

A PROPOSED CHRONOLOGY OF THE TRIBULATION—continued

(The Beginning of the 7-year Tribulation)

I. THE OPENING OF THE FIRST SEAL.

Revelation 6:1-2

¹ **And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals**, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

² And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

A. This rider on the white horse is the **Antichrist**. He is “**the little horn**” of Daniel chapter 7, “**the prince that shall come**” of Daniel chapter 9, and “**the willful king**” of Daniel chapter 11. The **Antichrist** confirms a seven-year covenant with Israel, bringing peace to Israel and Jerusalem.

1. WHAT DOES THE WORD “ANTICHRIST” MEAN?

The prefix “*anti*” can mean “against, opposed to” or “instead of, or in place of.”

1 John 2:22

²² Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is **antichrist**, that denieth the Father and the Son.

2 Thessalonians 2:4

⁴ Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

2. WILL THE ANTICHRIST BE JEW OR GENTILE?

a. The case for the Antichrist being a Jew.

(1). The tribe of Dan fell into idolatry and were omitted from the list of tribes recorded in Revelation chapter 7 of the 144,000; thus, some believe the Antichrist will be a Jew from the tribe of Dan, however Ezekiel 48:1-2 would seem to refute that theory.

Genesis 49:17

¹⁷ Dan shall be **a serpent by the way**, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.

Ezekiel 48:1-2

¹ Now these are the names of the tribes. From the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamath, Hazarenan, the border of Damascus northward, to the coast of Hamath; for these are his sides east and west; **a portion for Dan.**

² And by **the border of Dan**, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Asher.

(2). Those who believe he will be a Jew also point to Daniel 11:37 which states that the Antichrist will not regard the God of His fathers.

Daniel 11:37

³⁷ **Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.**

(3). They also say that the Antichrist must be a Jew because the Jews would never accept a Gentile as their Messiah.

b. The case for the Antichrist being a Gentile.

(1). He will come out of the great sea. The great sea refers to the area of the Mediterranean Sea. Sea refers to the world or the Gentile nations.

Daniel 7:2-3

² Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the **great sea.**

³ And four great beasts came up from the **sea**, diverse one from another.

Revelation 13:1

¹ And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and **saw a beast rise up out of the sea**, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

(2). Daniel chapters 7 and 9 tells us that he will be of a Gentile of Roman descent.

Daniel 7:23-24

²³ Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

²⁴ And **the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.**

Daniel 9:26b

^{26b} ...and **the people of the prince that shall come** shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

3. IS THE ANTICHRIST ALIVE TODAY?

a. Satan doesn't know when the rapture will occur. Therefore, he always has someone ready to step in.

4. IS THE ANTICHRIST SATAN? (Satan Incarnate)

2 Thessalonians 2:9

⁹ *Even him, whose coming is **after the working of Satan** with all power and signs and lying wonders,*

Revelation 13:4

⁴ ***And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast:** and they worshipped the beast, saying, *Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?**

5. WILL THE ANTICHRIST BE ASSASSINATED AND COME BACK TO LIFE?

a. There are passages that indicate that he does.

Revelation 13:3,12

³ *And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.*

¹² *And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.*

Revelation 17:8

⁸ *The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

b. The Greek word *hos esphagmenen* is used to describe the Lamb that was slain, referring to Christ's death in Revelation 5:6 and is also used to describe the wound of the Antichrist in Revelation 13:3.

c. Because of the close similarity, *Ryrie* concludes, "If Christ died actually, then it appears that this ruler will also actually die. But his wound would be healed, which can only mean restoration to life....He apparently dies, descends to the abyss and returns to life."

II. THE TWO WITNESSES BEGIN THEIR 3 ½ YEAR MINISTRY.

Revelation 11:3

³ *And I will give power unto my **two witnesses**, and **they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days**, clothed in sackcloth.*

A. There is much debate over which 3½ year period is seen in verse 3, the 1st half or the 2nd half. We know from Revelation 11:7 that these two witnesses will be killed at the end of their 3 ½ year ministry.

Revelation 11:7

⁷ *And **when they shall have finished their testimony**, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, **and shall overcome them, and kill them.***

Their ministry seems to fit best in the 1st half of the tribulation period.
Tony Garland lists 6 reasons why.

1. It is the beast (Antichrist) who is destroyed at the close of the tribulation, not the two witness.
2. It is more natural to understand the overthrow of these two Jewish prophets as leading to the defilement of the Temple in the Abomination of Desolation to follow. Prior to their overthrow, they are invincible and almost certainly would not allow the beast to sit in the Holy Place to declare himself as God.
3. Why would the two Jewish witnesses, who are key in the revival of the Jews during the Tribulation, be found in Jerusalem after the Jews have fled elsewhere due to the intense persecution of the dragon which begins at the midpoint of the tribulation?
4. How could the beast overcome the witnesses at the end of the 70th week and the world throw a big celebration at the very time Antichrist is heavily involved with the Campaign of Armageddon and Christ arrives?
5. The overthrow of the prophets would more naturally contribute to the rise and fame of the beast.
6. If Christ returns with the resurrected saints to the earth at the end of the 70th week, why do these two resurrected witnesses ascend to heaven?

B. WHO ARE THE TWO WITNESSES?

1. With the miracles they are given power to perform, it seems likely that they are Elijah and Moses.

Revelation 11:6

⁶ *These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.*

2. Moses and Elijah are the two who are seen with Christ when He was transfigured.

Matthew 17:2-3

² *And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.*

³ *And, behold, **there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.***

C. WHAT IS THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THESE TWO WITNESSES?

Revelation 7:3-4

³ *Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.*

⁴ *And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

Once their ministry is finished God allows the antichrist to kill them. After three and ½ days lying in the street they are raised up and taken to heaven.

Revelation 11:7-8, 11-12

⁷ *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.*

⁸ *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. ...*

¹¹ *And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.*

¹² *And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.*

III. THE OPENING OF THE SECOND SEAL.

Revelation 6:3-4

³ *And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.*

⁴ *And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.*

There is almost universal agreement among scholars that the rider on the red horse represents war, international strife, and civil upheaval. The promised peace of the white horse is swiftly shattered by the war of the red horse.

IV. THE BATTLE OF GOG AND HIS ALLIES, ALSO REFERRED TO AS THE ALIGNMENT OF NATIONS.

A. This battle is found in Ezekiel 38 – 39 and speaks of a battle the likes of which has never happened in the life of Israel.

1. In **Ezekiel 38:1**, Ezekiel states that his message is from the “**LORD**”.

a. **LORD** is in all uppercase letters and in the Hebrew is spelled “**YHWH**”. This is called a Hebrew tetragrammaton. It had no vowels because the Jews were afraid, they would mispronounce God’s name. Sometime later Bible scholars inserted vowels that gave the spelling of “Yahweh”. Most Orthodox Jews simply say Ha-Shem (the name). God revealed to Moses the name YHWH, tied to His historical, covenant relationship with the patriarchs. We see this in **Exodus 6:2-4**.

² *And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the **LORD** (YHWH):*

³ *And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name **JEHOVAH** (YHWH) was I not known to them.*

⁴ *And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.*

The word “LORD” here in Ezekiel then, reflects the personal relationship of Israel to their God, that of a covenant relationship. They are God’s covenant people.

So, what is Ezekiel saying when he states that what he is about to say is from the “LORD”?

2. In **Ezekiel 38: 3**, Ezekiel uses a different name for God.

“*Thus saith the **Lord GOD**”* also used in **39:1**

a. **Lord**—uppercase “L” and lower case “ord”

The Hebrew word here is “**Adonai**”. This designation points to the supreme authority or power of God.

Isaiah 6:1

¹ *In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also **the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.***

(1.) This word was often combined with the divine name of God to reinforce the notion of God’s matchlessness.

b. **GOD**—in all uppercase letters.

Its exact meaning is still being researched, but it is a form of the covenant name of God, **YHWH**. When combined with “Lord” the “L” uppercase and the “ord” lower case as in **38:3**, it has the meaning of the one with total authority; either for blessing or judgment.

3. In **chapter 39 verse 22**, Ezekiel uses another name for God. **“I am the LORD their God”**. (also **verse 28**)
- a. **God**— here the “G” is uppercase and “od” is lower case.

The Hebrew word for **“God” here** is Elohiym. Elohiym is a masculine plural noun and commonly designates the one true God (Genesis1:1)—the God of the Bible; He is over all the other gods; the creator, the triune God.

CONCLUSION:

Remember the Jews were in captivity in Babylon, a nation with many “gods”. Some of the Jews had turned to worshipping them. Ezekiel was told by God to give them messages from Him. So, Ezekiel wanted to make sure that they knew that his message was from the “LORD” “YHWH” their God.

Ezekiel 33:7

⁷ So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

What's in a Name?

When Moses encountered God for the first time, he asked Him, “When I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” (Ex. 3:13). God replied, “I AM WHO I AM” (v. 14), adding, “This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations” (v. 15). God revealed to Moses the name YHWH, tied to His historical, covenant relationship with the patriarchs. Some people have been confused by the later statement in Exodus 6:3: “I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name LORD [YHWH] I was not known to them.” This text does not mean God was not called YHWH in the time of the patriarchs (the term appears more than 100 times between Genesis 12—50) but, rather, that Israel as a nation had not yet experienced who YHWH was. That knowledge would be revealed during the Israelites’ deliverance from Egypt.

Understanding YHWH as an active participant in Israel’s history who demonstrated who He was in a personal way lies behind the meaning of the name itself. That is why God told Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’” (Ex. 3:14). “I AM” probably comes from the Hebrew verb *haya* (to be, exist), which connotes something about the doer, especially as demonstrated in an unfolding event. An example is the title “the LORD [YHWH] who made heaven and earth” (Ps. 134:3; cf. 115:15; 121:2; 124:8). In the Exodus, YHWH is the Redeemer who saves Israel from its enemies (Ex. 15:1–3) and is, therefore, uniquely Israel’s God: “Who is like You, O [YHWH], among the gods?” (v. 11). YHWH is the King of Israel (Isa. 44:6). He is not simply the one and only God; He is Israel’s God. In the New Testament, the Messiah is identified with YHWH on the basis of His act as Redeemer (Rom. 10:9, 13) and is depicted, especially in His Second Advent, by a “new exodus” motif. (See Romans 11:26–27.)

Early Judaism considered the name too sacred to pronounce (cf. Jud. 13:18). Therefore, the Jewish scribes at Qumran (ca. 100 BC) wrote YHWH in an old script used in first-Temple times. Later, in the 10th century AD, the Masoretes placed the vowels for the Hebrew word *Adonai* (my Lord) or sometimes *Elohim* (God) under the four consonants to prevent pronouncing them. Most Orthodox Jews simply say *Ha-Shem* (the Name). Unfortunately, early Christian scholars misunderstood the scribal substitution and rendered the term as “Jehovah,” a Germanic pronunciation of the Latinized transliteration of YHWH. Since this form never existed, modern English translations simply use the word LORD to distinguish the tetragrammaton (four letters) from common uses of lord. Liberal scholars often argue that YHWH was originally an Edomite or Midianite god because of His localized actions (Dt. 33:2; Jud. 5:4–5; Hab. 3:3) and because similar letters designated the Midianite deity. They contend that, during Israel’s

40 years in the wilderness, the new religion fashioned was influenced by local pagan beliefs because Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, was a Midianite priest (Ex. 3:1). However, the Bible clearly teaches that YHWH is unique and divinely revealed— not borrowed from a pagan source. Although the earliest mention (840 BC) of YHWH is from a pagan inscription (Moabite Stone or Mesha Stele), YHWH is depicted as uniquely the God of Israel. There it is recorded that King Mesha defeated the Israelites in a battle and “took the vessels of YHWH to Kemosh,” the chief Moabite god. Thus separate deities existed for Israel and Moab. Therefore, when God revealed Himself to Israel as YHWH, it was so that His unique (memorial) name might be understood in a covenant relationship with His Chosen People and that through them, the one supreme and sovereign Savior might be known to the nations (Ezek. 36:23).