

BIBLE PROPHECY

What did Jesus, Daniel, Ezekiel, Paul, and John
teach about the end-times?

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When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads,
because your redemption is drawing near.” (Luke 21:28; NIV)

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1. Salvation

God planted a garden. He gave Adam authority over this Garden of Eden. Life was magnificent; fellowship with God was routine. God walked in this garden. God planted trees in the garden; one was named the tree of life and another one the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God told Adam to refrain from eating fruit from the tree that provided knowledge of what is evil, but he disobeyed. This sin drove humanity outside Eden into our present world to gain first-hand knowledge of what is evil (Genesis 2:9-3:24).

Adam's transgression disrupted the relationship between God and man. Fortunately, God deeply cared about this broken fellowship and therefore provided a Messiah. God's mighty Savior left a throne in heaven and went to earth in human form to rescue Adam, Eve, and their descendants, to include you and me. Every person on earth has disobeyed God, which resulted in a broken relationship. Every person needs a Savior.

God had a dynamic plan for providing salvation. Jesus excelled as a teacher, a healer, and as a miracle worker. However, none of those things could bridge the gap between a holy God and a rebellious man. A perfect God must hold to perfect justice; accordingly, the offenses (sins) of man must be punished. Because punishment could not be avoided the critical question was—who would endure the punishment?

Scripture tells us that before Jesus died, sin was placed upon him, so that a perfect sacrifice would pay the death penalty for sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus took the punishment that you and I deserve because the shedding of blood is the only payment God accepts (Hebrews 9:22). In his resurrection, Jesus demonstrated authority over death.

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God provided a way to eradicate the penalty for sin, and to obtain eternal life, but only on his terms. Each person must acknowledge that he or she has rebelled (sinned) against God, and trust that the shed blood of Jesus—received as a gift—paid the penalty for that sin. It is insufficient to simply believe that God exists (James 2:19). It is never enough for a person to behave in a religious manner, or have another person ask God for forgiveness on his or her behalf. Each person must go directly to the Savior (Hebrews 7:24-25).

God offers each man, woman, and child a personal, restored relationship—to anyone who believes him. Belief in God is important because to not believe what God says, is to imply that he is a liar (1 John 1:10). As an illustration of this point, both the Old and New Testament state that God accepted Abraham simply because Abraham believed God (Genesis 15:6; James 2:23). God is able to forgive any sin, but he chooses to not forgive the sin of unbelief.

Faith in Jesus is similar to faith in an airplane. When a passenger boards an airplane, that person believes the plane will fly and land safely. The passenger does not put faith in his or her own ability to fly. In a similar manner, trust God. Trust him to save you, forgive you, and one day safely transport you to heaven. Your belief shows faith in God's abilities, promises, and faithfulness.

2. Covenants

The most meaningful relationships are “covenant” relationships. The best example of a covenant relationship is the marriage covenant. Each person demonstrates whom he or she trusts by the covenants they enter. Just as a bride and groom demonstrate covenant faith in each other, we are called to place covenant faith in God.

The central book of end-time prophecy, titled Revelation, tells about three covenants. Just as with God’s covenants in the Old Testament, scripture depicts covenants in Revelation with a mark on the forehead or hand (Deuteronomy 6:6-8). This type of mark may seem odd. However, consider that a common covenant symbol today, the wedding ring, distinguishes (marks) the left hand of the husband and wife.

During the end-times, it will be most convenient to accept the covenant offered by the preeminent world leader, a powerful man commonly called the Antichrist. Initially the leader of a restored Roman Empire, Antichrist will enter the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and claim to be God. Paul wrote that Antichrist *takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God* (2 Thessalonians 2:4b).

Belief in religion is a second covenant option. A person can have faith in his or her religion without having any faith in God. The Pharisees were the preeminent first-century teachers of Israel; yet their faith was in religion instead of God (Matthew 23:23). Pharisees wore long flowing robes (Mark 12:38), prayed in an impressive manner (Mark 12:40), and routinely fasted (Matthew 9:14). The typical Israeli citizen thought they set the gold standard for religious behavior.

Those who followed such religion were also in perilous danger. Jesus warned the Pharisees and their congregations when he said, *“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. (Matthew 23:13)*

Three Covenants

The three covenants in Revelation are depicted as a mark on the hand or forehead (Deuteronomy 6:6-8).

Faith in Antichrist: *And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, (Revelation 13:16)*

Faith in Religion: *and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” (Revelation 17:5)*

Faith in God: *saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.” (Revelation 7:3)*

The covenant that God offers makes each believer a member of the body of Christ. Jesus took bread during the last supper before his death and said, *“Take, eat; this is My body.” (Matthew 26:26b)*. Paul later noted that *we are members of His body*. (Ephesians 5:30b).

Also at the last supper, Jesus took wine and said, *for this is My blood of the covenant (Matthew 26:28a)*. The shedding of blood pays the penalty for sin because *without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Hebrews 9:22b; NIV)*.

Christians have entered into the following covenant relationship with God.

“FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL *
AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD:
I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS,
AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS.

AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD,
AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.
“AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN,
AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, ‘KNOW THE LORD,’
FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME,
FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM.
“FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES,
AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE.” (Hebrews 8:10-12)

* Gentile believers have been made citizens of Israel (Ephesians 2:11-13)

3. The Rapture

The end-times will bring the worst suffering the world has ever seen. Jesus said of the end-times, *For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.* (Matthew 24:21) There will be global conflict and persecution of Christians. Jesus warned believers, *“Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.* (Matthew 24:9)

But there also is good news. There is a way for God’s people to avoid the end-times. A rapture rescues believers from end-time suffering; rapture occurs when God suddenly removes people from earth—taking them up into heaven. The word “rapture” comes from the Latin word “rapiō” which means to take away by force. The benefits of an early rapture are obvious. Those leaving the earth will avoid tremendous suffering and persecution.

Jesus and Paul used the words “caught up” and “taken” to refer to rapture. Paul wrote, *“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.”* (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17) Jesus said, *“I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other will be left. There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken and the other will be left.”* (Luke 17:34-35)

Jesus cited Noah as an example of God protecting believers just prior to a worldwide judgment. Jesus then cited a second example; angels removed Lot and his family immediately before God destroyed Sodom. *And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. It*

was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building: but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed. (Luke 17:26-30)

The Incentive

Following years of study, teachers are placed in authority over students. After excelling as a leader, an executive gains authority over an entire corporation. Jesus promised positions of authority in his kingdom for believers who wisely handle responsibility. Jesus provided an analogy in the following parable. *And the Lord said. "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. (Luke 12:42-44)*

Jesus also offered incentives for action that matter during this Age. Consider the promise Jesus made to the Philadelphia Church. *Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. (Revelation 3:10)* The only hour of trial that affects the whole world is the end-times. By making this promise to a narrowly defined group, Jesus disclosed that not all believers would escape tribulation, but only the believers who endure trials patiently.

Jesus explained what would happen to those who miss the rapture. *The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 24:50-51; NIV)* Believers in Christ are servants of God (1 Corinthians 4:1). At the early rapture, unprepared servants of God will be left-behind on earth to suffer alongside unbelievers.

The Tragedy

Panic will take hold when end-time events unfold on earth. Consequently, unprepared Christians will act irresponsibly. When the pressure was on, Jesus laid down his life. He expects us to follow that example—to patiently endure every situation. Jesus described the widespread failure to patiently endure just prior to the early rapture. *Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.* (Matthew 24:12-13)

Only those who stand firm to the end will be rescued from the end times. Accordingly, Jesus repeatedly warned us to “keep watch” for this return.

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.
(Matthew 25:13; NIV)

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.
(Matthew 24:42; NIV)

“Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back
(Mark 13:35a; NIV).

What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”
(Mark 13:37; NIV)

The Warning

Every believer is vulnerable for being unprepared for Christ’s return. *But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”* (Luke 21:36)

Three parables instruct us how to keep watch, in order to participate in the early rapture.

Parable	Issues
A man leaving on a journey entrusted his property to three servants. Rather than invest the money, one servant simply buried it. Upon learning of this situation the master responded, <i>“You wicked, lazy servant!”</i> (Matthew 25:14-27; NIV)	Use your talents for God’s kingdom. – How well do you apply your abilities and resources? – Do you invest time in God’s work?

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<p>Before departing on a journey a master placed one of his servants in charge of the other servants to ensure someone would care for them. But this lead servant began to mistreat the other servants. When the master returns, he will hold that servant accountable. (Matthew 24:45-51)</p>	<p>Do to others what you would have them do to you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– How do you treat your spouse, children, and siblings?– How do you treat co-workers and those you supervise?– Do you emotionally abuse others?
<p>Ten virgins took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and did not take sufficient oil. In contrast the wise virgins took oil in jars along with their lamps. Only those who had taken a sufficient supply of oil were ready when the groom arrived. (Matthew 25:1-13)</p>	<p>Live with an overflowing presence of the Holy Spirit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Do you know the Holy Spirit?

4. Seven Churches

Jesus sent seven letters to seven churches located in a Roman province, called Asia. In each letter, Jesus urged us to pay attention saying, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” Jesus was saying something like, “If you have an ear, my expectation is that you will listen!” He repeated this expectation seven times, once in each letter (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).

Jesus could have sent a letter to any of a hundred first-century churches. He did not select many prominent churches, such as Antioch, Jerusalem, or Rome. It is widely thought that Jesus selected these churches for at least one reason: when placed end-to-end these letters describe worldwide church history, starting the first century and ending with the predominant church of today.

Church	Description	Predominance Began
Ephesus	Second generation (complacent)	95 AD
Smyrna	Martyrs (persecuted, alive)	100 AD
Pergamum	Catholic (compromised doctrine)	312 AD
Thyatira	Catholic (misguided)	
Sardis	Catholic (dead)	
Philadelphia	Protestant (missionary, alive)	1517 AD
Laodicea	Protestant (complacent)	1900 AD

The past two thousand years all seven church types have continued to exist to one extent or another. Today the church is largely complacent, similar to Laodicea, in nature. However, God's people can be found in other conditions. Believers living in countries that execute believers are part of the Smyrna Church.

Ephesus

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent. Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.' (Revelation 2:1-7)

Ephesus was a typical church near the end of the first century. Paul ministered in that city for two years (Acts 19:1-10). Later John, the writer of Revelation, was a part of this church. Ephesus was a hard-working church with integrity and perseverance. It was doctrinally sound and its members had tested and identified false teachers. Yet the Ephesus Church had lost its passion. Jesus had this criticism, *But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.* (Revelation 2:4)

The following outlines what it means to lose your first love.

- I value praise from people more than praise from God.
- I am callous in the way I treat a Christian brother.
- I choose not to witness because I fear rejection.
- My leisure-time thoughts do not turn to God.
- I do not cheerfully give to God's work.
- I become complacent to sin.
- I am slow to forgive.

Because Ephesus did not repent, severe persecution came against the church. This persecution was the central theme of the subsequent church, located at Smyrna.

Smyrna

“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: ‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.’ (Revelation 2:8-11)

Smyrna was a beautiful city and the one of the largest in Provincial Asia. However, its persecution of believers produced countless martyrs. Jesus said to this church, *I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich)*. The Smyrna Church predominance between 95 AD and 312 AD paralleled the story of the original Smyrna Church. Refusing to worship Caesar, martyrs laid down their lives, as replacement new believers continually came forward.

Christians were the targeted because they refused to worship the Roman gods or to pay homage to the emperor as divine. Smyrna is described as suffering for ten days; historians suggest that there were ten waves of persecution against Christians. While Polycarp was the most famous and best documented martyr, the Roman Empire martyred an estimated two million believers. Satan eventually gave up trying to destroy the church from the outside; instead, he chose to become active in church leadership. The new strategy was to destroy the church from the inside; that is the story of the following three churches.

Pergamum

“And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: ‘I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you, because you have there

some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality. So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.' (Revelation 2:12-17)

The first-century church at Pergamum accepted Roman dominance, to include the worship of emperors. The teaching of the Nicolaitans started to infiltrate the church, which translates “to rule over the laity”—in other words, to rule over non-pastoral members of the church. The Pergamum time in history saw the rise of Pontiffs, as religious leaders created high-ranking positions in order to rule over God’s people. Constantine, a Roman emperor ruling from Constantinople (Istanbul Turkey), made the Catholic Pontiff preeminent.

Pergamum was where Satan’s throne is—a possible location of this throne was an ornate altar honoring pagan gods. German engineers moved this altar to Berlin between 1878 and 1886. It was placed in the Altes Museum, and later moved to an adjacent building, the Pergamum Museum. These locations are significant because Adolph Hitler gave rousing speeches to hundreds of thousands of people from a platform built on the steps of the Altes Museum. After this altar was moved to Berlin that city became a focal point for World War I, World War II, and the extermination of Jews. Berlin also was the place of greatest confrontation (the Berlin Wall) during the Cold War.

Thyatira

“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: ‘I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to

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each one of you according to your deeds. But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you. Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’ (Revelation 2:18-29)

During the Thyatira Church period, Roman Catholic leadership emphasized tradition while setting aside the authority of scripture. A person likened to Jezebel in the Old Testament promoted sexual immorality (1 Kings 16:30-31). An Associated Press report quotes Richard Sipe, a former priest, as saying that priest sexual abuse is a centuries-old problem, “The Vatican is in the know and has documented its knowledge throughout the centuries.” The authors further stated “Vatican officials have known about sex abuse by priests going all the way back to the fourth century”. Immorality during the Thyatira Church period was clearly documented. [Doyle, Thomas, Sipe, Robert, Wall Patrick. *Sex, Priests, and Secret Codes: The Catholic Church's 2,000 Year Paper Trail of Sexual Abuse*. Volt Press. Los Angeles. 2006.]

Credible sexual molestation lawsuits have implicated Pope Benedict XVI. Plaintiffs in Houston Texas cited a May 18, 2001 letter that he wrote while head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. In a letter to bishops concerning molestations, then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger wrote that cases of this kind are subject to “pontifical secret.” The lawsuit alleged that Ratzinger was responsible due to his active cover-up of child molestation. The Pope avoided legal problems in the United States because he obtained immunity as the Vatican head of state.

Jesus also criticized that members would *eat things sacrificed to idols*. Catholics accept bread consecrated by their priests as actually being Christ in physical form. People kneel before communion bread, which makes that bread an idol.

Sardis

“To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found

your deeds completed in the sight of My God. So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’ (Revelation 3:1-6)

Although the Sardis Church had a reputation for being alive, Jesus said that this church was dead. This depiction of being alive can be seen in the impressive cathedral construction in Europe. Everything was done for the glory of the “one true church.” Honor was also given to its papal leader, who was called “the” representative of Christ on earth. While the reputation of the Roman Catholic leaders was zealously protected, precious little was done for the glory of God.

There can be no greater condemnation of a church than for Jesus to pronounce it dead. Sardis is the Catholic Church, in great need of reformation. Philadelphia tells of the success that came from the Protestant Reformation.

Philadelphia

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: ‘I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (Revelation 3:7-13)

The Gutenberg printing press in the fifteenth century increased the availability of Bibles to ordinary people. Through cruel inquisitions, popes fought those who believed scriptures possessed ultimate authority. Catholic leadership murdered Protestant believers; the charge for which believers were burnt at the stake was called “heresy” (John 16:2). There have been attempts to minimize this event, similar to efforts to deny the Jewish holocaust. For example, while King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella established the Spanish Inquisition in 1478, Spain did not abolish this religious terrorism until 1834. Accountings of the various Inquisitions today acknowledge only a few thousand deaths, and frequently use phrases like “greatly exaggerated” to describe more realistic execution totals. As administrator of Inquisitions, the Catholic Church maintained the only records.

What is historically verifiable is that Protestant believers eventually fled to America; the Pilgrims were not Catholic. In 1790, the United States named Philadelphia Pennsylvania its capital city. Larger than any other city in the colonies, both the Declaration of Independence and United States Constitution were signed at Independence Hall. The overall Philadelphia Church provided a worldwide missionary outreach. A remnant of Philadelphia believers continues to serve God today. Because these believers continue to keep God’s command to demonstrate *perseverance*, Jesus will act upon his promise to keep this church from *the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world*. This protection means that Philadelphia believers will not suffer through the end-times.

Laodicea

The Laodicea Church predominance began about 1900, with a wealthy church membership predominately interested in its own comfort and security. Members enjoy their place in society and are proud of their religion. Laodicea is a church with much religion—but little passion.

“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove

and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (Revelation 3:14-22)

Laodicea is the primary end-times church; it is the preeminent church in western civilization today. Laodicea places its founder on the outside; Jesus said to this church, *I stand at the door and knock*. Many Christians today have wealth. Yet their spiritual poverty caused Jesus to say they were neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm. Laodicea is an educated church, smart enough to avoid complete complacency, and therefore is not cold. However, instead of passionately applying that knowledge, to make Laodicea hot, members apply their God-given talents to sustain their own comfort. Laodicea is a weak church that is lacking credibility and intensity.

Laodicea has sufficient communication tools to reach the entire the world with the gospel, but is largely ineffective. The Laodicea Church is compromised; its members have bought into another religion. This religion sets our priorities and demands our loyalty. This is an infrequently recognized religion, called Secularism. The Laodicea Church believes it possible to passionately care about both God and money. In fact, a person is capable of loving only one or the other. Jesus said, *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.* (Matthew 6:24)

Laodicea sees itself as rich and that members have need of nothing. Jesus answers saying in effect, “you need everything!” Jesus says this kind of church makes him sick. He will spit this church out his mouth. Jesus’ warning of discipline for the Laodicea Church will one day touch millions of believers.

The End-Time Church

Today believers identify with a denomination, such as Baptist or Lutheran, or claim a non-denominational status. God also categorizes believers; every believer is a member of one of the seven churches of Revelation. The Philadelphia Church has a bright future. Jesus promised it protection: *I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.* (Revelation 3:10b). The only hour of testing

that affects the whole world is the end-times. In contrast, Jesus warns the Laodicea Church: *Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline* (Revelation 3:19a).

Many scholars anticipate the same future for both Laodicea and Philadelphia church members; that shared future is an early rapture. However, it is reckless to state with certainty that a group of believers promised discipline will share the same future as believers promised removal from earth for the entire end-time period.

5. The Scroll

End-time events begin with a dramatic scene playing out in God's throne room. An ancient scroll that is perfectly sealed, with seven seals, must be opened. This scroll is a critical document; some have called it the deed to planet earth. This scroll has also been referred to as the redemptive plan of God. In practical terms, think of a rolled millenniums-old paper sealed with seven pieces of tape, whose adhesive has made removing the seven seals impossible, as the paper would be torn. This situation is similar to the seven seals on this most critical document.

At the beginning of this drama, John is transported to God's throne room to provide a first-hand account of the end-times. *After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things."* (Revelation 4:1) From God's throne room John observed epic world events centuries ahead of time.

John sees God seated on a throne in heaven (Revelation 4:2). God is described in terms of the reflection and brilliance of precious stones (Revelation 4:3). *Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads.* (Revelation 4:4) The elders are dressed as Jesus had promised the seven churches, with white clothing like Sardis, and crowns like Smyrna.

Four angels surround the throne. *The first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within* (Revelation 4:7-8a). These four angels are a composite of high-ranking cherubim and seraphim; they are an exalted order of angels (Ezekiel 1:5-25; Isaiah 6:1-4).

As the twenty-four elders lay their crowns before the throne, they demonstrate that the honor of wearing crowns belong to God alone: *the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.* (Revelation 4:10-11)

Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. (Revelation 5:1; NIV) The scroll is in God's right hand to underscore power and authority. *And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it.* (Revelation 5:2-3; NIV)

John understood the need for God to finish his redemptive plan, so when no one came forward, he wept. *I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside.* (Revelation 5:4; NIV) The issue is not whether anyone is strong enough, but whether anyone is worthy enough to break the seals. These seals must be broken to read the document, for the document to take effect.

Soon the announcement comes that Jesus is worthy to execute God's plan. *Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."* (Revelation 5:5; NIV) The reclaiming of the earth is initiated through the opening of the seven seals. As each seal is broken, God's plan is advanced (Revelation 6:1-17; 8:1).

Jesus, *the Lion of the tribe of Judah*, was on the throne. John was expecting a lion to come forward; instead he sees a *Lamb* come forward to break the seals. *Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders.* (Revelation 5:6a; NIV) The Father relinquishes possession of the scroll to Jesus. *He went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.* (Revelation 5:7; NIV)

6. Seven Seals

The opening of the first four seals releases four angels riding horses, commonly called the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. By the sixth seal events are visible to people living on earth.

Four Horsemen

SEAL #1: *Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come." I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. (Revelation 6:1-2)*

The Spirit of **CONQUEST** comes into the arena. This angel brings the desire for world domination. This Spirit works to establish a one-world government. It promotes globalization and seeks to integrate nations, institutions and religions. This Spirit criticizes any form of fundamentalism, even from a faith that does not present a threat of any kind.

SEAL #2: *When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come." And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him. (Revelation 6:3-4)*

The Spirit of **WAR** is the second angel entering the world scene. War is a predictable response to the aggressive Spirit of Conquest. This angel rides a red horse, with red symbolizing bloodshed. Jesus said concerning this time, *You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.* He then described the starvation resulting from the

opening of the third Seal, *and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.* (Matthew 24:6-7)

SEAL #3: *When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine."* (Revelation 6:5-6)

The Spirit of **FAMINE** causes catastrophic food shortages. A denarius was a common wage for a day's work, meaning that people will expend their entire income to obtain food. (Matthew 20:2)

SEAL #4: *When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.* (Revelation 6:7-8)

The fourth angel is named **DEATH**. This angel rides an ashen horse, a color attributed to a seriously ill person near death. Hades is the unseen world of the dead where there are two very different residences. One area is where God's people reside; there is a separate area for condemned persons. Jesus called the area of Hades where believers dwelt "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22). That Hades was following Death means that a trip to the unseen world (Hades) immediately follows a person's death.

Many people die because of famine and pestilence, possibly a reference to biological warfare. To kill by wild beasts is reminiscent of when the Roman Empire fed Christians to lions. However, the application here points to soldiers on the battlefield. Ezekiel foresaw wild animals feasting on human flesh: *"As for you, son of man, thus says the Lord God, 'Speak to every kind of bird and to every beast of the field, "Assemble and come, gather from every side to My sacrifice which I am going to sacrifice for you, as a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood. You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of the earth* (Ezekiel 39:17-18a).

A Call for Justice

SEAL #5: *When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.* (Revelation 6:9-11)

Those in heaven saw the release of the four horsemen and understood these events signaled the beginning of the end-times. The martyrs now ask how long will it be until those who murder us are judged. They are told to wait patiently *until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed.* In other words, additional believers are yet to be martyred. Just as Israel poured the blood of sacrificed animal at the base of the altar, the souls of sacrificed martyrs were under the altar in heaven. (Exodus 29:12; Leviticus 4:7)

The Visible Seal

SEAL #6: *I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"* (Revelation 6:12-17)

The spilling of innocent blood has stained the earth blood red. The people on earth soon see another planet that appears covered with blood, the moon. When the sun is blotted out (turned black) during a lunar eclipse, the moon really does turn a blood red color. The moon turns a metallic red resembling the color of iron in blood. At that time, the entire world, to include every *mountain and island*, shakes. This worldwide earthquake is likely caused by meteorites slamming

into earth, one after another; similar to how *a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.*

These events should shake the world to its senses. God wants people to confess sin—repent—and turn to him. Even unbelievers will know that scripture foretold this event, and understand that this event precedes the outpouring of God’s wrath. People will seek religious leaders to plot a course that might deter such wrath. However, people do not say, “I repent of my sins.” Instead, they believe the best option is to hide. This wrong attitude creates an opportunity for dishonest leaders and false prophets to say “follow me and find safety.” Using this type of approach, the Antichrist and false prophet will lead most of the world astray.

Antichrist may declare that if people repent then God will withhold disaster. God showed mercy to ancient Nineveh. *When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.* (Jonah 3:10) *At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy it; if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it.* (Jeremiah 18:7-8) Yet it will be impossible to follow false prophets—and simultaneously repent.

Early Rapture

Next God protects selected believers, specifically those identified as being bond-servants of God. The seal placed upon these believers identifies them for participation in the impending rapture. *After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.”* (Revelation 7:1-3)

At the time God provides bond-servants this protection, the earth will have remained unharmed by end-time events. The land and the sea are unharmed—even the trees have not been harmed.

And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: (Revelation 7:4). The early rapture of the Philadelphia

Church will include 144,000 Israeli believers. These 144,000 believers are never again seen on earth, but are found on Mount Zion, a scriptural term meaning heaven (Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 14:1). Angels also seal Gentile believers around the world, identifying them for immediate rapture. Next these raptured believers appear in heaven. *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands;* (Revelation 7:9).

A question is asked about the identity of those who suddenly appear in heaven—who are they?—and where did they come from? *Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?” I said to him, “My lord, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* (Revelation 7:13-14) The answer clearly states that this multitude was rescued from the great tribulation—they were just raptured from earth. That more than just the 144,000 Israeli believers are raptured is evident from the number being a great multitude which *no one could count*. This raptured multitude is from *every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues*.

An event from Israel’s history foreshadowed this early rapture. God has already protected passionate believers from judgment, protecting *those who sigh and groan* over wicked behavior. Those protected first received a mark on the forehead, matching the seal on the foreheads of the 144,000 raptured Israelis. Ezekiel wrote that the LORD gave an angel the following instructions. *The Lord said to him, “Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst.” But to the others He said in my hearing, “Go through the city after him and strike; do not let your eye have pity and do not spare. Utterly slay old men, young men, maidens, little children, and women, but do not touch any man on whom is the mark; and you shall start from My sanctuary.” So they started with the elders who were before the temple.* (Ezekiel 9:4-6)

The Philadelphia rapture must occur at this point—after the sun is blotted, the moon turns blood red, and a worldwide earthquake occurs—because this sequence of events matches what Jesus taught. Jesus’ commentary in the Gospels is consistent with events in Revelation. (Matthew 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 21:26-28)

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SEAL #7: *When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.* (Revelation 8:1)

After Jesus breaks the seventh seal, the scroll can be read and put into effect. However, excitement subsides with the realization that Israel and the Laodicea Church are left-behind. The Seven Trumpets that soon follow will result in global nuclear war. For such reasons, there is silence in heaven.

Seven Seals	Description	Seen on earth?
Seal #1 (Revelation 6:1-2)	Angel on a white horse (Spirit of Conquest)	no
Seal #2 (Revelation 6:3-4)	Angel on a red horse (Spirit of War)	no
Seal #3 (Revelation 6:5-6)	Angel on a black horse (Spirit of Famine)	no
Seal #4 (Revelation 6:7-8)	Angel on a pale horse (Spirit of Death)	no
Seal #5 (Revelation 6:9-11)	Martyrs ask God to avenge their blood.	no
Seal #6 (Revelation 6:12-17)	The moon appears covered with blood; people panic.	yes
Early Rapture (Revelation 7)	Believers who endure with patient maturity are raptured.	yes
Seal #7 (Revelation 8:1)	Silence in heaven for about half an hour	no

7. Seven Trumpets

TRUMPET #1: *The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. (Revelation 8:7)*

With this initial trumpet, a third of the earth will be burned, as nuclear fire erupts across the earth.

TRUMPET #2: *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, and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed. (Revelation 8:8-9)*

The second round of attacks target ships and submarines. A third of the ships are destroyed and coastal cities are flooded. Jesus described the churning of the oceans saying there would be *perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves* (Luke 21:25b).

TRUMPET #3: *The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter. (Revelation 8:10-11)*

Wormwood is a bitter-tasting plant that grows on several continents. In the Russian and Ukrainian language, wormwood translates as “chernobyl.” The Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident resulted in a radioactive discharge that was the first-ever at the top of the International Nuclear Event Scale. Since that disaster Chernobyl (wormwood) has become synonymous with nuclear contamination.

Wormwood (English to Ukrainian)
полин, чорнобиль;гіркота, прикрість
[wormwood polyn, chornobyl'; hirkota, prykrist']
Chernobyl (Ukrainian: Чорнобиль, Russian: Чернобыль)

This trumpet depicts the detonation of a bomb designed solely to spread radioactive contamination. Nations incapable of exploding a nuclear bomb can still build a dirty bomb, which spreads radioactivity using only conventional explosives. Such an explosion high above the earth would maximize the geographic area contaminated. This impacts water supplies so that many more people die.

In this story, a great star fell from the sky. Aster is the Greek word from which the star-shaped asterisk * was derived. The Asteraceae plant family was also derived from this same Greek word. Wormwood is a member of this Asteraceae plant family.

Revelation was written in Greek; wormwood translates as Chernobyl in the Ukrainian and Russian languages. John did not coordinate with the scientists who would later place wormwood in the Asteraceae (star) plant family. Scientists did not coordinate the naming of this plant with those who would later name a nuclear power plant, Chernobyl. That this wormwood actually does turn water bitter is not a coincidence either. No person coordinated any of these facts with the nuclear disaster that inevitably followed. Only God could perfectly align these factors ahead of time.

TRUMPET #4: *The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way. (Revelation 8:12)*

Darkness could result from increased volcanic activity or smoke. Whatever the cause, the environment has been completely destroyed.

TRUMPET #5: *Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man. And in those days men*

will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them. (Revelation 9:1-6)

An angel, referred to as a star, is seen with the key to a bottomless pit inside the earth, called the Abyss. This angel releases demons that were trapped inside the Abyss for thousands of years. Locusts normally attack crops, but these locusts have power to sting like scorpions. These locusts only attack people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. People will suffer so badly they desire to die, but are unable. This is a foretaste of hell, where people will long to die but are not able to die.

TRUMPET #6: *Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind. The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. (Revelation 9:13-16)*

Four angels, who today are bound at the Euphrates River, will be released to kill a third of mankind. The four released angels ride horses, just as the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse rode horses. That these four angels are bound at the Euphrates River points to Iraq, the nation through which most of this river flows. Meanwhile an army of two hundred million soldiers advances against Israel. This army is likely an alliance of eastern nations.

The spiritual powers causing deaths are described. And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone. A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm. (Revelation 9:17-19)

To worship demons and idols after world events have fully validated Bible prophecy is a breathtaking delusion. *The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts. (Revelation 9:20-21)*

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By the sixth trumpet Gentiles worldwide will have accepted the mark of the beast. However, God has protected Israel from the beast the first three and a half years (Revelation 12:6). Israel will repent and accept Jesus as the Messiah. (Zechariah 12:10).

Seven Trumpets	Description
Trumpet #1 (Revelation 8:7)	Nuclear strikes against land-based targets burn a third the earth.
Trumpet #2 (Revelation 8:8-9)	Nuclear strikes against ocean-based targets.
Trumpet #3 (Revelation 8:10-11)	Nuclear contamination of water.
Trumpet #4 (Revelation 8:12)	Darkness covers the earth.
Trumpet #5 (Revelation 9:1-11)	Smoke pours from the Abyss; demonic locusts come from the smoke.
Trumpet #6 (Revelation 9:13-19)	200,000,000 soldiers descend on Israel; a third of mankind is killed.

8. Transition

The midpoint of the end-time seven-year period is filled with world-changing events. First God unveils a mystery; the seven thunders spoke, but John did not write down what was said. *When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them."* (Revelation 10:4)

Much mystery about "who God is" persists to this day. With the information disclosed in the seven thunders, this mystery will be over, this mystery will be finished, this great *mystery of God will be accomplished*. Scripture records this event saying, *But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished*. (Revelation 10:7a; NIV) The seven thunders reveal information about God's very nature, which will prompt Israel to accept Jesus as Messiah. At this time the final Gentile to become a believer in Christ steps forward and eternal salvation becomes a gift to Israel alone.

Two witnesses who preached in Jerusalem the initial half of the final seven years will be martyred, resurrected and then raptured to heaven. The entire world will see this event (Revelation 11:3-12). God also raptures the reformed Laodicea Church into heaven; this second rapture of the Church removes every Gentile believer, with none left behind (Revelation 14:16).

Also at this time the Antichrist travels to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. There he will proclaim himself to be the Messiah that Israel has sought since ancient times. Paul wrote concerning Antichrist – *who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God* (2 Thessalonians 2:4). However Israel will reject Antichrist and embrace Jesus Christ (Zechariah 12:10).

Israel's rejection of Antichrist sets the stage for Israeli martyrs the second half of the final seven years. The Israeli harvest lasts three and a half years, and ends with Christ rescuing Israel at the Second Coming (Revelation 14:18-20; 19:11-21).

Events at the mid-point in the seven years are transitional; the course of world events is forever changed.

The Final Seven Years

First Half	Transition (Mid-Point)	Second Half
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seven Seals• Early Rapture• Seven Trumpets• Christians Persecuted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seven Thunders – reveal the mystery of God• Two Witnesses – martyred, resurrected, raptured• Dead in Christ – resurrected• Alive in Christ – raptured• Unbelieving Gentiles – cut off from salvation• Israel – receives salvation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Israel Persecuted• Seven Bowls of Wrath• The Second Coming

9. The Last Trumpet

The seventh trumpet is where the resurrection of God's people occurs along with the final rapture. This "resurrection and rapture" event can be found by grouping events between the start of the seventh trumpet and the first bowl of God's wrath, into one event. This event occurs at the seventh trumpet—which is also called the last trumpet.

Start with the announcement of the last trumpet. *Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."* (Revelation 11:15)

The statement, *the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord*—is from persons instantaneously raptured from earth into heaven. They are describing their experience by saying something like, "What was in front of us one moment was (*the kingdom of*) *the world*—then what we saw instantaneously changed, became a view of heaven, which is *the kingdom of our Lord*.

Two harvests occur at the last trumpet. One of the harvests takes all the Gentiles who accept God's salvation: *Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.* (Revelation 14:14-16)

Paul also taught that there would be a resurrection of the dead, just prior to the rapture of believers at the last trumpet. Believers who are alive will be changed—given bodies that will thrive for all eternity. *Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.* (1 Corinthians 15:51-52)

Paul further wrote about this last trumpet rapture being for those left-behind from the early rapture. In the following verses “*and are left*” refers to those believers who were left-behind on earth for the first 42 months. *For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.* (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; NIV)

Israel Harvested

At this point all Gentile believers are in heaven, having left earth through either rapture or physical death. The time for salvation going to the Gentiles ends at this halfway point in the final seven years. These unbelievers have taken the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:9–10). During the seven thunders, they will have heard of the very nature of God, yet still reject God. They respond, “Not now, not ever!” To be fully convicted by the Holy Spirit of your need to accept the Messiah and to reply “not now, not ever” is to consider yourself to be greater than the Holy Spirit. Jesus said such blasphemy would never be forgiven (Matthew 12:31-32).

In contrast, Israel will respond positively to the seven thunders. Paul foretold that the entire nation of Israel would turn to Christ following the conversion of the last Gentile believer. Concerning the condition of Israel at the time Paul wrote: *a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved* (Romans 11:25b-26a).

Israel is the vineyard of the last trumpet: *And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.” So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. And the wine press was*

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trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles. (Revelation 14:17-20)

Isaiah identified this vine: *For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel (Isaiah 5:7a)*. Instead of being immediately taken up into heaven this nation, which rejected Christ for two thousand years, is harvested in God's wrath. The violent nature of the Israeli harvest is because Satan will initiate intense persecution. In response, Israelis will demonstrate an uncompromised allegiance to God.

10. Israel

Scripture foretold the past two thousand years of Israeli history. Ezekiel wrote about Israel's exile from its homeland, which occurred in 70 AD with the Roman destruction of Israel. He also foretold the persecution of Jews while in exile at the hands of enemies, to include suffering in concentration camps. Ezekiel quoted God as saying: *And the nations will know that the people of Israel went into exile for their sin, because they were unfaithful to me. So I hid my face from them and handed them over to their enemies, and they all fell by the sword. I dealt with them according to their uncleanness and their offenses, and I hid my face from them.* (Ezekiel 39:23-24; NIV)

Jewish people returned from exile and Israel was reestablished May 14, 1948. God foretold of a time when he would *no longer hide my face from them* (the Israeli people). God will reveal himself to the Israeli people, and Israel will accept Jesus as its redeemer. Concerning the establishment and purpose of modern Israel (referred to as “them” and “they” below), Ezekiel quoted God as saying: *When I have brought them back from the nations and have gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will be proved holy through them in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God, for though I sent them into exile among the nations, I will gather them to their own land, not leaving any behind. I will no longer hide my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit on the people of Israel, declares the Sovereign Lord.”* (Ezekiel 39:27-29; NIV)

Zechariah wrote about the moment Israel will accept a crucified Messiah, the one whose hands and feet were “pierced” with nails on the cross. *“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.* (Zechariah 12:10; NIV)

Initial Peace

The short-term protection of Israel comes about through a seven-year treaty with Antichrist, referred to as “He” in the following verse. *He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’* (Daniel 9:27a; NIV) This refers to an agreement (covenant) that initiates the seven-year end-time period. Antichrist will be the leader of a unified Europe, a reestablished Roman Empire. Israel already is an Associated State of the European Union; under the Antichrist it could become a full member. This would fully commit the European Union to protect Israel, which would give Israel the security needed to turn over the occupied territories to a hostile Palestinian state.

The three and a half years of protection Israel receives at the start of the end-times corresponds with the time Israel remains in unbelief concerning Christ. Scripture cites this 42-month delay five times.

Israel’s Time of Unbelief

	3 ½ years - 1260 days	3 ½ years - time, times and half a time*	3 ½ years - in the middle of the “seven’
Daniel 9:27			X
Daniel 12:6-7		X	
Revelation 11:3	X		
Revelation 12:6	X		
Revelation 12:13-14		X	

* time, times and half a time = (1 + 2 + ½) years = 3 ½ years

The question asked in Daniel, *“How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?”* *The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, “It will be for a time, times and half a time.* (Daniel 12:6b-7; NIV) Nothing could be fulfilled concerning Israel until the initial three and a half years are completed. At that time Israel will accept Jesus as Messiah, and become a spiritually re-born nation.

Two Witnesses

God will send two witnesses to Israel during the initial 42 months. These are the first authentic prophets in Israel since the first century. *And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.* These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way. These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire. (Revelation 11:3-6) These witnesses will be able to shut up the sky so that it will not rain, just as Elijah did when confronting King Ahab (1 Kings 17:1). They also will have power to turn the waters into blood, just as Moses did before Pharaoh (Exodus 7:20).

After 42 months, God withdraws protection from the two witnesses, and they are executed. *When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.* (Revelation 11:7-8) The place where these witnesses are murdered is the same city where the Lord was crucified. This Jerusalem on earth is corrupt, as Sodom was corrupt, and worldly, like Egypt. The eternal heaven, which is called New Jerusalem, is a sharp contrast to the Jerusalem on earth (Revelation 21).

The funeral celebration is appalling. *Those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.* (Revelation 11:9-10) Through various technologies people from all over the world will gaze upon these two corpses; the contempt will be so great that they are refused a proper burial. People celebrate by sending gifts to each other. Just as people celebrate the birth of the Christian faith by exchanging gifts, people will then celebrate this apparent end to the Christian faith using the same tradition.

However, the story transitions into a resurrection and rapture, it ends in victory. *But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them.* (Revelation 11:11-12)

At this point, Israel will accept Jesus as Messiah. *And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.* (Revelation 11:13)

A Third Temple

The Temple Mount in Jerusalem will be a critical end-time setting (Appendix A). Because Islam currently controls the Temple Mount, the probability that an Israeli temple could be built at this site is considered unlikely. Yet there is growing evidence Israel will be able to rebuild on the Temple Mount. Archeological findings indicate the Islamic shrine on the Temple Mount might be on a location other than the site of the first two Israeli temples. This misplacement of the Islamic sites would allow Israel to build a temple on the correct site, without destroying the Islamic structures.

God surveys the Temple Mount, an action that demonstrates he is reclaiming ownership. John is given a *measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months.* (Revelation 11:1b-2) The courtyard area of the temple remaining under non-Israeli control indicates that the Islamic structures remain in place for the first half of the final seven years.

Broken Promises

Israel is the woman in the following story, which depicts how God protects Israel from the Antichrist during the first half of the final seven years: *Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand*

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two hundred and sixty days. (Revelation 12:6) The story continues with the dragon, also called the serpent, being Satan; the male child that Israel gave birth to is Jesus: *And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child.* (Revelation 12:13) An application to the end-time story on earth is then stated: *But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.* (Revelation 12:14)

Antichrist will establish an agreement with many nations, to include Israel, for a seven-year period. In the middle of those seven years he will break that agreement and stop the Jewish practice of sacrifice and offering. *He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.'* *In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering.* (Daniel 9:27a; NIV) The blood sacrifice of lambs for the atonement of sins will return as a cornerstone of the Jewish faith at the rebuilt temple. Antichrist will enter the temple and claim to be Israel's Messiah. He will stop the sacrificing of lambs and require people to worship him.

Paul wrote about Antichrist: *who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.* (2 Thessalonians 2:4) Antichrist will declare that he is the Messiah that Israel has sought after since the fall of Adam and Eve. Daniel wrote about Antichrist: *"The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods.* (Daniel 11:36a; NIV) Israel will respond to Antichrist with a resounding rejection. From that moment forward Israel will be fiercely persecuted.

The violent harvest of Israel is depicted; enemy soldiers act as war criminals. *I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped.* (Zechariah 14:2a; NIV) God enters the fight: *On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves.* (Zechariah 12:3; NIV) Jesus returns to earth to finish the battle on Israel's behalf: *Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights on a day of battle.* (Zechariah 14:3; NIV)

11. Two Beasts

Daniel foresaw the Roman Empire hundreds of years before it was established. This Roman Empire is the last great empire.

Daniel's Four Great Empires

Major Empire	Chapter 2	Identification
Babylonia	Head of Gold	Daniel 2:38
Medo-Persia	Chest and Arms of Silver	Daniel 8:20
Greece	Belly and Thighs of Bronze	Daniel 8:21
Rome	Legs of Iron; Feet of Clay	Daniel 9:26 - Rome in 70 AD

Beast out of the Sea

Thrown from heaven, an ancient serpent-dragon (Satan) travels to earth. Upon arrival, Satan calls the Roman Empire beast out of the sea. *The dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.* (Revelation 13:1; NIV)

This end-time superpower beast is Rome. *The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.*" (Revelation 17:18) At the time Revelation was written, Rome ruled the earth. That same city will rule over world leaders during the end-times. Daniel also identified Rome as the final great empire. *The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.* (see Daniel 9:26; NIV) This refers to events that occurred in 70 AD. The *people* were Roman soldiers, the *city* was Jerusalem, and the *sanctuary* was the second

temple. Accordingly, the Romans are the people of the ruler in the end times; the final emperor must be Roman.

This Satanic beast is described in greater detail. That the beast *was, and is not, and is about to come* refers to the tendency of the Roman Empire to wax and wane (Revelation 17:8; NIV). For example, the Roman Empire remained in existence long after the so-called Fall of Rome in 476 AD; the Eastern Roman Empire did not fall until 1453. The Holy Roman Empire was an alliance of western European nations ruled by Frankish and German kings; it prospered from 800 AD to 1806 AD.

Initially foretold twenty-five hundred years ago, a contemporary Roman Empire is now coming into view (Daniel 7:7). Six nations signed the Treaty of Rome, which founded the European Economic Community in 1957. This treaty was taken to Rome's City Hall for each nation to endorse, which illustrates the formation of a revitalized Roman Empire. After six other nations joined the European Economic Community, this 12-member group (renamed the European Community) signed the Treaty of Maastricht to form the European Union. In 1994, these 12 European Union members joined six European Free Trade Association nations to form the 18-nation European Economic Area.

God wants believers to see this beast as it takes form. *This calls for wisdom. Let the person who has insight calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. That number is 666.* (Revelation 13:18; NIV)

Six charter members of the European Economic Community (EEC) – formed by the Treaty of Rome – came into force January 1, 1958.

- (1) Belgium
- (2) Netherlands
- (3) Luxembourg
- (4) France
- (5) Italy
- (6) West Germany

Six additional nations join the EEC before it became the European Community, effective November 1, 1993.

- (1) Denmark – 1973
- (2) Ireland – 1973
- (3) United Kingdom – 1973
- (4) Greece – 1981
- (5) Portugal – 1986
- (6) Spain – 1986

Six members of the European Free Trade Association combine with the European Community—to form the European Economic Area. January 1, 2004

- (1) Austria
- (2) Finland
- (3) Iceland
- (4) Norway
- (5) Sweden
- (6) Liechtenstein

This Roman Empire will eventually rule over nations far beyond its original eighteen members; it will devour the entire earth. *“He gave me this explanation: ‘The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it. (Daniel 7:23; NIV) It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. (Revelation 13:7)*

God also wants believers to understand the identity of the unfaithful church, depicted as a woman named Babylon. This woman is geographically collocated (sits) in the empire’s capital city. *“This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. (Revelation 17:9; NIV)* Romulus and Remus founded Rome on seven hills. Even with the Seven Hills of Rome being common knowledge, spiritual mysteries take discernment. A mind with wisdom is needed, because seeing Rome as the preeminent city for deception requires unlocking one of the greatest delusions in history.

The ancient Roman Empire is widely believed to be a great civilization. History depicts the nations and tribes they conquered—as barbarian. Yet Rome boasts of an ancient coliseum where slave gladiators fought and died at the whims of the crowd. Roman pride in this coliseum would

be analogous to Germans being proud of Dachau, which is a World War II prison camp where millions of people were executed. Rome brought slavery, crucifixions, and the government that crucified Jesus.

Antichrist

The beast out of the sea is comprised of both the Antichrist and the Roman Empire that he controls. Antichrist turns his attention from Europe, to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and the goal of world domination at the 42-month point. In like manner the authority, or life span, of this beast is limited to the initial forty-two months of the end-times. *The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise its authority for forty-two months.* (Revelation 13:5; NIV)

The support the dragon (Satan) provides this beast is extraordinary. *And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.* (Revelation 13:2b) However, remember that Satan first offered this kingdom to Jesus. *Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."* (Matthew 4:8-9)

Beast out of the Earth

The false prophet is the leader of a second coalition of nations called the beast coming out of the earth. This fraudulent prophet is normally interpreted as being a religious leader; yet no scripture requires him to be religious. Any person who says, "God chose me to lead you to safety" then leads people to destruction, is a false prophet. Like the European beast, the beast out of the earth consists of a political leader and his subordinate nations.

Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon. (Revelation 13:11) To those who are deceived this beast will appear harmless, like a lamb. Yet this beast spoke like a dragon; spoke with the authority of Satan. This beast will require everyone to submit to European authority. The false prophet—*exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the*

first beast (see Revelation 13:12). Just as the beast out of the sea (Europe) follows the dragon (Satan), this beast out of the earth will follow Europe.

Both beasts are from Western civilization. The United States is on course to become the lead nation of this second beast, with one horn being Mexico (or Latin America) and the other being Canada (or possibly French Quebec). The North American Free Trade Agreement gave life to this second beast. A strengthening of the Organization of American States or the Free Trade Area of the Americas could result an American Union, much like the European Union.

Deception

Satan devotes considerable effort toward causing people to believe deceptions. Scripture states that the beast and false prophet *deceived those who had received the mark of the beast* (see Revelation 19:20). The false prophet will be a master of deception. *He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.* (Revelation 13:13)

The false prophet will have the power to insist that everyone must accept the Antichrist, or suffer consequences. The false prophet will force *all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark* (Revelation 13:16b-17a; NIV).

But believers are not to follow the deception. *If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.* (Revelation 13:9-10)

12. Seven Bowls

Angels pour out God's wrath upon the earth from seven gold bowls. God's wrath comes from his intolerance of sin, from his holiness. God's command center during the plagues that follow is the temple in heaven. *Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues. They were dressed in clean, shining linen and wore golden sashes around their chests. Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever.* (Revelation 15:6-7; NIV)

The seven angels who pour out God's wrath on the earth leave the temple wearing golden sashes, symbolic of royal and priestly functions. God's wrath is awe inspiring: *And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power* (Revelation 15:8a). *Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."* (Revelation 16:1)

BOWL #1: *So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.* (Revelation 16:2)

This plague could be anthrax, which causes boils on both people and animals. Israel is spared these sores because only people having the mark of the beast are afflicted. This event is similar to the plague of boils Moses brought against Egypt. *So they took soot from a kiln, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses threw it toward the sky, and it became boils breaking out with sores on man and beast.* (Exodus 9:10)

BOWL #2: *The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead man; and every living thing in the sea died.* (Revelation 16:3)

The oceans and sea turn into blood. Again there is a similarity to another plague that God delivered through Moses. *Thus says the Lord, "By this you shall know that I am the Lord: behold, I will strike the water that is in the Nile with the staff that is in my hand, and it will be turned to blood. (Exodus 7:17)*

BOWL #3: *Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "Righteous are You, who are and who were, O Holy One, because You judged these things; for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. They deserve it." And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments. (Revelation 16:4-7)*

The martyrs under the altar are now satisfied seeing this blood judgment. Remember that these martyrs had cried out at the fifth seal, *and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" (Revelation 6:10b)* These martyrs respond with approval after seeing the severity of this judgment.

BOWL #4: *The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory. (Revelation 16:8-9)*

The sun will scorch people with intense heat; it is likely that natural protections in the atmosphere will have been destroyed. People responded by cursing God. With hardened hearts these enemies of God are incapable of repenting. This type of hardening occurred in ancient Egypt—when *the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart. (see Exodus 10:27)*

BOWL #5: *Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds. (Revelation 16:10-11)*

Moses delivered a similar judgment against Egypt: *Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even a darkness which may be felt." (Exodus 10:21)*

BOWL #6: *The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east. (Revelation 16:12)*

The flow of water on the Euphrates River is stopped, opening the way for the armies belonging to kings from the east. The destination of these armies is the valley of Har-Magedon (Armageddon) in northern Israel (Revelation 16:16). It would not take a supernatural event for the Euphrates River to become dry. Turkey has a dam that can stop the flow of the Euphrates; the Ataturk Dam dried this river while filling a large reservoir in 1990. Draught and water mismanagement have at times reduced flow of the Euphrates, resulting in international disputes over limited water resources.

Armageddon is derived from the Mount of Megiddo, which is an archeological site where the remains of ancient cities over millenniums created a large mound; excavations have unearthed 26 layers of ruins. An immense portion of the valley of Armageddon, more commonly called the Jezreel Valley, is in view from Megiddo. This valley is the only place in Israel where massive armies could gather; it has been the site of numerous battles for the control of Israel.

Upon arrival these armies will attempt to destroy Jesus as he returns to earth. It will be an extra planetary war of unfathomable proportions. The battle of Har-Magedon is the final battle of this Age (Zechariah 14:2-9; Revelation 19:11-21).

BOWL #7: *Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done." And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe. (Revelation 16:17-21)*

The final judgment features the destruction of Rome. God gives this city of the false king, which is the Antichrist, and the religion of Christian religious traditions that originated in ancient Babylon, the fierceness of his wrath. *"When the kings of the earth who committed adultery with her and shared her luxury see the smoke of her burning, they will weep and mourn over her. Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry: "Woe! Woe to you, great city, you mighty city of Babylon! In one hour your doom has come!" (Revelation 18:9-10; NIV)*

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Bowl poured out on the ...	Result
Bowl #1 - Land	Sores upon people with the mark of the beast
Bowl #2.- Sea	The sea turns to blood; the sea dies
Bowl #3 - Rivers	Rivers and springs turn into blood
Bowl #4 - Sun	Sun scorches people with intense heat
Bowl #5 - Throne of the beast	Kingdom of the beast is plunged into darkness
Bowl #6 - Euphrates River	River dries to allow armies to cross on march to Armageddon
Bowl #7 - Into the air	Massive earthquakes and hailstones; Rome is destroyed

13. Babylon

The Roman Empire integrated the religious practices of conquered nations into its own religion. The emperor Constantine merged the Babylonian and Christian religions and made the resulting Roman Catholic Church preeminent. Declaring himself the Pontifex Maximus (supreme pontiff), Constantine claimed authority over the entire Church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church continues to regard its ancient traditions as being coequal with scripture in authority.

Revelation depicts a Roman Church that shares in the corruption of the Roman Empire. It depicts this Church (woman) and Empire (beast) as entwined. *The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.*” (Revelation 17:18) Yet few people connect the corruption of the Roman Church with the Roman Empire, this connection basically remains a hidden secret. *And the angel said to me, “Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast* (Revelation 17:7a). Rome is a mystery with two components. The first is a woman who is a prostitute (Roman Church) and the other is a malicious beast (Roman Empire). While one seeks dominance in religion, the other seeks world conquest.

Because religious practices from Babylon were incorporated into the Roman Church, it is referred to as Babylon. The relationship Babylon has with world leaders is based on adultery—a shared disloyalty to God. With Babylon the *kings of the earth committed adultery* (see Revelation 18:3; NIV). Babylon commits adultery against God by being faithful to the kings, the leaders of this world, but not to the king of heaven. An example is the funeral of Pope John Paul II. This event was the largest gathering of statesmen in history. Attendance included four kings, five queens, and at least seventy presidents and prime ministers.

Countless people, even many believers, continue to think highly of the Roman Church. Instead of widespread condemnation for the thousands of priests worldwide who have molested children, the inhabitants of the earth are intoxicated with her religion and traditions. *With her the kings of the earth committed adultery, and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries.*” (Revelation 17:2; NIV)

Idolatry

Babylon is dressed like a prostitute in purple and scarlet with gold, precious stones and pearls. However, what really offends God is contained inside a golden cup, which is her chalice. *The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries.* (Revelation 17:4; NIV) Babylon worships the contents of the golden cup.

Catholic sacraments are the supposed ability of priests to perform miracles. For example, priests are supposedly able to transform bread into the body of Christ. Catholics call this transformation transubstantiation. Catholic doctrine says through transubstantiation, its chalice contains the literal Body of Christ—and therefore this bread is worshiped as being God. Catholics venerate this bread; they routinely kneel before this bread as if it were God. (Exodus 20:4)

The Wrong Rock

The position of Pontifex Maximus, thought by many to have started with Peter, actually began hundreds of years before Christ. Julius Caesar became Pontifex Maximus in 63 BC. Caesar Augustus became Pontifex in 12 BC, and held that position at the time of Christ.

The idea that there should be a Christian pontiff resulted from the misinterpretation of a single scripture. Jesus said, *I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.* (Matthew 16:18) However, the “rock” upon which the true church was built was Jesus, not Peter (Isaiah 26:4).

Peter identified Jesus as the primary rock, the cornerstone of the Church.

For in Scripture it says:

*“See, I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious cornerstone,
and the one who trusts in him
will never be put to shame.” (1 Peter 2:6; NIV)*

God sends a message to people in this false Church. Many are authentic believers who have been deceived.

Then I heard another voice from heaven say:

*“Come out of her, my people,
so that you will not share in her sins,
so that you will not receive any of her plagues;
for her sins are piled up to heaven,
and God has remembered her crimes. (Revelation 18:4-5; NIV)*

14. Second Coming

First-century Israelis longed for a redeemer who would destroy the Roman Empire. They turned against Jesus when his salvation provided spiritual deliverance from sin, instead of military deliverance from Rome. However, Jesus will destroy world empires and deliver Israel at his Second Coming. Christ returns to earth riding a white horse as enemy soldiers are overrunning Jerusalem. As Christ returns the battle shifts from a war against Israel to a war against God. *And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.* (Revelation 19:19)

From the valley of Armageddon the nations will attempt to destroy Jesus as he returns. *And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.* (Revelation 19:11-14)

Zechariah foretold that Israel will be on the brink of defeat when Jesus returns. *For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.* (Zechariah 14:2-4)

Jesus does not need to do anything more than speak and his enemies die. He spoke the world into existence, and his words have calmed the storm (John 1:1-3; Mark 4:39). Jesus has authority over everything that has been created (Matthew 28:18). *From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations* (Revelation 19:15a). *And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse* (Revelation 19:21a). *Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth* (2 Thessalonians 2:8a).

A wedding celebration occurs when a man and woman become one flesh (Mark 10:8). The future holds a spectacular celebration of those who share an incorruptible, eternal flesh. This feast is called the wedding supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9). Jesus spoke of this feast at the last supper; it will be the consummate Passover celebration. *When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."* (Luke 22:14-16)

15. Future Ages

Extraordinary events set the stage just prior to the Millennium Age. Satan will be thrown into the Abyss for a thousand years. *And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.* (Revelation 20:1-2; NIV) With Satan bound sin will be greatly reduced, but not completely eliminated. Sin does not always require a deception or enticement from Satan, but can result from flaws in human nature. (James 1:14-15; 1 John 2:16)

Then Israelis who died during the final 43 months will be resurrected, bringing to life all of God's people. John describes the family of God in heaven. *I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge.* (Revelation 20:4a; NIV) Believers will be given the authority to judge (1 Corinthians 6:2-3). *And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God.* (Revelation 20:4b; NIV) Throughout the end-time story there are references to martyrs, now they are given unique recognition at the resurrection. *They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.* (Revelation 20:4c; NIV) Every believer will be resurrected and will reign with Christ during the Millennium.

Inserted is a reference to the fate of the damned, which is a break in the story. Accordingly, this reference is in parenthesis: *(The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.)* (Revelation 20:5a NIV). That the rest of the dead are not resurrected until the thousand years are ended—refers to the final and largest harvest, which resurrects persons condemned to the lake of fire.

Then the story continues with the good fortune of believers. The “first resurrection” is the resurrection of God’s people, which occurs during six distinct harvests. Those who take part in the first resurrection will reign with Christ during the Millennium Age. *This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.* (Revelation 20:5b-6; NIV)

The first resurrection is for believers and is comprised of six separate harvests. The seventh harvest is a resurrection of the condemned.

Seven Harvests

	Harvest	Impacts	Time Frame
The First Resurrection	1. Rapture	Philadelphia Church	Start of 7 Years
	2. Rapture	Two Witnesses	3 ½ Years
	3. Resurrection	Asleep in Christ	3 ½ Years
	4. Rapture	Laodicea Church	3 ½ Years
	5. God’s Wrath	Israeli Martyrs	3 ½ – 7 Years
	6. Israeli Resurrection	Israeli Believers	After the 7 Years
The Second Death	7. Great White Throne	The Damned	After the Millennium

The Millennium Age

God restores the earth after the end-time environmental disasters, making it a delightful place to live. Just as the Ark took Noah’s family from the Pre-Flood Age into the Post-Flood Age, there will be Israelis alive at the return of Christ who will transition into the Millennium Age. People who are born during the Millennium Age will live to be hundreds of years old. Jesus will reign on earth as King. His people will reign in subordinate roles.

The following narrative may seem like the eternal heaven. However because people still die it must be referring to the Millennium Age: *“See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. “Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who*

does not live out his years; the one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere child; the one who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. (Isaiah 65:17-21; NIV)

The Millennium Age ends with Satan being released to lead the enemies of God into battle. Unlike our current Age, this next Age ends before a single shot is fired, as fire from heaven destroys those who would attack God's people. *When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—and to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. (Revelation 20:7-9; NIV)*

The Great White Throne

The final harvest follows the Millennium Age. This harvest resurrects people destined for the lake of fire and brings them before Jesus' throne. *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-14)*

These unfortunate people will stand in total despair before the great white throne of Jesus Christ. Even after being resurrected, this pathetic group is still described as “the dead”. Decayed bodies are resurrected in no better condition than at the time of their death. The condemned will have bodies that are constantly dying, but unable to die. Jesus said that the lake of fire is a place *where “the worms that eat them do not die, and the fire is not quenched.”* (Mark 9:48; NIV) The condemned are also tormented with burning sulfur (Revelation 21:8; NIV). Organic sulfur is an odor associated with rotten eggs, and sulfur dioxide is a suffocating odor.

Eternity

God will judge his people in a kind and gentle manner, featuring rewards. During this judgment, *the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward.* (1 Corinthians 3:13b-14).

The final heaven will be a garden city where God dwells with his people. The tree of life seen the Garden of Eden, will be in this Garden of Jerusalem (Genesis 2:9; Revelation 22:2). *And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."* (Revelation 21:2-4)

Appendix A: Temple Mount

The Israelis erected a tent in the wilderness soon after Moses led Israel out of Egyptian slavery (Exodus 40:1-3). They placed the Ark of the Covenant, which was God's dwelling place on earth, inside that tent. Centuries later Israel moved the ark into a magnificent temple on the Temple Mount. While building this first temple was an initiative of King David, it was King Solomon who oversaw its construction (2 Samuel 7:1-2; 1 Kings 6:1). This project employed a labor force of 180,000 men and required seven years to complete (1 Kings 5:13-15; 1 Kings 6:38).

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed Jerusalem, to include the Temple Mount, and the Israeli people were taken captive in 586 BC (Jeremiah 39:1). Three years later Darius the Mede overthrew the Babylonians and imposed the Medo-Persia Empire (Daniel 5:30-31). Later Cyrus, King of Persia, released a large number of Israelis and instructed those returning to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:1-3). In 515 BC, the temple was rebuilt; this second building on the Temple Mount became known as the second temple (Ezra 6:15).

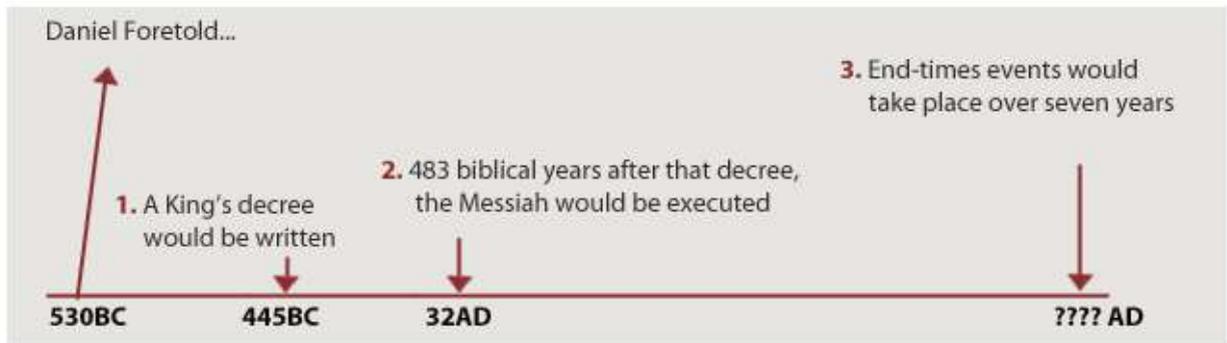
Joseph and Mary dedicated Jesus at this second temple (Luke 2:27). This also is where Jesus' searching parents found him teaching as a young man (Luke 2:41-50). Jesus forcefully cleared profiteering merchants from this temple (John 2:13-16). Jesus and Apostles preached at the temple (John 2:13-16; Acts 3:1).

Because Israel rejected its Messiah, Jesus foretold this temple would be destroyed (Matthew 24:1-2). This occurred when Israel fell to the Roman Army in 70 AD. With the Islamic capture of Jerusalem centuries later, the Dome of the Rock shrine and the Al Aqsa Mosque were built on the Temple Mount. The most visible building on the Temple Mount today is the Dome of the Rock, which is built over a "sacred" rock.

Islam understands that on God's holy mountain, this Temple Mount, that a rock should be honored. Unfortunately Islam is blinded to the authentic Rock—Jesus himself (Isaiah 26:4).

Appendix B: Seven Years

God limited the time allotted to end-time events to seven years. These seven years are part of a larger 490-year timeline that the prophet Daniel described—in just four verses. Realize that 483 of the 490 years have already occurred, exactly as predicted. In the following graph, events (1) and (2) occurred exactly as Daniel foretold in 530 BC. Historical validation of these scriptures as being accurate prophecy, capable of flawlessly predicting future events, validates the ability of these same scriptures to foretell the still-future end-time events.



At first, these verses appear exceptionally difficult. Start with the summary below.

Daniel 9:24-27	Paraphrase of Main Points
<p><i>“Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place. (Daniel 9:24; NIV)</i></p>	<p>There is a 490-year period for Israel and the city of Jerusalem, during which time God’s plan for our Age will be completed. (70 x 7 years = 490 years)</p>

<p><i>“Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench but in times of trouble. (Daniel 9:25; NIV)</i></p>	<p>It is important to understand how these 490 years are distributed. From the issuing of King Artaxerxes’ (then future) decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, until the Messiah comes to Jerusalem will be 483 years. (7 x 7 years) + (62 x 7 years) = 483 years</p>
<p><i>After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. (Daniel 9:26; NIV)</i></p>	<p>After the 483 years are completed, the Messiah will be put to death. Then the people of the future Antichrist, the Romans, will destroy Jerusalem and the second temple, which occurred in 70 AD. The end-times will come upon the world like a flood. It will not be pleasant; wars will continue until the end.</p>
<p><i>He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.” (Daniel 9:27; NIV)</i></p>	<p>Antichrist will confirm a peace treaty with many nations for a seven-year period. In the middle of the seven years, he will put an end to the Old Testament practice of sacrifice and offering (yet to be reestablished) at the (yet to be rebuilt) temple. Inside the temple, he will set up an altar to himself. Antichrist is destined for a horrific demise. (7 x 7 years) + (62 x 7 years) + (1 x 7 years) = 490 years</p>

Overview

♦ *“Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place. (Daniel 9:24; NIV)*

There is a 490-year timeline for Israel and the city of Jerusalem, to complete God’s purposes. (70 x 7 years = 490 years)

Israel

♦ *“Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench but in times of trouble. (Daniel 9:25; NIV)*

Daniel established a 490-year timeline for Israel in 530 BC. He foretold that the Messiah would come to Jerusalem 483 years after the issuing of a decree to rebuild Jerusalem. The 483 years are calculated as being (7 x 7 years) plus (62 x 7 years). King Artaxerxes issued that decree in 445 BC.

Sir Robert Anderson calculated the dates as being from March 14, 445 BC to April 6, 32 AD. Other historians have come up with different dates. Complicating factors, such as the Jewish calendar not being 365 days per year, make exact calculations unrealistic. The point is that at the time the 483 years expired only one living person claimed to be the Messiah—Jesus of Nazareth.

♦ *After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. (Daniel 9:26a; NIV)*

Daniel foretold that the Christ would be convicted of a crime that would result in an execution.

♦ *The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. (Daniel 9:26b; NIV)*

This destruction of Jerusalem occurred in 70 AD. The (Roman) *people* who destroyed *the city* (Jerusalem) and *the sanctuary* (temple) were identified as being *the people of the ruler who will come*. In other words, the invading Roman army was to come from the Antichrist’s kingdom; the Antichrist’s kingdom will be a Roman Empire.

The Final Seven Years

♦ *The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. (Daniel 9:26c; NIV)*

Just as no person can escape a massive flood; no living person will escape the end-times.

♦ *He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple, he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.*" (Daniel 9:27; NIV)

The end-times start with a seven-year agreement, which Antichrist will break after three and a half years. He will travel to the Temple Mount, where the rebuilt temple will have reinstated the Old Testament practice of blood sacrifice and offering. Antichrist will stop this practice and declare that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:4) God responds by lifting the veil that has blinded Israel for two millenniums, and all Israel will see Jesus as Messiah. (Zechariah 12:10)

Appendix C: Time Remains

Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six. (Revelation 13:18)

Six nations signed the Treaty of Rome, which established the European Economic Community. After six other nations joined the European Economic Community, this 12-member group (renamed the European Community) signed the Treaty of Maastricht to form the European Union. In 1994, these 12 European Union members joined with six nations of the European Free Trade Association to form the 18-nation European Economic Area (EEA). Accordingly, the EEA came together with three groups of nations, with each group consisting of six nations. Expressed numerically this beast was formed with ...

- $6 + 6 + 6 = 18 \text{ nations}$

Eighteen nations formed the European Economic Area; it is not a coincidence that this beast has 18 anatomical parts. There are seven heads and ten horns; this beast also has one body, as a woman is "sitting on" the beast. *And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. (Revelation 17:3)*

- $10 \text{ horns} + 7 \text{ heads} + 1 \text{ body} = 18 \text{ anatomical parts}$

Seven Heads

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) allowed member nations to participate in the integrated European market without forfeiting self-rule. The six EFTA nations that joined the European Economic Area are six heads on the EEA-beast. As the preeminent nation, Germany is the only "head" nation from the European Union. When this one European Union (Germany) head is added to the six EFTA heads, they comprise the seven heads of the EEA-beast.

Historical events provide the evidence needed to identify Germany is the head of the European Union, and therefore the preeminent head of the EEA-beast. In 962 AD, Pope John XII crowned the King of Germany, Otto the Great, as the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. The 1512 Diet

of Cologne changed the name of this empire to the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. It was not until 1806 AD that the French Empire of Napoleon surpassed the Holy Roman Empire.

After the fall of the Holy Roman Empire, Germany again attempted to dominate Europe. During World War I, Germany conquered multiple European nations; it required a response from nations around the globe to stop this German aggression. The Axis alliance of World War II united Germany (the beast's primary head) with Rome/Italy (the beast's body) in another effort to conquer Europe.

I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. (Revelation 13:3a). The wounded head is Germany; it was split in half after World War II. Germany was divided into the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), which was dominated by the Soviet Union. The splitting of a head normally produces a fatal wound. However, in 1989 this wound was healed when the Soviet Union surrendered control of East Germany, allowing a reunified Germany.

This beast has undergone change since its inception and must undergo further transformation to become the ultimate final Roman Empire, ready for the reign of Antichrist.

Heads Fall

Ten nations forfeited their sovereignty during the rule of ten national leaders, called kings. The following describes these national leaders transferring authority to the European Community: *The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast.* (Revelation 17:12-13)

Prior to the formation of the European Economic Area, ten nations forfeited their sovereignty while joining the European Community. These ten nations are depicted as ten horns (ten centers of power) on the beast. The ten horns of this EEA-beast are the twelve nations of the European Union, minus two nations; these two other nations are Germany (the head) and Rome/Italy (the body).

Six of the seven heads on the beast will eventually fail so that just one king, the Antichrist, will rule over Europe. Initially, there were seven vibrant heads on this EEA-beast that correspond to

the seven kings; each king had authority over a nation. The following is a description of when five of the heads will have fallen: *and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.* (Revelation 17:10)

So at some point five of the seven sovereign governments (kings) will have fallen. This forfeiture of authority is already underway. Three heads on this EEA-beast, who originally were members of the EFTA, switched to become members of the European Union in 1995. This shift grew the European Union from twelve to fifteen nations. The three nations whose heads have already fallen are Austria, Finland, and Sweden.

To reach the point where of the “seven kings; five have fallen” will require two more members of the EFTA to join the European Union. Therefore two out of three EFTA nations, that were a 1994 member of the EEA-beast and ratified the EEA Treaty, are needed to abandon EFTA membership to join the European Union.

- *3 heads have already fallen + 2 more heads yet to fall = 5 heads have fallen*

The three nations that meet that criterion are Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein. Tracking the movement of these three nations in relation to European Union membership serves to monitor the approaching time when five heads will have fallen. Economic issues are the primary reason these nations refrain from joining the European Union. Iceland is hesitant to join due to contentious issues concerning its fishing industry. Norway enjoys one of the highest per-capita incomes in the world, and it has substantial oil and gas reserves. Liechtenstein has one of the highest gross domestic product rates per person in the world.

After five heads fall, then one (king) is, the other (king) has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. (see Revelation 17:10) In other words, one of the final kings is still in power, and the other (final king to rule in Europe before the Antichrist) is yet to come; and when he does come into power, he will remain in power for a while; this seventh king will rule for several years.

Antichrist will rule after these seven kings have departed; he will be the eighth and final king over Europe. *The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction.* (Revelation 17:11; NIV)

Name	Active Heads	Fallen Heads	Situation
European Economic Community			Treaty of Rome
European Community	1	0	6 + 6
European Economic Area	7	0	6 + 6 + 6
European Economic Area	4	3	3 heads fall.
Future Events			
Unknown	2	5	5 heads have fallen
	1	6	1 head remains a little while
Beast out of the Sea	1	6	Antichrist – uproots horns

Horns Uprooted

Daniel was the first to see this Roman Empire beast: *“After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns. (Daniel 7:7; NIV) Daniel observed changes to the beast’s horns: “While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. (Daniel 7:8a; NIV)*

Daniel asked about these horns: *I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn that came up, before which three of them fell—the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully. (Daniel 7:20; NIV) During the final development of the beast, a powerful horn appears and overthrows three of the initial horns. This dominant horn is the Antichrist: another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. (Daniel 7:24b; NIV)*

Three nations that were initially compliant horns of the beast must now be forced to participate. This coercion will reverse any decision to withdraw from a united Europe.