit.
 - 3 And out of the smoke **came forth locusts** upon the earth; and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power.
 - 4 And they were told that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, **but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.**
 - 5 **And they were not permitted to kill anyone,** but to **torment for five months;** and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man.
 - 6 And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; and they will long to die and death flees from them.
 - 7 And the **appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle;** and on their heads, as it were, crowns like gold, and **their faces were like the faces of men.**
 - 8 And they had hair like the hair of women, **and their teeth were like the teeth of lions.**
 - 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of **many horses rushing to battle.**
 - 10 And they have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power **to hurt men for five months.**
 - 11 **They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss;** his name in Hebrew is **Abaddon,** and in the Greek he has the name **Apollyon.**
 - 12 The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things.
- (NAS)

7 Trumpets (8:2-11:18)
Trumpets 1-4
Trumpets 5-6
Interlude
Trumpet #7

The star described here in verse one is described in verse eleven as the angel of the abyss. Angels have been described as stars in a number of other places in the Bible. One of the foremost is within the book of Revelation. Chapter one of Revelation symbolizes the good angels as stars. "As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: **the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches**, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches." Rev 1:20

Chapter twelve of Revelation symbolizes Satan and his fallen angels as stars. "And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, **a great red dragon** having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And **his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth**... And the **great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan**, who deceives the whole world; **he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him**. Rev 12:3-4, 9.

It is easy to see that the star of the fifth trumpet is Satan. Particularly if you look in verse 11 of Chapter 9. Here it identifies him as the "angel of the abyss" – the same angel who was given the key to the abyss in verse 1. Verse 11 goes on to say that this angel's name is Abaddon and Apollyon. These words mean "destroyer" in Hebrew and Greek respectively. Satan means "adversary" or "accuser".

I believe that the fifth trumpet describes the impersonation of Christ by Satan. When Satan is given the key to the abyss, I believe that is symbolic of God allowing Satan to stage his greatest deception. Satan will appear personally on the earth and try to convince the world that he is Jesus returning. His fallen angels are depicted here symbolically as locusts. This symbolism has a purpose. It ties the descriptions back to Old Testament prophecies. The symbolism of the fifth and sixth trumpets ties back very clearly to the book of Joel. Note the similarities in the descriptions.

Joel 1:2-9

2 Hear this, O elders, and listen, all inhabitants of the land. Has anything like this happened in your days or in your fathers' days?

3 Tell your sons about it, and let your sons tell their sons, and their sons the next generation.

4 What the **gnawing locust** has left, the **swarming locust** has eaten; and what the swarming locust has left, the **creeping locust** has eaten; and what the creeping locust has left, the **stripping locust** has eaten.

5 Awake, drunkards, and weep; and wail, all you wine drinkers, On account of the sweet wine that is cut off from your mouth.

6 **For a nation has invaded my land**, Mighty and without number; **its teeth are the teeth of a lion**, and it has the fangs of a lioness.

7 It has made my vine a waste, and my fig tree splinters. It has stripped them bare and cast them away; their branches have become white.

8 *Wail like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the bridegroom of her youth.*

9 **The grain offering and the libation are cut off from the house of the LORD**. The priests mourn, the ministers of the LORD.

Rev 9:1-12 The Fifth Trumpet	Joel 1:2-9
Locusts come out of the pit (v.2-3)	Locusts cause devastation (v.6)
Locusts have power to harm and torment men (v.3-5, 7)	Locusts harm, damage and destroy (v.4, 7)
Appearance of locusts like horses prepared for battle (v.7)	Locusts symbolic of an invading army (v.6)
Locusts had teeth like lions (v.8)	Locusts had teeth like lions (v.6)

The similarities in descriptions are significant. More of Joel goes on to describe the sixth trumpet as well as the third and fourth Seals. We will look at that in a separate section. Joel gives a similar description of locusts and then identifies the symbol as an invading army. Under the fifth trumpet, Satan may, in fact, have some of his fallen angels appear as what we would expect demons to be like so that he could do battle against them and add validity to his impersonation of Christ. Or, this imagery might depict how Satan will attack those who have not yet made the decision to follow Christ. In any event, the warfare is spiritual warfare - the battle is for the souls of men. Note that Satan and his demons cannot harm those who already have the Seal of God (Rev 9:4).

Do not miss the significance of verse 8 in Joel 1. The church is awaiting her Bridegroom to come in the last days – and the church recognizes that this imposter is not Him. They have heeded his warnings as given in Matthew 24. **"Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him.** For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance. **If therefore they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go forth, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them.** For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be." Matt 24:23-27. Satan may be permitted to impersonate Christ, but he will not be able to fool Jesus' true followers.

Also, I would like you to note verse Joel 1:9 where it says that the grain offering and libation are cut off. This statement has led me to believe that Satan's appearance is the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel the prophet and referred to by Jesus in Matt 24:15. Daniel links the abomination of desolation with the "taking away of the daily offering" in Daniel 9:27, 11:31, and 12:11. Identifying the angel of the abyss as "Apollyon and Abaddon" is certainly consistent with this idea. The links between the fifth trumpet and this passage in Joel suggest that the "daily offering" is cut off during the time that Satan is impersonating Christ. I am not sure what the "taking away of the daily offering" refers to specifically. It may mean the universal acceptance of the false Sabbath by all the worldly governments. As I mentioned before, the ecumenical movement under the pope will establish Sunday sacredness within the secular laws. Originally, this will begin in the USA. After Satan appears, he will add legitimacy to this false religious movement. Under this influence, the other world governments will fall in step with the religious leaders and make similar laws. This is not the close of probation, however, because even though the governments have all capitulated, there will still be individuals that have not made their stand. When each and every living soul has made a personal choice to stand with or against Jesus, then probation will close.

I would like to draw your attention to a few more details in the next section of Joel.

Joel 1:10-2:2

10 The **field is ruined**, the land mourns, for **the grain is ruined**, the new wine dries up, fresh oil fails.
11 Be ashamed, O farmers, wail, O vinedressers, for the wheat and the barley; because **the harvest of the field is destroyed**.
12 The vine dries up, and the fig tree fails; the pomegranate, the palm also, and the apple tree, **all the trees of the field dry up**. Indeed, rejoicing dries up from the sons of men.
13 Gird yourselves with sackcloth and lament, O priests; wail, O ministers of the altar! Come, spend the night in sackcloth, O ministers of my God, for **the grain offering and the libation are withheld from the house of your God**.
14 **Consecrate a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly; gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD**.
15 Alas for the day! **For the day of the LORD is near, and it will come as destruction from the Almighty**.
16 **Has not food been cut off before our eyes**, gladness and joy from the house of our God?
17 The seeds shrivel under their clods; the storehouses are desolate, the barns are torn down, for the grain is dried up.
18 How the beasts groan! The herds of cattle wander aimlessly because there is no pasture for them; even the flocks of sheep suffer.
19 To Thee, O LORD, I cry; **for fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame has burned up all the trees of the field**.
20 Even the beasts of the field pant for Thee; for the water brooks are dried up, and **fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness**.

CHAPTER 2

1 **Blow a trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm on My holy mountain!** Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, **for the day of the LORD is coming; surely it is near**,
2 **A day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness**. As the dawn is spread over the mountains, so there is a great and mighty people; there has never been anything like it, nor will there be again after it to the years of many generations.

First note in verses 10, 11, 17, and 18 that there is great famine because the crops have been destroyed. Verse 19 and 20 tell why. Because they had been burned up by fire! Is this not reminiscent of the fire that had burned up a third of all the green grass and trees during the first trumpet? Look at Chapter 2 verse 2. Does this not sound like the darkness described in the fourth trumpet?

Here are a couple of other points. Remember that we said one of the functions of trumpets was to gather God's people together. Look at verse 14. The sounding of the trumpets causes God's people to call an assembly and gather together. And then the kicker is Chapter 2 verse 1. Blow a trumpet in Zion! I believe that this trumpet is the sixth trumpet because in the verses which follow, the descriptions change to more closely reflect those of the sixth trumpet. We will see those comparisons in the next section. Also note that this trumpet warns that the day of the Lord is near!

Finally, I would like you to note that in Revelation 9:1-11 Satan is allowed only to hurt not to kill. This is reminiscent of how God first allowed Satan only to take away Job's family and possessions, and then later to hurt him but not to kill him. Note also, that the fifth trumpet lasts for 5 months. I believe those to be literal months or 150 literal days. End time events will happen rapidly. I will develop an overall timeline of events later on.

The Sixth Trumpet

Rev 9:13-21

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14 one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."

15 And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that **they might kill a third of mankind.**

16 And the number of the **armies of the horsemen** was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.

17 And this is how I saw in the **vision the horses** and those who sat on them: the riders **had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone**; and the **heads of the horses are like the heads of lions**; and out of their mouths **proceed fire and smoke and brimstone.**

18 A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths.

19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads; and with them they do harm.

20 **And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk:**

21 and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

(NAS)

7 Trumpets (8:2-11:18)
Trumpets 1-4
Trumpets 5-6
Interlude
Trumpet #7

The sixth trumpet is really just an extension of the fifth trumpet. Satan and his followers are given greater permissions by God. Under the fifth trumpet, Satan was allowed only to *harm* those who did not have the Seal of God. Under the sixth trumpet, Satan is allowed to kill. He is also not restricted only to those who do not have the Seal of God. Notice in verse 20 that God's purpose in allowing all of this is to give people the opportunity to repent and to turn to Him. The trumpets are a warning to the fence riders to turn from Satan and follow God. He could have just allowed Jesus to come and destroy all those who had not before accepted Him. But in loving mercy, He gives them every chance that He can.

God cannot allow sin to enter into Heaven. Yet He loves the children He created and does not want to see them perish. Sin is a highly contagious disease. It is contained on this earth. God has provided the antidote to sin in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. But many have refused the cure. Many others don't know about it. God desperately wants to be with the children He loves, but He cannot allow sin to infect Heaven. This is the constant struggle that God has within Himself between justice and mercy. Aren't you glad that you do not have to make His decisions?

Many might view God as callous for allowing His people to be killed under the sixth trumpet. But those who know God see beyond this. God will allow his people to be killed because many others will be saved as a result of the witness of these martyrs. Many millions of Christians were martyred in the first century by the Roman Empire, and also in the dark ages by the Catholic Church. But a great many people turned to God because they witnessed the faith of those martyrs. Those who know God know that He will not call them to a service for which He will not also empower them. Martyrdom is a Gift of the Spirit that God will give to those whom He has called to martyrdom. They will die at peace, knowing that their lives are secure for eternity and that their deaths led others to eternal life.

This principle of allowing Satan to have increased permissions to harm is also in keeping with Biblical precedent. Remember how God first allowed Satan to attack only Job's possessions and his family. Then Satan came back and said that it was not enough. But God knew Job and the extent to which Job trusted Him. Therefore He allowed Satan to hurt Job himself, but not to take his life. During the sixth trumpet, Satan will be allowed to kill many of God's people, but not all of them. The movement will survive. God will only allow enough to die as are necessary. Many of the undecided will need to see the faith of the martyrs in order to make their decision for Christ.

The sixth trumpet is the last to sound prior to the close of probation. It is the last warning that people will get that they must make a decision for or against Christ. By allowing Satan to step up the intensity of his attacks, God is actually *causing* the people to make a decision. God will not make the decision for these people, but He will create circumstances which will force the people to get off the fence and make a decision. The last plagues will not fall and Jesus will not return before each and every living soul on the face of the earth has made that decision. Under the fifth trumpet all the governments endorsed the false religious movement. Under the sixth trumpet every individual will make his or her own choice. When the last decision has been made, probation will close. Actually the close of probation will pass almost without notice on the earth. Not until the 7 Last Plagues begin to fall will the world know that the door has been shut.

As we did with the fifth trumpet, I would like you to note the significant parallels to Joel Chapter 2. Note particularly the highlighted sections. Compare them with the section in Rev 9:13-21.

Joel 2:1-14

- 1 Blow a trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming; surely it is near,
- 2 A day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness. As the dawn is spread over the mountains, so there **is a great and mighty people**; there has never been anything like it, nor will there be again after it to the years of many generations.
- 3 **A fire consumes before them, and behind them a flame burns.** The land is like the garden of Eden before them, but a desolate wilderness behind them, and nothing at all escapes them.
- 4 **Their appearance is like the appearance of horses; and like war horses, so they run.**
- 5 With a noise as of chariots they leap on the tops of the mountains, **like the crackling of a flame of fire consuming the stubble, like a mighty people arranged for battle.**
- 6 Before them the people are in anguish; all faces turn pale.
- 7 They run like mighty men; they climb the wall like soldiers; and they each march in line, nor do they deviate from their paths.
- 8 They do not crowd each other; they march everyone in his path. When they burst through the defenses, they do not break ranks.
- 9 They rush on the city, they run on the wall; they climb into the houses, they enter through the windows like a thief.
- 10 ***Before them the earth quakes, the heavens tremble, the sun and the moon grow dark, and the stars lose their brightness.***
- 11 And the LORD utters His voice before His army; surely His camp is very great, for strong is he who carries out His word. The day of the LORD is indeed great and very awesome, and who can endure it?
- 12 **"Yet even now," declares the LORD, "Return to me with all your heart, and with fasting, weeping, and mourning;**
- 13 **And rend your heart and not your garments. "Now return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness, and relenting of evil.**
- 14 Who knows whether He will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him, even a grain offering and a libation for the LORD your God? (NAS)

Rev 9:13-21 The Fifth Trumpet	Joel 2:1-14
An army of two hundred million horsemen (v.16)	A great and might army (v2, 5, 7-9)
Vision of horses (v.17, 19)	Appearance is like horses (v.4)
Destroy with fire, smoke & brimstone (v.17-18)	Consume like a flame of fire (v.3, 5)

PLEASE note verses 12 & 13. God pleads with us to "Return to [HIM] with all your heart". This is God's last warning to a condemned world. Now look at the very next verses, Joel 2:15-16.

Joel 2:15-16

- 15 **Blow a trumpet in Zion, consecrate a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly,**
- 16 **Gather the people,** sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and the nursing infants. **Let the bridegroom come out of his room and the bride out of her bridal chamber.** (NAS)

I believe that the trumpet mentioned here is the seventh trumpet. Note that the bride and the Bridegroom come out of their chambers and are ready for the wedding feast. The wedding will begin when Jesus returns for his people. Revelation calls this the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9). Notice how Revelation describes this event in context of the seventh Trumpet.

The Seventh Trumpet

Rev 11:14-18

- 14 The second woe is past; behold, **the third woe is coming quickly.**
- 15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, **"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."**
- 16 And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God,
- 17 saying, "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast, because **Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign.**
- 18 "And the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came, **and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."** (NAS)

7 Trumpets (8:2-11:18)
Trumpets 1-4
Trumpets 5-6
Interlude
Trumpet #7

This is the trumpet of God that sounds to announce Jesus' Second Coming. It is the Trumpet call of Matt 24:31 and 1 Thess 4:16. Note in verse 14 that this trumpet is called a 'woe'. It is a woe to those who have not accepted Christ. To those who have accepted Him, it is the moment that they have waited their whole lives to see. Jesus Himself blows this trumpet and it produces an audible sound that is heard around the world.

Matt 24:31

31 "And **He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet** and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

(NAS)

1Thes 4:16-17

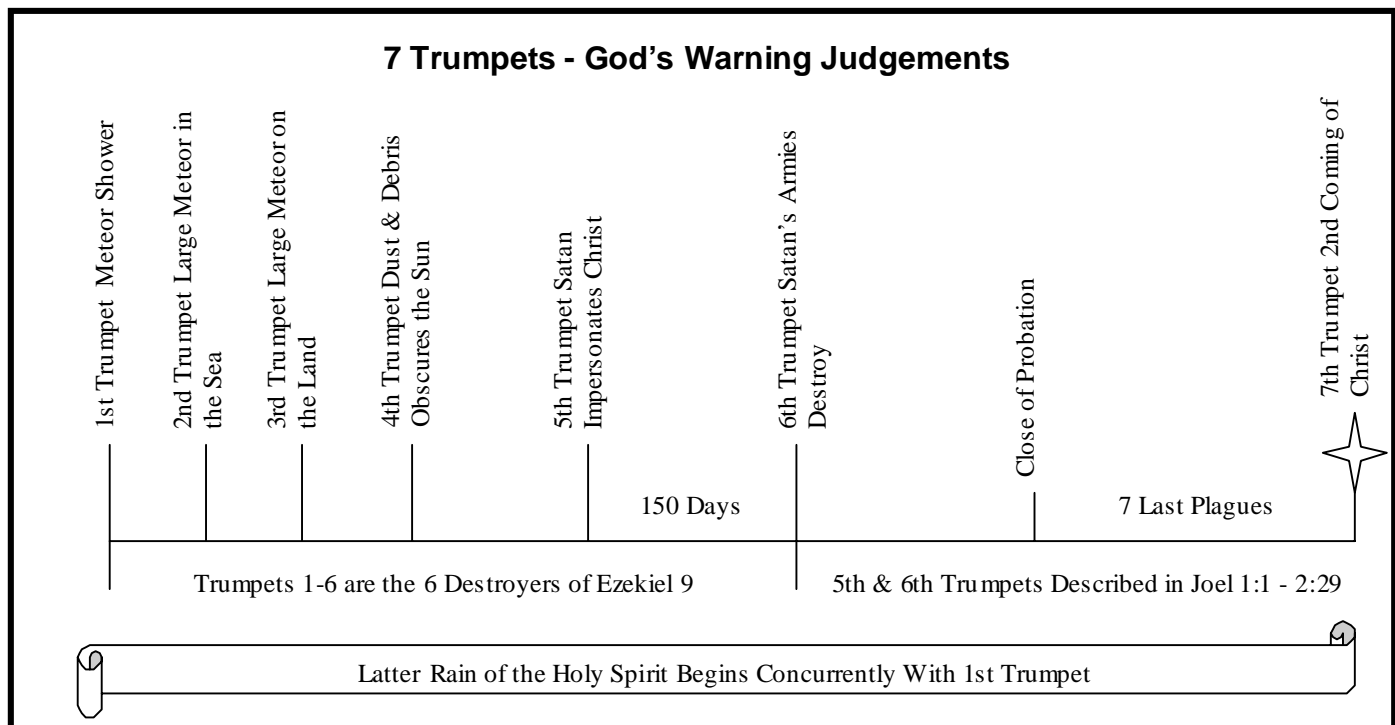
16 For the **Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God**; and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.

(NAS)

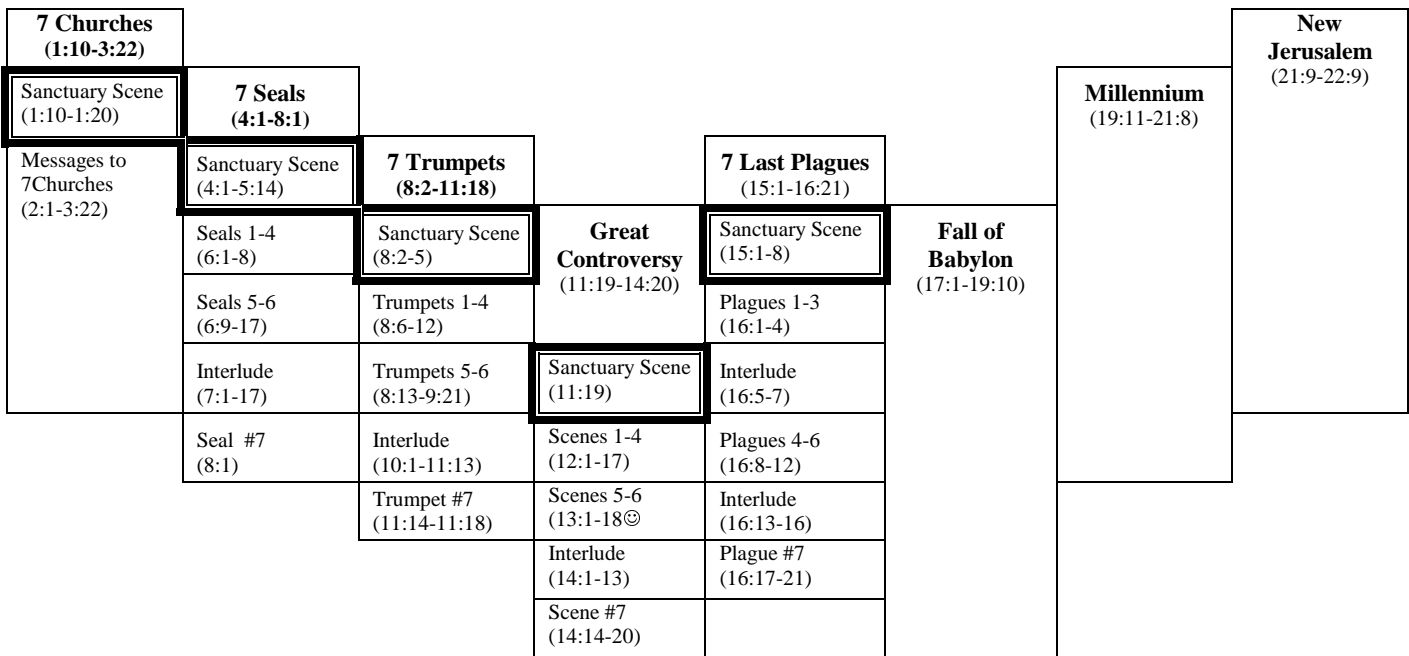
Note that there is an interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpets. This interlude is contained in Rev 10:1-11:13. I will discuss the introductory sanctuary scenes and the interludes in a separate section. It is very important to note here that they cannot be taken to occur chronologically where they appear in relation to the 7 Trumpets or the 7 Seals. This principle is most firmly established in the case of the 7 Seals, but it applies to all of the similar literary constructs. The important thing to note here is that Rev 11:19 does not necessarily follow chronologically right after the seventh trumpet. Verse 19 is the introductory sanctuary scene to the next section and is not tied directly to the 7 Trumpets in any way. Many bad assumptions have been made in the past based on this error.

Diagram of the 7 Trumpets



The Introductory Sanctuary Scene

The book of Revelation was written in the form of a chiasm. A chiasm is a Hebrew literary construct. Western literature usually builds progressively up to a climax and then has a very short resolution. A Hebrew chiasm climaxes in the center and has parallel elements in the build-up and resolution phases. Revelation is written in this style and has eight distinct divisions – three build-up scenes, two climax scenes, and three resolution scenes (see the diagram below). You will recognize the three build-up scenes – the Letters to the 7 Churches, the 7 Seals, and the 7 Trumpets. Each of these divisions is introduced by a sanctuary scene.



Here is the sanctuary scene that introduces the 7 Trumpets.

Rev 8:2-6

- 2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God; and seven trumpets were given to them.
- 3 **And another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.**
- 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand.
- 5 And **the angel took the censer; and he filled it with the fire of the altar and threw it to the earth;** and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.
- 6 And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them.
- (NAS)

The introductory scenes follow a pattern that progresses through the sanctuary. First we see the lampstands before the 7 churches; then the table of shewbread (a throne) before the 7 seals; then the alter of incense before the 7 trumpets; then the Ark of the Covenant before the opening scenes of the Great Controversy.

Most Holy Place	Holy Place
	[2] Table of Shewbread (7 Seals)
[4] Ark of the Covenant (Great Controversy)	[3] Golden Altar of Incense (7 Trumpets)
	[1] Lampstands (7 Churches)

However, these scenes do not CHRONOLOGICALLY precede the scenes that follow them, but serve, rather, to characterize the nature of the events that follow. For example, in the scene before the 7 trumpets, we see the Angel ministering before the altar of incense, and then he fills the censor with coals from the altar and throws it to the earth. The throwing down of the censor is commonly identified as the close of probation and I believe that is correct. Obviously, the close of probation does not precede the sounding of the trumpets. What purpose would there be in "warning judgements" if the ability to make a decision had already passed? Likewise, the scene where the temple is opened and the ark is revealed does not necessarily follow the seven trumpets chronologically. Rather it serves to introduce and characterize the Great Controversy scenes.

Another common thread that you see in almost all of the introductory sanctuary scenes is that they end with (or include) "flashes of lightening and peals of thunder". To these are progressively added an earthquake and a great hailstorm in the later scenes. Are these all the same event? Are they literal? They all happen in the same way under the 7th plague - which occurs just before Christ's return.

A similar situation exists with the interludes. As an example, the events described in the interlude of Chapter 10 and 11 cannot come chronologically between the 6th and 7th trumpets in any model of interpretation. They cannot even occur chronologically as they appear in relation to each other.

Instead of representing actual chronological events, the introductory sanctuary scenes serve to characterize the events that follow them. In looking for the meaning of these symbols, we can indeed look to the sanctuary and to the annual feasts. But I don't think that we should stop there. The exact words of the 4th seal are all over Jeremiah's writings. As we have seen, the descriptions of the 5th and 6th trumpets are very similar to those in Joel chapters 1 & 2. The horsemen of the 7 Seals show up in Zechariah chapters 1 & 6. And descriptions of very similar scrolls to the one with the 7 Seals appear in Ezekiel, Daniel, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Zechariah. The interludes are scenes of assignment and assurance for God's people. In each interlude, God gives His people an assignment that is associated with the event of that section. He follows this assignment with a scene that assures His people that they will make it to Heaven if they persevere. C. Mervyn Maxwell describes these scenes of assignment and assurance in his book, *God Cares Vol. 2*.

In the introductory sanctuary scene of the 7 Trumpets, the Angel adds much incense to the fire on the altar of incense. I believe that this represents the latter rain of the Holy Spirit. I believe that the smoke before the altar in the Old Testament sanctuary represented the Holy Spirit's ministry. Notice that the smoke of the incense mingles with the prayers of the saints.

Rom 8:26-27

26 And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;
27 and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (NAS)

I believe that the latter rain of the Holy Spirit occurs either in conjunction with, or shortly before the sounding of the trumpets. I also believe that the throwing down of the censer to the earth is the close of probation. Therefore, these events seem to characterize the period of the first six trumpets as warnings about God's impending judgement of the world. There is a very pointed Biblical parallel that reinforces this idea. It is a passage in Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 9 and the Seven Trumpets

Look at this passage in Ezekiel and see how it corresponds to the 7 Trumpets – especially the introductory sanctuary scene.

Ezek 8:17-10:4,6-7

17 And He said to me, "Do you see this, son of man? Is it too light a thing for the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they have committed here, that they have filled the land with violence and provoked Me repeatedly? For behold, they are putting the twig to their nose.
18 "Therefore, I indeed shall deal in wrath. My eye will have no pity nor shall I spare; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, yet I shall not listen to them."

Chapter 9

1 Then He cried out in my hearing with a loud voice saying, "**Draw near, O executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand.**"
2 And behold, **six men came** from the direction of the upper gate which faces north, **each with his shattering weapon in his hand**; and **among them was a certain man clothed in linen with a writing case** at his loins. **And they went in and stood beside the bronze altar.**
3 Then the glory of the God of Israel went up from the cherub on which it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed in linen at whose loins was the writing case.
4 And the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and **put a mark on the foreheads of the men** who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst."
5 **But to the others He said in my hearing, "Go through the city after him and strike; do not let your eye have pity, and do not spare.**
6 **"Utterly slay old men, young men, maidens, little children, and women, but do not touch any man on whom is the mark; and you shall start from My sanctuary."** So they started with the elders who were before the temple.
7 And He said to them, "Defile the temple and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" Thus they went out and struck down the people in the city.
8 Then it came about as they were striking and I alone was left, that I fell on my face and cried out saying, "Alas, Lord GOD! Art Thou destroying the whole remnant of Israel by pouring out Thy wrath on Jerusalem?"
9 Then He said to me, "The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is very, very great, and the land is filled with blood,

and the city is full of perversion; for they say, 'The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see!'

10 "But as for Me, My eye will have no pity nor shall I spare, but I shall bring their conduct upon their heads."

11 **Then behold, the man clothed in linen at whose loins was the writing case reported, saying, "I have done just as Thou hast commanded me."**

Chapter 10

1 Then I looked, and behold, in the expanse that was over the heads of the cherubim something like a sapphire stone, in appearance resembling a throne, appeared above them.

2 And He spoke to the man clothed in linen and said, "Enter between the whirling wheels under the cherubim, and **fill your hands with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.**" And he entered in my sight.

3 Now the cherubim were standing on the right side of the temple when the man entered, and the cloud filled the inner court.

4 Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub to the threshold of the temple, and the temple was filled with the cloud, and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the LORD.

6 And it came about when He commanded the man clothed in linen, saying, "Take fire from between the whirling wheels, from between the cherubim," he entered and stood beside a wheel.

7 **Then the cherub stretched out his hand from between the cherubim to the fire which was between the cherubim, took some and put it into the hands of the one clothed in linen, who took it and went out.** (NAS)

In the introductory scene for the 7 Trumpets, we see an Angel (perhaps Christ) ministering before the altar of incense. Then He takes coals from the fire and puts them in the censor, and casts them to the earth. Now look in Ezekiel 8:17 - 10:4. We have an angel that comes to stand before the bronze altar (v.2) and he gets instructions to go out and mark the people of Jerusalem. This is a very clear parallel to the sealing of Gods people in the last days (see Rev 7:1-8). Note that the angel is followed by six destroyers who were charged to kill those who did not receive the mark. When the marking angel is done with his task, he reports back to God. He is then instructed to go in among the Cherubim and to get some coals and scatter them throughout the city. Could we get a clearer parallel?

I would suggest the following interpretation as a possibility. In Revelation, when it says that the Angel pours much incense onto the altar, this could be the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power. This is concurrent with the beginning of the 7 Trumpets as eschatological events. This is the sealing time just prior to the close of probation. The sealing begins with those in the church and proceeds to the rest of the world. Of course this would mean that the first four trumpets will fall on those who claim the name of Christ, but live a life apart from Him. The very first to be affected are false religious leaders. The first six trumpets are the six executioners that follow the marking angel. We have already noted the difference in the first six trumpets and the seventh one. The first six are warning judgements; the seventh heralds Christ's return. As the warning judgements continue to fall, more and more people become aware that they are about to be judged. The casting down of the censor and the scattering of coals mark the end of the six trumpets, the completion of the sealing, and the close of probation.

The 7 Trumpets - Historical or Eschatological?

There are many who contend that the 7 Trumpets are symbolic of historical events that have already occurred. Actually, the arguments that they make are very good, and they have done a good job of digging through the symbology of the language. I do not discount these theories. We have long recognized that God uses types with antitypical fulfillments. In other words, something that happened literally might be symbolic of something that would happen again later with a more spiritual meaning. The slaying of literal lambs in the sanctuary services was symbolic of Jesus, the Lamb of God, Who was slain for the sins of the world.

I believe that many of these types could have a third fulfillment. This idea is illustrated by the prophecies about Elijah. Elijah was a literal prophet who made a literal call for God's people to turn away from Baal and back to God. After that incident on Mount Carmel, Elijah girded up his loins and ran ahead of King Ahab back to Jerusalem. He was, in that way, a forerunner to the king. God told Israel through the prophet Malachi that He would send Elijah to them before the great and terrible day of the Lord. Then Jesus told his disciples, "'Elijah is coming and will restore all things; but I say to you, that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.' Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist." Matt 17:11-1 (NAS) Elijah was the literal person. John the Baptist was an antitype of Elijah. He fulfilled the prophecy because he came in the spirit and power of Elijah. But notice that Jesus said Elijah would come again. He is referring to the end times when He will raise up an end time people (the 144,000) in the spirit and power of Elijah to proclaim the fourth angel's message and to be forerunners of the returning King Jesus. The prophecy about Elijah will have two antitypical fulfillments before it is all over.

I believe that the same thing could be true of the trumpets. They very well could have been symbolic of historical events – literal events at the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, as well as events throughout the Christian era up until now. But I believe that they will have their most complete fulfillment in a short period of time right before Jesus returns.

There is one significant point that the historicists have missed, though. Most everyone agrees that the 7 Trumpets (or at least the first six) are warning judgements. The primary purpose of the trumpets is to warn the world of Christ's return and of God's final judgement. If the trumpets were primarily fulfilled as historical events, then they would serve as pretty miserable warnings. About the only substantial group that has adopted the historicist view is the Seventh Day Adventist Church. And furthermore, as Adventists, we cannot even agree among ourselves exactly which events are the fulfillment of each of the trumpets. Some say the fifth and sixth trumpets described the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks. Others say that these same two trumpets symbolized the Crusades of the Middle Ages. If this is how the trumpets were fulfilled, then they were pretty lame warnings. Most Christians did not recognize these events as warnings of God's imminent judgement. Certainly non-Christians did not recognize them as such.

I would submit that any good warning **MUST** attract the attention of those who are to be warned. The Old Testament warnings certainly did. When the Babylonian armies were burning Jerusalem to the ground, I think that the Jews got the picture. They may have misinterpreted the events to suit their own desires, but they did not deny that the events were acts of God. I believe that the same principle applies to the 7 Trumpets. If God is nebulous and wishy-washy about His warnings, no one will pay attention. "For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle?" 1 Cor 14:8 (NKJ)

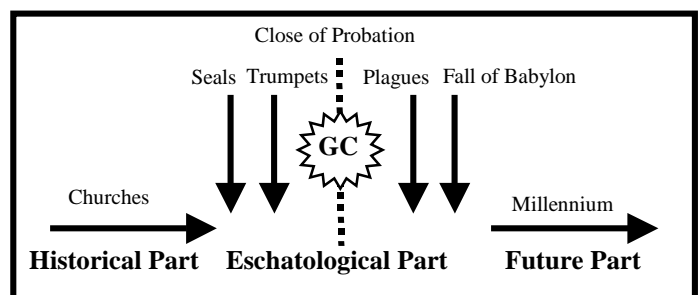
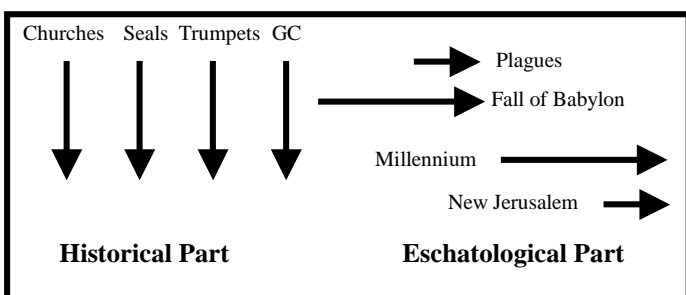
Scripture is clear that Jesus brings His reward with Him when He returns. This implies that God's judgement must take place before that time. As a matter of fact, it takes place even earlier than that. The 7 Last Plagues fall only on the wicked (those who have the mark of the beast) and do not affect God's people (those who have the Seal of God). So, God's judgement must be complete while both the righteous and wicked inhabit the world together. I would submit that God's judgement is complete at the close of probation, which I believe takes place after the sixth trumpet and before the first plague.

Most of the Christian world (as well as much of the non-Christian world) would agree that your eternal destiny is determined by the life you live and that the decision is sealed when you die. Most people recognize a certain amount of finality in death - that is why so many fear it. In general, people do not need to be warned that their probation will be closed the day they die. They already expect that. People **WOULD**, however, need to be warned if they were coming under judgement while they still lived. At some point in time, judgement will pass from the dead to the living. The living need to know that the decision will be made **BEFORE** they die. If the 7 Trumpets (particularly the first 4) are literal calamities, then they would be a real, unmistakable warning from God - just like in Old Testament times. But the warnings will only be effective if they are unmistakable acts of God. They **will** be unmistakable acts of God **if** they happen **JUST EXACTLY** like the events described in His Word. God always told His people what was about to happen to them through His prophets before it happened, so that they could not deny that it was an act of God.

The trumpets must have a more literal, more complete fulfillment as eschatological events in order to be effective in their primary purpose - to warn the world of impending judgement.

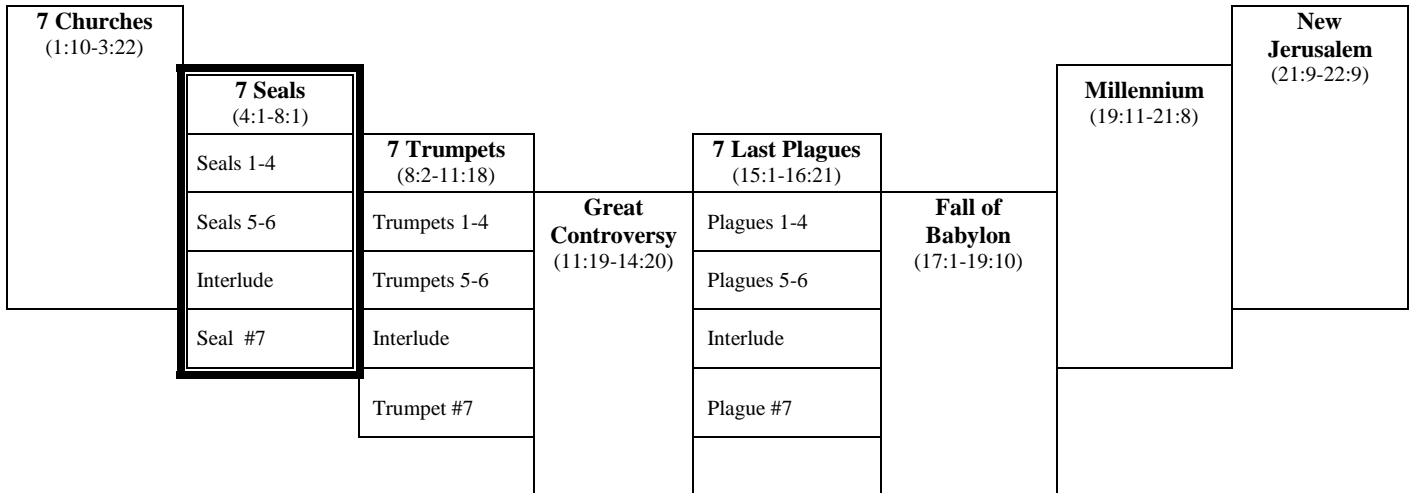
One other minor point is that prophecies should be clearly understood once they have been fulfilled. It is true that most prophecy is somewhat difficult to understand before it is fulfilled. But it should be very clear in retrospect. This is how God helps us mark our progress through prophetic time. It is also one way that He builds our faith in Him and His word. Much of the power of the testimony of the apostles was in showing how Jesus had fulfilled a huge number of Old Testament prophecies. In Isaiah, God tells us that one way we can distinguish Him from other gods and idols is that He has shown us the future - He knows the end from the beginning. Just about the whole book of Matthew was dedicated to showing the Jews how Jesus had fulfilled the old prophecies. During the walk to Emmaus, Jesus explained the old prophecies of the Messiah to the two disciples. God gave clear reference points in the 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9, so that we would know that we had the correct beginning dates for the prophecy. Well, if the 7 Trumpets have actually been fulfilled in history, then we should be certain of their interpretation at this point. Unfortunately, we are not. This is evidence to me that their primary fulfillment is still in the future.

Finally, the chiasmic structure of the book of Revelation is much more satisfying if the 7 Trumpets and the 7 Seals are seen as eschatological rather than historical. If you take the historical view, then the 7 Churches, 7 Seals, and 7 Plagues are parallel to each other and cover a period of roughly 2000 years. But the 7 Last plagues and the Fall of Babylon occur over a very short period of time, with the new heavens and new earth coming at the end of the millennium. If you take a more eschatological view of the Seals and Trumpets, you get a more balanced structure. Compare the two diagrams below.



The 7 Seals

Once you begin looking at the 7 Trumpets as literal eschatological events, it becomes apparent that the 7 Seals might be viewed in the same light. The seals are a little more difficult, because the first two are not very descriptive. The seals are certainly symbolic, but their effects on the earth should be considered to be very real. The 7 Seals are introduced by a sanctuary scene, just like the 7 Trumpets are. Also, like the 7 Trumpets, they follow a pattern of 4-2-1. The first four are similar to each other, but different from the fifth and sixth. There is an interlude scene that divides the sixth from the seventh. This pattern is the same as that of the 7 Trumpets.



The Introductory Sanctuary Scene

The introductory scene of the 7 Seals shows all heaven gathered together to witness the opening of a scroll. No one is qualified to open the scroll except the Lamb who was slain. Remember that these introductory scenes do not hold chronological significance, but serve to characterize the nature of the scenes that follow. The Lamb is obviously Jesus. The Lamb appears before the throne of God, but for what purpose? The scene centers around one significant symbol – the scroll. What is the scroll? Why is Jesus the only one who can break its seals and open it? The answers to these questions will help us to characterize the nature of the 7 Seals. Let's take a look at the introductory sanctuary scene.

7 Seals (4:1-8:1)
Sanctuary Scene (4:1-5:14)
Seals 1-4 (6:1-8)
Seals 5-6 (6:9-17)
Interlude (7:1-17)
Seal #7 (8:1)

Rev 5:1-14

1 And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a **scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.**

2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?"

3 **And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.**

4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.

5 But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood **a Lamb as though it had been slain,** having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

7 Then **He came and took the scroll** out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

9 And they sang a new song, saying: "**You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,**

10 **And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.**"

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, 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 who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor 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, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!"

14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever. (NKJ)

There are several parallel passages in the Old Testament that mention scrolls. You can look these up for yourself to discover meanings for the symbols. Ezekiel 2:9-3:21 talks about a scroll and Ezekiel's mission to prophecy to the exiles of Jerusalem in Babylon. His message was essentially the Elijah message. This passage has very strong links to the interlude scene between the sixth and seventh trumpets as found in Rev 10:8-11. You should do this study.

The following are two more passages on scrolls that parallel the scroll of Revelation 5, which contains the 7 Seals.

Jer 36:2-3

2 "**Take a scroll** and write on it all the words which I have spoken to you concerning Israel, and concerning Judah, and concerning all the nations, from the day I first spoke to you, from the days of Josiah, even to this day.

3 "**Perhaps the house of Judah will hear all the calamity which I plan to bring on them, in order that every man will turn from his evil way; then I will forgive their iniquity and their sin.**" (NAS)

Zech 5:2-4

2 And he said to me, "What do you see?" And I answered, "**I see a flying scroll**; its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits."

3 Then he said to me, "**This is the curse that is going forth over the face of the whole land**; surely everyone who steals will be purged away according to **the writing on one side**, and everyone who swears will be purged away according to **the writing on the other side**.

4 "I will make it go forth," declares the LORD of hosts, "and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name; and it will spend the night within that house and consume it with its timber and stones." (NAS)

But the most significant passage on scrolls is this one in Jeremiah. I believe that it reveals the identity of the scroll in Revelation 5.

Jer 32:6-15

6 And Jeremiah said, "The word of the LORD came to me, saying,

7 'Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle is coming to you, saying, "Buy for yourself my field which is at Anathoth, for **you have the right of redemption to buy it.**'

8 "Then Hanamel my uncle's son came to me in the court of the guard according to the word of the LORD, and said to me, 'Buy my field, please, that is at Anathoth, which is in the land of Benjamin; for you have the right of possession and the redemption is yours; buy it for yourself.' Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD.

9 "And I bought the field which was at Anathoth from Hanamel my uncle's son, and I weighed out the silver for him, seventeen shekels of silver.

10 "**And I signed and sealed the deed**, and called in witnesses, and weighed out the silver on the scales.

11 "**Then I took the deeds of purchase, both the sealed copy containing the terms and conditions, and the open copy;**

12 and I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the sight of Hanamel my uncle's son, and in the sight of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, before all the Jews who were sitting in the court of the guard.

13 "And I commanded Baruch in their presence, saying,

14 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "Take these deeds, **this sealed deed of purchase, and this open deed**, and put them in an earthenware jar, that they may last a long time."

15 'For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.'"

Notice that Jeremiah had the right of redemption. In Hebrew terms, he was qualified as a kinsman redeemer. He could purchase the land and bring it back to the proper family of inheritance because he was the nearest living relative to the person who had originally sold it. Not only land, but people could also be redeemed in this way. This is how Boaz redeemed Ruth out of servitude and into the family of Israel.

Notice also in Revelation 5:10 above that Jesus was the only One found worthy to open the scroll, and that He was identified as our Redeemer. Jesus is our kinsman redeemer. He came to the earth in the likeness of human flesh in order to become our Brother. He redeemed us back into the family of God. The price was His life.

1 Cor 6:19-20

19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that **you are not your own?**

20 **For you have been bought with a price**; therefore glorify God in your body. (NAS)

1 Cor 7:22-23

22 For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.

23 **You were bought with a price**; do not become slaves of men. (NAS)

1 Pet 1:18-19

18 knowing that **you were not redeemed with perishable things** like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,

19 **but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.**

Notice also that there were two deeds – a sealed copy and an open working copy. I believe that the scroll of Revelation 5, which is sealed with the 7 Seals, is the lamb’s Book of Life. I believe that there are two copies of the book – a sealed copy and an open copy. I believe the dead are being judged right now out of the open copy. This one was opened in 1844 to allow the unfallen angels to review the judgements that have been pronounced on those who have already died. The copy that has the seals will be presented to redeemed men after Jesus’ Second Coming for the same purpose – to vindicate God’s judgements. We will have 1000 years to review these documents in heaven before God executes the final punishment on the wicked at the second resurrection after the millennium.

Imagine Stephen and Paul popping up next to each other in the resurrection. The last thing Stephen saw as he was being martyred was Saul of Tarsus urging on the crowd to stone him. He will naturally have questions as to why Saul was raised up with him to inherit eternal life. God will allow Stephen to review the books to see how Saul repented and went on to become Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, and author of most of the New Testament. God wants us to know that His judgements are correct before He executes the final death sentence. He wants us to follow Him out of love, not fear.

We were purchased by the blood of Jesus. He is our Kinsman Redeemer, and the only one qualified to open the sealed deed. I believe that the breaking of the seals symbolizes the time when judgement is passing from the dead to the living. Remember that judgement is really redemption from the perspective of the innocent. As long as we accept Christ’s sacrifice on our behalf, then we are viewed by God not as forgiven sinners, but as if we had never sinned. He says “I will remember their sins no more.” When was the document sealed? “...everyone whose name has not been written **from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.**” Rev 13:8 (NAS). “For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, “As I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter My rest,” **although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.**” Heb 4:3

As Jesus breaks each seal, events happen which cause the living to accept or reject Christ. Breaking the seals are acts of redemption and of judgement. As each individual experiences the events of the seals, he or she will turn toward or away from Christ, and bring redemption or judgement upon himself. When the last seal is broken, the book will be open for us all to see. “For nothing is hidden that shall not become evident, nor anything secret that shall not be known and come to light.” Luke 8:17

The First Four Seals

Rev 6:1-17

1 And I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come."

2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer.

3 And when He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come."

4 And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men should slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.

5 And when He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." And I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.

6 And I heard as it were a voice in the center 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 the wine."

7 And when He broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come."

8 And I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. And authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.

7 Seals (4:1-8:1)
Seals 1-4
Seals 5-6
Interlude
Seal #7

I am not sure exactly what the first horseman represents. Most have equated it with the Gospel going forth with some kind of power. The historicists equate this symbol with the spread of the Gospel by the apostles. For some reason - I am not sure why - my study bible has inserted a caption over the first horseman saying “A False Christ.” Remember that idea. We will look at it again in a moment. The bow and the crown were both symbols of conquering in the Old Testament. Often, God would say that He would break the bow of a particular person or people. This would usually indicate that He would overthrow them as a nation.

The second horseman is obviously symbolic of war. The third represents famine. The fourth represents death by war, famine, plagues and wild beasts. There are a number of references to these forces throughout Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and some of the Minor Prophets. In almost all of these passages, God said that He was using these forces to punish His people for turning away

from Him. Punishments from God were always done in love. He treats us as His children - children who often need some discipline. "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent." Rev 3:16.

Zechariah and the First Four Seals

There are two sections in Zechariah that parallel the first four seals very closely. Unfortunately, I have not been able to draw much meaning out of the passages. I include them here so that you might study them for yourself. Perhaps you will be able to discover more than I have.

Zech 1:7-11

7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, as follows:

8 I saw at night, and behold, a man was riding on **a red horse**, and he was standing among the myrtle trees which were in the ravine, **with red, sorrel, and white horses** behind him.

9 Then I said, "My lord, what are these?" And the angel who was speaking with me said to me, "I will show you what these are."

10 And the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered and said, "**These are those whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth.**"

11 So they answered the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees, and said, "**We have patrolled the earth, and behold, all the earth is peaceful and quiet.**" (NAS)

Zech 6:1-8

1 Now I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and behold, **four chariots** were coming forth from between the two mountains; and the mountains were bronze mountains.

2 With the **first chariot were red horses**, with **the second chariot black horses**,
3 with **the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot strong dappled horses**.

4 Then I spoke and said to the angel who was speaking with me, "What are these, my lord?"

5 And the angel answered and said to me, "**These are the four spirits of heaven, going forth after standing before the Lord of all the earth.**

6 with one of which the black horses are going forth to the north country; and the white ones go forth after them, while the dappled ones go forth to the south country.

7 "When the strong ones went out, they were eager to go to patrol the earth." And He said, "**Go, patrol the earth.**" So they patrolled the earth.

8 Then He cried out to me and spoke to me saying, "See, those who are going to the land of the north have appeased My wrath in the land of the north." (NAS)

The Four Seals and the Four Trumpets

Notice that the first four seals are grouped together and are different than the fifth and sixth ones. The first four appear under the symbolism of four horsemen. The fifth and sixth drop the horseman motif. The fifth and sixth are separated from the seventh by an interlude scene. This gives us the 4-2-1 pattern that is just like the 7 Trumpets.

The first four trumpets and the first four seals do not describe the same events, but the events they describe may be intertwined. Certainly the forces described by the seals have been with us throughout human history. But they may be either more common or more severe in the last days. God causes circumstances that will force us to make a decision to accept or reject Christ. God will not make the decision for us, nor will He force us to make a particular choice. He will, however, force us to make a decision. Crisis can bring about this decision. As such, the seals might be most significant as end time events that describe the final scenes of the plan of salvation.

I believe it is possible that the first two seals precede the sounding of the first trumpet. I arrived at this conclusion based primarily on a text in Zechariah.

Zech 9:13-14

13 For I will bend Judah as **My bow**, I will fill the bow with Ephraim. And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece; and I will make you like **a warrior's sword**.

14 Then the LORD will appear over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning; and **the Lord GOD will blow the trumpet, and will march in the storm winds of the south.** (NAS)

Verse 13 uses the symbols of the first two seals - a bow and a sword. Then verse 14 says that God will blow the trumpet and bring forth "storm winds", which usually connote strife or calamity. I believe that this passage could refer to the sounding of the first trumpet after the second seal is broken. I know that this is not a strong conclusion.

Think logically about the first four trumpets and what the results would be. Wouldn't there first be widespread famine as crops are destroyed by fire and by the chaotic changes in the climate? Following that, would there not be many deaths as a result of famine, plague, and nations fighting each other in the chaos? Don't the third and fourth seals describe the natural results of the effects of the first four trumpets? To a certain degree, they also parallel some elements of the fifth trumpet. See the diagram at the end of this section on the 7 Seals.

The Fifth Seal and the Sixth Trumpet

9 And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of **those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained;**
 10 and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"
 11 And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and **their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been,** should be completed also.

These are not literal souls crying out. The Bible teaches that death is a sleep where each person will rest until the resurrection – but that is another study. Here these souls cry out in the same sense that the voice of Abel's blood cried out to God from the ground when he was slain by Cain (Gen. 4:10). These souls represent the fallen Christian martyrs of the last days. In this way, the fifth seal parallels the Christian martyrs of the sixth trumpet.

7 Seals (4:1-8:1)
Seals 1-4
Seals 5-6
Interlude
Seal #7

The Sixth Seal and the Fifth and Seventh Plagues

12 And I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was **a great earthquake;** and **the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood;**
 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.
 14 And the sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up; and **every mountain and island were moved out of their places.**
 15 And the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains;
 16 and **they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us** and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;
 17 for the great day of their wrath has come; and who is able to stand?" (NAS)

I'll give you a quick preview of the fifth and seventh plagues (of the 7 Last Plagues). I am sure that you will note the similarities.

Rev 16:10-11

10 And the **fifth angel poured out his bowl** upon the throne of the beast; **and his kingdom became darkened;** and they gnawed their tongues because of pain,
 11 and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds. (NAS)

Rev 16:17-21

17 **And the seventh angel poured out his bowl** upon 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 and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was **a great earthquake,** such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty.
 19 And the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath.
 20 **And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.**
 21 **And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men;** and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe. (NAS)

The sixth plague would obviously fit in between the fifth and seventh plagues and would fall into this section. The language of the sixth plague is not included in the language of the sixth seal. The sixth plague is the battle of Armageddon. We will look at this in more detail in the section on the 7 Last Plagues.

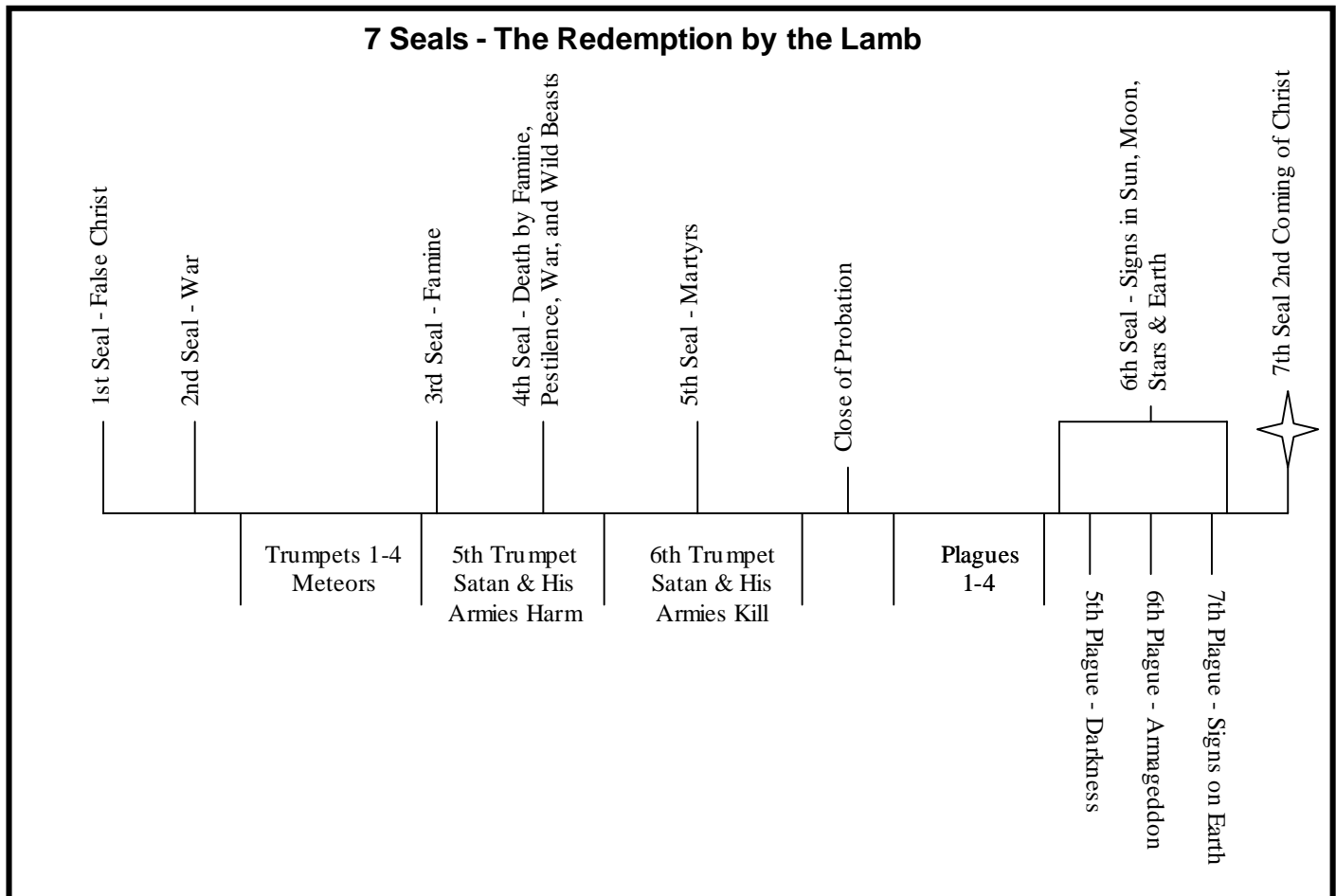
The Seventh Seal

Rev 8:1

1 And when He broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. (NAS)

There is not a lot here to go on. Many people believe that this is the very moment of Jesus' Second Coming. There would be silence in Heaven because all of the heavenly host would be returning with Jesus in His glory to redeem His people on the earth. Others believe that the silence in Heaven represents a moment of solemnity as the plan of salvation comes to a close and Jesus utters the fateful words, "It is finished."

Diagram of the 7 Seals



The Seven Seals and Matthew 24 (The Signs of the Times)

Probably the best parallels to the 7 Seals are the signs of the times that Jesus gives in Matthew 24. Look at the order of the signs as given in Matthew and notice their direct correlation to the 7 Seals. Almost all Christians believe that the signs of Matthew 24 are last day events and not events scattered throughout history. This is the strongest argument in favor of the 7 Seals being end time events. Look at Matthew 24 and notice the similarities. Note that the parallelism here requires that the first seal be interpreted as a false Christ – or the rise of an anti-Christian or false Christian religio-political system such as the papacy or the ecumenical movement.

Matt 24:1-31

- 1 And Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him.
- 2 And He answered and said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down."
- 3 And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"
- 4 And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you.
- 5 **"For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.**
- 6 "And you will be hearing of **wars and rumors of wars**; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.
- 7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be **famines** and earthquakes.

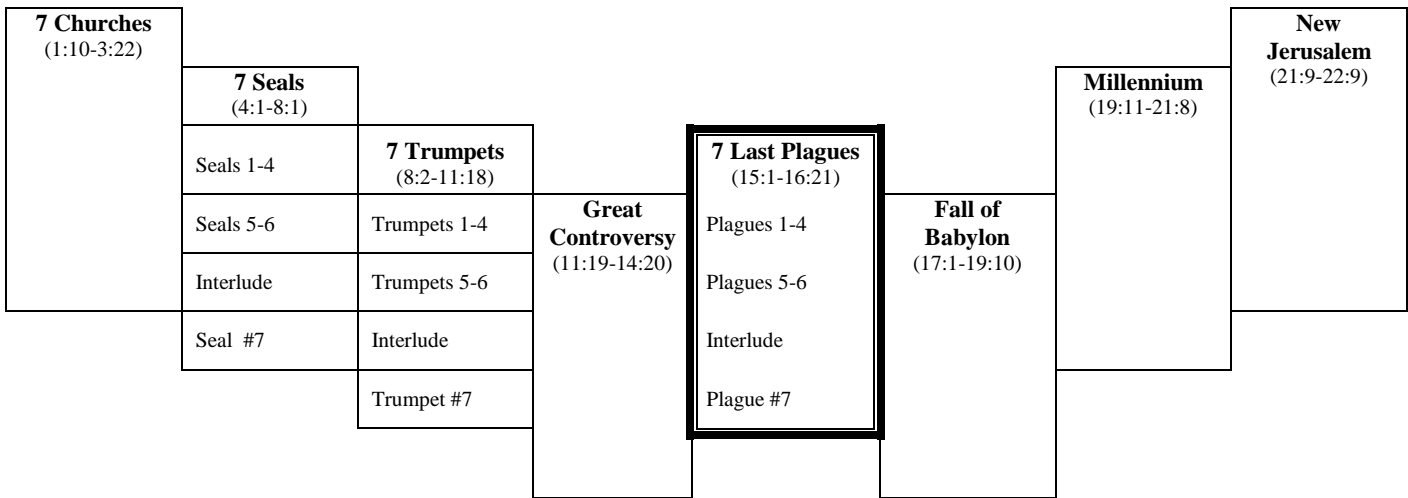
8 "But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.
9 "Then they will **deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you**, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name.
10 "And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another.
11 "And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many.
12 "And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold.
13 "But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved.
14 "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.
15 "Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),
16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains;
17 let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house;
18 and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak.
19 "But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days!
20 "But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath;
21 for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.
22 "And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short.
23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him.
24 "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.
25 "Behold, I have told you in advance.
26 "If therefore they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go forth, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them.
27 "For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.
28 "Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.
29 "But 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 the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken**,
30 and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all **the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory**.
31 "And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. (NAS)

Here is a table that shows the correspondence between the 7 Seals and Matthew 24.

1 st Seal – False Christ (Rev. 6:1-2)	Matt. 24:5 – False Christ
2 nd Seal – War (Rev. 6:3-4)	Matt. 24:6 – Wars and rumors of wars
3 rd Seal – Famine (Rev. 6:5-6)	Matt. 24:7 – Famines
4 th Seal – Death by sword, famine, plague & wild beasts (Rev. 6:7-8)	Matt. 24:7,9 – Famines and tribulation
5 th Seal – Martyrs (Rev. 6:9-11)	Matt. 24:9-10 – Killed and delivered up on account of My name's sake
6 th Seal – Earthquake, sun becomes black, moon like blood, stars fall from the sky, mountains and islands moved out of their places, men hide from the presence of the Lamb (Rev. 6:12-17)	Matt. 24:29-30 – Sun darkened, moon not give light, stars fall from sky, powers of heaven shaken, tribes of earth mourn when they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with power and glory

Many of the other pieces of Matthew 24 seem to describe events associated with the 7 Trumpets and the 7 Last Plagues – the abomination of desolation, the great tribulation, false Christ and false prophets performing miracles. Perhaps by comparing Matthew 24, the 7 Seals, the 7 Trumpets, the 7 Last Plagues, and the Great Controversy scenes of Rev. 12-15, we can get a picture of the very last days of earth's history. Wouldn't they look very much like the description at the beginning of this paper?

The 7 Last Plagues



Rev 16:1-21

- 1 And I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out **the seven bowls of the wrath of God** into the earth."
 - 2 And the first angel went and poured out his bowl into the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore **upon the men who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.**
 - 3 And the second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead man; and every living thing in the sea died.
 - 4 And the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood.
 - 5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "**Righteous art Thou, who art and who wast, O Holy One, because Thou didst judge these things;**
 - 6 **for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink. They deserve it.**"
 - 7 And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments."
 - 8 And the fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given to it to scorch men with fire.
 - 9 And men were scorched with fierce heat; and **they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues; and they did not repent, so as to give Him glory.**
 - 10 And the fifth angel poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and **his kingdom became darkened;** and they gnawed their tongues because of pain,
 - 11 **and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.**
 - 12 And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, **the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, that the way might be prepared for the kings from the east.**
 - 13 And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs;
 - 14 for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.
 - 15 ("Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.")
 - 16 And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.
 - 17 And the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon 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 and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was **a great earthquake,** such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty.
 - 19 And the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath.
 - 20 And **every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.**
 - 21 And **huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.**
- (NAS)

The 7 Last Plagues are to be taken literally. In most cases they are self-explanatory. The effects are literal. They are caused by God. The 7 Last Plagues fall only on those who have rejected Christ and have received the mark of the beast (see v.2). Also, the purpose of the 7 Last Plagues is to punish, not to warn. Note that the 7 Trumpets affected only a third of the land, seas, etc., but the 7 Last Plagues affect all of the land, seas, etc. "If any one worships the beast and his image...he also will drink the wine of the **wrath of God**, which is mixed in **full strength** in the cup of **His anger**" (Rev. 14:9-10). "I saw...seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because **in them the wrath of God is finished**" (Rev 15:1). The 7 Last Plagues are reminiscent of the ten plagues that God brought on Egypt at the time of the Exodus.

The 7 Last Plagues occur AFTER the close of probation. At this time it is too late for anyone to change his mind about accepting Christ. The two camps have been clearly divided. The saved are saved and the lost are lost. No one will switch sides at this point in time. The Bible highlights this point in verses 9 and 11 where it says that "men blasphemed God...and they did not repent of their deeds." The close of probation occurs when the last living individual makes the decision to stand with or against Jesus. It will pass without notice on the earth. No one will know that the final decisions have been rendered in the heavenly courts until the first plague falls.

The saved will experience "the time of Jacob's trouble", or their own version of the great tribulation, at the same time that the wicked experience the 7 Last Plagues. The 7 Last Plagues are not the time of Jacob's trouble for the saved - but the plagues do **cause** this tribulation. Satan will convince the wicked that the plagues falling on the world are a punishment because the other group refuses to acknowledge and worship him. Therefore, the wicked will issue a death decree against the righteous, believing that they will appease God's wrath by purging the heretics from among them. The attacks of the wicked are part of what constitutes the time of Jacobs trouble for the righteous. The other piece is that the righteous will not feel all that righteous. They will search their hearts for any unconfessed sin. As they grow closer and closer to a Holy God, they become painfully aware of their own unrighteousness. During this time they will learn to trust wholly in the merits of Christ and the grace of God. God does not remove them from this time of trial, but carries them through it in order to strengthen their faith in Him. It is just like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the three Hebrew boys who were thrown in the fiery furnace as described in Daniel 3. God did not remove them from the trial, He carried them through their fiery ordeal. He was with them in the furnace, and He used the fire of the furnace to burn their ropes and free them from their bondage. Likewise, God will allow His people to go through the great tribulation in order to purify their faith and to free them totally from their bondage to sin.

The death decree issued by the wicked will occur after the second plague. During the third plague, described in verse 4, the rivers are turned to blood. In verses 5 and 6, an angel says that this judgement was fair and righteous because the wicked had poured out the blood of the righteous. This occurred partly when many Christians were martyred during the fifth seal and the sixth trumpet. But this judgement is also a response to the death decree. Even though the decree had not yet been executed, the wicked were as guilty by making the decree as if the sentence had already been carried out. Therefore, the third plague was a response to the death decree issued after the second plague. Although this is not a strong conclusion at this point, we will see support for this idea when we look at a Biblical parallel - the story of Esther.

Joel 3 and the Sixth and Seventh Plagues

Note that the sixth plague is the battle of Armageddon. The wicked assemble together to hunt down the righteous and execute the sentence of the death decree. God, of course, intervenes and rescues His people. That is the seventh plague. Incidentally, Joel describes this event very clearly as well. Look at the passage in Joel below and note the similarities in the language with that of the sixth and seventh plagues as well as the 6th seal. You should be able to start recognizing the patterns and to fit the pieces of the puzzle together at this point.

Joel 3:2, 12-17

2 **I will gather all the nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there On behalf of My people** and My inheritance, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; and they have divided up My land.

12 Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for **there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.**

13 **Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.** Come, tread, for the wine press is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.

14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For **the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.**

15 **The sun and moon grow dark, and the stars lose their brightness.**

16 And **the LORD roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble.** But the LORD is a refuge for His people and a stronghold to the sons of Israel.

17 Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, and strangers will pass through it no more.

(NAS)

Note that Jehoshaphat means “Jehova judges”. Also note that the valley of decision in verse 14 is not a place for the people to make a decision, but for God to reveal His judgement decisions.

Please note most of all the second half of verse 16. “But the Lord is a refuge for His people and a stronghold to the sons of Israel.” God will always be with His people and protect them. There will not be any Christian martyrs after the close of probation. There would be no point to their deaths. The only reason that God gives some the gift of martyrdom is for others to be converted by their witness of faith. After the close of probation, no one can change sides. No one will come to Christ after that time. Therefore there is no purpose in the death of a single one of God’s people. Those who are alive at the close of probation will live to see their Savior’s return.

I strongly encourage you to read through the whole book of Joel with these new perspectives in mind. Actually you should read through all of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and the Minor Prophets. There is an incredible amount of support for the ideas of this paper in those prophetic books. You will probably notice other patterns that I have overlooked.

Esther - the Death Decree and the 7 Last Plagues

I mentioned before that there was a parallelism between the story of Esther and the death decree of the 7 Last plagues. Let me summarize the context of the story. King Ahasuerus (Artaxerxes) deposed his former queen Vashti and replaced her with a Jewess named Esther. The king did not know that Esther was Jewish. Esther had an uncle, named Mordecai, who advised her regularly and who was a pious Jew. The king had an advisor named Haman. Haman grew to resent Mordecai because this man refused to bow down and pay homage to him. Haman discovered that this was because Mordecai was a Jew. Haman grew to distrust all Jews because they would refuse to bow to him. He told the king that the Jews were insurrectionists, and would not show loyalty to the crown. He urged the king to issue a death decree to exterminate the Jews. (Does this sound familiar so far?) Let’s read about this decree. Note particularly the date of its issue and the execution date.

Esth 3:8-14

8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "**There is a certain people** scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from those of all other people, and **they do not observe the king's laws**, so it is not in the king's interest to let them remain.

9 "If it is pleasing to the king, **let it be decreed that they be destroyed**, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who carry on the king's business, to put into the king's treasuries."

10 Then the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.

11 And the king said to Haman, "The silver is yours, and the people also, to do with them as you please."

12 Then the king's scribes were summoned on **the thirteenth day of the first month**, and it was written just as Haman commanded to the king's satraps, to the governors who were over each province, and to the princes of each people, each province according to its script, each people according to its language, being written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet ring.

13 And letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces **to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews**, both young and old, women and children, **in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month**, which is the month Adar, and to seize their possessions as plunder.

14 A copy of the edict to be issued as law in every province was published to all the peoples so that they should be ready for this day.
(NAS)

The date of the decree was the 13th day of the first month. The execution date was the thirteenth day of the twelfth month. According to the ideal Jewish calendar, each month had thirty days. From the date the decree was issued until the execution date was exactly 11 months or 330 days.

As the story goes on, Esther appeals to the king on behalf of her people and exposes the evil intent of Haman’s plot. The glory that was Haman’s was given to Mordecai. Haman was hanged on the gallows that he had built to execute Mordecai. Now, the original decree could not be revoked. According to the laws of the Medes and the Persians, a royal edict could not be revoked. (See Dan. 6:12). Since the original edict could not be revoked, the king had Mordecai issue a second edict that gave the Jews the right to fight back against any who sought to do them harm. This second edict told the regional governors, in essence, that the king had changed his support to be in favor of the Jews and against their enemies. The might of the kingdom was, therefore, behind the Jews. The counter decree was issued on the 23rd day of the third month. When the execution date of the first decree came, the enemies of the Jews attacked them. But the forces of the king stood up on the side of the Jews and they totally destroyed their enemies. When Satan and the wicked attempt to execute a death decree against the righteous during the time of the 7 Plagues, Jesus Himself will intervene to rescue His people. The death decree will fall on the wicked instead of the righteous when Jesus returns in the clouds.

We can lay the 330 days of the death decree in Esther over the 7 Last Plagues and begin to get a time frame for the last plagues and the death decree. I will show this in a diagram, but first there is one more Biblical parallel to consider in order to get a more complete picture. This is the account of the flood.

The Flood and the 7 Last Plagues

The flood is also a great parallel to the time after the close of probation. Jesus, Himself, draws our attention to this fact in his discourse on the signs of His return.

Matt 24:37-39

37 "For **the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.**
38 "For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, **until the day that Noah entered the ark,**
39 and **they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away;** so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. (NAS)

This highlights the fact that the people were not even aware of the calamity that was coming upon them until it was too late. It wasn't Noah's fault. He had preached the coming flood for 120 years. The people could also not have helped but to see the immense ark that he was building in the middle of a dry land. The Bible at least hints at the possibility that it had never rained at all before that time. One reason that the people doubted Noah was because nothing like that had ever happened before. Let us not also make that same kind of mistake. God often has great things in mind that we do not expect. He told the prophet Habakkuk, "Look among the nations! Observe! Be astonished! Wonder! Because **I am doing something in your days-- you would not believe if you were told.**" Hab 1:5 (NAS).

Let's look at the sequence of some of the events of the flood. Like in Esther, pay particular attention to the timelines.

Gen 7:1,4-5,7

1 Then the LORD said to Noah, "Enter the ark, you and all your household; for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this time.
4 "**For after seven more days,** I will send rain on the earth **forty days and forty nights;** and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made."
5 And Noah did according to all that the LORD had commanded him.
7 Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood.

Gen 7:10-12

10 And it came about **after the seven days,** that the water of the flood came upon the earth.
11 In the **six hundredth year** of Noah's life, **in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month,** on the same day all **the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened.**
12 And the **rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.** (NAS)

Gen 7:15-17

15 So **they went into the ark to Noah,** by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life.
16 And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him; **and the LORD closed [the door] behind him.**
17 **Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days;** and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth. (NAS)

Gen 7:24

24 And the **water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days.** (NAS)

Gen 8:1-7

1 But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark; and God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the water subsided.
2 Also the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were closed, and the rain from the sky was restrained;
3 and the water receded steadily from the earth, and **at the end of one hundred and fifty days the water decreased.**
4 **And in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat.**
5 And the water decreased steadily until the tenth month; **in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains became visible.**
6 Then it came about **at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark** which he had made;
7 and he sent out a raven, and it flew here and there until the water was dried up from the earth. (NAS)

Gen 8:13-16

13 Now it came about **in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first of the month, the water was dried up from the earth**. Then Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the surface of the ground was dried up.

14 **And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month**, the earth was dry.

15 Then **God spoke to Noah, saying,**

16 "**Go out of the ark**, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you. (NAS)

Let me summarize some of the significant times and events.

<u>DAY</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>INTERVAL FROM LAST EVENT</u>
Day -7	God shuts the door of the ark	0 days
Day 0	Rains begin (40 days / 40 nights)	7 days
Day 40	Water prevails on earth for 150 days (including first 40)	40 days
Day 150	Ark rests on Mt. Ararat	110 days
Day 224	Tops of mountains seen	74 days
Day 264	Raven & Doves sent out at intervals	40 days
Day 314	Ark door opened, waters dried up	50 days
Day 370	Noah leaves ark	56 days

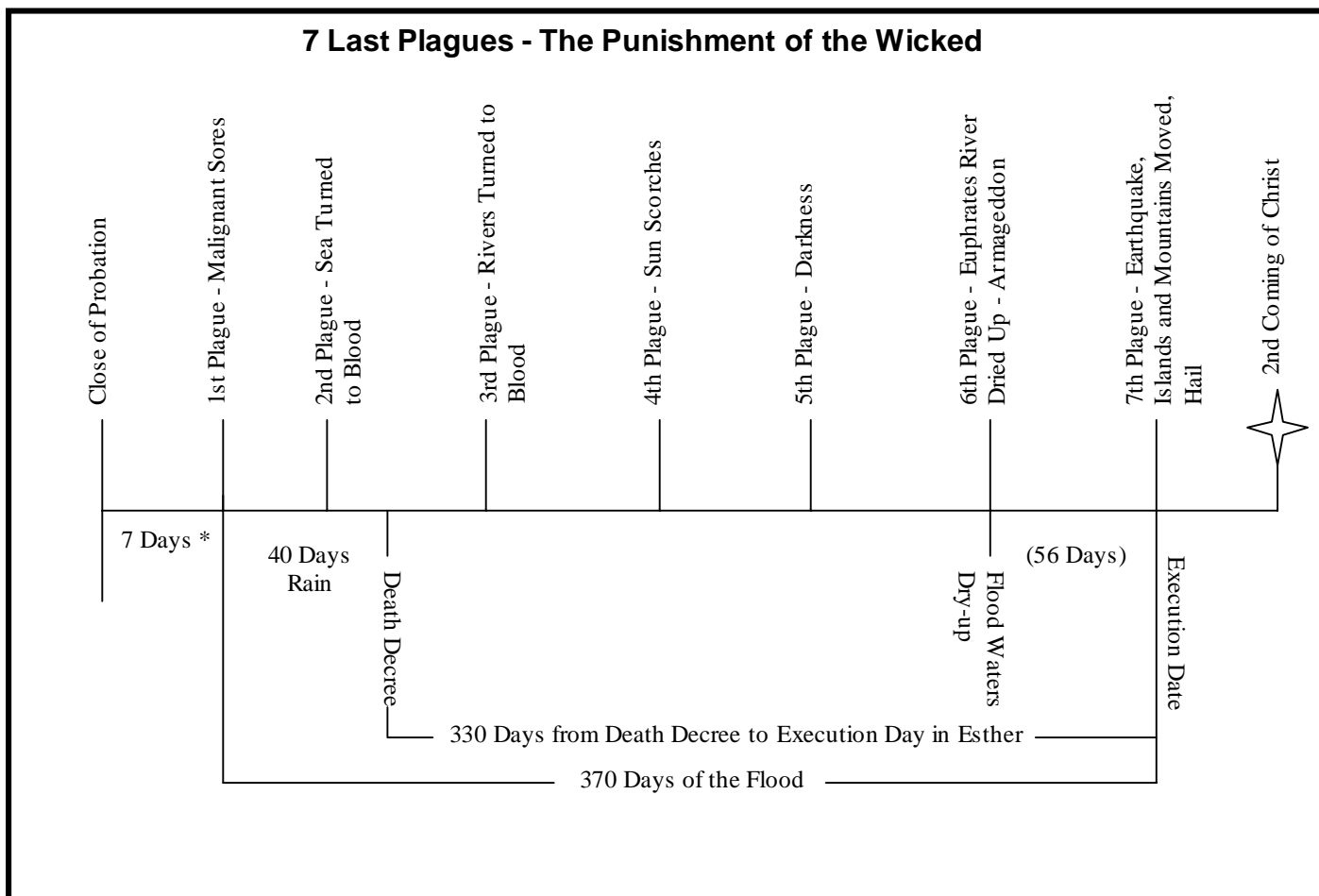
Notice a few significant points about the flood account. Both the flood and the seven last plagues are times of punishment for the wicked and rescue for the righteous. Note that only Noah's family believed him. In verse one, God says that He found them alone to be righteous before Him. Everyone else had ample opportunity to repent and turn to God, but no one did. Noah had been preaching to them for 120 years, without a single convert! Notice also in verse 16 that the Lord closed the door behind them after they had entered the ark. That represents the closing of the door of probation. After that time, the righteous were inside the ark and the wicked were outside. Even if someone would have come up to the ark and asked Noah to let him in, it would have been too late. But really, no one even seemed to notice. Matthew 24:39 says that the people did not understand until the flood came and took them all away.

Notice also that they were in the ark for seven days after the door was shut before the rains began to fall. I believe that the seven days is a symbolic time period, whereas others may be more literal. In my event charts, I use a period of seven days after the close of probation, but it may not be seven actual days. In this case, it may more correctly mean a complete period of time. Basically, you could say that it would be complete when God said so. In any event, the time period would be relatively short. Certainly not up into the range of 40 days or more.

Also note that God was very specific about most of these time periods. He designated particular days on which certain events happened. Altogether, there are seven basic time periods. There are also seven last plagues. There very well may be a correspondence between the two. There are two major points that I want to draw attention to. First, the total period of the flood was 370 days after the rains began to fall. Remember that there were 330 days between the death decree and the execution date in the story of Esther. Remember also that we said that the death decree would come after the first two plagues. Let's assume that the first two plagues were symbolized by the 40 days of rain during the flood. The 330 days of Esther plus the first 40 days of the flood would equal the 370 days of the whole flood account.

The second correlation that I find between the flood and the plagues is that the last time period mentioned before Noah came out of the ark was on the first day of the first month. It says that the waters were dried up and the ark door was opened. This could correspond to the sixth plague. Rev. 16:12 says that the Euphrates River was dried up that the way might be prepared for the kings of the east to rally their forces for the battle of Armageddon. This conclusion may not be very strong, but I do believe that we can overlay the 7 Last Plagues onto the general time structure that we have derived from Esther and the flood account. See the diagram below for a clearer picture.

Diagram of Plagues, Esther, and Flood



A Time Frame from Daniel

The 1290 and 1335 Days

Daniel 12:11-12 gives two time periods that deal with end times. I have never read a good explanation for these time periods. Most of the other time periods in Daniel have been explained to my satisfaction, but these two have been different. I now believe them to be literal time periods, not applying the day for a year principle that does apply to the time periods of earlier chapters.

Dan 12:11-13

11 "And from the time that the **daily sacrifice is taken away**, and **the abomination of desolation is set up**, there shall be **one thousand two hundred and ninety days**.

12 "Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the **one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days**.

13 "But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, **and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days**." (NKJ)

Actually there are three time periods to be dealt with in Daniel chapter 12. The 1290 days of verse 11, the 1335 days of verse 12, and the 1260 days, or 'time, times, and half a time,' of verse seven. I believe that the 1290 and 1330 are grouped together in context and that they begin at the same time. Verse 11 gives the beginning event for the 1290 days. Verse 13 gives the ending event of the 1335 days. Verse 13 says that Daniel would rest in the dust of the earth and arise for his allotted portion (or reward) at the end of ***these days***. Which days? The 1335 days. What is the event of verse 13? It must be the return of Jesus when the dead in Christ shall rise and receive the reward that He brings with Him. So the 1290 days and the 1335 days begin at the same point and the 1335 days end at Christ's return.

What event marks the beginning of the 1290 days? Verse 11 says that the event is when the regular (daily, or continual) sacrifice is taken away and the abomination of desolation is set up. So what is the abomination of desolation? These two events are tied together three times in the book of Daniel - 9:27, 11:31, and 12:11. Look at these two other occurrences.

Dan 9:27

27 "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the **week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering**; and **on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate**, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." (NAS)

Dan 11:30-37

30 "For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened, and will return **and become enraged at the holy covenant** and take action; so **he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant**.

31 "And forces from him will arise, **desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation.**

32 "**And by smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action.**

33 "**And those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder, for many days.**

34 "Now when they fall they will be granted a little help, and many will join with them in hypocrisy.

35 "**And some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge, and make them pure, until the end time;** because it is still to come at the appointed time.

36 "**Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god, and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods;** and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.

37 "And he will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the desire of women, nor will he show regard for any other god; for he will magnify himself above them all. (NAS)

The first instance in Dan 9:27 clearly talks about Jesus causing the sacrifice to cease when He offered Himself up as the one true Sacrifice. This situation does not seem to apply to the end times.

The passage in 11:31 definitely deals with the end times. Verses 32 and 36 describe the appearance of Satan (the fifth trumpet). Verses 33 and 35 describe the activities of God's people under the latter rain of the Holy Spirit. It even talks about the martyrs of the sixth trumpet. And in the middle of that language, it talks about the abomination of desolation and the taking away of the regular sacrifice. So we can begin to associate the abomination of desolation with the fifth and sixth trumpets.

Jesus does refer to the abomination of desolation in Matthew 24:15 in relation to the destruction of Jerusalem. In the parallel account in Luke, it is identified as the time when Jerusalem is surrounded by Roman armies. Josephus' account of the destruction of Jerusalem said that the Roman standards, each with an eagle mounted on top, preceded the marching Roman armies. These idolatrous standards would have certainly been an abomination in God's holy temple.

But remember that there can be multiple fulfillments of prophecy. I believe that this prophecy will be fulfilled a second time at the end of time. Particularly because Daniel did not rise 1335 days, or even 1335 years, after the destruction of Jerusalem. Remember that we already showed a correlation between the Signs of the Times in Matthew 24 and the 7 Seals.

To further highlight this interpretation of the abomination of desolation and the taking away of the regular sacrifice, I want to take you back to a text we discussed earlier. It is in Joel chapter 1.

Joel 1:4-13

4 What the **gnawing locust** has left, the **swarming locust** has eaten; and what the swarming locust has left, the **creeping locust** has eaten; and what the **creeping locust** has left, the stripping locust has eaten.

5 Awake, drunkards, and weep; and wail, all you wine drinkers, On account of the sweet wine that is cut off from your mouth.

6 For a **nation has invaded my land, Mighty and without number**; its teeth are **the teeth of a lion**, and it has the fangs of a lioness.

7 It has made my vine a waste, and my fig tree splinters. It has stripped them bare and cast them away; their branches have become white.

8 Wail like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the bridegroom of her youth.

9 **The grain offering and the libation are cut off from the house of the LORD.** The priests mourn, the ministers of the LORD.

10 The field is ruined, the land mourns, for the grain is ruined, the new wine dries up, fresh oil fails.

11 Be ashamed, O farmers, wail, O vinedressers, for the wheat and the barley; because the harvest of the field is destroyed.

12 The vine dries up, and the fig tree fails; the pomegranate, the palm also, and the apple tree, all the trees of the field dry up. Indeed, rejoicing dries up from the sons of men.

13 Gird yourselves with sackcloth and lament, O priests; wail, O ministers of the altar! Come, spend the night in sackcloth, O ministers of my God, **for the grain offering and the libation are withheld from the house of your God.** (NAS)

The language of Joel chapter 1 is very obviously the same as the language of the fifth trumpet. I have shown why I believe that the fifth trumpet is Satan's impersonation of Christ on the earth. Look at verses 9 & 13. It says that the grain offering and libation are cut off from the house of the Lord. These were continual offerings that were to be made each day before the Lord in His temple. I would like to suggest that the 'abomination of desolation' is Satan impersonating Christ. I am not exactly sure what the continual offering symbolizes here, but there is no doubt that it will be cut off at the time Satan appears. This locks in the starting time of the 1335 and 1290 days. They begin when Satan appears and takes away the regular offering and the 1335 days end at Christ's return.

I would like to suggest that the regular sacrifice symbolizes the universal legislation that mandates Sunday sacredness. I believe that the USA and other nominally Christian governments will make this type of legislation in the aftermath of the first four trumpets. But the rest of the world governments will not capitulate until Satan appears as Christ and legitimizes the claims of Sunday sacredness. Remember, the central issue is not about a day. It is about following the Commandments of God or the traditions of man. It is about accepting Christ's righteousness verses self-righteousness. It is about taking something that God has hallowed and using it for a common purpose. I have attached two very brief studies that further illustrate the significance of the issue in Appendix B of this paper, entitled, "The Sabbath as a Sign", and "The Mark of the Beast".

Regardless of the exact symbolic meaning of the regular sacrifice, we have established the beginning and ending events of the 1335 days. I believe that the 1290 days end at the execution date of the death decree and are concurrent with the seventh plague. I do not have a very solid explanation of the intervening 45 days, except that the events of the seventh plague probably do not occur in a single day, but rather over a period of time.

The 1260 Days

Dan 12:6-9

6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "**How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?**"

7 Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that **it shall be for a time, times, and half a time**; and **when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished**.

8 Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what shall be the end of these things?"

9 And he said, "**Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end**." (NKJ)

The 1260 days is not to be grouped with the 1290 and 1335 days. In this context, I do not believe that the day for year principle applies either. I do believe that this same time period referred to earlier in Daniel does refer to the 1260 years between 538 and 1798 AD and represents the period of papal supremacy. However, in this context I believe the time to be literal days. I do not have a good formula to use to differentiate when and when not to apply the day for a year principle. I do think that the time periods that deal specifically with the end times should be taken literally. Chapter 12 begins with the phrase, "At that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise." I believe that this phrase applies to the close of probation and the outpouring of the 7 Last Plagues. The 1260 days certainly fits in sometime around these events. It begins when the end time "wonders" begin to occur and ends when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered.

Generally speaking, 3-1/2 years, or 1260 days, represents a time of ministry by the righteous and apostasy by the wicked. There were 3-1/2 years of no rain just prior to Elijah's Mount Carmel experience, where the people were called to accept or reject God. Jesus preached for 3-1/2 years from His baptism to His crucifixion. The Apostles preached to the Jews for 3-1/2 more years after the cross before the Jews finally rejected the message, Stephen was stoned, Paul was converted, and the Gospel went out in force to the Gentiles. For these reasons, I believe that the 1260 days begins at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the sounding of the first trumpet and end either at the close of probation, the first plague, or the death decree. The death decree is the lowest point for the people of God in the sequence of end time events. Daniel 12:7 says that the 1260 days would end "when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered." I am not trying to establish absolutes here. I am just trying to construct an order of events and a general time structure based on Bible prophecy.

Why Now?

The evidence here is mostly circumstantial. My main point is that it could be at any time. There are many who believe in a 7000 year theory. There were approximately 2000 years from creation to the birth of Abraham, 2000 years from Abraham to the birth of Jesus, and there have been just over 2000 years from the birth of Jesus until now. According to this theory, the 7000th year would be the millennium between the first and second resurrections when the righteous would be with Christ, the wicked would be in the grave, Satan would be bound, and the earth would have a Sabbath rest. The best estimations put the end of the 6000 years in 1996. One author suggests that the time should not begin at creation, but at the fall, which he estimates to have been just a few years after creation week. That would put the 6000 years ending anytime in the next few years. It is also possible that the "end" began with the first seal, and that event could already have happened in either 1994 or 1997 with the documents that solidified the ecumenical movement.

In 1994, a comet crashed into Jupiter and caused a hole the size of the earth. This really awakened us to the real possibility that an asteroid or comet could impact the earth and cause massive devastation. Two movies came out in 1998 about asteroids or comets colliding with the earth. These movies paid lip service to the Biblical implications of such events in favor of the human solution - destroying the asteroid or digging tunnels to hide from the effects. I believe that God is warning us in very real ways about what is about to come upon this earth. Satan is quick to put his own slant on things. Within months after these movies were released, millions of people across the entire world saw them. Movies are probably the USA's number one export to the world.

The Orthodox Jewish world believes that something significant will happen very soon. They also believe that the temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem sometime soon. They are even raising a goat to be the first sacrifice in the new temple. The goat must be seven years old in order to be the sacrifice. The goat will be that age sometime in the next couple of years. This is just one other deception that Satan is planting to prepare for his impersonation of the Messiah.

Within the Protestant Church the ecumenical movement is in full force. Para-church ministries like Promise Keepers have equated "sectarianism" with "racism" and have vowed to stamp out both within the church by the turn of the millennium. Catholics and Protestants are cooperating through organizations like the Christian Coalition to influence the legislative process and to stem the tide of moral decay in our country. The world religious community is preparing to celebrate the year 2000 together as a 'year of jubilee'. The Protestant world also recognizes that Jesus' return is imminent. The standard Protestant concept of the 'secret rapture' is spreading like wildfire. This is a false doctrine about Jesus' Second Coming. Millions of copies of the book *Left Behind* have been circulated within the Protestant community. This book is centered around the false doctrine of the 'secret rapture'. Satan is preparing the Protestant world for his end time deceptions.

In 1998, the Pope John Paul II published a papal encyclical entitled "Dies Domini" or "The Lord's Day", which proclaimed Sunday to be the Christian Sabbath, and made it an obligatory observance for Catholics. He actually even urged all Christians to ensure that civil legislation protected their right to keep Sunday holy. The counterfeit interpretation that Satan has planted in the theology of the Catholic Church about the manner of Christ's return is also coming to fruition. Let's take a brief look at that in this next section.

The Catholic Counterfeit

The Catholics have their own view of the last day events that is based on a mix of traditional Catholic theology and messages that have been given by apparitions of Mary. These events are still somewhat mysterious, but they generally describe a sequence of four events - a warning, a miracle, a sign, and a chastisement. These four events will usher in the millennial reign of peace. The warning is to be a great event that will turn the world's attention back to God. The miracle is less well defined. A select few are reported to know its nature, but are to keep it a secret. It will in some way affirm the status of Mary in the plan of salvation. I believe that their miracle will be the appearance of Satan. The sign is supposed to be a continual reminder, perhaps visible, of the miracle and the warning. It will be something that people can return to in order to reaffirm their faith. The chastisement is supposed to be a punishment of all people because of the disobedience of a small group. These people must conform before the millennial peace can begin. Does this sound like the 7 Last Plagues to you?

Most of these accounts are third hand. I am told that most of them are reported in a book called the *Thunder of Justice*, which is a best seller in the Catholic bookstores. The apparitions of Mary have supposedly confirmed John Paul II as the last pope. He, himself, believes that he is the designated recipient of a message from Mary that was given to three girls in Fatima, Spain in the early 1900's. He believes that he was given a sign when he bent down to see a Fatima medallion on a little girl's neck when he was shot at, and nearly killed, a number of years ago. Whether he is to be the last pope or not, John Paul II will certainly not live for many more years. He is in rapidly failing health.

These things are certainly not conclusive evidence. The deceptions of Satan never are reliable. However, they seem to be consistent with how Satan might try to distort a Bible truth to his own advantage.

There are hundreds of little things that let us know that the time of Jesus' return is near. Impending shortages in the world water supply; a drastic reduction in the number of amphibians in the wild; wild fluctuations in world weather patterns; the possibility of cloning humans; wildly fluctuating economic indicators; wars, famines and moral decay, etc, etc. The bottom line is that the time is near.

The Great Controversy Scenes of Revelation 12-15.

I will not go into detail here. I have placed a number of studies in Appendix B that are brief explanations of topics such as the significance of the Sabbath, the mark of the beast, the identification of the anti-Christ beast of Revelation 13, and the Great Controversy between Christ and Satan. These studies are relatively brief. For better treatments of these topics I would recommend the booklet called, *The Dragon, the Beast, and the Woman*, available through Amazing Facts at www.amazingfacts.org. I would also recommend two books by G. Edward Reid, entitled, *Even at the Door*, and *Sunday's Coming*.

APPENDIX A – EG White Support

God Will Work in Unexpected Ways

"Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who Joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness." TM 300.

"God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that His people may be prepared to stand against the tempest of opposition and wrath." 5T 452.

"The Savior's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgment upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of the world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon His law." GC 36.

"Do you believe that the Lord is coming, and that the last great crisis is about to break upon the world? There will soon come a sudden change in God's dealings. The world in its perversity is being visited by casualties, --by floods, storms, fires, earthquakes, famines, wars and bloodshed. The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power;...but His forbearance will not always continue. Who is prepared for the SUDDEN CHANGE that will take place in God's dealings with sinful men?" -Fundamentals of Christian Education, p.356, 357.

"We who know the truth should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise." 8T 28; 7BC 911.

"Christians should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise, and this preparation they should make by diligently studying the word of God and striving to conform their lives to its precepts....God calls for a revival and a reformation." PK 626.

Great Balls of Fire

"Last Friday morning, just before I awoke, a very impressive scene was presented before me. I seemed to awake from sleep but was not in my home. From the windows I could behold a terrible conflagration. Great balls of fire were falling upon houses, and from these balls fiery arrows were flying in every direction. It was impossible to check the fires that were kindled, and many places were destroyed. The terror of the people was indescribable." Evangelism, p.29.

I saw an immense ball of fire fall among some beautiful mansions, causing their instant destruction. I heard someone say: "We knew that the judgements of God were coming on the earth, but we did not know that they would come so soon." Others, with agonized voices, said: "You knew! Why then did you not tell us? We did not know." -- 9T 28.

"Last night a scene was presented before me. I may never feel free to reveal all of it, but I will reveal a little.

It seemed that an immense ball of fire came down upon the world, and crushed large houses. From place to place rose the cry, "The Lord has come! The Lord has come!" Many were unprepared to meet Him, but a few were saying, "Praise the Lord!"

'Why are you praising the lord?' inquired those upon whom was coming sudden destruction.

'Because we now see what we have been looking for.'

'If you believed that these things were coming, why did you not tell us?' was the terrible response. 'We did not know about these things. Why did you leave us in ignorance? Again and again you have seen us; why did you not become acquainted with us, and tell us of the judgement to come, and that we must serve God, lest we perish? Now we are lost!'

Reflecting Christ, p.243.

"On one occasion, when in New York City, I was in the night season called upon to behold buildings rising story after story toward heaven. These buildings were warranted to be fireproof and they were erected to glorify their owners and builders...

The scene that next passed before me was an alarm of fire. Men looked at the lofty and supposedly fireproof buildings and said: 'They are perfectly safe.' But these buildings were consumed as if made of pitch. The fire engines could do nothing to stay the destruction. The firemen were unable to operate the engines." 9T 12, 13.

Crisis

"It is in a crisis that character is revealed. When the earnest voice proclaimed at midnight, 'Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him,' and the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, it was seen who had made preparation for the event. Both parties were taken unawares; but one was prepared for the emergency, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a SUDDEN AND UNLOOKED FOR CALAMITY, SOMETHING THAT BRINGS THE SOUL FACE TO FACE WITH DEATH, will show whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It will show whether the soul is sustained by grace. The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied." Christ's Object Lessons, p.412.

"The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury by having repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord will arise to shake terribly the earth. We shall see troubles on all sides. Thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea. Navies will go down, and human lives will be sacrificed by millions. Fires will break out unexpectedly, and no human effort will be able to quench them. The palaces of earth will be swept away in the fury of the flames. Disasters by rail will become more and more frequent; confusion, collision, and death without a moment's warning will occur on the great lines of travel. The end is near, probation is closing. Oh, let us seek God while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near!" MYP 89, 90.

"The commencement of the time of trouble,' here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period Just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary." EW 85.

What mean the awful calamities by sea -- vessels hurled into eternity without a moment's warning? What mean the accidents by land--fire consuming the riches that men have hoarded, much of which has been accumulated by oppression of the poor? The Lord will not interfere to protect the property of those who transgress His law, break His covenant, and trample upon His Sabbath, accepting in its place a spurious rest day.

The plagues of God are already falling upon the earth, sweeping away the most costly structures as if by a breath of fire from heaven. Will not these judgments bring professing Christians to their senses? God permits them to come that the world may take heed, that sinners may be afraid and tremble before Him.--3MR 311 (1902).

God has a purpose in permitting these calamities to occur. They are one of His means of calling men and women to their senses. By unusual workings through nature God will express to doubting human agencies that which He clearly reveals in His Word.--19MR 279 (1902).

How frequently we hear of earthquakes and tornadoes, of destruction by fire and flood, with great loss of life and property! Apparently these calamities are capricious outbreaks of disorganized, unregulated forces of nature, wholly beyond the control of man, but in them all God's purpose may be read. They are among the agencies by which He seeks to arouse men and women to a sense of their danger.--PK 277 (c. ~1914).

National Sunday Law

"The mark of the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be until the unrolling of the scroll." 6T 17; 8T159.

The Sunday Movement is now making its way in darkness. The leaders are concealing the true issue, and many who unite in the movement do not themselves see whither the under-current is tending. Its professions are mild, and apparently Christian; but when it shall speak, it will reveal the spirit of the dragon. RH Extra 12-11-1888, p.4.

"I saw that God has children who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They have not rejected the light upon it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath merely." EW 33.

"God's Sabbath will be trampled under foot, and a false sabbath will be exalted. In a Sunday law there is possibility for great suffering to those who observe the seventh day. The working out of Satan's plans will bring persecution to the people of God. But the faithful servants of God need not fear the outcome of the conflict." 2SM 375.

"The Protestant world today see in the little company keeping the Sabbath a Mordecai in the gate. His character and conduct, expressing reverence for the law of God, are a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling upon His Sabbath; the unwelcome intruder must by some means be put out of the way." 5T 450.

"When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held in common, shall influence the state to enforce decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result. GC 445

When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this three fold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.-- 5T 451 (1885).

Universal Sunday Law

"This earth has almost reached the place where God will permit the destroyer to work his will upon it. The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. **When this substitution becomes universal**, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth. He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity, and the earth shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain." 7T 141.

"The substitution of the false for the true is the last act in the drama. **When this substitution becomes universal**, God will reveal Himself. When the laws of men are exalted above the laws of God, when the powers of this earth try to force men to keep the first day of the week, know that the time has come for God to work. He will arise in His majesty, and will shake terribly the earth. He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity." 7BC 980.

"If popery or its principles shall again be legislated into power, the fires of persecution will be rekindled against those who will not sacrifice conscience and the truth in deference to popular errors. This evil is on the point of realization." 5T 712.

"God's people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day." 7BC 975; 9T 229.

"Sundaykeeping is not yet the mark of the beast, and will not be until the decree goes forth causing men to worship this idol sabbath. The time will come when this day will be the test but that time has not come yet." 7BC 977 (1899).

"Satan puts his interpretation on events, and they think, as he would have them, that the calamities which fill the land are a result of Sundaybreaking. Thinking to appease the wrath of God these influential men make laws enforcing Sunday observance." -- 10MR 239.

"As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false Sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example." -- 6T 18 (1900).

"The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part." -- 6T 352 (1900).

"Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world." -- 6T 395.

"The substitution of the false for the true is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal God will reveal Himself. When the laws of men are exalted above the laws of God, when the powers of this earth try to force men to keep the first day of the week, know that the time has come for God to work." -- 7BC 980 (1901).

"when the angel of mercy folds her wings and departs, Satan will do the evil deeds he has long wished to do. Storm and tempest, war and bloodshed -- in these things he delights, and thus he gathers in his harvest. And so completely will men be deceived by him that they will declare that these calamities are the result of the desecration of the first day of the week. From the pulpits of the popular churches will be heard the statement that the world is being punished because Sunday is not honored as it should be. And it will require no great stretch of imagination for men to believe this." 9-17-1901.

Close of Probation

"Wonderful events are soon to open before the world. The end of all things is at hand. The time of trouble is to come upon the people of God. Then it is that the decree will go forth forbidding those who keep the Sabbath of the Lord to buy or sell, and threatening them with punishment, and even death, if they do not observe the first day of the week as the Sabbath. 'And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time...'" RH 11-19-1908, p.5.

"I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. An angel with a writer's inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done, and the saints were numbered and sealed. Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the ten commandments, throw down the censer. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, 'It is done.' And all the angelic host laid off their crowns as Jesus made the solemn declaration, 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.'" EW 279, 280.

"'And at that time shall Michael stand up.' ...Every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people." 5T 212, 213.

"When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth...The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God's long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one." GC 614.

Satan's Impersonation of Christ

"We are warned that in the last days he [Satan] will work with signs and lying wonders until the close of probation, that he may point to them as evidence that he is an angel of light and not of darkness." 2SM 51; 7BC 911; 5BC 1099.

"In this age antichrist will appear as the true Christ, and then the law of God will be made void in the nations of our world. Rebellion against God's holy law will be fully ripe. But the true leader of all this rebellion is Satan clothed as an angel of light. Men will be deceived and will exalt him to the place of God, and deify him. But Omnipotence will interpose, and to the apostate churches that unite in exaltation of Satan, the sentence will go forth, 'Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.'" TM 62.

"The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his acceptive power he will make it appear that God's special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world." GC 464.

"There is a limit beyond which Satan cannot go, and here he calls deception to his aid and counterfeits the work which he has not power actually to perform. In the last days he will appear in such a manner as to make men believe him to be Christ come the second time into the world. He will indeed transform himself into an angel of light. But while he will bear the appearance of Christ in every particular, so far as mere appearance goes, it will deceive none but those who, like Pharaoh, are seeking to resist the truth." -- ST 698 (1889).

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation (Rev. 1:13-15). The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: "Christ has come! Christ has come!"

The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Savior uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed." -- GC 624.

Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit

"Before the final visitation of God's judgement on the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out on His children." GC 464.

"Before the work is closed up and the sealing of God's people is finished, we shall receive the outpouring of the Spirit of God." 1SM 111.

"The commencement of the time of trouble,' here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the 'latter rain,' or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out." EW BS, 86.

"This sealing of the servants of God is the same that was shown to Ezekiel in vision [Ezekiel 9]." TMM 45

Death Decree

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book. 'When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people. This small remnant, unable to defend themselves in the deadly conflict with the powers of earth that are marshaled by the dragon host, make God their defense. The decree has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death. May God help His people now, for what can they then do in such a fearful conflict without His assistance" 5T 212, 213.

"As the decree issued by the various rulers of Christendom against commandment-keepers shall withdraw the protection of government, and abandon them to those who desire their destruction, the people of God will flee from the cities and villages and associate together in companies, dwelling in the most desolate and solitary places. Many will find refuge in the strong-holds of the mountainsBut many of all nations, and of all classes, high and low, rich and poor, black and white, will be cast into the most unjust and cruel bondage. The beloved of God pass weary days, bound by chains, shut in by prison bars, sentenced to be slain, some apparently left to die of starvation in dark and loathsome dungeons." GC 626.

"I saw that God will in a wonderful manner preserve His people through the time of trouble. As Jesus poured out His soul in agony in the garden, they will earnestly cry and agonize day night for deliverance. The decree will go forth that they must disregard the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and honor the first day, or lose their lives; but they will not yield, and trample under their feet the Sabbath of the Lord, and honor an institution of the papacy. Satan's host and wicked men will surround them and exult over them because there will seem to be no escape for them. But in the midst of their revelry triumph, there is heard a peal of the loudest Thunder. The heavens have gathered blackness, and are only illuminated the blazing light and terrible glory from heaven, as God utters His voice from His holy habitation.

The Death Decree Happens After the Second Plague

"And 'the rivers and fountains of waters . . . became blood.' Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares: 'Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.' By condemning the people of God to death they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands." GC 628.

The Seven Last Plagues

"God would not suffer the wicked to destroy those who were expecting translation, and who would not bow to the decree of the beast or receive his mark. I saw that if the wicked were permitted to slay the saints, Satan and all his evil host, and all who hate God, would be gratified: And oh, what a triumph it would be for his Satanic majesty, to have power, in the last closing struggle, over those who had so long waited to behold Him whom they loved. Those who have mocked at the idea of the saints' going up will witness the care of God for His people, and behold their glorious deliverance." EW 284.

"I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus' work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come seven last plagues. These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous. They thought that we had brought the judgments of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to the saints, which caused them

to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob's trouble." EW 36, 37.

"With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness deeper than the darkness of the night falls upon earth. It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people....The proudest cities of the earth are laid low. The lordly palaces, upon which the world's great men have lavished their wealth in order to glorify themselves, are crumbling to ruin before their eyes. Prison walls are rent asunder, and God's people who have been held in bondage for their faith, are set free." GC 635-637.

"The foundations of the earth shake; buildings totter and fall with a terrible crash. The sea boils like a pot, and the whole earth is in terrible commotion. The captivity of the righteous is turned, and with sweet and solemn whisperings they say to one another, 'We are delivered. It is the voice of God.'" 1T 353, 354.

"The Lord has shown me repeatedly that it is contrary to the Bible to make any provision for our temporal wants in the time of trouble. I saw that if the saints had food laid up by them, or in the field in the time of trouble, when sword, famine and pestilence are in the land, it would be taken from them by violent hands, and strangers would reap their fields." EW 56.

"The plagues were falling upon the inhabitants of the earth. Some were denouncing God and cursing Him. Others rushed to the people of God and begged to be taught how they might escape His judgments. But the saints had nothing for them. The last tear for sinners had been shed, the last agonizing prayer offered, the last burden borne, the last warning given." EW 281.

"These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous; they thought that we had brought the judgements of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of us, the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob's trouble." EW 36, 37.

"And 'the rivers and fountains of waters . . . became blood.' Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares: 'Thou art righteous, O Lord....because Thou has judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.' By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands." GC 628.

"With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens, and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant, and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness." GC 635, 636.

"Two great opposing powers are revealed in the last great battle. On one side stands the creator of heaven and earth. All on His side bear His signet. They are obedient to His commands. On the other side stands the prince of darkness, with those who have chosen apostasy and rebellion." 7BC 982, 983.

"Evil angels unite their powers with evil men, and as they have been in constant conflict and attained an experience in the best modes of deception and battle, and have been strengthening for centuries, they will not yield the last great final contest without a desperate struggle. All the world will be on one side or the other of the question. The battle of Armageddon will be fought, and that day must find none of us sleeping... The power of the Holy Ghost must be upon us, and the Captain of the Lord's host will stand at the head of the angels of heaven to direct the battle." 7BC 982.

"The enmity of Satan against good will be manifested more and more as he brings his forces into activity in his last work of rebellion; and every soul that is not fully surrendered to God, and kept by divine power, will form an alliance with Satan against heaven, and join in battle against the Ruler of the universe." TH 465.

"The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven." GC 624.

"The Spirit of God is gradually withdrawing from the world. Satan is also mustering his forces of evil, going forth 'unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world,' to gather them under his banner, to be trained for 'the battle of that great day of God Almighty.'" 7BC 983.