

A SCRIPTURAL OVERVIEW OF END-TIME EVENTS

By Stephen Xu

I. THE 70TH WEEK OF DANIEL

DANIEL'S 70 WEEKS PROPHECY

"²⁴**Seventy weeks** (or 70 sevens, in this context, it means 70 times 7 years, with a year of 360 days) have been decreed for **your people** (the Jewish people) and **your holy city** (the city of Jerusalem), to **finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place** (the 6 purposes to be fulfilled within the 70 Weeks, after which the whole Israel will be saved. More to follow). ²⁵So you are to know and discern that from **the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem** (fulfilled in 444 BC by King Artaxerxes, cf. Nehemiah 2:1-8) until **Messiah the Prince** (the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem in AD 33, cf. Luke 19:29-44) there will be **seven weeks** (that is, 49 years) and **sixty-two weeks** (that is, 434 years); it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. ²⁶Then after the sixty-two weeks **the Messiah will be cut off** (Jesus Christ was crucified just 4 days later) and have nothing and **the people of the prince who is to come** (that is, General Titus and the Roman Empire army) will destroy the city and the sanctuary (In the war against the Jews in AD 70, the Roman army besieged and destroyed Jerusalem, burned the temple, and killed more than one million people). And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined." (Daniel 9:24-26, emphasis and notes added)

THE 70TH WEEK OF DANIEL

"²⁷And (since the events prophesied in the 70th Week have not been fulfilled yet, there is a long gap between verse 26 and 27. The 70th Week is still to come) **he** (the prince of the restored Roman Empire, who is called Antichrist in the end times, also called the beast that comes out of the sea in Revelation 13, the man of lawlessness and son of destruction in 2 Thessalonians 2:3) will make **a firm covenant** (that is, a covenant with death, see Isaiah 28:15) with the many for **one week** (that is, 7 years, or 2520 days), but **in the middle of the week** (that is, after 3 and half years, or 1260 days) he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate (that is, the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION referred by Jesus in Matthew 24:15), even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate (that is, the final destruction of Antichrist in the battle of Armageddon, cf. Revelation 19:20)." (Daniel 9:27, emphasis and notes added)

THE 70TH WEEK OF DANIEL PLUS 75 DAYS

"¹¹From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be **1,290 days** (that is, there will be 1260 days plus 30 days from the revelation of Antichrist at the midpoint of the 70th Week until the total destruction of Antichrist in the battle of Armageddon). ¹²How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the **1,335 days** (that is, there will be another 45 days until the Millennium Kingdom of Christ is established on earth)!" (Daniel 12:11-12, emphasis and notes added)

THE WHOLE ISRAEL IS SAVED AFTER THE 70TH WEEK OF DANIEL

"**Seventy weeks** have been decreed for **your people** and **your holy city**, to **finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity**, (the first three purposes find their fulfillment during the passing of the 490 years, at the end of which, Israel will finally receive total forgiveness and cleansing from her past rebellion against God and all other sins, cf. Ezekiel 37:21-23, Jeremiah 31:34) **to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy (place)** (the latter three purposes find their fulfillment after the passing of the 490 years, when the whole Israel will receive everlasting righteousness through their faith in Christ Jesus, cf. Romans 3:22, 2 Corinthians 5:21, find no need for a prophet because the Lord Jesus will be personally present and attend their needs, cf. Isaiah 60, Revelation 21:3, 22-23, and exalt Lord Jesus as their anointed King of Israel, cf. Zephaniah 3:14-15, John 12:13)." (Daniel 9:24, emphasis and notes added)

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES:

"And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles **until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled** ('the times of the Gentiles' is a specific time-period of Gentiles' dominion over both the nation of Israel and city of Jerusalem. The fulfillment of the times of the Gentiles is the end of the 70th Week of Daniel, as indicated clearly in Revelation 11:2)." (Luke 21:24, emphasis and notes added)

"²⁵For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of **this mystery** (that is, the mystery of Israel's partial hardening), lest you be wise in your own estimation, that **a partial hardening** (that is, a part of Israel's unwillingness to accept Christ Jesus as their Messiah and Lord) has happened to Israel **until** (until to the time in which) **the fullness of the Gentiles has come in** (that is, the full number of elect Gentiles is achieved, in other words, the salvation of all chosen Gentiles is completed); ²⁶and thus **all Israel will be saved** (that is, every single Jew that survives the persecution by Satan/Antichrist and God's refining wrath will get saved, cf. Zechariah 13:8-9, Isaiah 66:20. The timing of the salvation of Israel thus must be after the 70th Week of Daniel ends [which is after the sixth trumpet], when 'the mystery of God is finished' [Revelation 10:7], and before the seventh trumpet, when God

takes back the rule of earth and begins His final wrath [Revelation 11:15], see below for more details); just as it is written, *'The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.'*²⁷ *'And this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.'*" (Romans 11:25-27, emphasis, Italics and notes added)

GOD TAKES BACK HIS RULE OF EARTH AFTER THE 70TH WEEK OF DANIEL

⁵**Then** (the timing of this passage is after the sixth trumpet is sounded) the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, ⁶and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that **there will be delay no longer** (this is the response to the beseech by the martyrs' souls at the fifth seal, see Revelation 6:9-11. Now God is going to pour out His wrath on Antichrist's kingdom and earth-dwellers and avenge the blood of the martyrs), ⁷but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, **when he is about to sound** (that is, before he sounds the seventh trumpet), then **the mystery of God** (that is, God's special work in Christ to bring Gentiles to glory, cf. Colossians 1:27, 2:2. Notice this mystery of God is different than but closely tied to the mystery of Israel's partial hardening spoken by Paul Romans 11:25, but God is working with both of them at the same time) **is finished** (that is, 'the fullness of the Gentiles has come in' stated by Paul in Romans 11:25, and 'the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled' spoken by Jesus in Luke 21:24. Therefore, the sixth trumpet actually ends the 70th Week of Daniel, after which, the whole family Israel will be saved), as He preached to His servants the prophets." (Revelation 10:5-7, emphasis and notes added)

¹⁵**Then** (that is, after the sixth trumpet ends, after the 70th Week of Daniel ends, into the 75-day extended period, see Daniel 12:11-12 above) the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, **'The kingdom of the world** (which according to John 12:31 and 2 Corinthians 4:4 belongs to Satan, the god and ruler of this world) **has become** (the ingressive use of the aorist of this verb emphasizes on the entrance into a new state, rather than a preview of what is to come or an event that has occurred in the past. It is better translated as 'has begun to become') **the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ** (that is, God reclaims His rightful rule of earth from Satan to Himself, which, as indicated here, happens immediately following the conclusion of the 70th Week of Daniel); **and He will reign forever and ever.'** ¹⁶And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷saying, 'We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because **You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign** (this another ingressive use of the verb confirms the notion that the physical reign of God on earth has just transpired).

¹⁸And **the nations were enraged** (the hostile response of the nations toward God's reign on earth is prophesied and vividly depicted in Psalm 2:1-3), and **Your wrath came** (the six trumpet judgments already passed but the seventh trumpet initiates the seven bowl judgments, which are the final wrath of God and still to come, cf. Revelation 15:1), and the time came for **the dead to be judged** (that is, the righteous dead to be judged. The wicked dead will not be judged until the end of the millennial reign of Christ, cf. Revelation

20:11-15), and the time to **reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints** (that is, two groups of believers: prophets and saints are to be rewarded after being judged by God) and (the following is a further definition of the prophets and saints) those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.” (Revelation 11:15-18, emphasis and notes added)

THE BEGINNING OF BIRTH PANGS – THE FIRST HALF OF THE 70TH WEEK OF DANIEL

³As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, **when will these things happen** (‘these things’ refer to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple prophesied by Jesus in verses 1 to 2), **and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?** (the disciples seemed to connect the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple with Christ’s Second Coming and the end of the age. Besides the timing question WHEN, they wanted to know HOW these things will come to pass)’

⁴And Jesus answered (notice that Jesus skipped the first question WHEN but gave a detailed picture of the second question HOW) and said to them, ‘See to it that no one misleads you.

⁵For many will come in My name, saying, ‘**I am the Christ**’ (that is, the false christs, typified by the rider on the white horse, as the 1st Seal broken by Christ in Revelation 6:2) and will mislead many. ⁶You will be hearing of **wars and rumors of wars** (the 2nd Seal broken in Revelation 6:3-4). See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but **that is not yet the end.**

⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be **famines and earthquakes** (the 3rd Seal broken in Revelation 6:5-6. Although earthquakes are not mentioned in the 3rd Seal, they are most likely the causes for great famines around the world). ⁸But all these things are merely the **beginning of birth pangs** (which means, the hard labour - the persecution of the saints, and the delivery - the deliverance of the saints, are still to come, yet in a short time manner).” (Matthew 24:3-8, emphasis and notes added)

II. THE GREAT TRIBULATION BY ANTICHRIST

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION BY ANTICHRIST

⁹**Then** (that is, after the beginning of the birth pangs depicted from verse 5 to 7 of Matthew 24 has come to pass) **they** (Antichrist and his people) will deliver you to **tribulation** (that is, the hard labour, the persecution of God's people), and **will kill you** (that is, the 4th Seal - Death broken in Revelation 6:7-8. 'a fourth of the earth' is the exact population of claimed Christians in today's world) and you will be hated by all nations **because of My name** (that is, for the sake of Jesus, His followers, both the Jews and Gentiles, will be persecuted). ¹⁰At that time **many will fall away** (that is, the apostasy spoken by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2: 3. Those look-alike 'Christians' will forsake their faith in Christ when facing the great persecution by Antichrist and choose to worship Antichrist and accept his mark, cf. Revelation 13:16-17) and will betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹Many **false prophets** (which definitely include the 'another beast' - the Enforcer of Antichrist that comes up out of the earth in Revelation 13:11) will arise and will mislead many. ¹²"Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. ¹³But **the one who endures to the end, he will be saved** (that is, the promise of physical deliverance, rather than spiritual salvation, of the saints who survive the great tribulation). ¹⁴This **gospel of the kingdom** (that is, the gospel of God's reign on earth, preached by Christ in the early part of His ministry on earth, cf. Matthew 4:23, Mark 1:14-15, rather than the gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, preached by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4) **shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations** (this will be literally fulfilled by the 'another angel' in Revelation 14:6 that flies in midheaven just before the final wrath of God is poured out onto those who dwell on the earth), and **then the end will come** (that is, the age of man will come to an end in God's final wrath)". (**Matthew 24:9-14**, emphasis and notes added)

THE TIMING OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION – THE SECOND HALF OF THE 70TH WEEK OF DANIEL

¹⁵**Therefore** (notice that after giving a general overview of the end-time events from verse 1 to 14, from this verse on Jesus starts to give detailed instructions and warnings regarding the great tribulation period) when you see the **ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet** (that is, the Antichrist spoken of through Daniel in Daniel 9:27), **standing in the holy place** (which according to Daniel 9:27 will happen in the midpoint of the 70th Week and trigger the worst persecution of Jews and Christians in the history of mankind, cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:4. This verse also suggests that the Temple of God, or at least the Tabernacle, will be rebuilt before the midpoint of the 70th Week of Daniel), ¹⁶then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. ¹⁷Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. ¹⁸Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. ...²¹For then there will be **a great tribulation** (the severity of the tribulation, as stated in this verse, is the worst in the human

history and will even make the Holocaust in World War II compare in pale), such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will". (**Matthew 24:15-18, 21**, emphasis and notes added)

THE NATURE OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION – WRATH OF SATAN

⁷**And there was war in heaven** (notice that much alike the structure of Matthew 24, Revelation also gives a general overview of the end-time events from chapter 6 to chapter 11, then depicts in details the great tribulation period from chapter 12 to chapter 13. Therefore, this heavenly war is supposed to happen in the midpoint of the 70th Week), Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, ⁸and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. ⁹And the **great dragon** was thrown down, **the serpent of old** who is called **the devil** and **Satan**, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ... ¹²For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, **having great wrath** (this key verse reveals that the great tribulation or persecution by Antichrist is the wrath of Satan, not the wrath of God, which will not be unleashed until the 144,000 faithful Jews are sealed and the remaining saints that have survived the persecution are rescued or raptured by Christ, cf. Revelation 7. Furthermore, the martyrs' souls' beseech in the 5th Seal: 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' also confirms that their death is by the hands of Antichrist's followers not by the hands of God, cf. Revelation 6:9-11), knowing that he has **only a short time** (from the time Satan begins the great persecution through Antichrist to the time he is bounded for a thousand years, he has less than 1,335 days, cf. Daniel 12:11-12". (**Revelation 12:7-9, 12**, emphasis and notes added)

THE OBJECT OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION – JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

¹³And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, **he persecuted the woman** (that is, the remnant Jews of Israel, cf. Revelation 12:1-2. They are the first target of Satan's wrath) who gave birth to **the male child** (that is, the Christ, who was caught up to God and His throne and is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, cf. Revelation 12:5). ¹⁴But 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** (that is, they will be protected by God during the second half of the 70th Week, which last 3 and half years, or 1260 days), from the presence of the serpent. ¹⁵And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood. ¹⁶But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. ¹⁷**So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus** (that is, clearly, the faithful followers of Christ, which according to Romans 4:16 are spiritual descendants of Abraham. They are the second target of Satan's wrath). " (**Revelation**

12:13-17, emphasis and notes added)

THE PURPOSES OF GOD ALLOWING THE CHURCH TO UNDERGO THE GREAT TRIBULATION

1. TO TEST THE FAITH OF THE SAINTS

“¹²Beloved, do not be surprised at the **fiery ordeal** (i.e., the fiery ordeal by Antichrist and his people during the great tribulation) among you, which comes upon you **for your testing** (the testing of the faith as a purpose of persecutions), as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also **at the revelation of His glory** (at His second coming) you may rejoice with exultation.” (1 Peter 4:12-13, emphasis and notes added)

2. TO REFINE THE FAITH OF THE SAINTS

“⁶In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by **various trials** (i.e. the various trials during the great tribulation), ⁷so that **the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable**, even though tested by fire, **may be found to result in praise and glory and honor** (the refinement of faith as another purpose of persecutions) **at the revelation of Jesus Christ** (at His second advent)”. (1 Peter 1:6-7, emphasis and notes added)

3. TO PURIFY THE CHURCH AS THE WORTHY BRIDE OF CHRIST

“¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹²instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, ¹³looking for **the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus** (again, at His second coming), ¹⁴who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to **purify for Himself a people for His own possession** (the purification of the church, a third purpose as indicated here, so that the church can be presented to Christ ‘holy and blameless’, ‘having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing’ [Ephesians 5:27], at the second coming of the Lord Jesus), zealous for good deeds”. ... “And now, little children, abide in Him, so that **when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming**”. (Titus 2:11-14, 1 John 2:28, emphasis and notes added)

III. THE RETURN OF CHRIST AND RAPTURE OF THE SAINTS

THE CLEAR SEQUENCE OF EVENTS PRESENTED IN MATTHEW 24:21-31

1. THE GREAT TRIBULATION CUT SHORT BY THE LORD

“²¹For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. ²²Unless **those days** (that is, the days of the great tribulation, 3 and half years, which were originally decreed to Antichrist to persecute the saints, cf. Daniel 7:25, 9:27, Revelation 13:5) had been **cut short** (the Greek word used here is *koloboo*, which suggests a literal amputation of the days of tribulation. Mark 13:20 makes it clear that the Lord is the one who shortens the days of tribulation), **no life would have been saved** (which literally means no flesh would be physically delivered); but for the sake of **the elect** (or the chosen of God in Mark 13:20, is a collective noun only appeared in the New Testament that refers to church-age believers which include both Jews and Gentiles, cf. Luke 18:7, Romans 8:33, Ephesians 1:4-5, 2 Timothy 2:10, Titus 1:1, 1 Peter 1:1, 2:9, 2 John 1:1, 13, Revelation 17:14) **those days will be cut short** (it is by the mercy of God that these terrible days will be shortened so that the faithful can endure to the end and be delivered by the return of Christ, see below 1 Corinthians 10:13)”. (**Matthew 24:21-22**, emphasis and notes added)

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE:

“God is faithful, who will not allow you **to be tempted** (or literally, to be tested, i.e. by the great tribulation) beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide **the way of escape** (in the case of the great tribulation, the way of escape will be Christ’s personal return to the earth to receive His own to Himself, which is, the Rapture or Gathering of the saints, see Matthew 24:31 below) also, so that you will be able to endure it”. (**1 Corinthians 10:13**, emphasis and notes added)

2. THE SIGN OF THE SUN, MOON AND STARS

“²⁹But **immediately after the tribulation** (that is, after the days of tribulation are cut short) of those days **THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky** (the Sign of Sun, Moon and Stars as prophesied throughout the Scriptures signals the beginning of God’s wrath against the wicked during the Day of the Lord Judgment, see supporting scriptures below), and the powers of the heavens will be shaken”. (**Matthew 24:29**, emphasis and notes added, see also **Luke 21:25-26**)

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES:

“⁹Behold, **the day of the LORD is coming**, cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the

land a desolation. And He will exterminate its sinners from it. ¹⁰**For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises; and the moon will not shed its light.** ¹¹Thus I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity; I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud and abase the haughtiness of the ruthless". (Isaiah 13:9-11, emphasis added)

¹Blow a trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for **the day of the LORD is coming**; surely it is near. ... ¹⁰Before them the earth quakes, the heavens tremble, **the sun and the moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness.** ... ³¹**The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes** (notice that this verse was also quoted by Peter in Acts 2:20). ³²And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the LORD will **be delivered** (that is, physically delivered or rescued); For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those **who escape** (that is, escape from the coming wrath of God. This is a profound Old Testament prophecy regarding the protection of Jews and rapture of the saints at the beginning of the day of the Lord), as the LORD has said, even among the survivors whom the LORD calls." (Joel 2:1, 10, 31-32, emphasis and notes added)

3. THE GLORIOUS RETURN OF CHRIST

²⁷For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, **so shall the coming of the Son of Man be** (the second coming of Christ will be visible to all who live on the earth on that day. While all the natural lights are out, Christ will be the only Light on that day) ... ³⁰And **then** (that is, after the appearance of the sign of the sun, moon and stars in the sky) **the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky** (the Lord Jesus will appear physically and personally in His second coming, first to receive His own to Himself, then to judge the world, details to follow), and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the **SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory** (the second advent of Christ is powerful and glorious because Christ is coming with God the Father, the All Powerful and Mighty One of the universe, see supporting scriptures below". (Matthew 24:27, 30, emphasis and notes added)

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES:

"Jesus said to him, 'You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see **THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER** ('power' refers to the All Powerful One, which is, God the Father), and **COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN**". (Matthew 26:64, emphasis and note added, see also Mark 14:62)

²⁷Then they will see **THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory.** ²⁸But when these things begin to take place, **straighten up and lift up your heads** (for Christ is coming from above!), because **your redemption is drawing near** (in the context, this 'redemption' is no other than the physical rescue or deliverance of the

remaining saints that have survived the great persecution by Antichrist. This is also called 'the rapture of the saints'. See below for details". (Luke 21:27, emphasis and notes added)

4. THE RAPTURE OF THE ELECT/SAINTS

³¹And He will send forth His angels with **A GREAT TRUMPET** and **THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect** (that is, Christ with His angels will gather or rapture His chosen people, first the dead in Christ, then the living believers on earth. Also notice that by removing the living saints from earth, the Lord Himself literally cuts short the great tribulation by Antichrist, and 'renders him useless', cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:8) from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other". (Matthew 24:31, emphasis and notes added)

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES:

(Jesus said) "If I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself** (the promise of Christ to return and receive, or gather together, His own to Himself), that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:3, emphasis and notes added)

¹⁵For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive and remain** (a better translation is: **we who are alive and survive**) until **the coming of the Lord**, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For 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**. ¹⁷Then **we who are alive and remain** (or, **alive and survive**) **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. ¹⁸Therefore comfort one another with these words". (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18, emphasis and notes added)

¹Now we request you, brethren, with regard to **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ AND our gathering together to Him** (notice here Paul used the same word 'gather together' as Christ in Matthew 24:31 to refer to the rapture of the saints. The connective 'and' in this verse suggests that the coming of Lord Jesus and the rapture of the saints are back to back events and can not be separated from each other), ²that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** (notice that Paul was using three terms: 'the coming of Lord Jesus Christ', 'our gathering together to Him' and 'the day of the Lord' interchangeably in this passage. Why? It is simply because these three events are back to back and will happen on the same day, see the next chapter 'The Day of the Lord Judgment' for explanations) has come. ³Let no one in any way deceive you, **for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction**, ⁴**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** (Paul makes it very clear that the return of Christ and rapture of the saints will NOT happen until AFTER Antichrist is revealed when he takes seat in the temple and demands

the world's worship. In other words, the coming of Christ and rapture of the saints will NOT happen until AFTER the beginning of the Great Tribulation)". (2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, emphasis and notes added)

THE PARALLEL SEQUENCE OF EVENTS RECORDED IN REVELATION CHAPTER 6 AND 7

1. THE PLEAD OF THE SOULS OF THE MARTYRS FOR GOD TO JUDGE THE EARTH DWELLERS AND AVENGING THEIR BLOOD

⁹And when He (that is, Christ Jesus) 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 (notice that these are the souls of the martyrs who were slain because of their commitment to Christ during the great tribulation by Antichrist. They don't have resurrected bodies yet until the first day of Millennial, cf. Revelation 20:4); ¹⁰and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' (here the martyrs' souls are asking the Lord God to judge the people of Antichrist and avenge their blood) ¹¹And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a while longer (the Lord didn't give them a direct answer but told them to 'rest for a while longer'. The subsequent 6th seal initiates the sign of the Day of the Lord, which is followed by the Seven-Trumpet Judgment. During the seven trumpets, the fifth trumpet lasts five months [Revelation 9:5] and the seventh trumpet announces the end of the 70th Week of Daniel and the reign of Christ on earth [Revelation 10:7, 11:15]. Therefore, we can safely conclude that the great tribulation is at least cut short by five months) until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also." (Revelation 6:9-11, emphasis and notes added)

2. THE SIGN OF THE SUN, MOON AND STARS

¹²I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake (see also Joel 2:10a); and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; ¹³and the stars of the sky fell to the earth (without a doubt, this is exactly the sign prophesied by old testament prophets and Lord Jesus as the sign of the Day of the Lord), as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. ¹⁴The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." (Revelation 6:12-14, emphasis and notes added)

3. THE GLORIOUS RETURN OF CHRIST

¹⁵Then 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; ¹⁶and 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** (that is, God the Father, who is present at the coming of Lord Jesus Christ), and from **the wrath of the Lamb** (that is, Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, sitting on the right hand of God and coming on the clouds of heavens, see Matthew 26:64 and Mark 14:62); ¹⁷**for the great day of their wrath has come** (the phrase 'has come' in its original Greek meaning denotes the beginning of an event. Thus verse 17 means the great day of God's wrath has just begun to come. Realizing this, therefore, the earth dwellers begin to hide themselves and seek death), and **who is able to stand?** (a rhetorical question with certitude, which simply states: no one is able to stand when the wrath of God comes)" (**Revelation 6:15-17**, emphasis and notes added)

4. THE RAPTURE OF THE SAINTS

⁹**After these things** (that is, after the 144,000 Jews were sealed in Revelation 7:1-8) I looked, and behold, **a great multitude which no one could count** (that is, the raptured saints who include both the dead in Christ of all the ages and the living believers on earth at the time of Christ's return, see below for explanations), **from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues** (this great multitude is composed of people from all around the world, which confirms the notion that they are the raptured saints or church), **standing** before the throne and before the Lamb, **clothed** in white robes, and **palm branches were in their hands** (notice they are different than the souls in the 5th seal: they have properly clothed physical bodies: standing on their feet and waving palm branches by their hands! They are no other than the raptured saints!); ¹⁰and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, '**Salvation** (or literally 'victory') to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb' ... ¹³Then 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?**' ¹⁴I said to him, 'My lord, you know.' And he said to me, '**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation** (in other words, they have come out from the period of the great tribulation. With this key verse, we are left with no other options regarding the identity of the great multitude - they are indeed the saints of present and past ages raptured by the Lord Jesus Christ when He cuts short the great tribulation by Antichrist), and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'" (**Revelation 7:9-10, 13-14**, emphasis and notes added)

IV. THE DAY OF THE LORD JUDGEMENT

THE NATURE OF THE DAY OF THE LORD – THE WRATH OF GOD

“¹⁵**Then** (that is, after the sign of the sun, moon and stars that signals the beginning of the Day of the Lord appears in the sky) 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; ¹⁶and 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** (that is, God the Father), and from **the wrath of the Lamb** (that is, Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God); ¹⁷**for the great day of their wrath has come** (this verse makes it clear that the nature of the Day of the Lord is the wrath of God, see supporting scriptures below), and who is able to stand?’” (Revelation 6:12-17, emphasis and notes added)

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

“⁶Wail, for **the day of the LORD** is near! It will come as **destruction from the Almighty** (this is the primary purpose of the Day of the Lord - to destroy the evil and wicked on earth. The secondary purpose of the Day of the Lord is to refine the third part of Israel who will survive the Great Tribulation by Antichrist, cf. Jeremiah 30:11, Zechariah 13:9, Malachi 3:2-4, and prepare the remnant of Israel for her Messiah Jesus Christ). ⁷Therefore all hands will fall limp, and every man's heart will melt. ⁸They will be terrified, pains and anguish will take hold of them; they will writhe like a woman in labor, they will look at one another in astonishment, their faces aflame. ⁹Behold, **the day of the LORD is coming, cruel, with fury and burning anger** (in other words, with great wrath), **to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it** (the two objects of the Day of the Lord Judgment: the earth and the wicked earth-dwellers). ¹⁰For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises; and the moon will not shed its light. ¹¹Thus I will **punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity**; I will also **put an end to the arrogance of the proud and abase the haughtiness of the ruthless** (in a word, the Day of the Lord Judgment is destruction, punishment and humiliation from the Lord Almighty God onto the evil, wicked, arrogant and ruthless dwellers on earth)”. (Isaiah 13:6-11, emphasis added, see also **Zephaniah 1:14-18**)

“⁵(God) did not spare the ancient world, but **preserved** Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when **He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly** (the first comparison made by Peter between the Day of the Lord Judgment and the Flood at Noah's days that destroyed the whole world except the family of Noah); ⁶and if **He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes** (the second comparison made by Peter between the Day of the Lord Judgment and the total destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by God), having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter; ⁷and if He **rescued** righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual

conduct of unprincipled men. ... ⁹then **the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation** (that is, just like God did for Noah and Lot before the Flood and destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Lord God will also preserve/rescue His people before His wrath is poured out onto the earth to destroy the evil and wicked. As we have already seen from the scriptures at the previous chapter, Christ will accomplish this goal at His return by sealing the remnant Jews and catching away the living saints on earth before the seven trumpets are sounded), **and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the Day of Judgment** (that is, to keep those who are left behind for the Day of the Lord Judgment, which consists of the seven trumpet and seven bowl judgments. See below for details)". (2 Peter 2:5-7, 9, emphasis and notes added)

THE TIMING OF THE DAY OF THE LORD JUDGMENT

It Starts on the Same Day as the Rapture of the Saints

³⁶But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone (the exact time of the Lord's coming is made unknown by God the Father, yet the manner of His coming is made clear through the passage below). ³⁷For **the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah** (in two ways: first it will come suddenly in surprise to the wicked; second, the righteous will be delivered, i.e. raptured or caught away, before the wicked are destroyed). ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until **the day that Noah entered the ark**, ³⁹and they did not understand until **the flood came and took them all away** (they were totally destroyed on the same day as Noah and his family entered the ark); **so will the coming of the Son of Man be** (in the same manner, the Day of the Lord Judgment will happen on the same day as the elect of God are rescued or raptured from the earth). ⁴⁰Then there will be two men in the field; one will be **taken** (that is, taken to be with the Lord) and one will be **left** (that is, left for God's judgment). ⁴¹Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be **taken** and one will be **left**. ⁴²Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming". (Matthew 24:36-42, emphasis and notes added, see also Luke 17:26-30)

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE:

¹¹In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, **on the same day** all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. ¹²The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights. ¹³**On the very same day** Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, **entered the ark** (this key verse clearly states that the rain fell down from heaven on the same day as Noah and his family entered the ark. The Day of the Lord Judgment, as Christ describes in Matthew 24 and Luke 17, will also start on the same day as Christ returns to earth and after He raptures His saints), ¹⁴they and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, all sorts of birds."

(Genesis 7:11-14, emphasis and notes added)

It Ends on the 7th Bowl Judgment at the Day of the Battle of Armageddon

¹Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had **seven plagues** (that is, the seven bowl judgments), which **are the last** (or, final), because **in them the wrath of God is finished** (which supports the notion that the Day of the Lord ends at the seventh bowl judgment, which is believed to be 30 days after the end of the 70th Week of Daniel, at the same day of the Battle of Armageddon, cf. Daniel 12:11). ... ¹⁷Then **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.'** (which means, the total wrath of God is complete. From this point on, there is a 45-day restoration period during which God will restore the earth and prepare it for the Millennium Kingdom of Christ, cf. Daniel 12:12) ¹⁸And 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." (Revelation 15:1 and 16:17-18, emphasis and notes added)

THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS DURING THE DAY OF THE LORD

1. The Seven Trumpet Judgments

¹**When the Lamb broke the seventh seal** (which then makes the whole book open, thus revealing the content of the book: the initial wrath of God - the seven trumpet judgments, which cumulate to the end of the 70th Week of Daniel), there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ²And I saw **the seven angels** who stand before God, and **seven trumpets** were given to them. ³Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. ⁵Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake. ⁶And the seven angels who had the **seven trumpets** (see Revelation 8-9 for descriptions of the first six trumpet judgments, and Revelation 10:7-8 for the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which initiates the final wrath of God - the seven bowl judgments. See below for an explanation of the seventh trumpet), prepared themselves to sound them." (Revelation 8:1-6, emphasis and notes added)

⁷but in the days of **the voice of the seventh angel** (Just like the seventh seal initiates the seven trumpet judgments, the seventh trumpet initiates the seven bowl judgments, which cumulate to the climactic battle of Armageddon), when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets. ⁸Then the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, 'Go, take **the book** (that is, 'the little book' in Revelation 10:2. After eating it, John was given a new series of visions about the ministry of the two witnesses during the second half the 70th Week

of Daniel, the final wrath of God - the seven bowl judgments in the extended 30-day period, and the establishment of the Millennium Kingdom of Christ on earth) which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land.” (Revelation 10:7-8, emphasis and notes added)

2. The Seven Bowl Judgments

“⁶and the seven angels who had **the seven plagues** (that is, the seven bowl judgments) came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes. ⁷Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels **seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God** (the bowl judgments are different than the trumpet judgments in that they are quick to pour out and accomplished in a short time manner [in 30 days]. Moreover, they are the wrath of God to the fullest extent. While the trumpet judgments only affect a third of the earth and living beings, the bowl judgments intend for the whole earth and every living being on earth, see Revelation 16 for details about the bowl judgments), who lives forever and ever. ⁸And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.” (Revelation 15:6-8, emphasis and notes added)

3. The Marriage of the Lamb

“⁶Then I heard something like the voice of **a great multitude** (that is, the raptured saints of all ages, see Revelation 7:9) and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. ⁷Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for **the marriage of the Lamb** (that is, the heavenly ceremony of Christ formally receiving His own to Himself) has come and **His bride** (that is, the elect of Christ, ‘those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life’, cf. Revelation 21:27) has made herself ready. ⁸It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” (Revelation 19:6-8, emphasis and notes added)

4. The Battle of Armageddon

“¹¹And I saw heaven opened, and behold, **a white horse** (which compares to the white horse in the 1st seal in Revelation 6:2), and He who sat on it is called **Faithful and True** (this rider is the Faithful and True Christ, compared to the false Christ in Revelation 6:2), and in righteousness He judges and wages war. ¹²His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are **many diadems** (which are eternal heavenly diadems, compared to the temporary earthly diadems on the heads of Satan [Revelation 12:3] and the beast [Revelation 13:1]); and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. ¹³He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called **The Word of God** (which makes the rider’s identity crystal clear: He is the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God, cf. John 1:1, 14). ¹⁴And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. ... ¹⁹And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and

their armies **assembled** (at the battlefield of Armageddon, cf. Revelation 16:16) to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.” (Revelation 19:11-14, 19, emphasis and notes added)

5. The Final Destruction of Antichrist and the False Prophet

“²⁰And **the beast** (that is, the beast from the sea, the Antichrist, cf. Revelation 13:1-4) was seized, and with him **the false prophet** (that is, the beast from the earth, the Enforcer of Antichrist, cf. Revelation 13:11-12) who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; **these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire** (the final destruction of Antichrist and the False Prophet) which burns with brimstone. ²¹And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.” (Revelation 19:20-21, emphasis and notes added)

A FINAL EXHORTATION OF PAUL

“¹Now as to **the times and the epochs** (of the second coming of Lord Jesus Christ, see context in chapter 4 of 2 Thessalonians), brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ²For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night** (just like a thief comes in the night suddenly to steal, kill and destroy [John 10:10], the day of the Lord will come in sudden surprise to the unbelieving world and destroy them all, see also 2 Peter 3:10-13). ³While they are saying, ‘Peace and safety!’ then destruction will come upon them **suddenly** like labor pains upon a woman with child, and **they will not escape** (from the wrath and punishment of the day of the Lord). ⁴**But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day** (the day of the Lord) **would overtake you like a thief;** ⁵**for you are all sons of light and sons of day** (yet to faithful obedient believers of Christ ‘who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it’ [Revelation 1:3] and thus fully prepared, the Lord Jesus Christ is not coming as a thief in the night, but rather as the Lord of glory). We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. ⁷For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. ⁹**For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ** (true believers of Jesus Christ are promised by God to be physically delivered from the wrath to come by the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen!). (2 Thessalonians 5:1-9, emphasis and notes added)

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