

End-Time Events: The First Six Seals

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As any Bible student knows, there are many scriptures throughout the Bible—both the Old Testament and the New Testament—which speak of a period of end-time *devastation* to earth and its inhabitants! In fact, the great majority of the Book of Revelation deals with that future time of calamity.

Notice the 30th chapter of Jeremiah, where the Prophet Jeremiah foretells of a time-period *so terrible*, that “**none is like it**”!

³ For behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD... ‘We have heard a voice of trembling, Of fear, and not of peace. ⁶ Ask now, and see, Whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man *with* his hands on his loins Like a woman in labor, And all faces turned pale? ⁷ Alas! For that day *is* great, **So that none is like it**; And it *is* the time of Jacob’s trouble...” Jeremiah hints that this time of calamity will occur at the *end-time*—“in the latter days”: “**In the latter days** you will consider it,” said Jeremiah (verse 24).

In “The Olivet Prophecy,” Jesus Christ spoke of this *same* time-period: “For then there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, **nor ever shall be**” (Matt. 24:21). We know that both Christ and Jeremiah were speaking of the *same* period, because there cannot be **two** times of trouble worse than any other!

Furthermore, just as Jeremiah hinted that he was speaking of an **end-time** period, Jesus Christ was *definitely* speaking of the end-time. We *know* that, because this “Olivet Prophecy” was in response to the disciples questioning Him about what will happen at “the end of the age”: “Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be? And **what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?**’” (verse 3).

Yes, this end-time period of devastation *immediately precedes* the return of Jesus Christ to this earth!

A 3½-Year Period of End-Time Devastation

Notice, now, several passages referring to this end-time period of destruction:

“Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the **devil** has come down to you, having **great wrath**, because he knows that he has a short time.’ Now when the dragon [Satan] saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman [the **Old Testament Church** (Acts 7:38, *KJV*)] who gave *birth* to the male Child [Christ]. But the woman [*now* speaking of the **NEW Testament Church**] was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to **her place**, where she is nourished **for a time and times and half a time**, from the presence of the serpent [Satan]” (Rev.12: 12-14).

So, the passage above shows that God’s true Church will be in “her place” for **3½ years**— “a time [1 yr] and times [2 yr] & half a time [½ yr].” And, the Church will *not only* be “nourished” there (as we already read), it will *also* be **protected** there during this 3½ year period of “**trial which shall come upon the whole world**” (Rev. 3:10). [Actually, *not all* of the Church will be in this place of protection during this time of great trial upon the world. Some members of the Church will *not* “be counted worthy to escape all these things” (Luke 21:36), and they will remain outside and be faced with martyrdom (Rev.12:17; 7:14; 6:9; 17:6). (For more on that, see the article “‘The Ten Virgins,’ ‘Laodiceans,’ and ‘The Great Multitude.’”)]

For *another* reference to this “3½ year period,” notice Revelation chapter 11: “But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for **forty-two months**” (verse 2). Forty-two months *is*, of course, 3½ years.

Likewise, Daniel (referring to *end-time* events) says that “all these things shall be **finished**” after “a time and times and half *a time*” (Dan. 12: 7)— again, 3½ years.

So, the *three* passages above speak of an end-time period of devastation **lasting 3½ years**.

Satan’s Wrath Versus God’s Wrath

As shown above, God will lead His true, end-time Church into a place of protection *from* this tremendous 3½-year devastation upon the world.

However, let’s understand something. In delivering His Church into this place of **protection**, God will initially be protecting His Church from **Satan’s** devastation upon the earth... but, during the final **1-year** of that 3½ year period, the protection is *not only* from Satan’s devastation, but *also* from devastation which God **Himself** will begin to wreak upon the earth (during that final 1-year part of the 3½ years)! This will become plain as we continue.

“The Day of the LORD”

The phrase “Day of the LORD” is mentioned in more than 30 places in the Bible. In the **vast majority** of those usages, the term refers to the time-period **just prior to Christ’s return** to earth—a time when **God Himself will pour out His anger and fury** against a rebellious world!

Notice just a few examples of the usage of the phrase “the Day of the LORD” in prophecy:

(Joel 1:15) “Alas for the day! For **the day of the LORD** *is* at hand; It shall come as **destruction from the Almighty.**” (cf. Rev.15:1)

(Joel 2:31) “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome **day of the LORD.**”

(Isa. 13: 9) “Behold, the **day of the LORD** comes, cruel, with both wrath and **fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it.**”

(Obadiah 1:15) “For the **day of the LORD** upon **all the nations** *is* near; As you have done, it shall be done to you; Your reprisal shall return upon your own head.”

(Zeph. 1:18) “Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the **day of the LORD’s wrath**; But the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy, for He will make speedy riddance of all those who dwell in the land.”

So, from those scriptures (and many more), we see that *when* the phrase “Day of the LORD” is used, it almost always refers to this time period just prior to Christ’s return to earth—a time of **God’s wrath!** (A notable *exception* to that general rule, is found in II Peter 3:10, where “the day of the Lord” refers to a *different* time-period.)

Let’s now ask the question, **how long** does the “Day of the LORD” last?

The Prophet Isaiah shows that it will last for **one year**: “For the indignation of the LORD *is* against all nations, And *His* fury against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to the slaughter... For ***it is the day of the LORD’s vengeance, The year of recompense*** [‘retribution’ *NIV*] for the cause of Zion” (Isa. 34: 2, 8, *NKJV*).

Notice that verse 8 above speaks of “the **day** of the LORD’s vengeance,” and says that this “day” lasts for one **year**. This is the “day for a year” principle that is often used in prophecy (see Ezek. 4:6; Num. 14:34).

Yes, the “Day of the LORD” **lasts for about one year**, and is a time of **God’s wrath!**

So, from that, we see that the final 1-year period **of** the 3½-year period is when God pours out His wrath.

The Book of Revelation

The *final* book of the Bible is the book of Revelation. The *theme* of the book of Revelation is prophecy—the vast majority of which will not *begin* to be fulfilled until 3½ years prior to the return of Jesus Christ to this earth.

For just one *proof* that Revelation deals with end-time prophecy, consider the following:

As previously discussed, Jesus Christ gave the Olivet Prophecy in Matthew chapter 24. There, He foretold of future events which will be the sign of His return to earth *and the end of the age*. Yet, notice that *Revelation chapter 6* is a *parallel description of that Olivet Prophecy* (Matthew 24:3-29)! And, that fact is very *apparent* to those who truly *understand* the *symbolism* of Revelation chapter six—especially the fact that “the white horse” (The First Seal) symbolizes *religious deception*, including — and most importantly — *False Christianity*... which, during the final 3½ years, will be led by a great, *miracle-working* religious figure—a “False Prophet.”

Understanding the STORY FLOW of the Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation Is Primarily in Time Sequence

In Revelation 5, John saw a vision of One (clearly God the Father) sitting upon the throne in heaven, holding a scroll sealed with seven seals. The only One authorized to open the seals, and therefore to reveal the contents, was Jesus Christ. A scroll must be unrolled sequentially, and the seals must be broken one at a time to reveal what comes next. This vital key, when properly understood, makes plain that the book of Revelation is written in chronological order. While there are a few “insets” that go back and let a reader “catch up” on certain events, Revelation’s narrative flows chronologically.

... **An inset in the story flow occurs in Revelation 12 and 13.** These chapters pick up the story at an earlier period, and bring it up to date, presenting the stories of the Church (Revelation 12) and of the beast (Revelation 13). These contrasting stories of the persecuted and the persecutors need to be understood as the background to the events surrounding Jesus Christ’s return as King of kings.

Revelation 14 and 15 contrast the newly resurrected saints rejoicing in glory, with the final preparation for God’s wrath to be poured out upon rebellious mankind. God will need to punish severely the “sons of disobedience” (cf. Colossians 3:6) and the system that has persecuted His faithful servants through the centuries, because they have refused to respond to previous calls to repentance. [Herbert W. Armstrong referred to chapter 14 as an “inset” chapter.] Then, in Revelation 16, we learn the details of the pouring out of the seven bowls that contain the fullness of God’s wrath.

Revelation 17 and 18 provide another inset into the story flow, giving an overview of the end-time system called Babylon the Great. This is an alliance of false religion, military-political power and commercial dominance that will hold sway before Christ’s return. Revelation 18 describes this entire system’s absolute destruction.

(The information in this box is excerpted from John H. Ogwyn’s booklet *Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled!*, Oct. 2003, pp.9, 14)

Yes, the book of Revelation is a book of *prophecy*. Notice what Pastor John H. Ogwyn had to say about that in his booklet *Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled!* :

“More than 100 times throughout Revelation—more often than in any other New Testament book—John either quotes or paraphrases verses from the Old Testament. ...**If you only had the Old Testament, you would be totally at a loss to fit many of the Old Testament prophecies into a clear time frame.** But by weaving references throughout [the book of Revelation], John enables us to see *where* these different messages, previously recorded by the prophets, fit into God’s plan for the future.”

The *time of God’s future intervention and judgment* is the **theme that runs **throughout** [the book of] Revelation.** John wrote from that future perspective.

...John received in Revelation 4—*in vision*—an invitation to come up to heaven. He described God’s throne in heaven, and noted that the One sitting on it held a sealed scroll in His hand. There was no one worthy to break the seals and open the book except Jesus Christ—the Lamb of God and the Lion of Judah. As Christ, the Revelator, opened the seals one by one, John was invited to come and look. Beginning in Revelation 6, he described what he saw when each seal was opened.¹

The FIRST FOUR Seals

Revelation chapter 5 speaks about a **scroll** which is *sealed* with seven seals. The contents of that scroll reveals the **outline of end-time prophecy!** In other words, **the scroll reveals the outline of what will occur during the entirety of the 3½ year end-time period!**

Chapter 5 (verses 2 through 7) shows that *only* the resurrected Jesus Christ—sitting at the right hand of His Father (Heb. 8:1)—is able to *remove* those 7 seals and *reveal* what is written in that scroll. In the *next* chapter, Revelation chapter 6, Christ removes **six of those seven** seals, and *reveals* the prophecies therein.

The **first four seals** describe “the four horsemen”—the White Horse (religious deception), the Red Horse (war), the Black Horse (famine) and the Pale Horse (pestilence). Notice the following extremely important point made in Mr. Ogwyn’s booklet:

When this final False Prophet [a *miracle-working* religious figure, mentioned on the previous page] arises on the world scene, true Christians will be able to recognize exactly where we are in the scope of prophecy. The first seal will have been opened, and its end-time fulfillment will have been manifested. The opening of the other seals will follow quickly thereafter.¹

Consider what these Four Horsemen represent: religious deception, war, famine, and pestilence. Yes, the world has *always* experienced those things. Yet, the *intensity* of those things will be strikingly *magnified* during the end-time period. And, again, we will know that this intense magnification *is about to begin*, once a powerful, *miracle-working* religious figure arises on the world scene (Matt. 24:24; Rev. 13: 13-14; 19:20).

The FIFTH Seal

Now we come to the Fifth Seal. As we shall now see, the **Fifth Seal** describes a future time of tremendous religious persecution, accompanied by a **martyrdom of the saints**... and *also* a time of **horrifying calamity coming, primarily, upon the United States and British-descended nations of the world.**

Pastor Ogwyn continues:

...the **fifth** seal was opened and he [John] was again called to come and watch. He saw a strange vision that, when properly understood, was the harbinger of terrible **religious persecution** on a scale that is almost unimaginable to us in the modern Western world.

...This future time of trouble will clearly be a time of **intense religious persecution**, when all will be forced to conform to false religious practices that will be portrayed as “Christian.” All will be required to give their devotion to the great false church and its hierarchy...

There is [however] another aspect of this coming Great Tribulation that is often overlooked. It is *not only* a time of religious persecution but it is also identified as “the time of Jacob’s trouble” in Jeremiah 30:7...

If you are not familiar with **the identity of Jacob’s end-time descendants**, we invite you to write in for our free booklet, *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*... **The coming Great Tribulation will be a time of intense pressure and persecution directed against both spiritual Israel (the true Church of God) and physical Israel, which includes not only the Jews, but also the modern descendants of the so-called “lost ten tribes.”**¹

Notice what Pastor Roderick C. Meredith had to say about this:

The *fifth* seal of Revelation is, in fact, describing the *Great Tribulation*. **The emphasis here [in Revelation chapter 6] is on the Church aspect [of the fifth seal]—upon the fact that many of the people in God’s true Church will be persecuted, martyred, as they were in past ages (Rev. 6:9–11). But other scriptures—including Matt. 24:21–22, Luke 21:22–24 and Jer. 30:4–7—tell us that**

this horrifying Tribulation will be *not just* upon the true Church but also on the *physical* nations of Israel and Judah—including the United States and British-descended nations of the world.

The Great Tribulation involves a massive national punishment upon the physical nations of Israel...²

Pastor Roderick McNair stated this:

Scripture shows that this “fifth seal” will be a terrible calamity coming specifically upon the house of Jacob (Jer. 30:7)— which, in addition to the nation of Israel in the Middle East, today includes the nations of Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, South Africa, Canada and the U.S. ... Scripture reveals that tens of millions of the descendants of ancient Israel will perish.³

Pastor Richard F. Ames made the following comments:

It is the time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30:7), the time of God's punishment on the Western nations—including the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.⁴

Again, **the Fifth Seal** describes a future time of tremendous religious persecution, accompanied by a **martyrdom of the saints**... and ***also*** a time of **horribly destructive military attacks** conducted, primarily, ***against*** the United States and British-descended nations of the world!

Furthermore, *all five* of the **first FIVE** seals represent *Satan’s* wrath... *Satan’s* devastation upon the earth. (See Footnote #1)

“The Great Tribulation”

Some have stated that “The Great Tribulation” refers to the Fifth Seal, *alone*. HOWEVER... scripture states that “The Great Tribulation” will be the **greatest** time of destruction that has ever been or ever will be! (Matt. 24:21; Jer. 30:7). Therefore, how could the **first 4 seals** NOT be a ***part of*** “The Great Tribulation,” since those first 4 seals are responsible for the death of ONE FOURTH of humanity?! Notice that fact, in Rev. 6:8— “...power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.” (See Footnote #2)

Pastor Richard F. Ames *agrees* that “The Great Tribulation” is composed of **the first five seals**: “**The first five seals** of Revelation, outlined in Revelation 6, **cover a period of 2½ years—the Great Tribulation** of which Jesus spoke in Matthew 24.”⁵

Pastor John Ogwyn *likewise agrees* that **the first five seals** represent “The Great Tribulation.” He stated the following: “**The Great Tribulation**... is the result of the final end-time fulfillment, in rapid succession, **of the first five seals**.”¹ (Although Herbert W. Armstrong taught that the Fifth Seal **alone** will constitute “the Great Tribulation,” it seems *almost certain* that **ALL FIVE** of the first five seals actually constitute “The Great Tribulation.”)

Furthermore, all of the first Five Seals will be opened **in rapid succession!**

And, not only that, but once the seals are opened, the conditions CONTINUE until Christ’s return!

Herbert W. Armstrong, speaking of both the Olivet Prophecy and the Seven Seals of Revelation, said the following: “Notice this **consistent** principle: **Once a condition which Jesus predicts sets in, it REMAINS CONTINUOUS up until His very second coming!**”⁶

John Ogwyn, likewise, said this: “The events symbolized by the seals are cumulative and **the seals, once opened, remain open**.” [Whether that principle applies to the **Sixth** Seal—the heavenly signs— might, *perhaps*, be questionable. Yet, it *may very well* apply even to the Sixth Seal— which would mean there would be heavenly signs occurring *throughout the entire final year* leading up to Christ’s return.]

Yes, as John Ogwyn hinted, once the **First** Seal is opened, **the opening of seals two through five** “**will follow quickly thereafter.**”

It would not be surprising if the **Fifth** Seal is opened *within 6 months or so* of the opening of the **First** Seal. Also, consider this: Although one-fourth of humanity will be killed by what is represented in the first four seals, that does **NOT** mean that “the one-fourth of humanity” will *all* be killed **PRIOR TO** the opening of the Fifth Seal! Again, once a seal is opened, the conditions *continue until Christ’s return*.

Furthermore, considering this principle of “**continuity** of the opened seals **until** Christ’s return,” that would mean that **Satan’s wrath** endures for a period of 3 ½ years—NOT just 2 ½ years! And, **the final year** of that 3 ½ year period will **ALSO** include **God’s** wrath being poured out!

Therefore, it is actually **INACCURATE** to say that the 3 ½ year period is composed of “2 ½ years of Satan’s wrath, followed by one year of God’s wrath.” **Rather**, it is 3 ½ years of Satan’s wrath, *the final year of which* will **also** include God’s wrath being mightily poured out!

So, again, **how long** is “The Great Tribulation”? Well, “The Great Tribulation” is certainly 2 ½ years long (the length of time up until the opening of the Sixth and Seventh Seals). Yet, in the

larger sense, “The Great Tribulation” could be said to last 3½ years long... since the actions represented by those first five seals *continues* for the full 3½ years.

Rather than arguing over whether “The Great Tribulation” is 2½ years long or 3½ years long, it would seem better to just state the following: The end-time period of devastation will consist of 3½ years of Satan’s wrath, and the final year of that 3½ years will **also** include God’s wrath being mightily poured out!

The Martyrdom of the Saints

The martyrdom of the saints will *primarily* be confined to the period of time between the opening of the Fifth Seal and the opening of the Seventh Seal. At the very opening of the *Seventh* Seal, there is a brief “silence in heaven” (Rev. 8:1). **During** that brief “silence in heaven” is when God’s servants are **sealed!** (Rev. 7: 3-4). That “sealing” certainly *includes* the sealing of the 144,000 (Rev. 7: 4-8)... but it *likely also* includes the sealing of the “great multitude” (verses 9 to 14).

So, this future, great *martyrdom* of God’s saints will almost certainly **be completed** during that “silence in heaven.” Herbert W. Armstrong stated the following: “... this MARTYRDOM OF SAINTS — must occur **and be completed** BEFORE God pours out the vials of His Wrath [which He will pour out for a one-year period that will **begin immediately after** the brief ‘silence in heaven’]...”⁶

Thus, there will *apparently* be **NO martyrdom of saints (nor any new converts to true Christianity)** *during* the final one-year period preceding Christ’s return! The great, prophesied “martyrdom of the saints” (Rev. 6: 9-11) will apparently last about 2 or 2½ years.

By the way, **both** of the following two events will certainly be **VERY BRIEF** in duration: “the Sixth Seal” and “the silence in heaven.” Consequently, “**the martyrdom of the saints**” will occur **PRIMARILY** during the Fifth Seal! (As for the Sixth Seal, it *may* be—as already stated—that the “signs in heaven” will occur *throughout the entire final year* leading up to Christ’s return.)

How Does Satan Know WHEN to Begin The Great Tribulation?

What will be the *date* of Christ’s return? Christ Himself answers: “Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory ...**But of that day and hour no one knows**, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but **only the Father**” (Mark 13:26-32).

Now, since **only** God the Father knows when Christ will return, that means that Satan does *not know* the date of Christ's return! So... since Satan doesn't know the date of Christ's return, how does he know **when to BEGIN** "The Great Tribulation"?! After all, the approximate "3½ year period" that *ends* with Christ's return, *begins* with the period of SATAN'S wrath. So, how does Satan know *when to begin it*?

Well, the *answer* actually seems self-evident. Satan—even more so than you and I—*recognizes* world events. He *knows* that he has but "a **short** time" (Rev. 12:12). So, certainly, *even NOW*, Satan is **TRYING** to initiate the events of "the Great Tribulation." Yet, God Almighty is **restraining** him from doing so! God is restraining Satan, **until** the time is right... **until** it is 3½ years prior to the time when the Father *wants* Christ to return!

So, the answer is that Satan does **not** know *when* to begin "The Great Tribulation." Rather, God is *restraining* Satan's efforts, *until* the time is right.

Actually, in light of the fact that Satan is filled with violence (and has, as a primary goal, the *destruction* of mankind), it would seem to be a reasonable assumption that **ever since mankind has been on earth**, Satan has been **trying** to initiate "Great Tribulation" **type** of activity... but has always been **restrained** by God from *implementing* such activity!

Furthermore, it would likewise seem likely that Satan has *continually* desired to make **assaults on heaven**... yet is being *restrained* from doing so *until* the soon-coming time when God will allow Satan to lead his fallen angels in an end-time, futile assault against God's throne. "And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer..." (Rev. 12: 7-12).

The SIXTH Seal

Our discussion has briefly touched on the subject of the Sixth Seal, but let's now consider that seal more fully. When the Sixth Seal is opened, the Apostle John describes basically two things: (1) a great earthquake, and (2) dramatic "heavenly signs"—signs in heaven which will be visible to earth's inhabitants.

I looked when He opened the **sixth** seal, and behold, there was a great **earthquake**; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then **the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up**, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,

and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and **hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!** For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?” (Rev. 6: 12-17).

This **Sixth** Seal is the *prelude to* the 1-year “Day of the LORD,” represented by the Seventh (and final) Seal. (Although the Sixth Seal is part of **God’s** Wrath, it is **not part of** the “Day of the LORD”... as shown in Joel 2: 30-31).

As we just read, the sun will become “**black**” during the *Sixth* Seal. *Similarly*, the *Seventh* Seal (the one-year “Day of the Lord”) is likewise described as “...A day of **darkness** and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness...” (Joel 2: 1-2; cf. Joel 2:10; Amos 5:18; Zeph. 1:15). **So, it may very well be that AT LEAST a partial darkness on earth will predominate, not only during the Sixth Seal, but also throughout the entire final year leading up to Christ’s return!**

As Revelation chapter 8 shows, these “signs in heaven” (of the Sixth Seal) are **immediately followed by** a brief “silence in heaven” (as the *Seventh* Seal is opened). What an awesomely *dramatic* moment that will be! The earth’s inhabitants will have been experiencing a massive earthquake and the **extremely frightening** “signs in heaven”... and then, all of a sudden, it **stops** (or at least pauses)! To put it mildly, everyone will be *warily wondering*, “**What’s next?!**”

How **long** will the Sixth Seal last... that is, how long after it is opened before the “silence in heaven” (at the opening of the *Seventh* Seal) begins? Certainly, the Bible does not say! Yet, it seems safe to assume that this period of time will be **quite brief**. Consider that the Sixth Seal occurs basically **BETWEEN** a 2½-year period and a 1-year period... and consider that the *entire* end-time period lasts about 3½ years. Therefore, we can expect that period “in between” to be brief, indeed!

Furthermore, we know that the “**silence in heaven**” will *likewise* be extremely brief... as it is described in prophetic terms as lasting “for about half an hour” (Rev. 8:1). (See Footnote #3.)

Conclusion

In this article we have examined the First Six Seals (as well as the “silence in heaven” which will occur *briefly* at the very opening of the approximately one-year long Seventh Seal). For a full discussion of the **Seventh** Seal, see the article “End-Time Events: Part II.”

Footnote #1 Some might ask the following question: Since “The Great Tribulation” is the time of *Satan’s* wrath being poured out, then how can it—“*the time of Jacob’s Trouble*”—*also* be referred to as a time of *God’s* punishment on the modern-day descendants of Jacob?”

Here is the answer. Consider the book of Job. God loved the patriarch Job, but Job had a spiritual problem which needed correcting. Rather than correcting Job by *directly* punishing him, God *used* (allowed) Satan to punish Job. Satan brought about disaster after disaster upon Job... yet, God placed *limits* on how far Satan could go! (Job 1:6-12; 2:6). Although Satan did the destroying, it was God who was in complete control!

Yes, Satan was *unwittingly* helping God bring Job to the place where Job could more clearly see himself. In the end, Job deeply repented. “Therefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:6).

Likewise, during The Great Tribulation, God will *use* (allow) Satan to severely punish mankind. God’s **direct** punishment will come during the final 1-year “Day of The Lord.” Yet, even the horrific acts of Satan during the entire 3½ year period can, in one important sense, said to be punishments by God! (For related information, see the following two booklets: *Acts of God: Why Natural Disasters?* by Gerald E. Weston, April 2019, Living Church of God; *Is This the Only Day of Salvation?* by Roderick C. Meredith, Dec. 1999, Living Church of God.)

Footnote #2 In Revelation chapter 6, the latter part of verse 8 states that “power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.” The fact that this says “to kill with **sword** [and] with **hunger**,” *clearly* shows that verse 8 is attributing the destruction of one-fourth of humanity, **not just** to the Fourth Seal, but **also** to the seals *preceding* the Fourth Seal (seals Two and Three represent **war** [“sword”] and **famine** [“hunger”]).

Furthermore, the Fourth Seal represents *pestilence*. Accordingly, verse eight’s reference to “beasts of the earth” could possibly refer, *not only* to wild beasts, but also to bacteria and virus!

Footnote #3 As for the **duration** of the Sixth Seal and the duration of “the silence in heaven,” one can only speculate! The author’s **SPECULATION** is as follows:

The Sixth Seal and the “silence in heaven” will *together* last for *less* than 11 days. The Sixth Seal will last between 2 and 7 days, and “the silence in heaven” will last between 1 and 3½ days. (Two likely scenarios: the Sixth Seal lasts 2½ days, and the “Silence in Heaven” lasts for 1 day. That would *correspond* to the end-time periods of 2½-years and 1-year. Alternatively, perhaps the Sixth Seal will last 7 days, and the “Silence in Heaven” will last 3½ days.)

References:

1. John H. Ogwyn, booklet *Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled!*, Oct. 2003, Living Church of God
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