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THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

How God Warns the World Before His Wrath

A Continuous Jubilee Calendar Study

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." — Revelation 14:6-7 (KJV)

Author's Note on Terminology: This paper uses the traditional Christian terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament" for clarity. The author recognizes that the books of the Old Testament are the Hebrew Bible, the Tanakh, which Jewish tradition holds as complete Scripture in its own right, and quotes them with respect for that tradition.

> ***A note on what follows.*** *The interpretation in this paper is my best understanding of Scripture, reached by following its own examples and patterns. Where Scripture states something, I quote it, and where I draw a conclusion of my own, I say so plainly with words like "as I read it." The paper is held to one rule above all others:*
>
> ***Rule 1: No Scriptural conflicts.*** *No conclusion here may contradict any passage of Scripture. Where Scripture does not settle a detail, I say so plainly.*

Scripture is quoted from the King James Version. Pronouns for God and Christ are capitalized in the author's own words; KJV quotations are left as written.

Before we begin. The book of Revelation records visions that God gave to "his servant John" (Revelation 1:1) while John was held on the island of Patmos. A vision is something God shows a prophet, often in pictures, which is why John so often writes "like" or "as it were" as he describes what he saw. Scripture references work like addresses, so "Revelation 8:7" means the book of Revelation, chapter 8, verse 7.

This study is about the great tribulation, the time of trouble that begins when Christ opens the fourth seal. It follows the seals in order, and with each seal it follows the trumpets that sound inside it, because the trumpets are how each

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seal's mission is carried out on the earth. Before the seals, two short sections explain where this study's dates come from and how Scripture tells a prophetic day from a year. Along the way it explains a few words that Revelation uses often:

- **The Lamb** is Jesus Christ. John the Baptist pointed to Him and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).
- **Saints** are God's people, all who belong to Him.
- **To repent** is to turn away from sin and back to God.
- **A woe** is a cry announcing great trouble. Revelation calls the last three trumpets "woes."
- **Babylon** is the end-time system of false religion and power that Revelation calls "that great city" (Revelation 18:21). It is not the ancient city in Iraq.

A Trumpet Is a Warning

When God gave Israel silver trumpets, He told them exactly what they were for. The trumpets called the people together, and when an enemy came against them, the priests were to "blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies" (Numbers 10:9).

A trumpet was also the watchman's tool. God told the prophet Ezekiel about a watchman standing on the city wall, whose one job was to sound the alarm when he saw an army coming: "If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people" (Ezekiel 33:3). The trumpet never caused the danger. It gave the people time to run to safety, and in that same chapter God explains why He sends the warning at all: "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezekiel 33:11).

That is the right way to hear the seven trumpets of Revelation. What follows them is frightening, and many people will die, but a trumpet is a warning, and a warning is a kindness. God is telling the world, while there is still time, that judgment is coming and that the door of safety is still open.

The first six trumpets are not God's wrath. God is in control of every trumpet, yet Scripture never calls the first six His wrath. They call the world to repent, and Scripture records with sorrow that many still refused: "the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands" (Revelation 9:20). God's wrath comes later, and Scripture names it plainly. When the seventh trumpet sounds, the elders in heaven say,

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“thy wrath is come” (Revelation 11:18), and then come the bowls (the KJV calls them “vials”), which hold “the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God” (Revelation 15:1).

So believers are never under God’s wrath: “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:9). But Scripture never promised believers a life without trouble, either. Jesus said, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Tribulation and wrath are not the same thing. During the trumpets, believers may suffer and some may die, the way disasters have always fallen on good and evil people alike, but that is not God’s wrath on them, and it is not the end of their story.

God’s Clock: One Unbroken Count

This study gives a few dates from history, and before we reach them, you should know where they come from. They don’t come from a separate calculation made for each prophecy. They all come from one count that God Himself gave Israel.

God told Moses to count time in sevens of years, and seven sevens made a Jubilee: “thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years” (Leviticus 25:8). The Jubilee year was a year of release, when the people would “proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof” (Leviticus 25:10). My research, the Continuous Jubilee Calendar (CJC), follows that 49-year count as one unbroken line through history, with each Jubilee as Year 1 of a new cycle.

The count starts from a Jubilee that Scripture itself describes. When Assyria threatened Jerusalem in King Hezekiah’s day, God gave him this sign: “Ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same” (Isaiah 37:30). Two years without sowing is exactly what happens when a sabbath year is followed by a Jubilee, and in my research that Jubilee is 702 BC. Run the same count forward without ever changing it, and it lands on every date in this study:

- **702 BC**, Hezekiah’s sign: a Jubilee, Cycle 16, Year 1.
- **457 BC**, the decree of the Persian king Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem, where Daniel’s seventy weeks begin: a Jubilee, Cycle 21, Year 1, exactly five cycles later.

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- **AD 27**, the Messiah anointed at His baptism: Cycle 30, Year 43, the first year of the last seven.
- **AD 30**, the cross, “in the midst of the week” (Daniel 9:27): Cycle 30, Year 46, the fourth year of those seven.
- **AD 34**, the end of the seventy weeks: a Jubilee, Cycle 31, Year 1, exactly ten cycles after the decree.
- **AD 538**, the start of the 1,260 years: Cycle 41, Year 14, a sabbath year.
- **1798**, the end of the 1,260 years: the last year of a cycle, turning into a Jubilee that spring, Cycle 67, Year 1.
- **1844**, the end of Daniel’s 2,300 years: Cycle 67, Year 47.
- **1994**, the seventieth Jubilee: Cycle 71, Year 1, exactly 55 cycles after Hezekiah’s Jubilee.

The 1,260 years come from history and from Daniel 7, not from the calendar, and the count was never adjusted to meet them, yet they open on a sabbath year and close at the turn of a Jubilee. I offer that as agreement, not as proof by itself. But it does show that the count isn’t applied selectively to one prophecy. Anyone can check any year with one line of arithmetic, and you can try it yourself at https://scripturescjc.com. The sections ahead explain what each of these dates means.

Reading Prophetic Time: When Is a Day a Year?

Before we open the seals, there is one question every reader of prophecy needs answered: when does a “day” mean a day, and when does it mean a year? Scripture answers that question itself, and three rules cover every case this study has found.

Rule 1: History and ordinary prophecy use literal days. When Scripture tells us what happened, or gives a plain prediction about events close at hand, a day is a day. God told Noah, “For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights” (Genesis 7:4), and it happened just as He said. Jesus foretold His own death the same way: “so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12:40). Unless Scripture gives a reason to read a number another way, we read it plainly.

Rule 2: Symbolic prophecies that span the ages use a day for a year. God gave this key Himself: “each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years” (Numbers 14:34), and again, “I have appointed thee each day for a year” (Ezekiel 4:6). Three signs show when a prophecy uses it. First, it is a symbolic vision, like Daniel’s beasts, of which he was told, “These great beasts,

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which are four, are four kings" (Daniel 7:17). Second, its time has to reach across kingdoms and centuries, which a short count of literal days could never do. Third, history proves it, because Daniel's seventy weeks brought the Messiah right on time only when they are read as 490 years. This rule fits the seventy weeks, Daniel's 2,300 days, and the "time and times and the dividing of time" (Daniel 7:25), which Revelation repeats as the "thousand two hundred and threescore days" of the woman in the wilderness (Revelation 12:6). In my research, those are the 1,260 years from AD 538 to 1798.

Rule 3: The end-time numbers are literal days. This is my research's reading. The day-for-a-year key belongs to the prophecies given while God's Jubilee count was running, and as the count above shows, the seventieth Jubilee falls in 1994. Seventy is Scripture's number for a measure brought to completion, as when the land kept its sabbaths "to fulfil threescore and ten years" (2 Chronicles 36:21). After that, the periods Scripture gives for the end are days that the same people live through from start to finish: "except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved" (Mark 13:20). So the five months of the locusts, the witnesses' 1,260 days, and Daniel's 1,290 and 1,335 days in this study are all literal days.

A quick test, then: if it is history or a plain prediction, read it literally; if it is a symbolic vision spanning kingdoms, read a day as a year; and if it is an end-time period that one generation lives through, read it as literal days.

The First Three Seals: Christ's Campaign Begins

Revelation 5 shows a book in the right hand of God, sealed with seven seals, and no one in heaven or on earth is found worthy to open it until John hears, "behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof" (Revelation 5:5). Christ is worthy because of the cross: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain" (Revelation 5:9). As I read it, each seal opens a campaign of Christ, a mission He sends out across the earth, and the seals open at times the Old Testament marks.

The first seal: the King goes forth to conquer

After the cross, Christ sat down at the Father's right hand to wait for the appointed time, as the Father had said: "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Psalms 110:1).

The authority was His, but not yet acted out in full. Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). Yet Hebrews adds,

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“But now we see not yet all things put under him” (Hebrews 2:8). The authority had been given, and the time to act on it in full was still ahead, at a time the Father set.

Meanwhile, the enemy was allowed to war against God’s people for a measured time. Daniel saw it: “the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them” (Daniel 7:21), and “they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” (Daniel 7:25). Daniel also shows what happens when that time runs out: “Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High” (Daniel 7:22). Then “the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion” (Daniel 7:26), and the Son of man is brought before the Ancient of days, “And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom” (Daniel 7:13-14).

Revelation shows the same moment from heaven’s side. The Lamb “came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne” (Revelation 5:7), and when the first seal opens, “a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer” (Revelation 6:2). As my research reads it, the rider is Christ Himself. When the 1,260 years ended in 1798, He began to act on His authority at the time the Father set, against the enemy who had been free to trample His people. The mission of this seal is to take back His dominion.

Isn’t the rider the Antichrist? Many sincere readers have been taught that he is, a false christ imitating the real one. But Scripture’s own details point the other way.

- **Heaven sends him.** The Lamb opens the seal, and one of the four beasts at God’s throne calls the rider out: “I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see” (Revelation 6:1). These beings worship God day and night, “saying, Holy, holy, holy, LORD God Almighty” (Revelation 4:8). They do not send out Satan’s agents.
- **His crown is a victor’s crown, and it is given.** The Greek word for his crown is *stephanos*, the same word Christ uses when He promises His faithful, “I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:10). Christ Himself wears it: “And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown” (Revelation 14:14). The dragon and the beast wear a different kind, *diadēma*, a ruler’s crown: the dragon has “seven crowns upon his heads” (Revelation 12:3), and the beast has “upon his horns ten crowns” (Revelation 13:1). *(Greek note, outside the KJV text.)*

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- **Revelation labels its counterfeits.** When Revelation shows an imitation, it tells us so. The false prophet “had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon” (Revelation 13:11), and the locusts wear “as it were crowns like gold” (Revelation 9:7). Nothing in Revelation 6:2 marks the first rider as an imitation. When the white horse appears again, its rider is named: “he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True” (Revelation 19:11).
- **The timing doesn’t fit.** The Antichrist is revealed at the end, after “a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed” (2 Thessalonians 2:3). As my research reads it, the first seal opened after 1798 and is still running, long before that time.

The second seal: the sword of the Word

“And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword” (Revelation 6:4).

Scripture calls the Word of God “the sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17), and says it is “sharper than any twoedged sword” (Hebrews 4:12). As my research reads it, the first seal is the King taking His authority, and the second is the instrument He sends among people: His Word, put into ordinary people’s hands. The seal’s mission has two parts, the sword given and peace taken away, and history after 1798 shows both. *(The history in this section is outside Scripture. It is offered as history that agrees with the seal, not as proof, since Scripture gives the seals no opening dates.)*

The Word set free. For centuries, ordinary people were kept from reading Scripture in their own language. In 1229 the Synod of Toulouse forbade lay people to own the books of the Old and New Testaments, adding, “We most strictly forbid these works in the vulgar tongue.” In 1234 the Synod of Tarragona ordered vernacular Bibles brought to the bishop to be burned. After the Council of Trent, the Church’s Index allowed a Bible in the common language only with written permission. It was a famine of the kind Amos foretold: “not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD” (Amos 8:11).

Then, in the years right after 1798, the doors opened. The British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804, and the American Bible Society in 1816. By 1824 the British society alone had issued over 4.2 million Bibles and New Testaments. By 1879 the figure was about 82 million, and by 1909 about 215 million. Before 1800, only 67 languages had any part of Scripture in print. During the 1800s, 456 more languages received Scripture for the first time. For the first time in history, the humble farmer, the factory worker and the

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villager on a far continent could read God's Word for themselves, in their own tongue. The sword had been given.

Peace taken away. The Word divided, just as Jesus said it would: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34). Popes condemned the Bible societies again and again: Pius VIII in 1829, Gregory XVI in 1844 in a letter titled *On Biblical Societies*, and Pius IX in 1846. And believers paid with their lives, as Jesus warned: "the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2). In Madagascar, the Bible was printed in the people's own language in 1835, and that same year the queen outlawed Christianity. Believers were put to death in the years that followed, among them a young woman named Rasalama, speared in 1837.

The killing of Christians for their faith has gone on ever since, and it is widespread today. Counts differ, because researchers define a martyr differently. The late researcher David Barrett estimated about 70 million Christians killed for their faith since the time of Christ. For 2024 alone, the watch group Open Doors counted 4,476 Christians killed for their faith, and more than 380 million facing high levels of persecution.

The same two centuries also brought wars on a scale the world had never seen. World War I took an estimated 15 to 22 million lives, and World War II somewhere between 60 and 85 million. Jesus said such wars would come before the end, and that they are not the end itself: "ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet" (Matthew 24:6). As I read it, peace has been taken from the earth while the Word goes out, just as the second seal describes.

The mission of this seal is to send out the Word, and the division and bloodshed that follow show its sword at work.

The third seal: the balances of judgment

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

Many read this seal as famine, but every detail points to judgment and reward. In Scripture, balances stand for God's judgment, as when the king of Babylon was told, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting" (Daniel 5:27). The penny was a worker's daily wage in Jesus' parable of the vineyard, where the owner "agreed with the labourers for a penny a day" (Matthew

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20:2), and at evening he said, “Call the labourers, and give them their hire” (Matthew 20:8).

The workers’ wages. Wheat, barley, wine and oil are a list Scripture has used before. They were the wages King Solomon paid the workers who built God’s house: “twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil” (2 Chronicles 2:10). Today God is building a greater house, made of people, and Paul says His people are both the workers and the building: “For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building” (1 Corinthians 3:9). Jesus told His disciples to pray for more of them: “Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest” (Matthew 9:38). As my research reads it, the third seal weighs every life in God’s house, and it also feeds and pays the workers He sends out to spread His Word and build His church. “See thou hurt not the oil and the wine” means the Spirit and the covenant they carry are kept safe while the judgment goes on, the oil being the Spirit (“Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit,” Zechariah 4:6) and the wine the covenant (“this is my blood of the new testament,” Matthew 26:28). At the end of the day, every worker is paid in full: “behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be” (Revelation 22:12). The mission of this seal is to weigh every life and to pay the workers who build His house.

When did it open? Scripture gives the seal no date. But Daniel 8 gives a count that ends in a judgment, and as my research reads it, the two mark the same event. Here is how Scripture maps that count, in four steps.

1. **The days are years.** “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” (Daniel 8:14). This is a symbolic vision that runs from Persia to “the time of the end” (Daniel 8:17), so Rule 2 applies. 2,300 literal days, a little over six years, could never stretch that far, but 2,300 years can.

2. **The seventy weeks are cut from the front of it.** Daniel didn’t understand the time: “I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it” (Daniel 8:27). So the angel Gabriel came back and said, “understand the matter, and consider the vision” (Daniel 9:23), and he began with a shorter period: “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people” (Daniel 9:24). The word “determined” is the Hebrew *chathak*, found only here in the Old Testament, and its root meaning is “to cut off.” *(Hebrew note, outside the KJV text.)* As my research reads it, the seventy weeks, 490 years, are cut

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from the front of the 2,300, so both begin together in Persia's day, where the vision itself begins.

3. **The start is proved by the Messiah's arrival.** The seventy weeks begin with "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" (Daniel 9:25), which Ezra dates to "the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king" (Ezra 7:7), 457 BC by history. From there the count reaches the Messiah's anointing in AD 27 and the cross "in the midst of the week" (Daniel 9:27) in AD 30, right on time. (See *God's Clock* above for the whole count.)
4. **The end is a judgment.** From 457 BC, 2,300 years reach AD 1844, since there is no year zero (2,300 − 457 + 1 = 1844). And the cleansing of the sanctuary is a judgment. Daniel saw the heavenly court sit when "the judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Daniel 7:10), and Peter wrote, "the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Peter 4:17).

So, as my research reads it, the third seal's balances and the end of the 2,300 mark the same event: the judgment of God's house, beginning in 1844. Scripture does not state that date for the seal, so I offer it as my reading. My paper *Then Shall the Sanctuary Be Cleansed* sets out the full case, and *The Early and the Latter Rain* tells more about the workers' wages.

Where the great tribulation begins

My papers *The Four Horsemen* and *Then Shall the Sanctuary Be Cleansed* explain these three seals in full. They are already running in our time, and they set the pattern for the rest: each seal sends out a mission, and what happens on earth carries it out.

This study now turns to where the great tribulation begins, at the fourth seal. From there on the trumpets sound inside the seals, and each seal's trumpets carry out that seal's mission.

Before the Trumpets: The Servants Sealed (Revelation 7)

Before any trumpet sounds, John sees four angels "holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree" (Revelation 7:1). Another angel rises with "the seal of the living God" (Revelation 7:2) and calls out to them: "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor

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the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (Revelation 7:3).

God marks His people first, and only then does the harm begin. He did the same in Egypt on the night of the Passover, when the blood on the doorposts came before the destroyer passed through the land (Exodus 12:23). The seal is the Holy Spirit, given to everyone who believes: "after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13).

John hears that 144,000 are sealed (Revelation 7:4). As my research reads it, they are drawn from every people on earth, and through the whole time of trouble that follows, they carry God's message to the world. Right after them, John sees "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations" (Revelation 7:9), the people saved out of the great tribulation. So the story of the trumpets begins with God's people sealed and a great harvest of souls still to come.

The Seventh Seal and the Golden Censer (Revelation 8:1-6)

Where the trumpets fit

Revelation 8 opens with a verse that puzzles many readers: "And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour" (Revelation 8:1). The very next verse says, "And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets" (Revelation 8:2). So a careful reader naturally asks whether the trumpets come after the seventh seal.

Part of the confusion comes from the numbers themselves. When John wrote Revelation, it had no chapters or verses. It was one continuous letter. The chapter divisions were added about twelve centuries later, around 1227, and the verse numbers in the New Testament were added in 1551. *(That is history, outside Scripture.)* Those numbers are a great help for finding a passage, but they were never part of what John wrote. So the fact that 8:1 and 8:2 sit side by side doesn't mean the two verses describe one moment following the other. The seventh seal closes out the seals, and then John's words "And I saw" begin a new vision.

Scripture often tells a story this way. It gives the whole span first, then goes back and tells part of it again in more detail. The creation story is the best-known example. Genesis 1 covers all six days, and on the sixth day, "God

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created man in his own image... male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27). Then Genesis 2 goes back to that same sixth day and tells it in close detail: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created" (Genesis 2:4). We see God form the man "of the dust of the ground" and breathe into him "the breath of life" (Genesis 2:7), and then make the woman from his rib and bring her to him (Genesis 2:22). Nobody reads Genesis 2 as a second creation that came after the first. It is the same sixth day, told again and enlarged. Joseph even explained to Pharaoh why God tells some things twice: "for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God" (Genesis 41:32). Revelation follows the same pattern. The seals show the whole span, and the trumpets go back and show part of it in more detail.

As my research reads it, the seventh seal's silence comes after the thousand years, when the judgment is complete (my paper *Fear Not the Second Death* explains that scene). The trumpets fall inside the fourth, fifth and sixth seals, the way battles fall inside a war:

- **The fourth seal** holds trumpets 1-4.
- **The fifth seal** holds trumpets 5 and 6. The fifth trumpet sounds as the fifth seal opens.
- **The sixth seal** holds the seventh trumpet's days, the bowls, and the last trump at Christ's coming.

When does the great tribulation begin?

This is the question many readers most want answered. This study doesn't set a date, because Scripture doesn't give one. What Scripture does give is the order of events, and what must happen first.

As my research reads it, the great tribulation begins when the fourth seal opens. That is the same moment the golden censer is cast to the earth and the four winds are released, and it is day 1 of Daniel's 1,335 days. Scripture names two things that must be complete before that day comes:

- **God's servants must be sealed.** The harm is held back "till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (Revelation 7:3). The sealing comes first, and the harm waits for it.
- **The world's wickedness must be full.** Daniel saw the final enemy rise "when the transgressors are come to the full" (Daniel 8:23). God waits until the measure is complete, as He told Abraham long before: "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Genesis 15:16).

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The start doesn't depend on anything people build or do, such as a rebuilt temple or an altar. It comes on God's timing.

We are not there yet. The fourth seal gives Death power "over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth" (Revelation 6:8). With more than eight billion people alive today, a fourth of the earth would be over two billion lives, far more than any war, famine or plague in history has ever taken. Nothing like that has happened. And when it comes, it will not be quiet or hidden. The fire cast from the censer brings "voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake" (Revelation 8:5), and the first trumpets follow. The world will know the great tribulation has begun.

So the rest of this study follows the seals in order. Each seal is opened first, in Scripture's own words, with the mission it sends out. Then come the trumpets that sound inside it, so you can see for yourself how they carry out each seal's mission.

God answers His people's prayers

Before the trumpets sound, "another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer" (Revelation 8:3). A censer is a pan for carrying burning coals and incense, and this angel offers incense "with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne" (Revelation 8:3). Then the same angel "took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake" (Revelation 8:5). Scripture does not name this angel, so neither do I.

Notice where the fire comes from. It comes from the same altar where the saints' prayers went up, which means God has heard His people's cry. He did the same in Egypt, when He told Moses, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters" (Exodus 3:7). The plagues followed, and the trumpets echo those same plagues: hail and fire, water turned to blood, and darkness.

As I read it, the censer cast down is day 1 of Daniel's 1,335 days, the count God gave Daniel for the end: "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" (Daniel 12:12). It is the same moment the fourth seal opens and the four winds are released, and the great tribulation begins. (Lining up day 1 with the censer is my research's reading, explained in full in *The Shepherd's Gathering*.) But mercy is still open. The fire

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begins to fall in answer to the prayers, while the door of mercy stays open until much later in this story.

The signs at the censer, “voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake” (Revelation 8:5), come back at each stage of the judgment, and something is added each time. At the seventh trumpet there is “great hail” as well (Revelation 11:19), and at the seventh bowl comes the greatest earthquake ever and hail with “every stone about the weight of a talent” (Revelation 16:21). The judgment grows step by step.

Part One: The Fourth Seal and Trumpets 1-4

The Fourth Seal: The Pale Horse (Revelation 6:7-8)

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

The fourth seal’s mission. Its rider is named Death, and he is given power over a fourth part of the earth “to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth” (Revelation 6:8). As I read it, the fourth seal opens on the same day the censer is cast down and the four winds are released, and the first four trumpets are how its mission begins on the earth. Set the seal beside its trumpets and they match point for point.

- **The color of the horse.** The word “pale” is the Greek *chlōros*, which means green, or the pale green of sickness. Besides this verse it appears in only three places in the New Testament, and two of them are in the trumpets: “all green grass was burnt up” at the first trumpet (Revelation 8:7), and “any green thing” at the fifth (Revelation 9:4). *(Greek note, outside the KJV text.)* The pale horse’s color points straight to the first trumpet.
- **A measured share.** The rider is given power “over the fourth part of the earth” (Revelation 6:8), and the first four trumpets each strike “the third part” (Revelation 8:7-12). In both, God sets the measure, and it is a share, not the whole.
- **Hunger, death and wild beasts.** The rider kills “with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth” (Revelation 6:8). These are the same judgments God named long before: “my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence” (Ezekiel 14:21). (Revelation’s “death” matches Ezekiel’s “pestilence,” because the Greek Old Testament often uses the

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word for death for a deadly plague. *Greek note, outside the KJV text.*) As I read it, the first four trumpets are how this happens. A third of the trees and the green grass burn, a third of the life in the sea dies, and at the third trumpet "many men died of the waters" (Revelation 8:11). As I read it, the beasts are real wild animals. When the land and waters fail, animals starve too, and hungry animals turn on people. God warned Israel that an emptied land would let "the beast of the field multiply against thee" (Exodus 23:29). *(Science today sees the same pattern on a small scale: in British Columbia, conflicts in which grizzly bears had to be killed rose about 20 percent for every 50 percent drop in the salmon they feed on. That is outside Scripture, offered only as an illustration.)*

- **Held back until the sealing.** The fourth seal's harm is what the four winds were holding back "till we have sealed the servants of our God" (Revelation 7:3), and the first trumpets strike the very things the winds were held from: the earth, the sea and the trees.

The First Trumpet: Hail and Fire Mingled with Blood (Revelation 8:7)

"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up" (Revelation 8:7).

The four winds had been held back from "the earth… the sea… the trees" (Revelation 7:3), and now the first two trumpets strike exactly those things, so Revelation's own words show that these trumpets are the harm the winds were holding back. John doesn't say "as it were" here, the way he does at the next two trumpets. He simply tells us what fell, so I read the first trumpet plainly, as real hail and fire and real trees and grass burning, just as Egypt's hail was real: "So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation" (Exodus 9:24).

The blood is a sign that God's judgment has begun. Scripture has used blood this way before, when God turned Egypt's river to blood so that "the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink" (Exodus 7:21). Yet God shows mercy even here, in how much He strikes and why. He strikes a third of the trees, the sea, the waters and the lights, not the whole, holding back His full wrath while He calls the world to repent. The prophet Joel saw this same kind of sign, "blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke" (Joel 2:30), and right after it came God's open invitation: "whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered" (Joel 2:32).

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Scripture doesn't explain how hail and fire fall together, or how "all green grass" burns (Revelation 8:7), though by the fifth trumpet there is green grass again (Revelation 9:4). Some point to what a broken-up comet or asteroid could do, and that is a possible means God could use, but this study doesn't depend on it.

The Second Trumpet: A Burning Mountain in the Sea (Revelation 8:8-9)

"And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed" (Revelation 8:8-9).

The words "as it were" tell us John is describing what it looked like, something like a great mountain on fire, falling into the sea. As I read it, this is another natural-type disaster, like the first, third and fourth trumpets. A third of the ships are destroyed, which is a first blow to the world's trade and shipping, the same commerce that Babylon's fall will later bring to an end. And the judgment grows over time. At the second trumpet a third of the sea becomes blood, but at the second bowl all of it does, and "every living soul died in the sea" (Revelation 16:3).

The Third Trumpet: Wormwood (Revelation 8:10-11)

"And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter" (Revelation 8:10-11).

This is the first trumpet where Scripture says that people died. The star here is a burning object falling from the sky, described by how it looked, and it should not be confused with the star of the fifth trumpet, who is a fallen angel and is handed a key. "The fountains of waters" includes the springs and waters beneath the ground, so bitter water spreading underground could reach a long way.

Wormwood is a bitter plant, and in Scripture it stands for the bitter result of turning away from God. God said of a people who had forsaken Him, "Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink" (Jeremiah 9:15), so the name tells us what kind of judgment this is. There is a spiritual lesson here too, offered only as a parallel: what bitter water does to the body, false teaching does to the soul. But God's people have water

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that never turns bitter, as Jesus promised: “whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst” (John 4:14).

The Fourth Trumpet: The Lights Darkened (Revelation 8:12)

“And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise” (Revelation 8:12).

As I read it, the light is dimmed, and for a third of the day and of the night darkness settles in, though in the brightest hours some light may still break through. The sun, moon and stars are far apart, so the simplest explanation for all three dimming at once is something in our own sky, like smoke, ash and dust after the fires, the burning mountain and the falling star. Scripture names no cause, but it does picture God covering the lights: “I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light” (Ezekiel 32:7).

The first four strike what the gospel names

Now look back over the first four trumpets. They strike exactly the four things the everlasting gospel names as God’s work when the angel cries, “worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Revelation 14:7). The first trumpet strikes the earth, the second the sea, the third the fountains of waters, and the fourth the lights of heaven. The world is being shown who made everything it is losing.

The first four trumpets come as natural disasters: hail and fire, a burning mountain, a falling star, and darkness. Disasters like these don’t choose between believers and unbelievers. They strike wherever they fall, as storms and earthquakes always have, just as God “sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:45). And because they look natural, many people will explain them away as bad luck or nature taking its course, and go on living as before. That is exactly why the angel’s message names the Creator of the very things being struck: “worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Revelation 14:7). God is telling the world that these are not accidents. He made the earth, the sea and the waters, and He is calling.

Revelation makes no promise that God’s people will be untouched by the first four trumpets, and some believers may die in them, though never as God’s wrath on them. Still, there is a hope. In Egypt, “Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail” (Exodus 9:26), and even some Egyptians were spared because they believed God’s warning and brought

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their servants and cattle inside (Exodus 9:20). So as I read it, some places may suffer less than others, and those who heed God's warnings may find shelter. I offer that as a hope, not a promise.

And this is not yet God's wrath. Scripture says plainly when His wrath comes: after the seventh trumpet sounds and the elders say, "thy wrath is come" (Revelation 11:18). Then the seven angels are told, "Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth" (Revelation 16:1), and the first bowl falls "upon the men which had the mark of the beast" (Revelation 16:2). In those plagues, as in Egypt, God draws the line around His people.

The Eagle's Cry: Three Woes to Come (Revelation 8:13)

The fourth seal's campaign closes with a warning. After the fourth trumpet, John hears a cry from the sky: "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!" (Revelation 8:13). "Inhabiters" means the people living on the earth. So Scripture itself divides the trumpets into four that strike creation and three it calls woes.

The bowls are divided the same way. The first four bowls strike the same four places as the first four trumpets, in the same order: the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains, and the sun (Revelation 16:2-8).

Scripture shows that the first four trumpets are God's own acts. In them, no one but God's angels takes part. The hail and fire "were cast upon the earth" (Revelation 8:7), and the lights "smitten" (Revelation 8:12), and no one else is named. Each trumpet strikes only "the third part" (Revelation 8:7-12), leaving two-thirds standing. That is a share measured by God, as when He told Ezekiel exactly how His judgment would fall by thirds (Ezekiel 5:12). These disasters strike without choosing, but they are not random. God sets every limit.

Satan's forces appear only after the warning cry of the three woes. Revelation uses the same words when it tells us who is coming: "Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Revelation 12:12). And even then, every step is authorized from heaven. At the fifth trumpet the key is "given" to the fallen star (Revelation 9:1), and at the sixth the command comes from God's altar, "Loose the four angels" (Revelation 9:14). In both the trumpets and the bowls, Satan's own forces appear only in the last three, never among the first four. This pattern sets no dates, but it shows that the line between the first four trumpets and the woes is Scripture's own, and it lines

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the trumpets up with the bowls, a third struck at the trumpets and all of it at the bowls.

The first two woes are still not God's wrath. They are worse than the first four trumpets, because they bring Satan's forces up from the pit, and the rage in them is his, the devil's "great wrath" (Revelation 12:12). God limits even that, as we'll see. The third woe is the seventh trumpet, and that is when God's wrath "is come" (Revelation 11:18).

The fourth seal's mission complete

Look back at what the fourth seal was sent to do. Its rider was given power over a fourth part of the earth, "to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth" (Revelation 6:8). The first four trumpets carried it out on creation itself. A third of the trees and all the green grass were burned. A third of the sea turned to blood, a third of its life died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. A third of the rivers and springs turned bitter, and many people died from the water. And a third of the light from the sun, moon and stars went dark. Crops, fish, fresh water and light, the very things people and animals need to live, were struck. Hunger and death followed, and starving beasts turned on people, just as the seal foretold. Through it all, the earth was warned that its Creator was calling.

With the fourth seal's campaign finished and the woes announced, the Lamb opens the next seal.

Part Two: The Fifth Seal and Trumpets 5 and 6

The Fifth Seal: The Souls Under the Altar (Revelation 6:9-11)

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

The fifth seal's mission. The martyrs ask God to "judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth" (Revelation 6:10), and they are told to rest until the number of martyrs is complete. As I read it, the fifth seal opens as the fifth trumpet sounds, and the first two woes carry out both parts of its mission:

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the woes fall on “the inhabiters of the earth” (Revelation 8:13), and the beast from the pit makes war on God’s witnesses. The fifth seal also holds the mighty angel and the two witnesses that John sees before the second woe ends. Here, too, the seal and its trumpets match.

- **“Them that dwell on the earth.”** The martyrs ask God to judge “them that dwell on the earth” (Revelation 6:10), and the woes are announced “to the inhabiters of the earth” (Revelation 8:13). It is the same Greek phrase, and Revelation uses it again for the world that celebrates when God’s witnesses are killed: “they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them” (Revelation 11:10). *(Greek note, outside the KJV text.)*
- **The altar.** The martyrs cry out from under the altar, and the sixth trumpet’s command comes “from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God” (Revelation 9:13). Their cry is being answered.
- **More to be killed.** The martyrs are told to wait until their “fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were” are complete (Revelation 6:11). These are believers still living on the earth, who will die for their faith in the time ahead. Scripture names the one who will kill them: “the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them” (Revelation 11:7). The bottomless pit is opened at the fifth trumpet, so the fifth seal’s waiting begins when the killer is let loose.
- **“A little season.”** The martyrs “rest yet for a little season” (Revelation 6:11) while the woes run their course, until “The second woe is past” (Revelation 11:14).

Why white robes, and why wait? The martyrs are not called up from their graves here. They are pictured “under the altar” (Revelation 6:9), where the priest poured out a sacrifice’s blood, because “the life of the flesh is in the blood” (Leviticus 17:11). Their lives were poured out for God, and like Abel’s blood, which “crieth unto me from the ground” (Genesis 4:10), their cry reaches Him. As I read it, they are the martyrs of every age.

The white robes are God’s verdict in their favor, because “the fine linen is the righteousness of saints” (Revelation 19:8). As my research reads it, that verdict comes from the judgment of God’s house under the third seal. Then they are told to “rest yet for a little season” (Revelation 6:11). Rest is Scripture’s word for the sleep of death, as Daniel was told, “thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days” (Daniel 12:13). Jesus spoke of death this way more than once. Of a dead girl He said, “the maid is not dead, but sleepeth” (Matthew 9:24). Of Lazarus He said, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep,” and then “Lazarus is dead” (John 11:11, 14). When

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Stephen was stoned, “he fell asleep” (Acts 7:60), and Paul calls believers who have died “them which are asleep” (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

They wait because God means for all His people to rise together: “God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect” (Hebrews 11:40). As my research reads it, their fellowservants still to be killed include the 144,000, “the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb” (Revelation 14:4), who will finish their testimony and die for it (Revelation 11:7). Then all of them, the martyrs of every age and the firstfruits alike, are raised together at the last trump.

Two abominations of desolation

Before we follow the fifth and sixth trumpets, there is one phrase readers need to understand, because it is so often confused: “the abomination of desolation.” Scripture uses it for two different events, and telling them apart is the key to knowing what God’s people must do in the great tribulation.

What an abomination is. In Scripture an “abomination” is an idol, like “Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites” (1 Kings 11:5). An abomination “of desolation” is an idol set up in a way that brings ruin.

The first: Jerusalem, AD 70. Daniel saw it come after the Messiah: “after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off... and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary” (Daniel 9:26). Jesus warned His disciples it would come in their lifetime: “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains” (Matthew 24:15-16). Luke tells Gentile readers what that sign would look like: “when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh” (Luke 21:20). Everything about it was local: one city, armies around it, and a flight from Judaea to the mountains, with a prayer that the flight not come “in the winter, neither on the sabbath day” (Matthew 24:20). It came in AD 70, when Rome destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. And those who heeded the sign lived. Early Christian historians record that the believers in Jerusalem left the city before it fell and found safety across the Jordan, in the town of Pella. *(That is history, outside Scripture.)*

The second: the whole world, at the time of the end. Daniel’s last chapter speaks of another one, sealed “till the time of the end” (Daniel 12:9) and counted in days: “from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two

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hundred and ninety days" (Daniel 12:11). This one is not armies around a city. It is an image that people must worship or die: "as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed" (Revelation 13:15). And it reaches every nation, because the beast is given power "over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations" (Revelation 13:7).

How Scripture tells them apart:

- **Where:** the first came on Jerusalem and Judaea (Luke 21:20). The second reaches every nation (Revelation 13:7).
- **What is set up:** the first was armies on holy ground (Luke 21:20). The second is an image that must be worshipped (Revelation 13:14-15).
- **When:** the first came after the Messiah was cut off (Daniel 9:26). The second comes at the time of the end, at the close of a measured count of days (Daniel 12:9-11).
- **How it ends:** the first ended with the city destroyed (Daniel 9:26). The second ends with God's people delivered: "every one that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1).

The first abomination was a warning sign, and believers who knew Scripture fled in time. As my research reads it, the second works the same way, on a world scale. We'll come back to it, and to the clues Scripture gives for surviving it, when the story reaches day 1,290.

The Fifth Trumpet: The First Woe (Revelation 9:1-12)

The star and the key

"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit" (Revelation 9:1-2).

This star is a fallen angel: he is handed a key, and he opens the pit. Scripture tells us who fell from heaven: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" (Isaiah 14:12). As my research reads it, the star is Satan. But notice that the key is *given* to him, because Satan never owns it. Christ holds the keys, as He told John: "I am he that liveth, and was dead... and have the keys of hell and of death" (Revelation 1:18). God lends the key for a set time, and at the end of the story the key is back in an angel's hand and Satan is the one locked away (Revelation 20:1-3).

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The locusts and God's command

"And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads" (Revelation 9:3-4).

Scripture itself shows these are not ordinary insects. Real locusts eat everything green, but these are forbidden to touch the green. And "The locusts have no king" (Proverbs 30:27), but these have one, "the angel of the bottomless pit" (Revelation 9:11). As I read it, they are Satan's host from the pit, shown in the form of locusts.

This is also the first trumpet where Scripture says God's people are protected, because the locusts may hurt "only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads" (Revelation 9:4). Jesus had already promised His followers power over this kind of enemy: "I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (Luke 10:19). God has shielded His people from a swarm before. In Egypt He said, "I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there... And I will put a division between my people and thy people" (Exodus 8:22-23). At the fifth trumpet He draws the same line, this time with a seal.

Five months of torment, not death

"And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them" (Revelation 9:5-6).

William Tyndale's 1534 translation makes God's limit even plainer: "to them was comaunded that they shulde not kyll them." We have seen this limit before. When God allowed Satan to afflict Job, He set one boundary: "Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life" (Job 2:6). Satan could strike Job's body but could not take his life, and the locusts are under the same kind of limit. Scripture even counts five months for us, because at the flood the waters "prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days" (Genesis 7:24), from the second month to the seventh. Five months are 150 days.

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Why does God keep death away? Because there is still time to turn, which is the watchman's message from the beginning: "turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die" (Ezekiel 33:11).

Seen or unseen?

Revelation 9 tells us that people are tormented and long for death, but it never records anyone seeing the locusts, running from them, or fighting them. Our struggle has always been with what we cannot see: "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world" (Ephesians 6:12). So as I read it, the locusts are most likely unseen during the five months and known only by the torment they bring. Scripture doesn't state this outright, so I hold it as my reading.

John describes them as he saw them in vision, with "crowns like gold," faces "as the faces of men," "hair as the hair of women," "teeth... as the teeth of lions," and "breastplates of iron" (Revelation 9:7-9). Almost every feature is a cheap copy of heaven. The elders around God's throne wear real "crowns of gold" (Revelation 4:4), but the locusts wear crowns *like* gold, and where the believer wears "the breastplate of righteousness" (Ephesians 6:14), the locusts wear iron. They are hard and lifeless, without the life of God.

The message that troubles the world

While the world suffers, the sealed are untouched by the locusts, and their message cuts deep. It brings inner turmoil to people in pain, but pride keeps many from repenting, so the messengers only annoy them more. In the end the world rejoices when God's witnesses are killed, "because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth" (Revelation 11:10). They are tormented by the message, not by the stings.

As I read it, the unrepentant turn to a different remedy. They build a world government to restore order, treat the stings, hand out supplies and rebuild what was lost, and this is the beginning of Babylon. People did the same after the flood, when they said, "let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name" (Genesis 11:4). The 144,000 preach the opposite message, that these disasters are not random and the cure is not in governments, science or medicine alone, but in God. Scripture doesn't condemn doctors, since Jesus said, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick" (Luke 5:31). The sin is trusting people in God's place.

The door is still open

Here is one of the most hopeful truths in the trumpets. The locusts mean only harm, but God uses even their torment for good, the way He used the evil done

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to Joseph: “ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good” (Genesis 50:20). The torment presses people who are undecided to make up their minds, as Elijah once asked a nation that couldn’t decide, “How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him” (1 Kings 18:21).

The door of mercy stays open until the seventh angel begins to sound (Revelation 10:7). Then comes a solemn word: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still” (Revelation 22:11). After that, each person’s choice stands, and Jesus’ parable of the ten virgins shows that knocking after the door is shut is too late: “Lord, Lord, open to us… I know you not” (Matthew 25:11-12). But at the fifth trumpet the door has not yet shut. The torment itself lasts five months (Revelation 9:5). What Scripture doesn’t say is whether a person who repents partway through is freed from his stings at once, or carries them to the end of the five months. Either way, as I read it, a person who turns to God and believes receives His seal, and the sealed are not the locusts’ targets. Only those who take the mark of the beast have already chosen against Him (Revelation 14:9-10). Until mercy closes, there is room to turn.

Their king, and their end

“And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon” (Revelation 9:11). Both names mean destruction, and John gives them in both languages, as if to say that Jew and Gentile alike should know who rules these forces. Jesus put the contrast in one verse: “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

Scripture never says the locusts are killed during the trumpets. Their power simply runs out when God’s five months end. At the Lord’s coming they will be “gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison” (Isaiah 24:22). Their final end is “everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41), where, as God said of their king, “I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee… and never shalt thou be any more” (Ezekiel 28:18-19).

“One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter” (Revelation 9:12).

The Sixth Trumpet: The Second Woe (Revelation 9:13-21)

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

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trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men" (Revelation 9:13-15).

The command comes from the golden altar, the same altar where the saints' prayers rose with the incense, so as I read it, their cry is still being answered. Mercy is still open, though, and it stays open until the seventh trumpet.

These four angels are not the four who held the winds. Those four were *holding* the winds, but these four are *bound* and then *loosed*, the same two words Scripture uses for Satan himself, who is "bound... a thousand years" and afterward "must be loosed a little season" (Revelation 20:2-3). Scripture never describes God's holy angels as bound, so as I read it, these four are fallen angels. They were prepared "for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year" (Revelation 9:15), which is not a length of time but one exact moment God set in advance, down to the hour. God is in control even of this. The angels are loosed at one appointed moment, but Scripture doesn't say the slaying happens all at once. It runs through the rest of the second woe, which ends only after the two witnesses rise: "The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly" (Revelation 11:14). So the third of mankind falls within the second woe. The death decree against God's people comes later, inside the seventh trumpet's days.

The army

"And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them" (Revelation 9:16). Two hundred thousand thousand is two hundred million, a terrifying number. John says, "thus I saw the horses in the vision," with heads like lions and "out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed" (Revelation 9:17-18).

As with the locusts, I read the army as known by what it does, not seen by the natural eye, since people on earth die from the fire, the smoke and the brimstone. And God's host is greater still. When an enemy army surrounded the prophet Elisha, he told his frightened servant, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them," and God opened the young man's eyes to see the mountain "full of horses and chariots of fire" (2 Kings 6:16-17).

The locusts and the horsemen look like the same host. Both are "like unto horses," both have the features of lions, both wear breastplates, and both hurt with their tails (Revelation 9:7-10, 17-19). What changes is God's permission.

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At the fifth trumpet they were commanded “that they should not kill” (Revelation 9:5), and at the sixth they are loosed “for to slay the third part of men” (Revelation 9:15). As I read it, this is one army under Satan, and God lengthens its leash, first forbidding it to kill and then sending it to kill. Scripture doesn’t say exactly how the army kills, whether directly or through human wars, so I leave that open.

“Yet repented not”

“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts” (Revelation 9:20-21).

This is the saddest verse in the trumpets, and it shows what they were for, because Scripture expected people to repent. God grieved over the same thing long ago. Through the prophet Amos, He listed one hardship after another that He had sent on Israel to bring them home, and after each one came the same sorrowful words: “I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt... yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD” (Amos 4:10).

The list of idols is nearly the same one the prophet Daniel read out to Belshazzar, king of Babylon, on the very night Babylon fell: “thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know” (Daniel 5:23). That same night the king was slain. The end-time world repeats Babylon’s sin.

The Mighty Angel and the Little Book (Revelation 10)

The second woe isn’t over yet. Before John writes “The second woe is past” (Revelation 11:14), he sees two great scenes, and the first is a mighty angel: “I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire” (Revelation 10:1). He holds a little book open in his hand, sets his right foot on the sea and his left on the earth, and cries out “as when a lion roareth” (Revelation 10:3).

This angel bears many marks of the glorified Christ. Daniel saw the Son of man coming “with the clouds of heaven” (Daniel 7:13), there is “a rainbow round about the throne” (Revelation 4:3), and the risen Christ has a face like the sun and feet “like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace” (Revelation 1:15). Christ is “the Lion of the tribe of Juda” (Revelation 5:5), He alone was found worthy to open the book, and the one speaking here goes on to say, “I will give

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power unto my two witnesses" (Revelation 11:3). This angel may be Christ Himself, "the messenger of the covenant" (Malachi 3:1), or one of God's great angels, and Scripture does not give enough to say which. There are honest reasons to pause, since Revelation calls him "another mighty angel" and never plainly calls Christ an angel. So I lay the evidence before the reader and let Scripture speak.

The oath answers Daniel

The angel lifts his hand to heaven and swears "by him that liveth for ever and ever... that there should be time no longer" (Revelation 10:6). Long before, Daniel had asked, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" (Daniel 12:6), and a man clothed in linen raised both hands and swore that "all these things shall be finished" (Daniel 12:7), but Daniel was told the words were sealed "till the time of the end" (Daniel 12:9). Now John sees the same raised hand, hears the same oath, and receives the answer to Daniel's question. "Time no longer" can also be read "no more delay," and either way, the waiting is over.

The oath goes on: "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished" (Revelation 10:7). William Tyndale's 1534 translation reads the same way: "when he shall begyn to blowe: even the mistery of god shalbe fynisshed." Notice the words "days" and "begin to sound" (Revelation 10:7), because the seventh trumpet is not one short blast but a sounding that lasts for days. Paul tells us what the mystery is: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). When the seventh angel begins to sound, the gospel's work is finished and mercy closes.

When the angel cried out, seven thunders spoke, but John was told to "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not" (Revelation 10:4), so I won't guess what they said. Then John was told to eat the little book, which was sweet in his mouth and bitter in his stomach, and he was sent out: "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (Revelation 10:11). God's Word is sweet to receive, but the message of judgment it carries is bitter to deliver.

The Two Witnesses (Revelation 11:1-14)

The temple measured

John is given a measuring rod and told, "Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and

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the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (Revelation 11:1-2).

John is shown a real temple in heaven, the same one later "opened in heaven" (Revelation 11:19). But notice what he measures: "them that worship therein" too (Revelation 11:1). People can't be measured with a rod, only counted. As I read it, the measuring sets a limit, a number God permits, the way the angel later measures the holy city itself with "a golden reed" (Revelation 21:15), and only "they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" may enter (Revelation 21:27). God's people are also His temple: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God" (1 Corinthians 3:16). So in the middle of the storm, God counts and marks out His own, while the outer court is left out and given over. Forty-two months of thirty days are 1,260 days, the same length as the witnesses' testimony and the beast's rule (Revelation 13:5).

Who the witnesses are

"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth" (Revelation 11:3-4). "Threescore" is sixty, so this is 1,260 days.

The prophet Zechariah saw the same two olive trees, and when he asked what they were, he was told, "These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth" (Zechariah 4:14). The whole vision carries one message: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). The olive trees give the oil, the Holy Spirit, and the candlesticks hold the light of God's Word, for "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105).

So as my research reads it, the two witnesses are the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, God's Word in its two testimonies, lit by the Spirit. They work together through the sealed 144,000, who carry them to the world, which is why they are not two men. Jesus Himself joined the Spirit's witness to His people's: "he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness" (John 15:26-27). Peter said the same before the council: "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32).

Their sackcloth shows humility before God. Abraham spoke to God as one "which am but dust and ashes" (Genesis 18:27), and Daniel sought God "with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes" (Daniel 9:3). God's witness comes through the humble, not the proud, as it did through Peter and John, who were known

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as “unlearned and ignorant men,” and yet people “took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).

Their power

“And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies” (Revelation 11:5). The fire is the Word, as God told Jeremiah, “I will make my words in thy mouth fire” (Jeremiah 5:14), and again, “Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?” (Jeremiah 23:29). The witnesses also “have power to shut heaven, that it rain not” and “power over waters to turn them to blood” (Revelation 11:6), which are the powers of Elijah and Moses. When Elijah prayed, “it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months” (James 5:17), the same length as the witnesses’ 1,260 days, so Scripture itself sets the measure. No one can stop them until their work is done, just as it was with their Lord, when “no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come” (John 7:30).

Their death

“And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified” (Revelation 11:7-8).

They are not killed until they have finished their testimony, just as Jesus said, “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (John 17:4), so their death does not defeat the witness. It ends a finished work. As I read it, the dead bodies are the people who carry the testimony. The Holy Spirit does not die, and God’s Word cannot be killed, because it is “the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Peter 1:23). The messengers are the ones who are killed, and the messengers are the ones who rise.

As my research reads it, the beast from the pit is Satan, and this war on the witnesses is his first act that Scripture dates. Doesn’t Revelation tell Satan and the beast apart? It does, because the devil is cast into the lake of fire “where the beast and the false prophet are” (Revelation 20:10). The answer lies in what a beast is. Daniel was told, “The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth” (Daniel 7:23), so a beast is a kingdom together with its king. The kingdom, the end-time Babylon government, is thrown into the lake of fire with the false prophet at Christ’s coming (Revelation 19:20), while its king, Satan, is bound for the thousand years and cast in afterward. Revelation 13 shows the same king and kingdom from the other side: “the dragon gave him his power,

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and his seat, and great authority" (Revelation 13:2), and the world worshipped both the dragon and the beast (Revelation 13:4). The beast rises "out of the bottomless pit" (Revelation 17:8) because its king comes from there.

"The great city" is Babylon, spiritually Sodom for its open wickedness and Egypt for its hard heart, and it is wherever the messengers fall, not one place on a map. People "of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations" see the bodies (Revelation 11:9). As I read it, the 144,000 are spread across the whole world, in every land where God has placed them, so in many places people will see with their own eyes the messengers lie dead in their streets and then see them rise. Some communication may still work, but after the earlier trumpets many places will be without power or internet, and the sight will be seen firsthand.

A false holiday

"And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another" (Revelation 11:10). Scripture has seen a holiday of gifts before. In the book of Esther, a wicked official named Haman had a decree passed to destroy all the Jews, but God turned it around and the Jews were saved. They celebrated with "a day of gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another" (Esther 9:19), the feast of Purim. As I read it, the world keeps a counterfeit Purim over God's dead witnesses, and three and a half days later its celebration is turned around too. Jesus spoke of the same turn from sorrow to joy when He told His disciples, "ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16:20).

They rise

"And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them" (Revelation 11:11-12).

These are almost the very words of Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones, where "the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army" (Ezekiel 37:10), so the Spirit who witnessed through them now raises them. As my research reads it, this is a public sign, like Lazarus called out of the tomb. It is not the gathering of the church, which comes at the last trump, but they are shown as firstfruits before the harvest.

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“And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven” (Revelation 11:13). Seven thousand is a number Scripture has used before. In Elijah’s day, when he thought he was the only faithful one left, God told him, “Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal” (1 Kings 19:18), and Paul called them “a remnant according to the election of grace” (Romans 11:5). In Elijah’s day seven thousand faithful were kept, but here seven thousand fall, and the remnant gives glory to God. That is exactly what the gospel had called for, “Fear God, and give glory to him” (Revelation 14:7), and it is the last response before the door shuts.

“The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly” (Revelation 11:14).

Part Three: The Sixth Seal and the Seventh Trumpet

The Sixth Seal: The Great Day of His Wrath (Revelation 6:12-17)

“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood” (Revelation 6:12). The stars fall, the sky departs “as a scroll when it is rolled together,” and the kings and great men of the earth hide in the rocks, crying, “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (Revelation 6:14-17).

The sixth seal’s mission. It brings “the great day of his wrath” (Revelation 6:17), when the whole world must face the Lamb. As I read it, the sixth seal holds the seventh trumpet’s days, the bowls, and the last trump at Christ’s coming, and the seventh trumpet carries out its mission: wrath “is come,” the bowls are poured, and the last trump sounds as Christ appears. Once more, the seal and its trumpet match.

- **Wrath “is come.”** The sixth seal says, “the great day of his wrath is come” (Revelation 6:17), and at the seventh trumpet the elders say, “thy wrath is come” (Revelation 11:18). Wrath is named at the sixth seal and the seventh trumpet, and not before.
- **The earthquake.** The sixth seal opens with “a great earthquake” (Revelation 6:12), and the seventh trumpet ends its scene with “an earthquake, and great hail” (Revelation 11:19).

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- **The nations.** At the sixth seal the kings of the earth hide from the Lamb, and at the seventh trumpet “the nations were angry” (Revelation 11:18).
- **The end.** Jesus placed these same signs in the sky right before His coming: “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven… And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven” (Matthew 24:29-30). As my research reads it, they come at the close of the seventh angel’s days, as Christ appears at the last trump.

The Seventh Trumpet: The Third Woe (Revelation 11:15-19)

It begins quickly and sounds for days

The witnesses finish their 1,260 days, lie dead three days and a half, and rise, and in the same hour comes the great earthquake. Then “the second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded” (Revelation 11:14-15). As I read it, the seventh angel begins to sound quickly after the witnesses rise, about day 1,264 or 1,265, which leaves about seventy days of the 1,335. Seventy is a number Scripture uses for completion, as in “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people… to finish the transgression” (Daniel 9:24). Scripture doesn’t state the day or the seventy, so I offer them as my reading.

Remember that Revelation speaks of “the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound” (Revelation 10:7). The seventh trumpet sounds through its days, and its last note is the last trump. Jericho shows the pattern. On the seventh day the priests blew their trumpets all through the day as they marched around the city with the ark, “and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets” (Joshua 6:4). Only at the end came the long blast and the great shout, and the wall fell down flat (Joshua 6:5).

The door shuts

When the seventh angel begins to sound, “the mystery of God should be finished” (Revelation 10:7), and mercy closes. It is the moment Noah’s ark was shut, when “the LORD shut him in” (Genesis 7:16). Noah had been “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5), and the door of the ark stood open until God Himself shut it. Jesus told the same story in the parable of the ten virgins: “they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut” (Matthew 25:10).

After that, each person’s choice stands: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still… and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still” (Revelation 22:11).

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Tyndale's 1534 translation words the end of that verse a little differently, "he that is righteous let him be more righteous: and he that is holy let him be more holy." The wicked stay as they chose to be, but God's people keep growing.

The kingdoms become Christ's

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15). This is the kingdom Daniel foretold, when "the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed... it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:44). It is declared in heaven when the seventh angel begins to sound, and it is completed at Christ's appearing.

"Thy wrath is come"

"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth" (Revelation 11:18).

For the first time in the trumpets, Scripture says "thy wrath" (Revelation 11:18), and it says plainly whom that wrath is for. The first bowl falls "upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image" (Revelation 16:2). It ends in the destruction of all who would not repent, and none of it falls on God's people, who are called out before it falls: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4). As He did in Egypt, God draws a line between His people and the rest: "I will put a division between my people and thy people" (Exodus 8:23).

The same verse promises a reward for God's servants, and Jesus said, "behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me" (Revelation 22:12). And God will "destroy them which destroy the earth" (Revelation 11:18), just as in Noah's day, when "the earth was filled with violence" and God said, "I will destroy them with the earth" (Genesis 6:11, 13). God answers in kind, and those who ruin the earth are ruined.

The temple opened and the ark seen

"And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail" (Revelation 11:19).

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From this opened temple the seven angels come out with the bowls (Revelation 15:5-6). In the earthly temple the ark was hidden in the most holy place, where only the high priest could enter once a year. It held the tables of God's covenant, with the mercy seat above it. Now heaven shows the ark openly, and at the very moment His wrath begins, God shows that He keeps His covenant, with mercy for those who love Him and justice for those who would not. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face" (Psalms 89:14). It is the covenant God has always made: "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people" (Jeremiah 7:23). And Revelation shows its fulfillment at the end: "they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Revelation 21:3).

Kept through the storm: Michael stands up and the death decree

Daniel tells us who stands guard over God's people at this time: "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, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1). In Daniel, to "stand up" is to rise to rule, as when "a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion" (Daniel 11:3). As my research reads it, Michael stands up when the seventh trumpet sounds and Christ takes His great power (Revelation 11:17). The time of trouble such as never was, with the bowls and the death decree inside it, comes under his watch, and it ends with God's people delivered. Michael is "the archangel" (Jude 1:9), who leads heaven's angels against the dragon (Revelation 12:7), and the archangel's voice is heard when the Lord comes for His people: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

About twenty-five days into the seventh angel's days, on day 1,290, the second abomination is set up: the image of the beast and the command "that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed" (Revelation 13:15). (See "Two abominations of desolation" in Part Two.) It is the beast's wrath, not God's.

When it is set up. Daniel 12:11 can be read two ways. Most translations, like the KJV, read both events at the start of the count. But word for word the Hebrew says, "from the time the daily is taken away, and to set up the desolating abomination," and literal translations such as Young's keep that shape: "from the time of the turning aside of the perpetual sacrifice, and to the giving out of the desolating abomination" (Young's Literal Translation). Read

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that way, the 1,290 days run from the daily taken away to the abomination set up. I follow that reading because Scripture itself measures the time in between. *(Hebrew and translation note, outside the KJV text.)*

What "the daily" is. In the temple, the daily was the offering made to God every morning and evening without fail, "two lambs of the first year day by day continually" (Exodus 29:38). Today God's people are His temple, and their offering is worship: "let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually" (Hebrews 13:15). As I read it, the daily taken away at the end is the open worship of God's people being suppressed as the holy city is trodden under foot. Daniel heard an angel ask, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" (Daniel 8:13), and Revelation gives the treading its length: "the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (Revelation 11:2), which is 1,260 days. So as I read it, the daily is taken away at the start of the count, God's people are trodden down for 1,260 days, and thirty days later, on day 1,290, the abomination is set up.

One count. All three of Daniel's numbers answer one question, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" (Daniel 12:6). The first answer is "a time, times, and an half" (Daniel 12:7), which is 1,260 days, and then come 1,290 days (Daniel 12:11) and 1,335 days (Daniel 12:12). They read as one count, each answer reaching closer to the end.

Against those who have already chosen. Daniel describes the two groups as already set apart: "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly" (Daniel 12:10). The mark has been taken by choice while mercy was open, and the decree comes against people who have already decided.

How God's people survive it. Scripture doesn't leave His people guessing. It gives them clues:

1. **The wise will see it coming.** "None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" (Daniel 12:10). Daniel gave the count so that God's people could know the time: 1,290 days from the daily taken away. The first abomination gave believers a sign, and they fled in time. The second gives one too.
2. **Refuse the image and the mark, whatever it costs.** Three young men in Babylon showed the way when they refused to bow to the king's image: "our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace... But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve

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thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (Daniel 3:17-18). Those who stand firm are the ones John sees later, "them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark" (Revelation 15:2).

3. **Flee and hide.** Jesus told His followers, "when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another" (Matthew 10:23). And God calls His people to shelter: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast" (Isaiah 26:20).

4. **God will provide.** For the one who walks with Him, "bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure" (Isaiah 33:16), and "in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion" (Psalms 27:5).

5. **It is short.** From day 1,290 to day 1,335 is forty-five days. Jesus promised, "for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matthew 24:22). And "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" (Daniel 12:12).

6. **Even death is not defeat.** Some saints will be captured and killed under the decree, and Scripture honors them: they "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4). God's promise holds for every one of His own: "thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1). The living are kept through, and the slain are raised.

It is Haman's decree again, one set day to destroy God's people, "in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month" (Esther 3:13), and God will turn it around as He did then.

The last trump

At the end of the seventh angel's days, on day 1,335, comes the last trump: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:52). Daniel 12 ties the end of the count to deliverance and resurrection, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (Daniel 12:2), and Daniel himself was promised a place at that end: "thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (Daniel 12:13). The bowls, the seven last plagues, fall within these same days, and they are the subject of their own study.

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Hear the Trumpet

Every trumpet in this study is a voice calling the world home. The first four call through creation itself, naming the God who made the earth, the sea, the waters and the sky. The fifth calls through suffering, and God forbids the tormentors to kill so that people have time to turn. At the sixth, death comes on a vast scale, and still Scripture looks for the survivors to repent. Even at the end of the second woe, the remnant gives glory to God, and through it all the 144,000 carry the Spirit and the Word to every nation.

As my research reads it, the trumpets haven't sounded yet. Today the door is wide open, and the invitation is the same one Joel gave after his blood and fire: "whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered" (Joel 2:32). Jesus is still knocking: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).

For those who belong to Him, there is no need to fear the trumpets. The first six are not His wrath on His people, and He will bring His people through. The last trumpet in the whole series is the sound believers have waited for: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

Summary: The Chain of Events

Already running, the first three seals: after the 1,260 years end in 1798, the King goes forth to conquer (Revelation 6:2; Daniel 7:26), His Word is sent out (Revelation 6:4), and His house is weighed, beginning in 1844 as my research reads it (Revelation 6:5; Daniel 8:14). Then the great tribulation:

1. **The servants of God are sealed** while the four winds are held back (Revelation 7:1-3).
2. **The censer is cast down, day 1 of the 1,335 days.** The fourth seal opens, the winds are released, and the great tribulation begins (Revelation 8:5; Revelation 6:8). *(This research's reading.)*
3. **Trumpets 1-4 strike a third of creation:** the earth and trees, the sea, the rivers and fountains, and the lights of heaven, the four things the gospel names (Revelation 8:7-12; Revelation 14:7). They fall on all alike, and they are not God's wrath.
4. **Three woes are announced** (Revelation 8:13).

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5. **The fifth seal opens, and the fifth trumpet sounds.** Satan is given the key and opens the pit, and his host torments the unsealed for five months but may not kill. The sealed are spared, and the stung can still repent (Revelation 9:1-12; Revelation 6:9-11). *(This research's reading on the seal.)*

6. **The sixth trumpet looses four fallen angels** and the same host, now sent to kill a third of men. The rest repent not (Revelation 9:13-21). *(My reading: one army, two assignments.)*

7. **A mighty angel swears there will be no more delay.** The mystery of God is finished when the seventh angel begins to sound (Revelation 10:5-7).

8. **The two witnesses, the Spirit and the Word, testify through the 144,000 for 1,260 days.** When the testimony is finished, the messengers who carry it are killed by the beast from the pit, lie dead three and a half days, and rise. An earthquake strikes, and the remnant gives glory to God (Revelation 11:3-13). *(This research's reading on who the witnesses are.)*

9. **The seventh angel begins to sound quickly after,** about day 1,264-1,265, and mercy closes. About seventy days remain (Revelation 11:14-15; Revelation 22:11). *(My reading.)*

10. **God's wrath is come.** The first bowl falls on those with the mark, and God calls His people out so they "receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 11:18; Revelation 16:2; Revelation 18:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:9).

11. **The abomination is set up on day 1,290: the death decree.** God's people flee and hide, and every one written in the book is delivered (Daniel 12:11; Revelation 13:15; Isaiah 26:20; Daniel 12:1). *(The count's first day at the censer is this research's reading.)*

12. **The last trump sounds at day 1,335,** the end of the seventh angel's days. The dead in Christ rise, the living are changed, and Christ appears (1 Corinthians 15:52; Daniel 12:12).

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain… for the day of the LORD cometh" (Joel 2:1).

References

- The Holy Bible, King James Version.

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- Larry W. Wilson, Wake Up America Seminars, https://wake-up.org. I first learned from his research that prophetic time follows the Jubilee calendar: a day for a year while God's Jubilee count runs, and literal days after it ends, which is why this paper reads the trumpets' periods as literal days. I do not agree with him on every point, and this paper follows Scripture where we differ.

Related papers in this research

All papers are free to read at https://scripturescjc.com.

- *The Seven Last Plagues: God's Wrath Poured Out, and His People Kept* — what comes next: the bowls of Revelation 15 and 16, poured out in the seventh trumpet's days. https://scripturescjc.com/seven-last-plagues.html
- *The Four Horsemen: What the Words of Revelation 6 Reveal* — the first four seals, one by one. https://scripturescjc.com/four-horsemen.html
- *Then Shall the Sanctuary Be Cleansed: Daniel's 2,300 Days, the Antichrist of Daniel 8, and the Judgment That Begins at the House of God* — the first three seals and the judgment. https://scripturescjc.com/the-2300-days.html
- *The Jubilee Calendar and the Story of the End: A Bible Prophecy Timeline* — the overview of end-time events. https://scripturescjc.com/jubilee-calendar-story-of-the-end.html
- *The Shepherd's Gathering: What Scripture Teaches About the Timing of the Rapture and the Last Trumpet* — the 1,260, 1,290 and 1,335 days, and the last trump. https://scripturescjc.com/the-shepherds-gathering.html
- *The Early and the Latter Rain: How the Holy Spirit Sowed the Gospel, and How He Will Ripen the Harvest* — the sealing, the 144,000 and the two witnesses. https://scripturescjc.com/early-and-latter-rain.html
- *The Brittle Coalition: Daniel 2's Feet of Iron and Clay, and Revelation's Ten Kings* — the world government that rises from the destruction. https://scripturescjc.com/brittle-coalition.html
- *Does Scripture Support the Pre-Tribulation Theory?* — why God keeps His people through the tribulation, not out of it. https://scripturescjc.com/pre-tribulation.html
- *Fear Not the Second Death: What Scripture Teaches About the Thousand Years, the Book of Life, and the End of Sin* — what follows Christ's coming. https://scripturescjc.com/fear-not-the-second-death.html
- *The Five Exoduses* — Egypt's plagues and God's people kept, the pattern behind the trumpets. https://scripturescjc.com/five-exoduses.html

Research kits

- *The Revelations of Jesus Christ* (Tribulation Research Kit, beta) — ask questions about Revelation and Daniel, answered from this research. https://scripturescjc.com/tribulation-kit.txt

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- *Scriptures Timeline* (CJC Research Kit) — the Continuous Jubilee Calendar and its papers. https://scripturescjc.com (homepage, “Choose an Assistant”)

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