

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Revelation 6:9-17 | Session 12 | The Time of Jacob's Trouble Begins and Ends, Seals Five and Six

### THE FIRST VISION ON EARTH (6:1-7:8)

## The opening of the six seals<sup>1</sup>

### Seals Five and Six

### Opening of the Seals in Chapter Six



<b>Seal #1</b>	False Messiahs	<b>Matthew 24:4-5</b>	<b>Revelation 6:1-2</b>
<b>Seal #2</b>	Wars	<b>Matthew 24:6-7</b>	<b>Revelation 6:3-4</b>
<b>Seal #3</b>	Famines	<b>Matthew 24:7</b>	<b>Revelation 6:5-6</b>
<b>Seal #4</b>	Pestilences, Death	<b>Matthew 24:7</b>	<b>Revelation 6:7-8</b>
<b>Seal #5</b>	Martyrdoms	<b>Matthew 24:8-28</b>	<b>Revelation 6:9-11</b>
<b>Seal #6</b>	Signs in Heaven	<b>Matthew 24:29-30</b>	<b>Revelation 6:12-17</b>

### THE FIFTH SEAL | MARTYRS (6:9-11) | MATTHEW 24:8-28

Previously, (Sessions 10 and 11), we discussed how the first four seals in Revelation 6, when laid side by side with Jesus' prophesy of the end of the age in Matthew 24, might be the labor pains leading up to the birth of the Time of Jacob's Trouble (Jeremiah 30:7), or "one week", the seventieth week of Daniel (Daniel 9:27). The disciples asked Jesus to tell them what would be the sign of His coming and the end of the age. Jesus first told them what would not be the sign. In Matthew 24:6-7 he said there would be false deliverers, wars, rumors of wars, kingdoms against kingdoms...

<sup>1</sup> The seventh seal will be opened in the second vision in Heaven (8:1-6).

*“For all these things (Matthew 24:4-6) must come to pass (i.e., false messiahs, wars), but the end is not yet (Why not?), For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places” (Matthew 24:7).*

Jesus said, these things are only the labor pains; *“All these are the beginning of sorrows”* (Matthew 24:8). The Greek word for **sorrows** is *odin*, meaning *the pain preceding childbirth*. Labor pains are not the birth.

But then, He told them, *what happens next is a great time of affliction for Israel*. After the birth pains, *“Then”...*

*“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted.”* Matthew 24:9. The Greek word for affliction is *thlipsis* which is also translated as tribulation or trouble.

It is here where I would place the signing of the covenant of Daniel 9:27, and the beginning of the seven-years.

*“And he (the prince that shall come, see vs. 26), shall confirm a covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and with the abominable armies (See Luke 21:20) he shall make desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolator.”<sup>2,3</sup>*

Most believe this is a covenant of peace that the Antichrist makes with Israel. But what if it is a covenant of *death* and not peace? It is not clear what type of covenant this is, or with whom. It is always assumed by most that this is a peace treaty made between the Antichrist and Israel, but nowhere is it said that the Antichrist will make a covenant with Israel. The passage says he makes a covenant with many. The *many* are most always assumed to be Israel, but more likely, based on what comes next, the *many* are the Jew haters, those nations aligned to destroy Israel. In fact, Daniel 8:23,24 tells us that Antichrist is not coming to make peace, but to destroy Israel:

*“And in the latter time...a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and holy people.”*

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<sup>2</sup> This is an alternate reading of Daniel 9:27 based on the KJV translator’s notes.

<sup>3</sup> See my notes on Daniel 9:27. [https://rogerfeenstra.files.wordpress.com/2023/04/daniel-9-1\\_27-session-14-notes.pdf](https://rogerfeenstra.files.wordpress.com/2023/04/daniel-9-1_27-session-14-notes.pdf)

The fifth seal opened by the Lamb in Heaven is the announcement of the beginning of the seventieth week of Daniel and encompasses the entire seven-years. The fifth seal is the beginning of the day of wrath, and throughout the seven-years many believing Jews will be martyred.

Notice how in Matthew 24:9 Jesus shifts pronouns from speaking about nations and kingdoms and what seem to be worldwide events to addressing “**you,**” Israel. Jesus is communicating that the events to come are specifically to Israel, and the *Time of Jacob’s Trouble* (Jeremiah 30:7).

*Matthew 24:9 parallels with the opening of the Fifth Seal in Revelation 6:9-11.*

*The fifth seal summarizes the entire tribulation and Jesus does not hold back in describing what will be in store for Israel. Matthew 24:9-12 fills in the detail of the fifth seal:*

1. *They shall kill you (Matthew 24:9).*
2. *You shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake (Matthew 24:9).*
3. *Many shall be offended (Matthew 24:10).*
4. *Many shall be betray on another (Matthew 24:10).*
5. *Many shall hate each other (Matthew 24:10).*
6. *False prophets shall arise and deceive many (Matthew 24:11).*
7. *Iniquity shall abound (Matthew 24:12).*
8. *Love shall wax cold (Matthew 24:12).*

Parallel Passages  
**Matthew 24:9 and Revelation 6:9-11**

<p><i>“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake.”</i></p>	<p><i>“And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”</i></p>
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It is likely that the entire world will be affected by these events, but Israel is the subject!

In our last session we looked at the Rapture of the Church. Those in the body of Christ will not be present during this final seven years. Today, we are saved by grace through faith. Our salvation is not of our own doing, we are given a gift of salvation that does not require works (Ephesians 2:8,9). Throughout the seven-years, the gift of grace will no longer be offered and obedience to the Law, works, perseverance and endurance will be how one will enter into the kingdom (Seal #5). Jesus said, “*He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*”

(Matthew 24:13). Jesus gave this same message of enduring and overcoming to the seven assemblies in Revelation 2 and 3 (See sessions 4-7):

- Ephesus (2:7), *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life.*
- Smyrna (2:11), *He that overcometh shall not be hurt by the second death.*
- Pergamos (2:17), *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna...*
- Thyatira (2:26), *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works...I will give power...*
- Sardis (3:5), *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment.*
- Philadelphia (3:12), *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.*
- Laodicea (3:21), *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.*

These things presented to the seven assemblies do not concern us or our standing with Christ. We are not the overcomers.

### *Jesus overcame for us!*

We are complete in Christ. We will be with Christ during this time. But in the tribulation, grace will be removed. Instead, works and overcoming will be required in order to receive the Kingdom.

The fifth seal of Revelation 6:9 is the beginning of the seven years of the Great Tribulation. If that assumption holds up to scrutiny and study, then the first four seals are precursors (birth pains) during the interval between the Rapture and the confirmation of the covenant with the Antichrist<sup>4</sup>.

It doesn't destroy anyone's theology if one wants to assign the beginning of the Tribulation to seal number one, but we should consider the idea that it likely begins with the fifth seal.

Another reason for the line of thinking that the seven years begin with the opening of the fifth seal above is that the fifth seal is separated from all the others. It stands alone from the previous four, and the sixth.

Verse 9 —

John saw **under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.**



<sup>4</sup> Jesus does not mention a covenant between Antichrist and many.

The book of Revelation is not written in a linear, chronological fashion. We will see this as we move through the book. Although the seals, trumpets, and vial judgments are numbered sequentially, from 1 to 7, sometimes they are filled with gaps that will be filled in later. These **souls** might be those who have been killed throughout the Tribulation for their belief in Jesus as the True Messiah.

The word **souls** should be read as living **persons**. This is not unusual. A simple concordance search will reveal that Scripture often refers to the population as **souls**. Here, in verse 9, John **saw** people. In verse 10, John heard them speak. Speaking requires vocal cords, and tongues are necessary. But they are also dead. Later in Revelation 20:4, John sees them again and says **they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years**.

These **souls** are given white robes in verse 11. John saw Jews who believe that Jesus is their Messiah (saints), and have been martyred for their obedience to Him only and not receiving the *mark upon their foreheads* (chapter 13). They are at the foot of the altar of burnt offerings (Revelation 8:3). We must remember that during these seven years, the Jews have reverted back to the sacrificial system. During the first three and a half years they will be offering sacrifices in the rebuilt temple. And, like sacrifices of devotion, these souls are killed for their testimony. They are dead, but will be raised.

Verse 10—

To be clear, these are Jewish saints and those obedient to the Law who are martyrs. All the Jewish imagery helps us see that. **And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, How long O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood...** In the book of Romans Paul told the Jewish believers, not to avenge themselves; Romans 12:19, *“Avenge not yourselves, but give place unto wrath: for it is written Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”* These martyrs too cry out for the Lord to avenge their blood.

Verse 11 —

As a sign that their request for their blood to be avenged will be granted, they are given **white robes**. The bestowment of new *raiment*, fine linen or white robes, etc., was a part of the rewards in the Old Testament (Genesis 41:42; 45:22; Esther 6:8,9; Daniel 5:16; Isaiah 3:7; Zechariah 3:5, etc.).

**They should rest yet for a little season.** This is not true for believers who have died in the dispensation of grace. When we die we are not *resting nor do we experience soul sleep as some believe*. Scripture states that when we die we are *absent from the body and present with the Lord* (2 Corinthians 5:8).

**Until their fellow-servants also...should be killed**, more will be killed throughout the Tribulation for their belief in the True Messiah and refusing to take the Mark of the Beast (i.e., 666), Revelation 13:7,15; 17:6.

THE SIXTH SEAL | THE END OF THE TRIBULATION (6:12-17) | MATTHEW 24:29,30

As mentioned, the book of Revelation is not written chronologically. In this sixth seal, John is carried to the time of the end. That makes sense if we look at the fifth seal as the summary of the entire seven years and seal number six as the end and the coming of the Messiah as Judge (See timeline chart above).

Matthew 24:29,30 provides the parallel passage for the sixth seal. One would be hard-pressed to read this Matthew passage alongside Revelation 6:12-17 without seeing that they speak of the same event.

Parallel Passages Matthew 24:29-30 and Revelation 6:12-17	
<i>“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then all of the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”</i>	<i>“There was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth... And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said...hide us from...the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come...”</i>

Verses 12,13,14—

We should take these verses literally. At the end of the seven-years, there will be a great convulsion of nature, causing a worldwide earthquake (Greek, *seismos*), the Sun being darkened, the moon turning red, and stars/meteors falling to earth. This exact event was prophesied by the prophet Haggai 2:6,7;

*“For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, And I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: And will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.”*

The prophets Joel and Isaiah also predicted this event in Joel 2:30-32 and Isaiah 13:6-13.

**And the heaven departed as a scroll.** This likely refers to the universe, not the Heavenly realm (the third heaven), where God’s Throne is located. Matthew 24:35 foretells this catastrophic event in which heaven seems to implode, *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”*

Verses 15, 16, 17—

On that Day, no one on Earth will be able to stand, no matter how rich or powerful. Some will hide in bunkers, caves, or other seemingly secure places, but to no avail. Isaiah 24:19-23 presents a picture of this event. The Lord refers to this in Luke 23:30 (quoting the words of Hosea 10:8), *“Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.”*

We will see similar phenomena with the impending fourth trumpet blast (Revelation 8:12) and the seventh vial (Revelation 16:20,21).

Matthew 24:29 says, *“Immediately after the Tribulation of those days.”*

The Sixth Seal is a conclusion of the judgments distributed over the entire book of Revelation and is the precursor of the return of King Jesus in Revelation 19.

These judgments are all under Divine control and do not happen by chance. Everything leads up to **the great day of his wrath**, and chapter 6 ends with a poignant question,

*Who shall be able to stand?*

Will anyone stand?

Spoiler alert: That question will be answered in chapter 7 with the sealing of the 144,000 of all the tribes of Israel, who will pass unharmed through that Great Tribulation. We will pick up there next time.