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SIGNS OF THE END TIMES

Biblical Prophecy and the Evidence from Earth and Sky



DALE NANCE

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Figure 2 presents counts calculated from archived USGS earthquake records. Its values and counting method are documented in Appendix B.

This book presents the author's interpretation of Scripture and contemporary events. Sources and research details appear in the notes.

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For my King and Lord Yeshua

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Preface

Years ago, I believe it was around 2005, I had a website called www.endtimeproof.com. It grew out of my study of the connections among the news, scientific and archaeological discoveries, and whatever empirical evidence I could find that appeared to fulfill ancient prophecies in the Bible.

The discoveries strengthened my confidence in the Bible and supported my spiritual experiences. Throughout my life, I have experienced a spiritual reality that I cannot explain through science or demonstrate with empirical proof. The absence of that proof does not erase what I experienced.

Many of the articles and findings circulated around the internet for years. I believe some of my work may still be showing up today. One example was my study of USGS earthquake statistics. At the time, I believed I was breaking new ground by presenting those empirical records alongside biblical prophecy. I cannot establish that mine was the first such study, but it became an important part of my own research.

Eventually, I stopped writing articles and maintaining the blog for that website. My interest in the subject never diminished. With the shocking events now unfolding in the world, I decided to gather my notes from all those years and write this book.

I also renewed endtimeproof.com to promote the book and bring these findings to more people. Interest in biblical prophecy reaches across many backgrounds. People of different faiths, agnostics, and atheists may all wonder what these ancient passages have to say about the world

we share. Whether you found this book through my revived website or arrived here another way, welcome.

Signs of the End Times: Biblical Prophecy and the Evidence from Earth and Sky continues the theme that first inspired that website. This time, however, I have been able to use an extraordinary resource: artificial intelligence, or AI.

Like the search engines that changed how we find information, AI offers another tool for research. It can help locate statistics, explore scientific discoveries, compare sources, and organize a large body of material. What once took days of searching can sometimes be brought together much more quickly. The information still needs to be understood.

Sometimes it needs clarification. A trend can look very different when the period being examined is too short. The way a question is framed can influence which evidence comes into view and which evidence is overlooked. Here lies a temptation: someone can shape a query to obtain support for a conclusion already chosen. That is where deception can rear its head. The responsibility belongs to the person using the tool.

Steam power and atomic power changed what people could do and raised difficult questions about their use. AI does the same. Its value depends on whether we use it honestly and responsibly.

So let this be my declaration: yes, much of the research for this book involved AI-assisted searches. I also used AI to help organize material, prepare references and appendices, develop charts, and edit the manuscript. These tools can assemble material quickly, but they can also make mistakes. I remain responsible for the claims and interpretations presented in my name.

To be honest, assembling references and organizing research have always been among my least favorite responsibilities in writing a book like this. Today's tools are a far cry from the days when I had to get on my bicycle, ride to the library, and search the card catalog. Using the Dewey Decimal System, I would find the nonfiction shelf where there might be only one or two books on the subject. Often, the one I wanted was already checked out.

AI frees more time for me to study and consider the spiritual world. It can process words about faith, but it has not lived my experiences or made my response to God.

This book brings together my years of study, my convictions, and the assistance of that research tool. I am its author, and the perspective is my own; AI has assisted with research, organization, and editing. I wanted that relationship to be clear before we begin.

May you find the truth you seek.

INTRODUCTION

Imagine

Imagine… It is a freezing cold morning, with wind between 20 and 27 miles per hour. Puddles of water are frozen. It is December 17, 1903, at the Kill Devil Hills dunes near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

The bite of the cold is surpassed only by the excitement and anticipation in the air. A strong headwind from the north helps the machine gain lift at a lower speed over the ground, but makes working outdoors feel more like a punishment than an achievement.

Orville and Wilbur Wright prepare their machine on the windswept sand. Five local witnesses have gathered, including three men from the nearby Kill Devil Hills Life-Saving Station.

At 10:35 a.m., Orville lies prone on the lower wing of the 1903 Wright Flyer. He releases the restraining wire, and the aircraft moves forward along its launch rail. Wilbur runs alongside, steadying the wing. A 12-horsepower engine drives the carved wooden propellers. The machine built by two bicycle-shop owners and mechanics lifts into the air and remains aloft for 12 seconds, covering 120 feet before touching down on the sand. [5]

Human flight under power and control. For thousands of years, people had watched birds and wondered what it would be like to fly. To many, it must have seemed impossible. Even to the dreamers, it could seem implausible. Yet here, on a cold December morning, a long imagined “impossibility” becomes something five witnesses saw with their own eyes.

What if, on that day, after the first flight, Wilbur had stood and proclaimed that within a generation people would build machines capable of flying to the Moon? What

if he had boldly predicted that a man would walk on the Moon within seventy years? Imagine… What would those listening in 1903 have thought or said? You can almost hear the laughter and the scoffing, as though he had lost his mind. “Impossible!” they might have exclaimed.

And so we come to dreams, visions, and prophecy. Some things may be only a dream. Some people may have a vision of what could be. And some are given a divine prophecy to declare: “Thus saith the Lord.”

The Bible tells us, “All Scripture is God-breathed” (2 Timothy 3:16, NIV). Prophecy describes events that may lie far beyond the experience of those who first hear it. Their inability to imagine those events does not make the promise impossible.

Consider the Bible itself. Its books were written thousands of years ago. In the traditional account of its composition, around forty human writers contributed over roughly fifteen hundred years. They came from many walks of life: kings, shepherds, fishermen, scholars, and others called to record what God had given them.

That traditional timeline stretches from around 1400 BC, with the books associated with Moses, to the closing decades of the first century AD, with Revelation. The Scriptures were written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, in settings spanning Asia, Africa, and Europe. [83]

Imagine hearing those prophecies when they were first spoken. How would someone who traveled on foot picture our world? Today we cross oceans in hours, speak across continents, and watch events in Israel from our homes. What once stretched the imagination has become ordinary life.

I believe the signs described in Scripture are coming together in our time. My hope rests in Jesus, Yeshua, the Jewish Messiah, who promised to come again.

Whatever your faith or background, you are welcome in this conversation. I invite you to understand what I believe and why. Prophecy speaks to how we live today, how we love one another, and whether we are ready to meet the One who is coming.

As we examine the Bible and its prophecies of judgment and the cleansing of this world, the question becomes personal: Will I be saved, or am I destined for hell? Only you can answer God's invitation.

God loves you, even though you are a sinner. We all fall short. Who among us could stand before a holy God on the strength of our own goodness? Scripture tells us that all have sinned, and that salvation cannot be earned by good works, no matter how good we believe ourselves to be. We belong to a fallen humanity, and sin brings death and separation from God (Romans 3:23; 6:23; Ephesians 2:8–9).

But God so loved the world. He loved us so much that He sent His Son to suffer and die for our sins. Jesus gave His life, shedding His blood for the sins of mankind. Just as God provided Abraham with a ram to sacrifice in place of his son Isaac, He provided the ultimate sacrifice for us: the Lamb of God, given for the sins of the world (Genesis 22:13–14; John 1:29; 3:16).

This is the gospel—the good news Jesus sent His disciples into the world to proclaim. His name is Jesus, Yeshua, the Messiah. He died, and He rose again. Our hope rests in a living Savior, and it is through faith in Him that we receive salvation. Abraham believed God, and his faith was credited to him as righteousness. That same principle of faith points us away from confidence in ourselves and toward the God who provides the way (Romans 4:3–5; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4).

We cannot purchase this gift or make ourselves worthy of it. God offers it by grace. We are called to believe—to

turn to Him and trust the sacrifice He has provided. That is why this message is good news. Judgment is real, but so is the offer of rescue.

Are you ready for the end times? I believe the signs examined in this book point to an approaching judgment upon a world steeped in sin. The story of Lot gives us a sobering picture. Before judgment fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah, angels came to lead Lot and his family out. They urged them to escape and not look back. It was a rescue mission in the shadow of coming destruction (Genesis 19:15–17).

Jesus Himself pointed to the days of Lot when speaking of the day the Son of Man would be revealed (Luke 17:28–30). Ordinary life continued until judgment came. That brings the question home to us: Will you be among those who are rescued, or will you remain unprepared when judgment falls?

God is calling you to respond. Jesus—Yeshua HaMashiach, the Messiah, Immanuel, God with us—is the One in whom I place my hope. The invitation to choose life echoes an earlier appeal, spoken by Moses to Israel: “I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life” (Deuteronomy 30:19).

As you read these pages, keep that appeal close to your heart. God loves you. He has provided the way of salvation through His Son. Will you receive His gift? Choose life.

CHAPTER 1

The question the disciples asked

Matthew 24:1 records Jesus leaving the temple as His disciples point out its buildings. Those great stones stood at the center of their worship and national life. The temple must have seemed permanent.

Then Jesus makes a startling declaration: “Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down” (Matthew 24:2, NIV).

The buildings stood right before them. How could something so solid and magnificent be reduced to ruins? His prophecy must have been difficult to imagine. They could see the stones, but they could not yet see the future He described.

Think back to our imaginary proclamation at Kitty Hawk. Suppose one of the Wright brothers, beside that fragile flying machine, had announced that machines would carry men all the way to the Moon within seventy years. The idea might have sounded ridiculous. What the witnesses could see that morning would have seemed too small to support so enormous a claim. The disciples faced a similar distance between what stood before their eyes and what Jesus said was coming.

Yet in AD 70, Roman forces under Titus captured Jerusalem, and the temple was burned and destroyed. Roughly forty years after Jesus spoke, the catastrophe came within the lifetime of His generation. Some who had been alive to hear Him could still have been living when the

news arrived. What had seemed unimaginable had become history—a prophecy fulfilled. [121]

Jesus knew what would happen to the temple while His disciples still struggled to imagine its destruction. That fulfilled warning gives us reason to trust what He says next.

Matthew 24:3. After that startling announcement, the disciples come to Jesus privately on the Mount of Olives. When will these things happen? What will be the sign of His coming and of the end of the age? Their questions reach from the temple before them toward a future they cannot yet picture.

We will follow His answer in order, verse by verse. First, the next few chapters examine travel, knowledge, the land, the Jewish homecoming, and Jerusalem. Then we return to Matthew 24:4 and follow His words alongside the seals of Revelation.

I believe these passages describe a world already experiencing tribulation, or trouble, which intensifies as the Lord's return approaches. Keeping Jesus' words in order will help us distinguish the beginning of that trouble from the appearing for which we wait.

CHAPTER 2

From the horse road to the Moon

Picture a traveler setting out on a long journey before the age of engines.

He can walk. If he has the means, he can ride an animal or hire a wagon. If his destination lies across water, he can board a vessel moved by wind or human effort. Weather, terrain, provisions, and the strength of living bodies will shape his plans.

The traveler could belong to many centuries. Roads and ships improved, and trade expanded, but ordinary movement remained tied to muscle, wind, and the limits of the ground or sea beneath him.

Then engines changed the scale of the journey.

Steam, gasoline, diesel, electricity, and nuclear propulsion changed travel through a succession of inventions. Within a few generations, distances that had governed whole lives became journeys measured in hours.

Some Dates that show faster progress.

On September 27, 1825, Locomotion worked on the opening day of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. The locomotive survives as a record of the beginning of the railway age. [2]

In 1886, Carl Benz patented his motor car. His machine belonged to the development of practical gasoline-powered road transportation, a change that would eventually alter cities, farming, commerce, family life, and war. [3]

Diesel engines added another major branch of mechanical power. They became especially important wherever heavy loads had to be moved efficiently: ships, locomotives, trucks, and agricultural equipment. The familiar delivery truck and the ocean freighter belong to the same broad transformation in which stored fuel does work that previously depended heavily on living muscle or the wind. [4]

On December 17, 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright achieved controlled, powered airplane flight near Kitty Hawk. The first flight that day lasted twelve seconds and covered 120 feet. That short flight helped open a new era of travel. [5]

On January 17, 1955, USS Nautilus got underway using nuclear power. Human beings had learned to use energy released from the atom to propel a submarine. This was a very different kind of vessel from a wooden ship waiting for a favorable wind. [6]

On July 20, 1969, the Apollo 11 lunar module landed on the Moon. Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin reached its surface while Michael Collins remained in lunar orbit. Fewer than sixty-six years separated the Wrights' first successful powered flights from that landing. [7]

These advances occurred within a human lifetime. A person 20 years of age when the Wright brothers flew could live to watch a man walk on the Moon less than sixty-six years later.

Did Daniel foresee this world

Daniel 12:4 contains the familiar words, "Many will go here and there to increase knowledge."

Airports operate around the clock. Highways cross continents, fast trains connect cities, and satellites guide

travelers. A person can cross an ocean and arrive in time for dinner. Daniel's words about running to and fro sound familiar in a world like ours.

Daniel heard those words in a conversation about a revelation sealed until the time of the end. The chapter speaks of understanding, purification, and resurrection. Today, people can search Scripture and share what they learn across the world. That gives the promise of increased understanding a practical setting.

Modern travel also makes Jewish return, worldwide proclamation, international commerce, and the gathering of nations possible on a scale earlier generations never experienced. These developments help explain why I connect Daniel's words with our time.

The airplane that carries a Jewish family to Israel can also carry relief workers to a disaster. A ship that moves food can be caught in a war. A satellite can help a farmer and assist an army. The technologies do not carry a single moral identity. They enlarge what human beings can do, and therefore enlarge the consequences of our choices.

The more searching question is not simply how fast we can move. It is what kind of people we become while moving so fast.

CHAPTER 3

Knowledge at our fingertips

There was a time when finding an answer might require a journey to a library, a letter to someone knowledgeable, and several weeks of waiting.

Now a question can be typed into a device while the coffee is still hot. Within seconds, the screen offers articles, maps, translations, photographs, explanations, and confident statements from people we have never met. Sometimes the information is excellent. Sometimes it is wrong. Often the presentation makes the two difficult to distinguish.

Information that once filled distant libraries can now be searched from a kitchen table. A student can listen to a lecture from another continent, compare translations, and examine a photograph of an ancient manuscript without leaving home.

The International Telecommunication Union estimated that about six billion people used the internet in 2025, roughly 74 percent of the world's population. About 2.2 billion remained offline. [9]

The wisdom to use what we know

Access to information does not guarantee good judgment.

We must recognize reliable evidence, understand its context, and decide how to act. A society can become skilled at achieving an objective without asking whether the objective is good.

Scripture recognizes that difference. Proverbs values wisdom rooted in reverence for God. Paul warns about knowledge that can inflate pride. Second Timothy 3

describes people who are always learning without arriving at a knowledge of the truth. None of those passages commands ignorance. They expose the weakness of information separated from a rightly directed life.

Daniel 12 connects understanding with trouble, deliverance, resurrection, and purification. The knowledge that matters most concerns God and His purposes.

A message that can reach farther

Modern communication gives worldwide reach to the witness Jesus entrusted to His followers. We will return to His promise at Matthew 24:14.

An audio recording can reach a person who cannot read. A translated passage can be shared across a border. A believer living far from a church can hear teaching. A question once asked in isolation can become the beginning of a conversation with someone on another continent.

These are substantial opportunities. They are also reasons for gratitude. The same technology that carries confusion can carry Scripture, encouragement, education, and practical assistance.

The Great Commission remains personal work. A signal can cross a border in an instant, while a faithful witness may spend years translating Scripture or answering a neighbor’s questions. If we believe time is short, there is every reason to support that work and take part in it ourselves.

Deception can travel by the same road

The speed that helps truth spread also helps a falsehood escape examination. An emotionally powerful claim can be repeated thousands of times before someone asks where it

began. Repetition starts to feel like corroboration, even when every repetition traces back to the same unsupported statement.

A powerful image can carry the wrong date or tell only part of a story. Artificial intelligence can make a convincing picture of something that never happened. We have more ways to communicate than ever, and more reason to pause before passing a claim along.

A simple habit helps: go back to the source. Find out who is speaking and what actually happened. Truthfulness is part of our witness. The people who trust us deserve that care.

Daniel closes with a personal assurance. He is told to go his way, rest, and stand in his allotted place at the end of the days (Daniel 12:13). The prophet did not receive every answer. He received enough to remain faithful.

We hold more information in one hand than Daniel could have found in a royal archive. His final lesson still reaches us: trust the Lord, live faithfully, and look toward the place He has prepared.

CHAPTER 4

Water where the land is dry

Isaiah 35:1–2 (NIV): *"The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom…"*

Growing crops in a desert seems impossible. Look across dry, sunbaked ground and imagine trying to feed a family from it. Without enough water, a seed cannot become a harvest. Yet Isaiah described a wilderness coming alive, with water reaching the thirsty land (Isaiah 35:6–7).

Those words were written long before the modern pumps, pipelines, and irrigation systems that brought water into Israel's arid south. Today, farmers cultivate parts of the Negev and harvest crops from land that could not otherwise support them. The change is there to be seen: water reaches dry ground, and the ground produces food. [10–12]

I see in those harvests the miracle of Isaiah's prophecy being fulfilled. An ancient promise now has a visible expression in a desert producing food. This is the wonder at the heart of this chapter. As we look at how the water arrived and how the farmers put it to work, keep Isaiah's promise before us: the wilderness would bloom.

Water in a dry place. There is a spiritual meaning here too. God's word goes forth, bringing life to the desert. Images like these help us learn how God speaks to us. He uses examples we can see in the physical world to teach us spiritual lessons.

The promise of restoration

The whole of Isaiah 35 is larger than an agricultural project. The weak are strengthened. Fearful people are encouraged. Blind eyes and deaf ears are opened. The lame leap. A holy way carries the redeemed toward Zion. Sorrow and sighing flee away.

The cultivated desert anticipates that fuller restoration: renewed land and people healed and brought home.

The highway through the wilderness

The prophets repeatedly describe a prepared way. Isaiah 35:8 calls it the way of holiness. Isaiah 40 speaks of a way in the wilderness; Isaiah 11 of a highway for the remnant; Isaiah 19 of a connection between Egypt and Assyria. Roads become pictures of access, gathering, and restored relationship.

Israel has modern north–south routes through and alongside its desert regions. Highway 90 follows a long north–south course, with its southern section running through the Arava toward Eilat. Official crossing information places access to the Rabin terminal by Highway 90 near Eilat. A geographical study of the road describes its broader route from Metula to Eilat. [13]

A road through the wilderness gives a visible example of Isaiah's imagery. His holy way carries the redeemed toward Zion and joyful life with God. It also leaves us with a personal question: where is our own journey leading?

Water systems and roads support a country where people can settle, cultivate the land, and travel between communities. They also help make possible the return of Jewish people from many lands.

The return of those people is central to the promises of restoration. To understand the homecoming, we need to understand who is coming home.

CHAPTER 5

The people who keep coming home

Moving to another country requires a family to make difficult decisions about work, home, language, and the people they will leave behind.

There are forms to complete, possessions to sort, relatives to call, and words in a new language to learn. A child wonders about school. An older person wonders whether it is too late to begin again. A family leaves behind familiar streets and steps toward a place that may be deeply connected to its identity even if its members have never lived there.

Aliyah is the Jewish term commonly used for immigration to Israel. The word carries the idea of going up. For many Jewish people, the journey is more than a change of address. It is a return bound to peoplehood, memory, faith, security, family, and the land of their ancestors. The mixture of motives differs from person to person.

The prophets repeatedly name the Jewish people and their land. Their modern homecoming is one of the strongest reasons I believe these prophecies are unfolding in our time.

The many peoples who are coming home

What does a Jewish person look like? There is no single answer. Jewish people can be Black, Asian, Indian, Middle Eastern, or European in appearance. Families scattered

across many lands have carried their faith and identity through different languages, customs, and ways of life. A familiar European image of Jewish life tells only part of that story.

Jewish identity reaches beyond skin color. It involves peoplehood, family history, religious life, and belonging to a community. Someone can be both Ethiopian and Jewish, Chinese and Jewish, or Indian and Jewish. Those descriptions help us understand the life a family has lived; they do not cancel one another.

This diversity reflects the many places from which people are gathering. Some communities preserve traditions of descent from Israel's lost tribes. Others have well-documented Jewish histories without a known link to a particular tribe. Each history deserves to be described accurately.

The ten tribes and their ancient homes

The ten traditionally named lost tribes are listed below. These are their biblical homelands before dispersion, rather than a map assigning each tribe to a modern country. [84]

Reuben. the plateau east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan.

Simeon. towns in the south, within Judah's allotted territory.

Dan. an original allotment near the coastal plain; later also the far northern city of Dan.

Naphtali. northern and eastern Galilee.

Gad. Gilead and the Jordan valley east of the river.

Asher. western Galilee and the Mediterranean coastal region.

Issachar. the Jezreel Valley and neighboring lands.

Zebulun. the inland country of southern Galilee.

Ephraim. the central hill country, north of Benjamin.

Manasseh. lands on both sides of the Jordan, including territory north of Ephraim and parts of Gilead and Bashan.

Black Jews and the Ethiopian homecoming

The Beta Israel of Ethiopia have a history reaching far beyond the modern State of Israel. For generations, their communities lived in the Ethiopian highlands and preserved a distinctive Jewish religious life. Their African heritage is part of the Jewish people's history.

One tradition connects Beta Israel with the tribe of Dan. The Ethiopian Jewry Heritage Center also records other accounts of the community's beginnings. The precise ancient origin is uncertain, so the connection with Dan is best understood as an ancestral tradition rather than a complete, documented family tree. [85]

The modern journey to Israel is more directly recorded. Pnina Tamano-Shata arrived as a young child during Operation Moses in 1984. Operation Solomon brought more than 14,300 Ethiopian Jews to Israel in 1991. Behind these airlifts were families leaving familiar surroundings and beginning again. Ethiopian Jewish life became part of the everyday life of modern Israel. [85]

Indian Jews and their different histories

India has several distinct Jewish communities. The Bene Israel developed along the Konkan coast and around Mumbai. Cochin Jews maintained Jewish life in Kerala, on the southwestern coast. Baghdadi Jews came from Iraq and other parts of the Middle East and settled in Indian cities. Each community preserved its own family histories and local customs. [89]

Many Indian Jews later settled in Israel. Their families had preserved Jewish identity in India across generations.

These communities have different origins and migrations; they cannot all be assigned to one lost tribe. [89]

The Bnei Menashe live in northeastern India. Communities in Manipur and Mizoram, near Myanmar, identify with Manasseh. Their name means “children of Manasseh.” This ancestral claim is central to their community’s understanding of itself. Shavei Israel describes its work helping families study Hebrew and Jewish practice and prepare for life in Israel. The ancient tribal connection is their tradition; their modern communities and immigration are matters of record. [90]

For families making the move, homecoming means learning a language, finding work, enrolling children in school, and staying in touch with relatives abroad. These are the practical demands of gathering from distant lands.

Chinese Jews and the memory of Kaifeng

Kaifeng, in China’s Henan province, had a Jewish community for centuries. Shavei Israel traces it to Jewish merchants from Persia more than a thousand years ago. Their descendants became Chinese in language and culture while retaining a memory of Jewish ancestry. [88]

Assimilation weakened the community’s institutions, but some descendants have sought to recover their heritage and some have made Aliyah. Kaifeng demonstrates the reach of the diaspora; it does not establish settlement by a particular lost tribe. [88]

European and Middle Eastern journeys

Natan Sharansky was born in Donetsk, now in Ukraine and then part of the Soviet Union. After campaigning to emigrate and enduring years of imprisonment, he reached Israel in 1986 as part of the return of Soviet Jews. [86]

Singer Rita Jahan-Farouz was born in Tehran and moved to Israel with her family in 1970. Iranian families brought their language, songs, food, and memories, preserving a Jewish heritage rooted elsewhere in the Middle East. [87]

Families returning from distant lands give a visible example of the gathering described by the prophets. Their different backgrounds show how widely the Jewish people have been scattered and how much history this homecoming brings together.

The promises of gathering

Deuteronomy 30:1–5 looks beyond dispersion to return and gathering. Mercy meets a people turning again toward the Lord. From the beginning, homecoming and renewed relationship belong together.

Isaiah 11:11–12 describes the Lord recovering a remnant and assembling the dispersed of Israel and Judah. Isaiah 43:5–6 pictures sons and daughters being brought from the east, west, north, and south. Jeremiah 31 speaks of gathering and keeping Israel as a shepherd keeps a flock.

Ezekiel 36:24 is especially familiar: God will take His people from among the nations, gather them out of the countries, and bring them into their own land. The chapter then speaks of cleansing, a new heart, and the gift of the Spirit. The restoration reaches deeper than geography.

Ezekiel 37 gives the dramatic vision of the valley of dry bones. God identifies the bones as the whole house of Israel, a people describing themselves as cut off and without hope. The vision moves from death toward life. The chapter also joins the divided people and places them under one shepherd.

The biblical promises repeatedly describe dispersion followed by gathering. That recurring theme provides the basis for examining Jewish survival, return, and national restoration as fulfillment.

A nation in modern history

The modern State of Israel proclaimed its independence on May 14, 1948. The proclamation survives in the United Nations documentary record. That date marks a turning point in the modern events examined in this book. [14]

Jewish national life has been reestablished in the land named by the prophets. This makes passages about Israel, Jerusalem, the nations, and a future turning to the Messiah easier to understand as events that could unfold before us.

Jewish communities had remained in the land through the centuries, and modern immigration was underway before independence. Palestinian Arabs and other communities also had homes and deep attachments there. My conviction about Jewish return carries a responsibility to care about the people whose lives meet in this land. The prophets' call to restoration always travels with their call to justice.

The return is still taking place

The homecoming continues. The Jewish Agency reported helping 22,270 immigrants from 105 countries make Aliyah in 2025. Behind that assistance figure are thousands of families beginning a new chapter in the land of their ancestors. [15]

Air travel helps people make the journey. Communication networks allow relatives to stay in touch, agencies to coordinate arrangements, and newcomers to prepare.

This is what I mean by convergence: developments occurring in the same period that help one another take place.

The gathering continues at a changing pace, and many Jewish communities remain abroad. The return has already extended across generations.

The land and the heart

The promised restoration also includes spiritual renewal. Ezekiel describes cleansing and a new heart. Zechariah 12 speaks of mourning for the one who is pierced, and Zechariah 13 opens a fountain for cleansing. Romans 11 looks toward God's mercy and warns Gentile believers against arrogance.

I believe national restoration prepares the way for a deeper turning toward the Messiah. Ezekiel's new heart and Zechariah's cleansing are part of that promise. The Lord who gathers His people also calls them to know Him.

That hope should deepen our love for the Jewish people. Their history has carried the Scriptures to us, and their lives deserve our care. Romans 11 leaves Gentile believers no room for arrogance. We receive mercy with gratitude and extend it to our neighbors.

CHAPTER 6

Why Jerusalem keeps drawing our attention

Jerusalem remains at the center of international conflict and concern.

Its significance runs through the biblical accounts of kings, prophets, worship, judgment, crucifixion, resurrection, and the promised return of Christ. The city's place in Scripture helps explain why its future matters so much.

When events in Jerusalem draw international concern, prophecy readers remember Zechariah. The prophet describes Jerusalem as a cup of trembling and a burdensome stone in relation to surrounding peoples and the nations (Zechariah 12:2–3). Later, the book places the Lord's intervention and the Mount of Olives within its vision of the future (Zechariah 14).

A city within the prophetic sequence

Zechariah 12 moves from pressure upon Jerusalem to mourning and deliverance. Chapter 14 brings the Lord to the Mount of Olives and declares His kingship over the earth. The sequence gives our watchfulness a destination: God will act, and His people will recognize Him.

Daniel 9 adds a covenant and a crisis at the midpoint of the final week. I understand that week as a future seven-year period. We will examine its relationship to Jesus' warning about desecration when our discussion reaches Matthew 24:15.

Ezekiel 38–39 describes Gog and a coalition coming against Israel, followed by the Lord's judgment and vindication. These chapters draw the nations into the same larger question: who finally governs the future of this land?

The threats and negotiations surrounding Jerusalem do not change the outcome these passages promise: the Lord will be present among His people.

Caring about the people in the place

People living through this conflict need protection: children afraid of explosions and parents waiting for missing relatives. Studying prophecy must not make us indifferent to their suffering.

My commitment to Israel and Jewish safety goes together with grief for Palestinians, Lebanese, Iranians, and others suffering in regional conflict. The Lord commands love of our neighbor. That obligation reaches every family affected by violence.

Psalm 122 calls us to pray for Jerusalem's peace. I can expect the conflicts described by the prophets and still pray earnestly for peace today. Every life protected matters.

Every person killed by another human being brings sorrow to our Lord. And Satan laughs.

Jerusalem's promised peace rests in the Lord's return. That hope brings us to a more personal question: who is the King we are waiting for?

CHAPTER 7

Power in the name

The story of Jerusalem leads us to the King whose return gives the city its hope. Before we examine the powers that oppose Him, I want us to be clear about who Jesus is. The power in His name rests in the One it identifies: the Messiah who came to redeem us and has promised to return.

Yeshua, Jesus, and the God of Israel

The name can itself become a stumbling block. Yeshua is the Hebrew or Aramaic form commonly associated with Jesus' name. It was represented in Greek as Iēsous and in Latin as Iesus; through the history of translation and English usage, we received the form Jesus. We are speaking of the same person. A change of language does not give us a different Messiah. [148]

Yahweh is the name of Israel's God commonly represented by the four Hebrew consonants YHWH, the Tetragrammaton (Exodus 3:15). Christians believe the God who made His promises to Israel is the God revealed to us through Jesus. Yeshua often called Himself the Son of Man, language that recalls Daniel's vision of one receiving everlasting dominion (Daniel 7:13–14; Mark 14:61–62).

Christians speak of the Trinity: one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The body, mind, and spirit of one human being offer a simple starting point for thinking about unity, though no human illustration can contain God's nature. Christians confess three persons within the one God, not three gods.

John says the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). Matthew identifies the promised child with Immanuel, God with us (Matthew 1:22–23). I believe this is the wonder of the incarnation: the holy God came among sinful people in a real human life. Jesus is more than a body carrying a message. In Him, God personally came near to redeem us (Colossians 2:9).

The Messiah's family line

His family history helps us understand His place in God's promises. For Jewish readers, the Messiah's identity is bound to Israel's covenant promises. God promised that Abraham's offspring would bring blessing to the nations and that David's royal house would endure (Genesis 22:18; 2 Samuel 7:12–16). The promised king would arise from David's line (Jeremiah 23:5–6). Genealogy therefore helps answer a vital question: does the person being presented as Messiah belong to the family associated with those promises?

Matthew begins by identifying Jesus with Abraham and David. Here is the complete lineage he records, including the other family members he names, retold in Matthew's order (Matthew 1:1–17; paraphrased). [149]

From Abraham to David — Matthew 1:2–6. Abraham; Isaac; Jacob; Judah; Perez; Hezron; Ram; Amminadab; Nahshon; Salmon; Boaz; Obed; Jesse; King David.

Matthew also mentions Judah's brothers and Perez's brother Zerah. Tamar is the mother of Perez and Zerah; Rahab of Boaz; Ruth of Obed.

From David to the Babylonian exile — Matthew 1:6–11. David; Solomon; Rehoboam; Abijah; Asa; Jehoshaphat; Jehoram; Uzziah; Jotham; Ahaz; Hezekiah; Manasseh; Amon; Josiah; Jeconiah.

Solomon's mother is identified as Uriah's wife. Jeconiah and his brothers appear at the time of the exile.

From the exile to Jesus — Matthew 1:12–16. Jeconiah; Shealtiel; Zerubbabel; Abihud; Eliakim; Azor; Zadok; Akim; Elihud; Eleazar; Matthan; Jacob; Joseph.

Joseph is Mary's husband. Mary gives birth to Jesus, the Messiah.

Matthew 1:17 arranges this history in three groups of fourteen generations: Abraham to David, David to the Babylonian exile, and the exile to the Messiah.

Notice the distinction at the end of the record. Matthew traces the line through Joseph, Mary's husband, while identifying Mary as Jesus' mother. The birth account that follows attributes her pregnancy to the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18–25). Matthew presents Jesus within David's household without describing Joseph as His biological father.

For me, this genealogy identifies Jesus within Israel's covenant story and the royal house from which the Messiah was promised. Read alongside His life, death, resurrection, and the prophecies considered in this book, it helps confirm my conviction that Yeshua is the Jewish Messiah.

The message I see in the names

I see another possible miracle in this family history: when the meanings traditionally assigned to the names are read in sequence, they can form a message describing the Messiah. To follow that thought, we must go further back

than Matthew's opening with Abraham. The first ten names below come from Genesis 5, beginning with Adam and ending with Noah. Some meanings are clear; others are debated or expanded for this Christian devotional reading. [150]

- **Adam** — Man, linked with the Hebrew word adamah, meaning ground.
- **Seth** — Appointed or granted.
- **Enosh** — Mortal man, with associations of frailty or weakness.
- **Kenan (Cainan)** — Meaning uncertain; read as sorrow or lament in this devotional sequence. Kenan is a different name from Canaan.
- **Mahalalel** — Praise of God; expressed as the Blessed God in the devotional reading.
- **Jared** — Descent or descending; expressed as shall come down in the sequence.
- **Enoch** — Dedicated or initiated; associated with training or instruction, hence teaching in the devotional reading.
- **Methuselah** — Often explained as man of the dart; his death shall bring is the disputed interpretation used in this sequence.
- **Lamech** — Meaning uncertain; read as despairing in this devotional sequence.
- **Noah** — Rest; Genesis 5:29 also connects his name with comfort.

Read these meanings in order. With connecting words supplied, the devotional sequence has been expressed this way by Bible teacher Chuck Missler: [151]

> *"Man (is) appointed mortal sorrow; (but) the Blessed God shall come down teaching (that) His death shall bring (the) despairing rest."*

To me, this describes the Messiah's mission. Humanity lives under the burden of sorrow and death. God comes among us, teaches us, and through His death brings rest to those who despair. I see in this reading a miraculous foreshadowing of Jesus: the Word who became flesh and the Savior who invites the weary to find rest in Him (John 1:14; Matthew 11:28–30).

This is an interpretation of the names, rather than a literal Hebrew sentence written in Genesis. Its disputed meanings should be considered honestly. Even so, I find the connection remarkable: God's plan of redemption in a passage we might otherwise hurry past.

Names leading to the Messiah

The following names are selected from Matthew's genealogy. They continue the reflection on God's promises and the hope of salvation, although they are not part of the ten-name sentence above. [150]

- **Abraham** — Father of a multitude, or father of many (Genesis 17:5).
- **Isaac** — He laughs, recalling the laughter surrounding his promised birth to Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 17:17–19; 18:12; 21:6).
- **Jacob** — Heel-grabber or supplanter, reflecting the wordplay in Genesis 25:26 and 27:36.

- **Judah** — Praise, associated with Leah's praise of the Lord (Genesis 29:35).
- **Jesse** — Meaning uncertain; traditional explanations include gift or wealthy.
- **David** — Beloved.
- **Solomon** — Peaceful or man of peace, related to shalom, meaning peace.
- **Shealtiel** — I have asked of God, or asked of God.
- **Zerubbabel** — Offspring of Babylon, or born in Babylon; also expressed as sown in Babylon.
- **Joseph** — May He add, a prayer that the Lord would give another son (Genesis 30:24).
- **Mary (Miriam)** — Meaning uncertain; proposed explanations include beloved, bitterness, and rebellious.
- **Jesus (Yeshua)** — Yahweh is salvation. Matthew 1:21 connects His name with His mission to save His people from their sins.

The name of Jesus brings the hope of this reflection into focus: the Lord saves. I believe the God who guided this family through the generations fulfilled His promise in Yeshua.

The King who returns to Jerusalem

Jesus wept over Jerusalem and entered it on the way to His suffering. His death and resurrection are central to the hope of restoration. Acts 1 places His ascension near the Mount of Olives and records the promise that He will return.

Knowing who the Messiah is helps us recognize the opposition to Him. Before examining the seals and the warnings that follow, we need to consider the spiritual power that can work through those who resist Him.

CHAPTER 8

The Antichrist

Many Christians have been taught to see the rider on the white horse as one person: THE Antichrist. The picture is familiar—a powerful leader who arrives with promises, gains the world's confidence, and uses that confidence to conquer. When people read about the first seal, they often begin searching for the name of that man.

I believe we need to look deeper. The rider may portray a spirit of antichrist that has worked through human beings across the centuries. A ruler can die while the spiritual rebellion expressed through him continues. It can find another willing person, another movement, and another way to promise people what only God can give.

This is how I understand the white horse: the visible picture of a spiritual power of deception and conquest. Individuals can embody that power, but its story reaches beyond any one lifetime. To explain why, we need to listen carefully to what the New Testament says about antichrist.

Many antichrists had already come

John writes that his readers had heard an antichrist was coming, yet “many antichrists have come” already (1 John 2:18, NIV). A few verses later, he connects antichrist with denying Jesus as the Messiah and rejecting the Father and the Son (1 John 2:22–23). The danger was present among the people receiving his letter.

Then John speaks directly of the “spirit of the antichrist” and says it is already in the world (1 John 4:3, NIV). That is the connection I want us to notice. John describes both

people who oppose Christ and a spiritual opposition already at work through the world they inhabit. [134]

We can become so occupied with identifying a future individual that we overlook the influence operating in front of us. I believe that influence has repeatedly found human expression: drawing worship away from God, replacing truth with deception, and teaching people to seek salvation in a ruler or a system.

The Mystery of Iniquity

Paul describes this hidden activity as “the mystery of iniquity” (2 Thessalonians 2:7, KJV). The NIV calls it “the secret power of lawlessness.” He says it was already at work in his own day. Evil would become more openly visible, but its influence had already begun beneath the surface. [142]

Read the surrounding passage, 2 Thessalonians 2:3–12. Paul warns of rebellion, deception, and a lawless figure who exalts himself against God. He also speaks of restraint: the final unveiling cannot happen before its appointed time. And he tells us how the story ends. The Lord Jesus will overthrow that lawless one at His appearing.

This is why I look for more than one notorious person. I believe a spirit of opposition has worked through people across the centuries, sometimes hiding behind respectable appearances. Its activity is real, but it remains under limits. The mystery of iniquity does not place Satan beyond God’s authority. It prepares us to consider what happens when restraint is lifted.

Filled with a spirit

Paul urges believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). If we accept that God's Spirit can dwell within a person, why should we dismiss the possibility that an evil spirit can take hold of a person? The Gospels describe possession as part of the spiritual reality Jesus confronted.

In Luke 8:26–39, Jesus meets a man tormented by many demons. The encounter ends with the man restored and able to return home. John 13:27 says that Satan entered Judas before the betrayal. These accounts give us concrete examples of spiritual evil acting through a human life.

Paul also directs our attention beyond the human faces of conflict to the spiritual forces involved (Ephesians 6:12). People still make choices and bear responsibility for what they do. Yet the biblical account asks us to recognize that a person's visible actions may belong to a struggle we cannot see with our eyes.

Old gods and familiar darkness

The prophets of Israel confronted the worship of Baal and Molek. Elijah's challenge on Mount Carmel brought the question of allegiance into the open, while Jeremiah condemned the sacrifice of children associated with false worship (1 Kings 18; Jeremiah 32:35). In the Greek and Roman world, Apollo was honored as a god connected with prophecy and oracles. I see these claims to divine authority as part of the long struggle over whom people will trust and worship. [135]

Apollo should not be confused with Apollos, the Christian teacher in Acts 18:24–28, or with Apollyon, the angel of the Abyss named in Revelation 9:11.

Consider Nero. Tacitus records that, after the great fire of Rome in AD 64, Nero placed blame on Christians and subjected them to brutal punishment. In that use of state power against believers, I see a historical expression of the antichrist spirit: a ruler treating those who belong to Christ as people to be crushed. [136]

Centuries later, Adolf Hitler's regime and its allies and collaborators murdered six million Jews in the Holocaust, along with millions of other victims of Nazi persecution. I see the same spiritual darkness in that hatred, the exaltation of a human leader, and the organized destruction of human life. Calling this an expression of the antichrist spirit is my understanding of the evil displayed in those deeds. [137]

Satan is the spiritual adversary behind the rebellion I am describing. Nero and Hitler were human beings through whom I believe that opposition found expression. Their deaths did not end cruelty, deception, or the desire to rule in God's place. The pattern outlives the person. That is why I look beyond the question of which individual might be THE Antichrist.

Even Satan answers to the Lord

At this point, we need to remember who is in control. God has not surrendered His creation. Satan cannot overrule Him or seize authority that places him beyond God's reach.

The opening chapters of Job show Satan appearing before the Lord and answering His questions. When Satan challenges Job's faithfulness, God sets boundaries on what he is permitted to do. Those boundaries remain in place even when the testing becomes severe (Job 1:6–12; 2:1–6). Satan has to answer to the Lord.

Jesus gives us another glimpse when He tells Peter that Satan has asked to sift the disciples. Jesus has already prayed for Peter, and He speaks of the work Peter will do after returning from his failure (Luke 22:31–32). The enemy intends to break him. Jesus sees his restoration and the people he will strengthen.

Christ's victory is the foundation of our confidence. Colossians 2:15 presents the cross as His triumph over hostile spiritual powers, and 1 John 3:8 connects His coming with the destruction of the devil's work. Satan has been defeated, and Revelation 20:10 gives his final destination. His continuing activity does not change the outcome.

Why, then, does God still permit him to act? I believe even Satan's permitted activity remains within a plan that God can turn toward redemption. The enemy seeks to destroy; God can expose that evil, awaken a conscience, and draw a person back to Himself.

Paul gives a striking example in 1 Corinthians 5:5. His instruction concerning a man who has sinned involves handing him over to Satan, yet the stated purpose looks toward the man's eventual salvation. In 1 Timothy 1:20, severe discipline is again directed toward correction. These passages show why I believe that even the consequences of rebellion can become part of God's work of calling people back.

We should never use that conviction to excuse cruelty or turn away from someone who is suffering. God's command to love remains. But we can trust that evil will not defeat His purpose. The Lord who restored the tormented man and prayed for Peter is still able to rescue people from darkness.

The restraint and the seals

This brings us to the seven seals. Paul tells the Thessalonians that lawlessness is already active while its fuller revelation is being held back. He also describes the coming lawless figure as acting through Satan's power (2 Thessalonians 2:3–9). I understand the human figure and the spiritual power behind him together. An individual can become the instrument of an opposition that was at work long before his arrival.

That pattern of activity under restraint helps me understand the horsemen. I believe the imagery of the sealed scroll portrays forces held within limits until the Lamb permits the next stage to unfold. What has appeared at different times and places can spread with much greater reach as restraint is lifted.

Zechariah 6:1–8 provides an important connection. The prophet sees chariots with horses of different colors, and the explanation identifies them as spirits, or winds, of heaven going out from the Lord's presence. The vision leads me to consider the horses in Revelation as portrayals of spiritual forces working through earthly events.

In Revelation 6, Jesus opens the seals. The first rider receives a crown. The second receives authority to remove peace, and the fourth is given a defined reach. Again and again, the vision presents authority being granted. I read that as permission within God's unfolding judgment. The forces that bring turmoil do not take the scroll from the Lamb.

The first four seals bring the horsemen; the later seals show the martyrs, the signs of His appearing, and the silence in heaven. I believe the sequence reveals the progressive release of restraint and brings the spiritual struggle toward the Lord's decisive intervention.

So I see the white horse as a conquering spirit that can work through individuals and movements, followed by the widening consequences of conflict, scarcity, and death. The next chapter considers the responsibility of a watchman who believes he sees those dangers approaching. Then we will return to the Lamb and follow the opening of the seals. As we do, remember whose hand holds the future. God is in control.

CHAPTER 9

The watchman's warning

Before we examine the seven seals and the four horses of the apocalypse, I want to sound a warning. A watchman has a responsibility to speak when he sees danger approaching (Ezekiel 33:1–9). The scenario presented here connects the threats around us with the progression of the first four seals.

I believe the white horse represents quiet, apparently peaceful conquest. Power can be gained before a shot is fired. My concern is the advance of Islamist extremist movements seeking religious and political domination within Western nations. A movement can use a society's freedoms to establish itself while preparing to destroy those same freedoms.

The threats and attacks are already part of the record. Iran's revolutionary leadership has promoted "Death to America" for decades. Al-Qaeda carried out the coordinated attacks of September 11, 2001, including the destruction of the World Trade Center. A total of 2,977 victims (excluding the 19 suicidal hijackers) died during the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. [38,132]

On October 7, 2023, Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups attacked southern Israel. The Eshkol Regional Council, in the northwestern Negev near the Gaza border, was among the areas devastated. Its communities form part of the region often called the Gaza envelope. Armed attackers crossed the border, entered civilian communities, murdered residents, and carried hostages into Gaza. Homes were burned and looted. Families who had begun an

ordinary morning suddenly faced a struggle to survive. [133]

Nova music festival, near Re'im. People who had gathered for music were attacked at the festival and while trying to escape. An Israeli military investigation, reported in April 2025, put the death toll at 378: 344 civilians and 34 members of the security forces. Forty-four people were abducted. The figures encompass the festival attack and the pursuit of those fleeing the area. [138]

Kibbutz Be'eri. The Israeli military's inquiry recorded 101 civilian deaths in the attack and 31 security personnel killed during the battle, a combined toll of 132 Israelis. Thirty-two people were abducted. Homes sustained heavy damage, and surviving residents faced the loss of neighbors, relatives, and the community they had known. [139]

Kibbutz Nir Oz. Dozens of residents were killed and dozens taken hostage, tearing away a substantial part of this small community. Nir Oz's own account records 117 community members murdered or abducted. Attackers entered nearly every home, looting and burning as they went. These were people of different generations whose lives had been bound together in one place. [133]

Re'im military base. The assault also reached the base housing the Israel Defense Forces' Gaza Division headquarters. Reuters reported that attackers had penetrated the installation. That evening, The Times of Israel reported that Israeli forces had regained control of the base. Even a military headquarters had become a battlefield. [140]

The atrocities included sexual violence. A United Nations mission found reasonable grounds to believe that rape and gang rape occurred at several locations, including the Nova festival and its surroundings, Road 232, and Kibbutz Re'im.

It also found clear and convincing information that some hostages suffered sexual violence, including rape and sexualized torture, during captivity. These findings should be stated carefully, but the suffering they describe must not be passed over. [70]

Across the October 7 attacks as a whole, roughly 1,200 people were killed and 251 were abducted into Gaza. Those are the overall figures, not the toll for Eshkol alone. Behind each number was a person, a family, and a life that mattered. I ask the reader to consider how suddenly the familiar places of daily life became scenes of terror. That is why this history belongs in a watchman's warning. [141]

Imagine coordinated attacks on civilian neighborhoods across the United States. Families caught in their homes. Emergency services overwhelmed. Terror spreading from one community to another. This is the danger I fear: extremist networks preparing in relative quiet, then striking from within on a scale we have never experienced.

The red horse follows the white. Peace is taken from the earth. A wave of attacks could bring war into our streets and provoke retaliation that spreads the conflict.

The black horse follows. Supply chains break down. Grocery shelves empty. Food becomes scarce and prices soar. In a collapse severe enough to bring hyperinflation and starvation, a can of tuna could become more valuable than the money in someone's pocket.

Then comes the pale horse: death and disease. Hunger, displacement, and failing sanitation create conditions for pestilence. Biological weapons are another danger in the catastrophe I am describing.

Conquest. War. Famine. Death. This is the progression I am connecting to the first four seals. One disaster opens the door to the next. Prophecy becomes terrifyingly immediate when we consider how quickly ordinary life could collapse.

“I hope I am wrong.” I have said those words again and again. But hoping I am wrong does not release me from the responsibility to warn. Read the seals with this danger in mind. Watch. Learn. Prepare. Push back on the darkness.

CHAPTER 10

The Lamb opens the seven seals

The apostle John is on the island of Patmos near the end of the first century. Tradition identifies him as the last surviving apostle. There he receives the vision recorded in Revelation: the revealing of Jesus, the hidden Messiah. To understand the vision, we must begin with Him.

The scene begins in heaven, with a scroll in the hand of the One seated on the throne.

Revelation 5 introduces a scroll secured with seven seals and asks who is worthy to open it. John weeps because no one has been found. An elder directs him to the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. When John looks, he sees the Lamb who was slain and now stands alive.

The Lamb is Jesus, Yeshua: the promised Messiah of Israel and Redeemer of people from every nation. John hears of the Lion and sees the Lamb. His victory carries the marks of His sacrifice. The One worthy to open the scroll is the One who gave His life for us.

The Lamb takes the scroll.

The horses as spirits sent into the earth

I understand the four horses as portrayals of spirits released into the earth as Jesus opens the first four seals. Their activity can work through human rulers, warfare, economic distress, and death, but their origin in the vision is heavenly. They are commissioned and restrained; they do not act beyond the Lamb's authority.

Zechariah provides a biblical basis for this interpretation. In Zechariah 1:7–17, horses of different colors travel throughout the earth at the Lord's command and report what they have seen. The vision then turns to His concern for Jerusalem and Zion. Heavenly messengers are already shown responding to earthly conditions.

Zechariah 6:1–8 develops the picture through four chariots drawn by horses of different colors. The NIV calls them "the four spirits of heaven" in verse 5. The Hebrew ruchot can mean spirits or winds. They go out from the Lord's presence into the earth. [40]

The horses go out from heaven under the Lord's authority. This supports reading Revelation's horses as spiritual forces working through rulers, peoples, and institutions, with the first four seals revealing the consequences.

Reading the visions alongside Jesus

Matthew 24:4 begins the warnings we will follow in order. Alongside them, Revelation 6 gives the sequence of the seals. The connections made here are an interpretation of the two passages together; Matthew does not number seals or name horsemen.

These troubles can overlap. One does not have to end before another begins, and persecution has accompanied believers since the earliest days of the church. Luke 21:12 even places persecution before the events he has just described. We are tracing an unfolding and intensifying pattern, not assigning every war, famine, or act of persecution an exclusive place on a calendar. [122]

CHAPTER 11

The first seal and the white horse

Matthew 24:4. Jesus warns His disciples against deception.

Matthew 24:5. Many will claim His name and messianic authority and deceive others.

The Lamb opens the first seal. A white horse appears; its rider carries a bow, receives a crown, and goes out conquering (Revelation 6:1–2).

I connect this rider with Jesus' warning: conquest disguised as peace and righteousness. Jesus remains the Lamb opening the seals; this rider is distinct from the returning King of Revelation 19. [122]

My concern is with Islamist movements seeking political domination through peaceful public activity. The threat lies in demands for religious submission, not in a neighbor's Muslim identity.

Consider Hamas and other Islamist armed groups operating from Gaza. Their attacks on October 7 reached innocent people at a music festival and families in their homes. Rockets had threatened Israeli communities for years before that day. These armed groups have also operated among Palestinian civilians. In its October 2023 statement to the United Nations, the British government condemned Hamas for embedding itself in civilian populations and using Palestinians as human shields. Peaceful Muslims have suffered within that danger too. [133,138,143]

I believe Israel has the right to defend its people. The October 7 massacre was too much to bear. Patience has a

limit, and repeated provocation leads to retaliation. Israel says it takes precautions to reduce civilian casualties, yet innocent lives have still been lost. Its military response has drawn condemnation, including criticism I believe can overlook the threat that prompted it. Defending the innocent and grieving innocent Palestinian deaths belong together. Self-defense carries a responsibility to protect civilians. [143]

Keep in mind that Jews, Christians, and Muslims are citizens of Israel. Its founding declaration promises equal social and political rights regardless of religion, and freedom of worship. People of these faiths share neighborhoods, workplaces, and the ordinary responsibilities of life, even amid real tensions and inequalities. My concern here is with radicalized jihadist movements pursuing war and destruction, not with peaceful Muslim neighbors. [14]

We struggle with principalities and powers. Our fight is a spiritual one (Ephesians 6:12). This is why we are called to love our neighbor and even our enemies (Matthew 5:44). A religious label must never become an excuse to hate a person. We can resist violence while remembering that every human life matters to God.

Muslim communities have grown and become more visible in Western public life through immigration, births, and the development of established communities. The following figures describe that growth; population numbers alone do not establish a political purpose.

A changing population in Europe

In England and Wales, the Muslim population grew from about 1.5 million in 2001 to 2.7 million in 2011 and 3.9

million in 2021. Its share rose from approximately 3 percent to 6.5 percent. [34]

Germany's federal migration office estimated 3.8–4.3 million Muslims in its 2008 study and 5.3–5.6 million in 2019. The later estimate represented 6.4–6.7 percent of the population. [33]

Austria counted 338,988 Muslims in its 2001 census and estimated 745,600 in its 2021 survey, a rise from about 4.2 to 8.3 percent. Ireland's comparable census counts increased from 48,130 in 2011 to 81,930 in 2022. [51–52]

The change is visible in other European surveys too. Muslim identification among adults aged 18–49 in metropolitan France rose from 8 percent in 2008–2009 to 11 percent in 2019–2020. In the Netherlands, the rounded share among people aged 15 and older was 5 percent in 2010 and 6 percent in 2025. These age-specific figures appear in the notes alongside their sources. [54–55]

The United States Canada and Australia

The U.S. Religion Census estimated 1.56 million Muslim adherents in 2000, 2.60 million in 2010, and 4.45 million in 2020. This is a nongovernmental, mosque-based estimate of adherents. It shows substantial growth over the twenty years measured. [35]

Canada counted about 580,000 Muslims in 2001 and 1.78 million in 2021, an increase of approximately 206 percent. The population share rose from 2.0 to 4.9 percent. [49]

Australia's census series rose from about 281,600 in 2001 to 813,400 in 2021, an increase of approximately 189 percent. Muslims accounted for 1.5 percent of the population at the beginning of that period and 3.2 percent at its end. New Zealand's counts rose from 23,631 in 2001 to 75,138 in 2023. [50,53]

Muslim population growth in the national records

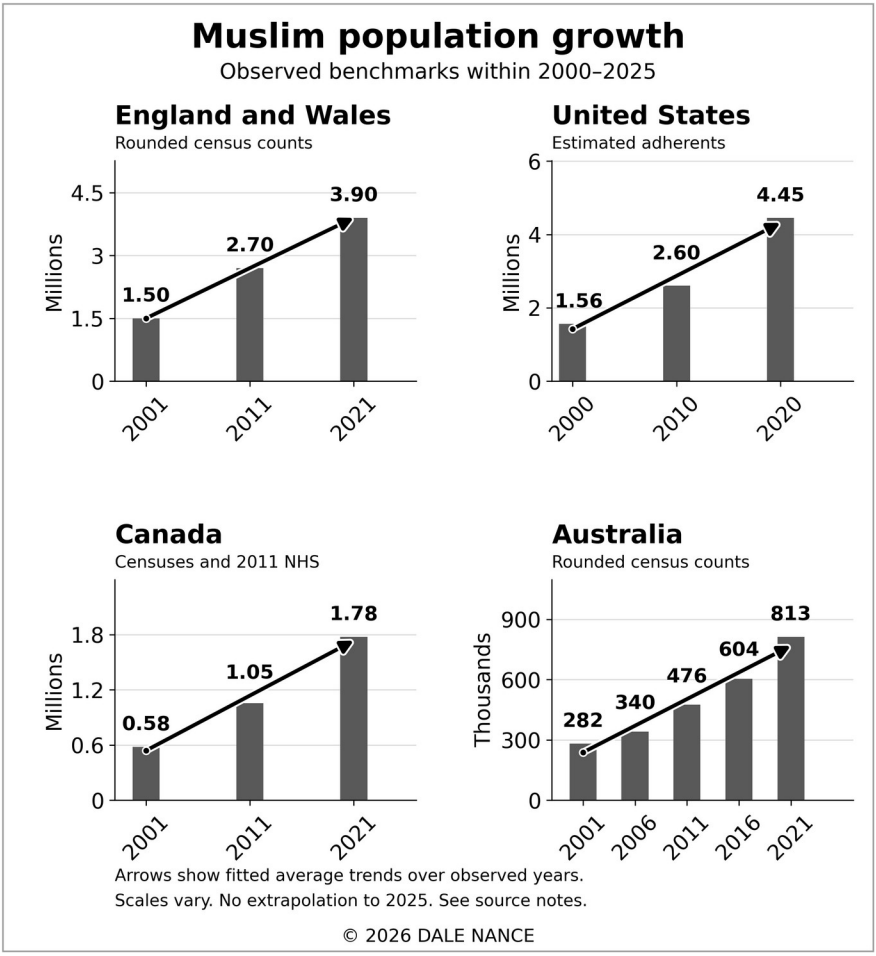


Figure 1A. Muslim population counts or estimates for the years shown. Straight arrows show fitted average trends across the available observations, ending at the last observation. They are not forecasts. Country scales differ; U.S. values are adherent estimates. [34–35,49–50]

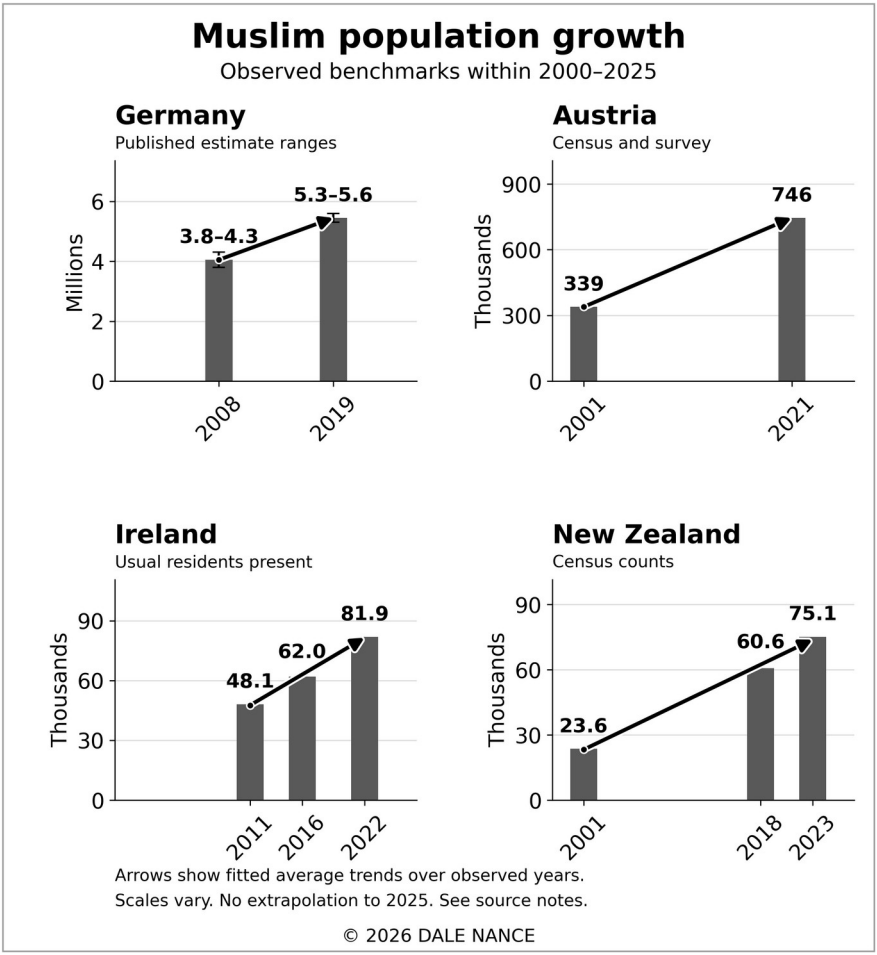


Figure 1B. Muslim population counts or estimates. Straight arrows show the fitted average trend within each country. German bars use the midpoints of the displayed ranges. Census and survey details are in the source notes. [33,51–53]

Immigration and public influence

The United States experienced a substantial immigration surge during the Biden administration. The Congressional Budget Office's January 2025 assessment estimated total net

immigration at 1.5 million in 2021, 2.8 million in 2022, 3.3 million in 2023, and 2.7 million in 2024. The annual average for 2010–2019 had been about 920,000. These are immigration totals across religious backgrounds; they do not provide a Muslim count. [56]

The demographic change is accompanied by greater political representation. Britain elected 25 Muslim members of Parliament in 2024, about 4 percent of the House of Commons. [36] Growing communities are becoming more visible in the institutions that shape national life.

An open society can be used by a movement seeking religious domination. That is the possibility behind the comparison with the white horse. The question is what power such a movement seeks and how it would treat those who refuse its demands.

CHAPTER 12

The second seal and the red horse

Matthew 24:6. Jesus warns of wars and rumors of wars but tells His followers not to be alarmed: the end is still to come.

Matthew 24:7a. Nation rises against nation and kingdom against kingdom.

The second seal releases the red horse. Its rider receives a great sword and authority to remove peace from the earth, with people killing one another (Revelation 6:3–4).

The red horse follows the white horse. The ambition to dominate can prepare the ground for open conflict. Religious coercion, fear, and retaliation deepen divisions between communities and bring suffering to ordinary families.

This is the spirit of war and bloodshed. The loss of peace reaches into the ordinary conditions that allow families to live: a safe road, a harvest gathered, a school kept open, a neighbor trusted. Even the journey to school, work, or worship can become dangerous. Human beings remain responsible for their violence even when we understand a spiritual power to be at work behind it.

We must recognize coercion, defend those in danger, and obey Jesus' command to love. The Lamb who opens the seals is also the Savior who calls people from every nation to Himself.

Trouble before the end

Please keep this in mind: the end is still to come. Tribulation means trouble or affliction. The birth pains describe that trouble developing toward its culmination. The saints are promised trouble in this world; the promise of salvation does not mean they will never suffer.

The growing tribulation described here precedes the final outpouring of God's wrath. Evil brings suffering, and God remains sovereign over what He permits. Trouble and wrath have different meanings, although Scripture sometimes describes suffering that involves divine judgment. Luke 21:23, for example, speaks of wrath in connection with Jerusalem's distress.

I understand the seals as a further withdrawal of God's protective restraint. What He has held back is being allowed to unfold. Even the warning is grace: He calls us to come to Him while there is time. His promised rescue gives us hope without removing our calling to remain faithful in trouble.

When conquest leads toward conflict

Some movements announce their hostility openly.

Radical Islamist movements have used calls for death to Israel and death to America for many years. Such language becomes especially dangerous when hatred is taught as a religious duty. Hamas's 1988 founding charter invokes a hadith describing Jews hiding behind stones and trees and being called out to be killed. This passage is found in Sahih Muslim 2922, not in the Quran. Its use in the charter places an antisemitic call to violence inside an account of the end times. [103]

The danger reaches children, too. Human Rights Watch documented ISIS recruiting children, giving them ideological and weapons training, and using them in military operations, including suicide bombing missions. One teenager described pressure to volunteer for a suicide attack. Teaching children to destroy themselves and others glorifies death and perpetuates violence. The responsibility belongs to the extremist organizations and those who promote their actions; it cannot be assigned to Muslim families as a whole. [104]

Apocalyptic expectations can intensify that danger. ISIS promoted the Syrian town of Dabiq as the setting of an approaching final battle. When the town fell, some supporters pointed to unfulfilled conditions, including the Mahdi's appearance, to explain the delay. This shows how expectations about the end times can be used to sustain a violent cause. It does not establish that Muslims generally believe they must create war and chaos to bring back the Mahdi. [105]

The Houthi slogan includes "Death to America," "Death to Israel," and an anti-Jewish curse. These are words to take seriously, especially from an armed movement. [37]

The radical Islamist leadership that took power in Iran after the 1979 revolution promoted "Death to America" as an enduring slogan. In 2019, Ali Khamenei named Donald Trump, John Bolton, and Mike Pompeo as its targets, but the chant had already been associated with the regime for forty years. [38]

October 7 and the regional struggle

The violence that spread across the region must be considered in light of October 7, 2023. That day, Hamas-led armed groups attacked southern Israel, murdering civilians

and taking hostages, including people attending the Nova music festival near the Gaza border. People who had gathered for music were hunted down. Human Rights Watch documented murder, hostage-taking, and other atrocities across the attack sites. A United Nations mission found reasonable grounds to believe that rape and gang rape occurred at the Nova festival and its surroundings, and clear and convincing information that hostages suffered sexual violence, including rape and sexualized torture. These victims deserve to be remembered as people, not reduced to figures in a political argument. [70]

Hamas has received Iranian support. Hezbollah, also backed by Iran, is a separate organization based in Lebanon. Iran's network also includes Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Houthis in Yemen, and aligned militias in Iraq and Syria. These relationships show how violence in one place can become part of a wider regional struggle. ISIS and Boko Haram have their own leadership and histories. [70]

Antisemitism and the wider spiritual struggle

The violence belongs to a larger moral and spiritual crisis. Jewish people have faced renewed threats, assaults, vandalism, and intimidation, including in countries where they should be able to live and worship securely. We have a responsibility to defend Jewish life and Israel's right to exist. The Jewish people are not strangers to the biblical story. Jesus, Yeshua, came into the world as a Jew.

What recent international reports show

Tel Aviv University's report on antisemitism worldwide in 2025 describes hostility remaining widely above the levels

before October 7, 2023. It records twenty people killed in four antisemitic attacks across three countries during 2025. National totals moved in different directions, but the danger to Jewish life remained unmistakable. [71]

Each organization uses its own definition and reporting system. The following national reports show how widely the renewed hostility has been felt. The notes explain differences in coverage, including online incidents.

In Britain, the Community Security Trust recorded 1,662 incidents in 2022, 4,298 in 2023, 3,556 in 2024, and 3,700 in 2025. The latest total was more than twice the 2022 figure. Its 2025 report also recorded 217 incidents involving damage or desecration of Jewish property, a record for that category. The sequence shows a surge followed by fluctuations at a substantially elevated level. [73]

France recorded 1,320 antisemitic acts in 2025, down 16 percent from 2024. Even with that improvement, its Interior Ministry described the three most recent years as the highest of the preceding quarter century. [74]

Canada's B'nai Brith reported 6,800 incidents in 2025, its highest annual total since the audit began in 1982. That was 9.4 percent above 2024 and 145.6 percent above 2022. Most incidents occurred online, an important difference from series that concentrate more narrowly on physical encounters and property damage. [75]

Australia’s Executive Council of Australian Jewry recorded 1,654 incidents in the year ending September 30, 2025, following 2,062 in the previous year. Both far exceeded the annual average of 342 during the ten years before October 2023. [76]

Chapter 19 examines the threats and assaults faced by Jewish students, the findings concerning Columbia University, and my view that the Trump administration’s funding pressure contributed to the campus decline in

2025. Those developments belong within the wider struggle against hostility described here.

The Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, and protest networks

The Muslim Brotherhood's historical connection with Hamas is explicit in Hamas's 1988 covenant. A later American prosecution also documented a support network: in 2008, a federal jury convicted the Holy Land Foundation and five leaders of providing material support to Hamas. The Justice Department described approximately $12.4 million in support and evidence concerning a Brotherhood-linked American Palestine Committee. [78–79]

A 2024 study from George Washington University's Program on Extremism traces relationships among earlier Hamas-support networks, American Muslims for Palestine, and Students for Justice in Palestine. It argues that organizational and personnel connections help explain ideological influence on campuses. [80]

Foreign interference adds to the concern. A U.S. intelligence assessment declassified in October 2024 reported that Iran's intelligence ministry encouraged an American to attend a pro-Palestinian demonstration in Washington and offered travel money. The assessment documents an attempted foreign influence operation. [81]

From the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea

The river in "From the river to the sea" is the Jordan; the sea is the Mediterranean. The area includes Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. Hamas's 2017 political document rejects recognition of Israel's legitimacy and demands the liberation of the entire territory. Read in that setting, the

slogan carries the movement's rejection of Israel into public speech. [78]

A demand to eliminate Israel or expel Jews from their ancestral homeland is a grave threat. When the slogan accompanies praise for massacres, threats against Jews, or support for attacks on civilians, that danger must be confronted. Israel's Jewish population has a right to live in safety.

My position is firm: freedom for one people must not mean destruction of another. I oppose calls to destroy Israel and threats against Jews. I also oppose violence against Palestinian civilians. Concern for their lives does not require surrendering my convictions about Israel, and defending Israel does not require indifference to innocent suffering.

The spiritual reality behind human actions

Ephesians 6:12 directs us beyond visible actors to spiritual powers. First John 4 speaks of testing spirits and of the spirit of antichrist already in the world. Revelation 12 portrays Michael and his angels fighting the dragon, while Daniel 10 describes conflict involving heavenly messengers. These passages describe spiritual conflict behind visible events.

Hatred takes hold through many ideologies. It appears in religious persecution, attacks on Jewish people, and celebrations of murder. Spiritual warfare is visible in what people choose to do.

The believer's confidence rests in God's greater power (1 John 4:4). We respond with prayer, truth, faithful witness, and protection for the vulnerable. Love remains the Lord's command in the middle of the struggle.

CHAPTER 13

The third seal and the black horse

Matthew 24:7b. Jesus next names famines.

The third seal brings the black horse, whose rider carries balances. A voice announces the cost of wheat and barley and sets a limit concerning oil and wine (Revelation 6:5–6).

The black horse portrays scarcity and economic pressure. Its balances concern the marketplace and the household's food supply. The NIV expresses the cost in daily wages and identifies the Greek coin as a denarius in its footnotes. Matthew 20:1–2 uses that coin for a day's agreed wage. A full day's labor buys painfully little staple food.

When war brings scarcity

War disrupts the food supply well beyond the fighting zone. Closed roads and interrupted harvests raise prices, while displaced families lose their livelihoods. Children who survive an attack may then face malnutrition or disease. These consequences help explain why the black horse follows the red.

Hunger in a world able to produce so much

The 2026 Global Report on Food Crises reported 266 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity during 2025 across the 47 countries and territories it analyzed. [19]

Agricultural knowledge, global transport, and rapid communication have not prevented severe hunger. The

black horse describes a crisis we can recognize: people work, yet food costs more than they can afford.

An increase in knowledge does not automatically produce an increase in justice. A world can become more capable while remaining unable or unwilling to protect its most vulnerable people.

The oil and the wine

The command concerning oil and wine places a limit on the horseman's reach. Even in this crisis, he cannot do whatever he wishes.

I also see a spiritual meaning in the command, "Hurt not the oil and the wine" (Revelation 6:6, KJV). Throughout the Bible, anointing oil provides a picture of the Holy Spirit's presence and work. When Samuel anointed David, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him; Zechariah's vision joins olive trees and oil with God's declaration that His work is accomplished by His Spirit (1 Samuel 16:13; Zechariah 4:2–6). I believe the oil here points to people filled with the Holy Spirit, as the believers were at Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4).

The wine points me toward blood, sacrifice, and covenant. At Passover, the blood of the lamb marked the homes of the Israelites for deliverance (Exodus 12:7, 13). At Sinai, blood accompanied the covenant with Israel (Exodus 24:8). Jesus then identified the cup with His own blood of the covenant (Matthew 26:27–28). Wine belongs to that larger biblical picture of covenant and redemption.

Understood this way, I believe the oil recalls Spirit-filled Christians, while the wine also directs our attention to the Jewish people and the covenant story of Passover. God has not forgotten either. I see the command as a reminder of His authority and covenant faithfulness, even while His people endure hardship. This is the spiritual interpretation I offer for the reader to consider.

CHAPTER 14

The fourth seal and the pale horse

Luke's parallel account adds pestilences to famine and earthquakes (Luke 21:11). That warning connects with the fourth seal; the NIV places pestilence in Luke's account rather than Matthew 24:7. [122]

At the fourth seal, the rider is named Death, with Hades following him. Authority is given over a fourth part of the earth, involving sword, famine, plague, and wild beasts (Revelation 6:7–8).

The Greek color word is chloros, which can describe green vegetation. Here, pale or pale green conveys the sickly appearance of death. [20] The horse portrays a spirit of death, bringing together the consequences of conquest, war, and scarcity.

Ezekiel 14:21 joins sword, famine, dangerous beasts, and pestilence as judgments upon Jerusalem. Revelation uses imagery already present in Scripture. The fourth seal completes the four-horse sequence; three seals remain.

Pestilence and the limits of confidence

COVID-19 showed how one disease could change daily life across the world. Gatherings stopped, families feared for elderly parents, and hospital restrictions kept people from the bedsides of those they loved.

The loss was staggering. In its October 2026 update, WHO estimated 5.3 million deaths directly caused by COVID-19 worldwide in 2020 and 9.4 million in 2021. The annual

estimate fell to about 900,000 in 2023. In the United States, CDC had already recorded approximately 1.1 million COVID-19-associated deaths by February 2024. Behind those figures are people whose places at family tables remain empty. [99,101]

Bioweapons

I consider a laboratory origin for COVID-19 plausible. Its exact origin has not been established, and a laboratory-associated origin would not by itself prove that the virus was deliberately created as a weapon. Whatever its origin, COVID-19 was a pestilence of world-changing significance. The death counts above describe its human cost regardless of how the pandemic began. [91–93]

Among some claims were suggestions of a connection to snake-venom proteins, including those of the Chinese cobra and the krait. Some studies explored limited similarities between parts of the virus and venom-related proteins. They did not establish that cobra and krait venom had been built into the virus. [94–97]

The serpent also appears in the biblical account of deception. Genesis 3 records its deception and God's curse; Revelation 12:9 identifies the ancient serpent as the devil, or Satan, who leads the world astray. Any connection drawn here is symbolic and cannot explain the virus's origin. The biblical warning is to seek truth and resist deception. [1]

Bioweapons are a real threat to humanity, so we must mention them here. Research in China and elsewhere has included work with altered viruses and experiments commonly discussed as gain-of-function research. Such work raises serious questions about accidental release and deliberate misuse. Research on dangerous pathogens is not,

by itself, proof of a weapons program, but the potential consequences reach far beyond a laboratory's walls. WHO has called for stronger safeguards against the misuse of life-sciences research. [144]

As I was making the final edits to this book in October 2026, reports emerged of a laboratory worker's death in Irkutsk, Russia. Some accounts alleged an accident involving plague material, including a broken vessel. That detail was not confirmed. WHO reported on October 7 that the worker had died with severe pneumonia, that Russia had reported no plague cases, and that about 200 contacts had been quarantined. WHO was still requesting information and said it did not yet have the full picture. We cannot present a fatal plague spill or a bioweapons accident as an established fact. [145]

Much of what happens in sensitive laboratories is beyond public view. That uncertainty calls for careful investigation and accountability. We do not need to treat every alarming report as proven to recognize that dangerous biological research, accidents, and the possibility of deliberate misuse remain threats to the world.

The possibility of future pestilence

Future pestilence could involve another form of this virus or a different disease. Whether a more deadly variant will emerge cannot be predicted. [98] I believe a future outbreak could contribute to the suffering described in Revelation 6:8. [1]

The pandemic exposed how fragile life remains despite our knowledge. Expecting the Lord's return should make us more willing to care for the sick and comfort the grieving. His promise gives us hope while we do that work.

CHAPTER 15

When the ground shakes

Matthew 24:7c. Jesus also names earthquakes in various places. Having considered the four horses, we return to this part of His warning. Earthquakes belong to the troubles He describes; they are not an additional seal.

An earthquake can destroy a home in seconds.

Walls fall, roads break, and families lose the places where they felt safe. The stability we depend on each day can disappear without warning.

Luke 21:11 specifies great earthquakes in various places. The record below shows events in that category.

A century of recorded earthquakes

The chart presents the USGS earthquake record from 1900 through the complete years ending in 2025. Appendix B gives the values and counting method. [16]

The bars show the annual average of recorded worldwide earthquakes above magnitude 6.0, including aftershocks. The last bar averages six complete years, allowing us to compare it with the full decades.

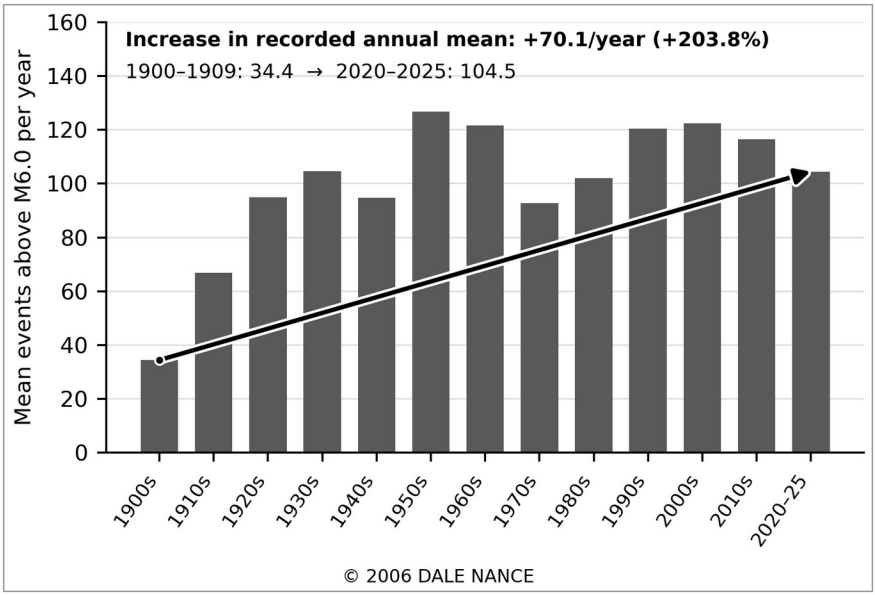


Figure 2. Recorded worldwide earthquakes above magnitude 6.0. The arrow connects annual averages of 34.4 in 1900–1909 and 104.5 in 2020–2025, a rise of 203.8 percent in recorded counts. The final bar covers six years. Source and method: Appendix B. [16]

The final displayed annual average is more than three times the first.

When the ground beneath us moves

Earthquakes expose the limits of human control and leave people needing immediate help. Scripture places such suffering within a creation awaiting renewal.

Taken together with Jewish return, modern travel, and increased knowledge, these events strengthen my belief that the world is approaching the events Jesus described.

The most faithful response to a shaking city includes prayer, assistance, and truthful speech. As we consider the larger prophetic picture, we can also remember the family sleeping outside because its home is unsafe. Watchfulness and compassion belong together.

CHAPTER 16

When the mountains erupt

Volcanic eruptions send fire, ash, and smoke into the sky. Matthew 24 does not name volcanoes, but other biblical passages use images of fire and smoke. The comparison belongs with our examination of the earth's upheaval.

An eruption can force a community to leave its homes with little warning.

Ash can cover familiar roads while families evacuate without knowing when they can return. Beyond the dramatic photographs are people who need shelter, clean water, and help rebuilding their lives.

The record of eruption starts allows us to examine volcanic activity over time and consider its resemblance to the fire and smoke described in Scripture.

The rise in recorded eruptions

The historical figures come from the Smithsonian Institution's Global Volcanism Program, using its April 24, 2026 archive. The Smithsonian and USGS also cooperate on the Weekly Volcanic Activity Report. Here, each confirmed eruption is counted in the year it began. [29]

During 1900–1909, the database lists 269 eruption starts, an average of 26.9 per year. The average reaches 39.2 in 2000–2009 and 36.7 in 2010–2019. The shorter 2020–2025 period contains 182 starts, or about 30.3 per year. These are averages for the displayed periods, so a six-year interval can be compared with a ten-year decade. [29]

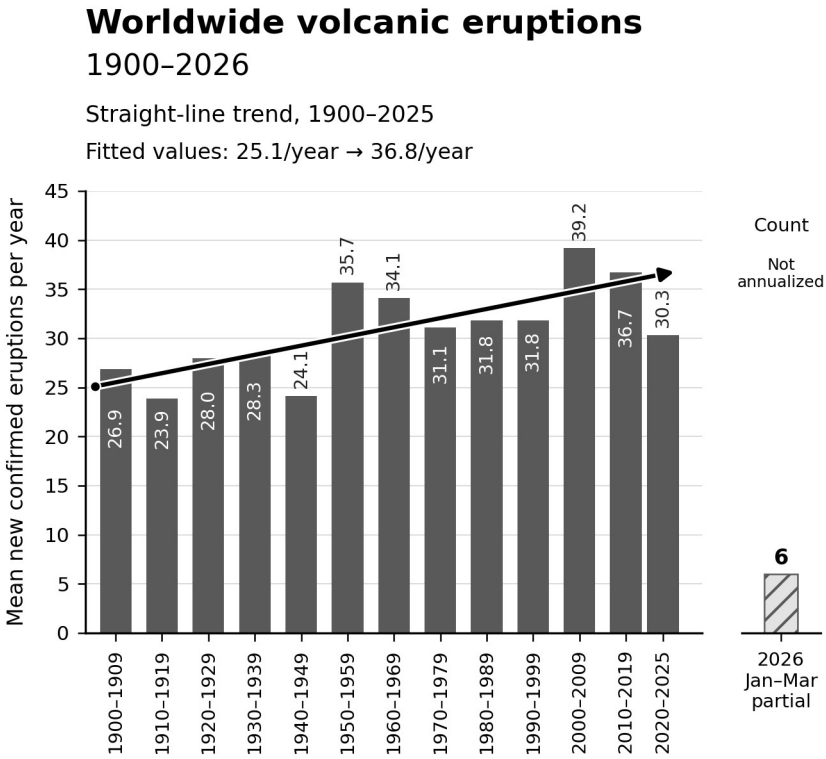


Figure 3. Recorded worldwide eruption starts, grouped by decade. The straight arrow shows the average trend fitted to the annual counts from 1900 through 2025. The partial 2026 count is displayed separately. [29]

What the straight line tells us

The straight line shows the average trend across all 126 annual counts from 1900 through 2025. It rises from a fitted value of about 25.1 to 36.8 recorded eruption starts per year. Individual periods rise and fall around it; the early 2026 count stands separately. [29]

These are records of observed activity. Better observation and reporting explain much of the apparent long-term increase, as the source notes explain. [30] The eruptions themselves demonstrate how quickly familiar conditions can change when mountains erupt and ash darkens the sky.

Fire and billows of smoke

Joel 2:30 describes blood, fire, and billows of smoke. The next verse describes the sun turning to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord. A volcanic plume gives a visible example of fire and smoke reaching into the sky.

Ash from an eruption can darken daylight over the surrounding land. That resemblance helps us picture the language Joel uses, though it does not establish a particular eruption as the fulfillment of his prophecy.

Peter quotes Joel in Acts 2 as he announces the outpouring of the Spirit. The passage also looks toward the Day of the Lord, joining terrifying signs with a promise of rescue.

Joel 2:32 promises deliverance to those who call upon the Lord. The warning requires a response: turn to God while there is time.

The burning mountain in Revelation

Revelation 8:8–9 describes something like a huge burning mountain cast into the sea, followed by the death of sea creatures and the destruction of ships. This is the second trumpet judgment, after the seals.

Human commerce depends on conditions we cannot fully control. The damage to shipping in this vision shows how a disturbance in the natural world can reach people far from its source.

A creation that groans and a people who hope

Romans 8:22 describes the whole creation groaning and travailing together. Paul looks toward its liberation from corruption and the redemption of those who wait for the Lord. The suffering and decay we see now will not last forever.

I believe that renewal is approaching. The promise of Jesus' return gives us hope amid events beyond our control.

That hope calls us to serve the people living near the mountain. A family may need shelter, clean water, or help with a damaged farm. The promise of restoration should make us eager to care for what is broken today.

CHAPTER 17

The birth pains of a troubled world

Matthew 24:8. Jesus calls these troubles the beginning of birth pains. Trouble is already present; it does not begin only in some later, unrelated period. The comparison describes suffering that leads toward an arrival, as labor leads toward birth.

As birth approaches, contractions generally grow stronger and closer together. I believe the troubles Jesus describes likewise increase in intensity and frequency as His return approaches. These birth pains are the intensifying tribulation before His appearing and our gathering to Him.

Jesus gives no numerical timetable for these birth pains. His comparison does not require every disaster record to increase every year. Individual trends fluctuate, and we must describe the evidence honestly while examining the wider pattern.

Fear can become a second crisis

Constant updates carry us from a battlefield to an earthquake or financial crisis in seconds. Events far away can feel immediate, leaving little time to pray, think, or respond.

Jesus tells us not to be alarmed by every report of war. We can take suffering seriously and help those affected without letting a constant stream of frightening news govern our lives. Our trust rests in His authority.

Are the birth pains here

The New Testament already describes the last days. Romans 8:22 pictures the whole creation groaning and travailing as it awaits freedom from decay. This suffering extends beyond any one country or statistical record.

These birth pains occur alongside developments earlier generations did not experience in the same way. Israel has returned to national life. Travel and knowledge have changed the world, and systems of power reach into daily transactions. War and hunger continue. Together, these developments strengthen my expectation that the Lord's return is near.

Expecting His return should sustain prayer, courage, generosity, and the willingness to share our hope. His promise stands through upheaval and relief.

The birth has an outcome

Birth pains lead toward a birth. Jesus promises resurrection, righteous judgment, the defeat of evil, and the renewal of creation. Suffering will end.

After the birth pains of verse 8, Jesus warns of persecution. The fifth seal shows people who have died for their testimony.

The next question is what faithfulness costs when people are threatened for following Him.

CHAPTER 18

The fifth seal and the martyrs beneath the altar

Matthew 24:9. Jesus warns that His followers will face persecution, death, and hatred because of His name. The fifth seal shows the faithful dead awaiting God's answer. That shared account of persecution connects His warning with John's vision.

The fifth seal changes what John is shown. No fifth horse appears. He sees the souls of people killed because of God's word and the testimony they held, beneath the altar (Revelation 6:9–11). A martyr is someone killed for remaining faithful to that testimony.

They ask how long judgment will be delayed. They receive white robes and are told to rest a little longer, while others will suffer as they have. God has not forgotten their faithfulness or their cry for justice.

The altar recalls the language of sacrifice. Leviticus 4:7 describes blood poured at its base, and Leviticus 17:11 connects blood with life. The image brings the martyrs' poured-out lives before God. Their testimony has been heard. The Lord is still in Heaven.

Persecution and the cost of bearing witness

Daniel 7:25 — *"He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time."*

Revelation 13:7 — *"And it was permitted to wage war against the saints and to conquer them. It was also given authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation."*

Matthew 24:9 — *"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake."*

2 Timothy 3:12 — *"Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."*

Revelation 6:9–11 — Speaks of the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God crying out for vindication, and being told to rest a little longer.

Violent Islamist movements have attacked people for following Jesus. Those attacks must be documented and those in danger protected. Burning churches and threatening people with death for refusing to renounce their faith are acts of persecution.

Documented attacks on believers

Boko Haram's attacks in Nigeria have brought killings, abductions, sexual violence, and assaults on churches. The U.S. State Department's 2014 religious-freedom report recorded accounts of Christians ordered to renounce their faith and killed when they refused. It also described churches destroyed or occupied and women subjected to sexual violence. [63]

The violence has crossed national borders. Amnesty International's field investigation in northern Cameroon documented Boko Haram attacks during 2019, including mutilation, kidnapping, forced conversion, and the burning of a Baptist church and a pastor's home in Gossi. Two abductees from a predominantly Christian area described being threatened with death and forced to convert to Islam

before escaping. Their accounts show the direct connection between coercion, religious identity, and violence. [64]

Children have been drawn into the violence too. UNICEF reported that United Nations and partner data verified Boko Haram's recruitment of nearly 2,000 children during 2016. The recruiters turned vulnerable children into instruments of a war that had already made them victims. [65]

In Libya in 2015, ISIS beheaded twenty-one Christians. United Nations Security Council proceedings addressed those killings and the abduction of Assyrian Christians in northeastern Syria. These attacks targeted people because of their religious identity. [66]

On Easter Sunday in Sri Lanka in 2019, suicide bombers attacked churches and hotels. The State Department attributed the attacks to National Thowheed Jamath, an Islamist group that pledged allegiance to ISIS. More than 250 civilians were killed across the sites. Worshippers who had gathered to celebrate the resurrection became victims of deliberate terror. [67]

In Jaranwala, Pakistan, blasphemy allegations against two Christian residents were followed by attacks on churches and homes in August 2023. Amnesty International's initial report recorded arson at at least five churches. The attacks left residents fearing for their safety and the loss of their homes and places of worship. [68]

These accounts show people facing a demand to abandon their faith or live under threat of violence. Our response should include prayer, practical support, and protection for those at risk.

Reported persecution and violence

Open Doors estimated that more than 340 million Christians experienced high levels of persecution and discrimination in its 2021 World Watch List, compared with more than 388 million in the 2026 edition. Those reports cover periods ending in 2020 and 2025. The estimates include people facing restrictions on worship and daily life as well as threats and violence. [57–62]

Beheading and the witness of Revelation

Revelation 20:4 describes believers beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and God's word. They have refused the beast's worship and mark. The Greek verb pelekizo means to behead. [69]

The murder of the twenty-one believers in Libya resembles the persecution John describes. I believe such attacks belong within this prophetic pattern. The fifth seal shows martyrs awaiting justice; Revelation 20 shows faithful witnesses vindicated. Their killers will not have the final word.

Before the sixth seal, Matthew 24 describes dangers to faith and love, the continuing witness, and deepening distress.

CHAPTER 19

When the love of many grows cold

Matthew 24:10. Jesus now speaks of people falling away, betraying one another, and turning to hatred. The King James Version says that “many shall be offended.” His warning reaches beyond public events into the loyalty of our hearts. [120]

The older word offended carries more weight here than simply having hurt feelings. The NIV describes people turning away from the faith. In the surrounding verses, persecution is followed by falling away, betrayal, deception, and hatred. Jesus warns of a spiritual failure under pressure. Everyday impatience may help us recognize how resentment takes root, but a rude encounter by itself does not establish the fulfillment of the prophecy.

Matthew 24:11. False prophets also arise and deceive many. Trouble can make a persuasive voice sound especially attractive. We must test what we hear against the Lord’s teaching, even when a message confirms what we want to believe.

Matthew 24:12. As wickedness increases, love grows cold. Constant hostility can teach us to treat others with the same contempt we condemn. We need to examine that danger in our own conduct.

Watching world events does not excuse neglecting the person beside us. What happens to our love when someone delays us, disagrees with us, or belongs to a group we have learned to distrust?

When inconvenience becomes an offense

A slow driver, a long line, or a misunderstood remark can become an occasion for anger. Someone makes a mistake, and we assume malice. Disagreement becomes a judgment about the other person's worth. There seems to be little room left for patience when every inconvenience feels personal.

No statistic measures a whole society's patience, and disturbing videos give an incomplete picture. The following U.S. records show changes in specific behavior; they do not measure the world as a whole.

Anger behind the wheel

Road rage can turn a minor dispute into a dangerous confrontation. An angry driver follows another car or blocks its path, putting strangers and passengers at risk.

Everytown Research's analysis of Gun Violence Archive records found at least 58 people killed and 160 wounded in U.S. road-rage shootings in 2018. In 2023, the figures were 118 killed and 365 wounded. Together, those reported casualties rose from 218 to 483, an increase of about 122 percent. That is more than twice as many people shot in five years. [117]

The same report records a decline in road-rage shootings from 2022 to 2023, while levels remained far above 2018. These figures cover reported shootings and their victims; they do not measure every angry exchange or every form of road rage. They do show how a dispute on the road can become deadly. [117]

Patience is tested before a weapon is drawn. Can we let another driver make a mistake without retaliating? A

routine journey gives us opportunities to practice the love we claim to value.

Demonstrations and the turn toward violence

Demonstrations can express demands for justice or grief over suffering. They can also become occasions for intimidation, clashes, and property destruction. Violence harms shopkeepers, students, police officers, and passersby whose lives matter to God.

Princeton University's Bridging Divides Initiative, analyzing ACLED records, reports almost 20,000 U.S. demonstrations in 2025, 77 percent more than in 2024. Yet violent or destructive activity was reported at only about 0.5 percent of those events. The category includes attacks on demonstrators and clashes involving different participants, not simply violence initiated by protesters. More demonstrations therefore do not establish an increase in rioting. [118]

The broader assault figures show a decline. The FBI estimated that aggravated assaults fell 7.2 percent in 2025 compared with 2024, while violent crime overall fell 9.3 percent. Targeted hatred can worsen even when total violent crime falls, so each trend needs to be described accurately. [119]

Keep in mind that this 2025 decline coincided with the Trump administration's return to office. Its April 2025 executive order called for stronger support and resources for law enforcement. I believe effective policing helps make our streets safer. The national figures, however, measure the decline; they do not by themselves tell us how much any one administration or policy caused it. [119,146]

Jewish students and targeted hostility

Jewish students should be able to attend class, worship, and speak safely. Threatening them over a government's actions or excluding them for being Jewish is targeted hostility.

The Anti-Defamation League recorded 1,694 antisemitic incidents on U.S. college and university campuses in 2024, an 84 percent increase over 2023. In 2025, the campus total fell to 583, a 66 percent decline; campus assaults also declined. These figures describe a sharp surge followed by substantial improvement, not an uninterrupted annual rise. ADL's audit includes harassment and vandalism as well as assault, and both criminal and noncriminal conduct. Its definitions, including treatment of certain Israel-related expressions, matter when comparing totals. [72]

CHAPTER 20

The warning before His appearing

Persecution has not ended the witness of those who follow Jesus. His next words describe the proclamation, warnings, and distress before the heavenly signs of His coming. [122]

The witness goes on

Matthew 24:14. The gospel of the kingdom reaches the nations as a testimony, and then the end comes. Trouble does not cancel the mission. The growing reach of travel, translation, and communication matters because it gives believers opportunities to carry that good news farther. No audience total or internet statistic, by itself, tells us that this promise is complete.

Daniel and the warning to flee

Matthew 24:15. Jesus directs the reader to Daniel and to the abomination that brings desolation, standing in the holy place. We are being asked to recognize a particular desecration. Daniel 9:27 connects desolation with the stopping of sacrifice; Daniel 11:31 describes the profaning of the sanctuary and the setting up of the abomination; Daniel 12:11 returns to that language.

Mark 13:14 records the same warning, describing the abomination standing where it does not belong. In the parallel place in Luke's account, Luke 21:20 names Jerusalem surrounded by armies and says that its desolation is near. Luke identifies Jerusalem specifically,

rather than the whole nation of Israel. In each account, the warning leads directly to flight from Judea.

Traditionally, Matthew and Mark are understood as Jewish believers, while Luke is understood as a Gentile. Matthew and Mark use the expression “the abomination of desolation,” an allusion to Daniel that would carry particular meaning for readers familiar with Jewish Scripture (Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). Think of a Texan saying, “Remember the Alamo.” Someone who does not know that history may hear the words without understanding all they evoke.

Luke gives us a different description in the parallel passage: Jerusalem surrounded by armies. I believe that helps clarify the danger Jesus was describing. It paints a picture of approaching desolation and an urgent need to flee. Reading the accounts together can keep us from resting everything on one familiar phrase.

I do believe an antichrist may stand where he does not belong, perhaps even in a rebuilt temple. But Matthew’s reference to the holy place and Mark’s warning about standing where he ought not do not, by themselves, say a third temple must first be built. Could the setting involve the Temple Mount and the mosque already there? Could standing where he does not belong refer to that sacred ground? I will not claim to know for certain. Others have made confident claims, but I am not going to wait for a third temple before I pay attention. I believe that could be a losing game.

These passages warn of a crisis surrounding Jerusalem. Its destruction in AD 70 gives Luke’s words a historical setting; I believe they also warrant looking for a final crisis before the Lord’s return. Luke does not use the phrase abomination of desolation, so his account must be read

alongside Daniel, Matthew, and Mark rather than taken as a complete definition of Daniel's sign.

Matthew 24:16. Those in Judea are to flee to the mountains. Recognition calls for action. Jesus does not tell them to remain in the danger merely to watch a prophecy unfold.

Matthew 24:17. The person on the housetop must not delay to collect possessions from the house. The warning makes the urgency practical: a life matters more than what can be carried away.

Matthew 24:18. The worker in the field must not turn back for a cloak. Even an ordinary, understandable errand can become a dangerous delay.

Matthew 24:19. Jesus names the hardship for pregnant women and nursing mothers. Their vulnerability makes protection and help especially urgent during the flight.

Matthew 24:20. He tells His followers to pray that their flight will not fall in winter or on the Sabbath. Weather and the conditions of life in Judea matter to those trying to escape. Prophecy reaches into the roads they must travel and the burdens they must carry.

The trouble reaches its height

Matthew 24:21. Jesus describes a time of unparalleled distress. The trouble already underway has intensified into an extraordinary crisis. The birth pains have grown more severe as His return approaches.

Matthew 24:22. The days are shortened for the sake of the elect; otherwise no one would survive. Even at the height of the crisis, suffering has a limit. God has not forgotten His people.

Recognizing the true coming

Matthew 24:23. Jesus warns against accepting claims that the Messiah has appeared here or there. A desperate hope for rescue must not become an opening for deception.

Matthew 24:24. False messiahs and false prophets offer impressive signs and wonders. The spectacle alone does not establish the truth of a claim. Even the faithful are the intended targets of deception.

Matthew 24:25. Jesus reminds His followers that He has warned them beforehand. His warning is care for them before they enter the danger.

Matthew 24:26. They must not chase reports of a hidden Messiah in the wilderness or in an inner room. The true coming will not depend on joining a secret search.

Matthew 24:27. Jesus compares the Son of Man's coming to lightning spreading across the sky. His appearing will be visible; no one will need to persuade the world that He has arrived in secret.

Matthew 24:28. The image of a carcass and gathering birds brings death and judgment into the warning. Readers differ over the proverb's precise application, but it does not describe the destination of believers caught up to the Lord. The following verses give the direct description of His appearing and the gathering.

CHAPTER 21

The sixth seal and the sign of His appearing

Matthew 24:29. Immediately after the tribulation of those days, Jesus describes darkened heavenly lights, falling stars, and shaken heavenly powers. [122]

I believe the order in this verse speaks directly to the arguments over a pre-, mid-, or post-tribulation rapture. I understand that Christians read these passages differently. My own conviction is that the gathering of believers and the Day of the Lord belong to the same event, on the same day: rescue as His wrath begins. Others describe a separate, quiet rapture. I do not want to spend our time repeating the same argument.

The question that matters now is whether we are ready today. We can disagree about the sequence while sharing the Christian hope that Jesus will return. I believe His coming is near, and its reality does not depend on anyone's interpretation. Do you love God and your neighbor? That is the question with which I return to these discussions. Jesus prayed for His followers to be protected from the evil one, not taken out of the world (John 17:15). He also told them they would have trouble and could take courage in His victory (John 16:33). He is with us through the trouble. [147]

When the sixth seal opens, the earth shakes violently. The sun becomes dark, the moon appears bloodlike, the stars fall, and the sky withdraws like a rolled scroll. Mountains and islands move. People of every social

position seek shelter among the rocks, terrified before the enthroned One and the Lamb (Revelation 6:12–17).

Their fear is no longer described simply as fear of war or hunger. They recognize the day of the Lamb's wrath. The chapter ends by asking who can stand before it.

Matthew 24:30. The sign of the Son of Man appears. The peoples of the earth mourn as they see Him coming on the clouds with power and glory.

I place the Lord's departure from heaven at the sixth seal. Revelation 6:12–17 records the heavenly signs and the earth's terror before the Lamb. Matthew 24:29–31 places His appearing after tribulation, while 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17 describes His descent and our gathering to meet Him.

The gathering after the tribulation

Matthew 24:31. Jesus sends His angels with a loud trumpet call to gather His elect. I identify this gathering with the rapture at the sixth seal.

I see this as confirmation of the sequence in Matthew 24:29. The gathering follows the tribulation and, in my reading, comes just before the outpouring of wrath on that same Day of the Lord. Another clue is the multitude described as having come out of the great tribulation (Revelation 7:14). Read that alongside the announcement of the day of wrath at the sixth seal (Revelation 6:17). These connections are why I hold this interpretation. [147]

Mark 13:24–27 follows the same progression. Luke 21:25–28 joins heavenly signs and human fear with the Son of Man's coming and approaching redemption. First Thessalonians 5:9 promises salvation rather than appointment to wrath. These passages support the sequence argued here, although readers differ over whether Matthew's gathering is the rapture.

Joel 2:30–32 is especially close to the sixth seal's sun and moon: darkness and a bloodlike moon precede the Day of the Lord, while deliverance is promised to those who call upon Him. Peter quotes this passage in Acts 2:16–21. Joel 2:10–11 and 3:14–16 add the shaking of heaven and earth, darkened lights, and the Lord's presence as a refuge for His people.

Isaiah 34:4 supplies the vivid picture of the heavens rolling like a scroll and their host falling like leaves or figs. Isaiah 50:3 joins blackness with sackcloth. Isaiah 13 brings together the Lord's day, darkened sun and moon, human terror, and shaken heavens. The language forms a recognizable pattern of God intervening in judgment.

Isaiah 2:10–22 describes people hiding in rocks and caves when the Lord rises to shake the earth. Hosea 10:8 contains the appeal for the mountains and hills to cover the people, language Jesus also uses in Luke 23:30. Nahum 1:5–6 adds trembling mountains and the question of who can stand before divine indignation. Revelation draws these recognizable expressions into its sixth-seal scene.

Isaiah 26:19–21 places the rising of the dead, shelter during indignation, the Lord coming out of His place, and the exposure of shed blood in one passage. These themes correspond with resurrection, gathering, judgment, and the martyrs' appeal in the fifth and sixth seals. Appendix D lists the parallels for further study.

The gathering and the multitude before the throne

Paul says that the dead in Christ rise first, then living believers are caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18). First Corinthians 15:50–54 adds the transformation from mortality to immortality.

Second Thessalonians 2:1 speaks of the Lord's coming and our gathering to Him together, then warns against a premature announcement of the day and describes developments that precede it. Second Thessalonians 1:6–10 connects relief for afflicted believers with Jesus being revealed from heaven and judgment upon their persecutors. These passages strengthen my conviction that deliverance and judgment must be considered together.

Between the sixth and seventh seals, Revelation 7 shows God's servants being sealed and a great multitude before the throne and the Lamb. First come the 144,000 from the tribes of Israel, then people from every nation and language. God's purpose for Israel and His redemption of the nations appear together.

The multitude has come out of great tribulation, and its salvation belongs to God and the Lamb. Its appearance between the sixth and seventh seals supports the connection with the gathering Paul describes. The people who suffered now worship before the throne, where the Lamb shepherds them.

Luke and the approaching redemption

Read Luke's warning and promise in their own order. Jerusalem surrounded by armies signals approaching desolation and calls those in Judea to flee (Luke 21:20–21). Later, Luke describes heavenly signs, the distress of nations, and the Son of Man coming in a cloud (21:25–27). He then tells believers to lift their heads because their redemption is drawing near (21:28).

I believe this confirms the sequence we have already discussed. The progression is quite clear to me, but I leave room for other possibilities. I ask you to read the passages

in their own order, consider what you find, and make your own decision.

The threatened city calls for watchfulness and obedience; the promise of redemption sustains hope through the suffering that follows. The army warning comes before the gathering and cannot, by itself, provide a date for the rapture. The Lord who tells us what to watch is coming for us.

CHAPTER 22

Living ready for His return

Matthew has brought us through the gathering in verse 31. The rest of the chapter explains how to live while we wait. These verses return to the disciples' present responsibility; they are not a new series of events after the rapture. We will finish the chapter in order before returning to the seventh seal. [122]

The season and the unknown hour

Matthew 24:32. The fig tree's tender branch and new leaves announce the approach of summer. Jesus teaches His disciples to recognize a season from what they can see.

Matthew 24:33. In the same way, the developments He has described announce nearness. The instruction is to recognize the unfolding pattern rather than live unaware of it.

Matthew 24:34. Jesus says that this generation will not pass before these things happen. The temple's destruction within His hearers' generation gives those words immediate weight. In the future application developed in this book, I also consider the generation that witnesses the final signs. The reach of this verse remains a question for careful study, not a basis for assigning a modern starting year and calculating a deadline.

Matthew 24:35. Heaven and earth can pass away, but His words will stand. Our confidence rests in His faithfulness even where our understanding of the details is incomplete.

Matthew 24:36. The day and hour remain unknown to human beings and angels; the Father knows. Recognizing a season does not give us possession of His calendar.

Ordinary life and sudden separation

Matthew 24:37. Jesus compares His coming with the days of Noah. The comparison brings us back to warning, human response, and an event for which many were unprepared.

Matthew 24:38. Eating, drinking, and marrying continued until Noah entered the ark. Ordinary life can absorb our attention even while God's warning calls for a response.

Matthew 24:39. The flood arrived and swept the unprepared away. Jesus says His coming will expose a similar lack of readiness. Familiar routines offer no protection against the day He has announced.

This is the connection behind my belief that the rapture —the rescue—comes just before the wrath. Noah entered the ark before the flood, and Lot left Sodom before its destruction. Jesus places those examples together in Luke 17:26–30, emphasizing the day Lot went out and judgment fell. I believe the end-times gathering will follow that same pattern of rescue and judgment on the Day of the Lord.

Matthew 24:40. Two are in a field, and one is taken while the other is left. Being in the same place does not mean sharing the same outcome.

Matthew 24:41. Two women are grinding, and the same separation occurs. Readers debate whether those taken in these verses are gathered for rescue or removed in judgment, especially because the preceding example concerns the flood. I ground the rapture discussion in the explicit gathering of verse 31 and 1 Thessalonians 4 rather than making these two verses settle that question.

The work of a watchful servant

Matthew 24:42. Jesus therefore calls His followers to keep watch. The unknown hour gives us a reason for continuing faithfulness.

Matthew 24:43. A householder who knew when a thief would come would stay alert. The comparison concerns the surprise of the hour; it is not a description of the Lord's character.

Matthew 24:44. We must be ready because the Son of Man comes at an unexpected hour. Readiness belongs to the life we are living today.

Matthew 24:45. Jesus pictures a trustworthy servant caring for the household and giving its members food at the proper time. Watchfulness includes meeting other people's needs.

Matthew 24:46. The servant found carrying out that responsibility is blessed. Faithfulness is visible in what the master finds the servant doing.

Matthew 24:47. The master entrusts that servant with greater responsibility. What is done during the waiting matters to the One who returns.

Matthew 24:48. An unfaithful servant tells himself that the master is taking a long time. The danger begins when apparent delay becomes permission to disregard him.

Matthew 24:49. The servant abuses others and gives himself over to drunken company. Here the warning about love growing cold reaches a household entrusted to someone's care.

Matthew 24:50. The master arrives on a day and at an hour the servant does not expect. The servant's assumption cannot alter the master's return.

Matthew 24:51. The chapter closes with judgment upon hypocrisy and cruelty. Jesus' answer to a question about

the future has become a question about our conduct: will He find us faithful?

Readiness means trusting His promise and doing the work He has entrusted to us. We practice it each day by telling the truth, praying, caring for people, and fulfilling our responsibilities.

Lift up your heads

Tribulation is already real, and I believe its birth pains grow stronger and closer together as the Lord's return approaches. The believer can remain alert without surrendering to terror. Our redemption is near in the promise of the One who is coming. With that hope, we return to John's vision and stop at the silence of the seventh seal.

CHAPTER 23

The seventh seal and silence in heaven

The Lamb opens the seventh seal. Revelation 8:1 records silence in heaven for about half an hour. The cries, songs, and worship heard earlier give way to stillness.

Seven carries a meaning of completion throughout Scripture. God completed His work of creation and rested on the seventh day, and the Sabbath became Israel's appointed day of rest (Genesis 2:2–3; Exodus 20:8–11). That pattern gives me another way to think about the silence at the seventh seal: a stillness associated with completion and rest. Others understand the silence differently, and Revelation does not explicitly make this comparison.

Silence can express solemn waiting before judgment. Habakkuk 2:20 calls the earth to silence before the Lord in His temple. Zephaniah 1:7 calls for quiet because His day is near. Psalm 76:7–9 describes the earth's stillness when God rises to judge and save the afflicted.

Zechariah 2:13 calls all flesh to silence because the Lord has risen from His holy habitation. The preceding verses promise His presence in Zion and nations joining themselves to Him.

The sequence followed here places the Lord's departure to gather His people at the sixth seal, followed by the silence of the seventh. Revelation 8:1 does not explain the silence or say that heaven is empty.

I also see a possible pattern in humanity's creation on the sixth day, followed by rest on the seventh. In the sequence I am proposing, the sixth seal brings the rescue of His

people, followed by the silence of the seventh. The resemblance helps me picture the promise of rest with God, while remaining an interpretation of the pattern.

The seals have all been opened, and the scroll can now be read. Scripture does not state its contents, but I believe it is the legal judgment authorizing the sentence upon the world. That is conjecture. We cannot claim knowledge beyond what has been revealed, and we should be willing to say we do not know.

So, even though we end here, we can ponder the journey that got us here. I believe time itself was created by God when man fell in the garden. Time… I would call it grace. A period with a beginning and an end. Time for us to be born, learn, and choose our eternal destiny.

The following chapters of this book take a closer look at this journey and may help us to have greater understanding. But ultimately, it really doesn't matter. What matters is whether we chose to love God and love our neighbor. By this we will be judged.

Did we have a relationship with the Creator? Did we feed the hungry? Did we really learn to love God and our neighbor? These are the important questions we all must answer.

Life or death… Choose wisely. Shalom.

CHAPTER 24

The colors on the flags

Flags and banners identify groups. Armies have carried them into battle and raised their own flag over conquered territory to proclaim victory. With that use in mind, this chapter examines flags and the meanings attached to them.

Several flags in the Middle East and North Africa share the colors of Revelation's four horses: white, red, black, and pale green.

The resemblance raises a question about symbolism in a region closely connected with Israel's future.

Chapter 10 explains the reading of the horses as spirits working through earthly events. The flag comparison extends that interpretation through a visual association. Scripture does not identify these modern flags as the horses.

The colors and their history

These four colors are commonly called the Pan-Arab colors. Their history includes the Arab Revolt and earlier Arab and Islamic dynasties. Jordan's foreign ministry explains those connections in its account of the national flag, and the United Arab Emirates also describes the colors in its official information. [21–22]

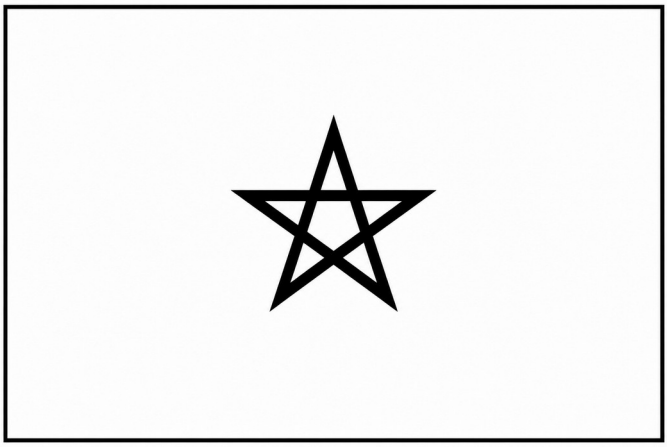
The palette appears in the flags of Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Sudan, and Palestine. Iraq includes it through the green inscription on its red, white, and black flag. Bands, triangles, stars, and lettering arrange the shared colors in different ways.

The political histories of those nations differ. The United Arab Emirates, for example, established peace and

diplomatic relations with Israel in 2020. [23] The flag comparison is a proposed symbolic association, not a way to judge every government or the people living beneath its banner.

Morocco and the five pointed star

At first glance, the image of Morocco's flag can be startling to someone familiar with occult imagery. I found the resemblance shocking when I first saw it. I do not, however, want to assign that meaning to this flag; its own history and official meaning need to be heard.
Morocco's flag has a red field and a green, interlaced five-pointed star—a pentagram. The constitution specifies the red flag and green star, and the 1915 decree introducing the emblem calls it the Seal of Solomon. The five points are also explained as representing the five pillars of Islam. [111]



Morocco's flag has a red background and an upright green five-pointed star. Black-and-white print graphic. [111]

The design is a five-pointed star. Its connection with five pillars is symbolic: the pillars are Islam's foundational

practices, not architectural columns. The same geometric form also has associations with occult imagery, which can give it a very different meaning to someone viewing the flag.

Morocco's star has one point upward. The flag could easily be hung upside down, although that would not change its official meaning. The Church of Satan's Sigil of Baphomet places a goat's head inside an inverted pentagram with two points upward. That documented use explains the visual association, but a pentagram alone does not establish Satan worship. Morocco gives its emblem a different meaning. [112]

Other flags with pentagrams

Ethiopia's green, yellow, and red flag carries a yellow pentagram and rays within a blue circle. Its flag proclamation explains the emblem as representing equality, unity, peace, and hope. The same geometric form therefore carries another national meaning. [113]

Haaksbergen in the Netherlands uses an inverted pentagram on its municipal flag. Nagasaki's stylized pentagram incorporates folded-crane shapes and references to its name and history as one of five treaty ports. These different uses prevent the shape alone from establishing one religious meaning. A solid five-pointed star is also distinct from an interlaced pentagram. [114]

The rainbow and the meaning of pride

Genesis records the rainbow as the sign of God's covenant after the flood. The world had been filled with wickedness, corruption, and violence. God instructed Noah to build the ark and brought his family through the judgment. He then

promised Noah, his descendants, and every living creature that a flood would never again destroy all life (Genesis 6:5, 11–22; 9:8–17). The rainbow therefore signifies mercy after judgment.

The modern Pride movement uses the rainbow for a different purpose. Gilbert Baker created the flag for the gay community in 1978. His account acknowledges the rainbow in Genesis and describes his design as a symbol of hope and liberation. The movement uses pride to express dignity and a refusal to live in shame. [115]

My objection concerns using a sign of God's mercy to celebrate conduct I believe Scripture forbids. I regard that use as an affront to the promise and a reversal of its meaning: mercy becomes a reason to disregard God's authority. The spiritual danger is the temptation to put our desires above the Creator. This theological objection does not establish that Baker intended to insult God.

Scripture also warns against pride. First Timothy 3:6 links conceit with the devil's condemnation. Isaiah 14:12–15 describes self-exaltation in a passage addressed to the king of Babylon; it has also been applied to Satan's fall. The Pride movement's use of the word and the biblical warning against arrogance have different stated meanings. The spiritual question is whether we are making ourselves the final authority. [116]

God's mercy requires a response from every one of us. Have we received His patience as an opportunity to turn to Him, or treated it as permission to ignore Him? His command to love Him and our neighbor still applies.

The spiritual question behind the image

The Lamb redeems people from every tribe, language, people, and nation. Whoever lives beneath a flag is someone He calls to Himself.

Each person must decide whom to obey. The next chapters examine demands for a loyalty that belongs to God.

CHAPTER 25

When power reaches into every household

Modern governments can reach into nearly every transaction in a person's life.

Revelation 13 describes authority, worship, deception, an image, and restrictions on buying and selling. Communication and financial systems now connect distant people in seconds. Such systems make the reach of the demand John describes easier to understand.

A demand once limited by distance can now affect someone buying food far from the ruler who issued it. That capability is one reason this prophecy concerns our generation.

Daniel saw empires as beasts

Daniel 7 begins with winds stirring a great sea and four beasts emerging. The vision portrays empires as dangerous creatures rather than accepting the glorious image rulers give themselves.

Kings may describe their authority in terms of glory, order, and destiny. The prophet sees predatory power. One beast is particularly terrifying, and a horn speaks arrogantly and makes war against the saints. The vision then moves to the Ancient of Days and to one like the Son of Man receiving an everlasting dominion.

God judges the power that claims to be supreme. The Son of Man receives an authority that outlasts the beasts.

Revelation 13 draws on Daniel's imagery, combining features of the earlier beasts. Both visions describe arrogant political power confronting God's people.

Daniel gives us the character of such power: boasting, blasphemy, persecution, deception, and a demand for allegiance. Those are the features to look for when comparing the prophecy with modern power.

The desire to feel safe

People rarely surrender freedom while saying that they hope to become oppressed. They usually want something good: safety, order, food, peace, protection from fraud, or relief from fear.

A promise of protection can open the door to a demand for submission. People agree to an arrangement that seems helpful, then discover how much authority they have surrendered. We should examine what is being surrendered before agreeing to the demand.

Second Thessalonians 2 describes a lawless figure who exalts himself and deceives others. Paul says lawlessness is already at work. Its present activity develops toward the final figure who openly claims the authority that belongs to God.

Global reach and prophetic possibility

A command, message, or economic restriction can now cross borders almost immediately. That worldwide reach makes the coercion described in Revelation possible on a scale unavailable to earlier rulers.

Revelation places worship at the center of the confrontation. The beast demands allegiance, and economic access becomes part of the pressure. Modern systems help us picture the reach of such a demand. The spiritual question is what we will do when an authority requires us to surrender the loyalty that belongs to God.

CHAPTER 26

The mark and the loyalty it demands

Revelation 13 brings the conflict over worship into the marketplace: people cannot buy or sell without the mark associated with the beast's name or number.

The conflict has reached bread, clothing, shelter, and the daily needs of a household. A person is being pressured at the point where conviction becomes costly.

The mark within the vision

Revelation 13:16–18 describes the mark on the right hand or forehead and connects it with buying and selling. The preceding verses describe the second beast directing worship toward the first beast and deceiving people through signs. Revelation 14:9–11 again connects receiving the mark with worshiping the beast and its image.

Identification, communication, and payment systems show how such a demand could reach an entire population. The precise mechanism remains unknown. John makes the decision clear: obey the beast or remain faithful to God.

The other name on the forehead

Revelation itself gives us an important comparison. God's servants are sealed in Revelation 7. Revelation 14:1 pictures the Lamb with those who bear His Father's name on their foreheads. Revelation 22:4 again speaks of His name in the final vision of His servants.

The marks identify whom people belong to. The beast demands allegiance, while God places His name on His own.

The hand and forehead also recall Deuteronomy 6:6–8, where God’s commandments accompany the whole life of His people. Thought and action are brought into obedience. Revelation makes belonging a matter that reaches both the inward life and its outward expression.

Christ knows those who belong to Him. John describes a conflict over worship and faithfulness. Our response begins with the loyalty we practice today.

Buying and selling as a pressure point

We understand how economic pressure can test conviction. It is easier to make a brave statement when nothing depends on it. The question becomes harder when a family needs food or a person fears losing the ability to work.

Revelation does not treat those needs lightly. It shows why the temptation is powerful. It also places faithfulness within a larger promise: the beast's authority is limited, and the Lamb's victory is final.

Our dependence on connected systems makes the pressure easy to imagine. It also gives us reason to care for people whose conscience makes them vulnerable. A faithful community can become a place of practical help when someone loses work, security, or access to necessities.

There is a present spiritual application even before any final fulfillment. Whenever a person is asked to call evil good in order to preserve advantage, the question of allegiance is already close. Whenever success seems to require denying Christ, exploiting a neighbor, or embracing a lie, the heart faces a smaller version of the temptation to worship power.

The future warning can therefore help us practice faithfulness now. People who habitually surrender small matters of conscience should not assume that a spectacular crisis will automatically make courage easy.

The number at the end of the scene

John closes the chapter with a call for wisdom and understanding. The reader is to calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and the number is six hundred sixty-six.

The number is attached to the beast and its name. To examine it, we will look at its Greek form and then at the suggested visual resemblance to Bismillah.

CHAPTER 27

The number John gave us

The number 666 has produced centuries of debate.

People notice 666 on a receipt, a license plate, a building, or a computer display and wonder whether something has been revealed. A proposed calculation circulates. Someone finds the number hidden in a name. A graphic compares ancient writing with a modern symbol.

John asks the reader to calculate the beast's number and identifies it as 666 (Revelation 13:18). The NIV calls it a man's number, with humanity's number offered in a footnote. The Greek anthrōpou brings the human connection into the discussion. [20]

This book follows the conventional dating of Revelation near the end of Domitian's reign, around AD 95. Irenaeus provides an important early witness behind that dating. [25] John's vision looks beyond his own surroundings toward the final confrontation between the beast and the Lamb.

Before considering the visual proposal, it helps to see how the number itself was written.

How Greek letters can represent a number

Ancient Greek could use letters as numerical signs. A conventional representation of 666 is χξς: chi, xi, and the numeral sign commonly called stigma. Their values are 600, 60, and 6. The sum is 666. [20]

Greek sign	Name	Value
χ	Chi	600
ξ	Xi	60
ϛ	Stigma numeral sign	6
χξϛ	Combined numerical value	666

Some surviving manuscripts write the number in words, while a smaller group preserves 616. The research notes explain that textual history. [20,24]

Irenaeus discussed the number as a calculation of a name. The visual proposal asks whether John could instead have been shown a later emblem and represented its appearance with signs familiar to him. [25]

The proposed resemblance to Bismillah

The Arabic expression intended in this proposal is Bismillah, meaning "In the name of Allah." The fuller opening formula commonly called the basmala continues with God's merciful and compassionate attributes. It appears at the opening of the Quran's first surah and is widely used in Muslim religious life. [26]

A later form of writing

Arabic has roots older than John’s lifetime. Its familiar script developed through later centuries from Nabataean writing, while Islam’s use of the basmala belongs to the seventh century onward. The language, the letter forms, and the religious setting each have their own history. [27–28]

The suggested connection concerns a later written design. A prophet shown the future could encounter symbols unknown in his own age. Whether that happened here remains the question.

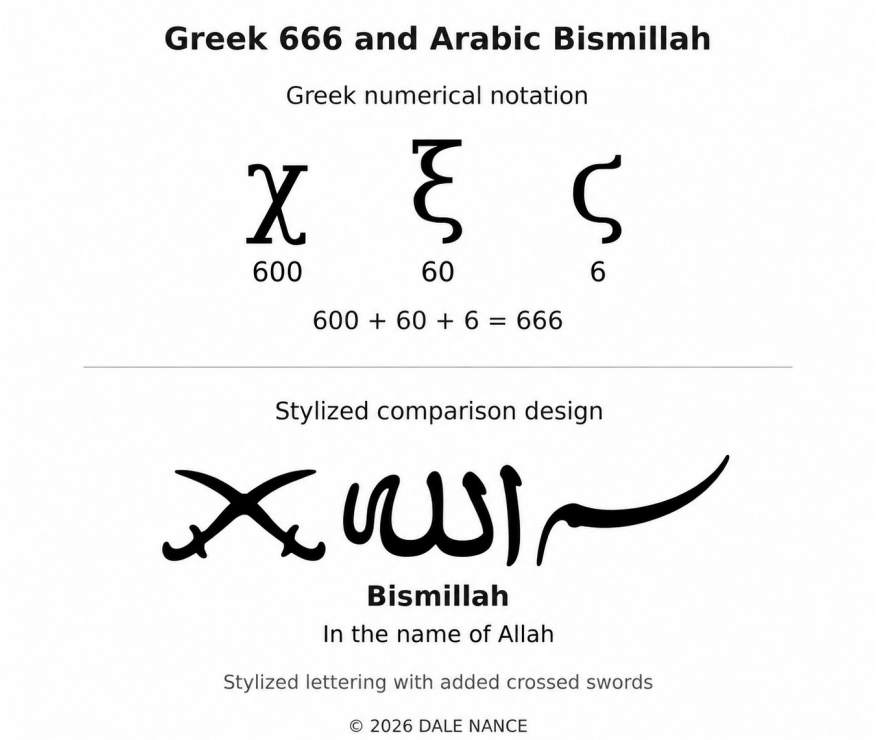


Figure 4. Greek numerical signs for 666 above a stylized Bismillah design with crossed swords. The lower image is an arranged visual comparison, not ordinary Arabic typography or a translation of the Greek number. [20,26]

Attribution: Credit for the proposed visual connection illustrated here goes to Walid Shoebat. [43]

The connection proposed by Walid Shoebat

Walid Shoebat's proposal places crossed swords on the left, a W-like element in the middle, and a curved symbol on the

right. It asks whether John represented a future emblem with signs familiar to him. [43]

This is a visual comparison, not a translation. The Greek signs express a number; Bismillah is an Arabic phrase. Similar shapes alone cannot prove a prophetic connection.

Wisdom and allegiance

Revelation 13 places the number within a warning about deception and forced worship. The beast uses economic life to demand allegiance, and John calls for wisdom at the end of that account.

Revelation also names the Lamb and the Father whose name His people bear. Examining the beast's number should strengthen our determination to remain faithful to the Lord.

The number six has another biblical association: Genesis places human creation on the sixth day. That raises a further question about the number's symbolism.

CHAPTER 28

Six and the human story

Genesis 1 places human creation on the sixth day. God blesses humanity and entrusts it with responsibility. On the seventh day, He completes His work and rests.

Six can therefore represent humanity, with the seventh day representing completion and rest with God. As an analogy, this raises the question of what happens when human power seeks completeness apart from Him.

Human beings bear God's image

Genesis 1:26–27 says that human beings are made in God's image. Male and female share that dignity. The statement is foundational for the way we understand our own lives and the lives of other people.

To bear God’s image is to carry dignity and responsibility. We are made to know Him, respond to Him, and care for what He entrusts to us. Every person we meet shares that worth. Body, mind, and spirit describe aspects of that life.

One God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Christians believe in one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Trinity names three persons within the one God. To picture unity with more than one aspect, I begin with something familiar. We were made in His image, and each of us is one person with a body, mind, and spirit. Those aspects belong to one life.

This is a simple illustration, not a complete explanation of God. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not three separate gods, nor merely parts of God. I offer the

comparison to help Jewish and Muslim readers understand what Christians are trying to express: our belief is in the one God of the Bible, whose nature Jesus revealed more deeply to us.

Jesus reveals God among us in human life; He speaks to the Father and promises the Holy Spirit's presence (John 1:14; John 14–16). Christians understand these passages as revealing the Father, Son, and Spirit together. We are not asking anyone to trade the God of Abraham for another god. We are explaining why we believe Jesus brings us into a fuller understanding of Him.

Does threefold humanity explain 666

One possible symbolic meaning of 666 is humanity seeking completeness apart from God. The body pursues its desires, the mind defends them, and the spiritual life turns toward an idol.

That is a devotional application of the number, not its established explanation. It asks what governs the whole of our lives: our desires, decisions, and worship.

The beastly temptation is precisely to cross that line: to take what belongs to the Creator and claim it for a creature. The warning reaches political rulers, institutions, and ordinary hearts.

God made human beings and declared His creation good. We honor that gift by depending on Him and offering our lives in faithful love.

CHAPTER 29

The prophets were looking toward a kingdom

The prophets lead us through frightening scenes toward a restored world. Their promises give the warnings a destination.

They saw judgment, certainly. They confronted corrupt rulers, warned of invasion, described upheaval, and spoke of a day when human pride would be brought low. They also saw restoration, cleansing, righteous rule, resurrection, and the knowledge of God filling the earth.

Isaiah and the world made right

Isaiah 2 pictures the nations learning the Lord's ways. Swords become tools for cultivation. War is no longer the skill by which nations organize their future. Isaiah 11 describes righteous judgment associated with the promised ruler and a transformed order in which harm is overcome.

Isaiah 35 joins a renewed landscape with healed people and a joyful homecoming. We encountered its desert and highway in an earlier chapter. Now notice the destination: the ransomed return to Zion with everlasting joy. Restoration is not merely increased national productivity. It is life in the presence and favor of God.

The Messiah fulfills these promises. Their scope extends beyond what technology, government projects, or diplomatic agreements can accomplish.

Jeremiah and a covenant reaching the heart

Jeremiah 31 contains both gathering language and the promise of a new covenant. God's law will be written within His people. Their relationship with Him will include forgiveness and a knowledge of Him deeper than outward membership alone.

The heart remains central to the prophetic story. Borders can change and people can return home while still needing the renewal only God can give. Jeremiah’s promise brings restoration into the inward life.

The New Testament connects the new covenant with Jesus' sacrificial work. At the Last Supper, He speaks of the cup in relation to His blood and the covenant. Hebrews develops the significance of the promised covenant at length.

Ezekiel and the gift of life

Ezekiel’s vision begins with dry bones and a people who have lost hope. They cannot restore themselves. God speaks, and the dead receive life.

Ezekiel 37 joins divided Israel and Judah under one shepherd. The national homecoming and the gift of life belong together. A people who believed their hope was lost receive a future from God.

Chapters 38–39 then describe hostile powers and divine judgment. The opposition is formidable, but it cannot overturn His purpose. The later temple and river vision in chapters 40–48 fills the landscape with the signs of His presence. Life flows outward, anticipating themes we meet again at the end of Revelation.

Daniel and the Son of Man

Daniel's visions show kingdoms succeeding kingdoms. In Daniel 2, the great image representing human dominion is struck by a stone, and God's kingdom is described as enduring. In Daniel 7, beastly rule faces the court of the Ancient of Days, and the Son of Man receives authority that will not pass away.

I understand the final week of Daniel 9 as a future seven years in the unfolding of these purposes for the people and holy city. Its covenant and midpoint crisis connect with the tribulation and desecration described in later passages. The sequence moves through trouble toward deliverance.

Daniel 12 moves from a time of unparalleled trouble to deliverance and resurrection. That movement is crucial. The prophet's final horizon is not merely the survival of a political system. It is God's power over death and His faithfulness toward His people.

The end of knowledge is not simply a better explanation of the crisis. It is the resurrection hope toward which the revelation points.

Zechariah and the pierced one

Zechariah describes Jerusalem under pressure, divine protection, mourning, cleansing, and the Lord’s kingship. Zechariah 12:10 speaks of the one who is pierced. John 19:37 and Revelation 1:7 apply that language to Jesus.

Zechariah 14 names the Mount of Olives and speaks of the Lord becoming king over all the earth. Those details have a central place in the futurist expectation of Christ's public return.

Jerusalem’s danger leads to divine intervention and worship. The prophet promises deliverance after the crisis.

The apostles carried the promise forward

The apostles continued to teach these promises. Paul describes the resurrection and gathering of believers in 1 Thessalonians 4. First Corinthians 15 records their transformation and the defeat of death. Peter connects the expectation of God's day with holy conduct and promises a new heaven and earth where righteousness dwells.

John sees the final conflict and the judgment of evil, but he also sees the marriage of the Lamb, the reign of Christ, the last judgment, the new creation, and God dwelling with His people. Tears are wiped away. Death does not continue forever.

That destination gives the warnings their meaning. The suffering we see now belongs to a story whose promised end is life in God's presence.

The convergence of present developments should lead us toward this whole hope. We can watch the nations, consider Israel, examine the systems of power, and recognize the troubles of the age. Then we should keep reading until we see the King.

CHAPTER 30

The signs in the sky

Revelation describes a woman clothed with the Sun, the Moon beneath her feet, and a crown of twelve stars. Nearly two thousand years later, people examining the sky found an arrangement that seemed to resemble that vision. Yet no one could have stepped outside and seen the whole scene: the Sun's brightness hid the stars.

The date was September 23, 2017. Astronomy software showed the positions of the Sun, Moon, planets, and constellations together, allowing people to compare them with John's description of a woman about to give birth.

Revelation was written in the first century, although its exact date remains debated. We cannot insist that it was completed before AD 90. John had no computer or planetarium program to display the sky for a future date. [123]

I believe the 2017 arrangement was a sign. The possibility that John's vision reached across those centuries has the wonder of a miracle. Its full meaning remains unknown. To examine it, we also need to consider the blood moons and the other heavenly signs described in Scripture.

A picture hidden by daylight

The Sun appeared against the region of the sky called Virgo, traditionally pictured as a maiden or virgin. With sunlight overwhelming the surrounding stars, an observer could not see the complete arrangement with the unaided eye. Modern software allows us to turn off the simulated daylight and show the bodies together. It helps us examine

a scene that an ordinary photograph of the daytime sky would not reveal. [124]

The software is showing calculated positions. It is not creating the celestial arrangement. Ancient people also studied and calculated the movements of the heavens, but today such a reconstruction is available to almost anyone with a computer.

The woman and the child

The suggested comparison identifies Virgo as the woman, the Sun as her clothing, and the Moon near the feet of the drawn figure. Jupiter represents the child. Its apparent movement through the area pictured as her womb has been compared to a pregnancy of about nine months. [125]

The crown needs a little explanation. The nine stars commonly mentioned in this interpretation belong to a selected pattern in Leo, above Virgo's head. Adding Mercury, Venus, and Mars gives the proposed total of twelve. Leo contains more than nine stars, and the three added lights are planets. [125]

The virgin, child, approaching birth, and crown resemble John’s vision, but the comparison does not settle every detail or establish that the arrangement was unique.

John also sees a dragon waiting to devour the child. The child is taken to God’s throne, and conflict, protection, and persecution follow. Revelation identifies the dragon as Satan.

Why 2017

Why did this arrangement attract such attention in 2017? Could it have marked the beginning of something whose meaning would become clearer later?

Later that year, Jerusalem became the subject of a major American decision. On December 6, 2017, President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and announced the relocation of the United States embassy. The embassy opened there on May 14, 2018. [126]

Could it have marked the beginning of a period associated with the seals, perhaps the release of the conquering spirit described by the white horse? That remains a possibility to consider, not a date established by Scripture. No verse ties the first seal to September 23, 2017.

I believe there was a sign, but its meaning may become clear only as events unfold.

When the Moon turns red

The blood moons raise a similar question in a different way. Here the sight can be visible to anyone standing in the right place at the right time. Earth's shadow moves across the Moon, and its familiar silver face can turn copper or deep red.

The explanation is easy to picture. During a total lunar eclipse, Earth stands between the Sun and the Moon. Some sunlight passes through Earth's atmosphere and reaches the lunar surface. The red light survives that journey more readily than the blue light, giving the Moon its striking color. Knowing how it happens does not take away its beauty. [127]

The red color resembles Joel's description of the Moon turning to blood before the Day of the Lord. Peter repeats Joel's words at Pentecost, and John describes a bloodlike Moon at the sixth seal (Joel 2:30–32; Acts 2:19–21; Revelation 6:12).

Those connections explain why the eclipses of 2014 and 2015 attracted so much attention. Four total lunar eclipses

occurred in succession: April 15 and October 8, 2014, followed by April 4 and September 28, 2015. Astronomers call a sequence of four a tetrad. We can simply think of them as four occasions when the Moon passed completely into Earth's shadow. [128]

Their timing near Passover and Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles, attracted particular interest. Passover recalls deliverance from Egypt; Sukkot recalls the wilderness journey and God’s provision. Both festivals commemorate His protection of His people.

The connection needs only a little clarification. Jewish months follow the Moon, and both festivals begin around the full Moon, which is also when a lunar eclipse can occur. Not every full Moon produces an eclipse. In October 2014, the eclipse happened before Sukkot began that evening in Jerusalem. And not all four eclipses could be seen from Jerusalem. These details help us describe the events honestly while keeping the calendar connection in view. [128]

Two later examples bring Purim into the discussion. Total lunar eclipses occurred on March 14, 2025, and March 3, 2026, dates that coincided with Purim in communities observing the usual festival day. Jerusalem's Shushan Purim observance falls a day later. [129]

Purim remembers the deliverance recorded in Esther, when a plot to destroy the Jewish people was overturned. A blood moon near that remembrance links the sky event with a season devoted to survival and providence. Esther does not predict these eclipses, so their timing cannot by itself prove a prophetic message.

A red Moon alone does not fulfill the sixth seal. John also describes upheaval on earth and terror before the Lamb. This book places the Lord’s departure from heaven and His appearing at that seal, as the intensifying trouble reaches

its climax. Earlier eclipses can remind us of that coming day without being the event itself.

The heavens throughout Scripture

The Bible's interest in the sky begins long before Revelation. Genesis 1:14 gives the heavenly lights a role in marking signs, seasons, days, and years. The rhythms above us help order life below. After the flood, God gives Noah the rainbow as a sign of His covenant (Genesis 9:12–17). Here we are told what the sign means. We do not have to discover its message through guesswork.

God also directs Abraham to the stars when promising him descendants beyond counting (Genesis 15:5). The sky becomes a way of helping a man grasp a promise larger than his circumstances. Psalm 19 speaks of the heavens declaring God's glory. Job names familiar star groups while reflecting on God's power over creation (Job 9:9; 38:31–33). The heavens testify to the power and faithfulness of their Creator.

Joshua 10 records a prolonged day, and 2 Kings 20 describes a retreating shadow as a sign to Hezekiah. Both accounts present the events as acts of God with meaning for His people.

The language of the heavens also enters promises about a coming ruler. Numbers 24:17 uses the image of a star rising from Jacob alongside a scepter arising from Israel. Matthew later tells of the Magi following a star in their search for the newborn King (Matthew 2:1–12).

Proposed explanations for the star of Bethlehem include conjunctions and comets, but Matthew does not identify its physical nature. He records a heavenly sign leading the Magi to Jesus. Signs in the heavens accompany the promise of His return as well.

Isaiah 13:9–13 and Ezekiel 32:7–8 describe darkened heavenly lights in judgments upon earthly powers. Joel connects such signs with the Day of the Lord. Similar language does not establish that every prophet describes the same event.

Matthew 24:29–31 places the heavenly disturbances after tribulation, followed by the Lord’s appearing and the gathering of His people. Luke 21:25–28 likewise joins signs in the Sun, Moon, and stars with earthly distress and the coming of the Son of Man. Both accounts connect the troubles on earth with the signs in the sky.

Astronomy and astrology

Discussion of Virgo, Leo, and planetary movements requires a clear distinction between astronomy and astrology.

Astronomy studies the heavens: what is there and how it moves. Astrology assigns meanings to celestial positions, often claiming they reveal a person's character or predict earthly events. Recognizing a constellation's name does not require us to accept a horoscope.

The ancient world often brought these practices together. Scripture, however, warns against worshiping the heavenly bodies and trusting those who claim to read our fate in them (Deuteronomy 4:19; Isaiah 47:13–14). The account of the Magi does not instruct us to make horoscopes our guide. Their journey ends in worship of Christ.

The method used here begins with Scripture and asks whether observable events help us understand it. Planets do not direct our lives. God’s word remains the authority by which each suggested interpretation must be judged.

Understanding as events unfold

The purpose of endtimeproof.com and this book is to compare the biblical account with empirical evidence. We examine what can be observed and verified, then ask whether those findings correspond with prophecy.

Even Jesus' disciples did not immediately understand what they witnessed. John 12:16 says they understood later when they remembered what had been written. In John 14:29, Jesus explains that He tells them beforehand so they will believe when it happens.

Fulfillment can clarify what was difficult to understand beforehand. A promise may remain in Scripture for generations before an event makes its meaning recognizable.

I continue to consider the 2017 arrangement a sign, although its meaning remains unknown. Neither it nor the blood moons supplies a date for the rapture.

Keep watching, examine the evidence, and admit what remains unknown. Meanwhile, obey Jesus: remain faithful, love one another, and be ready to meet Him.

CHAPTER 31

Why the convergence matters

The case for convergence depends on developments occurring together and affecting one another.

A railway, a newspaper, and a population movement each has its own history. Together, they can change how a country lives. Their combined effect is greater than the effect of any one development.

This book examines that kind of connection among events described in prophecy. Its argument rests on the combined evidence, rather than a single earthquake, flag, invention, or unusual week.

The Jewish people have returned in large numbers to the land associated with their ancestors and covenant history. The modern State of Israel exists. Jerusalem remains a focus of religious and political attention. Water and agricultural technology support cultivation in dry regions. Transportation can move people across the globe with extraordinary speed. Communication can place events before billions of people. Economic systems can exercise a reach that earlier rulers could hardly have imagined.

At the same time, war, hunger, disease, deception, and the shaking of the earth remind us that increased capability has not brought final peace.

Seeing the developments together

These developments interact. Air travel carries families home to Israel. Communication joins distant congregations and brings persecution to the world's attention. Conflict interrupts food supplies, while financial systems carry its

effects across borders. We are watching a world whose connections grow ever closer.

These connections explain why several prophetic descriptions could unfold within one period. That convergence is the basis of my expectation that His coming is near.

The creation week and the seven thousand year pattern

Another possible pattern runs from the creation week to the thousand-year reign: six periods of a thousand years followed by a seventh under the Messiah. This proposal reads the seven days as an outline of human history.

Genesis 1 presents God's work of creation across six days, and Genesis 2:1–3 describes His rest on the seventh. Exodus 20:8–11 makes that sequence the basis for Israel's weekly Sabbath. Work is followed by rest, and the seventh day is set apart. This sequence provides the basis for comparing the creation week with the course of history.

The Hebrew shabat in Genesis 2:2 means ceasing or resting. God rests from His completed work. The comparison connects that rest with the coming kingdom. [45]

Second Peter 3:8 says, “With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.” Psalm 90:4 similarly compares a thousand years with a passing day and a watch in the night.

Peter uses the Greek hōs, meaning like or as, to compare a day with a thousand years. His subject is the Lord’s promise and patience. [45] Applying that comparison to the creation week suggests a possible pattern; Peter does not state it as a formula for calculating history.

Revelation 20:1–6 then supplies the thousand-year period itself. John describes Satan's restraint and the reign of those who share in the first resurrection. I understand this as the future millennial reign of Jesus. In that reading, the seventh millennium can be pictured as a great Sabbath after the long labor and suffering of human history.

Hebrews 4:1–11 also draws on the seventh day and calls God’s people into His rest. Creation’s completion, the Sabbath, and the coming kingdom share this theme of rest after labor.

The pattern concerns a proposed sequence within history. Revelation continues beyond the millennium to final judgment and the new creation.

The two thousand year intervals

The first broad interval runs from Adam to Abraham. A common calculation from the Hebrew genealogies places Abraham’s birth about 2,008 years after Adam, the basis for the rounded two-thousand-year period. The calculation appears in the notes. [44]

The second interval runs from Abraham to Jesus, again commonly rounded to two thousand years in this traditional outline. It carries us through the covenant promises, Israel’s history, and the prophets toward the Messiah’s first coming.

The third proposed interval runs from the crucifixion of Jesus toward His return, again approximately two thousand years. I place the cross at the center of this expectation because it is central to redemption. We are now approaching two millennia since that event. If this interpretation is correct, the long period leading toward the kingdom may be nearing its completion.

The outline is roughly two thousand years from Adam to Abraham, two thousand from Abraham to Jesus, and a suggested two thousand from the cross toward His return. The thousand-year reign follows, completing the seven-thousand-year pattern. Its future portion remains unfulfilled.

This pattern does not change the sixth-seal gathering discussed in Chapter 21 or establish a date for His return.

That expectation should deepen our readiness and our care for others. Jesus' words in Matthew 24:36 keep the day and hour beyond our knowledge. His commands to watch and remain faithful still apply. We can take the nearness of His coming seriously while continuing the work, relationships, and responsibilities He has placed before us.

What is distinctive about our moment

Earlier generations faced wars, plagues, and persecution, and some expected to witness Christ’s return. Our period adds Jewish statehood, intercontinental aviation, global communication, and electronic financial systems. Those differences explain my expectation that His coming is near; they do not reveal the day or hour.

CHAPTER 32

The gathering and the hope beyond

The sequence developed in Chapters 21–23 places the gathering at the sixth seal and ends at the silence of the seventh. This chapter examines two interpretations of what follows. [39]

Readers reach different conclusions about what follows the meeting with the Lord. The following passages support two interpretations. Consider the evidence for each without assuming that every question must be settled before we can trust His promise.

A heavenly reception before the earthly return

One interpretation sees two stages: Jesus descends to gather believers in the air, receives them into heaven, and later comes with His people and angels to establish His kingdom on earth. His feet then stand on the Mount of Olives. John 14:1–3, with its promise of the Father's house and Christ receiving His own, supports this reading. Revelation 7:9–17 presents the multitude who have come out of great tribulation before God's throne. Revelation 19 announces the Lamb's marriage before showing the heavenly armies following Him, while Zechariah 14:4–5 describes His feet on the mountain and His coming with holy ones.

Together, these passages allow readers to consider a heavenly reception before the earthly reign. They do not explicitly describe the route from the meeting in the air back to heaven, or give the length of an interval between

that meeting and the Mount of Olives. The marriage announcement's position in John's vision contributes to this interpretation without supplying a complete timetable.

Meeting the King as He comes to reign

The other interpretation sees the gathering and the Lord's arrival on earth as parts of one unfolding return. Believers rise to welcome the coming King and accompany Him as He establishes His reign. Matthew 24:29–31 places the gathering beside His visible coming. Second Thessalonians 1:6–10 joins relief for the afflicted with His revelation and judgment, and 2 Thessalonians 2:1 speaks of His coming and our gathering together. Zechariah 14 supplies the earthly destination.

The Greek word apantēsis in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 means a meeting. In Matthew 25:6, the attendants go out to meet the bridegroom; in Acts 28:15–16, believers meet Paul as he approaches Rome. These examples fit a welcome followed by accompanying the arriving person. Yet the word itself does not dictate which direction everyone must travel afterward. Paul promises that we will always be with the Lord; he does not explicitly say that the meeting is immediately followed by a landing on the Mount of Olives. [106]

The Greek for being caught up describes the gathering, and parousia describes the Lord's coming or presence. Neither word fixes the duration of the events. The language therefore clarifies the promise while leaving room to consider these two readings. [106]

The wedding promise and the seven years

Revelation 19:7–9 describes the marriage of the Lamb and the blessing of being invited to His wedding supper. Its joy is belonging to Him. Jesus' bridegroom imagery in Mark 2:19–20 and John 3:29, and the marriage comparison in Ephesians 5:25–32, make that connection natural. At the Last Supper, the Gospel accounts explicitly place the meal in the Passover setting; Jesus speaks of His covenant blood and of drinking with His disciples in the kingdom (Matthew 26:17–29). Wedding imagery can illuminate that promise, but the passage does not identify the meal as a Galilean betrothal ceremony.

Seven-day wedding celebrations have ancient support. Genesis 29:27–28 distinguishes a bridal week from Jacob's additional seven years of service, and Judges 14:10–17 describes Samson's weeklong feast. Tobit also preserves extended wedding celebrations, including a fourteen-day celebration at Raguel's house (Tobit 8:19–20). These examples show festivity lasting several days, without establishing a single timetable for every Galilean wedding. [107]

The familiar claim that only the groom's father knew the day and hour for fetching the bride has not been securely established by the ancient sources examined. Later rabbinic material discusses agreed preparation periods. In Mark 13:32, Jesus says who knows the day and hour; the Greek verb means knowing, not merely granting permission. The verse does not identify a wedding custom as its explanation. [107]

Where, then, does the seven-year heavenly feast come from? Some teachers connect a seven-day wedding celebration with Daniel 9:27's final week, understood as seven years. Renald Showers, for example, argues for that

connection. Revelation 19 itself gives no duration for the supper. That interpretation cannot simply establish seven additional years in heaven after the great tribulation in the sequence presented here. The duration remains an inference, and readers also differ over whether the supper belongs in heaven or in the earthly kingdom. [108]

Other ancient witnesses

Ancient writings outside the New Testament also discuss the final trial and gathering. Didache 16 places a final trial before resurrection and the Lord's coming on the clouds. The later Coptic Apocalypse of Elijah depicts angels lifting the faithful away before wrath and subsequently describes Christ's reign. Neither establishes a seven-year wedding feast. They provide historical comparisons without settling the meaning or sequence of the biblical passages. Tobit, cited above for wedding history, belongs to some churches' biblical canons and to the Apocrypha in others. [109]

Enough to trust Him

For the purpose of this book, we can stop at the silence of the seventh seal. The signs call us to faithfulness now. I believe we have been given what we need to know. We do not need to solve everything after the rapture to rest in the promise that we will be with the Lord. We will be changed, as Paul assures us in 1 Corinthians 15:51–53.

I picture that life as the eternal now: time as we experience it, measured against loss and approaching death, giving way to life fully in His presence. This is how I contemplate eternity. Scripture promises everlasting life without fully explaining how we will experience it. We can

trust that promise even where our understanding reaches its limits. [110]

Genesis 3:8 describes the Lord in the garden in the cool of the day. That account offers an image of the fellowship we long to recover. Revelation 21:3–4 and 22:3–5 promise that God will dwell with His people, remove the curse, and let His servants see His face. Beyond the trouble and the gathering, we will be with Him. At the silence, we entrust the rest to the Lord.

CHAPTER 33

The One we are waiting for

We are waiting for Jesus Christ. The signs matter because they concern His return.

He died and rose for us. He promised to come again. The victory belongs to Him, and the future He offers reaches into our most personal fears and hopes.

A promise given to troubled hearts

In John 14, Jesus speaks to disciples facing the prospect of His departure. He tells them not to let their hearts be troubled, speaks of the Father's house, and promises to receive them to Himself so that they may be where He is.

First Thessalonians 4:13–18 speaks directly to grief over believers who have died. Paul brings Jesus' death and resurrection beside that loss, promising resurrection and a gathering of the living with those who have gone before them.

The final assurance is that they will always be with Him. Paul tells the church to comfort one another with these words.

Teaching about prophecy should offer the comfort Paul intended while taking judgment seriously. Those who belong to Christ can look forward to His return with hope.

The King who puts things right

Revelation calls Him Faithful and True. The Savior we await judges righteously. Our hope rests in His character and His promise to put things right.

Governments can restrain harm and improve lives, but they remain human and limited. We should act responsibly as citizens while placing our hope for final deliverance in Christ.

The final chapters of Revelation bring us to a new heaven and new earth, the holy city, and God dwelling with His people. The tears, death, mourning, and pain that have marked the old order do not remain forever.

That is the answer to the horsemen. Their devastation is not eternal. The Lamb's reign is.

Hope makes room for grief

Trusting the resurrection does not make loss easy. We can believe His promise and still weep. Revelation promises an end to grief because the pain of death is real.

When someone has lost a home, a loved one, or a sense of safety, compassion is part of speaking faithfully about the future. We can sit beside a grieving person and let the promise of resurrection become comfort at the pace grief allows.

Jesus met suffering people with compassion. His authority never made Him indifferent to their pain.

Jesus knows what suffering costs. He endured it for our redemption. We can trust the One who gave His life for us to keep His promise to return.

CHAPTER 34

One New Man

Paul gives us a remarkable picture in Ephesians 2:15: “one new man” (KJV). He is describing Jews and Gentiles brought together through Jesus Christ. The hostility that divided them is overcome, and both have access to the Father through one Spirit (Ephesians 2:14–18). People who once stood apart are being joined into one body. [148]

I want to speak here to Jewish readers, Muslim readers, and Christians who may have forgotten where our faith began. We do not understand every passage in the same way. But we can listen, examine the Scriptures, and begin to understand why another person believes as he does. The story of Christianity begins with the Jewish Messiah.

The Lion and the Lamb

Imagine the setting. Israel had waited for the promised Messiah. Under foreign rule, many longed for a king who would bring deliverance and restore the nation. Then Yeshua came. He healed, taught, forgave sins, and announced God’s kingdom. Yet His path led to rejection, suffering, and a cross.

They expected the Lion, but received the Lamb. That is how I picture the surprise. Expectations were not identical, and many Jews did believe in Him. Jesus was Jewish. His disciples were Jewish. The first community proclaiming His resurrection was Jewish. The division was over whether this suffering and risen teacher was the promised Messiah.

Christians believe His sacrifice opened the way of salvation to the whole world, including the Gentiles. John the Baptist identified Him as the Lamb of God who takes

away the world's sin (John 1:29). The suffering was not a failure of God's promise. I believe it was the means by which the promise could reach people far beyond Israel.

Revelation brings the two pictures together. John hears of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, then sees the Lamb who was slain standing alive (Revelation 5:5–6). The Lamb and the Lion are the same Messiah. The One who gave His life will return to reign.

When the message reached the Gentiles

During His ministry, Jesus first sent the Twelve to the lost sheep of Israel (Matthew 10:5–6). After His resurrection, He commissioned them to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). Acts follows that expanding mission from Jerusalem outward, and Paul describes the gospel as reaching the Jew first and also the Gentile (Acts 1:8; Romans 1:16).

The disciples entered a pagan world and found people willing to believe in Israel's Messiah. But these new believers had not grown up with Jewish law and tradition. Many were uncircumcised. Their food, family customs, and former worship were different. Could they belong to the Messiah without first becoming Jewish in every outward practice?

Read Acts 10 and 15. Peter sees God give the Holy Spirit to Gentiles, and the Jerusalem council considers what should be required of them. The apostles do not require Gentile believers to undergo circumcision. They give practical instructions concerning idolatry, sexual conduct, and food. The letters that follow keep addressing the difficulties of believers learning to live and worship together (Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8–10).

As the movement spread, its Gentile communities came to look less familiar to Jewish observers. Today, questions about evergreens, eggs, rabbits, and other later holiday customs can make the distance feel greater still. Those particular customs are not the dispute recorded in Acts. The earlier question was whether faith in the Jewish Messiah could unite people whose backgrounds and practices differed so greatly.

Paul's answer points us toward one new man. Unity in Christ does not require us to pretend we all came from the same history. It calls us to receive one another as people brought near by the same mercy.

Read the promises for yourself

We considered Yeshua's name and identity in Chapter 7. I now encourage you to read the Hebrew Scriptures—the Tanakh, including the Torah and the Prophets. The passages below are among those Christians read in connection with the Messiah. Some have immediate historical settings and are interpreted differently within Judaism. I am explaining the connections that have persuaded me, and inviting you to examine them.

Genesis 3:15. God promises conflict between the serpent and the woman's offspring, with a decisive blow against the serpent. Christians see here an early promise of the Messiah's victory. The verse does not explicitly describe a virgin birth, but it begins the story of deliverance that we follow through Scripture.

Isaiah 7:14. A child is called Immanuel, meaning God with us. Matthew 1:22–23 applies this passage to Jesus' birth from the virgin Mary. Read Isaiah's setting and then Matthew's account, and consider why the Gospel writer sees that connection.

Isaiah 52:13–53:12. The servant suffers, bears the sins of others, and is ultimately vindicated. For me, this is one of the clearest windows into the suffering Messiah. To my Jewish reader, I especially encourage you to read Isaiah 53 in your own Scriptures. Consider the whole passage and ask whom you see in it. I believe it can open our eyes to the Lamb.

Micah 5:2. A ruler for Israel comes from Bethlehem, a town small among Judah's clans. Matthew 2:1–6 connects this expectation with Jesus' birthplace.

Genesis 49:10. Jacob's blessing places royal authority with Judah. Christians connect this promise with the Messiah described as the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Second Samuel 7:12–13. God promises David an offspring and an enduring royal throne. Christians read the promise in the light of Jesus' Davidic ancestry and the everlasting kingdom announced in Luke 1:32–33.

Read these passages together. The royal promise and the suffering servant need not cancel each other. I believe they reveal different parts of the Messiah's work: the Lamb who brings redemption and the King who will establish His reign.

Grafted in, not a reason for pride

Christians need to understand our Jewish roots. Paul pictures Gentile believers as branches grafted into a cultivated olive tree and warns us against boasting: the root supports us (Romans 11:17–24). This gift leaves no room for contempt toward the Jewish people, through whom the promises and Scriptures came.

I do not believe Christians replaced the Jewish people in God's promises to Abraham. Paul says God has not rejected His people and His gifts and calling are irrevocable

(Romans 11:1–2, 28–29). God remains faithful. Unity in Christ does not erase Israel from His story.

Nor does the cross permit collective blame of Jewish people. Jesus said He laid down His life willingly and had authority to take it up again (John 10:17–18). His sacrifice was offered for sinners, including me. Our response must be gratitude and repentance, not hatred.

Jewish and Christian expectations of the Messiah differ, and Muslim beliefs about Jesus differ from both. We can understand those differences honestly while treating one another with love. I invite you to look closely at Yeshua, the Jewish Messiah in whom Christians place their trust.

I believe the Lamb will return as the Lion of Judah. God will fulfill His promises, rule over people from every nation, and gather His people to worship together. This is the hope I see in one new man: hostility overcome, people reconciled to God, and a shared life shaped by His love.

Are we learning to love God and the person beside us? That is a question we can answer today.

CHAPTER 35

Why this is happening and what we should do

We began beside the disciples, asking Jesus about the future. We have followed the return of Israel, the prominence of Jerusalem, changes in travel and knowledge, and the troubles of the earth. We have considered the Lamb opening the seals and the kingdom toward which the prophets looked. All of it now brings us to a personal question.

I believe the signs are calling us to wake up. They show a world in need of redemption and direct us toward the Lord who has promised to return. The opportunity before us is precious. Today we can turn to Him, receive His mercy, and begin to live differently.

The final question is what you will do with the love God is offering you now.

You may have reached these pages with questions that no chart can answer. Why would a loving God allow so much suffering before coming to set things right? What is the purpose of life? Why am I here? What am I supposed to learn? What am I supposed to do?

Suffering makes these questions urgent: beside a hospital bed, in a home without food, or at a loved one’s grave. We were created to know God’s love and learn to love Him and one another. That purpose remains even when we cannot explain everything we endure.

Love at the center of the story

When Jesus was asked which commandment was greatest, He answered with the call to love God with the whole of our being and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:28–31). His answer joins devotion to God with responsibility toward the person beside us. Love for the Creator is meant to become visible in our treatment of His creatures.

First John 4:8 gives the foundation: “God is love.” John then points to the sending of God's Son as the expression of that love. The gospel begins with God reaching toward people who need Him. We do not first make ourselves worthy and then persuade Him to care.

John 3:16 states the promise plainly. God loved the world and gave His Son so that those who believe in Him may receive eternal life. The world includes people from every nation and background. The invitation reaches the devout and the doubtful, the wounded and the guilty, and the person who has spent years insisting that God has no place in his life.

The good news concerns a living Savior. First Corinthians 15:3–8 places His death for our sins, His burial, and His resurrection at the center of the apostolic message. Faith requires more than agreement that Jesus once lived. It is trust that He lives now, that His saving work is sufficient, and that His promise of life can be trusted.

Why suffering continues

Genesis 3 describes humanity's disobedience. Romans 5:12 connects the entrance of sin and death with human rebellion. Romans 8:19–23 pictures creation itself suffering

while awaiting liberation. God’s purpose for creation extends beyond the suffering world we now experience.

The knowledge of good and evil was not given as permission to discover cruelty by practicing it. Humanity was called to trust God. In rejecting His command, we entered the experience of shame, estrangement, and death. We still repeat that rejection whenever we insist that our appetite, pride, or power matters more than another person's life.

The suffering person needs compassion. Jesus rejected the assumption that victims of violence and disaster were more guilty than others (Luke 13:1–5). He also entered our suffering Himself. Betrayal, injustice, pain, and death are part of the story of the cross. We can bring our unanswered questions to the One who knows their weight.

Second Peter 3:9 connects the apparent delay of the Lord's coming with His patience and desire for repentance. First Timothy 2:3–4 likewise speaks of God's desire for people to be saved and to know the truth. The time we are being given is an opportunity for grace to reach another life. Someone may yet turn back. Someone may yet hear the gospel. Someone reading this page may be that person.

Patience is not approval of evil. God's promised judgment means that cruelty will not have the final word. His mercy means that even someone who has done terrible wrong can repent. I need that mercy too. It would be a serious mistake to demand that God judge everyone else immediately while asking Him to keep giving me time to change.

The time we are being given

Jesus speaks of the times of the Gentiles in relation to Jerusalem (Luke 21:24). Paul speaks of the full number of the Gentiles coming in within God’s saving purpose

(Romans 11:25). History and redemption remain in His hands.

The Greek plērōma in Romans 11 conveys fullness. God knows the fullness of the work He is doing among the nations. He knows those who are His (2 Timothy 2:19). Our calling is to share the invitation while there is time to respond. [48]

I sometimes picture eternity as life perpetually in the now: no fear that the next hour will bring decay or separation, no shadow of death over the joy of being together. We cannot yet grasp the whole experience, but Scripture gives us a promise to hold.

Revelation 21:1–4 describes God dwelling with His people and the passing of death, mourning, and pain. That is the future toward which I look. Until then, the time in our hands has a purpose. Someone within our reach needs the love we can offer today.

The responsibility placed in human hands

We ask what God will do about suffering. We should ask what we are doing about the suffering we have the means to relieve.

Genesis 1:26–28 gives humanity responsibility within creation, and Genesis 2:15 describes tending and caring for the garden. Dominion carries accountability. It does not excuse exploitation or indifference. The earth's resources, human skill, and the ability to cooperate are gifts to be used responsibly.

UNEP estimated that households wasted more than a billion meals a day in 2022. Meanwhile, parents struggle to find enough food for their children. We have learned to grow, store, and transport food on an extraordinary scale.

War, poverty, and broken systems still keep it from people who need it. Our ability brings a responsibility to act. [46]

The same challenge appears in water. WHO and UNICEF reported that 2.1 billion people lacked safely managed drinking water in 2024. We know how to protect sources, treat contamination, and build supplies. Extending that work takes investment, care, and cooperation. Those are tasks human beings can undertake. [47]

A child dying from hunger in a world able to offer help confronts our claims to righteousness. That life is precious, however brief it may be. I believe God gives every life worth and purpose. Our answer must be to grieve, care, and work to keep another family from enduring the same loss.

God's instructions about giving make His concern concrete. Deuteronomy 14:28–29 directed Israel to store the tithe of every third year's produce so that Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows could eat. Deuteronomy 15:7–11 calls for an open hand toward the poor. These commands made provision for vulnerable people part of the community's obedience to God.

The New Testament carries that concern into willing, practical generosity. Second Corinthians 8–9 calls believers to give. James 2:15–17 asks what our words are worth if we leave a neighbor hungry and without clothing. Love must reach the table and the household where someone has run out of hope.

We cannot each repair the whole world. We can refuse to make that limitation an excuse for doing nothing. Feed someone. Support trustworthy relief work. Help provide clean water. Treat workers fairly. Visit the lonely. Protect a child. Use your abilities to make another person's burden lighter. Expecting Jesus soon should make us more faithful in these responsibilities.

What our actions reveal

If we claim to know God while cultivating hatred, something is profoundly wrong. First John 4:20–21 rejects the claim that we can love God while hating a brother or sister. Jesus extends the demand beyond the circle of friends by commanding love for enemies (Matthew 5:43–48).

The command reaches every one of us. I hold my convictions about Israel and the Messiah firmly, and I am still called to love the person who disagrees. A claim to righteousness becomes hollow when it gives hatred a home.

If your religion, movement, or belief system teaches you to delight in the suffering of other people, examine what you have been taught. If you celebrate torture, rape, or murder and call that celebration devotion to God, you have been deceived. Such delight serves the destroyer rather than the God revealed in Jesus. No victim's identity makes cruelty holy. Supporting or encouraging the shedding of innocent blood carries grave moral responsibility.

Love protects the vulnerable and confronts wrongdoing. It seeks justice and refuses delight in another person’s humiliation. The innocent must be defended, and the humanity of the person before us must remain in view.

Our actions reveal what we cherish. Hatred, greed, pride, violence, and indifference expose our need for repentance. Yet the gospel does not say that we can earn salvation by accumulating enough good deeds. Ephesians 2:8–10 places salvation in God's grace, received through faith, and then describes the life of good works for which believers are created. Love is the fruit of a life being changed by Him.

We are here to learn love, but we cannot separate that lesson from the One who loves us first. We need

forgiveness as well as instruction. We need the Spirit's work in us as well as a resolution to behave better. The hope of the gospel is that a heart shaped by hatred can be changed, and a person burdened by guilt can begin again.

His hand is reaching toward you

The signs of the end times are signs to wake us up. They call us to turn toward God and to stop treating the present opportunity as though it will remain forever. The coming of the Lord is a promise to receive with hope, and the call to salvation is a call to answer now.

Second Corinthians 6:2 puts that urgency plainly: “now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.” Today matters. This moment matters. You do not need to settle every question about the seals, the millennium, or the number 666 before you can call upon Jesus.

I believe God has placed this book in your hands for a reason. Here, now, you have been invited to consider His love and His claim upon your life. I believe He is calling you into a personal relationship with Him. You may have approached the book through curiosity, concern, disagreement, or a search for answers. You can bring all of that honestly before Him.

If you have been wounded by people who used God's name, their cruelty does not tell the whole truth about Him. Look at Jesus. Consider the compassion with which He met the broken, the seriousness with which He confronted evil, and the cross through which He offered reconciliation. Do not let someone else's misuse of His name keep you from seeking Him.

He is reaching toward you. Will you take His hand, or turn away? I cannot make that response for you. My appeal is that you receive His mercy, turn from sin, and trust the

living Messiah. You are invited into a relationship that begins now and reaches beyond death.

The signs have brought us to this invitation. I expect the Lord's return with urgency, and I pray that these pages lead you into the life He offers: a heart turned toward God, hands ready to help, and love growing where hatred once lived.

Postscript A prayer of repentance and faith

You can speak to Jesus now. The prayer sometimes called the sinner's prayer gives words to repentance and trust. Romans 10:9–13 calls us to confess Him as Lord, believe that God raised Him from the dead, and call upon Him. If this prayer expresses your heart, make it your own.

Lord Jesus, I come to You as I am. I confess that I have sinned and that I need Your forgiveness. I have failed to love You and other people as I should. I turn from my sin and ask for Your mercy.

I believe that You died for my sins and that God raised You from the dead. You are the living Savior. I place my trust in You and receive the grace You offer. Come into my heart and lead my life. Be my Lord, and teach me to follow You.

Fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Change the hatred, pride, and selfishness within me. Teach me to love what is good, to seek justice, to forgive, and to care for others. Give me courage to put my faith into action. Thank You for loving me and for the hope of eternal life. Amen.

Begin walking with Him. Read the Gospels, pray honestly, and seek a trustworthy congregation where Scripture is taught and love is practiced. Speak with a mature believer about your faith and baptism. Ask for help as you learn. You do not have to understand everything on the first day to begin a real relationship with Him.

Receive His love. Learn to love. Let that love become visible in the life you live.

Love and live. Shalom.

APPENDIX A

Milestones in the modern setting

The following milestones place the book's modern developments in their historical setting. Report dates are distinguished from the years their figures describe.

Date	Development	Source
1825	Steam locomotive on the Stockton and Darlington Railway opening day	2
1886	Benz patents his gasoline-powered motor car	3
1903	Wright brothers achieve controlled powered airplane flight	5
1940s	Water development expands in the arid south	10
1948	Independence of the State of Israel proclaimed	14
1955	Nautilus gets underway on nuclear power	6
1964	National Water Carrier completion documented	11
1969	Apollo 11 lands on the Moon	7
2025	Jewish Agency assists 22,270 immigrants from 105 countries	15
2025	ITU estimates about six billion people use the internet	9
Future	NASA prepares for eventual human Mars exploration	8

These developments continue to shape one another. Travel assists migration, communication joins distant

communities, and water systems sustain the land. Human exploration of Mars remains a future goal.

APPENDIX B

The earthquake chart data

The table below gives the values behind Figure 2, calculated from archived USGS earthquake records. The table uses complete years only. [16]

Period	Years	Recorded events M > 6	Annual mean
1900–1909	10	344	34.4
1910–1919	10	668	66.8
1920–1929	10	949	94.9
1930–1939	10	1,046	104.6
1940–1949	10	947	94.7
1950–1959	10	1,267	126.7
1960–1969	10	1,216	121.6
1970–1979	10	927	92.7
1980–1989	10	1,020	102.0
1990–1999	10	1,204	120.4
2000–2009	10	1,224	122.4
2010–2019	10	1,165	116.5
2020–2025	6	627	104.5

The increase shown by the arrow is 104.5 minus 34.4, giving 70.1 additional recorded events per year between the displayed endpoint periods. Dividing 70.1 by 34.4 and

multiplying by 100 gives 203.8 percent when rounded to one decimal place.

Definitions and source record

The original query requested worldwide events classified as earthquakes with a preferred magnitude of at least 6.0, beginning January 1, 1900 at 00:00 UTC and ending September 23, 2026 at 21:00 UTC. The saved file contains 14,454 records. Filtering the stored magnitude to strictly greater than 6.0 leaves 12,676 records through that cutoff. The chart then excludes partial 2026. Aftershocks remain in the count, and each catalog event is counted once. [16–18]

Each complete decade's count is divided by ten. The 2020–2025 count is divided by six. The chart reports recorded counts with the catalog's preferred magnitude values; it does not estimate missing historical events or apply a correction for changes in catalog coverage. Its arrow connects the first and last displayed period averages.

The figures are based on an archived USGS catalog download. USGS catalog solutions can be revised, so a later query may not be identical to the archived file.

APPENDIX C

Scripture reading guide

Use the passages below for further study. Read each in its surrounding chapter and follow its promises through to their outcome. This book uses the NIV and paraphrases much of the discussion. [1]

The disciples and the last days

Matthew 24–25; Mark 13; Luke 21; Acts 1:6–11; Acts 2:14–21; Hebrews 1:1–2. These passages establish the questions about the future, the warning against deception, the troubles of the age, and the responsibility of waiting disciples.

Travel and increased knowledge

Daniel 12:1–13; Proverbs 1:7; 1 Corinthians 8:1–3; 2 Timothy 3:1–9; Matthew 24:14; Matthew 28:18–20. Read Daniel's statement about knowledge within the setting of a sealed revelation, final trouble, understanding, and resurrection.

Desert water and the highway

Isaiah 11:11–16; Isaiah 19:23–25; Isaiah 35:1–10; Isaiah 40:1–11; Isaiah 41:17–20. These passages place gathering, a prepared way, renewed land, healing, and holiness within the restoration hope.

Gathering and restoration

Deuteronomy 30:1–10; Isaiah 43:1–7; Jeremiah 30–31; Ezekiel 36–37; Romans 11. These passages combine gathering with covenant faithfulness, cleansing, spiritual renewal, and mercy. Romans 11 also warns Gentile believers against boasting.

Jerusalem and the nations

Zechariah 12–14; Ezekiel 38–39; Daniel 9:24–27; Matthew 24:15–22; Luke 19:41–44; Psalm 122. Follow Jerusalem's place through conflict, the Lord's intervention, and the promise of peace.

Power in the name

Matthew 1:1–25; Genesis 5; Exodus 3:15; Daniel 7:13–14; John 1:1–18; Colossians 2:9; Matthew 11:28–30. Read the Messiah's ancestry, the meaning of His name, and the Christian understanding of His identity. The connected message drawn from the Genesis names is a devotional reading.

Earthquakes and the groaning creation

Matthew 24:6–8; Mark 13:7–8; Luke 21:9–11; Romans 8:18–25; Hebrews 12:25–29. The passages place physical disturbance within a larger call to perseverance and hope.

Volcanoes and the Day of the Lord

Joel 2:28–32; Acts 2:14–21; Revelation 8:6–9; Romans 8:18–25. Read the images of fire and smoke within their full

passages, including the promises of deliverance and creation's renewal.

The Antichrist

1 John 2:18–23 and 4:1–6; Ephesians 5:18 and 6:12; Luke 8:26–39; John 13:27; Job 1:6–12 and 2:1–6; Luke 22:31–32; Colossians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 1:20; 2 Thessalonians 2:3–9; Zechariah 6:1–8; Revelation 6 and 20:10. These passages support the discussion of spiritual opposition, divine authority, and restraint. The identification of the white horse with the spirit of antichrist is the author's interpretation.

The Lamb and the seven seals

Revelation 4–8; Zechariah 1:7–17 and 6:1–8; Matthew 24:29–31; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; Habakkuk 2:20; Zephaniah 1:7; Zechariah 2:10–13. Begin with the throne, scroll, and Lamb, then follow all seven seals. Appendix D provides an extended guide to the sixth-seal signs and seventh-seal silence.

The beasts and the mark

Daniel 2; Daniel 7; 2 Thessalonians 2; Revelation 13; Revelation 14:1–13; Revelation 15:1–4; Revelation 19:11–21; Revelation 20:4–6. Pay attention to worship, blasphemy, persecution, economic pressure, and the Lamb's ultimate victory.

The image of God and the whole person

Genesis 1:20–31; Genesis 2:1–3; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; Matthew 3:13–17; Mark 12:28–34; John 1:1–18; John 4:24;

John 14–17; 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24. Consider God's oneness, His revelation in Jesus, and the whole person's response to Him.

Creation rest and the millennial pattern

Genesis 1:1–2:3; Genesis 5; Genesis 7:6; Genesis 11:10–32; Genesis 12:4; Exodus 20:8–11; Psalm 90:4; Acts 7:2–4; Hebrews 4:1–11; 2 Peter 3:3–15; Revelation 20:1–10; Matthew 24:36. These passages underlie the proposed pattern of creation, history, and the Messiah's rest.

The gathering and the coming kingdom

John 14:1–3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11; 1 Corinthians 15; Revelation 19–22; 2 Peter 3:1–18. These passages make resurrection, reunion, righteous judgment, and new creation central to the hope of His return.

One New Man

Ephesians 2:11–22; Acts 10:34–48; Acts 15:1–29; Romans 11:1–2, 17–29; Isaiah 52:13–53:12; John 10:17–18; Revelation 5:5–6.

Living ready

Mark 12:28–31; John 3:16–21; Romans 5:12–21; Romans 10:9–13; Romans 11:25–32; Luke 21:24; 2 Peter 3:9–15; 2 Corinthians 6:1–2; Deuteronomy 14:28–29 and 15:7–11; Ephesians 2:8–10; James 2:14–17; 1 John 4:7–21; Revelation 21:1–4.

APPENDIX D

Sixth and seventh seal Scripture parallels

This guide brings together the closest verbal parallels and wider biblical themes behind the interpretation in Chapters 11–23. Some passages describe earlier judgments; others look directly toward the Lord's appearing. Reading them in context reveals how the imagery develops across Scripture. [39]

The sixth seal and its closest verbal parallels

Revelation 6:12–17. The comparison passage: earthquake, dark sun, bloodlike moon, falling stars, a rolled sky, displaced mountains and islands, hiding humanity, and the announcement of wrath.

Matthew 24:29–31. Darkened sun and moon, falling stars, shaken heavenly powers, the Son of Man's appearing, and the gathering of the elect. Jesus places these signs after the tribulation described.

Mark 13:24–27. The same heavenly disturbances lead into the coming of the Son of Man and the gathering from the ends of earth and heaven.

Luke 21:25–28. Signs in sun, moon, and stars accompany distress and fear; the Son of Man comes, and His followers are told that redemption draws near.

Joel 2:30–32 and Acts 2:16–21. The sun becomes dark and the moon bloodlike before the Day of the Lord. Acts quotes

Joel in Peter's Pentecost proclamation; both connect the announcement with calling upon the Lord.

Joel 2:1–11 and 3:14–17. The Lord's day, shaking earth and heavens, darkened lights, and His voice and presence. Joel also describes Him as a refuge for His people.

Isaiah 34:1–8. Heaven rolls like a scroll and its host falls like leaves or figs. The prophecy concerns divine judgment, with particular attention to Edom and Zion.

Isaiah 50:3. Heaven is clothed with blackness and sackcloth, a close verbal parallel to Revelation's description of the sun.

Isaiah 13:6–13. The Day of the Lord brings terror, darkened heavenly lights, and shaken heaven and earth. Read within the oracle against Babylon.

Isaiah 2:10–22. People hide among rocks and caves before the Lord's majesty when He rises to shake the earth; human rank and pride offer no protection.

Hosea 10:8 and Luke 23:28–31. People appeal to mountains and hills to cover them. Hosea addresses Israel's judgment; Jesus applies the language in His warning to Jerusalem's daughters.

Nahum 1:2–6. Mountains quake, rocks break, and the question is asked who can stand before the Lord's anger. The book's historical focus is Nineveh.

The earth and heavens before the Lord

Isaiah 24:18–23. The earth's foundations shake, the world reels, rulers face punishment, and sun and moon are humbled before the Lord's reign in Zion.

Isaiah 26:19–21. Resurrection language is followed by shelter during indignation and the Lord coming from His place to judge, with shed blood disclosed.

Isaiah 64:1–3. A prayer for God to rend the heavens and come down, with mountains responding to His presence. This is a plea for intervention, not a numbered seal.

Jeremiah 4:23–28. Lightless heavens, trembling mountains, and ruined cities portray judgment on Judah. The imagery resembles creation being undone.

Ezekiel 32:2–8. Sun, moon, and stars are darkened in a lament over Pharaoh. This provides a historical prophetic use of the same cosmic vocabulary.

Ezekiel 38:18–23. Divine wrath brings a great shaking in Israel, falling mountains and walls, and judgment upon Gog before the nations.

Amos 5:18–20 and 8:8–10. The Day of the Lord is darkness rather than security; the land trembles, daylight fails, and celebration becomes mourning in warnings to Israel.

Zephaniah 1:14–18. The Lord's day is characterized by wrath, distress, darkness, and alarm. Wealth cannot rescue those facing judgment.

Micah 1:2–5. The Lord comes from His place and descends; mountains melt and valleys split. The immediate charge concerns the sins of Jacob and Israel.

Haggai 2:6–7 and 2:21–22. Heaven, earth, and nations are shaken; royal power is overturned. The promises stand in the setting of the restored temple and Zerubbabel.

Hebrews 12:25–29. Haggai's shaking language is applied to the removal of what can be shaken and the receiving of an enduring kingdom.

Habakkuk 3:3–16. God's appearing includes brightness, trembling mountains, disturbed waters, and the sun and moon. The poem recalls divine deliverance while anticipating trouble.

Exodus 19:16–20. At Sinai the Lord descends with cloud, trumpet, fire, and earthquake. This earlier divine appearance supplies a pattern, rather than a direct prediction of the rapture.

Psalm 18:7–15 and 2 Samuel 22:8–16. Parallel songs of deliverance describe the Lord descending amid darkness, fire, thunder, and a shaking earth.

Psalms 46:1–10 and 97:1–6. Mountains move, kingdoms shake, the earth trembles, and divine kingship is revealed. These are broader poetic parallels to the imagery of Revelation.

Psalm 50:1–6. God comes amid fire and tempest, calls heaven and earth as witnesses, and gathers His covenant people. Here He breaks silence to judge.

Revelation 11:13 and 11:18–19. An earthquake and later the announcement of wrath, judgment, reward, and the opened heavenly temple repeat elements of the larger judgment pattern.

Revelation 16:17–21. The seventh bowl includes an extraordinary earthquake, displaced islands and mountains, and hail. Similarity to the sixth seal does not by itself determine whether the scenes overlap chronologically.

2 Peter 3:7–13; Revelation 20:11 and 21:1. The passing of the present heavens and earth belongs to the wider horizon of judgment and new creation. These passages should not be collapsed automatically into the sixth-seal moment.

His appearing and the gathering of His people

John 14:1–3 and Acts 1:9–11. Jesus promises to receive His people to Himself; the ascension account promises His return. These establish personal return and reunion without assigning a seal number.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18. The explicit catching-up passage: the Lord descends from heaven, the dead in Christ rise, and the living join them to meet Him in the air.

1 Corinthians 15:50–54. At the trumpet, the dead are raised and living believers are changed from mortality to immortality. The passage itself does not identify a Revelation seal.

1 Thessalonians 5:1–11. The Day of the Lord brings sudden destruction, while believers are called to watchfulness and promised salvation rather than wrath.

2 Thessalonians 1:6–10. Relief for the afflicted and judgment upon persecutors are joined to Jesus being revealed from heaven with mighty angels.

2 Thessalonians 2:1–8. Christ's coming and the gathering to Him are discussed together, along with preceding rebellion and the revelation of the lawless one.

Daniel 12:1–3. A time of exceptional trouble, deliverance, and awakening from the dust connects suffering with resurrection and hope.

Luke 17:24–30. The Son of Man's revelation is compared with lightning and with the days of Noah and Lot, linking rescue with the arrival of judgment.

Revelation 1:7 and Zechariah 12:10–14. Cloud-coming, seeing the pierced One, and mourning connect Revelation's opening announcement with Zechariah's prophecy.

Revelation 7:1–17. Between the sixth and seventh seals, John sees the sealing of Israel's servants and a multitude from every nation before the throne. The connection with the rapture is the author's interpretation.

Daniel 7:9–14. The heavenly court and cloud-bearing Son of Man explain the royal background to Jesus' language. In Daniel's scene He approaches the Ancient of Days, rather than descending to earth.

Silence and stillness before God acts

Revelation 8:1–5. The comparison passage: roughly half an hour of heavenly silence, followed by angels, incense and prayers at the altar, then fire and disturbance on earth.

Habakkuk 2:20. The earth is called to silence before the Lord in His holy temple. This closely parallels solemn stillness before His authority.

Zephaniah 1:7. Silence before the Lord is tied directly to the approach of His day and the judgment He has prepared.

Zechariah 2:10–13. The Lord promises to dwell in Zion, many nations join Him, and all flesh is told to be silent because He has risen from His holy habitation.

Psalm 76:7–9. The question of who can stand before divine anger is followed by the earth's stillness when God rises to judge and save. It connects themes from both seals.

Isaiah 41:1. The islands are summoned to silence as the peoples approach for judgment. The scene supplies a courtroom parallel.

Amos 8:3. Songs become wailing and bodies are removed in silence during judgment. This is a more distant parallel involving grief, not an explanation of heaven's silence.

Psalm 46:8–10 and Lamentations 3:26–28. Stillness before God and quiet waiting for salvation broaden the theme. Neither passage states the cause of the seventh-seal silence.

The Lord comes with a heavenly company

Matthew 16:27 and 25:31. The Son of Man comes in glory with His angels; Matthew 25 expressly says all the angels accompany Him.

Zechariah 14:3–9. The Lord comes with holy ones; His feet stand on the Mount of Olives, the mountain divides, and His kingship is declared.

1 Thessalonians 3:13 and Jude 14–15. The Lord's coming is associated with His saints or holy ones. Jude emphasizes judgment; the passages do not say that heaven becomes empty.

Revelation 19:11–16. Heaven opens and the armies of heaven follow the rider identified as the Word of God. This explicitly depicts a heavenly company accompanying Him.

The first five seals in their biblical setting

Revelation 4–5. The throne-room, the seven-sealed scroll, and the worthy Lamb establish the authority behind the entire sequence.

Zechariah 1:7–17 and 6:1–8. Horses sent throughout the earth and four chariots identified as spirits or winds provide the principal background for the author's reading of the four horses as spirits.

Revelation 6:1–8 and Ezekiel 14:21. The first four seals bring the horses; Ezekiel's four judgments provide a close

background to the fourth horse's sword, famine, death, and wild beasts.

Revelation 6:9–11; Leviticus 4:7 and 17:11. The fifth seal reveals the martyrs beneath the altar. Sacrificial blood at the altar's base and the association of blood with life help explain the imagery.

Revelation 8:3–5. Prayers at the heavenly altar precede judgment on earth, providing a meaningful connection with the martyrs' earlier appeal.

The trumpets and bowls and the completion of wrath

Revelation 8:1–7. The seventh seal opens, silence follows, and the angels receive and prepare their trumpets. This establishes the narrated transition from seals to trumpets; bowls are not introduced here.

Revelation 9:1–12 and 16:10–11. Compare darkness and torment at the fifth trumpet and fifth bowl, while retaining the differences in agents, targets, duration, and stated effects.

Revelation 9:12 and 11:14. The first and second woes are declared past before the next is announced, giving explicit progression within the trumpet series.

Revelation 15:1 and 15:5–8; 16:1–2. The bowls are the last plagues that complete God's wrath. The first bowl's sores provide context for the pain and sores mentioned under the fifth.

Revelation 10:7; 11:15–19; 16:17–21. Completion language and the similar seventh-trumpet and seventh-bowl disturbances support comparing their climactic scope, without proving identical timing.

Exodus 7:14–25; 9:8–12; 10:12–29. Bloodied water, sores, locusts, and darkness provide earlier patterns of successive judgment. Repeated imagery does not by itself establish simultaneity.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 and 5:9; Romans 5:9. Believers are promised deliverance from divine wrath. These verses do not identify a seal number; the sixth-seal placement is the author's synthesis with the other passages.

Hebrew Aramaic and Greek notes

The NIV is the English reading text. These notes consult the languages in which the relevant passages were written, rather than later translations into those languages. Transliteration is used for readability. Word meanings and manuscript differences can clarify an argument, but they do not settle every question of prophetic timing.

Hebrew in Zechariah 6:5. Ruchot is the plural of ruach, a word used for spirit, wind, or breath according to context. The NIV main text chooses spirits and its footnote allows winds. This gives a real textual basis for examining the horses as spiritual agents, without proving that the two prophetic visions depict identical beings. [40]

Aramaic in Daniel 7:13. The expression kevar enash describes someone like a human being, traditionally the Son of Man. The passage then says he reaches the Ancient of Days and is brought before him. The movement in this Aramaic scene is toward the heavenly court; a descent to earth must be established from other passages. [41]

Greek in Revelation 6:2. Leukos describes the horse as white. Nikōn and nikēsē express conquering. The verse's vocabulary establishes color and conquest; it does not itself say that the rider is peaceful. The appearance of peace

concealing conquest is the author's reading of the symbol. [42]

Greek in Revelation 6:17. The NIV follows the plural pronoun autōn, referring to their wrath; its footnote records the alternative singular reading. The shared wrath of the enthroned One and the Lamb fits the preceding verse. Ēlthen announces that the day has come, but the verb alone does not decide how much earlier judgment the announcement may encompass. [42]

Greek in Revelation 8:1–2. Sigē means silence, not an empty or abandoned place. Verse 2 begins kai eidon, and I saw. Neither expression independently proves that heaven has been vacated or that every later vision supplies an uninterrupted chronology. Angels remain before God in the passage itself. [42]

Greek in Revelation 15:1. Eschatas identifies the plagues as last, and etelesthē, from teleō, expresses completion. These words support reading the bowls as the completion of divine wrath. They do not expressly state that each bowl coincides with its similarly numbered trumpet, or that no events overlap. [42]

Greek in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Harpagēsometha is a future passive form of harpazō and describes believers being caught up. The gathering is an explicit part of the passage. Its placement at the sixth seal is an interpretation formed by connecting passages, not a meaning contained in this verb. [42]

Sources and research notes

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https://www.opendoors.org/research-reports/wwl-documentation/Appropriate-use-of-WWL-data-February-2021.pdf

[60] Open Doors Hong Kong. World Watch List 2024 Overview; Open Doors International, WWL 2024 Compilation of Main Documents, January 2024. Supplies the 365-million population benchmark, physical-or-mental-abuse comparisons, and historical violence tables. Period ended September 30, 2023.

https://www.opendoors.org.hk/en-US/news/latest/wwl24-overview/

https://www.opendoors.org/research-reports/wwl-documentation/WWL-2024-Compilation-of-main-documents-January-2024.pdf

[61] Open Doors Hong Kong. World Watch List 2025 Overview; Open Doors International, WWL 2025 Compilation of Main Documents, January 2025. Supplies 380-million benchmark and 54,780 other physical-or-mental-abuse cases. Period ended September 30, 2024. The abuse category includes beatings and death threats, not exclusively torture.

https://www.opendoors.org.hk/en-US/news/latest/wwl2025-overview/

https://www.opendoors.org/research-reports/wwl-documentation/WWL-2025-Compilation-of-main-documents-January-2025

[62] Open Doors Hong Kong. World Watch List 2023 Overview. Reports more than 360 million facing high levels of persecution and discrimination. Period: October 1, 2021–September 30, 2022. Christian population estimates and violence counts describe different measures and must not be added.

https://www.opendoors.org.hk/en-US/news/latest/wwl23-overview/

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https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2014/af/238248.htm

[64] Amnesty International. Cameroon: Victims of Boko Haram Attacks Feel Abandoned in the Far North, December 11, 2019. Field investigation of killings, mutilation, forced conversion, and destruction. Includes the Gossi Baptist church and abductees from Tourou.

https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/12/cameroon-victims-of-boko-haram-attacks-feel-abandoned-in-the-far-north/

[65] UNICEF. At Least 65,000 Children Released from Armed Forces and Groups over the Last 10 Years, February 21, 2017. United Nations and partner data verified nearly 2,000 children recruited by Boko Haram in 2016. This is a finding about an armed group, not Muslim children generally.

https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/least-65000-children-released-armed-forces-and-groups-over-last-10-years-unicef

[66] United Nations. Security Council Urged to Stop the Madness as Terrorists Trample Cultural, Religious Diversity of Middle East, March 27, 2015, SC/11840. Proceedings discuss the twenty-one Christians beheaded in Libya and Assyrian Christians abducted in Syria.

https://press.un.org/en/2015/sc11840.doc.htm

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https://2021-2025.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/sri-lanka/

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https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/08/pakistan-authorities-must-ensure-protection-of-minority-christian-community/

[69] The Holy Bible, NIV, Revelation 20:4; Thayer and Strong lexical entry 3990, pelekizo, hosted by Bible Hub. The verse describes witnesses to Jesus and God's word; the Greek term concerns beheading, not a named modern religion or ethnic group. Revelation 20:4 does not name Islam or use the word infidels. The modern correspondence is the author's interpretation.

https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+20%3A4&version=NIV

https://biblehub.com/greek/3990.htm

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https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/17/october-7-crimes-against-humanity-war-crimes-hamas-led-groups

https://www.un.org/unispal/document/mission-report-official-visit-of-the-office-of-the-srsg-svc-4mar24/

https://www.fincen.gov/system/files/advisory/2024-05-07/FinCEN-Advisory-Iran-Backed-TF-508C.pdf

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https://cst.tau.ac.il/data-antisemitic-incidents-worldwide-2025/

[72] Anti-Defamation League. Audits of Antisemitic Incidents 2024 and 2025; the latter published May 6, 2026. National and campus incident counts, including criminal and noncriminal activity. Methodology notes expanded inclusion of certain Israel-related expressions after October 7, 2023. The author's view that Trump administration policy contributed to the decline is a causal interpretation, not an effect estimated by the annual audit. ADL associates much of the campus reduction with reduced encampment-related activity. Its incident definitions include noncriminal conduct and certain anti-Zionist expressions, with changes after October 7, 2023. The May 6, 2026 press release reports 196 national assault incidents in 2024 and 203 in 2025, while the audit reports a decline in campus assaults.

https://www.adl.org/resources/report/audit-antisemitic-incidents-2024

https://www.adl.org/resources/report/audit-antisemitic-incidents-2025

https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/adl-records-historic-high-antisemitic-assaults-and-attacks-deadly-weapons

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https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2026/02/11/antisemitic-incidents-report-2025

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https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/actualites/communiques-de-presse/actes-antireligieux-tendances-2025

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[75] B’nai Brith Canada. Antisemitism Reaches Record Levels, April 7, 2025; A National Crisis of Antisemitism, April 27, 2026. Annual totals for 2024 and 2025; most 2025 incidents occurred online.

https://bnaibrith.ca/bnai-brith-canada-report-antisemitism-reaches-record-levels/

https://bnaibrith.ca/bnai-brith-canada-special-report-a-national-crisis-of-antisemitism/

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https://www.ecaj.org.au/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/ECAJ-Report-Anti-Jewish-Incidents-Australia-2025.pdf

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https://www.hhs.gov/press-room/ocr-columbia-violates-federal-civil-rights-law.html

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https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/doctrine-hamas

[79] U.S. Department of Justice, Northern District of Texas. Federal Jury in Dallas Convicts Holy Land Foundation and Its Leaders for Providing Material Support to Hamas Terrorist Organization, November 24, 2008. Describes verdicts, funding, and trial evidence concerning the Palestine Committee.

https://www.justice.gov/archive/usao/txn/PressRel08/HLF_convict_pr.html

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https://archive.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/NICM-Declassified-Foreign-Threats-to-US-Elections-After-Voting-Ends-in-2024.pdf

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https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/additional-measures-to-combat-anti-semitism/

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https://overviewbible.com/authors-who-wrote-bible/

https://kidsanswers.org/how-long-ago-was-bible-written/

[84] The traditional ten-tribe list and biblical territories. See Joshua 13, 16–17, and 19 (NIV); 2 Kings 17:6; and 1 Chronicles 5:26. Ephraim and Manasseh are the two sons of Joseph represented in the territorial list; Levi had no comparable tribal allotment. Simeon's allotment lay within Judah. "Lost tribes" describes the historical and religious tradition associated with dispersion, not a verified modern genealogy for every community. PBS NOVA, The Lost Tribes of Israel.

https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/israel/losttribes.html

https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+13%3B16-17%3B19&version=NIV

[85] Ethiopian Jewry Heritage Center, About Ethiopian Jewry, on the community's history and differing traditions of origin, including Dan. The Jewish Agency, Operation Solomon, documents the 1991 airlift. The Times of Israel, Ethiopia-born minister on immigration amid COVID: Even in wars we didn't stop, records Pnina Tamano-Shata's childhood immigration. Tribal descent is presented as tradition.

https://ethiopianjhc.org.il/en/ethiopian-jewry/about-ethiopian-jewry/

https://www.jewishagency.org/operation-solomon/

https://www.timesofisrael.com/ethiopia-born-minister-on-immigration-amid-covid-even-in-wars-we-didnt-stop/

[86] The Genesis Prize, Natan Sharansky biography; The Jewish Agency, Natan Sharansky. Biographical accounts document his Donetsk birthplace, Soviet imprisonment, and arrival in Israel in 1986.

https://www.genesisprize.org/honorees/laureate-2020/biography

https://www.jewishagency.org/natan-sharansky/

[87] Jewish Journal, One Israeli Creation for the Weekend, profile of Rita. Born in Tehran in 1962, she immigrated with her family in 1970.

https://jewishjournal.com/commentary/blogs/126569/one-israeli-creation-for-the-weekend-32/

[88] Shavei Israel, The Kaifeng Jews, describes the community's origins, institutions, assimilation, and renewed interest among descendants. See also From Jin Jin to Yecholiya: A Chinese Jew's Journey to Jerusalem, February 28, 2012, for a personal Aliyah account.

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https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about/communities/IN

[90] Shavei Israel, Bnei Menashe community history; The Jewish Agency, Helping Immigrants from India Integrate into Israeli Society. These sources describe the community in northeastern India and its Aliyah. Descent from Manasseh is the community's ancestral tradition.

https://www.shavei.org/communities-2/bnei-menashe/

https://www.jewishagency.org/helping-immigrants-from-india-integrate-into-israeli-society/

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https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/Report-on-Potential-Links-Between-the-Wuhan-Institute-of-Virology-and-the-Origins-of-COVID-19-20230623.pdf

[92] Office of the Director of National Intelligence. Fauci Funded Wuhan Lab Research That Sparked COVID, June 18, 2026, with linked declassification materials. Cited for the agency's stated laboratory-leak position; the announcement is not a demonstration of snake-venom insertion or weapons intent.

https://www.odni.gov/13668/fauci-funded-wuhan-lab-research-that-sparked-covid/

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https://www.who.int/news/item/27-06-2025-who-scientific-advisory-group-issues-report-on-origins-of-covid-19

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https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7138088/

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https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7889469/

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https://www.jci.org/articles/view/149236

[98] World Health Organization. Tracking SARS-CoV-2 Variants, accessed October 4, 2026, United States Central time. Explains that most mutations have little effect, while some can affect transmission, severity, and medical countermeasures. The discussion of a future pandemic in relation to Revelation is theological interpretation, not a forecast from this source.

https://www.who.int/activities/tracking-SARS-CoV-2-variants

[99] World Health Organization. The Top 10 Causes of Death, updated October 2, 2026, drawing on Global Health Estimates 2023. Estimates 5.3 million deaths directly attributable to COVID-19 in 2020 and 9.4 million in 2021; the declining annual series reaches approximately 0.9 million in 2023. These are modeled cause-specific estimates, not the dashboard's cumulative reported death count. The 0.9-million figure is not a combined 2022–2023 total.

https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/the-top-10-causes-of-death

[100] World Health Organization. COVID-19 Global Risk Assessment, Version 10, August 6, 2026. Reports more than seven million confirmed deaths reported globally to WHO as of June 28, 2026. This cumulative surveillance measure is distinct from modeled mortality estimates and is not to be added to them.

https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/covid-19-global-risk-assessment--version-10

[101] Lakshmi Panagiotakopoulos and colleagues, CDC. Use of an Additional Updated 2023–2024 COVID-19 Vaccine Dose for Adults Aged 65 Years and Older: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices — United States, 2024. MMWR 73 (April 25, 2024): 377–381. Introduction reports approximately 1.1 million COVID-19-associated U.S. deaths as of February 3, 2024. Cited here for that dated mortality figure, preserving the source's associated-death terminology.

https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7316a4.htm

[102] Mandeep R. Mehra, Frank Ruschitzka, and Amit N. Patel. Retraction—Hydroxychloroquine or Chloroquine with or without a Macrolide for Treatment of COVID-19: A Multinational Registry Analysis. The Lancet, June 4, 2020. DOI: 10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31324-6. Authors' retraction and the journal's statement were reproduced by The Lancet Press Office on EurekAlert. The underlying data could not be independently audited. This example documents failed verification; it does not establish the motive behind the failure, a treatment recommendation, or a coordinated deception across a field.

https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/734345

[103] Sahih Muslim 2922, The Book of Tribulations and Portents of the Last Hour; Anti-Defamation League, Hamas in Its Own Words, quoting Article 7 of the 1988 founding charter. The stones-and-trees passage is a hadith, not a Quranic verse.

https://sunnah.com/muslim/54/103

https://www.adl.org/resources/article/hamas-its-own-words

[104] Human Rights Watch. "Maybe We Live and Maybe We Die": Recruitment and Use of Children by Armed Groups in Syria, June 22, 2014, especially the section on ISIS. Interviews document child recruitment, training, suicide missions, and pressure to volunteer.

https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/06/22/maybe-we-live-and-maybe-we-die/recruitment-and-use-children-armed-groups-syria

[105] William McCants. Apocalypse Delayed. Brookings, October 17, 2016. Analysis of ISIS propaganda about Dabiq and supporters' explanations after its fall. This concerns an extremist movement's use of prophecy; it is not evidence of a uniform Muslim belief about deliberately causing chaos.

https://www.brookings.edu/articles/apocalypse-delayed/

[106] Greek terms in 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17: parousia (coming or presence), harpagēsometha (we will be caught up), and apantēsis (meeting). Compare Matthew 25:6 and Acts 28:15–16. The cited lexical meanings do not themselves determine the destination after the meeting or a duration between stages of Christ's return. See also note 42.

https://biblehub.com/text/1_thessalonians/4-17.htm

https://biblehub.com/greek/529.htm

https://biblehub.com/greek/3952.htm

[107] Ancient wedding evidence: Genesis 29:27–28; Judges 14:10–17; Tobit 8:19–20. Stuart S. Miller, Celebrating Marriage in Ancient Israel and the Origins of Sheva Berakhot, TheTorah.com, 2023. Mishnah Ketubot 5:2 describes preparation periods; this later compilation does not independently establish a first-century Galilean custom. The sources examined do not securely attest the popular father-alone-knows-the-date claim. Compare the Greek oiden in Mark 13:32, which expresses knowing.

https://www.thetorah.com/article/celebrating-marriage-in-ancient-israel-and-the-origins-of-sheva-berakhot

https://library.drisha.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/handout_mishnah-in-depth-ketubot_pt4.pdf

https://biblehub.com/text/mark/13-32.htm

[108] Renald Showers, The Marriage and Marriage Supper of the Lamb, Revelation 19:7–9, Israel My Glory, June/July 1991. Primary exposition of the proposed wedding-feast interpretation: the proposed correspondence between seven wedding days and Daniel's seven years is expressly the writer's conviction. The article also identifies differing views of the supper's location. It documents this argument, not its earliest historical origin.

https://israelmyglory.org/article/the-marriage-and-marriage-supper-of-the-lamb-revelation-197-9/

[109] Didache, chapter 16, in the Roberts–Donaldson translation hosted by New Advent; Coptic Apocalypse of Elijah, concluding chapter, English translation by Anthony Alcock, 2013. These writings illustrate differing ancient presentations of final trial, gathering, and judgment; they do not supply a seven-year marriage-supper timetable. Their date, transmission, and standing differ from those of the New Testament. Tobit's canonical status varies among churches.

https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0714.htm

https://www.roger-pearse.com/weblog/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/apocalypse-of-elijah_alcock_2013.pdf

[110] Revelation 10:6–7: chronos ouketi estai. In context the announcement concerns the completion of God's mystery; the NIV understands the phrase as no more delay. It does not require an end to temporal succession at the rapture. The chapter's eternal-now and garden language expresses the author's contemplation of restored fellowship, not an explicit biblical statement that time did not exist before the fall. Compare Genesis 1:5; 3:8; 1 Corinthians 15:51–53; Revelation 21:3–4; 22:3–5.

https://biblehub.com/text/revelation/10-6.htm

[111] Morocco, Constitution of 2011, Article 4, official text published on Maroc.ma. Dahir of November 17, 1915, introducing the green five-pointed Seal of Solomon, reproduced with the public-domain flag record on Wikimedia Commons. The archived U.S. Department of State country profile describes the five-pillars association. The illustration is a black-and-white adaptation of the public-domain national flag design; it is not an occult emblem substituted for the national symbol.

https://maroc.ma/sites/default/files/2024-10/constitution_du_1er_juillet_2011.pdf

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flag_of_Morocco.svg

https://2017-2021.state.gov/countries-areas/morocco/

[112] Church of Satan, The History of the Origin of the Sigil of Baphomet and its Use in the Church of Satan. Primary account of that organization's own emblem and its inverted pentagram. Used to distinguish this emblem from Morocco's upright star; not evidence of Satanic intent in Morocco's national flag.

https://churchofsatan.com/history-sigil-of-baphomet/

[113] Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Flag Proclamation No. 654/2009, Articles 6–8, Ministry of Justice. Specifies the flag and explains the equal lines, star, blue circle, and rays in terms of equality, voluntary unity, peace, and hope.

https://justice.gov.et/en/law/flag-proclamation/

[114] Flags of the World, Haaksbergen (Netherlands), including the municipal flag illustration and historical notes. Nagasaki City, The Symbols of Nagasaki City, explains the city emblem through folded cranes, a stylized character from the city's name, and five treaty ports. These are municipal examples, not additional national flags. The illustrated flag records identify pentagram forms without establishing a common religious purpose.

https://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/nl-ov-hb.html

https://www.city.nagasaki.lg.jp/page/2364.html

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flag_of_Nagasaki,_Nagasaki.svg

[115] Gilbert Baker Foundation, Rainbow Flag: Origin Story, excerpts from Baker's memoir Rainbow Warrior, chapter 5, recounting his choice of the rainbow and explicitly mentioning the Genesis covenant alongside other historical associations. U.S. National Park Service, Gilbert Baker, documents the flag's 1978 debut. These sources establish the stated intent of hope, community, and liberation; the chapter's spiritual critique is the author's interpretation.

https://gilbertbaker.com/rainbow-flag-origin-story/

https://www.nps.gov/people/gilbert-baker.htm

[116] Scripture references for the reflection on pride: 1 Timothy 3:6; Isaiah 14:4, 12–15; compare Proverbs 16:18. Isaiah's explicit address is to the king of Babylon; its application to Satan is a theological interpretation. Genesis 6 identifies pervasive wickedness and violence without naming a modern movement. The rainbow covenant in Genesis 9 concerns Noah, his descendants, and all living creatures.

[117] Everytown Research & Policy. Road Rage Shootings Remain Alarmingly High, December 2024. Analysis of Gun Violence Archive records accessed October 1, 2024. The approximately 122 percent increase is calculated from 218 reported shooting victims in 2018 and 483 in 2023; it does not measure all aggressive driving.

https://everytownresearch.org/road-rage-shootings-remain-alarmingly-high/

[118] Princeton University, Bridging Divides Initiative. Key Political Violence and Resilience Trends From 2025, February 2026, section 5 and endnote 10. ACLED-based analysis: nearly 20,000 demonstrations, 77 percent above 2024; violent or destructive activity at approximately 0.5 percent. Includes attacks on demonstrations and clashes without automatically assigning responsibility to protesters.

https://bridgingdivides.princeton.edu/key-political-violence-and-resilience-trends-2025

[119] Federal Bureau of Investigation. FBI Releases 2025 Reported Crimes in the Nation Statistics, August 14, 2026. Estimated changes from 2024: aggravated assault down 7.2 percent; violent crime down 9.3 percent. Distinct from ADL's incident series.

https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/fbi-releases-2025-reported-crimes-in-the-nation-statistics

[120] Matthew 24:9–13, KJV and NIV. Compare verse 10 in the context of persecution, betrayal, hatred, deception, and endurance. The application to everyday impatience is devotional, not a prediction of a particular statistical series.

https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+24%3A9-13&version=KJV%3BNIV

[121] Matthew 24:1–3 (NIV). Tyler Perry, The Siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE, World History Encyclopedia, May 2, 2022. Documents the Roman siege under Titus. The imagined reaction is the author's reflection.

https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1993/the-siege-of-jerusalem-in-70-ce/

[122] Matthew 24:1–51; Mark 13:1–37; Luke 21:5–36; Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:1, 11; Revelation 6:1–17; 7:9–17; 8:1. The verse-by-verse paragraphs are paraphrases. The public-domain King James text was consulted alongside the manuscript's principal NIV translation. Luke 21:20 names Jerusalem; 21:28 follows the heavenly signs and the Son of Man's coming. The alignment with the seals and the increasing-frequency application of the labor image are the author's interpretation. Accessed October 7, 2026.

https://biblehub.com/kjv/matthew/24.htm

https://biblehub.com/kjv/mark/13.htm

https://biblehub.com/kjv/luke/21.htm

https://biblehub.com/kjv/daniel/9.htm

https://biblehub.com/kjv/daniel/11.htm

https://biblehub.com/kjv/daniel/12.htm

https://biblehub.com/kjv/revelation/6.htm

[123] Revelation and its date. USCCB, introduction to Revelation. The introduction places the book near the end of Domitian's reign; earlier dates are also debated.

https://bible.usccb.org/bible/revelation/0

[124] Displaying the sky. Stellarium, official astronomy software site. The discussion concerns a calculated display of the whole arrangement, including stars concealed by daylight.

https://stellarium.org/

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[134] The Holy Bible, New International Version. Principal passages for The Antichrist: 1 John 2:18–23 and 4:1–6; Ephesians 5:18 and 6:12; Luke 8:26–39; John 13:27; Job 1:6–12 and 2:1–6; Luke 22:31–32; Colossians 2:15; 1 John 3:8; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 1:20; 2 Thessalonians 2:3–9; Zechariah 6:1–8; Revelation 6 and 20:10. The statement about many antichrists is in John’s first letter. Revelation 6 does not explicitly name its first rider Antichrist. The identification of this rider as a spiritual power and the connection between restraint and the seals are the author’s interpretation.

https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2:18;4:3&version=NIV

https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Thessalonians+2&version=NIV

[135] 1 Kings 18 and Jeremiah 32:35 for Baal and Molek. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bronze statuette of Apollo, ca. 500 BCE, describes Apollo’s connection with oracles. Apollo, Apollyon, and Apollos are distinct names: Revelation 9:11 calls the angel of the Abyss Abaddon in Hebrew and Apollyon in Greek; Acts 18:24–28 presents Apollos as a teacher of Jesus as Messiah. The chapter’s interpretation of false worship is theological. Accessed October 9, 2026.

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[142] The Holy Bible. 2 Thessalonians 2:3–12. Verse 7 is quoted in the King James Version as “the mystery of iniquity” and in the New International Version as “the secret power of lawlessness.” The passage joins already-active lawlessness, present restraint, a future unveiling, and the Lord Jesus’ final victory.

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[147] The Holy Bible, New International Version. Matthew 24:29–31; Revelation 6:12–17 and 7:9–17; Luke 17:26–30; John 16:33 and 17:15. These passages support the discussion of tribulation, the gathering of believers, rescue and judgment, and Christ's care through trouble. Identifying all of these events with one day at the sixth seal is the author's interpretation.

https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+24%3A29-31%3BRevelation+7%3A14%3BJohn+17%3A15&version=NIV

[148] The Holy Bible. Ephesians 2:11–22, especially 2:15 ("one new man," King James Version); Acts 10 and 15; Romans 11; John 10:17–18; Revelation 5:5–6. Chapter 34 also names the Hebrew-scripture passages discussed and their New Testament connections. The name forms Yeshua, Greek Iēsous, Latin Iesus, and English Jesus refer to the same historical person. Biblical and theological connections in Chapters 7 and 34 are presented from the author's Christian perspective.

https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+2%3A11-22&version=KJV%3BNIV

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[149] The Holy Bible, Matthew 1:1–17. The genealogy in Chapter 7 is a complete prose rendering of Matthew's sequence and named family connections, using familiar NIV name forms rather than a verbatim quotation. Matthew 1:18–25 supplies the accompanying birth account. Genesis 22:18; 2 Samuel 7:12–16; and Jeremiah 23:5–6

provide the covenant and royal promises discussed in the introduction. The conclusion expresses the author's Christian understanding of Jesus as Israel's Messiah.

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[150] Biblical name explanations: Genesis 2:7; 4:25; 5:29; 17:5, 17–19; 18:12; 21:6; 25:26; 27:36; 29:35; 30:24; Matthew 1:21. Compare Strong's Hebrew dictionary and Brown–Driver–Briggs, especially entries 2216, 2585, 3091, 3382, 3442, 3448, 3929, 4111, 4813, 4968, 7018, and 7597. For alternative explanations of Miriam, see A. J. Maas, "The Name of Mary," The Catholic Encyclopedia (1912). Lexical meanings and devotional expansions are distinguished in the text.

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