



Session 8

The Timing of the Rapture

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In the last session dealing with the Pre-Wrath view of the rapture, we looked at validating the Pre-Wrath view by harmonizing the prophecies concerning the end of time. The next task is to find if all the problems with the other views are answered by the Pre-Wrath view. But to do this, we must first determine the timing of the rapture according to what the scripture says. The Bible tells us that there are three events that will happen together at the Day of the Lord.



So, in order to determine the timing, we must look for these events in prophecy and discern if there is harmony as to the time when these things will occur.

The book of Revelation locates the sign of the Day of the Lord after the sixth seal is broken.

Rev 6:12-13 (NIV) 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*, {13} and the *stars in the sky fell to earth*, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind.
(emphasis added)

Now we must determine what are these seals and what do they signify. In the prior chapter of Revelation, we are told of a scroll sealed with seven seals. These seals were common in the Apostle John's day. A scroll could be sealed with multiple seals, but it could not be opened until all the seals had been broken.

Rev 5:1-2 (NIV) 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*. {2} And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to *break the seals* and *open the scroll*?" (emphasis added)



The scroll is sealed with seven seals and as the sixth seal is broken the sign of the Day of the Lord takes place. When the seventh seal is broken the scroll is opened and the Day of the Lord's wrath begins. Therefore we can surmise that the scroll sealed with seven seals IS the scroll of the Day of the Lord.

The Timing of the Rapture?

(Rev 7:9-10 NIV) After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count... {10} And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation

belongs to our God, who sits on

Rapture – Salvation/Deliverance!

So, based on the scripture in the book of Revelation, we can deduce that the rapture will follow the breaking of the sixth seal before the Day of the Lord begins.

The Timing of the Rapture?



The Seven Seals of Revelation

Rev 6:1-2 (NIV) 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!" {2} 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. (emphasis added)



The rider on a white horse looks and sounds like a hero, but the implication is that he does not deserve his title. He was *given* a crown which seems to indicate that he did not earn it. Secondly, we are told he rode out *as* a conqueror. Most scholars agree that this seal describes the appearance of the Antichrist on the scene. He will

begin the 70th Week by looking like the answer to the problems of the world.

Rev 6:3-4 (NIV) When the Lamb opened the *second seal*, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" {4} 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. (emphasis added)

The second seal is a rider on a fiery red horse and it's rider was given power to take peace from the earth. This seal symbolizes *war*.



Rev 6:5-6 (NIV) When the Lamb opened the *third seal*... I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. {6} Then I heard... "*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!" (emphasis added)



The third seal is a rider on a black horse and we are told that a quart of wheat will sell for a days wages. This, then, is a reference to the coming of famine.

Rev 6:7-8 (NIV) When the Lamb opened the *fourth seal*... {8} 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. (emphasis added)

The fourth seal is a rider on a pale horse whose name is death. As this seal is opened the ¼ of the earth is under the power of this rider to kill by wars, famines, and other catastrophes. It seems that the ¼ quantity applies to the segment of the world under its control and not necessarily to the number who are actually killed.



Rev 6:9 (NIV) 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. {10} 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?" {11} 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. (emphasis added)

5 Martyrs

As the fifth seal is opened the scene changes to heaven and we are introduced to souls there who had been slain because of their faith. They are told to wait a little longer until the full numbers of martyrs are fulfilled.

Rev 6:12-13 (NIV) 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, {13} and the *stars* in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind.

Rev 6:17 (NIV) For the great day of their *wrath* has come, and who can stand? (emphasis added) When the sixth seal is opened the sign of the Day of the Lord occurs - the sun turns dark, the moon turns red, and the stars fall from the sky, and God's wrath is proclaimed as having come.

6 Sign

Rev 8:1-2,5-6 (NIV) When he opened the *seventh seal*, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. {2} And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given *seven trumpets*... {5} Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth... {6} Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets *prepared to sound them*. (emphasis added)

7 Day of the Lord

As the seventh seal is broken, the angels with the seven trumpets prepare to sound them. The Day of the Lord's wrath has come. The seven trumpets begin to pour out God's wrath upon the world.

Timing of the Rapture?

- The Seals in Revelation

Compared to...

- The timing of Matthew 24

Mat 24:4-5 (NIV) Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. {5} For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

1 Antichrist

A dark red rectangular banner with a gold sunburst on the left containing the number '2' and the word 'Wars' in white serif font.

Mat 24:6-7 (NIV) You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. {7} Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom...

Mat 24:7 NIV) ... There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.

A dark red rectangular banner with a gold sunburst on the left containing the number '3' and the word 'Famine' in white serif font.A dark red rectangular banner with a gold sunburst on the left containing the number '4' and the word 'Death' in white serif font.

Matt 24:8-10 (NIV) All these are the beginning of birth pains. {9} "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. {10} At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other...

The scripture then describes a period of suffering where these fourth and fifth seals will be opened. It says that this time of suffering will be unparalleled in all of history.

A dark red rectangular banner with a gold sunburst on the left containing the number '5' and the word 'Martyrs' in white serif font.

Mat 24:21-22 (NIV) For *then* there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equaled again. {22} If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. (emphasis added)

Matthew 24 vs. Revelation
 (Mat 24:21-22 NIV) For **then** there

At This Time...
Between vs. 10-20

one would su for the sake of
 the elect those can be shortened.

4 Death **5** Martyrs

In Matthew 24 from verses 10 until verse 20, describes a time of suffering...

Matthew 24 vs. Revelation
 (Mat 24:10-16 NIV) **At that time**
 many will turn away from the
 faith and will betray and hate each
 other... but he who stands firm to
 the end will be saved...

4 ← **Suffering** → **5**

It is important to note the indicators that Matthew uses to show the relation of time. In verse 9 he starts, "Then you will be handed over..." and then in verse 10 he states, "At that time many will turn away from the faith..." He continues in verse 21 "For then there will be great distress..." All of these references center around verse 15...

Mat 24:15-16, 19 (NIV) *So* when you see standing in the holy place '*the abomination that*

causes desolation'... {16} then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. {19} How dreadful it will be in those days... (emphasis added)

Therefore, we can place the fourth and fifth seal suffering centered around the Abomination of Desolation. And we know that the Abomination of Desolation is the mid-point of the 70th Week when Antichrist demands that the world worship him. The suffering between the fourth and fifth seals, then, follow the Antichrist's demand for worship.



Matthew 24 defines, then, the first through third seals as the "beginning of birth pains." So, we can illustrate the seals and the timing to look like the diagram below...



Now, back to Matthew 24, the next event in the passage is the sign of the Day of the Lord - the sixth seal!

Matthew 24 vs. Revelation

(Mat 24:29-31 NIV) "**Immediately** after the distress of those days 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

6 Sign

Matthew 24 continues...

Matt 24:30-31 (NIV) *At that time* the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. {31} And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call and they will gather

power and great glory. {31} And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. (emphasis added)

Matt 24:37-38 (NIV) As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. {38} For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; {39} and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away.

That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. {40} Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. (emphasis added)



The diagram below depicts how the seven seals fall in the 70th Week of Daniel according to Matthew 24 and the book of Revelation.



The exact timing of when each seal will happen is not clear except that the first 3 seals will happen before the mid-point, the 4th and 5th around or just after the mid-point, and the 6th and 7th seals after the mid-point.



Jesus told us in Mark 13:32 that no one knows the day and the hour. But He did say...

Matt 24:32 (NIV) Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. {33} Even so, *when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.* (emphasis added)

We can know His coming is "right at the door." So, we cannot say exactly when during the final half of the 70th Week that the rapture will occur - but according to Matthew 24 it will be sometime during the second 3½ years. Jesus did give us two exciting clues as to when it would happen:

Two Clues...

- **Matt 24:22** (NIV) "...for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened."
- **Matt 24:29** (NIV) "Immediately after the distress of those days..."

We can say that the tribulation of the second half of the 70th Week will be cut short for the elect (saints), and that the rapture will take place *immediately* after the distress of those days. It helps us to realize why the New Testament writers would say, "even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus!"

There is one other important note when placing the timing of the rapture. It will happen before the 1st trumpet sounds and the seventh trumpet sounds at the end of the 70th Week. The fifth trumpet that sounds brings 5 months of torment to those on the earth. Therefore, presumably the rapture would have to happen at least 6 months prior to the end of the 70th Week for all the other trumpet judgments to fit in.

In the last 3 1/2 years of the 70th week, the rapture could happen in as quickly as 6 months or less, or as much as

2½ to 3 years. The fact that Jesus uses the word "immediately" causes this writer to believe that the rapture will happen very early in the 2nd half of the 70th Week.

- [The Millennium](#)
- [Daniel's 70th Week](#)
- [The 30 Days](#)
- [The 45 Days](#)
- [The Rapture](#)
- [The Day of the Lord](#)
- [The PreWrath Rapture](#)
- [Timing of the Rapture](#)
- [Rapture Problems](#)
- [The Wrath of God](#)