

## The Order of End Time Events – Part I

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When the Book of Revelation is read, one naturally and rightly begins to seek understanding. One seemingly mysterious bit of the Book is how to understand it in a chronological way, that is to say, how can we easily see the sequence of events from start to finish?

In this Book, the first 3 chapters include letters to 7 churches; after this, the opening of 7 seals (*Chapter 5-8*); and when the 7<sup>th</sup> seal is opened, 7 angels are each given a trumpet to sound (*Chapter 8-10*). Obviously, the 4<sup>th</sup> seal cannot be opened before the 3<sup>rd</sup> seal and likewise the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet cannot be sounded before 6<sup>th</sup>, because the seals and trumpets are named by the order in which they are opened or sounded, respectively. This gives us guaranteed chronological (sequential) order of events. The chapters after this will not all be fulfilled chronologically, because they were given to John as an additional stream of prophecy when he ate a scroll of prophecy from which to prophesy. They are therefore not part of the first thread or continuum of prophecy of *Chapters 1-10* since the chapters after are God-breathed through the avenue of the eaten scroll. So the book of revelation consists of two streams or threads of prophecy, separated by the eating of the scroll.

Revelation 10:10-11, NKJV.

*Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. 11 And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."*

Thus *Chapters 11 – 22* are a result of him *prophesying again* differentiated from the earlier ones where he prophesied.

The most reliable place of chronology (sequential orderliness) for end time events is given in the gospels (*Matthew 24:4-31; Mark 13:5-27; Luke 21:8-27*), from which we know, from two witnesses (Matthew and Mark), that the coming of Christ occurs immediately after the great tribulation.

*"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; 25 the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be*

*shaken. 26 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory (Matthew 24: 29-30; Mark 13:24-26).*

This further buttresses this point: the fact that *Chapters 11-14* of the Book of Revelation describe the great tribulation, does not mean that it will take place after the events mentioned in *Chapters 5-10*.

For purposes of order of end time events, the important take away from the Book of Revelation is, first of all, contained in the opening of seals and sounding of trumpets, which are guaranteed to be fulfilled chronologically. From this perspective, we also see that the great tribulation is contained in the opening of the 5<sup>th</sup> seal because:

- a) It comes right before the 6<sup>th</sup>, in which Christ is revealed on the clouds (in agreement with the gospels of *Matthew 24, Mark 13* and *Luke 21*), and
- b) It speaks of the completion of martyrdom of all those predestined for it, before those who perpetrated the murder of these saints are altogether punished. We know that martyrdom shall be completed during the great tribulation, given that, the power given to the antichrist to conquer the saints is limited to the second 42 months of his reign, after which Christ is revealed (*Revelation 13:5*).

Revelation 6:9-17, NKJV.

*I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. 13 And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. 14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. 15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

The 7<sup>th</sup> seal, in which 7 trumpets are sounded, is opened after the 6<sup>th</sup> seal in which Christ appears.

Revelation 7:1, NKJV.

*After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.*

Revelation 8:1-2, NKJV.

*When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.*

The fact that angels are positioned at the four corners of the earth and the trumpets are sounded by angels, shows clear agreement with what Christ had said earlier, namely, that after He appears on the clouds of heaven, He will send angels with a trumpet to gather the elect from the four winds, from one wind of heaven to another.

Matthew 24:29-31, NKJV.

*29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

We understand from this given chronology that the rapture will take place sometime after Christ is revealed on the clouds, because:

1. From the above scriptures, we know that angels are sent to the four corners of the earth with trumpets to sound after the revelation of Christ upon the clouds of heaven, and
2. We know that the rapture must happen at the last of these angel-sounded trumpets:

1 Corinthians 15:51-52, NKJV.

*Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

Revelation 10:5-7, NKJV.

*The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven 6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, 7 but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.*

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, NKJV.

*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

In *Part I*, here, we have established the chronology of three major end time events, which will occur in order:

1. The Great Tribulation
2. The great global signs in the moon, stars, and the sun
3. The appearance of Christ on the clouds
4. The Rapture

There are several other major events in between them, before and after. Also, still left to discuss are other chapters of the Book of Revelation that we haven't delved into as touching chronology of end time events. These we will look at in *Part II*. ~ © **Gideon Wananda**