

First period of time, 49 years:

From the month of Nisan (March) 445 BC, the date the building permit was issued to Nehemiah until the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the walls of the city took 49 years and was completed in 396 BC.

Second period of time, 434 years:

Daniel 9:26 -

'And after the 62 weeks, Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood and till the end of the war desolations are determined.'

This second period began in 396 BC immediately **after** the rebuilding of Jerusalem and continued for 434 years until Messiah the Prince was 'cut off' – **crucified in AD30 at Calvary**. At the cross Jesus, the Messiah, was cut off in death 'but not for Himself' – it was for us and for all who will believe.

At the end of Daniel's 69th week Jesus was crucified. Thus this prophecy of Daniel accurately pinpoints and predicts the time of Jesus death – a prophecy given over 500 years before His birth.

Daniel 9:26 -

'And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary'.

Who are the people of the prince? This passage has reference to the Romans, they fulfilled the prophecy of the destruction of the city and the temple and brought the desolations of verse 26 – Roman soldiers under Titus destroyed the city and Temple in AD 70. The 'prince that shall come' verse 26 is a reference to the Antichrist himself who will come. It is likely that he will come from the people who destroyed the Temple in AD70 – e.g. Rome. Jerusalem was destroyed about 40 years after the crucifixion of Christ, which ended the 69th week. There remains therefore 7 weeks of years of Israel's history yet to come.

Third period of time, 7 years

This time is known as '**the time of Jacob's trouble**'.

Jeremiah 30:7 -

'Alas for that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble but he shall be saved out of it.'

This is the final week of years, which is yet to be fulfilled in the future and is known as Daniel's 70th week.

Daniel 9:27

²⁷Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering and on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation which is determined is poured out on the desolate’.

The ‘he’ in this passage is the Antichrist himself, who having made a covenant of 7 years with the Jews to enable them to sacrifice at their rebuilt temple, suddenly in the middle of the 7 years, breaks this treaty, invades Jerusalem, defiles the Temple, setting himself up as god, here we really come to the worst time in human history as Satan is thrown down with great fury to vent his rage on the Jewish nation.

But as it says in Matthew 24: 21, 22 ‘For then shall be Great Tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor shall ever be, and except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved, but for the elect’s sake, those days shall be shortened.’ That scripture refers to the **Second half of the Great Tribulation period**, when the antichrist is in full control of the whole world.

Now, back to Revelation 6 -

Seal and Trumpet judgements:

The seal and trumpet judgements are **sequential or chronological** with one event following the other in order. Thus we see the sealing of the 144,000 and the judgements are simultaneous and chapter 7 is therefore infill detail – the Lord says, O and by the way, you need to know this is going on as well.

Revelation 6: 1 – 8 the four horsemen:

These are commonly known as the four horsemen of the apocalypse. As Jesus breaks the seals, the antichrist is revealed and famine, bloodshed, and death walk onto the world’s stage.

First Seal: The Conqueror

*⁴Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.” ² And I looked, and behold, **a white horse**. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.’*

*The first seal is opened to reveal a rider on **a white horse** wearing a crown, with a bow in his hands, no arrow.*

A white horse signifies victory. Whatever his victory it is bloodless, he hasn’t overcome by force. One of the ways this rider comes to power is by subterfuge. He is a deceiver; coming in the name of peace, his ‘golden age’ will be short lived. He offers the world peace, entering the world stage with a flashing smile and an air of confidence. This great counterfeiter is the Antichrist himself who rides on to the world stage at the beginning of the tribulation period to bring peace in the midst of global turmoil.

The seal judgements cover the first 21 months or the first quarter, of the Tribulation. The realisation for me that this Beast was prepared by God for use in His judgement of the earth was quite shatteringly awesome. You will see in Daniel that it was given to him to have power and make war. This is an awesome thing – God prepares the destroyer to destroy Isaiah 54:16. He uses the wickedness of man’s

heart and Satan's desires to annihilate the Jews and mankind generally to carry out His own plan of redemption and judgement on the unbeliever. Jesus said to Pilate "You can do nothing except it be given to you". He allows in His wisdom what He could easily prevent by His power.

Second Seal: Conflict on Earth

“When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come and see.”⁴ Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.’

The second seal is opened, the second of the four horsemen of the apocalypse rides on to the world's stage. A rider on **a red horse**. Bloodshed - war breaks out. In the antichrist's take over of the world, obviously not all nations are willing to follow and war breaks out on a large scale. Although their attempt to throw off the shackles of the antichrist will be unsuccessful, it is evident from the opening of this seal that this will be a widespread and bloody war.

Third Seal: Scarcity on Earth

*“When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come and see.” So I looked, and behold, **a black horse**, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. ⁶ And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.”*

The third seal a rider on **a black horse** takes the stage, after the wars, an acute shortage of food begins, the rider is holding a pair of scales, a symbol of the desperate state of the world after the first two horsemen. Three measures of barley are about a pint, a minimum daily sustenance diet. This, then, indicates that a person will have to work for a whole day just to earn enough money to live, which will leave nothing for the family or the elderly. As always with war, the famine will take a heavy toll on the ordinary people, but will not touch the rich – ‘do not harm the oil and the wine’.

Fourth Seal: Widespread Death on Earth

*“When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come and see.”⁸ So I looked, and behold, **a pale horse**. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them **over a fourth** of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.’*

The fourth seal is opened and the rider on the sickly **green horse, or pale horse** comes forth. Seated on the horse was a rider named Death and Hades followed on behind. Note that there was given to them authority over **a quarter** of the earth to kill. Just who is in charge here? In this judgement one quarter of the world's population is destroyed. Horrendous. But worse is to come –

Revelation 6: 9 - 17

Fifth Seal: The Cry of the Martyrs

⁹When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

¹¹ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed'.

In opening the *fifth seal* the tribulational martyrs are revealed, the *6th seal* follows quickly and natural disasters hit the earth, earthquakes, the sun darkened, blackouts, meteors falling from the sky, but now men are recognising this is the judgement of God and there is no place to hide. Fearfully, many still refuse to change their minds -

Sixth Seal: Cosmic Disturbances

¹²I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. ¹³ And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴ Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. ¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

When the sixth seal is broken the earth is violently shaken by a giant earthquake, indicating that it is the great day of God's wrath. Great fear will grip human hearts but because of their stubborn, wilful and rebellious ways instead of turning to God in this hour of peril, they will hide in the rocks and the dens of the earth. These people will be fully aware that they are now in the Tribulation period.

The fifth seal delineates for us the large scale persecution of Christians during the Tribulation and prepares us for the opening of this sixth seal – suddenly the world will recognise they are being judged and will be conscious that there is no place to hide.

Notice please this passage, **Revelation 6: 12 – 17** does not say judgement *has just begun*, that *only with the opening of the 6th seal do unbelievers recognise that it is the wrath of God.*

Revelation 6:17 ends with a question

"The great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

This question is answered in Revelation 7, which as we have already seen, is in full detail – these are the ones, the sealed, who are able to stand.

The 144,000 Jews from every nation who have been sealed by the angels, again we see the angels holding back judgement whilst the sealing takes place – *sphragis* (Greek) denotes a seal/signet, an emblem of ownership and security, here combined with that of destination.

Ezekiel 9:4 -

“and the LORD said to him, “Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it.””

The person being sealed is being secured from destruction and marked for reward (Vine’s Expository Dictionary) 2 Timothy 2:19 *‘For the Lord knoweth them that are His’* indicating ownership, authentication, security, and destination.

These go forth in the 1st half of the Tribulation to evangelise, resulting in Revelation 7:9 *‘a great multitude martyred for their faith.’*

Revelation 7:1 -17

The Sealed of Israel:

‘¹After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. ² Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, ³ saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” ⁴ And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:

- ⁵of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed;*
- of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed;*
- of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;*
- ⁶of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed;*
- of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed;*
- of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;*
- ⁷of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed;*
- of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed;*
- of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;*
- ⁸of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed;*
- of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed;*
- of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.*

The greatest revival that is yet to come is prophetically described here in Revelation 7: 5-8 and appears right after the seal judgements to indicate that it will take place during the first 21 months of the Tribulation, whilst the antichrist is making his political advance, the Holy Spirit will move in the hearts of millions of people, leading them to a saving knowledge of Jesus.

*⁹After these things I looked, and behold, **a great multitude** which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs*

to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"¹¹ All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God,¹² saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honour and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"¹⁴ And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."¹⁵ Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.¹⁶ They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;¹⁷ for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

The exact identity of this multitude is carefully spelled out. The elder asks the question as to their identity, John does not recognise them, indicating if they had been members of the church or the Old Testament he could have identified them, since they have been redeemed from the Tribulation, he does not know them, but they have a great reward, they are before the throne of God and they serve Him day and night in His temple. Best of all, every tear will be wiped away from their eyes.

Revelation 8 – 9 The Seven Trumpet Judgements:

We are now entering the **second quarter** of the Tribulation. The sounding of the **7th trumpet**, heralds the **last half** of the Great Tribulation, and the **bowl or vial judgements**. But we have much ground to cover before we get there.

Opening the 7th seal reveals the trumpet judgements – the effect is so ghastly that there is silence in heaven for about half an hour. Whatever is now to be revealed is so terrible that heaven itself is silent. These judgements are so awful. The angels who stand before God are given their trumpets –

An angel begins to cast fire upon the earth and we see the sequential trumpet judgements unfolding. At the sound of the first trumpet trees and grass are burnt up, the second trumpet sounds and a burning mountain is cast down to earth resulting in a third of the living creatures being destroyed and the sea turning to blood.

The third angel sounds his trumpet and the water becomes undrinkable, the **fourth angel** sounds and the sun, moon and stars are affected and the 'woe' judgements begin, chapter 9 the **fifth angel** sounds and Satan is cast down – wholesale killing by disease and the loosing of the demonic host to torture and torment mankind.

The **sixth angel** sounds his trumpet (Revelation 9:13) and a third of mankind is slain. We don't see anything about the **7th trumpet until Revelation 10:7** when John is told when this sounds, the mystery of God shall be finished. He is also told to seal up other things which he sees, but he is not allowed to record them.

Revelation 8: 1 - 6

Seventh Seal: Prelude to the Seven Trumpets

'¹When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ²And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. ³Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. ⁵Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. ⁶ So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.'

These judgements are so terrible that the angels stand breathless in wonder and there is silence in heaven for about half an hour. The seventh seal is broken and the angels receive seven trumpets, the second quarter of the Tribulation is about to begin. The angel throws incense, which is the prayers of the saints, on the golden altar – this indicates that the forthcoming trumpet judgements will answer the prayers of the saints. As a warning to the earth that these judgements are about to commence, it is made to tremble with an earthquake...

Then in verse 6, the angels prepare themselves to sound the seven trumpets.

Revelation 8: 7

First Trumpet: Vegetation Struck

'The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.'

It would be comforting to think that these descriptions were symbolic, as some have interpreted them, but they are no more symbolic than the plagues that God brought upon Egypt under Moses.

Five of the plagues that God brought upon Egypt are repeated in the book of Revelation. Egypt's water was turned to blood, there was darkness throughout the land and plagues.

This has all been predicted by God –

Joel 2: 30 - 31

³⁰"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.³¹The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord."

The hail and fire are literal judgements that fall on one-third of the earth's surface, burning up all the vegetation they touch.

It should not strike us as strange – God has brought judgement of this kind before on Sodom and Gomorrah where he rained down burning sulphur and turned Lot's wife into a pillar of salt.

Revelation 8:8 - 9

Second Trumpet: The Seas Struck

⁸ Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. ⁹ And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

Here again is a similarity to the Egyptian plagues – the sea becomes blood.

Revelation 8:10 - 11

Third Trumpet: The Waters Struck

¹⁰ Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. ¹¹ The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.'

And a third of the sweet waters of the earth are destroyed – the water becomes bitter which causes the death of many. Whenever the word 'star' is mentioned it is a common symbol for an angel which is the case here. This fallen angel causes one-third of the sweet water to turn bitter, which in turn causes many deaths.

Revelation 8: 12

Fourth Trumpet: The Heavens Struck

¹² Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. ¹³ And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"

The same God who created light, is able to diminish it.

And with the fourth trumpet day and night will appear to be reversed. This corresponds with the 9th plague of Egypt (Exodus 10). And Jesus' prediction in

Luke 21:25, 26

²⁵ "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;"

Revelation 8:13

¹³ And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"

And we have the prelude to the '**Woe Judgements**'.

The **fourth trumpet** has destroyed one-third of the earth's light source. Light is hindered from reaching the earth. Darkness is beginning to cover the earth.

With the sounding of the 4th trumpet, we have the prelude to the '**Woe judgements**'.

The first four trumpets having sounded, verse 13 gives the introduction to the final three. The three final trumpet judgements are especially severe for mankind on the earth; hence they are called 'the woe judgements'. The first two of these woes are demonic invasions of the earth, and the third one contains the bowl judgements.

Revelation 9:1 – 21 The fifth trumpet and the first woe judgement:

Fifth Trumpet: The Locusts from the Bottomless Pit

'¹Then the fifth angel sounded: and I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. ²And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. ³ Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. ⁴ They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. ⁵ And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. ⁶ In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. ⁷The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. ⁸They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. ⁹ And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. ¹⁰ They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. ¹¹And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. ¹² One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.'

Sixth Trumpet: The Angels from the Euphrates

'¹³ Then the sixth angel sounded: and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, ¹⁴saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." ¹⁵So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. ¹⁶Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. ¹⁷And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulphur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. ¹⁸By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. ¹⁹ For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. ²⁰ But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. ²¹ And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.'

These first nine chapters of the book have brought us almost to the middle of the Tribulation. The seven seal judgements covered the first quarter, the seventh seal introduced the next quarter – the trumpet judgements, and now, chapters 10:1 -11:14 comprise infill detail, a parenthetical section to give us more information before ***the 7th trumpet is sounded in Revelation 11 - it is a proclamation -***

Revelation 11:15

'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ and He shall reign for ever and ever'.

We will end there today, and see what tomorrow holds.

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