

God's Planned Future
(6) Seal Judgements 1-6

Contents

Seal 1	4
Restraining removed	10
Tribulation evangelism	11
Seal 2	20
Seal 3	22
Seal 4	23
Tribulation half time	25
Seal 5	28
Seal 6	29

In lesson 2 of this series, we learned how John sequentially progresses through the Revelation and pauses his storyline on 4 occasions to add detail to the context before moving forward to the next section of the storyline. We call these pauses “Textual Interludes.” As we move through our study of the judgements of God, we shall draw from these textual interludes to provide us with extra information to help our understanding.

#1 Rev 7:1-17

#2 Rev 10:1-11:14

#3 Rev 11:19-14:20

#4 Rev 17:1-18:24

Throughout the Revelation John explains how Christ releases the various judgements upon the earth through 3 sets of 7 judgements. I call these God’s trilogy judgements. The trilogy of God’s Revelation wrath consists of:

- 7 seal judgements (Rev 6:1-17; 8:1-5)
- 7 trumpet judgements (Rev 8:1-9:21; 11:15-18)
- 7 bowl judgements (Rev 16:1-21).

The 7th seal opens into the 7 trumpets. Likewise, the 7th trumpet opens into the 7 bowls, illustrated in the chart below.

Revelation Trilogy of Judgements:

7 Seals - 7 Trumpets - 7 Bowls

Seals 1-7



Trumpets 1-7



Bowls 1-7

As we progress through Revelation, John supplies us with a great deal of information about other events happening at the same time as the judgements. These other events are also happening in the world by God's design and give expression to God's mercy during His judgement.

As we enter Revelation chapter 6, it begins with Jesus opening the first seal of the scroll handed to Him by God the Father. This act of Christ begins 'the tribulation' as He step by step unleashes judgement upon the world.

Seals 1-4 take place in the first 3 ½ years of the 7 year tribulation following the church being raptured. This is the 1st half of Daniel's final '7th week' prophecy (Dan 9:27). This is also what Jesus described as *the beginning of the birth pains* (Mat 24:8). This marks the beginning of God's indignation which is God's fury and wrath (Dan 11:36). Jesus also described this period as *great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and*

never will be (Mat 24:21. Cf. Rev 13:5-10). All the terrible events of past human history, including the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70, will pale by comparison to this tribulation time.

As terrible as the first four seal judgments shall be, they are simply the preliminary outpouring of God's final wrath, which we will see later in the last three seal judgements.

Each of the first 4 seal judgements are authorised and dispatched from heaven by Christ Himself, while being announced in heaven by one of the Four Living Creatures.

Seal 1 **Rev 6:1-2**

The world conqueror

Now I watched when the Lamb (Jesus) opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!"² And I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer.

There are 4 characteristics of the *rider* which help identify him.

1st he is riding on *a white horse* which typically characterises peace. So, we understand that whoever this rider is, he is

entering this world scene on what appears to be a peaceful mission.

2nd this *rider had a bow*. This rider of the 'peace horse' has a weapon, which seems peculiar if they are on a peace mission. Even more strange, is there are no arrows as ammunition for the bow. The rider has the appearance of military power and weaponry, but he does not use it because he does not have any ammunition.

3rd *a crown was given to him*. We now know this rider is a male going to the world with a message of peace. Further, he was given a crown. The Greek word for crown is *Stephanos*, which is a crown won as a prize. In other words, authority was granted to him, he did not earn it.

This rider is given various names in Scripture: Antichrist (1Jn 2:18), the king (Dan 8:23-24; 11:36), the beast (Rev 13:5), the lawless one (2Th 2:18), the man of lawlessness (2Th 2:3), the son of destruction (2Th 2:3), he is the rider of the white horse in seal number 1 (Rev 6:1-2).

The one who sat on the white horse CANNOT be Christ, as Christ opens the sealed scroll. Christ cannot be both the rider of the horse and the one opening the scroll. Further, in Revelation 19:12, Christ wears many Gr. *diadēmas*, royal

crowns. Unlike this rider of seal 1, who carries a bow, Christ carries a sword (Rev 19:15). Finally, Christ returns to earth again at the end of the tribulation, NOT at its beginning, as Christ has already visited the clouds and raptured the Church before Daniel's 70th Seven began.

4th he came out conquering, and to conquer.

Antichrist conquers the world because that is his intention, to conquer. He does not accidentally get promoted to world leadership. His advancement will be rapid and deliberate, which is precisely what God has authorised. His presentation from beginning to end is for people to understand that he is the conqueror – 'resistance is futile.' Initially, his victory will be a bloodless victory. He takes over the world initially through false peace using deception and trickery.

In the void created by the disappearance of millions of Christians in the rapture, antichrist introduces himself as a spiritual, political, and military leader in pursuit of global peace and stability. He introduces himself as one who has the support of the existing world leaders; so, he is ushered in with joyful celebration by the whole world, including Israel.

Antichrist, as we will see, will play a leading role in promoting this worldwide obsession with seeking peace. He's destined to become the single world leader. God has predetermined for him to rise to what shall appear to be an unchallengeable position of supreme global authority. But he will be smashed by the ultimate authority of Jesus Christ in the end (2Th 2:8; Rev 20:10).

One of antichrist's first achievements will be to form a 7 year peace treaty (covenant) with Israel. Daniel 9:27 explains, *he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.*

In the Hebrew language, *desolator* is *šâmêm*, which means to stun, to grow numb, to amaze and destroy. Apart from deceiving the world by amazing them, antichrist will also deceive the remaining false church into allegiance by performing many false miracles, false signs and wonders. The remaining false church, following the rapture of the true church, completely buys into his deception. *The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.¹¹ Therefore God sends*

them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false... (2Th 2:9-11).

He will also approve of, if not order, the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem along with reinstating the Old Testament sacrificial system. This will seem to Israel, to be the ultimate peace gesture by antichrist. Therefore, Israel will happily yield their support to him. But this sweet relationship with Israel will only last 3 ½ years.

Interlude #3 provides us with greater detail of what antichrist is like (Rev 13:1-18).

Rev 13:1-9 *And I saw a beast [antichrist] rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.* ² *And the beast [antichrist] that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon [Satan] gave his power and his throne and great authority [Satanically energised, with demonic powers].* ³ *One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast [Satanically empowered antichrist].* ⁴ *And they worshiped the dragon [Satan], for he had given his authority to the beast [antichrist], and they worshiped the beast [antichrist], saying, "Who is like the beast [antichrist], and who can fight against it?" [Seemingly invincible].* ⁵ *And the beast [antichrist] was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was*

*allowed [by God] to exercise authority for forty-two months [the 2nd 3 ½ years].⁶ It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.⁷ Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them [killing tribulation converts]. And **authority was given it** [by God] **over every tribe and people and language and nation,**⁸ **and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.**⁹ **If anyone has an ear, let him hear.***

2Th 2:3-4 ...the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,⁴ who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship.

Daniel details antichrist's self-exalting character well...

*Daniel 11:36-37, **And the king [antichrist] shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done.**³⁷ He shall pay no attention to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women. He shall not pay attention to any other god, **for he shall magnify himself above all.***

Antichrist shall be an egocentric smooth talker with persuasive speech, seemingly authenticated by false signs

and wonders. This is the man who enters the world leadership stage in Seal number 1 (Rev 6:1-2).

Restraining removed

At this point I would like to clarify the Holy Spirit's ceasing to restrain sin during the tribulation. When the apostle Paul was explaining the coming man of lawlessness (antichrist) to the Thessalonians, he explained in 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8, *...you know what is restraining him [antichrist] now so that he [antichrist] may be revealed in his time.*⁷ *For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it (the mystery of lawlessness) will do so until he is out of the way.*⁸ *And then the lawless one will be revealed...*

That almost sounds like the Holy Spirit is going to move out so that antichrist can move in. **But NO!**

The personal pronoun *"he who"* does NOT exist in the Greek language of 2 Thessalonians 2:7. The actual Greek word for *"he is"* is one word and does not possess the personal pronoun. It should simply read; *"until is out of the way"* in English. Therefore, Paul is not referring to removal of the Holy Spirit but simply the removal of His restraining work of holding sin back during the time of antichrist.

The Holy Spirit will remove (stop), His restraining influence in the world that would possibly slow down the

advancement of antichrist. Sin will run wild without restraint. This will happen following the *snatching up* (rapture) of the New Testament Church. Only then will the antichrist reveal himself to the world without any opposition from the Holy Spirit. He, and the world, will experience full liberty to do as they want.

Without the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit antichrist will rapidly advance his evil agenda to dominate the world politically, religiously, and militarily. What's more, the world will see no reason to hold evil antichrist back.

It's important to understand also, that while the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit is removed, the Holy Spirit continues to *convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment* (Jn 16:8) in regard to salvation. This is necessary for people to be able to come to faith in Jesus Christ for salvation during the tribulation. We shall now consider evangelism during the tribulation.

Tribulation evangelism

In Matthew 24:14, Jesus explained that during the tribulation, the *gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come*. God never stops evangelism!

Again, we look to Interlude number 3 for more details (Rev 11:19 to 14:20). The text lays itself out in 4 natural groupings:

1) The 144,000 (Rev 7:1-8; 14:1-5)

In this phase of John's vision, he sees the Lamb (Jesus) on Mount Zion (14:1). This vision is focused on earth. The fact that John heard a voice from heaven also points to an earthly location.

The 144,000 evangelists are unique (Rev 7:1-8).

- ◆ They are sealed by God on their foreheads as His servants.
- ◆ John sees the 144,000 on earth - they cannot be harmed or die (Rev 9:4); thus, they cannot go to heaven during the tribulation. They will still be alive at the end of the tribulation and shall live through into the 1000 year millennial kingdom.
- ◆ There are 12,000 unmarried men from each tribe of Israel (sons of Israel) – Jewish, virgin men.

Further unique qualities (Rev 14:1-5).

- ◆ The 144,000 have the names of the Lamb and God the Father on their foreheads.

- ◆ They are human men who have been redeemed (Purchased) from the earth. This means they were saved after the rapture because they were not taken up in the rapture.
- ◆ They are the firstfruits in the sense that they would have been the first saved following the rapture. Thus, they begin worldwide evangelism with themselves.
- ◆ Only they could learn the song that was being sung before the throne of God while still on earth.
- ◆ They are sexually pure – this shows they have not been seduced by the unrestrained sinful world.
- ◆ They follow the Lamb wherever He goes – this speaks of absolute faithfulness and obedience.
- ◆ No lie could be found in their speech.
- ◆ They are blameless in the sense of being beyond reproach, or public accusation.

2) The 3 Flying Angelic Evangelists (Rev 14:6-13)

Angels appear in most chapters of Revelation. They play a significant role in God's final dealings with this world. Here in Revelation 14, we read of 6 angels in total. The first 3 angels are evangelistic; however, their messages have 3 distinct emphasis.

Angel 1 (14:6-7) Preaches the gospel

~ :6a *flying directly overhead*

In the Greek language, *overhead* is *mesouranēma*; and means mid-sky. This angel positions himself at the high point of the sky in each location that he appears.

This is the 1st of 3 extremely large angels who can be seen from a great distance. They also has strong voices as they fly through the air calling out to humanity below.

~ :6b *with an eternal gospel to proclaim*

Eternal because the gospel is the only message God has that leads to eternal life.

~ :6c *to every nation and tribe and language and people*

In God's final invitation for the world to receive eternal life, He leaves no-one out. Remember when Jesus was giving his 'Signs of the end of the age' address to the disciples in Matthew 24:14, he said, *this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*

This angel shall repeatedly fly around the entire world, from country to country, missing none,

loudly proclaiming the gospel, calling people to repent and believe in Christ.

- ~ :7 The message of this single evangelistic angel will be clear and unmistakable. *Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.*

Angel 2 (14:8) Pronounces Judgement on the world

- ~ This 2nd angel follows the first evangelistic angel around the world. While they do not speak together, or at the same time, their messages are equally powerful in calling the sinful world to Christ.
- ~ Babylon the great is more than just the city, it's antichrist's world empire, including all his political, military, financial, and religious components of his world dictatorship. We shall learn more of this when we come to Revelation chapters 17-18.

Angel 3 (14:9-11) Assures the world of wrath

- ~ This 3rd angel clarifies exactly who it is that shall experience God's wrath. Verse 9, *if anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand...*" (Rev 13:18 – the 666 mark).

- ~ :10-11 Wrath shall consist of the following:
- It shall be God's holy wrath on those who have rejected and rebelled against Him.
 - His wrath shall be delivered full strength and without restraint.
 - The recipients shall be tormented in a place of fire and burning sulphur.
 - Even though physically separated from God, they will be unable to be separated from the essence of His holiness, His sovereignty, and His omnipresence (cf. Psa 139:7-8).
 - Verse 11 makes it clear, *they have no rest, day or night* from their eternal torment.

In context, Revelation 14:12-13 speaks of the converts resulting from the 3 angels' evangelistic ministry, they are called *saints*.

- ~ A call for perseverance by those who turn to Jesus Christ during the tribulation period. They are to persevere in 2 ways: obedience and faith in Jesus.
- ~ In verse 13 the Holy Spirit speaks directly – this only occurs 2 times in the entire Revelation (Rev 14:13; 22:17).

- ~ Verses 12-13 announce a blessing for these faithful tribulation saints who are martyred, killed because they refuse to take the mark of the beast (666). Their faithful work and pains suffered for Jesus shall accompany them to Heaven where they shall be rewarded.

3 more angels (Rev 14:14-20) **The harvest of the earth**

- ~ 3 more angels are spoken of here – these 3 are instrumental in the final judgement upon the earth when Jesus returns at the end (Rev 19).
- ~ The word picture presented here is of harvest time and depicts the inevitability of final judgement. Which is fulfilment of Daniel 7:13-14, *...behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.* ¹⁴ *And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.*

3) **The Two Witnesses** (Rev 11:1-12)

In Revelation 11:3, these two witnesses simply appear, no history, no information as to how they arrived, they just appear. They are dressed in sackcloth, much like John the Baptist, humble, and of no earthy appeal.

These 2 witnesses will prophesy for 3 ½ years at some point during the tribulation. They have 1 purpose only – to prophesy, to speak God’s message, to call people to repentant faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to foretell of the coming judgements.

They are not angels, but men, because they die later (Angels don’t die). Their very existence is for the purpose of being God’s speakers until they are martyred, that is, killed for their message. Revelation 11:4 says these 2 have a unique position of standing before the Lord. While there is considerable speculation as to who these 2 witnesses are, we don’t really know. John simply quotes Zechariah 4:11-14, which speaks of these 2 individuals.

Their unique abilities (Rev 11:5-7):

- ~ 11:5 They have the ability to breath out fire and kill anyone who tries to harm them.

- ~ 11:6a They can prevent rain for any period during their 3 ½ year ministry time.
- ~ 11:6b They can turn rivers, lakes, and oceans into blood.
- ~ 11:6b They can strike the earth with every type of plague as often as they want.
 - They don't have to go and ask God permission each time they act.
 - They have global freedom to do their work.
- ~ 11:7 They are protected by God for 3 ½ years, until the appointed time of their death.

After antichrist kills the two witnesses (Rev 11:7-11), they lay dead in the street for 3 ½ days. During that time, *those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents* (Rev 11:10) in celebration of their death. Then God breaths life into their bodies, they stand, and are immediately raptured into heaven (Rev 11:12) while their enemy's watch.

Even during this terrible tribulation time, we see two principles fulfilled by God:

- a) Romans 5:20 *...where sin increased, grace abounded all the more...*
- b) James 2:13 *Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

During the most horrendous unleashing of God's wrath upon this world, He sovereignly saves some. Even in wrath, God is not without mercy.

Seal 2 Rev 6:3-4

War and Anarchy (Uncontrollable Disorder)

When he [Christ] opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!"⁴ And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword.

- ~ Here, early in the 7 year tribulation, the earthly scene turns ugly and remains that way until the true King of kings returns to establish His kingdom.
- ~ Writing about the deceitfulness of this future false peace, Paul said; *while they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labour pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape* (1Th 5:3).

In Matthew 24:6-7, Jesus noted that *you will hear of wars and rumour of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet.*⁷ *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.*

First comes a short time of deceptive global peace as antichrist establishes his worldwide rule. This will initially be disturbed by murmurings of war, which will soon become rumours of war, and then actual reports of war. The temporary false peace will begin to disintegrate even while the Antichrist is claiming peace.

Throughout the entire 7 year tribulation, peace will be antichrist's enticement to the world to win their allegiance. Strangely, the world keeps believing antichrist even though he is unable to deliver true lasting peace.

John noted that a great sword was given to the rider of the 2nd horse. The Greek word *Machaira* (sword) refers to the short, stabbing sword which a Roman soldier carried into battle. However, the sword given to this rider was a **great stabbing sword**, which most likely refers to the broad and destructive nature of killing brought about by hand to hand fighting.

Antichrist will be as skilful at war as he is at promoting false peace (cf. Rev 6:9; Matt. 24:9). Daniel 8:24-25 expands our understanding of antichrist by explaining, *his power shall be great - but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy*

mighty men and the people who are the saints. ²⁵ *By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many...*

- Antichrist shall use deceit to win the trust of his victims, only to suddenly massacre them.
- His appearance of peaceful favouritism shall quickly turn to bloodshed as he slaughters his way to global dictatorship.

Seal 3

Rev 6:5-6

Famine

When he [Christ] opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair of scales in his hand.

⁶ *And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures [God's voice], saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!"*

God speaks here as a reminder that the famine is a direct judgment from Him resulting from war. A denarius represents one day's wages for an average worker with a quart of wheat being just enough to feed one person for one day (1 quart of wheat weighs about 500 grams).

Consequently, 1 day's labour by 1 person will only provide the minimum amount of food for themselves and not enough to feed their families. Families will be able to purchase three quarts of barley for a denarius (a day's wages). Barley is low in nutritional value and commonly fed to animals. Therefore, a person's daily wages will barely feed three people with low quality food for one day. Both of those scenarios represent starvation conditions, accompanied by severe famine, which is typical of war conditions. Olive oil and wine, used in the preparation and cooking of food, as well as the purification of water, will be a rare luxury and shall need to be jealously protected.

Seal 4 Rev 6:7-8

Death

When he [Christ] opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!"⁸ And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

John describes this 4th horse as a pale horse. The Greek word for *pale* is *Chlōros*, from which the English words "chlorophyll" and "chlorine" are derived, it refers to a sickly, pale, yellow-green colour.

John saw death followed by Hades, which pictures the grave. Hades becomes, as it were, the grave digger, swallowing Death's victims. Death will use 4 tools in his grim task: the sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts.

With global war progressively taking control, famine, crop disease, disease carried by rodents, starvation, and death will become globally common. Starvation shall be common in both the animal kingdom and humanity alike. Many non-domesticated animals being hungry, will prowl into populated areas looking for food of any kind. They won't be fussy eaters. People who are malnourished, slow, and defenceless will be easy prey for these animals. Remember, this is a divine judgment, and wild animals will be liberated by God from their normal boundaries to kill rebellious mankind.

Another possibility may include the one wild creature which seems to thrive in the worst of conditions - the rat. The rat is both a natural scavenger and a predator. Rats will not only devour both dead and live prey, but in so doing become an effective carrier of deadly deceases. This, in and of itself, will perpetuate disease and death even more.

Crime will also be at an all-time high as desperate people search for food and medicine as resources are quickly exhausted.

Tribulation half time

The Abomination of Desolations

The actions of antichrist at the 3 ½ year point trigger the irreversible disaster which is about to unfold. But first, I want to answer the question; “what evidence is there to support the 3 ½ year point falling between Seal 4 and Seal 5 judgements?”

Answer: The answer lies in the chronology of the Revelation, the natural sequence of progressive events. Remember from Daniel’s 70th week prophecy, antichrist breaks the covenant of peace in the Jerusalem temple after 3½ years (Half time). Dan 9:27 *...and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering...*” (cf. Dan 11:31, 36; Mt 24:9, 15-21; Lk 21:20; 2Th 2:3-4; Rev 11:2).

Remember also the chronology of Jesus’ prophecy in Matthew chapter 24 which follows in alignment with the chronology of Revelation.

Seal #1 Mat 24:5 *For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ...’* – One of them will be the antichrist proclaiming peace.

Seal #2 Mat 24:6-7a *you will hear of wars and rumours of wars...* War and death will quickly replace peace.

Seals #3-4 Mat 24:7b ...*there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.* Starvation and mass death – ¼ of the world's population will be killed.

In Matthew 24:8 Jesus said that *all these are but the beginning of the birth pains.* Now, notice Jesus' transition to the next chronological stage of events. He begins Matthew 24:9 with the word "*then.*" **Then** *they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake.*

That speaks of martyrdom on a global scale, which is Seal number 5 in Revelation. And that is what comes next. It will look like this:

Mat 24:15 *"So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand) ...*

Dan 9:27 *and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering.*

At the 3 ½ year point antichrist enters the temple in Jerusalem and stops the Jewish sacrifices. He then sets up an image of himself to be worshipped as God in fulfillment of Daniel 11:36-37. *And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done.* ³⁷ *He shall pay no attention to the*

gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women (Jesus). He shall not pay attention to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all.

This single act of antichrist at the 3 ½ year point is the *abomination of desolation* which triggers the 2nd half of the 7 year tribulation into effect.

In Matthew 24:21 Jesus marks another significant step forward in the progression of Revelation, when He said... *then there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.*

This means that Seal 5 marks the beginning of the 2nd 3 ½ years which is the **great tribulation**.

It should be noted, that at this time a remnant of Israel flees Jerusalem after witnessing the desecration of their temple by antichrist. They are hidden away in the desert for protection in order to preserve Israel so that the remaining Old Testament prophecies can be fulfilled through them in Revelation 18-19 onwards, when Christ returns to establish His Kingdom.

Revelation 12:6-16 tells us that 1/3 of Israel becomes the remnant which is hidden and protected in the desert for the 2nd 3½ year period (Fulfilment of Zch 13:8-9).

Again Interlude #3 provides more information. Revelation 12:6, *and the woman [Israel] fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days* (cf. Joel 2:30-32).

Seeing the disappearance of 1/3 of Israel triggers antichrist to legalise the killing of all believers in the one true God who will not worship him. Which leads in seal number 5.

Seal 5 Rev 6:9-11

Martyrdom

*When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar [in heaven] the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne [these are repentant tribulations saints, both Jew and Gentile].¹⁰ They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"¹¹ Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, **until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.***

When John was called to measure the temple in Revelation 11:2, he was told not to *measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.* From the tribulation mid-point, between Seals 4 and 5, when antichrist declares himself to be god, the gentile

people who are loyal to antichrist will flood into Jerusalem for the remaining 3 ½ years.

Later on in Revelation 20:4, John *saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands.*

Antichrist will not tolerate anyone who will not worship him as god. He will not waste military resources on these enemies of his, so he legalises the death penalty by beheading, worldwide, for both Jew and gentile alike.

Seal 6

Rev 6:12-17

Environmental & Political Anarchy (Uncontrolled Disorder).

When he (Christ) *opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth* (Similar to an eclipse, but not a total blackout), *the full moon became like blood* (cf. Joel 2:31; Ac 2:20 – this is when four total lunar eclipses happen in the span of two years – it's called a lunar tetrad),

¹³ *and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale* (Meteorite storms).

¹⁴ *The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up* (Like the old style 'roller blinds;' from the stratosphere out into

space, it shall recoil and collapse), *and every mountain and island was removed from its place.*

Planet earth will have all of its tectonic plates moved – just think of the tsunamis, the altered landscape, the oceanic underwater channels will be changed, submarines will no longer be able to navigate by charts or satellite, the roading systems will be destroyed, the falling satellites and space junk created by man etc.

¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”

The world seeks death rather than repentance as it awakens to the reality that this is the rightful judgement from God the Father and Son.

With the judgements of Seal numbers 1 through 6 opened and delivered upon the world, and with over 3 ½ years of world catastrophe past, the worst is yet to come. Next we shall go to Revelation 8 where we shall watch as Seal 7 is opened to reveal the 7 Trumpet judgements.