

Chapter 8

Seven Seals

The Lamb opens the seven seals.
Soon end-time events are visible on earth.

End-time events are best understood by breaking the seven-year period into two halves (Appendix 2). There will be an initial 42-month period, and then a 43-month second period will follow. During the initial 42 months, seven seals are broken and seven trumpets sounded.

TABLE 8-1: THE FINAL SEVEN YEARS

FIRST HALF (42 MONTHS)	HALF-TIME	SECOND HALF (43 MONTHS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>7 Seals</u>• <u>Philadelphia rapture</u>• 7 Trumpets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7 Thunders• Resurrection of the Dead• Laodicea rapture• Two Witnesses• Israel rejects Antichrist and accepts Jesus Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Israel Attacked• 7 Bowls• Second Coming

underlined = covered this chapter

Near God's throne is a scroll locked with seven seals. Jesus alone is worthy to break open these seals. Significant end-time events occur as each seal is broken.

Four Horsemen

The first four seals bring the famous four horsemen of the apocalypse. These are four angels riding horses.

SEAL #1: *I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, “Come!” I looked and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.* (Revelation 6:1-2)

The Spirit of CONQUEST comes into the world arena. This angel brings the desire for world domination. This Spirit works to establish a one-world government, such as through the United Nations, with the Antichrist in command. This Spirit approves of efforts to establish a single, worldwide monetary, banking, and business system to place global economic power under the authority of Antichrist. This Spirit desires to control the world’s oil supply. This angel rides a *white horse*—with *white* symbolizing conquest.

SEAL #2: *When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!” Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay each other. To him was given a large sword.* (Revelation 6:3-4)

The Spirit of WAR is the second angel entering the world scene. War is a common response to the aggression that accompanies a spirit of conquest—as seen coming from the first seal. This angel rides a *red horse*—with *red* symbolizing bloodshed.

SEAL #3: *When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, “A quart of wheat for a day’s wages, and three quarts of barley for a day’s wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!”* (Revelation 6:5-6)

THE ETERNAL CROWN

Now the Spirit of FAMINE means that a *quart of wheat* will cost *a day's wages*, and *three quarts of barley* cost *a day's wages* means that food is in short supply. Wheat and barley are basic food requirements; people are paying their entire salary to feed themselves.

SEAL #4: *When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth, to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.* (Revelation 6:7-8)

The Spirit of Death, with authority *to kill ... over a fourth of the earth* comes forward. This fourth angel is "*Death*." Appropriately, this angel rides a *pale horse*—the color attributed to a corpse.

The above verses do not say that one-fourth of the earth's population dies at this point, but only that the Spirit of Death comes onto the end-times stage, with the *power ... to kill*.

"Hades" was the unseen world of the dead. This place had two separate abodes, a place where God's people lived and another area for condemned persons. Jesus called the area of Hades where believers dwelt "*Abraham's side*." (Luke 16:22; AKA "Abraham's Bosom")

That *Hades was following close behind Death* meant that following death, people travel to the unseen world. In other words people die (*Death*), and then immediately travel to the unseen world (*Hades*).

God called sword, famine, wild beasts, and plague the "four dreadful judgments." "*For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: How much worse will it be when I send against Jerusalem my four dreadful judgments—sword and famine and wild beasts and plague—to kill its men and their animals!*" (Ezekiel 14:21)

BIBLE PROPHECY

TABLE 8-2: GOD’S FOUR DREADFUL JUDGMENTS

JUDGMENT	END-TIMES MENTION
Sword	Seal #2
Famine	Seal #3
Wild Beasts	Seal #4
Plague	Seal #4

Many people will die because of *plague* or pestilence, a likely reference to biological warfare. Because *their animals* are also killed—the cause could be anthrax. To kill by *wild beasts* is reminiscent of the days when the Roman Empire fed Christians to the lions. But the application here points to soldiers on the battlefield.

Ezekiel also foresaw birds and *wild animals* feasting on human flesh—devouring the *mighty men and soldiers* that are enemies of Israel. Ezekiel wrote, “*Son of Man, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: Call out to every kind of bird and all the wild animals: ‘Assemble and come together from all around to the sacrifice I am preparing for you, the great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel. There you will eat flesh and drink blood. You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of the earth as if they were rams and lambs, goats and bulls.* (see Ezekiel 39:17-18)

The Call for Justice

SEAL #5: *When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”*

Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.

(Revelation 6:12-17)

Believers in heaven see the release of the four horsemen, and know this event signals the start of the end-times. The martyrs ask, “*How long ... until you judge the people who murder us?*” The martyrs are told to *wait a little longer*. The martyrs were to be patient waiting *until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed*. Additional end-time martyrs are to be added to the final list of martyrs.

Israel poured the blood of sacrificed animal at the *base of the altar*. (Exodus 29:12; Leviticus 4:7) In a similar manner, the souls of sacrificed martyrs were placed *under the altar* in heaven.

The Visible Sixth Seal

SEAL #6: *I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.*

Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the 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 their wrath has come, and who can stand?” (Revelation 6:12-17)

When the martyrs cried for justice at the fifth seal, God will judge the inhabitants of earth as guilty. The spilling of innocent blood has stained the earth *blood red*. God then shows the people on earth another planet that appears covered with blood—the moon. When the *sun* is blotted out (*turned black*) during an lunar eclipse—the moon really does turn a *blood red* color. During such an eclipse the moon turns cupric red—a metallic red—like the color of iron in blood.(1)

BIBLE PROPHECY

God shows those living on earth another planet, the *moon*, which appears *blood red*. At that time, the entire world—to include every *mountain and island*—is shaken. (Revelation 6:14) God punctuates this event through a worldwide *earthquake*. This earthquake is likely caused by meteorites slamming into earth, one after another, similar to how *figs drop* to the ground *from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind*.



Photograph: NASA Public Domain

**Eclipsed moon appears blood red,
as the whole earth shakes!**

God is shaking the world to its senses. He wants people to see themselves as guilty of the blood of innocent people—even infants. God wants the world to confess sin—repent—and turn to him. At this point even unbelievers will know that scripture foretold these events; people will also know that these events immediately precede the outpouring of God’s wrath. People will say, *the great day of wrath has come*. Accordingly, people will seek great religious leaders and prophets to plot a course that might deter such wrath.

However, the people of the earth do not find the right answer. They 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 teachers 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 quote the following verse. The promise is that if people repent, then God will not deliver disaster. *If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned.* (Jeremiah 18:7)

God showed such mercy to ancient Nineveh: *When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.* (Jonah 3:10) What is missing in this interpretation is that end-time events must occur. It will be impossible to follow Antichrist and his false prophets—and *repent of evil* simultaneously.

Early Rapture

The Philadelphia rapture is the initial end-time harvest.

TABLE 8-3: PHILADELPHIA RAPTURE

Harvest	Details
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BIBLE PROPHECY

Sixth Seal rapture ... of the Philadelphia church	<p><i>After this I looked and there before me was a <u>great multitude</u> that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. ...</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Revelation 7:9)</p> <p><i>Then one of the elders asked me “These in white robes--who are they, and <u>where did they come from?</u>” I answered, “Sir, you know.” And he said, “<u>These are they who have come out of the great tribulation</u> ...</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Revelation 7:13-14)</p>
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John asks about the *great multitude* of people who suddenly appear in heaven—*where did they come from?* The answer “*These are they who have come out of the great tribulation*—they were just raptured from earth.

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

After Jesus breaks the seven seals the scroll can be opened, read, and put into effect. However, the excitement subsides with the realization the Laodicea church and Israel were left behind. The most severe persecution is pending, and global nuclear war will come at the first three trumpets, which immediately follow. For such reasons, there is *silence in heaven for about half an hour*.

TABLE 8-4: SEALS VISIBLE TO EARTH

Prophetic Event	Described as...	Jesus taught?	Seen on earth?
Seal #1 Revelation 6:1-2	Angel riding a white horse (Spirit of CONQUEST)	Spoke of war ... famine ... and death at Matthew 24:6-9	no
Seal #2 Revelation 6:3-4	Angel riding a red horse (Spirit of WAR)		no
Seal #3 Revelation 6:5-6	Angel riding a black horse (Spirit of FAMINE)		no
Seal #4 Revelation 6:7-8	Angel riding a pale horse (Spirit of DEATH)		no
Seal #5 Revelation 6:9-11	- Martyrs' cry out--asking God to avenge their blood - God sees earth as a planet that is covered with blood	no	no
Seal #6 Revelation 6:12-17	God then shows the inhabitants of earth another planet that appears covered with blood... - The sun is blotted out and the moon turns blood red. - People on earth—to include most Christians— <u>panic</u> .	Matthew 24:29	yes
Philadelphia Rapture Revelation 7	Rapture <i>from every nation, tribe, people and language</i> – including 144,000 Jesus-believing Jews.	Matthew 24:30-31	
Seal #7 Revelation 8:1	Silence in heaven for about half an hour.	no	no

Reference:

1. Wikipedia. *Lunar Eclipse*. April 4, 2007. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lunar_eclipse