

1. Introduction

The Five-Month Prophecy of Revelation is a period some believe is still unfolding. It spans from Passover, (Nisan 15), 70 CE, to Elul 14, CE. This timeframe covers the time when Titus surrounds Jerusalem and its subsequent destruction culminating in the horrific climax of the 2300-day Great Tribulation prophesied by Daniel.

A. Previously

This is our tenth lesson on the Great Tribulation from 66 CE to 73 CE.

In our [Introduction to the Great Tribulation](#), we learned:

1. The Great Tribulation will never happen again.
2. The Abomination of Desolation was the Roman armies
3. That all nations had been preached to before the Great Tribulation.
4. Josephus is a credible historian.

We then examined the [Seven Seals of Revelation](#) and their relationship to the Great Tribulation of 66 CE to 73 CE, and a quarter of the population was killed, as Revelation states.

In our third lesson, [we studied the 144,000](#) and determined that they were Jews of the first century prior to and during the Great Tribulation.

We analysed the key elements of [calendars from the first century](#) to understand the historical perspective on the Great Tribulation. The lack of knowledge of these calendars was a major reason why theologians couldn't discern the historical truth.

Our lessons on [Daniel's Seventy-Weeks Prophecy](#) revealed that these seventy weeks perfectly coincided with the beginning of Jesus' ministry. By understanding various calendars, we can pinpoint the start of the New Covenant, Stephen's martyrdom and ultimately Jesus' birth in 4 BCE.

Then we [learned that the Euphrates army](#), comprising a 10,000-man legion of horsemen called the Legio Equestris and a second legion of 10,000 men, came from the Euphrates to attack Jerusalem.

In the eighth lesson, we learned that the [Great Tribulation was the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel](#).

In [67 CE: A Year of Signs](#), we learned that God sent four powerful signs inside the Temple linking the books of Daniel and Revelation to the events of the next three and a half years.

Then, in the [Forty-Two Month Prophecy of Revelation](#), we learned that the Idumeans (Edomites) trampled the Temple courts for the full period, fulfilling the prophecy that the Gentiles would do so.

Now we will look at the Five-Month Prophecy of Revelation.

2. The Summit of the Great Tribulation: 70 CE

A. Three Factions

By 70 CE, Jerusalem was divided into three factions.

1. Simon, son of Giora, with his Idumeans, had 15,000 men;
2. John the Zealot had 6000 men and controlled the Temple; then
3. Simon, son of Eleazer, with 2,400 men.

Within Jerusalem, factions were engaged in war until Titus's arrival. As a result, the dead were left to rot in the streets until the city was destroyed in September.

B. The Seditious and the Innocent

Besides these three factions, other bands of robbers attacked both rich and poor alike. The situation worsened with the outbreak of pestilence, and the famine deepened as the Romans intensified their siege of the city. People were cut open alive to see whether they had concealed any valuables in their bodies. Even those merely suspected of wishing for the Romans to come and deliver them from the civil war were brutally massacred by both Jews and Gentiles.

C. Sacrifices Continue

Until Titus arrived in mid-April, people from all lands—even from Greece and regions beyond the Roman Empire—continued to come to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices, as it was still regarded as the world's center of religious observance. Josephus records that these pilgrims were being killed at the altar by missiles launched over the walls from outside the temple.

D. Famine

Once the Romans encircled the city, the famine grew so severe that cannibalism began, epitomized by the case of a woman discovered eating her own child. As the siege continued, the streets of Jerusalem filled with rotting corpses, and pestilence spread throughout the city, sometimes claiming more lives in a single day than the fighting itself.

E. Idumean Fate

Once the Temple fell on August 10, 70 CE, the Idumeans tried to escape to the Romans but were discovered by Simon, who killed their commanders. Leaderless, they remained in Jerusalem until its final fall, dying alongside the Jews.

F. Judgment on the Idumeans

The Idumeans had converted to Judaism to survive as a people. However, they retained elements of their own religion, resulting in a syncretic form of worship that honoured both the God of Israel and other gods. The Jews may not have fully accepted them as faithful converts, perhaps due to the Book of Obadiah, which portrays the Edomites/Idumeans as enemies of Israel in God's eyes. They were often considered beyond redemption under Jewish law, so their death alongside the Jews might have been seen as fulfilling a prophetic judgement sometimes linked to Isaiah.

ISAIAH 63:1-4
THE LORD IN JUDGMENT AND SALVATION
WHO IS THIS WHO COMES FROM EDM,
WITH DYED GARMENTS FROM BOZRAH,
THIS ONE WHO IS GLORIOUS IN HIS APPAREL,
TRAVELING IN THE GREATNESS OF HIS STRENGTH? –
"I WHO SPEAK IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, MIGHTY TO SAVE."
WHY IS YOUR APPAREL RED,
AND YOUR GARMENTS LIKE ONE WHO TREADS IN THE WINEPRESS?
"I HAVE TRODDEN THE WINEPRESS ALONE,
AND FROM THE PEOPLES NO ONE WAS WITH ME.
FOR I HAVE TRODDEN THEM IN MY ANGER,
AND TRAMPLED THEM IN MY FURY;
THEIR BLOOD IS SPRINKLED UPON MY GARMENTS,
AND I HAVE STAINED ALL MY ROBES.
FOR THE DAY OF VENGEANCE IS IN MY HEART,
AND THE YEAR OF MY REDEEMED HAS COME.

Josephus' Reference	Macedonian Date	Julian (Roman) Calendar	Hebrew Calendar	Historic Event
70 CE				
	Xanthicus 11	April 11	Nisan 12	Titus arrives at Jerusalem and Jews attack
5.163 5.567	Xanthicus 14	April 14	Nisan 15	Titus encamps against Jerusalem
6.94	Panemus 17	July 17	Tammuz 20	Daily sacrifice finishes
6.249	Lous 10	August 10	Av 15	John sets fire to the Temple
6.374	Lous 20	August 20	Av 25	Siege of the Upper City and Subterranean caves begins
6.392	Gorpeaus 7	September 7	Elul 13	Final attack begins
6.407	Gorpeaus 8	September 8	Elul 14	City of Jerusalem falls

Events of 70 CE, with a pictorial Timeline in the Summary below

G. September in Jerusalem

Titus spent the next three days praising his officers and distributing gifts to all the men from the plunder. He appointed the Xth Legion to guard Jerusalem while sending the XIIth Legion back to the Euphrates. On the fourth day he led the remaining two armies to guard the 97,000 Jewish prisoners and marched them 120 km to Caesarea by the Mediterranean.

Remarkably, exactly forty-two months elapsed before the glory departed the Temple, the Temple was destroyed and the Gentiles took control of the city. Following the destruction of the temple and city, the Romans proceeded to Galilee.

Before we delve into the epilogue concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and another prophecy spanning 1335 days, it's essential to review the Book of Revelation and the final five months of the 42-month prophecy.

3. Hell on Earth

A. The Bottomless Pit is Opened

Revelation describes a specific time when the bottomless pit is opened and a destructive spirit is unleashed.

REVELATION 9:1-2

THEN THE FIFTH ANGEL SOUNDED: AND I SAW A STAR FALLEN FROM HEAVEN TO THE EARTH. TO HIM WAS GIVEN THE KEY TO THE BOTTOMLESS PIT. AND HE OPENED THE BOTTOMLESS PIT, AND SMOKE AROSE OUT OF THE PIT LIKE THE SMOKE OF A GREAT FURNACE. THUS, THE SUN AND THE AIR WERE DARKENED BY THE SMOKE OF THE PIT.

B. Apollyon

In both Hebrew and Greek, the name of the spirit is 'Destroyer,' which accurately describes what will happen to Jerusalem.

REVELATION 9:11

AND THEY HAD AS KING OVER THEM THE ANGEL OF THE BOTTOMLESS PIT, WHOSE NAME IN HEBREW IS ABADDON, BUT IN GREEK HE IS CALLED APOLLYON.

For the first time in Jewish history, the very depths of Hell are opened to bring destruction and devastation. In our lesson on Hell, we learned that many of Jesus' teachings about Hell were directly connected to this time of judgment.

C. Torment Jerusalem for Five Months

There was a five-month period during which Apollyon permitted the Roman army to torment the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

REVELATION 9:5

AND THEY WERE NOT GIVEN AUTHORITY TO KILL THEM, BUT TO TORMENT THEM FOR FIVE MONTHS. THEIR TORMENT WAS LIKE THE TORMENT OF A SCORPION WHEN IT STRIKES A MAN.

People fled ahead of the Romans, Simon son of Giora, and the Iduemans' plundering and destruction of their cities, towns, and villages across Galilee and Judea, all the way to Jerusalem, convinced it would never fall. For five months, they endured being trapped, with no food or clean water, and faced the constant terror inflicted by the Zealots and Idumeans inside the city.

On 11 April, the Romans arrived outside Jerusalem and were immediately attacked by the Jews. Titus was shocked by the number of corpses scattered around the city. These included those killed by the Jews as they sought refuge with the Romans from the violence within Jerusalem. This group comprised both Jews living in Jerusalem and those from outside Judea and the Roman Empire who had travelled to the city for Passover. Consequently, Titus issued an edict to save the city and protect non-combatants.

D. Locusts

John's vision depicted locusts emerging from the smoke of the bottomless pit.

REVELATION 9:3
THEN OUT OF THE SMOKE LOCUSTS CAME UPON THE EARTH. AND TO THEM WAS GIVEN
POWER, AS THE SCORPIONS OF THE EARTH HAVE POWER.

Locusts symbolised judgment because they were a plague during the time of the Jews in Egypt. A clearer picture is provided in Joel, where, in reference to the Last Days, the locusts are mentioned.

JOEL 1:4
WHAT THE CHEWING LOCUST LEFT, THE SWARMING LOCUST HAS EATEN;
WHAT THE SWARMING LOCUST LEFT, THE CRAWLING LOCUST HAS EATEN;
AND WHAT THE CRAWLING LOCUST LEFT, THE CONSUMING LOCUST HAS EATEN.

Later in Joel, God explicitly states that each locust symbolises God's army.

JOEL 2:25
"SO I WILL RESTORE TO YOU THE YEARS THAT THE SWARMING LOCUST HAS EATEN,
THE CRAWLING LOCUST,
THE CONSUMING LOCUST,
AND THE CHEWING LOCUST,
MY GREAT ARMY, WHICH I SENT AMONG YOU.

One type of locust for each of the four armies under Titus' command.

E. Like Horses

Revelation states they are similar to horses.

REVELATION 9:7
THE LOCUSTS RESEMBLED HORSES PREPARED FOR BATTLE. ON THEIR HEADS WERE
CROWNS OF SOMETHING LIKE GOLD, AND THEIR FACES WERE LIKE THE FACES OF MEN.

Just like Joel does:

JOEL 2:4
THEIR APPEARANCE IS LIKE THE APPEARANCE OF HORSES.
AND LIKE SWIFT STEEDS, SO THEY RUN.

This is because the Xth legion was the Legio Equestris, or the army of horses.

F. Harm the Trees and Grass

John says they were instructed not to damage the trees or the grass.

REVELATION 9:4
THEY WERE COMMANDED NOT TO HARM THE GRASS OF THE EARTH, OR ANY GREEN
THING, OR ANY TREE, BUT ONLY THOSE MEN WHO DO NOT HAVE THE SEAL OF GOD ON
THEIR FOREHEADS.

However, examining the Greek word for “**not**” (coloured green) reveals an incorrect translation. The Greek word for “not” is ἵνα (hina), meaning “that”. It’s only translated as “not” once in this verse. If it were intended to be negative, the “not” would have been coloured red. The correct words for “**not**” are οὐ ou or μή mē, as seen in Revelation 6:6, where the angel is commanded not to harm the oil or wine.

Titus was authorised to damage trees and grass but not to kill those marked by God on their foreheads. Using this authority, Titus ordered the felling of all trees within 18 kilometres in each direction.

JOSEPHUS' WAR OF THE JEWS 6.5

THE ROMANS, ... RAISED THEIR BANKS IN ONE-AND-TWENTY DAYS, AFTER THEY HAD CUT DOWN ALL THE TREES THAT WERE IN THE COUNTRY THAT ADJOINED TO THE CITY, AND THAT FOR NINETY FURLONGS ROUND ABOUT

And to the grass:

JOSEPHUS WAR OF THE JEWS 5.108-109

SO THEY THREW DOWN ALL THE HEDGES AND WALLS WHICH THE INHABITANTS HAD MADE ABOUT THEIR GARDENS AND GROVES OF TREES, AND CUT DOWN ALL THE FRUIT TREES THAT LAY BETWEEN THEM AND THE WALL OF THE CITY, AND FILLED UP ALL THE HOLLOW PLACES AND THE CHASMS, AND DEMOLISHED THE ROCKY PRECIPICES WITH IRON INSTRUMENTS; AND THEREBY MADE ALL THE PLACE LEVEL FROM SCOPUS TO HEROD'S MONUMENTS, WHICH ADJOINED TO THE POOL CALLED THE SERPENT'S POOL.

G. Gold Helmets and Like Lions

Revelation describes these "locusts" as men wearing golden helmets, with their backs flowing down like women's hair.

REVELATION 9:7-9A

THE SHAPE OF THE LOCUSTS WAS LIKE HORSES PREPARED FOR BATTLE. ON THEIR HEADS WERE CROWNS OF SOMETHING LIKE GOLD, AND THEIR FACES WERE LIKE THE FACES OF MEN. THEY HAD HAIR LIKE WOMEN'S HAIR, AND THEIR TEETH WERE LIKE LIONS' TEETH. AND THEY HAD BREASTPLATES LIKE IRON BREASTPLATES.

This is an exact description of the legions as in this photo:

Joel describes the upcoming Roman nation in the Last Days.

JOEL 1:6

FOR A NATION HAS COME UP AGAINST MY LAND, STRONG, AND WITHOUT NUMBER; HIS TEETH ARE THE TEETH OF A LION, AND HE HAS THE FANGS OF A FIERCE LION.



XII Legion Gold Helmet with flowing down 'hair'

H. Scorpions

Revelation describes this army as scorpions with a sting in their tail and as sounding like chariots.

REVELATION 9:9-10
AND THEY HAD BREASTPLATES LIKE BREASTPLATES OF IRON, AND THE SOUND OF THEIR WINGS WAS LIKE THE SOUND OF CHARIOTS WITH MANY HORSES RUNNING INTO BATTLE. THEY HAD TAILS LIKE SCORPIONS, AND THERE WERE STINGS IN THEIR TAILS. THEIR POWER WAS TO HURT MEN FOR FIVE MONTHS.

This is an excellent description of Roman weapons. In fact, one of the siege weapons is the Greek word 'scorpio,' which Revelation uses for "scorpion." It is called Scorpio in Greek, and the weapon shares the same name.



Roman Scorpion firing over the walls of Jerusalem

I. Do Not Harm the Christians

John further states that those who bear the mark of God (believers in Jesus) will not be killed by the Romans for five months. This no-kill edict from the angel only applied to Romans killing Christians. Jews killing Christians may have, and likely did, occur.

REVELATION 9:4-5
THEY WERE COMMANDED NOT TO HARM THE GRASS OF THE EARTH, OR ANY GREEN THING, OR ANY TREE, BUT ONLY THOSE MEN WHO DO NOT HAVE THE SEAL OF GOD ON THEIR FOREHEADS. AND THEY WERE NOT GIVEN AUTHORITY TO KILL THEM, BUT TO TORTURE THEM FOR FIVE MONTHS. THEIR TORTURE WAS LIKE THE TORTURE OF A SCORPION WHEN IT STRIKES A MAN.

It doesn't say no one will be killed; it simply states the Romans wouldn't kill those bearing the mark of God – specifically those who believed in Jesus Christ. From his arrival until the morning of 7 September, he was solely targeting Zealots and Idumeans. The few remaining Christians in Jerusalem were non-combatants and were killed by the Zealots and Idumeans, not the Romans. Most were hiding in the upper city and caves from robbers, Zealots and Idumeans to avoid being robbed or killed on suspicion of supporting the Romans or for their food and valuables.

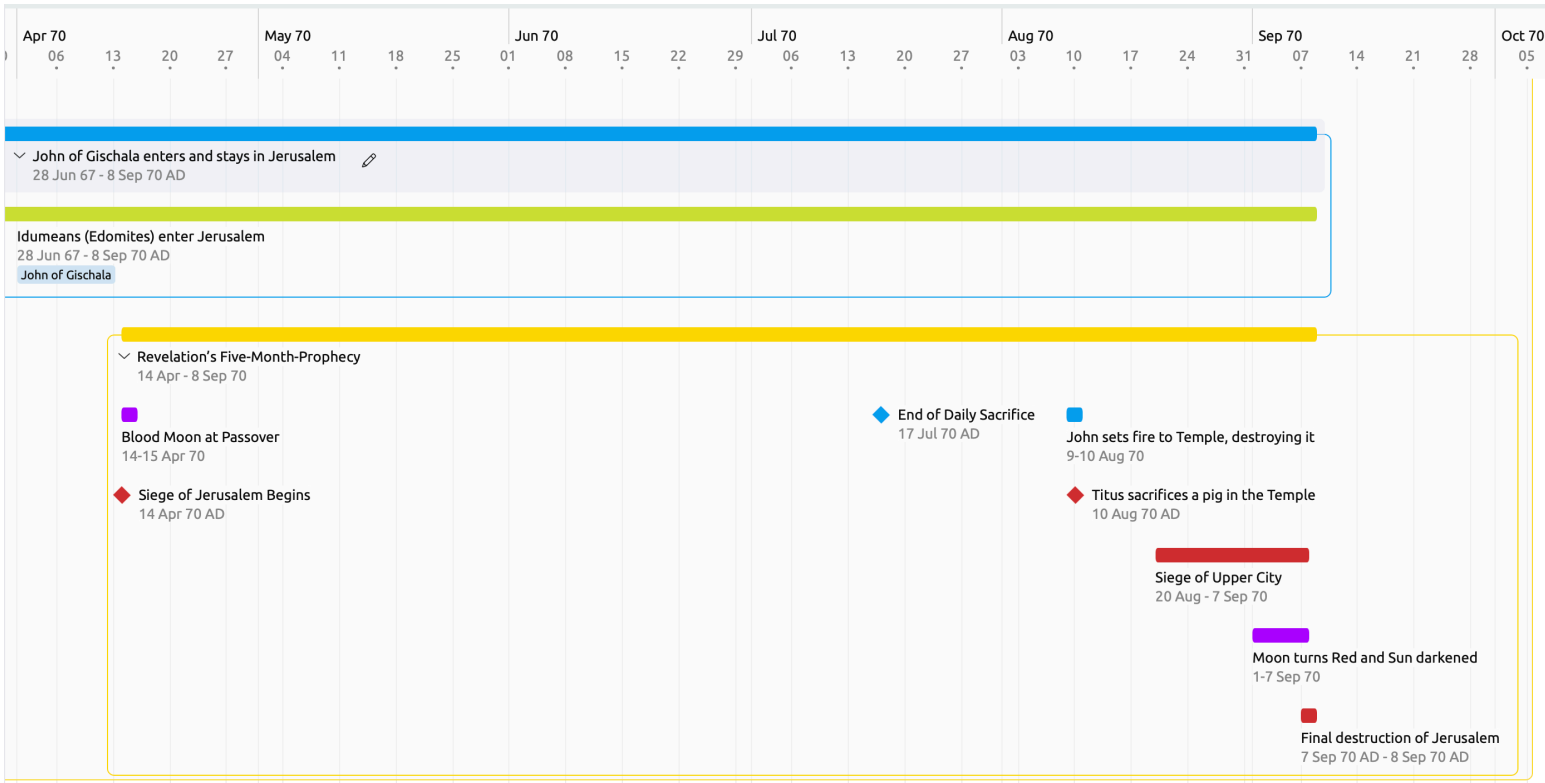
J. Authority to Kill Restored After Five Months

On April 14, 15 Nisan, the attack on Jerusalem commenced under specific orders from Titus prohibiting the killing of non-combatants. However, by September 9, Elul 15, the day after the five-month siege concluded, Titus's order no longer protected non-combatants. Exactly one day after the siege ended, Titus's forces discovered heaps of Jewish bodies in the upper city. These victims had either been killed by John Simon and their Idumean allies or succumbed to starvation and disease.

JOSEPHUS WAR OF THE JEWS 6.404-405
BUT WHEN THEY ENTERED THE CITY IN LARGE NUMBERS, SWORDS DRAWN, THEY KILLED ANYONE THEY CAUGHT WITHOUT MERCY, AND SET FIRE TO THE HOUSES WHERE THE JEWS HAD FLED, BURNING EVERY SOUL INSIDE AND DESTROYING MANY OF THE OTHERS. WHEN THEY ARRIVED AT THE HOUSES TO LOOT THEM, THEY FOUND ENTIRE FAMILIES OF DEAD MEN AND THE UPPER ROOMS FILLED WITH CORPSES OF THOSE WHO HAD DIED FROM FAMINE. THEY WERE STRUCK WITH HORROR AT THIS SIGHT AND LEFT WITHOUT TOUCHING ANYTHING.

Out of disgust and hatred for what the Jews had done to each other, they rampaged through the Upper City, killing all except 97,000. The blood flowed so freely that it extinguished the city's fires.

**JOSEPHUS WAR OF THE JEWS 6.406
(THE ROMAN SOLDIERS) RAN THROUGH EVERYONE THEY MET, BLOCKING THE LANES WITH BODIES AND TURNING THE WHOLE CITY INTO A RIVER OF BLOOD—SO MUCH SO THAT THE BLOOD OF THESE MEN EXTINGUISHED THE FIRES IN MANY HOUSES.**



4. Summary

The Five-Month Prophecy in Revelation 9:1-11 closely aligns with the five months starting on Nisan 15, 70 CE, during the siege of Jerusalem, and ending with its capture on Elul 14, 70 CE.

1. It starts with Titus ordering that non-combatants be spared on that date and ends with his approval for the massacre of anyone within Jerusalem on Elul 14.
2. He ordered the destruction of trees within an 18km radius in all directions and the flattening of the ground as described in Revelation 9.
3. The four locusts of Joel in the last days represent the four legions.
4. The horses of Revelation 9 equate to the Xth Legio equestris.
5. The scorpions are the same as the scorpion weapons used by Rome.
6. The gold helmets with neck protectors worn by Roman soldiers are described in Revelation.
7. The judgment on the gentile Idumeans fulfils Isaiah 63:1-4.

Now that the city has been destroyed, we can examine the rest of 70 CE and the fulfilment of Daniel's 1290-day and 1335-day prophecy.