

The 1,260 Days and the Time of the Church

by Douglas E. Cox

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Introduction

Many interesting interpretations of the prophetic 1,260 days of Revelation 11:3 and 12:6, proposed throughout the history of the church, are examined. The 1,260 days, and the related 42 months of Revelation 1:2 and 13:5, and the *time, times and a half* of Revelation 12:14, are the most prominent time periods mentioned in Bible prophecy, yet their interpretation has also been a subject of much dispute and controversy. The main interpretations are included here. Some are postposterous, some comical, and some are gems of wisdom.

Insights by some expositors on related prophecies are also included. Where Old English and Middle English sources are quoted, spelling, and occasionally the text are presented in a more modern style, and may differ from the original source.

The interpretations are arranged by the authors' birthdate. The development of various streams of thought has occurred during the history of the church. Historicism was prominent in England, and amongst Protestant expositors, and the majority of the interpretations considered are by historicists, who proposed various start and end dates for a period of 1,260 years. The early development of futurism, and preterism, as alternative interpretations, occurred while the historicist view was dominant. These alternate theories both assume that the 1,260 days are literal days, and the 42 months are literal months.

Since the early centuries of the church, another stream of thought has existed; the 1,260 days and related time periods have been interpreted symbolically, as representing the entire history of the Church, and as completing the prophetic week in which Christ confirms his covenant with his Church.

Expositors

Hippolytus (c. 170-c. 236)

Hippolytus of Rome wrote a commentary on Daniel, and also an account of the events preceding the end of the world, in which he referred to the 1,260 days and the two witnesses of Revelation 11, who he said would be Enoch and Elias. He wrote:¹

With respect, then, to the particular judgment in the torments that are to come upon it in the last times by the hand of the tyrants who shall arise then, the clearest statement has been given in these passages. But it becomes us further diligently to examine and set forth the period at which these things shall come to pass, and how the little horn shall spring up in their midst. For when the legs of iron have issued in the feet and toes, according to the similitude of the image and that of the terrible beast, as has been shown in the above, (then shall be the time) when the iron and the clay shall be mingled together. Now Daniel will set forth this subject to us. For he says, "And one week will make a covenant with many, and it shall be that in the midst (half) of the week my sacrifice and oblation shall cease."² By one week, therefore, he meant the last week which is to be at the end of the whole world of which week the two prophets Enoch and Elias will take up the half. For they will preach 1,260 days clothed in sackcloth, proclaiming repentance to the people and to all the nations.

Daniel said of the little horn, that arose among the ten horns of the fourth beast in his vision, "in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."³ Eyes like the eyes of a man represents a human point of view, which is in contrast to and opposed to a divine one. Naming Enoch and Elias as the two end-time prophets, which is mere speculation, may be an example of "a mouth speaking great things," that Daniel's prophecy refers to. The Jews expected the return of Elijah, but Jesus said, "Elias is come already, and they knew him not."⁴ The apostle Peter said the spirit of Christ was in the prophets.⁵ The spirit of prophecy, that inspired Elijah, and John the Baptist, came upon the disciples at Pentecost, after the ascension of Jesus to heaven.

¹Hippolytus. *On Christ and Antichrist*, 43.
<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0516.htm>

²Daniel 9:27

³Daniel 7:8

⁴Matthew 17:12

⁵1 Peter 1:11

Victorinus (died c. 303)

Victorinus, Bishop of Poetovio, wrote a book on the interpretation of the prophecies of the Apocalypse, in which he identified the *two witnesses* as Elijah and Jeremiah. He wrote:¹

3. “*They shall tread the holy city down for forty and two months; and I will give to my two witnesses, and they shall predict a thousand two hundred and threescore days clothed in sackcloth.*” That is, three years and six months: these make forty-two months. Therefore their preaching is three years and six months, and the kingdom of Antichrist as much again.

5. “*If any man will hurt them, fire proceeds out of their mouth, and devours their enemies.*” That fire proceeds out of the mouth of those prophets against the adversaries, bespeaks the power of the world. For all afflictions, however many there are, shall be sent by their messengers in their word. Many think that there is Elisha, or Moses, with Elijah; but both of these died; while the death of Elijah is not heard of, with whom all our ancients have believed that it was Jeremiah. For even the very word spoken to him testifies to him, saying, “Before I formed you in the belly I knew you; and before you came forth out of the womb I sanctified you, and I ordained you a prophet unto the nations.” But he was not a prophet unto the nations; and thus the truthful word of God makes it necessary, which it has promised to set forth, that he should be a prophet to the nations.

According to Victorinus, the visions in the Apocalypse do not always follow a chronological order. Victorinus was martyred during the persecutions of Emperor Diocletian.²

Methodius of Olympus (died c. 311)

Methodius was Bishop of Olympus in Lycia, and he suffered martyrdom under Maximinus Daia in 311. On the woman who flees to the wilderness for 1,260 days, in Revelation 12:6, he wrote:³

Now she who brings forth, and has brought forth, the masculine Word in the hearts of the faithful, and who passed, undefiled and uninjured by the wrath of the beast, into the wilderness, is, as we have explained, our mother the Church. And the wilderness into which she comes, and is nourished for a thousand two

¹Victorinus. *Commentary on the Apocalypse*.
<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0712.htm>

²Bruce, F. F. *The Earliest Latin Commentary on the Apocalypse*. The Evangelical Quarterly 10 (1938): 352-366.

³Methodius, *The Banquet of the ten virgins, or, concerning chastity*. In: *The writings of Methodius, Alexander of Lycopolis, Peter of Alexandria, and several fragments*. Volume 14 of Ante-Nicene Christian library. T. & T. Clark, 1869. p. 75.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=XcIUAAAQAAJ>

hundred and sixty days, which is truly waste and unfruitful of evils, and barren of corruption, and difficult of access and of transit to the multitude; but fruitful and abounding in pasture, and blooming and easy of access to the holy, and full of wisdom, and productive of life, is this most lovely, and beautifully wooded and wellwatered abode of Arete [virtue]. ... For the Bride of the Word is adorned with the fruits of virtue. And the thousand two hundred and sixty days that we are staying here, O virgins, is the accurate and perfect understanding concerning the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit, in which our mother increases, and rejoices, and exults throughout this time, until the restitution of the new dispensation, when, coming into the assembly in the heavens, she will no longer contemplate the I AM through the means of [human] knowledge, but will clearly behold entering in together with Christ.

Tyconius (died c. 390)

c.30 AD – 380 AD

Tyconius thought the two witnesses of Revelation 11 represent the the two Testaments, by which the church is governed and ruled. He wrote:¹

He had earlier said that “you must prophesy again.” Now he desires to show this in his two witnesses. In the two witnesses, he wants us to understand the two Testaments by which his church is governed and ruled. For he did not say, “I make witnesses for myself,” as though they did not yet exist. Rather, he said, “I shall give to my witnesses,” who were with me from the beginning and have never at all departed from me. The 1,260 days are not a time of peace but of the last persecution, during which time the devil shall break out against the Christians, namely, when he receives power to test the church. And just as before the flood, when the sins of humankind raised their head to the heavens, there was not absent someone who might proclaim the wrath of God to those who were perishing, so also at that time there will be those who will announce the kingdom of God and the last day and by their own example will show the way of repentance to sinners. [The witnesses] were “clothed in sackcloth,” it says, they were established in confession. As the prophet said, “When they troubled me, I clothed myself in sackcloth.”² And Job said, “They have sewed sackcloth upon my skin.”³

¹Tyconius, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, in: Weinrich, William C. *Revelation*. Volume 12 of Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture: New Testament. InterVarsity Press, 2005. p. 158. <http://books.google.ca/books?id=irWI6DUtPncC>

²Psalm 35:13

³Job 16:16

Tyconius suggested the three and a half years during which the two witnesses give testimony were 350 years, beginning with Jesus' crucifixion.¹

R. L. Peterson wrote:²

According to Tyconius, the witnesses are not two personalities. Rather, they represent the pure Church, the Lord's body in the world, prophesying and preaching through the two testaments. Later medieval commentators would further this perspective. However, it is the message-oriented reform movement, Protestantism in the years of its formation, that will be most marked by this conception of out text. The work of the prophets is carried out in the entire age of the Church. For Tyconius, this period can be interpreted as 350 years, calculated from the "1260 days" of their prophetic activity. The beast who rises to slay the witnesses, leaving them to lie in the great city (11:7-10), is symbolic of worldly power. The true Church exists in a persecuted and martyred condition in the midst of the world. Under the impact of Tyconius's fifth exegetical rule, the meaning of this period is not so straightforward. Different temporal indicators may reveal the same spiritual relationships. Therefore, the work of the witnesses also falls under the millennial age of the Church. This is adumbrated by the 1260 days of protection and nourishment given the woman (12:6) who flees before the wrath of the seven-headed, ten-horned dragon (Satan).

Primasius (died c. 560)

Primasius was the Augustinian bishop of Hadrumetum and primate of Byzacena, in Africa. Edward Elliott said that he "explained the 42 months, 1260 days, and time times and a half a time, as specially designating the time of Antichrist's last persecution, yet as signifying also the whole time of the duration of the Church."³

Oikoumenios in c. 590

Oikoumenios was the author of first extensive Greek commentary on the Apocalypse, and he wrote, according to his account, about five centuries after John had seen his visions. Oikoumenios claimed that the 42 months when Gentiles trample the holy city were figurative, but he interpreted the 1,260 days of Revelation 12:6 as the time that Mary, the mother of

¹Tyconius. *Rules 5*; in Kovacs, Judith L., Christopher Rowland, Rebekah Callow, *Revelation: the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2004. p. 124

²Petersen, Rodney Lawrence. *Preaching in the last days: the theme of "two witnesses" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*. Oxford University Press US, 1993. p. 14. <http://books.google.com/books?id=dgEcoNuyCI4C>

³Elliott, Edward Bishop. *Horae apocalypticæ: or a commentary on the Apocalypse*. Volume 3. p. 235. <http://books.google.com/books?id=ZL87AAAAcAAJ>

Jesus, hid in Egypt with the Christ child.¹

Andrew of Caesarea (563-614)

Andrew was the Archbishop of Caesarea, Cappadocia in the early 7th century. He was the author of a commentary on the Apocalypse, which was influential in promoting the acceptance of the Apocalypse into the canon of the Orthodox Church. Andrew wrote:²

Rev. 11:1-2 *And a reed, like a staff, was given to me, saying: "Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship in it; And the outer courtyard of the temple take out and do not measure it, for it was given to the nations, and they will trample upon the holy city for forty-two months."* By this reed is shown that all things manifested in heaven and the things inanimate to us are spiritual, just as also the altar, the throne and some others. How was the reed which was given to him saying, *Rise and measure the temple of God?* By this it is shown that the temple of God is measured with angelic intelligence. If anyone says that he received the reed from the same angel, and that he heard from him the *rise and measure this temple*, then we say that the reed signifies the measure of the knowledge which is proportionate to the one receiving it, of which those are deemed worthy who known from God and the divine angels through their good deeds. *For the Lord knows His own*, says the divine word. One must know nonetheless some understood *the temple of God* to mean the Old Testament and the *outside yard* to be the New, on account of the innumerable number of those saved in it. The *forty two months* they took to mean the shortness of time during which the sacraments of the New Testament are to prevail until the second coming of Christ arrives. But we think that the *temple of the living God* refers to the Church, in which we offer rational sacrifices to God; the outside court (is) the gathering place of the unbelieving nations and of the Jews since the unworthiness is measured by the angel through the impiety. *For the Lord knows his own*, as it has been said. It is said that He who is All-knowing does not know the unlawful. The *trampling of the holy city* (is) either the new Jerusalem or the universal church and the *forty two months* by the nations I think means that the faithful and the ones being tested will be trampled upon and persecuted in the three and a half year appearance of the Antichrist.

Rev. 11: 3-4 *"And I will give my two witnesses (power), and they will prophesy for one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands which stand before the God of the earth."* Many of the teachers understood these (to be) Enoch and

¹Constantinou, Eugenia. *Andrew of Caesarea and the Apocalypse in the ancient church of the East: Studies and Translation*. 2008. p. 168.

<http://www.theses.ulaval.ca/2008/25095>

²Constantinou, Eugenia. *Op. Cit.*, p. 118.

Elias receiving time given by God to prophecy in the end time for three and a half years, numbered three hundred and sixty days (each), and showing through the clothing in sackcloth that which is appropriate for sadness and mourning, to those who are deceived at that time and leading those who are then found away from the deception of the Antichrist. (These are the two) whom Zacharias hinted at in the form of the two olive trees and lampstands, to bring forth food for the light of knowledge by the olive oil of God-pleasing deeds.

Andrew interpreted the 1,260 days of the woman's sojourn in the wilderness as literal days.¹

Rev. 12:6 *And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God there, so that there they will nourish her for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.* When, it says, the devil acting through the Antichrist has arrayed himself against the Church, her chosen and supreme ones, who have spit upon the noisy public approbations and the pleasures of the world, will flee to a manner of life devoid of every evil and abundant in every virtue, according to Methodios, and there they will avoid the assaults from both the hostile demons and people. Of course, the actual physical desert will save those fleeing from the plot of the Apostate (devil) in the *mountains and caves and the dens of the earth*, as did the martyrs previously for *three and a half years*, that is the one thousand two hundred sixty days, during which apostasy will prevail. May the Great Official, *who does not allow anyone to be tested beyond his strength*, deliver us from this, granting us steadfast disposition and manly strength in the assaults against us, so that *legitimately contending against the principalities and powers of darkness* we might be adorned with the *crown of righteousness* and receive the rewards of victory. For to Him is due victory and power through the weak ones routing the strong *aerial powers*, together with the Father and the Life-Giving Spirit unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Bede (672-735)

Venerable Bede was a monk at the Northumbrian monastery of Saint Peter at Monkwearmouth, in Sunderland, England. Commenting on the 1,260 days of Revelation 12:6, he wrote:²

In this number of days, which makes three years and a half, he comprehends all the times of Christianity, because Christ, Whose body the Church is, preached the same length of time in the flesh.

¹*Ibid.* p. 132.

²Bede (the venerable.) *The explanation of the Apocalypse.* Translated by Edward Marshall, 1878. p. 83. <http://books.google.com/books?id=r6UCAAAAQAAJ>

That is one of the most sublime explanations of the 1,260 days I have seen.

On the wings given to the woman, and the *time, times and a half* of verse 14, Bede wrote:¹

14. wings. The Church is upheld by the two Testaments, and avoids the envenomed tumult of the world, and seeks in the affection of her mind the solitude of a “meek and quiet spirit,” while she thus sings with joy, “Behold I got me away far off in flight, and abode in the wilderness.” Nor does it make any difference that there she asks for the wings of a dove, but here receives those of an eagle. For as the Church, “whose youth is renewed as an eagle’s,” is represented in the former because of the gift of the Holy Spirit, so also is it in the latter, because of the lofty flight and heavenly vision, by which it beholds God with a clean heart.

nourished. The whole time of the Church is signified, as being comprised in the number of the days above. For a “time” denotes one year, “times” two, “half a time” six months.

Alcuin (c. 735-804)

Edward Elliott reported that Alcuin concluded that the period of the ministry of the two witnesses is the whole age of the church.²

Benjamin ben Moses Nahawendi in c. 860

Benjamin ben Moses was a Jewish scholar and philosopher in Nahawend, Persia, and a founder of the Karaite movement. He is thought to be one of the first to interpret the numbers in Daniel’s prophecies as referring to years.³ Taking the word *yamin* to mean years, he interpreted the 1,335 days of Daniel 12:12 as so many years, and computed the date of the arrival of the Messiah at 1012 AD, about a century and a half after his own time.⁴

Adso of Montier-en-Der (died 992)

Adso was the abbot of the monastery of Montier-en-Der Abbey in France. He wrote a treatise on the Antichrist, at the request of Queen Gerberga of France, which was widely circulated in the Middle Ages. The reign of the Antichrist was said to last three and a half years.⁵

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 83

² Elliott, *Op. cit.*, p. 126

³ Fisel, Fernand. *Adventism’s last stand in the battle for the “year-day formula.”* p. 7. [http://www.truthorfables.com/ADVENTISM final version.pdf](http://www.truthorfables.com/ADVENTISM%20final%20version.pdf)

⁴ Salo Wittmayer Baron, *Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Volume 5: High Middle Ages: Religious Controls and Dissensions. Columbia University Press, 1957. p. 225.

⁵ Adso’s letter on the origin and time of the Antichrist: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/apocalypse/primary/adsolletter.html>

“Then there will be tribulation such as has not been on earth from when the nations began to exist up to that time. Then those who are in the field will flee to the mountains, and he who is on the roof will not go down into his house to take anything from it.”¹ Then every faithful Christian who will be discovered will either deny God, or, if he will remain faithful, will perish, whether through sword, or fiery furnace, or serpents, or beasts, or through some other kind of torture. This terrible and fearful tribulation will last for three and a half years in the whole world. “Then the days will be shortened for the sake of the elect, for unless the Lord had shortened those days, mankind would not have been saved.”²

This Antichrist was supposed to go to Jerusalem, claiming to be Christ, where he would deceive the Jews. There he would be enthroned in the temple, and persecute and kill Christians. Prior to his coming, Enoch and Elijah would appear, and would preach for three and a half years.

Lest the Antichrist come suddenly and without warning and deceive and destroy the whole human race by his error, before his arrival the two great prophets Enoch and Elijah will be sent into the world. They will defend God’s faithful against the attack of the Antichrist with divine arms and will instruct, comfort, and prepare the elect for battle with three and a half years teaching and preaching. These two very great prophets and teachers will convert the sons of Israel who will live in that time to the faith, and they will make their belief unconquerable among the elect in the face of the affliction of so great a storm.

Joachim of Fiore (1130-1202)

1 *BC* – 1260 *AD*

Joachim divided the history of salvation into three distinct eras; the first, which he associated with the Father, was represented by the Old Testament; the second, the era of the Son, was represented by the New Testament; the third, and the final era, was the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, when mankind would be purified, and men would not seek worldly things; it was to begin in the year 1260. He identified the 42 months when the Two Witnesses prophesy as 42 generations, apparently corresponding to the period between the advent of Christ and 1260 AD.³

Nerses of Lambron (1153-1198)

Nerses was Archbishop of Tarsus in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia and was a noted Armenian scholar and poet. In 1179 he translated the Book of Revelation, which had not

¹Matt. 24:21,16; Dan. 12:1

²Matt. 24:22

³Elliott, *Op. cit.* Volume 3. p. 238.

yet been included in the Armenian canon of scripture. He adapted the commentary on the Apocalypse by Andrew of Caesarea to produce his own Armenian commentary. On Revelation 12:6 he wrote:¹

“And the woman fled to the desert, where a place had been prepared for her by God, that she might be nourished there for one thousand, two hundred and sixty days.” This [will] happen in the last times, when the Devil will act with the Antichrist, and through him arm himself against the church. For the chosen in it disdain civic ease and the repose of the body, and will flee to the desert according to what Methodius says, so that perhaps they may be freed thereby from the warlike men with their demonic poisons, and be secure in caves and holes. But the one thousand, two hundred and sixty days indicate again the three and a half years in which his rebellion holds tyrannical sway. From this the Lord of all and his great succour will deliver us, so as not to allow anyone to be tested more than his ability and power. He will grant endurance of thought, and render vain the arrows of the Opponent, so that we can fight lawfully against princes and the leaders of darkness. Perhaps becoming worthy of lawful crowns, we may receive the prize of righteousness from Christ our God, because it is fitting for him to conquer through the weak—to whom is victory and ability, power and glory, with the Father and the holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hugo Ripelin (1205-1268)

Hugo Ripelin of Strasburg was a Dominican theologian. It is believed he was the author of the *Compendium theologiae veritatis*, consisting of seven books (*God, Creation, Sin, Christ, Virtues, Sacraments, Last Things*). The work was translated into several languages, and became the most widespread and famous manual of scholastic theology in the Middle Ages. Hugo’s doctrine on the Antichrist resembled that of Adso of Montier-en-Der, who is discussed on page 11. Andrew Gow wrote:²

Hugo’s *Compendium theologiae veritatis* was the most widespread basic sketch of scholastic theology in the later Middle Ages and Reformation era. It went through almost 40 printings, and owed much of its medieval vogue to the fact that it was greatly indebted to Bonaventure’s ‘Breviloquium’ and to the works of Albert the Great; indeed, it was generally mistaken for the work of one or the other. Hugo followed the Tiburtine Sibyl and Adso concerning the descent of the Antichrist, who was to be born of the Jewish tribe of Dan. He would claim to be the Jewish Messiah, and the Jewish people would be his

¹Thomson, Robert W. *Nurses of Lambron Commentary on the Revelation of Saint John*. Volume 9 of Hebrew University Armenian studies. Peeters Publishers, 2007. p. 118-119.

²Gow, Andrew. *Jewish Shock-Troops of the Apocalypse: Antichrist and the End, 1200-1600*. Journal for Millennial Studies, Vol 1. Spring 1998.
<http://www.bu.edu/mille/publications/summer98/agow.pdf>

special and foremost adherents. Hugo was not above inventing sources for this assertion. His thinking on the Antichrist is concrete and personal, whereas the *Glossa ordinaria* he carelessly cites calls the Beast of Rev. 13,1, 'in a spiritual sense the Antichrist, or generally the entire number of the wicked'. The late-medieval Antichrist book is based largely on Hugo's popularizing and literalist exegetical framework.

Hugo embellished Bible prophecy with tales of the Red Jews, the Amazons, and Gog and Magog, who, he said, will break out and descend upon Christendom at the end of the age. Hugo wrote:¹

Concerning Gog and Magog some say they are the Ten Tribes enclosed within the Caspian Mountains, however in such a way that they might leave if they were permitted; but they are not permitted to do so by the Queen of the Amazons, under whose rule and jurisdiction they live.

Hugo Ripelin's writings about a Jewish Antichrist figure, Gow said, along with similar works by others, contributed to antisemitic attitudes in Europe. He wrote:²

In German-language texts of the 14th and 15th centuries, the especially threatening Red Jews were among the first to be assigned to the ranks of the Antichrist. First the Jews, then the Red Jews were servants of Antichrist. The part assigned to the Red Jews in the final drama was a 'step up' in the 'escalation of antisemitism' that included canon law restrictions, accusations of sacrilege and ritual murder, suspicions of a diabolical role in the entourage of Antichrist, expulsion and forced conversion. The re-assignment of the Jews from 'conversion duty' to active service in the army of the Antichrist had occurred by the time Hugo Ripelin wrote his theological encyclopedia; it took fifty years more for the idea to start showing up in other genres, after which time it became a commonplace of antisemitic Christian apocalypticism.

Hugo Ripelin's teaching about an individual Antichrist implied the prophetic 1,260 days of Revelation is a literal three and a half years at the end of the age.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

Thomas was a Sicilian priest of the Catholic Church in the Dominican Order, also known as known as Doctor Angelicus. He wrote:³

¹Luberda, James. *The Amazons and the Antichrist*.
http://www.sp.uconn.edu/~jbl00001/amazons_luberda.pdf

²*Ibid.*, p. 19.

³Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologica. Treatise on the resurrection*. Question 77.2.2.
<http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/aquinas/summa/sum623.htm>

The thousand two hundred sixty days mentioned in the Apocalypse (12:6) denote all the time during which the Church endures, and not any definite number of years. The reason whereof is because the preaching of Christ on which the Church is built lasted three years and a half, which time contains almost an equal number of days as the aforesaid number. Again the number of days appointed by Daniel does not refer to a number of years to elapse before the end of the world or until the preaching of Antichrist, but to the time of Antichrist's preaching and the duration of his persecution.

Gerardo of Borgo San Donnino in 1250

1 *BC* – 1260 *AD*

Gerardo was a Franciscan friar, and one of the leaders of the Spirituels, a sect within the order. He published a work in Paris called the *Introduction to the Eternal Gospel*, which was an interpretation and summary of Joachim's three major works.

Gerardo's *Introduction* claimed Saint Francis and Saint Dominic were the two witnesses of the Apocalypse. The Antichrist, he said, would come in 1248, and he would be Emperor Frederic II or an anti-Franciscan Pope. He claimed that the third status, the age of the Spirit, would arrive in A.D. 1260, signaling the total abrogation of the church of the second status, including the substitution of Joachim's writing for the Old and New Testaments.

Gerardo's work created such a scandal that a papal commission was held at Anagni under Alexander IV in A.D. 1255, which condemned his *Introduction*. Gerardo was imprisoned, and Friar John of Parma, the General Minister of the Franciscan order, was discredited.¹

Pierre D'Olivi (1248-1298)

According to Olivi, the 1,260 days indicate the duration of the mission to the Gentiles after the rejection of Christianity by the Jews.²

Walter Brute 1391

135 *AD* – 1395 *AD*

Brute was a layman, who graduated from Oxford. He said the 1,260 and 1,290 days of prophecy were so many years, to be reckoned from the Hadrian desolation of Jerusalem to his own day.

¹Orlando Fedeli. *Two histories: The Spiritual Franciscans and Pope Celestine V (Saint Peter Celestine), and the Quietism and Blessed Innocent XI, Pope*. MONTFORT Associação Cultural. <http://www.montfort.org.br/index.php?secao=veritas&subsecao=igreja&artigo=duashistorias&lang=eng#>

²*Lectura 643* in Kovacs et. al., *Op. Cit.* p. 125

He rejected the idea of Antichrist as an individual who reigns for a literal 42 months, calling that belief “fantastical.” He said,¹

Wherefore it is an unfit thing to assign the 42 months, being appointed to the power of the Beast, unto three years and a half, for the reign of that fantastical and imagined Antichrist, especially seeing that they do apply to his reign the 1,290 days in Daniel, which make 42 months, and in the Apocalypse they assign him 42 months.

Hans Hut (c. 1490-1527)

1525 AD – 1528 AD

Hut was a bookbinder and book seller in southern Germany, who was influenced by the teachings of Thomas Muntzer. He took part in the battle of Thuringia during the Peasants' War on 15 May 1525 at Bad Frankenhausen. He preached Universal salvation, and expected the kingdom of God and the rule of Christ to be established on Pentecost in 1528, three and a half years after the Peasant's War. In August 1527, he was arrested in Augsburg, tried for heresy, imprisoned, and tortured. He died of asphyxiation, when a fire broke out in the prison on 6 December 1527.

John Bale (1495-1563)

Bale was the first to write a commentary on Revelation in English; it was titled *The Image of Both Churches*. He understood the holy city of Revelation 11:2, which is trampled by gentiles, to be the church, and the 42 months as symbolic. On this verse he said:²

And the holy city (of whom glorious things are spoken) they shall tread under foot for the space of 42 months. Not the earthly Jerusalem is this city, builded of men, and made holy by the outward observations and ceremonies of the Jews as many expositors have fantasied. For of that (as Christ prophesies) is not one stone standing upon another. But this city is the sure building of God, grounded upon the strong foundation of the Apostles and prophets, even upon the hard rock stone Jesus Christ. This is the pleasant possession, the wholesome household, the sure hold, and the delectable vineyard of the Lord of Hosts. This is the living generation of them which feareth, loveth, and seeketh their Lord God in faith, spirit, and truth, and not in outward shadows. These are the children of promise, the true offspring of Abraham, the chosen of Israel, and the kingdom of the holy ghost. Pure, clean, and holy hath Christ made this city, by none other thing but the only shedding of his precious blood.

¹Foxe, John. *Acts & Monuments*, 1570. Book 5. p. 574.
http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/johnfoxe/main/5_1570_0574.jsp

²John Bale, *The Image of Both Churches*. 1547. (Spelling is modified in the quote.)

This city tread they underfoot, that keepeth down the truth of the gospel, that persecutes, and fleeth God's people for it, that defeateth his word for their own traditions, that bringeth in the Jewish ceremonies, the gentiles' superstitions, pagan customs and heathen usages, poking men with impossible burdens of false worshippings for their own filthy lucre and anauntage. Not withstanding thus must they do still by the sufferance of God, till the 42 months to be finished, which is not else but the time, times, and the half time, or the thousand, two hundred and sixty days, in that God shall shorten the time for his chosens' sake. Thus after saint Paul also, before the Lord's coming, there must be a departing.

In his comments on Revelation 12:6 he identified the 1,260 days with "the time of the Gospel preaching from Christ's ascension to the end of the world." He wrote:¹

The numbered days here are none other but the afore written time of the two witnesses, the time of Elias' preaching, the time of John's preaching, the time of Christ's preaching, or the time of the Gospel preaching from Christ's ascension to the end of the world. That is the very time of the feeding of his church. And not open is this feeding here, but secret in the wilderness among a sort unknown to the world, having the poverty of the spirit without having anointing, or hypocrites' apparel. And not only hath the Lord thus nourished his people in this spiritual respect, but also in body. When they have been grievously handled, spoiled of their goods imprisoned, and exiled, graciously has he relieved them, and provided for them both solace and comfort at the hands of them whom they never saw before. So that the just has not felt himself forsaken, nor his children seeking bread.

Melchior Hoffman (1495-1544)

1526 AD – 1530 AD

Hoffman was an early Anabaptist theologian and visionary leader in northern Germany and the Netherlands. Gary K. Waite wrote of him:²

As an artisan and lay-preacher, Hoffman found himself in conflict with the formally educated theologians and reformers. Unlike the learned, he emphasised spiritual discernment by disparaging educated opinion, for "God's wisdom is not perceives with fleshly eyes, but only with spiritual eyes, which do not look upon the person, nor upon the position of rank." In short, Hoffman's interpretation of Scripture assumed a sharp distinction between letter and spirit, where "the stiritual meaning lay concealed under the letter." The thrust of this approach

¹*Ibid.*

²Waite, Gary K. *David Joris and Dutch Anabaptism, 1524-1543*. Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press, Waterloo. 1990. p. 90. <http://books.google.com/books?id=tHjuSNGSh54C>

meshed well with popular anticlerical sentiment, a fundamental feature of the early Dutch Reformation. For Hoffman a true understanding of Scripture came only by means of the Spirit active in the hearts of the children of God. In practice this meant Hoffman and his followers must look beyond the literal meaning of individual texts to a comprehension of the spiritual meaning as a whole. For Hoffman then, the entire enterprise was the mystery of Christ's work in history as revealed in Scripture, particularly its prophetic passages depicting the course of events, past, present and future. The Old and New Testaments presented a mine of allegory, spiritual types, symbols and images for Hoffman. His Christocentric hermeneutic was at root oriented toward expectations of a return of Christ and the coming kingdom.

Hoffman identified the woman clothed with the sun and having the moon under her feet in Revelation 12:1 with the church, and he said her 1,260 days of sojourn in the 'desert of the world' marked forty-two generations of thirty years each.

Thomas N. Finger described Hoffman's views about the seven year period beginning 1526:¹

During the first 3½ years, apostolic messengers would invite all people to the Lamb's feast, and many would respond. The pope would be exposed, and this period would end with the "two witnesses" punishing the world for 1,260 days (Rev 11:2) or 1,290 days (Dan 12:11). Hoffman identified the witnesses as Elijah and Enoch, claiming that both were alive but as yet unknown.

Then the pope would call on the red dragon, Emperor Charles V (cf. Rev 12:3-13:2), who would kill the two witnesses (Rev 11:7-10) and many saints (Rev 11:15), and Christians would flee into the wilderness, as Hutterites noted (Rev 12:6, 14) There God would teach them directly. Other political forces would enter the fray. Two rulers, whom Hoffman identified, would lead the persecution, while two others would somewhat protect the true church. (These were unnamed in 1526, but in 1530 Melchior identified one.) Then pagan Gog and Magog would wreak greater destruction on all (Rev 20:8-9). Only Christ's return would overcome them.

In 1529-1530 Hoffman visited Strasbourg. In 1533 he was arrested, and imprisoned until his death.² The failure of his predictions in 1533 precipitated an ill-fated rebellion by radical Anabaptists in the German city of Münster; the leaders of the rebellion were executed.

¹Finger, Thomas N. *A contemporary Anabaptist theology: biblical, historical, constructive*. InterVarsity Press, 2004. p. 530.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=CUybVhQc3PQC>

²*Ibid.*, p. 96.

Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575)

Bullinger was a Protestant Reformer, and was the successor to H. Zwingli. He rejected the idea that the 3¹/₂ prophetic years of Revelation were literal years.¹

But who shall believe that within three and a half years all those things should be accomplished which he declared in the whole work? Why do they restrict the time of Antichrist to three and one half years, especially his persecution? Why don't they see the destruction of Antichrist, the peace of his saints and day of judgment to be the same day? ... It is known to the Father alone. Therefore let them stop fighting the Gospel with their speculations.

John Calvin (1509-1564)

Calvin was a French theologian and pastor during the Protestant Reformation. He referred to the 42 months of Revelation 13:5 in his Commentary on Daniel, in a discussion on the "time, times and a half" mentioned in Daniel 7:25. He wrote:²

But a greater consolation is added in the last clause, even for a time and times, and the division of a time, or half, as some translate it; it is properly a division. Interpreters differ widely about these words, and I will not bring forward all their opinions, otherwise it would be necessary to refute them. I should have no little trouble in refuting all their views, but I will follow my own custom of shortly expressing the genuine sense of the Prophet, and thus all difficulty will be removed. Those who consider a "time" to mean a "year," are in my opinion wrong. They cite the forty-two months of the Apocalypse, (Revelation 13:5,) which make three years and a half; but that argument is not conclusive, since in that case a year will not consist of 365 days, but the year itself must be taken figuratively for any indeterminate time. It is better then to keep close to the Prophet's words. A "time," then, is not put for a certain number of months or days, nor yet for a single year, but for any period whose termination is in the secret counsel of God. They shall be given, then, for a time, says he, and afterwards adds times; that is, for a continuance of times; and again, even to a section or division of a time; meaning, these calamities should come to an end whenever God, in mercy to his Church, should restrain those tyrants by his wrath against them. As long, therefore, as the cruelty of the Caesars oppressed God's Church, it was committed into their hands. We have already seen how many Caesars were enemies of the true Church. First, of all, Nero raged most cruelly, for he burnt some thousands of Christians at Rome, to extinguish the

¹Bullinger, Heinrich. *In Apocalypsiu[m] conciones centum*. Basel: Oporinus, 1557. In: Petersen, Rodney Lawrence. *Preaching in the last days: the theme of "two witnesses" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*. Oxford University Press US, 1993. p. 132.

²<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom25.toc.html>

infamy which raged against himself. The people could not endure his barbarity; for, while the fourth part of the city was destroyed by Nero, he was enjoying his pleasure and rejoicing so mournful a spectacle! As he feared the popular tumult against himself, he laid hold of many Christians, and offered them to the people as a kind of expiation. Those who followed him, did not cease to pour forth innocent blood, and those who seemed to be endued with some degree of clemency and humanity were all at length seized with a diabolic fury. Trajan was esteemed a very excellent prince, and yet we know how he commanded the Christians everywhere to be slain, since he thought them obstinate in their error. And others were more savage still. No wonder, therefore, the angel predicts, even for a time, and times, and the division of a time, that license would be given to the tyrants and enemies of the Church to pervert all things, to despise God, and set aside all justice, and to execute a cruel and barbarous slaughter.

Michael Servetus (1509-1553)

325 AD – 1585 AD

Servetus was a Spanish theologian who opposed the doctrine of the Trinity during the Reformation. He published *De Trinitatis Erroribus*¹ in Strasburg in 1531. He hoped to persuade John Calvin, but when he visited Geneva, he was he was arrested after a church service, tried for heresy, and burnt at the stake.²

Servetus believed the 1,260 years of the reign of Antichrist were about to come to an end. Friedman wrote of him:³

In determining how long the reign of the Antichrist might be, Servetus followed Joachamite tradition that “the reign of the Antichrist would last 1260 years” adding “after the end of which will be a heavenly war.” To determine the temporal date of this debacle, he added 325 years to represent the council of Nicea during the reign of Constantine. This computation led to the date 1585 as the time the reign of evil would end.

John Foxe (1517-1587)

An English historian, in his famous work *Acts & Monuments*, Foxe applied the prophecy of 1,260 days in Revelation 12:6, which he interpreted as 1,260 years, to the period of time since the Gospel had arrived in Britain. He wrote,⁴

¹Tr: *On the Errors of the Trinity*

²<http://www25.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/michaelservetus.html>

³Friedman, Jerome. *Michael Servetus: a case study in total heresy*. Librairie Droz, 1978. p. 38. <http://books.google.com/books?id=hlwvVY74Z3IC>

⁴Foxe, John. *Acts & Monuments*, Bk. 5, 1570. p. 571. (Spelling modified)

Christ being demanded of the Apostles, what should be the token of his coming, and of the end of the world: said unto them. There shall come many in my name, saying, I am Christ, and they shall seduce many. Also he telleth them of many other signs, of battles, famine, pestilence, and earthquakes. But the greatest sign of all he teacheth to be this.

When you shall see (saith he) the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, he that readeth, let him understand. But Luke 21 in his Gospel speaketh more plainly hereof. When you therefore shall see Jerusalem to be compassed about with an army, then know ye that the desolation thereof shall draw nigh. And afterward it followeth: And they shall fall by the face of the sword, and shall be led away captive to all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot of the heathen, until the times of the nations be fulfilled. Now, in Daniel thus it is written of this matter. And after 72 weeks, shall Christ be slain, neither shall that be his people, that will deny him. And as for the City and sanctuary, shall a people (with his captain that will come with them) destroy the said city & sanctuary, & his end shall be to be wasted utterly, to it be brought to nought, and after the end of the war, shall come the desolation appointed. In one week shall he confirm the covenant to many, and within half a week that the offering and sacrifice cease. And in the temple shall there be the abomination of desolation, and even unto the end shall the desolation continue. And elsewhere in Daniel, thus it is written:

From the time that the continual sacrifice shall be offered, and that the abomination shall be placed in desolation, there shall be 1290 days. Now, if any man will behold the Chronicles, he shall find that after the destruction of Jerusalem was accomplished, and after the strong hold of the holy people was fully dispersed, and after the placing of the abomination, that is to say, the Idol of desolation of Jerusalem, within the holy place, where the temple of God was before, there had passed 1290 days, taking a day for a year, as commonly it is taken in the Prophets. And the times of the heathen people are fulfilled, after whose rites & customs God suffered the holy city to be trampled under foot for 42 months.

For although the Christian church, which is the holy city, continued in the faith from the Ascension of Christ even till this time: yet hath it not observed and kept the perfection of the faith all this whole season. For soon after the departure of the Apostles, the faith was kept with the observation of the rites of the Gentiles, and not of the rites of Moses' law, nor of the law of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Wherefore seeing that this time of the error of the Gentiles is fulfilled: it is likely that Christ shall call the Gentiles from the rites of their gentility, to the perfection of the Gospel, as he called the Jews from the law of Moses to the same perfection, in his first coming: that there may be one sheepfold of the Jews and Gentiles, under one shepherd Christ. Seeing therefore the Antichrist is known which hath seduced the nations: then shall the elect after that they have forsaken the errors of their Gentility come, through the light

of God's word, to the perfection of the Gospel, and that same seducer shall be slain with the sword of God's word.

So that by these things it doth partly appear unto me, why that at this time rather than at an other time, this matter of Antichrist is moved. And why that this motion is come to pass in this kingdom rather than in other kingdoms: me thinks there is good reason, because that no nation of the Gentiles was so soon converted to Christ as were the Britons the inhabitants of this kingdom. For, to other places of the world there were sent preachers of the faith, who, by the working of miracles & continual preaching of the word of God, & by grievous passion and death of the body, did convert the people of those places:

But in this kingdom, in the time of Lucius king of the Britons, and of Eleutherius bishop of the Romans, did Lucius hear of the Romans that were infidels (by the way of rumors and tales) of the Christian faith, which was preached at Rome. Who believed straightway, & sent to Rome to Eleutherius for men skillful to inform him more fully in the very faith it self: at whose coming he was joyful, and was baptized with his whole kingdom. And after that receiving of the faith, they never forsook it, neither for any manner of false preachings of others, neither for any manner of torments, or yet assaults of the Paynims, as in other kingdoms it had come to pass.

And thus it seems to me the Britons amongst other nations, have been, as it were by the spiritual election of God, called and converted to the faith. Of them as me seemeth, did Isaiah prophecy, saying: For they did see to whom there was nothing told of him, and they did behold, that had not heard of him. And again, behold, thou that call a nation which thou knewest not: and nations that have not known thee, shall run unto thee: for the Lord thy GOD, and the holy one of Israel, shall glorify thee.

Of this kingdom, did S. John in the Apocalypse prophesy, as me seemeth, where he said, The Dragon stood before the woman, which was about to be delivered of child, to the intent that when she had brought it forth into the world, he might devour up her son: and she brought forth her child which was a man child, who should govern all nations with an iron rod. And the same son was taken up to God, and to his throne.

And the woman fled into the wilderness, whereas she hath a place prepared of god, that they may feed her 1260 days. And again in the same chapter, after that the Dragon saw that he was cast out upon the earth, he did persecute the woman, which brought forth the man child. And there were given to the woman two wings of a great Eagle, that she might flee into the wilderness into her place, where as she is fostered up for a time, times, and half a time, from the face of the Serpent. And the Serpent did cast as it were a flood of water after the woman, to the intent that he might cause her to be drawn by the flood: and the earth opening her mouth did hear the woman and did swallow up the flood which the Dragon did cast out of his mouth. Let us see, how these sayings may be applied to this kingdom rather than to other kingdoms. It is well known that

this kingdom is a wilderness or a desert place, because that the Philosophers and wise men did not pass upon it, but did leave it for a wilderness and desert, because it is placed without the climates. Unto this place fled the woman, that is to say the church (which by faith did spiritually bring forth Christ into the world) where as she was fed with the heavenly bread, the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, for 1260 days, seeing that for so many days, taking a day for a year, the Britons continued in the faith of Christ, which thing can not be found so of any Christian kingdom, but of this desert: and well is it said, that she flew to this place.

For, from the east came the faith into Britain, not by walking in journey nor yet by sailing: for then should it have come by Rome, Italy, Almaine, France, which can not be found: and therefore she flew over those places, and rested not in them, even as a bird flying over a place, resteth not in the same: but rested in this wilderness for a time, times, and half a time, that is, 1260 years from the first coming of the faith into Britain until this present.

In saying for a time, times, and half a time, there is a going forward from the greater to the less. The greatest time that we name, is a thousand years, there is a time: and the next time that is less in the singular number, is one hundredth years. In the plural number times signifies that there be more hundreds than one, at least 2 hundred years. Wherefore if they be put under a certain number, it must needs be that they be 2, but the same 2 cannot fitly be called some times, except they be hundreds. For in that, that there is a going down from the greater to the less, when as it is said, a time, times, & half a time, and that the number of a thousand is likely assigned for a time: it must needs follow that times must be taken for hundreds, and half a time for 60 because it is the greater half of an hundred years, though that 50 be the even half. And when that the serpent sent the water of persecution after the woman to cause her to be drawn of the flood: then did the earth, that is to wit, the stableness of faith help the woman, by supping up the water of tribulation. For in the most cruel persecution of Diocletian and Maximilian against the Christians, when as Christianity was almost every where rooted out: yet did they in this kingdom stand continually in the faith, unmovable. And so, considering that the Britons, were converted to the faith of Christ, as you would say, by an election and picking out amongst all the nations of the heathen, and that after they had received the faith, they did never start back from the faith for no manner of tribulation: It is not to be marveled, if in their place, the calling of the Gentiles, be made manifest to the profiting of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by the revealing of Antichrist.

David Chytraeus (1530-1600)

412 AD – 1672 AD

An influential Lutheran theologian and historian, Chytraeus suggested the 1,260 years began with the overthrow of the Western Roman Empire by Alaric in 412.

Francisco Ribera (1537-1591)

Ribera was a Jesuit priest who published a commentary on Revelation, which applied all but the introductory chapters to a future three and a half years, when the church had fallen into apostasy. He interpreted the Antichrist as a human individual, who would control the whole world, deceive the Jews, rebuild the Jerusalem temple, and oppose the church. His theory denied that the book of Revelation had any application to the Catholic Church of his time, or to the papacy. David Brady wrote:¹

The real father of futurism was Francisco Ribera (1537-1591) of Salamanca who, having become a Jesuit in 1570, produced his famous Biblical commentaries whilst serving as confessor (and ultimately biographer) to the famous Carmelite nun and mystic St. Teresa of Avila. In Ribera's opinion, only the introductory chapters of the Apocalypse referred to ancient Rome, while the remainder he assigned to a literal three and a half years at the end of time. In contrast to the Protestant claim that Antichrist was the papacy as a whole, Ribera taught that Antichrist would be a single individual, who would rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, abolish the Christian religion, deny Christ, be received by the Jews, arrogate divine honours to himself, and conquer the world. Since all this was to happen at an unknown time in the future, Ribera could resign dogmatism over the exact interpretation of specific prophetic details, asserting for example that the interpretation of the number 666 could only be known when Antichrist was at last revealed.

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Ribera was followed in his interpretation of the Apocalypse by Cardinal Bellarmine and the Spanish Dominican Thomas Malvenda. As might be expected, it took a long time for the futurist interpretation to be received in Protestant England. L.E. Fromm believed that it actually took as long as three centuries.

William Fulke (1538-1589)

Fulke connected the 1,260 days with 70 weeks of years in Daniel 9. He thought the 42 months and 1,260 days represent three and a half years, and signify a limited time, and that "a short space of time is permitted to the devil that he may strive with all his force to beat down the Church."

Fulke wrote on Revelation 11:2:²

And the holy city they shall tread under foot two and forty months &c.

¹Brady, David. *The contribution of British writers between 1560 and 1830 to the interpretation of Revelation 13.16-18: (the number of the beast): a study in the history of exegesis*. Volume 27 of Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese. Mohr Siebeck, 1983. p. 205. <http://books.google.com/books?id=UUmpt3hM7cC>

²Fulke, William. *Praelections upon the sacred and holy Revelation of S. Iohn, written in latine by William Fulke Doctor of Divinitie, and translated into English by George Gyffard*. 1573.

The wicked and profane gentiles shall tread under foot, that is, shall grievously oppress, persecute, and afflict the Church of God, to the full space of two and forty months, that is for that time which Christ doth grant unto Antichrist to rage in cruelty against the godly. Some do count the number of months, from the first persecutions of the Christians by the Roman conquerors, even till the time of the emperor Constantine which granted peace, unto the churches. But let them which maintain that opinion see how certain it is. But to me it seems more plain that under numbers the certain fixed, and determinate time of the persecution of Antichrist is assigned, which he cannot pass, although he fret fume and rage never so much. For the Lord hath counted the same time by months days and hours. The reason of the numbers seemeth to be of this sort, this time which sometime is called two and forty months, sometime a thousand two hundred and sixty days, sometime a time two times and half a time, maketh in all three years and an half, that is the one half of a prophetic week, which time also is called three days and an half. And this place alludes to the weeks of years in the 9 Chapter of Daniel. Whereupon we gather to the great consolation of the Church, that a short time is appointed to Antichrist to wait the same, which is also shewed twice afterward in the 12 Chapter and in the 20, that a short space of time is permitted to the devil that he may strive with all his force to beat down the Church, this interpretation as most simple and plain pleases me best; those that seek more subtler may follow their own judgment.

Robert Ballarmine (1542-1621)

Bellarmino was a Roman Catholic Cardinal, and head of the Jesuit College in Rome. He implemented many of the reforms of the Counter-Reformation, and attacked the year-day principle that Protestants had applied to the 1,260 days, by which they associated that number of years with the period of domination of the church by the papacy, which they labeled Antichrist.

Bellarmino claimed that the Roman Empire had never been divided according to the prophecy of Daniel 7, and therefore Antichrist could not have come yet; he said the desolation of the Roman Empire must come before the advent of the Antichrist, and that desolation had not happened; his argument implied that a gap or parenthesis exists between the fourth beast and its ten horns.¹

Bellarmino insisted that the Antichrist must be a person:²

All Catholics think thus that the Antichrist will be one certain man; but all heretics teach... that Antichrist is expressly declared to be not a single person,

¹Bohr, Steven P. *Futurism's Incredible Journey*. Amazing Facts, 2009. p. 46.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=j2kZltYFbl0C>

²*Ibid.*, p. 47.

but an individual throne or absolute kingdom, and apostate seat of those who rule over the church.

Since no popes had reigned for precisely three and a half years, he said, the pope can't be identified with Antichrist:¹

Antichrist will not reign except for three years and a half. But the pope has now reigned spiritually in the church more than 1500 years; nor can anyone be pointed out who has been accepted for Antichrist, who as ruled exactly three and one half years; therefore the Pope is not Antichrist. Then Antichrist has not yet come.

Bellarmino also said that the Antichrist has his throne in Jerusalem, not in Rome.²

The Pope is not antichrist since indeed his throne is not in Jerusalem, nor in the temple of Solomon; surely it is credible that from the year 600, no Roman pontiff has even been in Jerusalem.

George Gifford (c.1548-1600)

Gifford saw that it was unwise to identify the 1,260 days or the 42 months of Revelation 11:2-3 with specific dates, but instead he argued that in this book, "a number certain is put for an uncertain." He wrote:³

Then next here is shewed how long the great Antichrist and his rout of profane Gentiles, possessing the outer court of the Temple, shall tread down the holy city. The time is set to be two and forty months: and that is three years and a half: for twelve months to a year, three times twelve is thirty and six, and then six months for the half year, do make up two and forty. From this place the Papists do draw one argument, by which they would prove that the Pope is not Antichrist. After this manner they reason: The Pope hath governed the Church many years: the great Antichrist shall reign but two and forty months, which is three years and a half: (for they do rightly confess that the Gentiles which possess the outer court of the temple, are the rout of Antichrist) therefore say they, it is impossible that the Pope should be Antichrist. For answer unto this: let it be demanded, doth not Saint John in this prophecy speak mystically, even as the Prophets did in old time? they cannot deny this. And then demand further, is not every day put for a year in the seventy weeks which Daniel the Prophet speaketh of? so every week is seven years. And why may not every

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.*

³ Gifford, George. *Sermons upon the whole booke of the Reuelation Set forth by George Giffard, Preacher of the Word at Mauldin in Essex.* Richard Field and Felix Kinston, 1599. p. 189-190.

month here then be put for thirty years? which then do amount unto 1,260 years. Which indeed is a long time in comparison of three years & an half: but compared with the eternity of Christ's kingdom, it is as nothing. And that is one cause why the Lord numbers it by days & months which quickly run out. But then here will arise another scruple: If the kingdom of Antichrist shall continue twelve hundred and sixty years, we must either say that the Bishop of Rome was Antichrist more than a thousand years past, yea above thirteen hundred, if we take his reign to be no longer than until he was disclosed by the Gospel: or else we must say he hath yet long to continue. Let not this trouble us, seeing it is most clear and out of all controversy, that in this book, a number certain is put for an uncertain. As in the seventh chapter of this book it is said, that of every tribe there was sealed twelve thousand. And because twelve times twelve amount unto one hundred forty & four, it is said chap. 14 that so many thousands stand with the Lamb upon mount Sion. Is any man so unwise, as to take it, that of every tribe there should be saved just twelve thousand neither more nor less, and so on all of the Jews in these latter days just an hundred forty & four thousands to be saved? & not rather that the Lord by a number certain doth declare that even when his Church doth seem utterly to fail, he saves a great number, of which he expresses not the just sum. So in this place when God will comfort his people, he shows that Antichrist shall tread down the holy city but for a short time, that is, two and forty months, which is but three years and an half, he meaneth not to note the just number of years that he shall continue.

David Pareus (1548-1622)

606 AD – 1866 AD

Pareus claimed the 1,260 years began with the decree of Phocas in 606.

John Napier (1550-1617)

300 AD – 1560 AD

316 AD – 1576 AD

Napier said the 42 months are 1260 years which began about the years 300 or 316 AD.¹ He identified the pope professing himself to be the head of the church, as the Antichrist, and the fulfillment of Paul's prophecy in 2 Thess. 2.

Thomas Brightman (1562-1607)

304 AD – 1546 AD

¹Napier, John. *A plaine discovery of the whole Reuelation of Saint Iohn*, Proposition 36. 1593.

Brightman was an English clergyman and biblical commentator. His commentary on the Apocalypse was published posthumously. He identified the two witnesses as the Scriptures, and the assemblies of the faithful.¹ He said the 1,260 days of their ministry began in the reign of Constantine, and ended in the year 1546; the period was short 18 years from 1,260 years, because of the discrepancy between the 42 months of 30 days and three and a half Julian years, which is about 1,278 days. There followed a period when they were killed and their bodies exposed. On Revelation 11:7, Brightman wrote:²

This is the second determinate time, (as we distinguished the times in the Analysis) that beginneth after that office of prophesying is expired, namely in the year a thousand, five hundred forty six. Until which time those thousand two hundred threescore days do reach, each of them being taken for so many years, as we have shewed in the 2. vers. & the number beginning to be reckoned from the year of our Lord three hundred, and fourth, wherein Constantine came to the Empire, as Cassiodorus saith, teaching that the years of Constantine are numbered from thence, and as Onuphrius seemeth to have gathered, and made up the computation most accurately. For a thousand two hundred and threescore years (if you take away 18, how many the account of the years which the Angel followeth wanteth of Julian years, as we said afore on the second vers.) do make thousand two hundred, two and forty Julian years, which do fall into that year that I have set down, 1546, [counting] from the beginning of Constantine's reign.

James Brocard (b. 1563)

313 AD – 1573 AD

Brocard supposed the 42 months or 1,260 years of trampling of the holy city began with the reign of pope Sylvester. He wrote:³

Now at this time when we shall come to the end of 1260 years, the beginning being taken from Pope Sylvester, the church, and the government thereof shall be given to those who hold the testimony of Christ. The new Prophets and the worthy Petarcha famous for godliness and learning do reckon that those 1260 days are set for years, for the year of our Lord 313 unto the time when with

¹Thomas Brightman *on the Two Witnesses*
<http://vinyl2.sentex.net/~tcc/dload/Brightman.pdf>

²Brightman, Thomas. *The Reuelation of S. Iohn illustrated with an analysis & scholions. Wherein the sence is opened by the Scripture, & the euent of things fore-told, shewed by histories. The third edition corrected & amended, with supply of many things formerly left out.* Imprinted at Leyden by J. Claesson van Dorpe, 1616. p. 469.

³Brocard, James. *The Reuelation of S. Ihon reueled or a paraphrase opening by conference of time and place such things as are both necessary, and profitable for the tyme present: written in Latine by Iames Brocard, and Englished by Iames Sanford Gent., Imprinted at London: In Fleetestreate neare vnto S. Dunstones Church by Thomas Marshe,* 1582.

power and might Christ shall bring his Church out of the desert, then if to those 1260 years you add 313, in the which year Sylvester took the red garment for the black, there shall be 1573 years, when both in France, Holland and Zelande the Gospellers having been trodden down oppressed, put to death, burned and slain lifted up themselves, and afterward made their foes afraid, as it is said hereafter.

Pierre Du Moulin (1568-1658)

429 AD – 1689 AD

A Huguenot minister, Du Moulin said 1689 would end the beast's reign.¹

Hugo Grotius (1583-1645)

Grotius was a Dutch Arminian and humanist. He tried to establish common ground between Protestants and the Roman Catholic Church in his *Commentary on Certain Texts Which Deal with Antichrist* published in 1640, by saying that the texts relating to Antichrist had their fulfillment in the 1st century AD. He identified Trajan as the Antichrist, saying his name *Ulpus*, when written in Greek, was a cipher of the number 666. He identified Simon Magus with the dragon in chapter 12.² F. F. Bruce wrote of Grotius:³

Grotius broke with the Reformed tradition of identifying the Papacy with Antichrist. Grotius's *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (1641) carried on the philological and historical method of Flacius Illyricus and Camerarius, and did so more rigorously and in greater detail. So objective was his treatment of the text, in fact, that he was charged with rationalism. He saw that the individual books of the New Testament could best be understood in their respective historical contexts, even if he was not always successful in his attempts to identify those contexts. Thus he saw in 2 Thess. 2:1-12 a reference to Emperor Gaius's attempt to have his statue set up in the Jerusalem temple, and accordingly dated the epistle c. A.D. 40, making it the earliest of the Pauline writings. He inferred from 2 Pet. 3:3f. that that epistle was written after A.D. 70 and therefore not by Peter the apostle; he treated the name "Peter" in the initial salutation as a later addition to the text and conjectured that the author was Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, who was traditionally martyred under Trajan.

Henry More (1614-1687) of Cambridge University objected to the ideas of Grotius on the grounds that if Grotius were right, and if in consequence the Book of Revelation did not

¹ *The Fulfillment of Prophecies*; in Kovacs et. al., *Op. Cit.* p. 125

² Brady, David. *Op. Cit.*, p. 159.

³ Bruce, F. F. *The History of New Testament Study*, I. Howard Marshall, ed., New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods, 1977. Carlisle: The Paternoster Press, revised 1979. pp.21-59.

cover the whole development of human history, then it would be “*utterly Useless.*”¹

Joseph Mede (1586-1638)

476 AD – 1736 AD

Mede was a scholar at Cambridge, England. He was a naturalist, an Egyptologist, a Hebraist, and a Lecturer of Greek. He was the author of *Clavis Apocalyptica*, an influential work on the interpretation of the Book of Revelation. He developed the idea of *synchronism*, that different prophecies may portray various aspects of things during the same period of time. Mede equated seven time prophecies which contained time spans of 3½ years, 1260 days, or 42 months.² These, he explained, must apply to the antichristian power of papacy. Mede offered an explanation for why 42 months are used for the time of the Beast, and 1,260 days for the sojourn of the woman in the wilderness. He wrote:³

Now let us come to the text: *And I will give, saith he, unto my two witnesses, that they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.* Where this cometh first to be observed that the whole prophecy which followeth, from this verse to the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the nature of the matter so requiring, is exhibited not in a vision, but was dictated by an angel, personating Christ, the observation whereof is of no small consequence for the better perceiving of the nature of the allegory or type.

To my two witnesses he calleth them two in regard of the type, which, as I said, is of pairs, as if he should have said, I will give to my *Zerubbabel and Joshua*, to my *Elijah and Elisha*, to my *Moses and Aaron*. To which is added that he calleth them witnesses, now by the law there ought to be two witnesses to confirm every word. Add that they may be called two, in regard to the number of the Tables of God, which they used in their prophecy, of the Old and New Testament, as it were witnesses of two Testaments.

That they shall prophesy clothed with sackcloth to wit, mournfully bewailing the trampling under foot of the holy city by the bringing in of the idolatry of the Gentiles, giving testimony to the truth of God, and exhorting to repentance.

1260 days as many, to wit, as are contained in 42 months. Which that they are not natural days, it appeareth as well out of those three days and an half, parts of these days, a little after to be assigned to the death of the witnesses; which that they cannot be taken for natural days, those things which are foretold to be

¹Van Den Berg, Johannes. *Grotius and Apocalyptic thought in England*, in: Hugo Grotius, theologian: essays in honor of G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes, Ed. by Guillaume Henri Marie Posthumus Meyjes, Henk J. M. Nellen, Edwin Rabbie. Brill, 1994. p. 178.

²Dan.7:25; 12:7; Rev.11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5

³Mede, Joseph. *The key of the Revelation, searched and demonstrated out of the naturall and proper characters of the visions.* 1643. Part 2, p. 8-9.

then done do prove: as also out of that the Beast (the measure of whose time they also do continue) contemporized with the company of the 144,000 sealed: and the company of the sealed with the six first trumpets: but the matters of the trumpets could not be run out, in so little time as in 1260 natural days, or in the space of three years and an half. But thou wilt ask, why is the profanation of the Gentiles measured by months, and all the prophecy of the witnesses defending the pure worship of God by days? Forsooth, because the worshipping of idols, and every sin and error is of the power of darkness and night, wherein the Moon ruleth; contrariwise true religion is compared to the light and to the day of which the sun is the ruler. Therefore the sending of Paul to convert the Gentiles from idols is said Acts 26:18, *To turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God.* The same meaning hath that What fellowship hath light with darkness? Now then the months are directed by the motion of the moon which ruleth the night; days and years by the motion of the sun which ruleth the day. For the same cause as afterwards we shall see, the blasphemy of the Beast will be reckoned after the motion of the moon, by months: but the abiding of the woman in the wilderness by years and days, after the motion of the sun.

Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588-1638)

362 AD – 1622 AD

Alsted began the period of the 1,260 years with the reign of Julian the Apostate in AD 362, perhaps in order to relate the prophecy of the two witnesses to events in his own time. The sack of Heidelberg occurred in 1622 during the Thirty Years' War.¹

Thomas Parker (1595-1677)

c. 390 AD – 1649 AD

c. 600 AD – 1859 AD

Parker was an English nonconforming clergyman and founder of Newbury, Massachusetts. He wrote a book on the prophecies of Daniel, in which he proposed two alternate interpretations of the 1,260 days of Revelation 11 and 12, as well as the other associated periods; the time, times, and a half, 1,290 days, 1,335 days, and 42 months, all of which, he said, terminated at the same time, which was the end of the desolation of the Church. He also identified two

¹Hotson, Howard. *Johann Heinrich Alsted, 1588-1638: between Renaissance, Reformation, and universal reform*, Oxford University Press US, 2000. p. 205.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=cAeGhpL2WNkC>

sets of historic events, which began each period.¹

Hanserd Knollys (1599-1691)

428 AD – 1688 AD

Knollys was an English particular Baptist minister, and the author of *Exposition of the whole book of the Revelation*, in 1687, in which he suggested that the 1,260 days might end in the following year, 1688. He wrote:²

Fourthly, the time of their prophesying is here said to be a thousand two hundred and threescore days, which days are not to be understood literally for so many natural days; for that is but three years and an half; and is intended by the three days and an half, expressed vers. 9, to be the time that the dead bodies of the slain witnesses shall lie unburied, called a time, and times, and half a time, Rev. 12:14 and Dan. 7:21, 25. But these thousand two hundred and threescore days must be understood of prophetical days; that is, a day for a year, and each day for a year, according to the scripture account, Numb. 14:34, and Ezek. 4:6, which is one thousand two hundred and threescore years. And so is the prophetical number of days and time of the woman, that is, the Church of God in the wilderness, viz. one thousand two hundred and threescore days, Rev. 12:6. It is not my work at present to determine the beginning and ending of this time, and these days, but to give the right interpretation thereof, that the reader may understand the meaning by my exposition. God hath timed the persecutions, tribulations, and sufferings of his churches, ministers, and saints, in their generations, Gen. 15:13. Exod. 12:41. Jer. 25:10, 11, 12. and 29:10-13, Rev. 2:10. and Rev. 11:2. They must last no longer, nor end sooner, than God's set time.

But yet I may say, that the best ecclesiastical historians, and the later expositors of this book of the Revelation, affirm, that these thousand two hundred and threescore days began about the year of our Lord 407, 409, 410, or before 428. (Simpson's *Hist. of the Church*, Lib. 4; Socrat. *Hist. Eccl.* cap. 3; Helvicus in *Concil. Taurinat.* cap. 7; Magdeb. *Cent.* 5. cap. 10, &c.) And if these thousand two hundred and threescore days did begin about 428, then they will end about 1688, which a short time will manifest more certainly. Though these

¹Parker, Thomas. *The visions and prophecies of Daniel expounded wherein the mistakes of former interpreters are modestly discovered, and the true meaning of the text made plain by the words and circumstances of it: the same also illustrated by clear instances taken out of histories which relate the events of time mystically foretold by the holy prophet: amongst other things of note, touching the two witnesses, the New Jerusalem, the thousand years &c.* London: Printed for Edmund Paxton and are to be sold by Nathanael Webb and William Grantham. 1646. pp. 134-143.

²Knollys, Hanserd. *An exposition of the whole book of the Revelation wherein the visions and prophecies of Christ are opened and expounded: shewing the great conquests of our lord Jesus Christ for his church over all his and her adversaries pagan, arian, and papal.* London. 1689. pp. 129-130.

are uncertain conjectures; yet if we shall see the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, make war against the two prophetic witnesses, and overcome them, and kill them, as is prophesied, vers. 7, then we shall certainly know the ending time of these thousand two hundred and threescore days, Dan. 12:4-6-8, 9-13.

Knollys believed that the 1,260 years would be followed by three and a half years of apostasy, and tribulation, when the church would be lukewarm, or spiritually lifeless. He wrote on the killing of the two witnesses in Revelation 11:7,¹

The war which the beast shall make against Christ's prophetic witnesses, whereby he shall overcome them and kill them, is an open, visible, and public opposition, which the enemies of Christ, his churches, ministers, and saints do make against them, either by open hostility, as the popes, and emperors' forces did against the protestants in Germany; or else by public edicts and laws, as the papists did against the Protestants in England in Queen Mary's days, by a violent and bloody persecution, which hath ever been the practice of the popes and papists; Pope Alexander the III, about the year 1159, and the popish powers, persecuted the Waldenses, with a great and bloody persecution. Afterwards, about 1464, the Waldenses, the Wicklevists, the Hussites, and their followers, were violently persecuted, even to death, under the name Lollards.

And shall overcome them, and kill them. Some Ministers and some members of churches will be overcome by fear, others by flatteries; the mouths of some will be stopped by preferment; others will be silenced by threatening, by excommunication, and by persecution; and so far overcome, as they will cease for a time to bear their testimony against the beast, so publicly and vigorously, as they did before. But that will not appease the rage and great wrath of the beast; for he will proceed further, and will kill them that still go on boldly and constantly to bear their testimony publicly against him, his worship, and his kingdom, Rev. 13:15, 16, 17. The killing of the two witnesses, doth not signify a corporal death only, nor principally; for such a death doth not fully agree to their lying unburied in the streets of the city, nor to their resurrection, vers. 10,11, but it is rather a metaphorical expression, by which Jesus Christ meant and intended, both a civil and ecclesiastical death, or deprivation of livelihood, and deprivation of life: some of them shall be deprived of all their civil rights, privileges, and liberties; their estates will be confiscated, proscribed, or decimated, &c. Their persons confined, imprisoned or banished, &c. and in fine, all their livings and livelihood taken from them by the beast, and his instruments of cruelty. And others of them shall be deprived of all their ecclesiastical rights, privileges, and liberties: yea, their love to Christ will decay, their zeal for the glory of God will cool, and their spiritual vigor against Antichrist, and his false doctrines, superstitious worship,

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 138-139.

and tyrannical government, will faint, and be ready to die. The darkness, and blackness of the day of the death of the two witnesses will be very great, for they will be deprived of that spirit of life, which they formerly had, and manifested for Christ against the Man of Sin, and Son of Perdition that sits in the Temple of God. Some of the witnesses (not all of them) will fall from their first love, lose their former zeal, and become luke-warm; some of them will fall in with the grand apostasy of these latter days, and thereby be deprived of that vigor and spirit of life which they had; and this spiritual kind of death, is called here the killing of the witnesses; for as their resurrection shall be by the spirit of life from God entering into them, Rev. 11:11, so their death will be by being deprived of the spirit of life, by resisting, quenching, and grieving the holy spirit.

Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680)

406 AD – 1666 AD

Goodwin was an English Puritan theologian and preacher, and a leader of religious Independents. He was chaplain to Oliver Cromwell. He considered several possible dates for the beginning of the 1,260 days, and commented: “By adding therefore twelve hundred and sixty years to any of the above supposed periods of the rise of the beast, we get the supposed date of his fall.”¹

Henry Hammond (1605-1660)

132 AD – 136 AD

Hammond was an English churchman and scholar, and a friend of King Charles I. He was the King’s chaplain, when the King became a captive in the hands of parliament, after the First Civil War (1642–45). Hammond related the 1,260 days of the two witnesses to the time of Hadrian, and the Jewish revolt by Simon bar Kokhba. The Romans crushed the Jews with an army of 12 legions in a war lasting three and a half years. Hadrian then rebuilt Jerusalem, and built a temple of Jupiter Capitolinus there, but barred Jews from living there. Hammond’s paraphrase of Revelation 11:1-3 was as follows:²

1. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, ch. X, the most memorable passage concerning this matter of the Jews (and so the fittest member of a further vision) being that which fell on that people under the emperor Adrian [i.e., Hadrian] the next vision here seems to belong to that. And by way of

¹Goodwin, Thomas. *The Exposition of Thomas Goodwin on the Book of Revelation: with Life of the author*. London, 1842. p. 603.

<http://www.archive.org/details/theexpositionoft00gooduoft>

²Hammond, Henry. *A Paraphrase and Annotations Upon All the Books of the New Testament*. Vol. 2. Oxford University Press, 1845. p. 506.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=AyMVAAAAYAAJ>

preparation to the representing of it, here is first set down Adrian's rebuilding of Jerusalem, and setting up the heathen worship there. To this purpose, saith he, methought I had a measuring rod, or pole, or perch given me, (as in Ezekiel, ch. xl,) and a command from the angel to mete the temple of God, that is, first, the sanctuary or holy, and in it the holy of holies, and then the court, where the altar of burnt-offerings stood, and where the people worshiped and prayed to God, called the court of the Israelites. (This measuring is the enclosing or settling thus much of the temple apart in memory of the former consecration, not to be profaned or meddled with, that is, built upon by the emperor Adrian, who now designed to erect a new city there, calling it (by his own name, Aelius) Aelia.

2. But I was appointed to leave or cast out, that is, not thus to measure or enclose the court of the Gentiles, called the outer court, ... noting that the Roman emperor should take that in, and build upon it and about it a new city, not only for Jews, but Gentiles to live in; and so that Jerusalem, formerly called the faithful and holy city, should now, being thus rebuilt, be called by another name, and profaned with idol-worship, a temple being erected to Jupiter upon mount Sion, and so continue for the same proportion of time (that is, three years and a half) that it had in Daniel's prophecy been profaned by Antiochus, Dan. vii. 25.

3. And all this time there being two Christian bishops of Jerusalem, one of Jewish, the other of Gentile or stranger Christians there, and these being raised up by God like prophets to forewarn men of their sins and danger, shall like prophets set themselves against the sins both of the Jews and Gentiles, labor to convert them all to Christianity, to bring them to the reformation of their wicked lives, to the purging out of all the abominable sins (mentioned in ch. ix. 20, 21.) unreformed among them; and this angel told me they should do all that space of three years and an half, (mentioned ver. 2,) and do it (as prophets are wont when they prophesy judgments on unreformed sinners) in sackcloth, ... denoting the yet further evil effects that would be consequent to their still holding out impenitent against the faith.

Hammond identified the temple of God in John's prophecy with the temple of Jupiter. He wrote:¹

Who the witnesses are is the main difficulty of this chapter: and the matter here spoken of yielding some directions to pitch on the time of which this vision treats; as 1. the farther judgments falling on Jerusalem after the destruction by Titus; and 2dly, those after the rebuilding the city, and planting it with Gentiles as well

¹Hammond, Henry. *A Paraphrase and Annotations Upon All the Books of the New Testament*. Vol. 4. Oxford University Press, 1845. p. 567.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=3ysVAAAAYAAJ>

as Jews, vv. 1,2, which must needs belong to the time of Adrian; [i.e., Hadrian] it may be reasonable to forsake all other conjectures, and pitch upon that which the learned Hugo Grotius hath resolved on, of making the two churches, which were at this time at Jerusalem, one of the Jewish, the other of Gentile Christians, the two witnesses here spoken of; or more distinctly, I conceive, the two bishops of (and together with them) those two congregations.

Lodowicke Muggleton (1609-1698)

1652 AD – 1658 AD

Lodowicke Muggleton and his cousin John Reeve were two tailors in London. In 1651, during a period of civil war, they both experienced revelations about the meaning of scripture, which led to them becoming “two of the greatest medlers of religion in all the world.” In 1652 they declared that *they* were the two witnesses of Revelation 11:3, and their followers became known as the Muggletonians.¹

William Lamont wrote:²

The Muggletonians, in the twelfth-century Joachimite tradition, believed in three stages of history. The first age was that of Law, the text was the Old Testament, the Prophet was Moses. The Second Age was that of Gospel, the text was the New Testament, the Prophet was Jesus. The year 1652 marked the Third Age, that of the Spirit, the text was the Prophets’ writings, and the Prophets were Reeve and Muggleton. Muggletonians therefore often described themselves as believers in the Third Commission. How long would it last? In a letter of 1656, Reeve spoke in terms of months. That sense of an imminent transformation of society disappeared with his death.

Reeve and Muggleton were involved in a dispute with Rev. Goffin, upon whom they pronounced a curse. When Goffin died, Reeve and Muggleton were arrested and charged with blasphemy. They were sentenced to six months in Bridewell Prison. They were released in 1654. Reeve died in 1658, and after brief struggle for control of the group with Laurence Clarkson, Muggleton became the sect’s leader. Their meetings were informal.

In 1663 Muggleton was charged with blasphemy and committed to Derby gaol.

George Charles Williamson wrote:³

Muggleton never had any patience with people who opposed him. He pronounced against them what he called the curse of God, calling down a sentence

¹http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lodowicke_Muggleton

²Lamont, William. *Puritanism and historical controversy*. McGill-Queen’s Press, 1996. p. 32. <http://books.google.com/books?id=7wiWQmeGEgAC>

³Williamson, George Charles. *Lodowick Muggleton*. 1915. <http://www.muggletonian.org.uk/NonMuggletonian/contentfiles/apaperread.pdf>

of eternal damnation upon every person who refused to accept his religious opinions.

In 1677 Muggleton was again charged with blasphemy, and fined £500, and being unable to pay, he was sent to Newgate prison for six months, and was released after paying £100. He was also humiliated by having to stand in the pillory in three places in the city, on three occasions, where his books were burned.

Henry More (1614-1687)

More was an English philosopher and poet of the Cambridge Platonist school.

In a treatise on the Apocalypse, More interpreted the 1,260 days as 1,260 years, which expired in the Reformation. When commenting upon Revelation 11:2, and the Gentiles trampling the holy city for 42 months, he pointed out that the area of the outer court is three and a half times larger than the inward court, corresponding to the three and a half year time periods mentioned in the prophecy:¹

... it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. That is, a kind of Paganochristianity instead of pure Christianity shall visibly domineer for forty and two months of years, that is 1260 years; which is the same proportion of time to the commensurate time of the church under the Ephesian and Smyranean succession, and a little further, that the proportion of the outward court has to be to the inward court, which proportion is as 1260 to 360; that is, the outward court contained the inward court three times and a half in quantity.

More viewed the three and a half year periods as seven "semitimes," which he defined as six months. He wrote:²

For particular symbolical meanings, and for the embellishing of the cortex of the Apocalypse, &c. This symbolical meaning, as I remember Mr. Mede takes notice of. That the time and times and half a time is expressed by one thousand two hundred and sixty days, when the time or continuance of the Children of Light, or of the Day is notified, but by forty two months, when the children of Darkness or of the Night their continuance is signified. Thus the continuance of the ten-horned beast, Chap. 13, is numbered by months; as also the treading down the outward court by the Gentiles, Chap. 11. But the Woman's stay in the wilderness is expressed by Days, as also the time of the two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth. And it is manifest that the outward letter or cortex of

¹More, Henry. *Apocalypsis Apocalypseos; or the Revelation of St. John the Divine unveiled: an exposition from chapter to chapter and from verse to verse of the whole Book of the Apocalypse*, 1680. p. 102.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 122-123.

of the Apocalypse is better adorned this way, than if wherever we find forty two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days, a time and times and half a time had been repeated. But these reasons of varying the phrase thus being so apparent (to say nothing of the use of turning Daniel's Time and times and half a time into forty two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days, for the more certainly understanding that three prophetic years and an half is meant thereby) we may be the better assured, that no greater accurateness of time is intended by them, than if the phrase of a time and times and half a time had been always used. The not understanding of which has made sundry in vain attempt to predict events foretold in the Apocalypse to the accuracy of a prophetic day, when as indeed there is no use of either prophetic day or month, unless in saying, such a thing was to fall out, or did fall out in such a day, or such a month, or such a day of such a month of, suppose, the seventh or last semitime or prophetic half year, which consists of one hundred and eighty days or six months. And the nature of the things foretold are such, that they are not to terminate on a year, but rather that grosser numbering by semitimes.

More defended Joseph Mede's approach against the preterist views of Henry Hammond. He wrote, referring to the 42 months of Revelation 13:5,¹

Of the ten-horned beast Chapt. 13 it is said verse 5, *that power was given unto him to continue forty two months*; I demand here of R.H. has the Roman Empire since the time of its being divided into many kingdoms continued but forty two months or three years and an half? Is this a likely measure of time for the continuance of an Empire? Nay is it not plain that this divided Roman Empire thus apostatizing and apostatized more and more into a pagan like idolatry had continued so, near forty two prophetic months, that is months of years, viz. 1260 years, till in the last *semitime* of these 1260 years, the Reformation broke out, which was the expiration of the *entire* reign of the beast. But in the mean time by virtue of this key of the angel it is exceeding evident that the forty two months are not to be understood *literally* but of *prophetic* months, forty two whereof make 1260 years. And consequently that all the visions that synchronize with this ten-horned beast have the same extent of duration: as the two-horned beast, the whore, the woman in the wilderness, the sealed company of virgins, the outer court trodden down by the Gentiles, the two witnesses mourning in sackcloth, and the dead bodies of the witnesses lying three days and an half in the street of the great city. For I conceive that as the woman abode in the wilderness is first denoted by 1260 days, and after in the same chapter by a *time and times and half a time*, so the continuance of the sad condition of the witnesses is first set down by 1260 days, but after by *three days and an half*, to answer to a *time and times and half a time*, which is *three times and an half*. And

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 319-321.

that three times and an half are signified by three days and a half on purpose to teach us to reckon the duration of all these synchronals not by the curiosity of a *prophetical month* much less of a *prophetical day*, but as it is originally in Daniel by *semidays* or *half-days*: after the beginning of the expiration of the seventh of which *half-days* the witnesses were to rise, as they did. But this by the bye but very worthy the noting. All these *synchronals*, I say, of the prophecy of the *opened book* are necessarily to be measured by *prophetical semitimes*, that is, the duration of every one of them is to be about seven *semitimes*, a semitime consisting of *one hundred and eighty years*. And so must also two *synchronals* of the *sealed book prophecy*, the six first trumpets, and the *one hundred and forty four thousand* sealed servants of God, they being synchronal to these.

Drue Cressener (1642-1718)

606 AD – 1848 AD

An English clergyman and interpreter of the Apocalypse, Cressener in 1690 said the years of the period should be taken as 360 days each, and shortened the period of 1,260 days to 1,242. Thus he proposed 1848 as the critical year in the downfall of the papacy.

Isaac Newton (1642-1727)

800 AD – 2060 AD

Newton thought the dragon bestowed his power on the beast in the year 295 AD.¹ He proposed 360 days for each prophetic year, and 30 days to a prophetic month, thus disassociating prophetic time from solar or lunar calendars. He thought the period began “at about the time of the invasion of the Barbarous nations and their erecting several Kingdoms in the Roman Empire.” and “it being certain that 1200 of the 1260 years are run out already.”

Later in life Newton considered the year 800 AD to be a likely beginning date for the “time and times and the dividing of time” of Daniel 7:25, and the 1,260 days of Revelation 11:3 and 12:6.

In an article on Newton’s views about the prophecy of the 1,260 days, Stephen D. Snobelen stated:²

The year 800 is a significant one in history, as it is the year Charlemagne was crowned emperor of Rome in the west by Pope Leo III at St. Peter’s in Rome. Since Newton believed that the 1260 years corresponded to the duration of the corruption of the Church, he added 1260 to 800 A.D. and arrived at the date 2060 for the “fall of Babylon” or cessation of the apostate Church.

¹Newton, Sir Isaac. *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St. John*. (Dublin, 1733) p. 280.

²Snobelen, Stephen D. *Statement on the date 2060*.
<http://www.isaac-newton.org/update.html>

Robert Fleming (c. 1660-1716)

552 AD – 1794 AD

606 AD – 1848 AD

758 AD – 2000 AD

David Brady wrote of Fleming's work:¹

Fleming was one of the very few apocalyptic date-fixers whose speculations proved to be at all successful. This is reflected in the large number of reprints of his work which appeared when the first two dates offered for Rome's downfall were reached. In the last decade of the eighteenth century Fleming became acknowledged as a true prophet of the French Revolution, an event which dealt a severe blow to the papacy in France. Between the years 1792 and 1809, no less than eleven editions of Fleming's works appeared from the presses in Edinburgh, London, and Falkirk, as well as an edition published across the Atlantic in Boston. Other collections of prophetic extracts joined in acknowledging Fleming's God-given foresight. And then the second prophetic date drew near, answering to the year 606 indicated by the number of the beast, and between the years 1843 and 1846 four more editions of the work were published in America and another at Edinburgh. Fleming proved right again, for 1838 has gone down in the history books as "the year of revolutions" which broke out in almost every European capital, whilst nearer home there occurred the Irish rebellion and the Chartist demonstrations. The Pope himself fled from Rome to Gaeta when an Italian Republic was proclaimed and once again the press acknowledged Fleming's foresight. In the years 1848 and 1849, five new editions of the *Rise and Fall* were published in London, two at Aberdeen, and three in America. Not only that, but it was then translated into French and Welsh. The book became a consolation in times of crisis and those who read it received reassurance that the rise and fall of kingdoms lay in the wise providence of God.

Fleming converted the 1,260 prophetic years to solar or Julian years by subtracting 18 years, thus obtaining 1,242 Julian years. He believed that the fall of the beast, which he identified with the papacy, would occur in stages, and he proposed dates that mark three successive stages in his fall, the year 2000 being the year of Christ's return, and the commencement of the millennium. Fleming's comments published in 1701, that seem to apply to the period of the French Revolution, include the following:²

Now, my conjectures shall relate to two things, viz. to the remaining part of this vial, and to the other vials that follow this.

¹Brady, David. *Op. Cit.*, p. 33.

²Fleming, Robert. *Apocalyptical key. An extraordinary discourse on the rise and fall of papacy.* William S. Young, 1848. p. 19-20.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=tj4UAAAAYAAJ>

And first, as to the remaining part of this vial, I do humbly suppose that it will come to its highest pitch about A.D. 1717, and that it will run out about the year 1794. The reasons for the first conjecture are two. The first is, because I find that the papal kingdom got a considerable accession to its power, upon the Roman Western empire's being destroyed, A.D. 475, to which the Heruli succeeded the year following, and the Ostrogoths afterward. Now if from this remarkable year we begin the calculation of the twelve hundred years, they lead us down to A.D. 1735, which in prophetic account is this very year 1717. The second is, because (as I have many years ago observed,) this year leads us down to a new centenary revolution: for is it not observable that John Huss and Jerome of Prague, (to run this up farther,) were burnt A.D. 1417? After which the true religion in Bohemia, and in other places, was more and more obscured and suppressed, until that famous year 1517, when Luther arose, and gave the Reformation a new resurrection: according to that remarkable prediction of Jerome of Prague, *Centum annis revolutis Deo respondebitis et mihi*;¹ which the Bohemians afterwards stamped upon their coin as their motto. From which year the reformed interest did still increase, (whatever particular stops and troubles it met with,) till the year 1617; about which time the German and Bohemian wars began to break out. And it is but too obvious, what an ebb hath followed since that time to this, notwithstanding the pouring out of the second, third, and fourth vials. So that there is ground to hope, that about the beginning of another such century, things may again alter for the better: for I cannot but hope that some new mortification of the *chief supporters of Antichrist will then happen; and perhaps, the French monarchy may begin to be considerably humbled about that time: that, whereas, the present French king takes the sun for his emblem, and this for his motto: Nec pluribus impar, he may at length, or rather his successors, and the monarchy itself (at least before the year 1794) be forced to acknowledge, that (in respect to the neighboring potentates he) is even singulis impar.*

But as to the expiration of this vial, I do fear it will not be until the year 1794. The reason of which conjecture is this; that I find the pope got a new foundation of exultation, when Justinian, upon the conquest of Italy, left it in a great measure to the pope's management, being willing to eclipse his own authority, to advance that of his haughty prelate. Now this being in the year 552; this, by the addition of the sixteen hundred and twenty years,² reaches down to the year 1811; which according to the prophetic account, is the year 1794. And then I do suppose the fourth vial will end, and the fifth commence, by a new mortification of the papacy, after this vial has lasted one hundred and forty eight years: which indeed is long, in comparison with the former vials; but if it be considered in relation to the fourth, fifth, and sixth trumpets, it is but short,

¹*A hundred years hence ye shall answer to God and me.*

²*sic.* The numbers show 1,260 was meant.

seeing the fourth lasted one hundred and ninety years, the fifth, three hundred and two, and the sixth, three hundred and ninety-three.

And now, my friends, I may be well excused, if I venture no further, in giving you any more conjectural thoughts upon this present period of time. But seeing I pretend to give my speculations, of what is future, no higher character than guesses, I shall still venture to add something to what I have already said. Therefore be pleased, first to call to mind, what I premised to the consideration of the seven vials, as the second preliminary, viz., that seeing the vials do (all of them,) suppose a struggle or war between the popish or reformed parties; every vial is to be looked upon, as the event and conclusion of some new periodical attack of that first party upon this other; the issue of which proves at length favorable to the latter against the former. For if this be duly considered, it will let us see, that great declining of the Protestant interest for some time, and great and formidable advances, and new degrees of increase in the Romish party, are very consistent with the state of both these opposite interests under the vials. For, as Rome pagan was gradually ruined under the seals, under many of which it seemed to increase to outward observation, and to become more rampant than before, when yet it was indeed declining; so must we suppose it will be with Rome papal. For monarchies, as they rise gradually and insensibly, so do they wear out so likewise. And, therefore, we must not entertain such chimerical notions of the fall of the papacy, as if it were to be accomplished speedily or miraculously, as many have done. For as it rose insensibly, and step by step, so must it fall in like manner.

Fleming continued, on another page:¹

But, second, to proceed with my other conjectures relating to the remaining vial: I do further suppose, that

The fifth vial, (v. 10, 11,) which is to be poured out on the seat of the beast, or the dominions that more immediately belong to, and depend upon the Roman see; that, I say, this judgment will probably begin about the year 1794, and expire about A. D. 1848; so that the duration of it, upon this supposition, will be the space of fifty-four years. For I do suppose, that seeing the pope received the title of supreme bishop, no sooner than A. D. 606, he cannot be supposed to have any vial poured upon his seat immediately (so as to ruin his authority so signally as this judgment must be supposed to do) until the year 1848, which is the date of the twelve hundred and sixty years in prophetic account, when they are reckoned from A. D. 606. But yet we are not to imagine that this vial will totally destroy the papacy (though it will exceedingly weaken it,) for we find this still in being and alive, when the next vial is poured out.

¹*Ibid.*, p. 21.

William Whiston (1667-1752)

455 AD – 1715 AD

476 AD – 1736 AD

606 AD – 1866 AD

Whiston first published *An Essay on the Revelation of Saint John* in 1706, in which he claimed that the beast of Revelation 13 would be slain as early as 1716, however this prediction failed. He proposed several alternate dates for the 1,260 year period. The following excerpts are from his 1744 edition.¹

XIV. That the overbearing Tyranny of all the ten Kingdoms in the Roman Empire, should continue 1260 Years, from A.D. 476. till the Year 1736, but no longer; and that, by Consequence, some one at least, of those ten Kingdoms would leave off Antichristian Tyranny and Persecution at this very Year, has been, for the main, foretold from Daniel vii. 25 and Apoc. xiii. 5 by Mr. Mede, a Century ago; by Bishop Lloyd, by Dr. Allix, by Mr. Daubuz, and by Mr. Whiston since; nor is there any Room for delaying this grand Period any longer.

...

XVII. Upon the same Premises tis also easy to foretell, that the Little Horn, Second Beast, and Man of Sin. or the Pope of Rome, and his Antichristian Hierarchy, which arose A.D. 606, 130 Years after the ten Kingdoms; and is to last as long as they, or 1260 Years; though he may probably begin to fall before, yet will he not come to his last End, till our Lord consumes him with the spirit of his mouth, and destroys him with the brightness of his coming: 2 Thess. ii. 8, at the year 1866.

...

They may please to consider further, that this grand Period of 1260 Years, might be well dated from that Year, as well as from 476. Perhaps therefore it may not be amiss, to suppose that this famous Period was to come on gradually at twice, i.e. partly at A.D. 455, and partly at A.D. 476. And that the evident and actual Persecution in Great Britain, and its Dominions, was to cease 1260 Years after the Death of Valentinian III, A.D. 455, or after the taking and sacking of Rome, a Quarter of a Year later, i.e. at A.D. 1715.

Moses Lowman (1679-1752)

756 AD – 2016 AD

Lowman was a nonconformist minister at Clapham. His book, *A paraphrase and notes on the Revelation of St. John*, influenced the Apocalyptic views of Jonathan Edwards (1703 -

¹Whiston, William. *An essay on the revelation of St. John so far as concerns the Past and Present Times*. 1744. pp. 319-323.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=hT1BAAAAcAAJ>

1758). In his chapter on the interpretation of the prophecy of the two witnesses of Revelation 11, he disputed the claims of Grotius and others who took the 1,260 days to be literal days. Lowman thought the days represented years. In his scheme they began in the year 756 AD, implying an ending in the year 2016. Thus in the historicist approach, the gap between the ministry of Jesus and the fulfillment of the prophetic half week of years became ever larger. Lowman wrote:¹

But, before we enter upon the particular meaning of each representation, it may be proper to observe something as to the proper time of this period, as to its beginning and continuance.

As interpreters, for very different reasons, have fallen into very different accounts of both, it has occasioned no little uncertainty and disorder in the different interpretations given of it.

The Papists are very unwilling Protestants should find any of the corruptions of the Roman church in this prophecy, they have therefore used all their art and learning, to finish all the prophecies in this book, in much less time than twelve hundred and sixty years, in the downfall of Rome heathen, when the empire became Christian, under Constantine, A. D. 323. They must therefore make the time of this period, no more than twelve hundred and sixty natural days, or three common years and a half, and in this, the Bishop of Meaux greatly triumphs over the Protestant interpreters, that they should make a year not to signify one year, but three hundred and sixty years.

There are also some learned interpreters among Protestants themselves, who think the whole prophecy reaches but to a small period of time. Grotius, and after him Dr. Hammond, in support of that opinion, make the duration of this period much less than twelve hundred and sixty years; for to understand the twelve hundred and sixty days, according to the stile of prophecy, for so many years, is inconsistent with their favorite schemes, and must quite overthrow them.

But it appears, I conceive, from many reasons, that the opinion which assigns a short time to the whole prophecy, is without all foundation, and expressly contrary to the intent of the prophecy, which is to extend to the day of judgment.

It is also a considerable circumstance, to strengthen the interpretation of days by years, that as it is agreeable to the stile of prophecy, it is most agreeable to the plan of this prophecy. ... let us then see, how justly preferable the prophetic interpretation of a day for a year is in this place.

It is agreeable to the ancient stile of scripture, in the days of Moses, (Numb. xiv. 34.) *after the number of the days in which ye searched the land even forty days, each day for a year, shall you bear your iniquities, even forty years.* The punishment of the people was to be as many years as the days of their

¹Lowman, Moses. *A paraphrase and notes on the Revelation of St. John*, 3rd. Ed. London. T. Cadell. 1773. pp. 143-146.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=i5YCAAAAQAAJ>

transgression; so that each day for a year, seems an allusion to some known method of counting, in which days were answered by years.

The prophetic stile of Ezekiel farther confirms it, (Ezek. iv. 6.) The prophet is directed *to lie on his right side, and bear the iniquity of the House of Judah forty Days*. This is explained to signify, according to the stile of prophecy, so many years: *I have appointed thee each day for a year, or, as in the margin, a day for a year, a day for a year*. So that, in this figurative interpretation, each day in the prophetic representation, is to be answered by a year in the historical event.

In the prophecy of Daniel, this manner of prophetic expression is used again, (Daniel ix. 24.) *Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy*. All who consider this a prophecy relating to the Messiah, for which there are abundant and unanswerable reasons, must consider the seventy weeks as so many times seven years, not as so many weeks of natural days.

It is a criticism below such great men as Grotius, and the Bishop of Meaux, that because *hebdomas* signifies a number of seven, it may signify seven of any thing, according to the circumstance of the place; and therefore a week, (*hebdomas*) which is so called because it contains seven days, may signify seven years. A week primarily signifies seven days, and properly nothing but seven days: a week (*hebdomas*) never did naturally signify seven years, and only can do so, as the figurative expression of prophecy puts a day to signify a year.

The particular circumstances of this prophecy add a farther strength to this interpretation, that the 1260 days are to be understood of so many years.

The order of the prophecies of this book shew, that these 1260 days contain the whole time of the third period; or, all the time wherein the witnesses prophesy, the woman is in the wilderness, and the beast has power given unto him: that is, all the time of the last state of the church's sufferings, to that glorious state of the church, when Satan shall be shut up in the bottomless pit for a thousand years. In this period the seven vials of God's wrath are to be poured out, and all the historical events that relate to them accomplished; this period is to last till the mystery of God shall be finished. These events are too many, and the times in which they are to be accomplished too long, to be comprised within three years and a half, or 1260 natural days.

The order of the periods shew this third is not to begin, until the two former are passed; until the nations which had destroyed the Roman Empire, had divided it among themselves; till the imperial government of Rome was passed away, as the preceding forms of government were before it; till another form of government should be established in Rome, which, on some accounts, should be called the seventh, and on other accounts the eighth form of government; when Rome, once the powerful mistress of the world, after she had lost her dominion, and

seemed to lose it without hope of recovery, should be restored to power and empire again, which was to continue during the 1260 days of this period, and then to be utterly overthrown, and never to rise again.

Now, as a great variety of concurring circumstances shew the beginning of this period, about the year 756, when the popes were invested with the temporal Dominion of Rome, in which only time, the several descriptions of this period do all exactly agree; the 1260 days of this prophecy are to last so long as this power is to continue: which seems evidently to shew, that we are not to understand 1260 natural days, the time of this period, but so many prophetic days, in which a day is given for a year.

Johan Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752)

864 AD – 1521 AD

1058 AD – 1836 AD

Bengel was a Lutheran churchman and scholar. He is best known for his edition of the Greek New Testament, and his *Gnomon* or *Exegetical Commentary*.

Bengel discredited the idea that the 1,260 days of the Apocalypse were 1,260 years. He wrote:¹

If any should pretend that by a day is meant a *year* in several places of the Scriptures, as *Numb.* xiv. 33, 34; *Ezek.* iv. 5, 6; *Dan.* ix. 24, 25, 26; and *Luke* xiii. 33; he is to be answered thus, The fourth of these places speaks of natural days; as is remarked in the *Harmony of the Evangelists* §. 126. The third is nothing to our present purpose; for the word day is not mentioned in it, but the week immediately betokens a *week of years*. In the second, a day is only to represent a year. And in the first, a year of punishment is appointed for each day of their sin : It is not said, Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty *days*, that is, forty *years*. The word *day* is not any where in the Scripture put for the word *year*; as Bishop *Forbes*, on the *Apocalypse*, p. 85, has long ago observed: but if it was so put any where else, it does not follow that it must be so in St. John too; as the Measure in *Revel.* xxi is different from that in *Ezek.* xl.

If one comes *at first* to the knowledge of the times by the help of the *knowledge* he has of the subject-matter, he will *afterwards* come to a *more exact knowledge* of the matter by the help of that of the times: and so *always alternately* (yet no *circulus vitiosus*) every *former* discovery will be brought to greater exactness by the following.

¹Bengel, Johann Albrecht. *Bengelius's introduction to his exposition of the Apocalypse: with his preface to that work and the greatest part of the conclusion of it, and also his marginal notes on the text, which are a summary of the whole exposition.* Translated by John Robertson. 1757. pp. 143-148. <http://books.google.com/books?id=Ru82AAAAMAAJ>

Thus the present argument is remarkably strengthened by this consideration, that we cannot put the beginning of the second woe before *Mahomet*. For the Hour and the Day and the Month and the Year make, by the day of a year long, *three hundred and ninety one years*. Now if we should begin just at the year 622, in which the calamities of *Mahometism* broke out (for farther back we cannot go) it reaches to the year 1013. What shall we reckon after that year for the Interval between the second and third woe? Where shall the forty-two months of the beast, which by this way of reckoning last 1260 years, I will not say *end*, but even *begin*? Where shall we dispose of all the events under the third woe, that happen before and after these forty-two months of 1260 years, from Ch. xii. 12 to Ch. xx. 1? And where is there room for the times mentioned in the xxth chapter, together with the everlasting Gospel?

Again; how can (to speak in particular of the third Woe) the time that the enraged Devil hath, which begins a considerable while before the forty-two months and does not end till after them, be called a *short one*, when the forty-two months alone last 1260 whole years? Certainly the short time which the Devil hath, who is the more enraged on *this* very account, viz. of its shortness, is shorter than that of the thousand years of his being bound, which comes afterwards: and so also much more is the power of the beast during his forty-two months shorter than the thousand years in which those reign who were put to death by the beast.

So then we need not go far for an answer to that question, *What is the matter that hitherto nothing has hit right in expounding this book, even with those who value it most highly? and why so many of their prognostics have failed?* The Reformers themselves did *not*, but afterwards *many protestant* expositors, tho' not *all* those, nor those *alone*, have highly cryed up this *year-day* or day signifying a year; and thus out of the forty-two months, the 1260 days, and the three and a half times have made one calamitous period of 1260 years. Then they pitched upon *some year* in the fifth or some earlier or later century, that appeared to be a remarkable one, and added to *that* the 1260 years: the sum gave the *term* or end of *their* period. There were so many *such terms*, that at last some one or other of the inventors of them should, one would think, have hit by chance on the *right* term, tho' he had not found out either the right beginning or the right length of that period which he made choice of. This *pretended period* of 1260 years was like a large chest where every kind of heterogeneous things (or things of different natures) were thrown in together: but the *true Apocalyptical periods* are like many small drawers in a fine and artfully contrived cabinet, each of which contains only things homogeneous or of the same kind.

He who has once laid aside this *prejudice* of the *year-day*, will find out the *root* of most of the *forced interpretations*: and if he knows of any inquisitive friend, will caution him against a fruitless labour in which many have wasted the greatest part of their life-time.

Most interpreters have begun their imaginary period of 1260 years, at the year

476 and before it. But as that term is already past, in the year 1736, without any considerable event: so, for a long time after the year 476, there are not to be found in history any more later *epochs* for the 1260 years in which a man might take refuge with any plausibility. And yet there is a *general Expectation* of a *nearly approaching revolution*, even among those who observe only the present conjuncture of affairs, without any view at the same time to the word of prophecy. This period of 1260 years, and consequently the year-day, has yet some patrons that have been accustomed to defend it; but it will soon totally vanish, compare the *Gnomon* on Revel. xi. 2.

Bengel thought the 42 months and 1,260 days in Revelation 11:2-3 were common months and days:¹

Forty-two months—These, and the 1260 days in ver. 3, are common months and days: for in the event they are later than the number of the beast, which being put in part enigmatically, in part literally, fixes the point where the book passes from prophetic times to common times, as I more fully show elsewhere. [*Forty-two months* are 1260 days, i. e., three years and a half. This *half of seven* is a ruling number in the Apocalyptic periods of time. "A time, times, and the dividing of time was the duration of the oppression of the saints in Dan. vii. 25. The shutting up of heaven against rain, in ver. 6, reminds us of Elijah, (comp. James v. 17; Luke iv. 25), and the turning water into blood, and smiting the earth with plagues, of Moses, whose testimony endured through 42 stations of Israel's march." Comp. ch. xii. 6. xiii. 5. *Alf*]

Bengel proposed the following interpretation of the 1,260 days of Revelation 12:6:²

A thousand two hundred and three score days—The 1260 prophetic days are 657 full ordinary years. And if you reckon these from A.D. 864 to 1521, you will not be far from the truth. The woman obtained a firm place in the wilderness, in Europe, especially in *Bohemia*, and there, in particular, she was fed; until more free and abundant food was vouchsafed to her by means of the *Reformation*. The close of the 1260 days is the Reformation. The close of the times, 1, 2, and 1/2, is the Millennium. *Between the Reformation and Millennium there is no more remarkable revolution, than the Reformation itself*, the great importance of which is sufficiently plain from this. ["I am quite unable, in common with all apocalyptic interpreters, to point out definitely any period in the history of the Church corresponding to the 1260 years of ch. xxii. 6, or any in the history of this world's civil power, which shall satisfy the forty-two months of ch. xiii. 5. As far as I have seen, every such attempt hitherto made has been characterized by signal failure." *Alf.*, p. 251.]

¹Bengel, Johann Albrecht. *Gnomon of the New Testament*. Vol. 2. Perkinpine & Higgins, 1864. p. 885. <http://books.google.com/books?id=PsVBhA9ucK8C>

²*Ibid.*, pp. 891-892.

On the time, times, and a half of Revelation 12:14, Bengel wrote, in part:¹

Through a *time, and times, and the half of a time*, the Church is fed, removed from the serpent, and assailed by a river, *i.e.*, the attack of the *Turks*, yet not overwhelmed: therefore those times are terminated by the captivity of the serpent, and are conveniently divided by the turning points of Turkish history. The beginning of the captivity, as is shown in its place, will be A.D. 1836. Therefore the *time* is 222 and two-ninth years, from A.D. 1058 to 1280; and in the middle of the eleventh century, a new kingdom arose among the Turks, and shortly afterwards *inundated* the eastern part of the Christian world; but, at the close of the century, the city of Jerusalem was taken from them, which not long after they took again. The times are 555 and four-ninth years, from A.D. 1280 to 1725. In that interval they greatly desolated the Church, having taken Constantinople, having long had possession of Buda, and having more than once besieged Vienna. The *half a time* consists of 111 and one-ninth years, from A.D. 1725 to 1836. Before the end of this half a time, and indeed considerably before the earth swallows up the last attacks of the river.

In Bengel's scheme a prophetic day was $\frac{1}{2}$ year and about 8 days, or $190 + \frac{20}{21}$ days; a prophetic year was $190 + \frac{20}{21}$ natural years or 69570 days.

John Gill (1697-1771)

606 AD – 1866 AD

Gill maintained that the date when the Bishop of Rome was made Universal Bishop, or Pope, should be considered that of the decree of the Emperor Phocas in 606; "if to this we add 1,260 the expiration of his reigns will fall in the year 1866, so that he may have upwards of a hundred and twenty years yet to continue; but of this we cannot be certain; however, the conjecture is not improbable."

Bishop Thomas Newton (1704-1782)

533 AD – 1793 AD

606 AD – 1866 AD

727 AD – 1987 AD

For the 1260 day/year period Newton suggested at least three starting points. The earliest is with Justinian's decree (533 AD), the second Phocas' decree in 606 (this had the additional benefit of being also the beginning of Mohammed's rise to power), and the third the early 8th century when the pope was established as a "temporal prince."

¹*Ibid.*, p. 894.

Joseph Galloway (1731-1803)

606 AD – 1866 AD

Galloway was a former speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly and a friend of Benjamin Franklin. He opposed the American Revolution, and in 1788 he fled to England, believing the Revolution to be mainly a religious quarrel, caused by Presbyterians and Congregationalists, having “principles of religion and polity equally averse to those of the established Church and Government.”

Galloway wrote:¹

If, then, we date the rise of the two apostasies in the year 606, which has just been proved to be the true time, the witnesses have now prophesied in ‘sackcloth’ 1195 years of the 1260 so that there are only 65 years to come, before they will have ‘finished their testimony,’ according to our present mode of calculation. But if the prophet calculated by synchronical years, or only 360 days to a year, according to the Jewish mode of computation, when he wrote, as some commentators suppose, and which indeed, is most probable, there remain only 48 years before the witnesses shall have finished their testimony in sackcloth.

David Simpson (1745-1799)

538 AD – 1798 AD

606 AD – 1866 AD

666 AD – 1926 AD

756 AD – 2016 AD

Simpson was an Anglican priest, and an associate of John Wesley. He addressed his arguments on prophecy to skeptics and wavering Christians. On the little horn of Daniel 7, which he described as “one little horn, that was become so great and powerful, was also to grow proud, and vain, and cruel, and bloody, and tyrannical, and idolatrous, and a vile persecutor of the true servants of the living God,” he wrote:²

This horribly bloody and tyrannical power, was to be aided and assisted in its cruelties towards the genuine followers of the Lamb, by all the other seven kingdoms, over which it had obtained an unbounded influence. This wicked and cruel dominion, was to continue a time and times and half a time. A time here, in prophetic language, signifies a Jewish year, which consisted of 360 days. The times then will signify twice 360 days; and half a time will signify 180 days. But

¹*Brief commentaries upon such parts of the Revelation and other prophecies as immediately refer to the present times: With the prophetic, or, anticipated history of the church of Rome. To which is added A pill for the infidel and atheist,* by Joseph Galloway, 1809. p. 108.

²Simpson, David. *A plea for religion and the Sacred Writings: addressed to the disciples of Thomas Paine, and wavering Christians of every denomination.* Solomon Wiatt, 1809. pp. 154-156

a day, in the language of prophecy, is put for a year. If, therefore, we add these numbers together, they will be thrice 360 years, and 180 years, or exactly twelve hundred and sixty years, for the continuance of this bloody and tyrannical power; at the end of which period it is to be completely and everlastingly destroyed.

Let us see whether these strange predictions of Daniel have ever been accomplished.

The Roman empire was to be destroyed. It was so, in the fifth and sixth centuries. It was to be divided into a number of small kingdoms. It was so in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries. A little horn was to arise, unperceived, and subdue three of the ten horns. The bishop of Rome, in a secret and imperceptible manner, did arise to temporal dominion, and subdued by the help of Pepin, three of those ten states into which the empire had been divided; the senate of Rome, the kingdom of Lombardy, and the exarchate of Ravenna; three governments all in Italy. And, it is extremely remarkable, that upon becoming master of these three states, the bishop of Rome assumed a triple crown, which he hath worn ever since, and which he continues to wear at this very day!

The bishop of Rome was to retain his power over these three states, and his influence over the seven others, 1260 years. If we knew exactly when to begin to reckon these years, we should know precisely when the destruction of Antichrist would take place. (5) Some begin to reckon from the year 606, when the proud prelate of Rome was declared universal bishop. Others begin from the year 666, the apocalyptic number; and others from the year 756, when he became a temporal prince. If the first period be right, then the Pope, the undoubted Antichrist of the New Testament, will be completely destroyed, as a horn, about the year 1866. If the second period be intended by the spirit of prophecy, then his end will be near the year 1926. But if the third period be the time, then Antichrist will retain some part of his dominion over the nations till about the year 2016.

Writing in about 1798, Simpson also anticipated the end of the 1,260 days of the prophecies of Revelation in his own time. He wrote:¹

From this view of these two classes of predictions concerning the Saviour of mankind, and the condition of the Christian church in the world, every candid and sober-minded man, may see, without the smallest room for deception, that there is something far more than human in the prophetic Scriptures. It is impossible to account for all these strange coincidences, upon any principles of nature or art whatever. Here is a long series of predictions running through all time, partly fulfilled, partly fulfilling, and partly to be fulfilled. Let any man account for it, without supernatural interposition. If he cannot, then the Scriptures are of

¹Ibid., pp. 184-187.

divine original; Jesus is the Saviour of mankind; all the great things foretold shall be accomplished; infidels and infidelity shall be confounded world without end; and sound, practical believers in Christ Jesus, of every denomination, shall stand secure and joyful amidst the convulsion of nations, the subversion of churches, "the wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds." ...

Are not abundance of these predictions fulfilling at this day before our eyes? Is not the religion of Jesus' diffusing itself far and wide among the nations of the earth? Did not the corruptions of it commence at a very early period? Did not the church of Rome assume an universal spiritual empire in the seventh century, and temporal dominion in the eighth? Is it not expressly predicted, that the illegitimate empire of that church should continue the precise period of 1260 years? Does it not seem that those 1260 years are upon the point of expiring? Were not great changes to take place among the kingdoms, into which the Roman empire was to be divided, about the expiration of the said term? Have not great changes already taken place in those kingdoms? Were not the nations, which, for so many ages, had given their power unto the beast, to turn against that beast, and use means for its destruction? Is not this part of the prophecy also, in a good degree, fulfilled at the present moment? Have not all the catholic powers forsaken the pope in the time of his greatest need? And is not he, who, a few ages ago, made all Europe tremble at the thunder of his voice, now become weak like other men? Are not the claws of the beast cut, and his teeth drawn, so that he can no longer either scratch or bite? Is he not already in our day, and before our own eyes, stripped of his temporal dominion? And doth not the triple crown, even now dance upon his head? or rather, has he not forever lost his right and title to wear it? Is it not extremely remarkable, and a powerful confirmation of the truth of Scripture prophecy, that just 1260 years ago from the present 1798, in the very beginning of the year 538, Belisarius put an end to the empire of the Goths at Rome, leaving no power therein but the bishop of that metropolis? Read these things in the prophetic Scriptures; compare them coolly with the present state of Europe, and deny the truth of Divine revelation, if you can.—Open your eyes, and behold these things accomplished in the face of the whole world. This thing is not done in a corner.

Bryce Johnston (1747-1805)

756 AD – 1999 AD

Johnston was a minister at Hollywood, 2 miles north of Dumfries, Scotland. He followed the principle suggested by Isaac Newton, of converting the numbers in Revelation to solar years, and thought that the number of the beast, 666, represents 657 solar years that began AD 95, when John wrote. They ended in AD 756, which was therefore the date of the beast's commencement. The 1260 days he understood to be 1243 solar years, and by adding 1,243 years to 756, he arrived at the date 1999 AD for the termination of the 1,260 days.

Discussing the period of the two witnesses he wrote:¹

It will appear, that the holy city which the church of Rome shall tread under foot for 42 months, shall at the end of that period be rescued from their hands, and measured off to the true worshipers of God as certainly as the temple was at the beginning of that period. This will be shewn in the commentary on chap. xxi. 10,– 21. Upon the principles established in the commentary on chap. ix. 5. the forty-two months here, are 42 prophetic months, that is, 1260 years. But as each of these years consists of twelve months, and each of these months of 30 days, each year must contain 360 days, which is five days and some fractions less than the solar year, which hath for a considerable time also been the civil year. Therefore five times 1260 days, which is 6300 days or 17 solar years, must be deducted from the 1260 years, by which they will be reduced to 1243 solar years, the exact time represented by the symbolical number of 42 months. During that long period of time, the church of Rome shall appear in great outward pomp and grandeur, and extend over a great part of the world, whilst the church of Christ during the same period, blessed with all the essentials of true religion, shall be stripped of outward magnificence. And during that period, the church of Rome shall be vested with a temporal as well as an ecclesiastic jurisdiction.

But when did these 42 months commence? They commenced at the time the church of Rome was vested with a temporal dominion, and the Popes received the scepter of the Heathen emperors, as their predecessors in the government of Rome. This shall be shewn in its proper place, from a prediction in chap, xiii. 18, to have been the year of Christ 756. And it shall be shewn from authentic history, that in that very year Pepin king of France granted to the Pope and his successors the temporal dominion of Rome, under the name of the patrimony of St. Peter.

For the 1024 years of that time which is past, the church of Christ and the church of Rome have appeared exactly in the situations in which they are represented in this hieroglyphic. And we have no reason to doubt, that those who shall live at the end of that period shall see that this prediction hath been as exactly fulfilled in the last 20 years of of the period, as it has already been in the first 1034 years of it.

This relative situation of the church of Christ and of the church of Rome, the former worshiping God in spirit and in truth, according to the ordinances of divine institution, without external pomp and shew, the latter regulating their worship by many Heathenish rites with great outward pomp and shew, the former persecuted, and the latter persecuting it for the period of 1243 years, commencing in the year of Christ 756, and consequently ending in the year 1999, is represented by five different hieroglyphics in this, the 12th and 13th chapters of this book,

¹Johnston, Bryce. *A commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, Volume 1. William Creech, 1807. p. 363-366. <http://books.google.com/books?id=pPc2AAAAMAAJ>

and the precise same period of time fixed in every one of them, though mostly in different expressions.

In this verse, it is represented by the Gentiles treading the holy city under their foot for 42 months;—In the third verse, by Christ's two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth for 1260 days;—in chap. xii. 6. by the woman fed in the wilderness 1265 days;—in chap. xii. 14. by the woman nourished in the wilderness for a time and times and half a time, that is, for three years and an half;—and in chap. xiii. 5. by power given to the Beast to continue 42 months. The smallest attention may satisfy every candid person, that all these five denominations of time signify the same precise length of time. For three years and an half, each year consisting of 12 months, are exactly 42 months. And 42 months, each each month consisting of 30 days, are exactly 1260 days. As we proceed it shall appear, that all these different hieroglyphics refer to the relative situations of the church of Christ and of the church of Rome in the same period of time, but in different points of view.

Thomas Scott (1747-1821)

Scott was the author of a popular Bible Commentary. In an article on Revelation 11:1, 2 he wrote:¹

The scene is the temple; and 'a reed like a measuring rod,' being given to the apostle, he was ordered to measure the temple, the altar, and the worshipers in the inner court. (*Notes*, Ex. 27:9-19. Ez. 40:3.) This denoted that, in the predicted period, there would be a small number, whose doctrine, worship, and behavior, would bear measuring by the Word of God; and that these only would be acceptable, interior worshipers; whereas, 'the outer court' being left, by express command, unmeasured, and 'given unto the Gentiles,' emphatically showed, that the greatest number of professed Christians would be formal, superstitious, and idolatrous worshipers; Christians only in name, but Gentiles in wickedness, and even in idolatry. The 'holy city' also, being 'trodden under foot' by them, implied that the church at large, and its most lucrative and eminent places, would be filled with idolaters, infidels, and hypocrites, and that true Christians would be oppressed in a grievous manner. The duration of the evil times was fixed to 42 months, or 1260 days, which, by prophetic computation, are so many years. (*Notes*, Dan. 7:23-27. 8:9-14. 12:5-13.) The whole of Daniel's prophecies should be compared with the subsequent parts of this book, as the same events and dates are intended in both; and this gives a measure of certainty to the interpretation. Daniel also fixes these events to the remains of the fourth monarchy, after it was broken to pieces, and formed ten kingdoms; and this determines the geography of them, especially to the western empire, which

¹Henry, Matthew, & Thomas Scott. *The Comprehensive Commentary on the Holy Bible: Acts-Revelation*. Fessenden & Co., 1839. p. 699.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=7hxVAAAAMAAJ>

was properly the seat of that monarchy. So that the outlines, both of the *time* and *place*, to which these prophecies belonged, are unalterably determined, by the prophets themselves; nor can the accomplishment of them be referred to any other times or places, without doing the most manifest violence to them in both respects. Indeed, the prophecies of Daniel, and those of the apostle, when properly explained, and compared with each other and with their accomplishment, constitute the fullest imaginable demonstration, of the truth of the Scripture. But demonstration itself cannot convince those, who will not bestow due pains to examine it.—The beginning of these 1260 years must be placed subsequent to the first four trumpets, on the subversion of the Western empire, which was completed A. D. 566. This made way for the pope, in process of time, to acquire a vast accession of ecclesiastical dominion. (*Note*, 2 Thess. 2:3-7.) He became universal bishop, A. D. 606; and was fully established as a temporal prince, A. D. 756. Did we know exactly at what time to date the beginning of the 1260 years, we might show with certainty when they would terminate; but this would not consist with that wise obscurity, which always, in some respects, rests on prophecies, before they are fulfilled. Till the event, therefore, shall explain this matter, it must be left undetermined; but perhaps the *beginning* of the rise and of the fall of this antichristian tyranny, and the *completion* of them, may both be at the distance of 1260 years from each other; as in more than one way the Babylonish captivity lasted 70 years. (*Notes*, 2 Ki. 24:1, 8-16. Ezra 1:1-4. Dan. 1:1, 2.) The beginning, however, of these years cannot well be fixed sooner than A.D. 606, nor later than A.D. 750. It is, indeed, far from probable, that the beginning fell so late as this; but that it did not much precede 606, will, I think, after wards appear. (*Note*, 7–12.)—‘*Measuring* the servants of God, is equivalent to sealing them.—The unmeasured tenants of the outer court, and the unsealed men throughout the Roman empire, are alike the votaries of the apostasy; while they that were measured, and they that were sealed, are the saints who refused to be partakers of his abominations.’ *Faber*.

John Chappel Woodhouse (1749-1833)

Woodhouse was Dean of Lichfield 1807-1833. His work on the Apocalypse was distinguished by his spiritual approach. He endeavored to determine the meaning of the symbols from the writings of the Old Testament prophets, and other scriptures. On the period when the two witnesses prophesy, he wrote:¹

To proceed to the application of this prophecy: we are not to expect a literal accomplishment. For first, that would be contrary to the mode of interpretation,

¹Woodhouse, John Chappel. *The Apocalypse, or Revelation of Saint John, translated: with notes, critical and explanatory; to which is prefixed A dissertation on the divine origin of the book; in answer to the objections of the late Professor J.D. Michaelis*. 1805. pp. 294-298. <http://books.google.com/books?id=TNNJAAAAMAAJ>

to which we are in general directed by the highest authority; by our Lord himself and angels, who, in explaining the "mystery" of the stars, the lamp-bearers, the wild-beast, his heads, his horns, teach us to look for a hidden and allegorical meaning. Secondly, such an explication becomes necessary in this particular prophecy: for, the dead bodies are represented as lying "in the streets of the great" city which is called spiritually Sodom, and Egypt, "where also their Lord was crucified." Now it is plainly, in a spiritual sense in which we are to understand the words Sodom, Egypt, and Jerusalem:— they are used metaphorically. And further, the great city which is called Sodom, Egypt, and Jerusalem, cannot be all of them, and therefore must be interpreted to signify some great society, or body of men, which is like them all; resembling those famous communities in the peculiar wickedness of each; and in rebellion to the most high God; for such is the character of them all. As Jerusalem, in its degenerate days, is by the prophets called Sodom and Gomorrah; so the great city, in which the witnesses prophesy and suffer, is called after the name of all the above mentioned communities, because resembling all. Thirdly; the time of the accomplishment of this prophecy seems well ascertained: for, although doubt may arise concerning the exact commencement, and consequently the close of its period; yet the main part of it is plainly seen to occupy many centuries of the most degenerate and idolatrous periods of the Christian Church; at a time when the Gentile world, the European nations, professed the Christian Religion, but not in purity; a time contemporary with the reign of the wild-beast; a period of 1260 years; a considerable part of which, at least, is now past. Yet, during this period, we cannot remark in history, that any such literal accomplishment has taken place. Nor, (fourthly,) can we expect such literal accomplishment: because in other instances, the acknowledged types under the Old Testament have not been thus literally fulfilled in the Gospel. John the Baptist is said to come "in the spirit and power of Elias;" nay, to be that very prophet; yet, conformably to the spirit of meekness which belongs to the Gospel, he performed no avenging miracles; he called down no fire from heaven to consume his enemies. He knew by the Holy Ghost, and better than those disciples who entreated their Master for this fire, "what manner of Spirit he was of." He knew, that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down strong holds."

Thus, in a spiritual sense, the prophecy may be accomplished in the witnesses, without (1.) literal fire; without (2.) the hindrance of literal rain; or (3.) the conversion of the waters literally into blood. The first may be deemed essentially fulfilled, if their enemies, the enemies of pure Religion, are in many instances dismayed, confounded, frustrated, and subdued by the heavenly words of their mouth. The second, if the rain from heaven, which, spiritually interpreted, is the blessing from heaven upon the growth of true Religion, is evidently suspended during their prophecy. The third, if in the contest, their enemies, instead of the peaceful enjoyment, expected to accrue from the overthrow of the witnesses, be found to have that peace troubled and discomfited, and blood and slaughter to

be poured on their own heads. Add to this, that the death of the witnesses is also to be taken in a spiritual sense. Such interpretation agrees best with the succession of witnesses, which, as before observed, must necessarily take place in so long a duration of time. They do not all die, and again arise from the dead; but if their religion and the power thereof be first extinguished, and then raised again, the prophecy seems to be accomplished.

We are then to look beyond the literal sense; and fixing our attention on the period of history, to which we seem directed, we cannot but remark a long succession of ages, commencing with the times when the western Gentiles flowed into the Church, and possessed the outer courts of the temple; when on their ignorance and superstition a corrupt and ambitious clergy began to raise the papal hierarchy, substituting pagan ceremonies and unauthorized observances in the room of primitive Religion. These, in history are called the middle ages; intervening between the bright period of Grecian and Roman literature, and the restoration of learning in the fourteenth century; between the days of primitive Christian knowledge, and the return of it at the Reformation. They are marked in ecclesiastical history by increasing ignorance, superstition, corruption, and by papal usurpation. But the progress of these foes to true Religion, and to the happiness of mankind, was opposed and retarded by the professors of a purer faith. "God did not leave himself without a witness." There arose in various parts of the great Christian republic, and at various periods, professors, and preachers of a purer religion; of a religion formed upon the precepts and promises revealed in that Sacred Book, which it was the constant endeavor of the ecclesiastical usurpers to keep out of sight. A successive train of these, though thinly scattered, was seen steadfastly to profess pure Religion, and, in defiance of the papal thunder, to hold up to admiring Christians the light of the Gospel, and the true worship of the Temple. Although beset with difficulties and dangers, from the civil and ecclesiastical powers, now united to suppress them, they stood their ground with a confidence and energy, which could arise only from such a cause; the cause of truth, cherished and supported by the Spirit and power of God. If they suffered, their enemies suffered also,—were frequently discomfited in the conflict, and enjoyed at last a dear-bought and only temporary victory.

Although he thought the 42 months and 1,260 days represented so many years, Woodhouse was cautious about assigning any specific dates for the period.¹

The four grand apocalyptic periods are involved very much together, and before the final completion of them *all* has taken place, it may not be in the power of man to settle the times when each of them had its commencement. But, for the reasons above assigned, I am inclined to conjecture that the period

¹*Ibid.*, p. 344.

of the beast maybe found to derive its beginning somewhat later than that of the woman in the wilderness; and to receive its termination somewhat later than that of the witnesses. His times seem rather later than either of theirs. And it may perhaps be found, that those of the woman and of the witnesses are the same; with which the other remaining period, that of the Gentiles treading the holy city, seems also to accord. Commentators seem to have been too adventurous in fixing the exact commencement of these periods, which appear to be involved in a purposed obscurity, which *the event* only can clear. But it may be probable, that the 1260 years of the Gentiles; of the woman in the wilderness, and of the witnesses; will come to their conclusion, before the antichristian reign of *the beast* is seen finally to cease. And this is all that I dare advance concerning prophecies which are yet fulfilling.

George Stanley Faber (1773-1854)

604 AD – 1864 AD

606 AD – 1866 AD

Faber was an Anglican theologian, and a prolific author. He argued that the 1,260 days of prophesying by the two witnesses, and the period when the woman of Revelation 12, who represents the Church, is nourished in the wilderness, excluded the centuries when the Roman Emperors were pagan. He wrote:¹

IN the Prophecies of Daniel and St. John, frequent mention is made of a certain period, during which, for wise purposes, unknown to us, the enemies of God should be allowed to persecute and oppress his *Church*. This period is indifferently described as consisting of *three times and a half, 42 months, or 1260 days*: for if we reckon *a time* or *a year* to contain *360 days, 42 months, or 1260 days*, will, in that case, be exactly equal to three such years and a half. In the language of prophecy however, as it is well known, natural years are termed days. Hence *1260 days* mean *1260 years*: and, by a parity of reckoning, *42 months* mean *so many months of years*; and *three years and a half* the same number of *years of years*. Consequently the period, during which the Church is to be oppressed by her enemies, amounts to *1260 natural years*.

Both Daniel and St. John have given us abundantly sufficient reasons for concluding, that this period of persecution and trouble has no connexion with the persecutions which *the Church* endured from *the pagan Roman Emperors*. The first of these prophets, in his vision of *the four great beasts or empires*, intimates, that *the power*, into whose hand *the saints* should be given during

¹Faber, George Stanley, *A dissertation on the prophecies, that have been fulfilled, are now fulfilling, or will hereafter be fulfilled, relative to the great period of 1260 years*. M. and W. Ward, and E. Duyckinck, 1811. p. 25-27.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=dDMXAAAAYAAJ>

the appointed period of 1260 years, should begin to arise in the age in which *the last beast*, or The Roman Empire, was divided into *ten horns or kingdoms*. *The Roman Empire*, however, was not thus divided till after it had become Christian, and till all the persecutions of the pagan Emperors had ceased. Whence it will necessarily follow, that the period of 1260 years cannot include the persecutions of Paganism, and that *the power* symbolized by *the little horn of the Roman beast* must be *some power* at once posterior to and distinct from the line of the pagan Emperors. The second of these prophets, in a similar manner, describes a variety of important events as taking place between his own age and that in which *the 1260 years* may be supposed to have commenced; and, like Daniel, teaches us, that the date of *those 1260 years* is to be sought for, not at any era while *the Roman Empire* was *one great monarchy*, but after it had been broken into *ten kingdoms*. Independent indeed of chronological considerations, the very term of *1260 years* plainly shews, that that period can have no relation to the tyranny of *pagan Rome*. Constantine published his famous edict for the encouragement of Christianity, and the abolition of all persecution, in *the year 313*. *The primitive Church*, therefore, was only subject to the malice of Paganism during the space of *313 years*; whereas it is, more or less, to be subjected to the malice of *the little horn* during the space of *1260 years*.

But, although *the pagan Roman Empire*, has no connection with the persecution of *1260 years*, we are evidently to look for the grand promoter or promoters of it within the limits of *the old Roman Empire*. *The little horn, the ten horns, and the last head of the fourth head, all arise out of that beast; the Roman Empire*, therefore, must necessarily comprehend *every one of these powers*.

The 1,260 days, Faber said, represent 1,260 years of apostasy, and began in the year 606 AD, which implied the period would end in 1866. He wrote:¹

The period, assigned both by Daniel and St. John to the tyrannical reign of *live man of sin* or *the little horn of the Roman beast*, and the dominance of *the great western Apostasy*, is *three times and a half*, or 1260 years. Here, therefore, we must define the proper mode of dating that period.

In prophecies, which are *strictly chronological*, the overt acts of communities, or the heads of communities, are necessarily alone considered in the fixing of dates; because it would be impossible for us to know how to date any particular period from the insulated and unauthorized acts of individuals. But in prophecies which are *not strictly chronological*, the scope is much more wide, and much less definite; extending, not merely to communities and their heads, but to every individual whose actions the prophecies may describe. On these grounds there are two entirely different dates to *the Apostasy*. The *first* is its date when considered as relating to individuals: the *second* is its date, when considered as relating to

¹*Ibid.*, p. 31-33.

that community over which the man of sin presides. St. Paul describes *the apostasy* in its *first*, or individual character; Daniel and St. John specify its triumphant duration in its *second* or *general* character. Now it is manifest, that the date of *the Apostasy*, when considered *individually*, is the very day and hour when any single Christian individual was first guilty of any one of those acts which characterize *the Apostasy*; and it is equally manifest, that this date never can be ascertained by man, but is known unto *God* alone. We can say, indeed, in general terms, that monkish celibacy, and a superstitious veneration of saints and angels, were creeping fast into the Church during the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries; but we shall find it impossible to point out the precise year of their commencement. Such being the case, Daniel and St. John, in their chronological prophecies, consider *the Apostasy* only in its *public* and *authorized* capacity; and teach us to esteem the 1260 years, as being the period of *the public dominance of the Apostasy*, not of *its individual continuance*. Accordingly they both specify, with much exactness, the era, from which those years are to be computed. Daniel directs us to date them from the time when *the saints were by some public net of the state delivered into the hand of the little horn*: and St. John, in a similar manner, teaches us to date them from the time when *the woman, the true Church*, fled into the wilderness from the face of *the serpent*: when *the mystic city of God* began to be trampled under foot by a new race of Gentiles, or idolaters; when *the great Roman beast*, which had been slain by the preaching of the Gospel, revived in its bestial character, by setting up an idolatrous spiritual tyrant in the Church, or, as Daniel expresses it, by delivering *the saints* into the hand of such a tyrant; and when *the witnesses* began to prophecy in sackcloth. A date, which will answer to these concurring particulars, can certainly have no connection with the mere acquisition of a *temporal* principality by the Pope. It seems most probably to be the year, in which *the Bishop of Rome* was constituted *supreme head of the Church*, with the proud title of Universal Bishop: for by such an act *the whole Church*, comprehending both good and bad, both *the saints* of the Most High and those who were tainted with the gentilism of *the Apostasy*, considered *individually*, were formally given by the chief secular power, *the head of the Roman Empire*, into the hand of the encroaching *little horn*. This year was the year 606, when the reigning Emperor Phocas, the representative of *the sixth head of the beast*, declared Pope Boniface to be *Universal Bishop*: and the *Roman church* hath ever since shown itself to be *that little horn*, into whose hands *the saints* were then delivered, by styling itself, with equal absurdity and presumption, *the Catholic or universal Church*. *The year 606* then seems to be the date of *the 1260 years*, and the era of what St. Paul terms *the revelation of the man of sin*. *The Apostasy*, in its *individual* capacity, was already in existence *previous* to such revelation; hence he represents it as commencing *before* it: but, as soon as *the man of sin* was openly revealed, by having *the saints* delivered into his hand, then apparently commenced *the 1260 years of the Apostasy* in its *public* and *dominant* capacity.

Faber seems to have modified his date to 1864, in the following, written in 1852:¹

If I have correctly placed the termination of the 1260 years in the year 1864, we may expect, in no great length of time, the commencement of a General War, a War of Opinion, in Europe: and, when we consider the baleful perfection to which the Military Art of Destruction has now been carried, we may readily understand the force of the declaration, that, in the latter scenes of the internecive war which open out at the close of the 1260 years and at the commencement of the Time of the End, synchronically with the Deliverance of Daniel's People; *there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.*

Faber believed that when the 1,260 years ended, the Jews would be converted, and return to their homeland. Against those who said the 1,260 years had already expired, he said,

Some have supposed, that the 1260 years are already expired, and that their expiration took place about the commencement of the French revolution. As yet I have seen no sufficient reasons to induce me to assent to this opinion. According to the most natural interpretation of Dan. xii. 6, 7, the interpretation adopted by Mr. Mede and other eminent expositors, the interpretation which best harmonizes with parallel prophecies, the Jews will begin to be restored so soon as the three times and a half shall have expired. But the Jews have not begun to be restored. Therefore we scarcely seem warranted in supposing that the three times and a half have expired. However this may be, I have little doubt that the wonderful shaking of nations during these last eighteen years is preparatory to the return and conversion of God's chosen people, and to the final overthrow of his congregated enemies.

James Hartley Frere (1779-1866)

532 AD – 1792 AD

Frere identified Napoleon as the 'vile person, to whom they shall not give the honor of the Kingdom,' of Daniel 11:21, in his book *A Combined View of the Prophecies of Daniel, Esdras and St John, Shewing that all the Prophetic Writings are Formed upon One Plan*, published before the battle of Waterloo, in 1815.² Frere became notorious for date-setting, which was distinguished for including not only the year, but also the month and day. He claimed that the termination of 1,260 years was on 21st September, 1792:³

¹Faber, G. S. *Napoleon III: The Man of Prophecy Or the Revival of the French Emperorship Anticipated from the Necessity of Prophecy*. 1852. p. 69-70

²<http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=397101§ion=1.5.2>

³Frere, James Hartley. *A combined view of the prophecies of Daniel, Ezra, and St. John*. J. Hatchard, 1826. pp. 38-39.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=ke00AAAAMAAJ>

The Reign Of Popery is predicted in Daniel's vision of the Four Beasts, where it is said, "that the Saints should be given into the hands of the little Papal horn for a time and times, and the dividing of time," or for 1260 natural years.—In the Little Opened Book of Saint John, it is the period of the forty-two prophetic months, or 1260 natural years, during which the ten-horned Beast, or the Roman empire is described as being under the influence of the two-horned Beast, or the Papacy. —It is also the same period of 1260 prophetic days, or natural years, during which the two Witnesses are said to prophesy, clothed in sackcloth: or the Old and New Testaments to be held in disesteem by the Papists.—It is likewise the same period of "a time, and times, and half a time," or 1260 natural years, during which the Woman is said to be nourished in the wilderness: or the true Church to be secretly sustained, though in barrenness and obscurity.

—It is also the same period of 42 prophetic months, or 1260 natural years, during which the Outer Court of the Temple is given to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles: or the visible Church is permitted to be overrun by the Papists.—This period is supposed to extend from March, 533, to 21st September, 1792.

The Period of the Reign Of Infidelity in the history of the Church (being the same as that of the destruction of the Empire) is the period of the 30 years of Daniel or difference, between the two periods of the 1260 and 1290 years, including also the first part of the following 45 years.

Frere proposed dates for the termination of the 1,290 years and the 1,335 years of Daniel 12:11-12, and predicted that the Jews would be restored to their land after 1823.¹

It has been already shewn when examining other prophecies, that the 1260 years prosperity of the Papacy terminate in the year 1792, and the 1290 years in 1822–3: subsequently to which (the period of the seventh Vial alone intervening,) the Papal and Infidel powers will be destroyed, and the Jews restored to their own land. Prophetic history then becomes less particular and distinct; for the world is described as in a state of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, "even unto that same time;" and no farther information is given except as to the blessedness of those who should wait and come to the end of the period of 45 years, or to the year 1867.

William Miller (1782-1849)

538 AD – 1798 AD

Miller thought the two witnesses represent the scriptures. In 1840 he wrote:²

¹*Ibid.*, p. 256.

²<http://www.earlysda.com/miller/views4.html>

What are those witnesses? Rev. xi. 4: “These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.” Zech. iv.: The candlestick is there called the word of God unto Zerubbabel. Psalm cxix. 105: “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” The olive-trees are sons of oil, the evidence for our faith in Christ. John v. 39: “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” The answer then is, the Scriptures.

Miller claimed that the one thousand two hundred and sixty years of the papacy were to be reckoned from A. D. 538, by virtue of the decree of Justinian. This decree, though issued A. D. 533, did not go into full effect until 538, when the enemies of the Catholics in Rome were subjugated by Belisarius, a general of Justinian. A biographer wrote:¹

Miller adopted the Protestant view, that they represent years. There is probably no point respecting which Protestant commentators have been more agreed than this. Faber, Prideaux, Mede, Clarke, Scott, the two Newtons, Wesley, and almost every expositor of note, have considered this a settled question. Indeed, so universal has been this interpretation of these periods that Professor Stuart says: ‘IT IS A SINGULAR FACT THAT THE GREAT MASS OF INTERPRETERS in the English and American world have, for many years, been wont to understand the days designated in Daniel and the Apocalypse as the representatives or symbols of years. I found it difficult to trace the origin of this GENERAL, I might say ALMOST UNIVERSAL, CUSTOM.’

Matthew Habershon (1789-1852)

533 AD – 1793 AD

583 AD – 1843 AD

Habershon was an English architect, who wrote several books on the time periods of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. Noting that several of the dates that other interpreters had identified as milestones, marking the fulfillment of the 1,260 years, had passed without incident, he suggested a *double commencement*, and a *double termination* to the 1,260 year period.²

Joshua William Brooks (1790-1882)

Brooks was an Anglican priest, and Vicar of All Saints’ Church, Nottingham, England, 1843-1864. He reviewed many attempts by others to discover the start and end dates of

¹<http://www.earlysda.com/miller/william-miller-biography-11.html>

²Habershon, Matthew. *A dissertation on the prophetic scriptures: chiefly those of a chronological character; shewing their aspect on the present times, and on the destinies of the Jewish nation*. Printed by G. Ellerton, and published by J. Nisbet, 1834. p. viii.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=kdM0AAAAMAAJ>

the prophetic 1,260 years in his book, *Elements of prophetic interpretation*, but avoided supporting any particular pair of dates. He called such attempts rash.¹

Among the various mistakes upon the subject, some have been rashly led to fix the event to a certain year, or even a certain day; a mode of interpretation which does not appear to have any warrant in the word of God; but the contrary. For though abundant is revealed concerning the signs which shall precede that event, whereby the believer may know that his redemption draweth nigh; (Luke xxi. 28;) yet of the day and hour of his coming it is not given to any man to know. (Matt. xxi v. 36.) And even in the Apocalypse, which is by some supposed to be a subsequent specification of the times, the advent is nevertheless spoken of as to take place suddenly, and as a thief cometh.

Granting then that many have been deceived by such calculations; and granting likewise, that the whole church has been repeatedly in error on this point, and have indulged in delusive expectations; there is at all events nothing in the objection drawn from previous mistakes on this point, which will not apply with equal strength to the expectation of the advent, let it be entertained *at any period whatsoever*. If there be any force in the argument, it will be as forcible on the very day previous to our Lord's actual coming, as it is now; and there will be just as much reason then as now for deprecating the hope of his speedy appearing.

A note in his book lists some of the dates that had been previously proposed for the rise of Antichrist, the end of the world, and the end of the 1,260 years.²

The reader who has a desire for entering into these discrepancies will find the following formidable array of different dates brought forward by Calmet (a Roman Catholic writer) which have been assigned by different expositors for the rising of Antichrist. Arnaud de Villeneuve 1326, Francis Melet 1530 or 1540, John of Paris 1560, Cardinal de Cusa 1730 or 1734, Peter D'Aille 1789, Jerom Cardan 1800, and John Pico of Mirandolo 1994. Bengel also notices the following years, as being periods which were immediately preceded by a great expectation that the world would come to an end; (but this expectation existed without any adequate cause,) viz. 1288, 1388, 1488, 1588, and 1666. Pref. p. 311. The Rev. S. R. Maitland gives us the following dates which have been fixed upon for the termination of the 1260 years of Dan. vii. viz. 1650, 1655, 1670, 1686, 1694, 1697, 1716, 1736, &c. Reply to Cuninghame, p. 113. And in his "Reply to a Review in the Morning Watch" he adduces various instances from modern writers, who differ from each other in regard to important events which they fix the accomplishment of as follows: 1843, 1866, 1873, 1888, 1917, 1920, 2000.

¹Brooks, Joshua William. *Elements of prophetic interpretation*. Orrin Rogers, 1841. p. 127. <http://books.google.ca/books?id=ybw0AAAAMAAJ>

²*Ibid.*, p. 333.

Edward Irving (1792-1834)

533 AD – 1793 AD

Irving's views on eschatology were strongly influenced by James Hartley Frere.¹

Irving's interpretation of the 1,260 days, which followed the interpretation proposed by Frere, is expressed in a book published in 1828:²

The next passage to which I have to direct your attention is the last verse of the book of Daniel, where it is written, "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." The first question here is, What days meaneth he? The verse preceding furnisheth the answer: "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." These are the days at the end of which Daniel was to stand in his lot; that is, his allotted office or station upon the earth; for if it be his condition in the middle state, then he is in it long ere now. Daniel is now resting with Job and the rest of the saints; but at the end of these days he shall stand in his lot of active administration. Now, concerning this awakening from the sleep of the dust, you have particular mention made of it in ver. 2, and in ver. 1, concerning the deliverance of the Jewish people, and the time of unexampled trouble which is to precede it. And in the last verse of the foregoing chapter you have the destruction of the infidel Antichrist, which is to precede these, or to fall out about the same time. Of which events not one having yet happened, we can with perfect certainty say, that "the end of the days," or the last days, are not yet ushered in. But a more particular consideration of this passage will throw yet more light upon the subject which we have in hand. After Christ—for it is no other—had revealed all the mysteries up to the resurrection of the saints, Daniel heard (ver. 6) a questioner ask further information as to the time "how long it should be to the end of these wonders." Who received for answer, that it should be for "a time, times, and an half;" that is, the period of the little horn's tyranny over the saints: but how much longer he saith not, but signifieth that it should be for a season longer, until God should have accomplished to scatter (that is, should be done or finished with scattering) the power of the holy people; then all these things should be finished. That is to say, they would run through the Papal period, and continue till the restoration of the Jews. Daniel, not understanding this, because it was sealed till the time of the end, and hath only lately been opened, did inquire at one of the questioners, "What shall be the end of these things?" and in answer received this information (ver. 11): "From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate

¹<http://www.cc-vw.org/articles/irving1.html>

²Irving, Edward. *The last days: a discourse on the evil character of these our times, providing them to be the "perilous times" of the "last days."* J. Nisbet, 1850. p. 19-22.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=B9IHAAAQAAJ>

set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." All the time up to the conclusion of the Papal usurpation is reckoned by times, being one thousand two hundred and sixty days; but all beyond it is reckoned by days, being thirty days and forty-five days, these being the odd days over the three times and a half—a time or year being three hundred and sixty of these days, as we learn from the Apocalypse. (Compare xi. 2, 3, with xii. 6, 14.) The times and the fullness of the times, so often mentioned in the New Testament, I consider as referring to the great period numbered by times; the days, to the thirty and the forty-five days by which the course of the Lord's purposes over-went the three times and a half. Of these days, I should consider the forty-five days to be the last of the days in which these great events are to be revealed. Now, if this reasoning be correct, as there can be little doubt that the one thousand two hundred and sixty days concluded in the year 1792, and the thirty additional days in the year 1823, we are already entered upon the last days, and the ordinary life of a man will carry many of us to the end of them. If this be so, it gives to the subject with which we have introduced this year's ministry a very great importance indeed. Further, if you will look to the opening of this vision (x. 14), you will see a great confirmation of this our conclusion; for it is there said that this vision was expressly given to show him "what should befall his people in the latter days." Now, in all the vision the Jewish people are not once mentioned till xii. 1, when they are delivered immediately upon the fall of Antichrist, which is not yet happened, and is, as we believe, just about to arrive.

In 1826 Irving learned Spanish, in order to translate a book by Manuel Lacunza, a Spanish Jesuit, '*The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty*', who used the pseudonym *Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra*, pretending to be a converted Jew. In the preliminary Discourse Irving wrote of Lacunza's position on the 1,260 days:¹

This indeed is the point in which our author falls short of himself, viz. in all that respects the chronology which is intermingled with the prophecy, whereof he makes not the slightest use in guiding himself with respect to our present place in the prophetic chart, but simply looks upon all the numbers 1260, 1290, and 1335 days, as determining the duration of the great and awful era which precedes the coming of the Lord. And I confess that upon this system he hath made out such a very strong case, derived and deduced from all the scriptures, that though he hath not shaken me in the least out of our interpretation of these numbers, he hath sometimes awakened in my mind the suspicion of a possibility, that when the time of that last great antichristian trouble shall arrive, these numbers may be found to have a literal application without prejudice to that

¹Lacunza, Manuel & Lacunza, Edward Irving. *The coming of Messiah in glory and majesty*. Volume 1. Seeley, 1827. p. xxx-xxxii.

symbolical one which they have already had; even as this symbolical answers, as I conceive, to a former literal period given in the three years and a half famine in the time of Ahab, which closed in the destruction of the priests of Baal, and the coming of rain, after seven successive messages to look out for it from Elias the true prophet of God. And I have sometimes had a suspicion, moreover, that the three years and a half duration of the Lord's suffering ministry, may be a type of the duration of the sufferings of the Jewish church when it shall be again called; for I continually find the suffering Messiah, and the suffering Jewish church, interwoven in the prophecies of the Old Testament, especially in the Psalms, of which the ciind may be taken as an example. Now it may be as Ben-Ezra argueth, that while the Israel of the apostate Gentile church is enduring the three years and a half famine and sore suffering in the days of king Ahab, or the personal infidel Antichrist, the Jewish church may be suffering the same three years and a half trial and persecution, which Messiah endured for them, ending in that agony of sorrow described in the xiith chapter of Zechariah, and in their apparent death preparatory to their great resurrection. I know not what there may be in this, and I do but throw it out as a conjecture and suspicion which hath oft been forcibly awakened in my own mind. And thus it may be, that both we Protestants, and Ben-Ezra, may be in the right.

Samuel Roffey Maitland (1792-1866)

Maitland was a lawyer and Bible scholar who became librarian to the Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1826 he published a book in which he attacked the views of George Stanley Faber, and proposed that the prophecies described an individual human Antichrist who will arise at the end of the age, an interpretation that was previously advanced by the Jesuit Francisco Ribera in 1590. He wrote:¹

After much consideration, I feel convinced that, "the time, times, and dividing of time;" Dan. vii. 25: "Time, times and a half;" Dan. xii. 7: "Time, times, and half a timer Rev. xii. 14: "Forty and two months;" Rev. xi. 2— xiii. 5: "The thousand two hundred and threescore days;" Rev. xi. 3: denote a period of 1260 natural days.

I believe it to be a rule of sound criticism, that we should take the literal sense of every writer, unless sufficient reasons can be given for departing from it. Whether those generally assigned for the mystical interpretation of the passages just cited, are satisfactory, I proceed to enquire.

But in fact, 42 months can only be equated with 1,260 days in an *ideal* manner; if the months are taken to be *lunar*, the number of days is about 1,240, and in 42 *calendar* months

¹Maitland, S. R. *An Enquiry into the Grounds on which the Prophetic Period of Daniel and St. John Has been Supposed to Consist of 1260 Years*. London. 1826. p. 2.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=Zb606lMolEwC>

there are about 1,278 days. This argues against interpreting the 1,260 days as a period of natural days. Similarly the numbers given by Daniel, 1,290 days and 1,335 days, do not fit a real three years and a half, again implying these are numbers signify an *ideal* period rather than a *literal* three and a half years.

Edward Bishop Elliott (1793-1875)

606 AD – 1866 AD

Elliott was an Anglican clergyman and premillenarian writer. His four-volume work, *Horae Apocalypticae* went through five editions. Elliott supported the Historicist interpretation, against Preterism and Futurism. A Wikipedia article states:¹

Reverend Elliott set out what he saw as the history of “Christ’s secret ones” or “the Church in the wilderness” by which the spirit of primitive Christian doctrine was kept alive during the epoch of the Beast. Witnesses listed (amongst others) were Alcuin, Claude of Turin, the Paulicians, Peter de Bruys, and the Poor Men of Christ who had originated in Cologne. Edward Elliott specifically identified these as a proto-Protestant underground. He said the prophetic period of 1260 years was simultaneous for all its manifestations; the period during which the gentiles trample the temple court, the period of the woman in the wilderness, the reign of the Beast and the period in which the two witnesses prophesy. [*Horae Apocalypticae* Vol 2 p. 412] When he first wrote, this period of 1260 years had yet to come to an end. But he wanted the murder and resurrection of the witnesses to coincide, not with the end of the period, but with the final persecution of the Waldenses followed by their resurrection represented by the Reformation.

Were this to be ruled out, then the Reformation would not be marked by any special prophetic fulfillment and the period when the gospel message would be almost totally extinguished would still be in the future. This he found unpalatable. He got around the dilemma by suggesting that the sense of Revelation 11:7 would be better taken as ‘when the witnesses had perfected their testimony’ rather than ‘when they had finished their testimony’. This meant the death of the witnesses was during their prophetic period and not at its end so there need be no hiatus to allow for the events preceding their ascension. Then, the millennium could start as soon as the prophetic period had ended which was what was required of Daniel 7:25.

The ‘great city’ where all this took place was Rome. But Revelation 11: 8 described it as “where also our Lord was crucified” which seemed to point to Jerusalem. Again, Reverend Elliott preferred a slightly different wording, “where also their Lord hath been crucified” [*Horae Apocalypticae* Vol 2 p. 439] thus the witnesses were murdered in Rome in remembrance of Christ’s death and the

¹http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horae_Apocalypticae

precise occasion was the Fifth Council of the Lateran of 1512. For the witnesses' resurrection, Edward Elliott quoted Pope Adrian VI, "The heretics Huss and Jerome seem to be alive again in the person of Luther." The witnesses' ascension he assigned to the Peace of Passau 1552. [*Horae Apocalypticae* Vol 2 p. 469]

Elliott's views on the 1,260 days are discussed further in a critique by Benjamin Wills Newton beginning on page 80.

Albert Barnes (1798-1870)

533 AD – 1793 AD

606 AD – 1866 AD

752 AD – 2012 AD

1073 AD – 2333 AD

Barnes was the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. He believed the prophetic 1,260 days were 1,260 years which began with the rise of the Papacy, but that date that was difficult to determine. In an extended note to his commentary on Daniel 7:23-27, he wrote:¹

Different writers have assigned different periods for the rise of the Papacy, and different acts as the first act of that power; and all the prophecies as to its termination depend on the period which is fixed on as the time of its rise. It is this which has led to so much that is conjectural, and which has been the occasion of so much disappointment, and which throws so much obscurity now over all calculations as to the termination of that power. In "nothing is the Scripture more clear than that that power shall be destroyed; and if we could ascertain with exactness the date of its origin, there would be little danger of erring in regard to its close. The different periods which have been fixed on as the date of its rise, have been principally the following: (1) An edict published by Justinian (A. D. 533), and a letter addressed by him at the same time to the Pope, in which he acknowledged him to be the head of the churches, thus conferring on him a title belonging only to the Saviour, and putting himself and empire under the dominion of the Bishop of Rome. Duffield on the Prophecies, p. 281. (2) The decree of the emperor Phocas (A. D. 606), confirming what had been done by Justinian, and giving his sanction to the code of laws promulgated by him: a code of laws based on the acknowledged supremacy of the Pope, and which became the basis of European legislation for centuries; and conferring on him the title of 'Universal Bishop.' (3) The act of Pope Stephen, by which,

¹Barnes, Albert. *Notes on the book of Daniel: with an introd. dissertation.* 1853. p. 329. <http://books.google.com/books?id=sNw7AAAAcAAJ>
For the substance of Albert Barnes' note on Daniel 7:23-27, see:
<http://vinyl2.sentex.net/~tcc/dload/BarnesNote.pdf>

when appealed to by the claimant to the crown of France, he confirmed Pepin in the kingdom, and set aside Childeric III., and, in return, received from Pepin the Exarchate of Ravenna and the Pentapolis. See Ranke's Hist. of the Papacy, vol. I. 23. This occurred about A. D. 752. (4) The opinion of Mr. Gibbon (IV. 363,) that Gregory the Seventh was the true founder of the Papal power. "Gregory the Seventh," says he, "who may be adored or detested as the founder of the Papal monarchy, was driven from Rome, and died in exile at Salerno." Gregory became Pope A. D. 1073. These different dates, if assumed as the foundation of the Papal power, would, by the addition to each of the period of 1260 years, lead respectively to the year 1793, 1866, 2105, and 2333, as the period of the termination of the Papal dominion.

William De Burgh (1801-1866)

De Burgh was an eminent scholar and the rector at Ardboe, Tyrone, Ireland. He is known for his Commentary on the Book of Psalms. In an appendix in his Commentary on Revelation, he discussed the times of Antichrist:¹

From a consideration of Daniel, ix. 27—*"And he"* (that is, not *"the Messiah"* but *"the Prince to come who shall destroy the city and sanctuary"* ver. 26) *"shall confirm the covenant with many for one week"* (or *"one seven"* i. e. of years) *"and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate,"*—it would appear that the time of Antichrist's power (of whom I believe this passage speaks) is seven years, which is divided into two periods of "3½ years," or "1260" days, each: the difference between which seems to be, that, for the first half week, or 3½ years, he is in covenant with the Jews—"working deceitfully after the league made with him," and "corrupting by flatteries" the wicked of them, as said of him ch. xi. 23, 32—but in the last half declares himself, turns against them, and becomes by his persecution of them the accomplisher of the indignation, and at the same time the means of trying and purifying a faithful remnant.

Moreover, that I am not singular in referring the "one week" of Daniel to the times of Antichrist will be seen from the following passage of Sir Isaac Newton, which not only shows his opinion but that of the early fathers. In his exposition of ver. 25,—*"Know therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the Commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks"*—he thus writes:—

'The former part of the prophecy (ver. 24) related to the first coming of Christ, being dated to his coming as a Prophet: this being dated to his coming

¹De Burgh, William. *An exposition of the book of the Revelation*. Hodges, Smith, & Co, 1857. pp. 411-412. <http://books.google.com/books?id=epQCAAAAQAAJ>

to be Prince or King, seems to relate his *second coming*. There, the prophet was consummate, and the Most Holy anointed: here, He that was anointed comes to be Prince and to reign. For Daniel's prophecies reach to the end of the world; and there is scarce a prophecy in the Old Testament concerning Christ, which doth not, in something or other, relate to his second coming. If divers of the ancients, as Irenaeus, Julius Africanus, Hippolitus the Martyr and Apollinaris, bishops of Laodicea, applied "the half week" to the times of Antichrist; why may not we, by the same liberty of interpretation, apply "the seven weeks" to the time when Antichrist shall be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming?'

I would add that this also accounts in some degree for the precise period of three-and-a-half years, by referring it to the greater period of the complete week, or seven of years, as its half: while it furnishes another and decisive argument against those who interpret the 1260 days as years; inasmuch as they will have to show two periods of 1260 years instead of one.

De Burgh further discredited the theory that the 1,260 days represent 1,260 years in another appendix.¹

The argument for and against the day-for-year system of interpreting this period, may, as far as the appeal is to Scripture, be stated in a short space.

1. For this mode of interpretation the warrants from Scripture referred to are only three,—viz.

1. Numbers, xiv. 33, 34:—"And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years—after the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, and ye shall bear your iniquity even forty years." But this, it has been very justly remarked, is not a case in point, inasmuch as the period embraced in the prediction is *declared*, as it was *fulfilled*, in years; and the forty days are mentioned, not at all as an expression for that period, but its reason; whereas "the 1260 days" are always the expression for the period which is the subject of the Prophecy in which they occur.

In other words, to make the cases parallel, the passage in Numbers should have said, "ye shall wander in the wilderness and bear your iniquity *forty days*" without any intimation that forty years were intended, and leaving this to be gathered only from the event.

2. The second passage adduced is Ezek. iv. 4-6, where the Lord having directed the prophet to pourtray a siege of Jerusalem as "a sign to the house of Israel," adds—"Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the bouse of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 413-417.

them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year."

But this is as little to the purpose as the former; or rather is, as well as it, a proof plain against the system it is adduced to support For, again, the very words relied on—"I have given thee a day for a year"—apprised the prophet and his people that a period of *years* was intended of which the prescribed days were but the type. In other words,—again in this instance, a prophecy fulfilled in years was announced in years; while we are asked, on the warrant of this, to believe that a prophecy announced only in days was to be fulfilled in years.

3. [Elided...]

II. Against this mode of interpretation the arguments on the other hand are many, some of which I will merely enumerate without dwelling on them. And,—

1. All the chronological prophecies in the Bible which have undoubtedly been fulfilled, whether expressed in days, months, or years, have been fulfilled literally; as for example,—The "120 years" and "the seven days" notice of the flood, and "forty days" rain, Gen. vi. 3; vii. 4. The "400 years" sojourning of the Israelites, Gen. xv. 13. The "forty years" wandering in the wilderness, Num. xiv. 33, 34. The "three score and five years" allowed to Ephraim, Isa. vii. 8. The "seventy years" of Tyre, chap, xxiii. 15. The "seventy years" captivity in Babylon, Jer. xxv. 11: and a number of others less notable.

2. In the same book in which the mention of "the 1260 days" first occurs, namely, in Daniel, chap, vii 25, where it is expressed, "a time, times, and dividing of time," we have at once both the definition of "a time," as meaning "a year," and the proof that a literal year is intended: namely, in chap. iv. 34, "the seven times" decreed to pass over Nebuchadnezzar, which the mode of calculation adopted for "the time, times, and half" would make 2520 years that the monarch was removed from his kingdom; but which the authors of that calculation are therefore compelled to admit are years, as proved by the event; and thus are forced to assign two different meanings to the same word in the same prophet!

3. Presumptive against such a period as one thousand two hundred and sixty years being the subject of the prophecy, is the fact that it would have effectually prevented that expectation of the Lord's coming which the Church is continually exhorted to cherish, and which is said to be the attitude of the faithful servant: that is, unless the Prophecy were to remain wholly unintelligible, and therefore useless. For it would, if at all understood, be an infallible and positive information to the Church that the coming of the Lord could not take place for 1260, or a thousand, or so many hundreds of years as remained unexpired of the period. And, that the Lord *has* not come for so long is one thing; but that he should have told his Church he would not, is quite another. It will be found, however, that the Scripture interposes no period between any existing generation of men and the Lord's coming, which does not admit the possibility of his coming to that generation.

4. As it will not, of course, be contended that days always mean years, or

a year 360 years, in prophetic language—(for in that case a prophet meaning to say 1260 days, or 3½ years literal, would have no way to express himself)—it follows that, admitting some instances would be found in which a day means a year, still in others it would be a question which the time was figuratively or literally expressed—a question only to be decided by *the matter* of the Prophecy or *the events* predicted. But this brings us from the direct Scriptural argument to the consideration of the interpretations of its prophecies, and especially of the Apocalypse, founded on the year-for-day theory; and, as the principal of these have passed in review in these Lectures, the reader must be left to judge whether—with their endless discrepancies and utter uncertainty—they can be received as proofs of it.

5. And last:—It is admitted by the supporters of that theory that for the first four centuries at least the “days” in Daniel’s and the Apocalyptic prophecies respecting Anti-Christ were interpreted literally by the Fathers of the Christian Church:—So Elliott (*‘Horae Apocalypticae,’* Part iv. ch. ix. § 1, Vol. iii. p. 233, *Third Edit.*), who accounts for the fact by the suggestion that it was needful that the true solution should be concealed from the Church, ‘to answer a moral purpose,’ viz., ‘that she might be kept from the earliest age in the attitude of watchful expectation.’ Strange assertion, truly:—that a good purpose should be answered by misunderstanding the word of God! But in fact, though some at an earlier period spoke of a probable mystical meaning of the “1260 days,” in addition to the literal, the year-for-day system (it may be shewn) originated as late as the end of the fourteenth century, in the application of the Prophecies of Anti-christ to the Papacy.

Isaac Williams (1802-1865)

Williams was a poet and theologian at Oxford, and was the author of some of the *Tracts for the Times* associated with the Oxford Movement. In 1845 he became seriously ill, from tuberculosis, or consumption, and was expected to die, but he recovered, and afterwards lived in retirement at Stichcombe in Gloucester. During that period he wrote poetry, and commentaries on scripture. On the 42 months and the 1,260 days of Revelation 11:2-3 and 12:6 and 14, he wrote:¹

The “*forty-two months*” here specified is explained, as by Aretas, Berengaudus, and others, to be the three years and a half of Antichrist; and this will be evident on a little attention to the subject. For the forty-two months, the 1260 days, and the three years and a half, must mean the same period of time, from the manner in which they occur and mutually explain each other; but why they are thus differently expressed is full of mysterious significance. First we have it here stated that the Holy City is trodden under foot for “forty-two months;”

¹Williams, Isaac. *The Apocalypse, with notes and reflections.* Rivington, 1852. pp. 185-187. <http://books.google.ca/books?id=m5gCAAAAQAAJ>

and then we find that the continuance of Antichrist is for “forty-two months.”¹ But the whole passage evidently refers to Daniel, where we find it twice expressly stated that the power of Antichrist is for three years and a half, or “a time, times, and the dividing of a time.”² And therefore the forty-two months and the three years and a half must mean the same.

It is shown in the like explicit manner that both of these are the same as the 1260 days. It is here stated that the Holy City will be profaned for forty-two months; and it is added in the next verse that the Witnesses will prophesy for 1260 days, meaning this forty-two months of the Church’s desolation. For the Woman in the Wilderness continues for this same period of 1260 days;³ and after a short digression, that her flight “from the face of the serpent” is spoken of as for three years and a half, or the duration of Antichrist, “a time, and times, and half a time;” with a studious and self-evident reference to the memorable expression, twice repeated, of Daniel; and marking, by putting the same period also into days, that the “times” in Daniel refer to years.

It is evidently intended by all this that we should consider the time to be limited and appointed of God: “seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with Thee, Thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.”⁴ But there are reasons for believing that it is not intended we should ever know “the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.”⁵ And it is remarkable that in no single instance has any modern interpreter succeeded in explaining any period of time in the Apocalypse; from the ten days of Smyrna’s persecution, or the five months of the locust-plague, to the thousand years of Christ’s reign upon earth. The reason is obvious—they do not perceive that, like every thing else in the Apocalypse, numbers are allegorical; and that although it is not for us to know the secrets of God, yet by comparing things spiritual with spiritual they furnish us with an hieroglyphic language which is in the highest degree instructive. There appears, indeed, to be some mysterious reasons for expressing the periods of time in this varied manner of days, months, and years; for the diversity of terms is introduced by St. John with manifest design and purpose. For here in two successive verses he expresses the same duration of time differently—that of evil by months, that of good by days. And, on whatever principle this may be founded, it serves us at once with a clue to the connexion or identity of different descriptions. Thus the profaning of the Holy City is for forty-two months, and the continuance of Antichrist is for forty two months; therefore this is but a different way in which the same thing is set before us: the two symbolic representations will mutually explain each other, as having one and

¹Rev. xiii. 5.

²Dan. vii. 25; xii. 7.

³Rev. xii. 6. 14.

⁴Job xiv. 5.

⁵Acts i. 7.

the same subject. In the next sentence the Two Witnesses are for 1260 days, and the Woman in the Wilderness is for 1260 days; therefore the Two Witnesses and the Woman in the Wilderness are one and the same, or contemporaneous. Again; the three years and a half are definitely given as the period both of the Woman in the Wilderness and also of Antichrist; therefore it is from Antichrist that the Woman is fled, and during his continuance she is in the wilderness.¹

Williams continued:²

It may be noticed that in whichever way this period is expressed—by months, years, or days—all intimate a breaking off as it were of time, like the “half-hour space” of silence (ch. viii. 1). And it is an observation of Aretas “that this is owing to our Lord’s saying that for the Elect’s sake He hath shortened the days; that this expresses abrupt shortness on account of the presence of Antichrist being so oppressive to the Saints; that therefore Christ, the true God, hath shortened those days, the forty-two months or three years and a half, during which the faithful will be trodden under foot and persecuted.”

Moreover the time is short, yet seems long. They rise again “after three days and a half” (ver. 9. 11), as if their resurrection corresponded with that of Christ’s, yet seemed deferred. Forty is the time of trial and suffering, but the two added might indicate the time delayed.

The numbers thus variously yet uniformly expressed seem to indicate, indeed, that the period is definite and exactly predestined with God; but it is not for us to know “the number, measure, and weight” by which He ordereth all things. St. Augustin, therefore, does not consider times as accurately to be reckoned, but to be thus taken as to the general mystery of numbers.³ And Aretas more than once observes that in the reckoning of times Scripture admits not of small and trivial calculations.

Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg (1802-1869)

A German Lutheran churchman and theologian, Hengstenberg rejected the idea that the 1,260 days refer to a particular time in the history of the world, but instead he interpreted these and related numbers as symbolic, and represented the whole course of the church’s history, and he said the three and a half years were a *signature* of the church. On Revelation 11:2, he wrote:⁴

The two and forty months contain only an apparent determination of time; as, indeed, all numbers in the Apocalypse have only an ideal signification; they

¹Conf. xi.2; xiii. 5. Conf. xi. 3; xii. 6. Conf. xii. 14. Dan. vii. 25.

²*Ibid.*, p. 189.

³Augustine, *Civ. Dei*, xi. xxx. *et passim*.

⁴Hengstenberg, Ernst Wilhelm. *The Revelation of St John: expounded for those who search the Scriptures*, Volume 1. T. & T. Clark, 1851. p. 396

belong not so properly to the chronological, as to the symbolical forum. The common signature of the dominion of the world over the church in the Revelation, resting on the prophecies of Daniel, (comp. at ch. xii. 6, xiii. 5), is the three and a half, in which we have only to think of the broken seven, the signature of the church. So that the meaning is here conveyed, that however the world may lift itself up, however it may proudly triumph, it can never attain to anything complete and lasting. These three and a half years return again in different forms: a time, two times, and an half time, ch. xii. 14, forty and two months, here and in ch. xiii. 5, 1260 days in ch. xii. 6. In the number of the beast also in ch. xiii. 18, the same thing substantially holds as in these numbers. We have here before us a representation, which does not bring into view some particular period of time in the world's history, but the whole course of it, only that towards the end every thing realizes itself in a more perfect manner. Wherever the world is found overflowing the church, from that of which John himself saw the commencement, to the last in ch. xx. 7-9, of which we have now the beginning before our eyes, there the substance of the prophecy always verifies itself anew, there the obligation still remains to those who are affected by the evil, to take it as the ground of consolation and warning to their hearts. ... The thought in this prophecy was in other respects quite correctly apprehended by the older expositors. Thus on the expression, "the holy city shall be trodden down," Bossuet remarks, "Christians shall be under the sway of the unbelievers; but though the weak shall fall, the church shall continue in strength. This is the first point which St John apprehends in the persecutions: the church continually abiding."

Patrick Fairbairn (1805-1874)

Fairbairn was a pastor in the Presbyterian church for 27 years; he was divinity professor at the Free Church College in Aberdeen, and then for 18 years was principal of the Free Church College, Glasgow. He is known for his book *The Typology of Scripture*, and his *Commentary on Ezekiel*. He wrote:¹

It remains only to notice the indications of time contained in the portion of the Apocalypse we have been surveying. These appear to be simply three, though one of them is expressed in a threefold manner. It is the period of the church's tried and oppressed condition—denoted first in chap. xi. 2, as a period of forty-two months, during which "the holy city is trodden down of the Gentiles," during which also the beast was to continue in its power to blaspheme and injure (chap. xiii. 5); then as consisting of 1260 days (forty-two months multiplied by 30 days), during which the witnesses, representatives of a faithful, but oppressed

¹Fairbairn, Patrick. *Prophecy viewed in respect to its distinctive nature, its special function, and proper interpretation*. T. & T. Clark, 1865. Part 2, Chapter III.
<http://vinyl2.sentex.ca/~tcc/PF/IP.php?page2=Fairbairn2-3.html>

and persecuted church, were to prophecy, chap. xi. 3, and the church was to abide in the wilderness, chap. xii. 6, having a place and food prepared for her by God; and finally, as a time, times and a half (corresponding to one year of twelve months, two of the same, and a half-year of six, or to forty-two months, or again to 1260 days), during which the church was to remain and be fed in the wilderness, chap. xii. 14. In Dan. vii. 25, where the expression first occurs, it is the time during which the saints of God were to be given into the hand of the power that was to speak great words against the Most High. These are manifestly but different modes of expressing one and the same period, as the state of things also to which they are applied is substantially identical, though variously represented. For the sojourn in the wilderness on the part of the faithful and proper spouse, the treading down of the holy city by those who belonged only to the court of the Gentiles, and the testifying for the truth of God by a faithful remnant clothed in sackcloth, and wrestling against error and corruption; these are obviously but different symbolical representations of the same abnormal and dislocated state of things. The other two periods mentioned are both very brief, as compared with the one just noticed. The shortest is that during which the bodies of the faithful witnesses are represented as lying dead, though unburied, three and a half days, chap. xi. 12; and the other is the five months during which the scorpion-locusts were to have power to torment the followers of the beast, chap. ix. 5.

Now, it is scarcely possible to avoid being struck even on the most cursory inspection of these periods, with a peculiarity that is common to them all—the broken and incomplete aspect they present. A certain whole was evidently in respect to each of them in the mind of the Divine author of the vision, as that toward which the parties spoken of were aiming, but were arrested midway in their career. This is particularly observable in the largest and by much the most important number, which in every form—whether as time, times and a half, or as the months and days that make up three and a half years—is most expressive of an unfinished course, a period somehow cut off in the middle. In like manner, the three and a half days of rejoicing over the unburied corpses of the slain witnesses, betokens the same violent and abrupt termination of the course indicated; in their ungodly triumph, the adversaries could not complete more than half of one of the briefest revolutions of time—one of the smallest cycles of the whole period allotted to the ascendancy of evil. The incompleteness may appear less palpable in the five months specified for the plague of scorpion-locusts; but it will scarcely do so to those who have attended to the use made in Scripture of ten with reference to certain kinds of totality. The five is simply the broken ten.

So marked a peculiarity in the use of all these numbers is itself a strong presumption in favour of their symbolical import. It seems to stamp their value as indications of relative, rather than of absolute periods of duration—relative both as regards each other, and also as regards an ideal whole. And it will appear to do so the more convincingly the more the periods are viewed in reference to the

parties mentioned, which are the entire spiritual church throughout the world, on the one side, and the whole antichristian power on the other; for in regard to such vast bodies, and their wide-reaching interests, what could such periods avail in their natural sense! They could obviously afford but a mere fraction of the time necessary for the accomplishment of the results connected with them; nor could such results in actual history be shut up into any periods consisting of such exact and definite measures. Another, and very powerful consideration in favour of the same view is the place of these historical numbers—surrounded on every hand, not with the literal, but with the symbolical. The woman that is persecuted, and the dragon who persecutes; the wilderness into which she flees, and the floods sent after her; the beast that rages against the truth, and the two witnesses who testify for it to the death; the holy city that is trodden down, and the Egypt or Babylon by whom the treading is effected; all are symbolically used, and shall the periods of working be otherwise than symbolical? In that case there would be the violation of one of the plainest laws of symbolical writing, and confusion and arbitrariness, as a matter of necessity, would be brought into the interpretation. It is true, the number seven, as applied to the heads of the beast, and the number ten spoken of its ultimate forms of separate organization, have already been found by us to possess a kind of historical verification. But this, when more closely considered, manifests an evident striving after the symbolical. For, it is to make out the number seven, that St John diverges so strikingly here from the representation of Daniel, taking in the two earlier worldly kingdoms, which Daniel had omitted, and making of the divided state of Daniel's fourth empire a separate kingdom—the seventh. Nay, even this seventh he calls in a sense also the eighth—chap. xvii. 11—although seven still is taken as the proper number, because it alone has the proper symbolical import. The beast comes into view mainly as the rival of God, and seven being the common symbol of completeness for the Divine manifestations in the world (Isa. xxx. 26; Zech. iii. 9, iv. 2; Prov. ix. 1; Rev. i. 4, iii. 1, etc.)—originating, no doubt, in the sevenfold acts of God at creation—the worldly rival of God's power and glory in the world is, in token of its God-defying character, presented under the same number of manifestations. For a like reason the divided state of the last manifestation is distributed into the number ten. This also is often used as a symbol of completeness, on which account the ancients called it the perfect number, which comprehends all others in itself. But it commonly denotes completeness in respect to human interests and relations—as in the tithes or tenths (ten being regarded as comprising the entire property, from which one was selected to do homage to him who gave the whole), and the ten commandments, the sum of man's dutiful obedience. When, therefore, the divided state into which the modern Roman world fell, is represented under ten horns or kingdoms, it may well be doubted whether this should be pressed farther than as indicating, by a round number, the totality of the new states—the diversity in the unity—whether or not it might admit of being exactly and definitely applied to so many historical kingdoms. There is always

some difficulty in making out an exact correspondence; and we should the less hold such a correspondence to be necessary, since even in the case of the tribes of Israel, when taken to represent the company of an elect people (chap. vii.), one tribe is totally omitted to preserve the symbolism of the historical twelve. This shows very strikingly the stress laid on the symbolical element, and strengthens the conclusion, that both in the seven and ten, as applied to the beast, and in the broken periods now under consideration, that element is primarily respected. Lastly, there is to be added on the same side the obviously loose setting of the periods; neither their starting-point, nor their termination is sharply defined. Viewed historically, indeed, one does not see how it could have been otherwise. The flight of the church into the wilderness, or the treading down of the holy city by the Gentiles, came on gradually; and appeared in different places at different times. It cannot be linked to definite historical epochs, as if at one or other of these it commenced for the first time, and for the whole church; and from the very nature of things, the termination must have a like diversity and gradation in its accomplishment. This draws a plain line of demarcation between the periods before us, and Daniel's seventy weeks, which are definitely bounded both in respect to their commencement and their close. The narrower field, and more outward character of the things they referred to, easily admitted of such a limitation; but here the world is the field, and the cause of vital Christianity throughout its borders the great interest at stake.

Giving all these considerations their due weight, we cannot avoid arriving at the conclusion, that the periods mentioned, in accordance with the general character of the book, are to be chiefly, if not exclusively, understood in a symbolical manner, as serving to indicate the times of relative length or brevity which the operations described were destined to occupy. If anything further is implied, it should only, we conceive, be looked for in some general correspondence, as to form, between the symbol and the reality, such as might be sufficient to guide thoughtful and inquiring minds to a more firm assurance of the realisation of the vision. But all precise and definite calculations respecting the periods, as they necessarily proceed upon a disregard of the symbolical character of the book, and upon a too external and political contemplation of the events to which it points, so they must inevitably be defeated of their aim in the future, as they have continually been in the past. The prophecy was not written to give men to know after such a fashion, the times and the seasons, which the Father has put in His own power.

Benjamin Wills Newton (1807-1899)

Newton was an evangelist and author, who was educated at Oxford. He left the Anglican Church in 1832, and became an elder in the Plymouth Brethren. Although he at first regarded Nelson Darby as a mentor and friend, the two men held different views on prophecy. Newton believed that the church would go through the tribulation, but Darby promoted his idea of a pretribulation rapture of believers. Newton was also critical of Darby's doctrine that

separated the Old Testament saints from the church. Newton published his 'Thoughts on the Apocalypse' in 1842, which provoked a hostile review by Darby in 1843.¹ Disagreements between the two leaders led to the split of the brethren movement into the Open Brethren and the Exclusive Brethren, which occurred in 1848.

Disputing with Edward Bishop Elliott and others who supported a day-year interpretation of the 1,260 days of Revelation 11:3 and 12:6, Newton wrote:²

It may therefore be safely said that not only does Scripture afford no instance of "*days*" meaning "years," but that all the instances quoted in support of this assertion, prove exactly the reverse. They prove that "days" mean "days," and "years" mean "years." It would be strange indeed if it were otherwise; for what possible reason could there be that Scripture should not say days when it means days, and months when it means months, and years when it means years?

Mr. Elliott candidly resigns the argument which is commonly founded on the seventy hebdomads of Daniel, and admits that no proof of days meaning years can be founded on it.³ Indeed, even in his mode of using the arguments just recited, it appears to me that there is a degree of hesitation apparent, which seems to intimate, that he is somewhat mistrustful of their soundness. Other writers, such for example as Mr. Fleming, boldly refer to these arguments, as if they plainly and satisfactorily proved, that "days" mean "years." Mr. Elliott uses far more cautious language, and speaks, somewhat obscurely, of a "transition from days to years, as if the lesser were a type of the greater." (Elliott, Vol. III., p. 958.) But this very statement does in fact surrender the argument; for the lesser *must absolutely exist*, otherwise it could not be a type of something greater to follow. Therefore, according to this principle, Antichrist must reign for 1260 literal days, in order to become a type of 1260 years, which *must* on this hypothesis follow; for a type precedes an antitype. Thus the fact of Antichrist's literal reign is conceded. We may safely leave the consideration of the 1260 years that are supposed to succeed; for seeing that the millennium immediately follows the reign of Antichrist, there would be no room for the succession of 1260 *years* of woe.

Clearly, Newton overlooked Daniel's prophecies about the desolation of Jerusalem which occurred during the reign of Antiochus IV. If the events in that period are seen as typical of

¹ *The writings of J. N. Darby*, Vol. 8.
<http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/darby/>

² Newton, Benjamin Wills. *Aids to prophetic inquiry*. Houlston and sons, 1881. pp. 237-248.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=4nFLAAAAIAAJ>

³ **Note by BWN:** Mr. Elliott's words are: "I do not rest, in this argument, on the parallel of Daniel's celebrated prophecy of the seventy weeks: * * * * and for this reason, because the Hebrew word ... rendered a week, has been shown to be a word etymologically of ambiguous meaning, signifying any septenary, and applicable to seven years as well as seven days." (Elliott, Vol. III., p. 962.) For further remarks on this passage of Daniel, see "Prospects of the Ten Kingdoms," p. 217.

the Antichrist to come, and of a future desolation to occur in the church, the temple not made with human hands, his argument loses its force. Newton continued:

If there were no other argument to be urged against this very extraordinary notion, the partiality of its application would be sufficient for its refutation; for why, when the expressions two days –three days–forty days–three years–seventy years, and the like, occur hundreds of times in Scripture, should the words “days” and “years” be uniformly understood to mean days and years in all these passages, and in one or two other passages, equally definite, be interpreted differently? Why, when it is said of Nebuchadnezzar in his madness, that “seven times” should pass over him, do we say that “seven times” mean *seven years*—and immediately after, when the same word occurs, say that “three and a half *times*” mean 1260 years? Soundness of interpretation requires consistency. If “time, times, and half a time” in the seventh of Daniel mean 1260 years, then seven times in the fourth of Daniel must mean the double of that period, and then we must say that Nebuchadnezzar is yet alive, and his madness continuing still.¹

But if we were to allow Mr. Elliott’s hypothesis, and suppose that days mean years, even then, his system will not bear the test either of Scripture or of fact, nor is it consistent with itself.

The events to which the period of 1260 *days*, or as Mr. Elliott says, *years*, belong, are:

The power of the little Horn, as described in Daniel vii.

The sackcloth testimony of the two Witnesses.

The sojourn of the Woman in the Wilderness.

The reign of Antichrist as the sole Head of the Roman World, described in Rev. xiii.

These periods are made parallel or coincident periods in the Scripture, and are rightly so regarded by Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming. They begin at the same moment, and they terminate at the same moment. The event that terminates them, is the Advent of the Lord in glory.

Now it is obvious that the period thus marked by 1260, whether days or years, must be a *definite* period. In other words, it cannot extend over a period longer than 1260. There must be a *fixed* moment in the counsels of God (whether we discover it or not) for the commencement of this period; and when it has once commenced, from that moment the numbering of the 1260 must begin. To say

¹**Note by BWN:** Mr. Elliott endeavours to obviate the force of this argument, by supposing that Nebuchadnezzar was personally degraded for seven literal years, in order to be a type of the degradation of his Empire for 2520 years. But in this case the literal interpretation as regards Antichrist is granted, and he must reign for three and a half literal years. In this case too, seeing that a type precedes that which it typifies—if the three years and a half of Antichrist’s reign were typical, it must precede that which it is supposed to typify, viz., the 1260 years of his mystical reign; just as Nebuchadnezzar’s degradation precedes the supposed antitypical period of his Empire’s degradation. Thus the notion refutes itself; for Antichrist’s literal reign terminates the dispensation of sorrow and of evil.

that there may be two different periods for its commencement, would be to say, that it was not a *definite* period at all. It would be equivalent to saying that it *did* begin, and yet that it did *not* begin—it would oblige us to say that it *has* ended, and yet has *not* ended.

But Mr. Elliott maintains that there *are* different epochs for the commencement of this period. One he places at the aera of Justinian, A.D. 533 – the other in A.D. 606, when Phocas acknowledged the primacy of the See of Rome; so that, after having commenced in A.D. 533, about seventy years afterwards it commenced again; and consequently, after having ended in A.D. 1793, will, in about fifteen years more from this present period, end again. Therefore, according to the theory we are considering, this most precise and definite period *did*, and that by the appointment of God, commence in A.D. 533, and yet did *not* commence: it did end in 1793, and yet will not end until 1866.¹

And when we consider the nature of the events that are to close this period of 1260, we cannot but feel more than ever astonished at the supposition of there being a duplicate termination of such a period: for what are the events that are to conclude this period? They are these; the termination of the Woman's sojourn in the Wilderness; the destruction of Antichrist by the brightness of the Lord's appearing—in a word, the abolition of the reign of evil, and the commencement of the reign of righteousness and peace.² Did any of these things occur in 1793? Was the Lord manifested in His glory in 1793, or 1866, or at any past period? Was the reign of Satan *terminated*, in any sense whatever, by the French Revolution? The French Revolution *terminated* no evil. On the contrary, it was a period when the energies of men were set more free than ever to work their own designs; and the result is seen around us on every side, in the continuance of old systems of iniquity, as well as in the development of new.

¹**Note by BWN:** The year 1866, so long looked for, has now passed. Would that at its expiration the evil and misleading theories which we are considering, had expired also. But it is far otherwise. Efforts are still being made by astrological calculations, and otherwise, to perpetuate the delusion. The notion that there may be a *year*-period, and also a *day*-period has been suggested by others besides Mr. Elliott—only *he* considers a *day*-period to come first, and a year period after, whereas *they* imagine 1260 *years* to come first, and 1260 *days* after; and they regard the 1260 years as passed or nearly so. But such a notion is immediately set aside by the fact that during the last twelve centuries there has been steady progress in the world's prosperity. Civilisation has advanced, and is advancing still—God allows this; even as when He said of Pharaoh, “For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee and that My name might be declared in all the earth.” God intends that pride should bud and blossom. What likeness can there be between two periods, one of which is a period of advancing prosperity, and the other a period of judgment, curse, and destruction. The period of the 1260 days will be one in which God's hand will be stretched out to smite the strength. of man with plagues more terrible than those which He poured upon Egypt of old. What likeness can such a period have to the years of prosperity which precede?

²**Note by BWN:** Nothing can be more express than the words of Daniel: “I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them: UNTIL the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the High Places;” i.e. the reign of the saints immediately follows the fall of Antichrist.

Those periods in the past 1800 years, when God has permitted one form of evil to chasten or to supplant another (and this was the case at the Revolution, when Infidelity warred with Popery) are as different in principle from that great coming hour, when God will interfere, by the mission of His Son, as the workings of Satan are different from the direct agencies of God. In the former case, evil, and that of increased intensity, supplants former evil, and strengthens itself on the ruins of that which it has supplanted: in the latter case, God by His own immediate hand terminates for ever the reign of wickedness, and brings in the kingdom of righteousness and peace. This is the subject of the Revelation. It is not the history of the *progress* of human evil. It is the record of the manner in which God finally smites that evil, and establishes His own glory. Holy angels clothed in white, issuing from the Temple of God, are fit expressions of such agencies of Heaven: but who, unless his mind were under the power of some radical error, could suppose that such hallowed symbols could represent the wickedness and triumphs of prospering Revolutions? Who, unless fatally deceived, could find in the occurrences of 1793, anything similar in principle to that hour, when God will “arise to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth.”

But again, let us pass by this error also—let us suppose that the 1260 days, or, as Mr. Elliott says, *years*, have a duplicate commencement and a duplicate end: even then, the system refutes itself. Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming suppose this period to have commenced first in A.D. 533, and to have commenced again in A.D. 606—in which case it must have terminated first in 1793, and would again have terminated in 1866. Now since we are told in the eleventh of Revelation that the two Witnesses prophesy in sackcloth throughout the whole of the 1260 days, or, as Mr. Elliott says, *years*, the first termination of their testimony, according to Mr. Elliott, should not be earlier than 1793; and the second termination should not be earlier than 1866. In apparent forgetfulness, however, of the dates they have fixed on for the commencement of the sackcloth testimony, Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming go on to say, that the Witnesses died in A.D. 1514, revived in 1517, and ascended in 1555.¹ Now seeing that the sackcloth testimony cannot be continued after they have died and ascended, (whatever that ascent may mean, for the Scripture expressly says, “When they shall have completed their testimony, the beast shall kill them”)—it follows, that if they were killed in 1514, the 1260 days, or *years*, ought *then* to have concluded, whereas, according to Mr. Elliott’s previous statement, they cannot conclude earlier than 1793 or 1866.

Another inconsistency is this; if, as Mr. Elliott says, the Witnesses ascended into the “heaven of political power” in 1555, how can the Woman be in the wilderness hundreds, of years after they have reached the “heaven of political power?”—for Mr. Elliott supposes the Woman to remain in the wilderness till

¹**Note by BWN:** Mr. Elliott supposes the Witnesses to have died, when the Lateran Council was held, and none of the “Bohemian Heretics” appeared to plead before it: their resurrection and ascent is supposed to be at the political establishment of the Reformation. See Elliott, Vol. II., p. 735.

the middle of the present century. Nor, if the period of Satan's being excluded from heaven was, as Mr. Elliott says, in the days of Constantine, i.e. about A.D. 320, must Mr. Elliott be permitted to delay the flight of the Woman into the wilderness until A.D. 600 or 606, i.e. nearly three hundred years after. The Scripture expressly says that "*when* the Dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the Woman," and seeing that the Woman did not, and could not resist, she has no alternative save instant flight and sojourn in the wilderness. It cannot therefore be admitted that there should be three hundred years, or even one year between the exclusion of Satan from Heaven, and her flight.

It is instructive to observe the marvellous inconsistencies into which even thoughtful minds may be led, when they cling to an erroneous system. The truth is, that all these things are future. The Day of the Lamb's wrath did not come, nor was supposed by men to have come, when Constantine was nominally converted. It will not come until the Lord is revealed in His glory—the armies of heaven following Him. The "Woman clothed with the sun," etc., does not represent the spurious Christianity of the days of Constantine. The vision is future; it describes a scene which immediately precedes the last 1260 days; the Woman being the abstract expression of the essential excellency of Truth apart from the condition, of her supposed, or even of her real children. Satan was not excluded from Heaven, neither did his accusations before God cease, when Constantine professed Christianity. That hour of exclusion is still future, and will be immediately followed by the 1260 days of matured Antichristian, blasphemy. The two Witnesses did not begin their sackcloth testimony when the Pope was acknowledged either in A.D. 533, or in A.D. 606—nor did they ascend into Heaven when Protestants, in 1555 began to bask in the sunshine of princely favour or (to use the words of Mr. Elliott) "were admitted, equally as Romanists, to sit as judges in the Supreme Imperial Chamber." (Elliott, Vol. II., p. 741.) The path of the two Witnesses will be one very different from that which either the Paulicians¹ or the Reformers trod. They are reserved for the furnace of Antichristian evil: the place of their testimony will be Jerusalem, "the city where their Lord also was crucified:" the time of their ascent into Heaven will be at the conclusion of the 1260 days of evil, and is immediately followed by "the sovereignty of the world becoming the sovereignty of our Lord and of His Christ." Antichrist did not assume the headship of the *whole* Roman world either in A.D. 533 or in A.D. 606; for the Ten Kingdoms over which he is to rule, are as yet undeveloped; neither did God interfere in 1793 to stop the further progress of human evil. On the contrary, the French Revolution was a period when human evil gathered new strength, and rushed forward into fresh channels

¹**Note by BWN:** As regards the Paulicians, whom Mr. Elliott wishes to honour by assigning to them the place of one of the Witnesses, he will find, if he more closely examines their history, too much reason to believe that their doctrines were *deeply* tinged with heresy on many most important subjects.

which Satan opened for its tide.

Whether, therefore, we regard the past, the present, or the future, we have alike reason to sorrow, and to sorrow bitterly over the views of Mr. Elliott and Dr. Cumming. As to the future, their doctrines hide it from us, and throw an impenetrable covering over the very period which it is the object of the Revelation to unveil. But more than this, they tend to hide from us even present facts, such, for example, as that of Satan's accusations against us before God. And, as regards the world's past history, its most important periods, such as the exaltation of Christianity in the days of Constantine, the political elevation of Protestantism, and the era of Infidelity's triumph at the French Revolution, are presented in aspects essentially untrue. The secular exaltation of Christianity was not rejoiced over in Heaven, nor recorded in the Revelation in honourable and heavenly symbols; the commingling of Protestants with Papists in legislative councils was not (as the ascent of the Witnesses will be) the result of a command from Heaven, but was a device of the Evil One; nor were the deeds of such men as Voltaire, Robespierre, and Napoleon, similar, either in kind or in effect, to those holy and heavenly agencies of God, which are finally to usher in and establish the kingdom of His Son. We cannot too earnestly deprecate such principles. They render right exposition of Scripture hopeless, and may be said to nullify the very object for which the Revelation is given.

As shown on page 67, it is futile to equate 1,260 days with 42 months as Newton does.

Newton observed (page 82) that during history, "God has permitted one form of evil to chasten or to supplant another" and cited the French Revolution, "when Infidelity warred with Popery" as an example, but his critique of Elliott's ideas suggests another example of that principle, one which fulfills prophecy.

In the prophecy of Ezekiel 38, armies of Gog and Magog come against the mountains of Israel, and against the prophets of Israel.¹ These mountains are not literal mountains, but I suggest they represent revelations of God, prophecies of scripture, and promises to the saints, their spiritual inheritance. In the judgment against the invading hordes, the armies of Gog and Magog, Ezekiel says, "I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother."²

The armies of Gog and Magog are armed with swords, and in prophetic language "swords" and similar weapons are sometimes metaphors connected with a spiritual conflict. They are words of reproof, and castigating. Psalm 64:3 refers to men who "whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even *bitter words*."

Newton's critique of Elliott's views is an example of how the above prophecy of Ezekiel has been fulfilled.

¹Ezekiel 38:17

²Ezekiel 38:21

Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885)

Wordsworth was an Anglican priest, and canon of Westminster, and he became bishop of Lincoln. He was a gifted scholar. He wrote, on the 1,260 days:¹

These 1260 days equal forty-two months, or three years and a half; and they are mentioned under all these terms in the Apocalypse.

The Holy City is trodden by the Gentiles forty-two Months.² It is given to the Beast, to exercise his power forty-two months.³ The Two Witnesses preach in sackcloth 1260 Days. [Rev. xi. 3.] The Woman is in the Wilderness 1260 Days;⁴ and she is also said to be in the Wilderness a time, times, and half a time; that is, three years and a half.⁵

Now, if we examine the records of Scripture, we find that the period of three years and a half represents an idea; one of spiritual toil, pilgrimage, and persecution.

First, it may be observed, that three and a half, being the half of seven, which is the number of completeness, represents a semi-perfect state; one of transition and probation.

In illustration of this, it may be remarked here, that the body of the Two Witnesses remains unburied three days and a half.⁶

The same kind of opposition to the Apostolic number Twelve may, perhaps, be thought to exist in the half of that number, Six; and to exhibit itself in the remarkable combination of Six Hundreds, Six Tens, and Six Units, which constitute the number of the name of the Beast.⁷

Let us pass to facts.

Three years and a half, or forty-two months, or 1260 days, are, as we have seen, the time of the pilgrimage of the Woman in the Wilderness, that is, of the Church in her trials. This number forty-two connects her with the History of the Israelitish Church in the Wilderness. Its haltings are enumerated in the Book of Numbers,⁸ and they are Forty-two. And all these things (says St. Paul) happened to them as types of us.⁹ They foreshadow the history of the Christian Church in her pilgrimage through the Wilderness of this World to the promised

¹Wordsworth, Christopher. *Lectures on the Apocalypse: critical, expository, and practical, delivered before the University of Cambridge. (Hulsean lectures)* 2nd. ed. H. Hooker, 1852. pp. 205-209. <http://books.google.com/books?id=K6Q8AAAAYAAJ>

²Rev. xi. 2.

³Rev. xiii. 5.

⁴Rev. xii. 6.

⁵Rev. xii. 14.

⁶Rev. xi. 9, 11.

⁷Rev. xiii. 8.

⁸Num. xxxiii. 1-50.

⁹1 Cor. x. 6-11.

land of Heaven.

Again: "I tell you of a truth," says Our Blessed Lord, "many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land."¹ And St. James says, "Elias prayed it might not rain; and it rained not on the Earth by the space of three years and six months."²

It also pleased God to strengthen the type, if we may so speak, by assigning the same duration of three years and a half to the persecution of the Church of Israel by Antiochus Epiphanes.

St. John's precursor, Daniel, had named that period as the duration of that persecution. He had also identified it with the future time of the trials of the Christian Church, which are more fully described by St. John.

Thus the very mention of three years and a half to the ear of an Israelite had an ominous sound. It was his chronological symbol of suffering.

And to us Christians there is another reason why it should be identified with a time of trial, since, as some ancient Writers assure us, and there is good reason to believe, this period of three years and a half was the duration of the earthly Ministry of Him,—the great Prophet, the Divine Witness— "who was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"³ and who, as Daniel prophesied, caused the sacrifice of the Temple to cease in the midst of a week by his own oblation on the cross.⁴

Hence this period of three years and a half, forty-two months, or 1260 days (resting on a solid historical basis,) is employed in the Apocalypse as a typical exponent of an idea; just as the numbers four, seven, twelve, and twelve times twelve, do not represent a precise sum, but a well-defined principle.

We observe, in passing, that the Locusts of the fifth Trumpet are said to

¹Luke iv. 26.

²James v. 17.

³Isa. liii. 3.

⁴**Wordsworth's Note:** Dan. ix. 27.—Lightfoot Harm. N. T. ad cap. xi. "The forty-two months," "1260 days," and a "time, times, and a half time;" are but borrowed phrases from Daniel, who so expresses the three and a half years of Antiochus' persecution (Dan. xii. 7;) and they mean times of trouble, and are used to express that, and not any fixed time. The Jews have learned to make the same construction of it: and this also, that comfort might stand up against mercy, was the time of our Saviour's Ministry. Christ preached three and a half years in trouble. (cp. also Lightfoot on Matth. iii. 16.) So the Two Witnesses in sackcloth. He having finished his ministry was slain; so they. He revived and ascended; so they likewise. Their case is paralleled with Christ's, their Master's. See also Lightfoot's Chorographical Inquiry, chap. vi. sect. iv. "This waste of sacred things by Antiochus lasting for three years and a half, the Jews retained that very number as famous, inasmuch that they often make use of it when they would express any thing very sad and afflicting... And perhaps it had been much for the reputation of the Commentators upon the Book of Revelation, if they had looked upon that number and the forty and two months, and the thousand two hundred and sixty days as spoken allusively, and not applied it to any precise or determinate time." See also his Serm. on Dan. xii. 12, p. 1250. Vitringa, pp. 449, 463. 1 Mace xiii. 50, 51.

have power to injure the five months. This number also expresses an idea. It designates the time of the duration of the Deluge, and indicates that the Locusts would cover the world, like the flood; but that the Ark of the Church would float upon the waters, and rest securely, when they were abated.

I do not venture to affirm, that the Church may not be called hereafter to endure intense suffering for three years and a half, and so a second, literal, fulfillment be given to this prophecy; but, on the whole, we arrive at this conclusion, that we cannot safely deduce any precise arithmetical results, with regard to the future, from this number of three and a half years, forty-two months, or 1260 days.

Let us not, however, imagine that these numbers are superfluous. Nothing in Scripture is so. "God has ordered all things in measure and number and weight."¹ We cannot now understand all the harmonies of the divine Arithmetic, yet some we can. These numbers in the Apocalypse are of great use. They do not indeed gratify the cravings of human curiosity. They do not enable us to construct a prophetic Ephemeris, or an Apocalyptic Almanack. But they present to us certain parallelisms. They show that the sufferings of Scripture coincide with those of the Church, and with the Empire of the Beast. They remind us of our own ignorance, and of God's knowledge. They teach us patience. They tell us that the days of man are few, and that a Millennium is but a moment to the Eternal. They warn us that we are not to expect sabbatical perfection in this World. They have also an analogical value. They remind us that here we are to look for trials—trials such as those endured by the Ancient Church of Israel in her forty-two sojournings in the wilderness;—trials such as those endured by Elias under Ahab, by the Maccabees under Antiochus, and by Christ from his own countrymen. And they encourage us with the joyful assurance, that if we are true to Christ, and maintain his cause with zeal, courage, and charity, then, though we suffer, we shall conquer also; that our sufferings will soon be over; that they will appear like a few days; then even for us there will be a chariot of fire, and a heavenly Feast of Dedication, and a cloud of heavenly glory, and an eternity of joy.

Henry Alford (1810-1871)

Alford was an English churchman, theologian, textual critic, and poet. He identified the following landmarks or fixed points for the sound interpretation of the prophecies of Revelation, which he said must not be departed from.²

1. The close connection between our Lord's prophetic discourse on the Mount

¹Wisdom xi. 20.

²Alford, Henry. *How to study the New Testament. The Epistles (2nd section) and Revelation*. Strahan and Co. London, 1868. pp. 293-298.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=orQCAAAAQAAJ>

of Olives and the line of prophecy in this book. That discourse has been aptly termed, by Mr. Isaac Williams, "*the anchor of apocalyptic interpretation.*" It is the touchstone of apocalyptic systems. If it have not guided the expositor, the true key to the book is lost.

2. The interpretation of the opening of the *sixth* seal is another such fixed point. The description by which that is followed is the very same which is used throughout Scripture to indicate the Great Day of the Lord. Any system under which it is a necessity to interpret this otherwise than of that Great Day of the Lord, stands self-convicted.

3. Another fixed point is this. The imagery of the seals, trumpets, and vials, severally run on to the time of the end. At the termination of each series, the note is unmistakably given that such is the case. Any system which makes the three consecutive one on another, without taking this common ending into account, is thereby convicted of error.

4. Another such fixed point is found in the vision of ch. xii. 1, etc. In ver. 5, we read that the woman "brought forth a son, who should rule (or, shepherd) all the nations with a rod of iron;" and that "her child was caught up to God and to His throne." All Scripture analogy requires that these words should be interpreted of our Blessed Lord, and of none other. Every system which finds it necessary otherwise to interpret them, however plausible may be its fittings to events, and however ingenious its illustrations by coins and other trifles of the kind, is convicted of error in its first principles, and need not seriously be considered.

5. Another fixed canon of interpretation is found in the usage of terms by the apocalyptic writer himself. For instance: he often speaks of the Divine Persons; he often speaks of angels. He never mixes one with the other. Any system which finds it necessary to understand by "an angel," Christ himself, is wrong, and violates the analogy of the book.

6. Account ought to be taken of the *numbers* used in the book. These are kept constant to their great lines of symbolic meaning. *Seven* is the number of perfection; seven spirits are before the throne (i. 4; iv. 5); seven churches represent the church universal; the Lamb has seven horns and seven eyes (v. 6). In the several series of God's judgments, each complete in itself, seven is the number of the seals, trumpets, thunders, vials. *Four* is the number of terrestrial extension: four living beings are the symbols of creation (iv. 6, etc.); four angels stand on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of heaven; four seals, four trumpets, four vials, in each case complete the number of judgments consisting in physical visitations; four angels are loosed from the Euphrates, to slay the destined portion out of mankind (ix, 13, etc.), and in obedience to a voice from the four corners of the altar; Satan deceives the nations in the four corners of the earth (xx. 8); the New Jerusalem lieth four-square, with all sides equal.

Twelve is the number belonging especially to the Church, and to the ap-

pearances symbolically connected with her. Twice twelve is the number of the heavenly elders; twelve times twelve thousand the number of the sealed elect; the woman, in ch. xii., has a crown of twelve stars; the heavenly city has twelve gates, at the gates twelve angels, on them the names of the twelve tribes; also, twelve foundations, and on them the number of the twelve apostles; and its circumference is twelve thousand furlongs; in the midst of her, the tree of life brings forth twelve manner of fruits.

Again, the *half* of the mystic seven is a ruling number in the apocalyptic periods. Three years and a half had been the duration of the drought prayed for by Elijah (James v. 17); "a time, times, and the dividing of time" (= three years and a half), was the prophetic duration of the persecution of the saints in Dan. vii. 25. Thus we find, in Rev. xi. 6, that the two witnesses, one of whose powers is to shut up heaven, that there shall be no rain, shall prophesy 1260 days, *i. e.*, three years and a half; also the testimony of three witnesses is to endure forty-two months (= three years and a half), as that of Moses endured through the forty-two stations of Israel in the wilderness. Three days and a half are the bodies of the witnesses to lie unburied in the street of the great city; again, for 1260 days is the woman to be fed in the wilderness; again, forty-two months is the period of the power of the first wild beast, which ascended from the sea (ch. xiii. 5).

Of these latter periods no satisfactory solution has ever been given. Again and again, the interpreters of prophecy have fixed a time for the end of them; again and again that time has passed unsignalized by any event; again and again, these interpreters have adroitly shifted on their ground into the as yet safe future, and reappeared before the public with the same confidence as if they had not been utterly defeated. Some have held that a "*day*" may mean a year, in the face of the occurrence of a period of "a thousand years" in the same prophecy, which they ought to, *but do not*, interpret to mean 365,000 years. Such inconsistencies, which, if presented for the first time, would ensure the rejection of any system, have been so long before the public that they pass unchallenged, and draw down wrath from their perpetrators on him who, in the cause of common honesty, ventures to notice them, and to point them out for reprobation.

Such are the principal remarks which I have to make on the rules for the interpretation of this mysterious book.

Philip S. Desprez (1812-1879)

Desprez was an Anglican clergyman who became a preterist. He applied the 1,260 days and the 42 months of Revelation 11, 12 and 13 to the period of the destruction of Jerusalem in

70 AD. He wrote:¹

The next point of marked coincidence between this prophecy of Daniel and the Apocalypse is, this desolation was to continue for a specific time. This time is accurately marked by each.

According to Daniel, the period is “a time, times, and a half,” or “a thousand two hundred and ninety days.” According to the Apocalypse, the period is “forty and two months,” “a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” I consider these periods to be identical, and the 1290 days of Jewish or Babylonian reckoning to be equivalent to the 1260 days—the forty-two months—of Roman reckoning mentioned in the Apocalypse.

It is very remarkable, that the periods of time observed in the Apocalypse are the same:—

The Gentiles are to tread the holy city under foot a time, times, and a half—1260 days, 42 months, 3¹/₂ years.

The witnesses are to prophesy a time, times, and a half—1260 days, 42 months, 3¹/₂ years.

The woman is to be fed in the wilderness a time, times, and a half—1260 days, 42 months, 3¹/₂ years.

She is to be nourished for a time, times, and a half—1260 days, 42 months, 3¹/₂ years.

Power is given to the Beast (Rome) to continue a time, times, and a half—1260 days, 42 months, 3¹/₂ years.

There can be little doubt but that these periods all relate to the same events, and that they are identical with the periods of time recorded in Daniel, xii. It is true there is a difference of thirty days between the prophecy of Daniel and the Apocalyptic statement; but this may be owing to the different methods of computing time, Daniel probably using the Babylonian, and St. John the Roman, method.

Now, upon a reference to history, it is found that this was the precise period during which the invasion of Judaea lasted. It is known that Cestius laid siege to Jerusalem in the month of October, A.D. 66; he was defeated, and “this defeat happened on the eighth day of the month Dios (Marchesvan), in the twelfth year of the reign of Nero.” In the spring of the following year Vespasian is sent by Nero. On the eighth day of the month Gorpheius (Elul), A.D. 70 (in the middle of August, A.D. 70), Jerusalem is taken. From the spring of A.D. 67, to August, A.D. 70, is somewhere near the time, times, and a half,—the forty-two months, the 1260 days, during which the Gentiles tread down the holy city.

¹Desprez, Philip Charles Soubien. *The Apocalypse fulfilled: in the consummation of the mosaic economy and the coming of the son of man: an answer to the Apocalyptic sketches and The end by Dr. Cumming.* Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=II0TAAAAYAAJ>

Another circumstance, which serves to establish the length of the Jewish war, is to be found in the history of one of Christ's witnesses, who predicted the woes coming upon Jerusalem. We read of him, that "four years before the war began, at a time when the city was in great peace and prosperity, one Jesus, the son of Ananus, began on a sudden to cry aloud, 'A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people.' This cry of his he continued for seven years and five months, until the very time when he saw his presage fulfilled in earnest in our siege."

Desprez later abandoned the ultra-preterist views he had expressed in *The Apocalypse fulfilled*.¹

James Stuart Russell (1816-1895)

67 AD – 70 AD

Russell has been called the father of full preterism; he saw the second coming as a past event that took place in conjunction with the Roman destruction of the Jewish temple in AD 70.

The following is from Russell's *The Parousia*.²

The passage which we are now considering throws light also upon our Lord's prediction in Luke xxi. 24: 'And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.' Our Lord, it is to be observed, is here speaking of the siege and capture of Jerusalem, the very theme of the apocalyptic vision. ... But if so, what are we to understand by 'the times of the Gentiles' in our Saviour's prediction? It has been generally supposed that this expression refers to some mystic period of unknown duration, extending, it may be, over centuries and aeons, and still rolling on its uncompleted course. But if this non-natural interpretation of words is to be applied to Scripture, it is difficult to see what use there is in specifying any periods of time at all. Surely, it is much more respectful to the Word of God to understand its language as having some definite meaning. What, then, if 'forty and two months' should really mean forty-two months, and nothing more? The times of the Gentiles can only mean the time during which Jerusalem is in their occupation. That time is distinctly specified in the Apocalypse as forty-two months. Now this is a period repeatedly spoken of in this book under different designations. It is the 'thousand two hundred and sixty days' of the next verse, and the 'time, times and half a time' of chap. xii. 14, that is to say, three years and a half. Now it is evident that such a space of time in the history of nations would be an insignificant point; but for a tumultuous and lawless rabble to domineer over a

¹http://www.preteristarchive.com/Books/pdf/1880_armstrong_parson-desprez.pdf

²http://richardwaynegarganta.com/Parousia_Russell.rtf

great city for such a period would be something portentous and terrible. The occupation of such a city by an armed mob is not likely to continue over ages and centuries: it is an abnormal state of things which must speedily terminate. Now this is exactly what happened in the last days of Jerusalem. During the three years and an half which represent with sufficient accuracy the duration of the Jewish war, Jerusalem was actually in the hands and under the feet of a horde of ruffians, whom their own countryman describes as 'slaves, and the very dregs of society, the spurious and polluted spawn of the nation.' The last fatal struggle may be said to have begun when Vespasian was sent by Nero, at the head of sixty thousand men, to put down the rebellion. This was early in the year A.D. 67, and in August A.D.70 the city and the temple were a heap of smoking ashes.

William Kelly (1820-1906)

Kelly was one of the leading supporters of dispensationalism, along with John N. Darby. He was the editor of Darby's collected writings, and of *'The Bible Treasury.'* In Kelly's interpretation, the 1,260 days are literal, the time when an individual Antichrist has dominion over the earth, after the church has been "*raptured*" to heaven. The forty two months when Jerusalem is trampled, and the time of the two witnesses, he claimed, is future. He wrote:¹

In Daniel 7 the little horn is said to speak great words against the Most High, "and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hands, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time." Now it appears to me perfectly certain that the "times and laws" in question here are those the prophet Daniel was familiar with. These "times" had to do with Israel's festivals, and the "laws" with the Jewish polity or ritual. The saints of the Most High were those whom the prophet knew and was interested in; just as in Revelation 12 "the children of thy people" (i.e., Daniel's people) are intended. This shows that a special enemy of God's people in Judea who will arise in that day is here spoken of. He meddles with the Jews when they have begun to be owned in a measure by God. This iniquitous power wears out the saints of the high places, and thinks to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand. Not that the saints should be so given, for God never relinquishes them to the enemy: He may permit saints to be worried for a while, but He never gives them up. It is the times and laws that are thus given for a season, because the nation is not owned thoroughly till the Messiah comes. As yet it is only a partial recognition of their worship. These are then to be abandoned to him "for a time, and times, and the dividing of time." You have this same period referred to in the forty-two months, which is exactly the same length of time, taking "a time" as meaning a year.

¹Kelly, William. *Lectures on the Book of Revelation*. Part 2.
http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/kelly/2Newtest/REV_PT2.html

Kelly taught that during the reign of Antichrist, the two witnesses prophesy, having the power to kill their enemies with fire from their mouth, and to smite the earth with plagues, while the woman of chapter 12 represents ethnic Jews. The Christian church is represented by the man-child who is caught up to heaven, Revelation 12:5. The woman flees to the wilderness, for 1,260 days, which is the duration of the beast's reign. Kelly wrote:¹

In short, the first portion of the chapter is a mystical representation of the Lord's relationship with Israel and of Satan's deadly antagonism; then the Lord's removal out of the scene to heaven, which gives room for God's binding up, as it were, with Christ's disappearance to heaven the saints' translation there. In this way the rapture of the Man-child is not brought in here historically, but in mystic connection; and the great agents are all in their place according to God's mind.

If this be borne in mind, the whole subject is considerably cleared. "*She brought forth a man-child to rule all the nations with a rod of iron.*" There is no difficulty in applying this to the Man-child, viewed not personally and alone but mystically; and the less, because this very promise is made to the church in Thyatira, or rather to the faithful there. It will be remembered that at the end of Revelation ii. it was expressly said that the Lord would give to the overcomer power over the nations, and he should rule them with iron rod, broken to pieces like vessels of pottery, just as He Himself received of His Father. But where for the present is Israel? Hidden in the wilderness, yet preserved till God's public kingdom appears. "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should nourish her there a thousand two hundred [and] sixty days." The days are numbered for the tried; as elsewhere in the shortest form compressed for like purpose as to the Beast's reign.

William Milligan (1821-1892)

Milligan was a Scottish theologian, who is best known for his writings on Revelation.² He found similarities in structure in the fourth gospel and the book of Revelation. John's gospel, he suggests, omits the Olivet Discourse of Jesus which is present in the other gospels, as the book of Revelation is an expanded account of the things contained in Christ's prophecy. The 42 months and the 1,260 days in Revelation 11, 12, and 13 are symbols of the church age; the three and a half years corresponds to the duration of the ministry of Jesus. He said the 1,260 days "denote the Christian era from its beginning to its close." He wrote:³

¹Kelly, William. *An Exposition of Revelation*.
http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/kelly/2Newtest/Rev_expo.html

²Milligan, William. *The Revelation of St. John*. MacMillan & Co., London. 1886.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=cvAOAAAQAAJ>

³Milligan, William. *The Book of Revelation*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1889. pp. 175-177.
<http://vinyl2.sentex.net/~tcc/dload/MillRev.pdf>

One question still remains: What is the meaning of the forty and two months during which the holy city is to be trodden under foot of the nations? The same expression meets us in chap. xiii. 5, where it is said that "there was given to the beast authority to continue forty and two months." But forty and two months is also three and a half years, the Jewish year having consisted of twelve months, except when an intercalary month was inserted among the twelve in order to preserve harmony between the seasons and the rotation of time. The same period is therefore again alluded to in chap. xii. 14, when it is said of the woman who fled into the wilderness that she is there nourished for "a time, and times, and half a time." Once more, we read in chap. xi. 3 and in chap. xii. 6 of a period denoted by "a thousand two hundred and threescore days;" and a comparison of this last passage with ver. 14 of the same chapter distinctly shows that it is equivalent to the three and a half times or years. Three and a half multiplied by three hundred and sixty, the number of days in the Jewish year, gives us exactly the twelve hundred and sixty days. These three periods, therefore, are the same. Why the different designations should be adopted is another question, to which, so far as we are aware, no satisfactory reply has yet been given, although it may be that, for some occult reason, the Seer beholds in "months" a suitable expression for the dominion of evil, in "days" one appropriate to the sufferings of the good.

The ground of this method of looking at the Church's history is found in the book of Daniel, where we read of the fourth beast, or the fourth kingdom, "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."¹ The same book helps us also to answer the question as to the particular period of the Church's history denoted by the days, or months, or years referred to, for in another passage the prophet says, "And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."² The three and a half years therefore, or the half of seven years, denote the whole period extending from the cessation of the sacrifice and oblation. In other words, they denote the Christian era from its beginning to its close, and that more especially on the side of its disturbed and broken character, of the power exercised in it by what is evil, of the troubles and sufferings of the good. During it the disciples of the Saviour do not reach the completeness of their rest; their victory is not won. Ideally it is so; it always has been so since Jesus overcame: but it is not yet won in the actual realities of the case; and, though in one sense every heavenly privilege is theirs, their difficulties are so great, and their opponents so numerous and powerful, that the true expression for their state is a broken seven years, or three years and a half. During this time,

¹Dan. vii. 25

²Dan. ix. 27

accordingly, the holy city is represented as trodden under foot by the nations. They who are at ease in Zion may not feel it; but to the true disciples of Jesus their Master's prophecy is fulfilled, "In the world ye shall have tribulation."¹

Robert Young (1822-1888)

67 AD – 70 AD

Best known for his *Analytical Concordance of the Bible*, Young supported a preterist interpretation of Revelation. On the question of the date when it was written, he wrote:²

It was written in Patmos (about A.D. 68), whither John had been banished by Domitius Nero, as stated in the title of the Syriac Version of the Book; and with this concurs the express statement of Irenaeus (A.D. 175), who says it happened in the reign Domitianou, i.e. Domitius (Nero). Sulpicius Severus, Orosius, &c., stupidly mistaking Domitianou for Domitiani~~kos~~, supposed Irenaeus to refer to Domitian, A.D. 95, and most succeeding writers have fallen into the same blunder. The internal testimony is wholly in favor of the earlier date. The temple at Jerusalem was still standing (ch. 11.1–10); the exact duration of the siege is foretold, viz., 42 months, 31 years, or 1260 days; the two witnesses are to be slain in the city where our Lord was crucified; Nero was reigning at that time, for it is said of the seven kings of Rome; 'five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come, and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.' The five kings are Julius Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius. The 'one who is' is Nero; the one who 'must continue a short space' i.e. Galba, who reigned only seven months. Everywhere the events are 'to come quickly,' lit. 'with haste,' or speed (ch. 1.1; 2.16; 3.11; 11.14; 22.7, 12, 20). The escape of the Christian Jews from Jerusalem to Pella is undoubtedly referred to in ch. 7. 1–8, compared with Mat. 24. 30.

Joseph Augustus Seiss (1823-1904)

Seiss studied theology privately, and was ordained as a Lutheran pastor. He ministered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His book of lectures on the Apocalypse was published in 1865, and was reprinted several times. C. I. Scofield claimed that it was the best of more than fifty books that he had read about Revelation. He insisted that the witnesses in Revelation are two persons, and that the 42 months and 1,260 days are literal months and days. He wrote:³

¹John xvi. 33

²Young, Robert. *Concise commentary on the Holy Bible, being a companion to the new translation of the Old and New Covenants*. G.A. Young & Co., 1865. p. 179

³Seiss, Joseph Augustus. *The Apocalypse: A Series of Special Lectures on the Revelation of Jesus Christ, with revised text*. 1882. p. 175.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=QpsCAAAAQAAJ>

These Witnesses are two in number... This duality is three times repeated, and is an essential part of the record. As stated by Alford, "no interpretation can be right which does not retain and bring out this dualism." Why two, we do not fully know. Both the law and the Gospel calls for two witnesses to establish important truth. (Deut. 17:6; Matt. 18: 16.) God generally sets his heralds and witnesses in pairs, as Moses and Aaron, Caleb and Joshua, Zerubbabel and Jeshua, Peter and John, the twelve and the seventy, "two by two." And in the trying circumstances here described, two could better uphold and console each other than one, without companionship.

These witnesses are persons. Primasius says, though somewhat equivocally, "The Two Witnesses represent the Two Testaments preached by the Christian Church to the world," and Bede, and Bishop Andrews, and Melchior, and Affelman, and Croly, and Wordsworth, and some others, have taken this view. But it is altogether a mistaken view, necessitated by the embarrassment occasioned by wrong conceptions of the Apocalypse, rejected by the overwhelming majority of interpreters ancient and modern, and utterly irreconcilable with the text. It is not true that the Old and New Testaments are preached to the world only 1260 days, or years, and then end their testimony;—that they are arrayed in sackcloth all the days they are preached;—that fire issues out of their mouths and kills those who will to injure them;—that there is no rain upon the earth during the days of their prophesying;—that they have power over waters to convert them into blood, or at will to smite the earth with plagues;—that they are capable of being killed by man;—or that indignity can be offered them, being dead, by refusing to allow them to be put into a sepulchre. Yet all these things are affirmed of these Witnesses. Nor is either the Old or the New Testament ever called a Ten times do we find this word in the New Testament, and in every other place but this, no one questions that it denotes persons. In more than fifty places in the Old Testament, the corresponding Hebrew word denotes persons only. These Witnesses prophesy. This is the work of a person. More than one hundred times does this word ... occur in the Bible, and never, except once by metonymy, but of persons. These Witnesses wear clothing of sackcloth, of which we read much in the Scriptures, but always of persons. They work miracles and execute judgments, but nothing of the sort is ever predicted of anything but personal agents. Not without the greatest violence to language and fact, therefore, can we regard these Witnesses as other than real persons. The conclusion may be very damaging to some men's cherished theories, but the integrity of God's word requires it, and it is impossible to escape it with any just regard to the laws of language and the nature of things.

These witnesses are individuals. No reader of the account, having no pre-conceived theory to defend, would ever think of taking them for bodies, or successions of people. All the early fathers, from whom we have any testimony on the subject, regarded them as two individual men. Two distinct and conspicuous bodies of witnesses for Christ, all prophesying in sackcloth through 1260 years, or

even days, and all dying martyrs, as here represented, expositors have searched in vain to find in the history of the Christian ages.

Uriah Smith (1832-1903)

538 AD – 1798 AD

Smith was a Seventh-day Adventist author and was the editor of *Review and Herald*. His family had followed William Miller, and experienced the *great disappointment* of 1844. He is known for his book on the prophecies of Daniel, which supported a historicist interpretation of the 1,290 days of Daniel 12:11 and the 1,260 days of Revelation 11:3 and 12:6. It promoted the views of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Smith proposed a period of indefinite duration after the fulfillment of the *time, times and a half* of Daniel 12:7. He wrote:¹

How Long to the End?—The question, “How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?” undoubtedly has reference to all that has previously been mentioned, including the standing up of Michael, the time of trouble, the deliverance of God’s people, and the special resurrection of verse 2. The answer seems to be given in two divisions: First a specific prophetic period is marked off, and then an indefinite period follows before the conclusion of all these things is reached, just as we have it in Daniel 8:13, 14. When the question was asked, “How long . . . the vision . . . to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot?” the answer mentioned a definite period of 2300 days, followed by an indefinite period in the cleansing of the sanctuary. So in the text before us, there is given the period of a time, times, and a half, or 1260 years, and then an indefinite period for the continuance of scattering of the power of the holy people, before the consummation.

The 1260 years mark the period of papal supremacy. Why is this period here introduced?—probably because this power is the one which does more than any other in the world’s history toward scattering the power of the holy people, or oppressing the church of God. But what shall we understand by the expression, “When he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people?” To whom does the pronoun “he” refer? According to the wording of this scripture, the antecedent would at first seem to be “Him that liveth forever,” or Jehovah; but, as an eminent expositor of the prophecies judiciously remarks, in considering the pronouns of the Bible we are to interpret them according to the facts of the case, and hence must frequently refer them to an antecedent understood, rather than to some noun which is expressed. So here, the little horn, or man of sin, after being introduced by the particular mention of the time of his supremacy, 1260 years, may be the power referred to by the pronoun “he.” For 1260 years he had grievously oppressed the church, or scattered its power. After his supremacy

¹Smith, Uriah. *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*. Review and Herald Publishing Association. pp. 320-321.

is taken away, his disposition toward the truth and its advocates still remains, his power is still felt to a certain extent, and he continues his work of oppression as far as he is able, until when?—Until the last of the events brought to view in verse 1, the deliverance of God's people. When they are thus delivered, persecuting powers are no longer able to oppress them, their power is no longer scattered, the end of the wonders prescribed in this great prophecy is reached, and all its predictions are accomplished.

Smith said the 1,290 days began 30 years before the 1,260 days, and he found some significance in the date 508. He wrote:¹

The 1290 Prophetic Days.—We have here a new prophetic period introduced, 1290 prophetic days, which according to Bible authority would denote the same number of literal years. From the reading of the text, some have inferred that this period begins with the setting up of the abomination of desolation, or the papal power, in A.D. 538, and consequently extends to 1828. We find nothing in the latter year to mark its termination, but we do find evidence in the margin that it begins before the setting up of the papal abomination. The margin reads "To set up the abomination." With this reading the text would stand thus: "From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away to set up [or in order to set up] the abomination that maketh desolate, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days."

The Year A.D. 508.—We are not told directly to what event these 1290 days reach; but inasmuch as their beginning is marked by a work which takes place to prepare the way for the setting up of the papacy, it would be natural to conclude that their end would be marked by the cessation of papal supremacy. Counting back, then, 1290 years from 1798, we have the year 508. This period is doubtless given to show the date of the taking away of the daily, and it is the only one which does this. The two periods, therefore, the 1290 and the 1260 days, terminate together in 1798, the latter beginning in 538, and the former in 508, thirty years previous.

Karl August Auberlen (1824-1864)

Auberlen was Professor of Theology in Basel, Switzerland. Commenting on the woman of Revelation 12 fleeing to the wilderness, he wrote:²

The Church's life is nourished by the kind ministrations from on high; she lives in the wilderness, even as Israel, on manna from heaven; and like her Lord,

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 323-324.

² Auberlen, Karl August, Magnus Friedrich Roos. *The prophecies of Daniel and the revelations of St John: viewed in their mutual relation, with an exposition of the principal passages.* T. & T. Clark, 1856. <http://books.google.com/books?id=v942AAAAMAAJ>

from the word proceeding out of the mouth of God (Matt. iv. 4, comp. Rev. xii. 11 ...) so that the devil's attempts are as unavailing in her case as in that of the Saviour. ... But, though she finds no nourishment, yet she finds a refuge and an asylum in the Gentile world, even up to this day, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." 1 Tim. ii. 2.

Let the Church, however, never forget that she is still in the world—in the ungodly world—which may, at any time, manifest her hostile spirit. This is expressed primarily by the time which is mentioned, that the stay in the wilderness should last (ver. 6 and 14). The three times, and half-a-time, or 1260 days, have, doubtless, an accurate chronological meaning, but it is impossible, at present, to arrive at it; the fulfilment alone will interpret the apocalyptic chronology, even as we saw in the case of the chronological statements of Daniel. At present we have solely to look to the symbolical meaning of the numbers in the Revelation of St John. We know the meaning of three and a half from Daniel, vii. 25; xii. 6, 7; ix, 27. It is the time of the world power, in which the earthly kingdoms rule over the heavenly. The same number is again used in the Apocalypse to characterise the times of the Gentiles, during which Jerusalem is trodden down, and hence the kingdom of God has lost completely its external visible existence on earth—that is, the time from the Roman destruction of Jerusalem to the second coming of Christ. Compare Luke xxi. 24, and Rev. xi. 2, in both which passages, the treading of the holy city under foot of the Gentiles is spoken of, which is to last till, according to the first passage, the times of the Gentiles; according to the second, forty and two months ($3\frac{1}{2}$ years = 1260 days) are fulfilled. To these negative dates is added, in Rev. xiii. 5, the positive definition, according to which, the forty-two months designate the period of the power of the beast—that is, the world-power. The only remaining passage of our book, in which the 1260 days occur, is probably to be understood in the same light, but this will be shown in a subsequent part of our investigation.

We have thus seen that although the church finds a shelter in the heathen world, yet she is given into the hands of the power of the world; she stands under the protection, and also under the oppression of the worldly power; she is a suffering and militant church to this very day. This mixture of protection and oppression is the specific characteristic of the relation of the church to the power of the world during the church-historical period. In one part of this period the one element preponderates, in another the other; but in the end, the enmity and opposition of the world shall break forth, with great violence, against the church, Rev. xiii. 6, 7.

Auberlen compared his approach with other ways of interpreting the book of Revelation. He wrote:¹

The interpretation of the Apocalypse may be reduced to three grand groups.

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 359-362.

First, the church-historical view regards the Revelations as a prophetic compendium of church history, and supposes that the exalted Saviour has revealed therein the chief events of all centuries of the Christian era, in detail, and with chronological accuracy. *Bengel* is still the most important representative of this view in Germany. His apocalyptic system, though the event has already proved it erroneous in some points of primary importance, has yet, as far as its essence is concerned, many adherents among believers of our time. Besides, the British and French divines have a great predilection for this mode of interpretation. We shall endeavour to give a characteristic of their mode of treating the Apocalypse, in our remarks on two of their most distinguished works in modern times, the "Horae Apocalypticae" of the English divine *Elliot*, which were published in 1851 in London, fourth edition, four large volumes; and, secondly, the work of the Genevan divine, *Gausson*, which we have quoted frequently, "Daniel le Prophete," of which hitherto three volumes have been published (2d edition, 1850). *Gausson* gives a full exposition of the parallel passages in Daniel. The English and French theologians have latterly devoted much attention to the theological, and especially the Apocalyptic literature of Germany: we enter, therefore, willingly into an examination of theirs.

The second view is peculiar to those circles of modern German theology who deny the genuineness of Daniel. They start with a conception of prophecy, which excludes a real beholding of the future, revealed by God. Hence, they limit the view of John, as well as that of Daniel, to his contemporary history; what Antiochus Epiphanes is, according to their interpretation, in the book of Daniel, Nero is in the New Testament Apocalypse. This exegetical view is generally accompanied by the critical view, that the gospel of John and the Apocalypse cannot be of the same author. Some, *Ewald*, *De Wette*, *Lücke*, and others, attribute the gospel, others again, *Baur* and his school, the Apocalypse, to the apostle.

A second species of this view (that of contemporary history) has been recently attempted, after the precedent of *Herder* and others, by *Züllig*. He excludes all reference to Rome and heathenism, and tries to refer everything to Jerusalem and Judaism. This view has found so few adherents, that we need not devote to it a minute consideration.

The chief representatives of this second class of interpreters are *Ewald*, who first developed it in his *Commentarius Apocal. Criticus et Exegeticus*, 1828; *De Wette*, in his short exposition of the Revelations, 1848; and *Lücke*, in his "Versuch einer vollständigen Einleitung in die Offenbarung Johannis. 2d edit. 1852." *Baur's* school has not produced a monograph on the Apocalypse, but only detached essays and occasional remarks.

The third view is the one to which we adhere. The fundamental principles of this interpretation is the same as that of the first class (the church-historical view), and opposed to the second. It starts from a belief in real predictions. It does not even deny the possibility of prophecies so minute and special, as

the interpreters belonging to the first class find in the Apocalypse; for that the second part of Daniel contains such circumstantial predictions, and hence, that such predictions are possible, the fulfilment has proved. But we deny, that the New Testament Apocalypse, as it lies before us, *de facto*, is or was intended to be a detailed history of the future. If this had been intended, the Revelations would have been given in the same manner as the eleventh chapter of Daniel, where there is indeed a minute history of the future. But we know that the seventh chapter of Daniel, and its symbolism of beasts and man, forms the substratum of the Apocalypse, and even the numbers occurring in the New Testament Revelations chiefly refer to the fundamental number of three and a half, given in Daniel vii. 25. The book does not intend to be a detailed description of church-history, but its object is to represent the great epochs and leading principal powers in the development of the kingdom of God viewed in its relation to the worldkingdoms. As *J. T. Beck* says: "The Apocalypse describes essential peculiar principles, and we must endeavour to apprehend these independently of the question, 'To what external historical phenomenon (Church, State, event, individual) does this apply?'" We have pointed out above, why the Old Testament congregation stood in need of more special prophecies than the New Testament Church.

This view of the Apocalypse (according to which the book refers to the history of the kingdom of God) is the original view held in the Church. It was first reintroduced in a scientific shape by Hofmann, who referred the interpretation of the Apocalypse to the fundamental passage in Daniel, and thus opened a new path for the exposition of the beast. We refer to the second part of his "Weisagung u. Erfüllung," 1844, p. 300. It was Hofmann also, who asserted again the importance of the doctrine of the millennial kingdom, for which *Bengel* had lifted so powerful a testimony. The two most recent commentaries on the Revelations, that of *Hengstenberg* (2 vols., 1849-1851), and *Ebrard* (1853), pursue the principle laid down by Hofmann. The former falls partly into pre-Bengelian views, the latter adopts French and English ideas.

Michael Paget Baxter (1834-1910)

537 AD – 1797 AD

1867 AD – 1871 AD

Baxter was an Anglican minister and the founder and proprietor of the *Christian Herald* newspaper in London. He was a fervent date setter; he named several people as the Antichrist, and he unsuccessfully predicted the end of the world for no less than seven different times between 1867 and 1908. He also distributed about two million Bibles. Baxter thought the prophecies of the 1,260 days in Revelation and the 1,290 days, and 1,335 days of Daniel would be fulfilled both as years, and as literal days; he wrote, "nearly all the dates in Daniel and Revelation have their future recapitulated literal-day fulfillment."

In 1863 he published a book in which he wrote:¹

The fact of the End or Consummation being about or soon after 1871-72, requires Antichrist to make a Jewish Covenant about or soon after 1864, and Louis Napoleon is the only prophetic character in existence by whom such a Covenant could properly be made.

The ten dates, which combine in showing the End to be about 1871-72, are the 6000, 2520, (seven times, Dan. iv.,) 2500, 2300, (Dan. viii. 14,) and 1335 years, (Dan. xii:12,) which all terminate in 1871-2: also the 1290, 1260, (Dan. xii.,) 666, 390, and 360 years, (Rev. xiii., ix. 15, x. 6,) which ending respectively in 1824-7, 1794-7, 1868, 1844, and 1872, form additional links in the chronological chain of evidence. As regards the four septenaries—the 7 Heads of the Beast, the 7 Seals, 7 Trumpets and 7 Vials—we are living under the seventh-revived or last Head of the Beast, and just before the fulfillment of the last year-day 7th Seal, 7th Trumpet, and 7th Vial, which will last for about 5 years, from 1866-7 to 1871-73. (Rev. vii. xi. 18. xvi. 15). As soon as they commence the first stage in Christ's Advent, His Coming in the air to translate the 144,000 Wise Virgins, takes place, at the distance of about two years, and five or six weeks after the date of the seven-years' Covenant, (See Chap. II., Event 5.) During the succeeding five years, the seals, trumpets, vials, and nearly all the dates in Daniel and Revelation have their future recapitulated literal-day fulfillment. Their past year-day fulfillment has been interpreted by more than a hundred expositors to show that the coming of Christ and end of this Dispensation would occur between 1864 and 1869-73. It is at this last-named year probably that the second translation and descent of Christ upon Mt. Olivet, at the Battle of Armageddon, will take place, and Antichrist and his followers being slain, the Millennium will be fully inaugurated.

From All These Considerations it appears that whereas Napoleon Bonaparte slew his thousands, Louis Napoleon will slay his hundreds of thousands: the former scourged men with whips, but the latter will chastise them with scorpions. The one only required homage to be offered to him as a King, but the other will demand worship to be rendered him as a god. The Uncle made Europe the principal theater of his desolations: but the Nephew will fill the four Continents of Europe, Africa; Asia, and America, with destruction and slaughter. The former unsuccessfully meditated, but the latter will triumphantly achieve, the humiliation and conquest of England, Russia, and Turkey. Satan was but experimenting when he raised up the first Napoleon as a Great Destroyer, but he has taxed his powers to the utmost to produce his most finished masterpiece, the Third Napoleon, who will be unapproachably the Greatest of all Destroyers.

¹Baxter, Michael Paget. *Louis Napoleon the destined monarch of the world: foreshown in prophecy to confirm a seven years' covenant with the Jews about seven years before the millennium.* J.S. Claxton, 1867. pp. 58-59.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=u8E0AAAAMAAJ>

In his interpretation of the prophecy of the two witnesses of Revelation 11, Baxter briefly notes a mystical fulfillment “in the 1260 years’ sackcloth testimony of the two Testaments,” but he elaborates in great detail on his ideas about a literal fulfillment of the prophecy.¹

It was almost the universal belief among the Fathers of the Primitive Church, some of whom had conversed with the Apostles themselves, that Elijah would be the herald of Christ at his Second Advent, as stated in Mal. iv. 5, 6, and would also be one of the two Witnesses. Either Enoch, Moses, or St. John was thought to be the other Witness. The mysterious way in which Moses was taken up to heaven, as well as the fact of his being with Elias at the Transfiguration, and also his having performed actions similar to those ascribed to the Witnesses, point him out as the person who will most probably be Elijah’s fellow-prophet. It is noticeable that the Greek word, for Witnesses, ... is used about forty times in the Bible, and invariably signifies living personal witnesses, which is also the case with the word “Prophets;” therefore this prophecy cannot be completely fulfilled except by real persons, although it has had a mystical accomplishment in the 1260 years’ sackcloth testimony of the two Testaments, and their destruction during the 3¹/₂ years of the French Revolution. The appearance and ministry of these two supernatural Witnesses will be necessitated by the severity of Napoleon’s persecution, against the violence of which no mere mortal can contend. Therefore a testimony in opposition to his Anti-Christian apostasy will be maintained by Elias and the other prophet, who from the moment of his image being placed in the Jewish temple, will thenceforth for 1260 days continue to preach the Gospel and warn mankind not to worship the Antichrist or his image, or receive his mark in their forehead or in their hand. It is through their instrumentality in a great degree that the innumerable company of persons (Rev. vii. 9) who are to be converted during the great tribulation will be brought to repentance: In the absence of any definition of the localities where they will prophesy, we may conclude that if they visit every place in which the infidel persecution rages, they will deliver their testimony throughout nearly the whole of Christendom and even in some parts of Heathendom. Their supernatural powers will probably enable them to traverse long distances with the swiftness of angels. Clothed in sackcloth from head to foot, they will suddenly alight in places where many people are congregated together, and proceed to proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus, and show from the prophecies that Napoleon is the Antichrist, and that all the marvelous events of that period have been predicted to accompany Christ’s advent. If any person attempts to injure them, they will breathe forth fire, a jet of flame will issue from their mouth, and their assailant will instantaneously fall dead, pierced through as by a flash of lightning. As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses and Aaron, and counterfeited their miracles, so will the False Prophet (the Pope) and Romish Priests withstand the Two Witnesses and imitate

¹*Ibid.* pp. 125-127.

their wondrous deeds. Whereas the Witnesses will breathe forth fire against those who attempt to injure them, the False Prophet will mimic them by making fire come down from heaven on the earth. Thus it will be a contest of fire against fire. And as Moses and Aaron stood before Pharaoh, and remonstrated with him regarding his cruel oppression of Israel, and punished his obduracy by the infliction of grievous plagues, so most probably the Witnesses will enter into the presence of Napoleon, the great anti-typical Pharaoh, and expostulate with him respecting his ruthless persecution of the saints, and punish his obduracy by "smiting the earth with all plagues as often as they will." The sore judgments of famine, pestilence, and ravages of wild beasts, that are foreshown under the third and fourth literal-day seals to occur during the 3¹/₂ years of Antichrist, will be specially caused by the Witnesses, for they have power to shut heaven that it rain not during the 1260 days of their prophecy, and the appalling scarcity of food that will result from the total absence of rain for 3¹/₂ years, will necessarily bring in its train wide-spread disease, and give rise to the predatory incursions of wild beasts, which will overrun many parts of the earth in search of food to satisfy their raging hunger. The two Prophets will also exercise power "over waters to turn them to blood," by converting all salt and fresh water into blood, under the second and third literal-day Vials, at the time of their slaughter and resurrection.

At the termination of their 1260 days' testimony, their invulnerability will cease, and Antichrist will succeed in putting them to death. Great and universal will be the exultation among "the peoples and kindreds and tongues and nations," when the welcome news¹ is transmitted to them over the electric wires; they will rejoice, and make merry, and send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them by their infliction of plagues for worshiping Napoleon. But their joy will soon be turned into grief. For after the Witnesses' dead bodies have been exposed for 3¹/₂ days, they will suddenly stand upon their feet and ascend up to heaven in a cloud. About the same time there will be a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city (apparently Jerusalem) will fall, and 7,000 men be slain, and the remnant will be affrighted and give glory to the God of heaven. The remnant that are constrained by these sights to give glory to God, may be identical with the 144,000 Jews whose conversion and sealing (Rev. vii.) takes place, principally during the ensuing 2¹/₂ months, and it may be the intelligence of their consequent defection from Antichrist's cause that constitutes "the tidings out of the East," (Dan. xi. 44,) which lead to his last exterminating assault upon them at the time of the Battle of Armageddon.

¹**Baxter's note:** It was once objected to the literal fulfillment of this prophecy, that the intelligence of the slaughter of the Witnesses could not be circulated even through Europe within 3¹/₂ days. The invention of the telegraph, however, furnishes a triumphant answer to such an objection, and if the transatlantic cable should be laid down by that time, the death of the two Prophets might be made known in America within a few hours of its occurrence.

Henry Barclay Swete (1835-1917)

Swete was an English Biblical scholar and Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. He is known for his commentary on the Book of Revelation. Swete wrote, on the time that the two witnesses prophesy, Revelation 11:2-3:¹

This limit of time is derived from Dan. vii. 25; xii. 7, i.e. 3½ years or 42 months, the duration of the sufferings of the Jews under Antiochus, whether we reckon from June 168 to Dec. 165, or from Dec. 168 to the middle of 164; see Driver *ad loc.* The same limit is given under various terms in Apoc. xi. 3, xii. 6 (1260 days), xii. 14 ("a time and times and half a time," as in Daniel), xi. 2, xiii. 5 (42 months). By comparing these passages with the present context we get the equation: the duration of the triumph of the Gentiles = the duration of the prophesying of the Two Witnesses, = the duration of the Woman's sojourn in the wilderness. The time-limit serves of course no further purpose than to synchronize the several periods, and to compare them with the greatest crisis through which the Jewish people passed between the Exile and the Fall of Jerusalem. In this place it suggests that as the Syrian domination yielded at last to the faith and courage of the Maccabees, so when the appointed time has come the Jewish people may be emancipated from Gentile oppression, and restored to the unity of the people of God. The words have a special interest in view of the recrudescence of Anti-Semitism.

The speaker is Christ (cf. ii. 13, xxi. 6) or His Angel-representative (xxii, 7, 12 ff.) Neither Moses and Elijah, nor Elijah and Elisha, nor Enoch and Elijah can exhaust the meaning of the two witnesses who prophesy through the whole period of Gentile domination, though, as the sequel shews (vv. 5, 6), the first pair at least are in the mind of the writer, suggested doubtless by Mal. iv. 4, 6, and by the vision of the Transfiguration (Mk. ix. 4). Nor again can such allegorical interpretations as the Law and the Prophets, the Law and the Gospel, the Old Testament and the New, be maintained in view of all that follows. Rather the witnesses represent the Church in her function of witness-bearing, (Acts i. 8); her testimony is symbolized by two witnesses, partly in reference to the well-known law of Deut. xix. 15, partly in order to correspond with the imagery of Zechariah iv. 2 ff., about to be cited; or, as Primasius says, they may represent the Church in both stages of her career, "*ecclesia duobus testamentis praedicans et prophetans.*" The witness of the Church, borne by her martyrs and confessors, her saints and doctors, and by the words and lives of all in whom Christ lives and speaks, is one continual prophecy, (cf. xix. 10) lasting throughout the 1260 days of the triumph of heathendom. Her witnesses are clad in sackcloth (for the construction see x. i), a reference perhaps to the rough costume worn by ancient

¹Swete, Henry Barclay. *The Apocalypse of St. John: the Greek text with introduction, notes.* London: Macmillan. 1911. pp. 133-135. (Note: Some editing, text omitted in quote.) <http://www.archive.org/details/2apocalypseofstj00swetuoft>

prophets; cf. 2 Chron i. 8, Zech. xiii. 4, Isa. xx. 2, and see Mk. i. 6, note. But ... the sackcloth dress indicates that the attitude of the Church during the prevalence of paganism, if not to the end of her course on earth (Mk. ii. 20), must needs be penitential and not triumphant; cf. Jonah iii. 6, 8, Mt. xi. 2 1 Cf. Bede: "*saccis amicti, id est in exomologesi constituti.*"

Henry Grattan Guinness (1835-1910)

533 AD – 1793 AD

606 AD – 1866 AD

Guinness was an Irish Protestant Christian preacher, evangelist and author. He connected the 1,260 days with events in the history of the papacy, using the dates for the 1,260 days that had been suggested by Irving, and he also supported another fulfillment, between 606 AD and 1866, as if he felt the first one might seem unconvincing. Apparently he thought the date 1866 was close enough to 1870, when the events actually occurred, to satisfy the prophecy. It was then that the holdings of the pope, and the status of the Vatican became uncertain as Rome was incorporated into the Kingdom of Italy. Guinness mentioned the interval from the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD to the death of Gregory XIII as another possible fulfillment. As well, he connected the 1,260 days with astronomical cycles. In 1879 Guinness wrote:¹

Gregory XIII. died in A.D. 1585, exactly 1260 years after the Council of Nice, and his reformation of the calendar only came into use three years before his death, and that only in the Catholic countries which accepted it as a matter of course; in Protestant Germany and Switzerland it did not take effect till A.D. 1700, and in England not till A.D. 1752.

It is a singular coincidence, to say the least of it, that this chronological legislation, emanating from the Pope who sanctioned and struck a triumphant medal, in memory of the bloody massacre of the Protestants of France, on St. Bartholomew's day, should have removed from a period of 1260 years (dating from the first General Council following the rise of Imperial Christianity) the accumulated Julian error which concealed its true epoch measures, and that he should thus have unintentionally uncovered, as attached to it, one more form of the triple six, so solemnly linking the period with the number of the Beast.

The downfall of the temporal power of the Papacy is the event marking the close of this period of 1260 years, just as the rise of the Papacy marked its beginning; and it is evident that neither of these events happened in a year, or indeed in a century. "Rome was not built in a day," it is commonly said; and assuredly the Roman Catholic Church did not burst full-blown on the world. It rose into power gradually as the old Roman empire decayed and passed away; it

¹Guinness, Henry Grattan. *The approaching end of the age viewed in the light of history, prophecy and science.* Hodder and Stoughton, 1879. pp. 425-427

had various marked crises of rise, and hence its great period of 1260 years, must have analogous successive termini, earlier and later, exactly as in the case of the Captivity era. The earliest possible conclusion of the period, is the epoch of the Reformation. Up to that time the saints had been delivered into the hand of this persecuting power without exception, and without appeal, or redress. Then, and thenceforward, a very considerable portion of Christendom was delivered from its spiritual and temporal oppression and tyranny. From the Council of Nice to the full end of the Reformation movement may therefore, perhaps, be regarded as an initiatory 1260 years.

The chronological legislation of Gregory XIII., took place at the close of this period, and corrected the error that had accumulated since its commencement. Sixtus V., who died five years after Gregory (A.D. 1590), was "the last pope who rendered himself formidable to European courts." From his time, to the present, Papal power has been passing through its period of decline and fall, just as from the fourth to the end of the sixth centuries, the system of the apostasy was gradually rising and developing into the Papacy.

A second and more evident and accurate measurement, is found by dating the 1260 years from the Edict of Justinian, which constituted the Bishop of Rome "the head of all the Churches" A.D. 533. This date of the terminus a quo, gives as the terminus ad quem A.D. 1793, the time of the French Revolution, in the course of which, as we have seen, the Pope was carried captive from Rome, and the Papal power received a tremendous shock, from which it never fully rallied.

But the main reckoning of the period is unquestionably between the chronological limits A.D. 606 and 1866-70, the former being the date at which the title of Pope, or universal bishop, was, by the Emperor Phocas, conferred upon Boniface III., and the latter, that of the overthrow of Austria and France, and the consequent loss of the last vestige of temporal power, by Pius IX., when Victor Emmanuel moved his court to the Quirinal, and became sole king of united Italy. Then, and never quite till then, the Papacy, as a temporal power—a horn—ceased to exist. As a religion, it is destined to continue till the second advent of Christ, when the Lord will destroy it "with the brightness of his coming." The Beast is to be cast alive into the lake of fire, and therefore to be still in existence at the Epiphany.

To sum up: 1260 years, the foretold and fulfilled period of Papal domination in Christendom, and of the temporal political power of the Popes of Rome, has the following remarkable astronomic measures.

1260 years is 6 + 6 + 6 soli-lunar 70-year cycles;

1260 years is 66 lunar cycles + 6 years.

1260 years have 6606 days of epact.

In the Preface to his book *History Unveiling Prophecy*, Guinness wrote:

It is a deep satisfaction to the author to remember that whatever may be the views of a modern section of skeptical or speculative interpreters of the Apoca-

lypse, who either see no reference to definite historical events in the prophecy, or relegate its fulfillment to future times, in accepting and advocating its historical interpretation, in regarding it as the story told in advance in symbolic language of the events of the Christian centuries, he is treading in the steps of the greater part of Apocalyptic interpreters from the earliest times, of Justin Martyr; Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Victorinus, Methodius, Lactantius, Eusebius, Athanasius, Jerome, and Augustine among the Fathers; of Bede and Anspert, Andreas and Anselm, Joachim Abbas and Almeric of the middle ages, of the Albigenses and Waldenses, of Wickliffe and the Lollards, of John Huss and Jerome of Prague of pre-Reformation times; of the Reformers, English, Scottish, and Continental; of the noble army of Confessors and Martyrs who suffered under Pagan and Papal Rome; of the Puritan theologians, of the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, of Mede and More, and Sir Isaac Newton, and Jonathan Edwards that greatest of American theologians, of Bengel the learned German exegete, of Alford and Wordsworth, of Birks and Bickersteth, of Faber and Elliott in England, and a host of others, men distinguished for their ability, their assiduity, their spirituality, their deep study of the prophetic world, in short by what appear to be the greatest and best of the expositors of the book. Modern historical interpreters of the Apocalypse are in good company; they stand with the Fathers, the Confessors, the Martyrs, the Reformers, with men who suffered for the truth they believed, and were practically guided and inspired by the interpretations they have handed down to posterity.

Not all of those listed above would have agreed that the 1,260 days of Revelation 11:2 and 12:6 must be interpreted as so many years. Philip Mauro was not impressed by the dating schemes and cycles that Guinness used; see page 119.

A. J. Gordon (1836-1895)

Gordon was minister at Clarendon Street Baptist Church in Boston. He believed the 1,260 days of Revelation 11:3 and 12:6 represent so many years, and defended that view against literalism, in a note in his book *Ecce Venit*:¹

“And power was given unto him to continue forty and two months” (Rev. xiii. 5). This period of Antichrist’s duration we hold to be, according to the “year-day theory,” twelve hundred and sixty years. To those who deride such interpretation as strained, and insist that the words mean three years and a half, we reply: What expositor has interpreted the ten day’s tribulation in Rev. ii. 10 to be ten literal days? But if the Holy Spirit meant years, in the Apocalypse, why did He not say years? it is replied. Why, when He meant churches and ministers, and kingdoms and kings and epochs, did He say candlesticks, and

¹Gordon, A. J. *Ecce Venit*. Fleming H. Revell, NY. 1889. p. 139.
http://xythos.gordon.edu/Archives/Gordon_Heritage/EcceVenit.pdf

stars, and beasts, and horns, and trumpets? Yet, having used these miniature symbols of greater things, how fitting that the accompanying time should also be in miniature! To use literal dates would distort the imagery, as though you should put a life-sized eye in a small-sized photograph.

Gordon was impressed by the fulfillment of some of the predictions of previous historicists; probably alluding to Fleming's dates in the quote below.¹

For the energy of Satan is evermore a tribute to the zeal of God appearing in the Church. If Christians are rising up to extraordinary service for God, because they know that "the time is short," what wonder if Satan should "come down with great wrath because he knoweth he hath but a short time?"

As for chronological signs, we believe that these are given to enable us to approximate, not to calculate, the time of the end. Those computations by which some have presumed to determine the day and the hour of the Lord's return have brought great discredit upon Apocalyptic study. Only as the prophet's lamp shines upon the prophet's calendar can we read it aright; and while we examine the inspired dates of the latter, we must give heed to the divine admonition of the former: "But *of that day and hour* knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. xxiv. 36).

In saying this, however, we are far from disparaging the study of divine chronology. That oft-repeated interval,—*"time, and times, and a half a time," "forty and two months," "a thousand two hundred and threescore days,"*—we hold to signify always the same thing, according to the year-day interpretation, *twelve hundred and sixty years*. Now, as this is the period of the domination of the beast (Rev. xiii. 6), and of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth (xi. 3), of the career of the "little horn" (Dan. vii. 24), and of the sojourn of the woman in the wilderness (Rev. xii, 6), it gives us several lines of measurement that verify each other. By general consent, the "little horn" and "the beast" signify the Antichrist. This mysterious power holds dominion for *"forty and two months,"* the same period as that of the woman's sojourn in the wilderness. But the exile of the Bride, the woman in white, must correspond in duration with the enthronement of the Harlot, the woman in purple, for these are the obverse and reverse sides of the same prophetic fact. Now, as we know from history that the Harlot has been sitting as queen on the seven hills for more than twelve hundred years, and as we know from prophecy that her opposite, the Bride, was to be in exile for "a thousand two hundred and threescore days," we conclude that these days signify years, for the Beast, and for the Bride, and for the Harlot alike, all these having the same period for their allotted career. Therefore it is not true, as some assert, that Antichrist arises only after the apostate Church has run her course, to hold sway for a literal three years and a half; but he is contemporaneous with her. Now, since Antichrist's destruction is effected by Christ's coming,

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 203-206.

the career of the former, as predicted in prophecy and confirmed by history, must furnish one of the plainest measures by which to approximate the time of the end. If the rise of the papacy could be fixed as to the exact day and year, we might not err in seeking by computation for the day and year of its fall, and so approximate closely the date of the coming of the Lord. But as its beginning was in several epoch-marking events, so, applying our measuring line, we must look for its decline in corresponding crises of decadence, each crisis being an alarm bell for admonishing us to watchfulness. From several initial dates in history, corresponding terminal periods have been correctly anticipated by students of prophecy for the last three hundred years. It is impossible to enter with detail into the subject. Nearly two hundred years ago, Apocalyptic scholars forecast the years 1790 and 1848 as critical years in the commencing of the downfall of the papacy,—the first of which, as events proved, brought her under the bloody judgments of the French Revolution, and the second into that other political convulsion which drove the pope into exile. So, likewise, many expositors concurred in looking for some marked calamity to Rome in 1868-70,—the latter year, as history was to prove, being that of the downfall of the temporal power of the pope, the severest blow, in the estimation of many, which has fallen upon Rome in a thousand years. These are illustrations of correct chronological computation which might be greatly multiplied. They suffice to indicate that they err not who, like the prophets, search “*what manner of time*” the Spirit in the Word has signified by the chronology therein given; as they suffice, also, to indicate that our century is solemnly marked as the era of expiring dates, and therefore of startling admonitions to watchful expectation.

Ethelbert William Bullinger (1837-1913)

Bullinger was an Anglican clergyman and the originator of Ultradispensationalism, also known as Bullingerism.

He approached the prophecies literally; he said the temple of Revelation 11:1-2 is a literal one, that is yet to be built. He wrote:¹

There is no difficulty whatever if we leave the Temple alone. But if we say (with Alford and others) that it means “the church of the elect servants of God, everywhere in this book symbolized by Jews in deed and truth,” then we create difficulties which are insurmountable; for how John was to measure the Church we are at a loss to understand.

That there is to be a “Temple of God” in Jerusalem is clear from 2 Thess. ii. 4, for Antichrist is to sit as God there; and “the abomination of desolation” is to be there set up (Matt. xxiv.15).

¹Bullinger, E. W. *The Apocalypse*, 3rd ed. London. 1935. pp. 347-348.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=nXvYP1aiTOKC>

For Bullinger the 42 months and 1,260 days of the prophecy are merely three and a half literal years.¹

The "court" of the Temple and the city is given over to be "trodden under foot" by the Gentiles. It is given over to the Gentiles for a special treading down, and for a definite period. The period of 42 months is connected with the measuring. It closely follows it in order of time, We dare not reverse the two events. This proves, again, that the Church cannot be here, because it could not be at one and the same time delivered from Papal oppression, and yet still be under that oppression. In other words the treading down of the true Church by Rome, preceded the Reformation (which is said by the Historicists to be denoted by the measuring); whereas, here, the order is opposite. This, at once, effectually disposes of the historical interpretation. As to the period of "forty and two months" Alford truly says "no solution at all approaching to a satisfactory one has ever yet been given of any one of these periods. This being so, my principle is to regard them as still among the things unknown to the Church." But why? Why does this period require any "solution" at all? When it makes known a fact to us as to the duration of a certain period, Why regard that period as "among the things unknown"? "Secret things (we read) belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever" (Deut. xxix. 29). Surely this period of "forty two months" is among the things that are "revealed." It is not a "secret" thing; and therefore, being revealed, we are not to regard it as "unknown! but as among the things we assuredly know; and that, upon Divine authority. The great "solution" of this (and similar difficulties) is to believe that the words mean what they say: that "months" mean "months"; and "forty-two" means forty-two. There is no difficulty then. All is natural, simple and easy. The "city" is literal. The treading down is literal. The Gentiles are literal. Why is not the duration of their oppression of the holy city literal also? And when this duration is given to us as "forty and two months" (or 3¹/₂ years), why should it need any so called "solution"? It matters not how great or learned the men may be who offer us these solutions. They are all vain imaginations; and mere fancy-work, which only obscures instead of elucidating the word of God.

Bullinger's simplistic literal approach dismisses the problem of the discrepancy between 42 months, and 1,260 days. In fact, the number of days in 42 *lunar* months is 1,240, and the number of days in 42 *calendar* months or 3¹/₂ *real* years is about 1,278, or 18 days more than the 1,260 days of the prophetic time period. Historicist interpreters wrestled with this for centuries. Was that discrepancy meant to teach us that John's prophetic time period is not to be taken as a *literal* 3¹/₂ years, but these various expressions signify an *ideal* or *symbolic* period, of *indeterminate* duration?

¹*Ibid.* p. 352.

Isbon T. Beckwith (1843-1936)

Beckwith was a professor of Greek language and literature at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. In his commentary on Revelation, he wrote:¹

*Three and a half, always typical, is unquestionably taken from Dan. 7:25, 12:7, where the 'time and times and half a time,' i.e. three and a half 'times,' denote the last period of the triumph of evil and the oppression of God's people, as accomplished in the rule of Antiochus, after which should come the Great Day of Jehovah, with the destruction of the enemy and the giving of the kingdom to the saints of the Most High. While the persecutions of Antiochus are seen to have lasted approximately 3¹/₂ years (cf. Driver *Dan.* in C. B. 93; *Introd.* 494) it is probable that the author of Dan. uses the number typically of the indefinite but short period which he pictures as preceding the End. ... The author of the Apocalypse in 12:14 takes a primary phrase of Daniel 'a time and times and half a time;' elsewhere he interprets 'times' as *days*, or *years*, and in the latter case gives variously 3¹/₂ years, or the equivalent 42 months, or 1260 days, the month being reckoned as 30 days (11:2, 3, 9, 11; 12:6; 13:5). *But in all places the meaning seems to be the same, the period of the last terrible sway of Satan and his agents in the world before the second coming of the Lord.**

B. H. Carroll (1843-1914)

250 AD – 1510 AD

Carroll was pastor of the First Baptist Church, Waco, Texas for 28 years; he became Dean of Bible at Baylor University; and then helped found and later became president of Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth. On the 42 months of Revelation 11:2, for which the holy city is trodden down by Gentiles, he wrote:²

Under this unique measurement only the true temple with its altar of sacrifice and its few worshipers are counted. The outer court and all the holy city are left out. These are trodden under foot by the nations forty-two months, which equals one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the next verse. And in this book a prophetic day represents a year; as in its Old Testament analogue, Ezekiel. The forty-two months and their equivalent, 1,260 days, symbolizing 1,260 years, date the dark ages of the apostasy—beginning in the third century and extending to the Reformation of the sixteenth century. The true church in this period is an inner circle determined by divine spiritual measurement. ... Our

¹Beckwith, Isbon T. *The Apocalypse of John: Studies in Introduction, With a Critical and Exegetical Commentary*. MacMillan, N.Y., 1922. p. 252.

²Carroll, B. H. *An Interpretation of the English Bible: Revelation*. J. B. Cranfill, Ed. Broadman Press, 1948.
<http://sgblibrary.homestead.com/files/BHCarroll/Volume.17.htm>

interpretation makes the numbers “forty-two months” in 11:2, and 13:5, and the 1,260 days of 11:3, 12:6, and the “time, times and half-time” of 12:14, all mean the same thing—i.e., 1,260 years, which delimits the wilderness period of the church, commencing about A.D. 250, and extending to A.D. 1510.

Clarence Larkin (1850-1924)

Larkin was trained as a mechanical engineer, and became a Baptist minister. He is best known for designing and drawing many charts illustrating the dispensational interpretation of prophecy. Below is Larkin’s discussion on the “Times of the Gentiles.”¹

In Luke 21:24 Jesus says that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the “Times of the Gentiles” be fulfilled.

We have seen that the “Times of the Gentiles” began in B.C. 606; is there any way of telling when they will end?

There are those who claim that Jesus meant by the word “Times,” “Prophetical Times,” and that a Prophetical “Time” is a year of 360 days, each day standing for a year, thus making a “Time” equal to 360 years. They also claim that Moses in the Book of Leviticus (Lev. 26:18-20, Lev. 26:24-26), foretold, and four times repeated it, that if the Children of Israel disobeyed God, He would punish them “Seven Times” for their sins and that Jesus referred to these “Seven Times” when He spoke of the “TIMES” of the Gentiles. Therefore if a “Time” is 360 years, “Seven Times” would be $7 \times 360 = 2520$ years; and as the “Times of the Gentiles” began in B.C. 606, they should end in A. D. 1914.

Can this claim be substantiated? In the Book of Revelation the last “half” of the “Seventieth Week” of Daniel is described by three statements of time. First by 42 months (Rev. 11:2; Rev. 13:5); second by 1260 days (Rev. 11:3; Rev. 12:6); third by “Time, and Times, and Half a time” (Rev. 12:14); this last corresponding with Daniel’s “Time and times and the dividing of time.” Dan. 7:25; Dan. 12:7. Now as all these statements of time apply to the same period it is clear that the things that are equal to the same thing are equal to each other; and as a “thousand, two hundred and threescore days” equal 1260 days, and 1260 days equal 42 months of 30 days each, and 42 months equal $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, then “Time, Times and Half a Time” (or the dividing of time), must equal $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. That is, a “Time” must equal one year; and “Times,” two years; and a “Half a Time,” half a year. So we see that in “Prophetical Chronology” a “Time” is equal to a year of 360 days, and not a year of 360 years. There is therefore no scriptural authority for calling a “Time” 360 ordinary years.

If a “Time” was 360 ordinary years, then the “times, and times, and half a time” of Rev. 12:14 would be equal to $360+720+180$ or 1260 years, making the “Last Week” of Daniel’s “Seventy Weeks” 2520 years long; the absurdity of

¹Larkin, Clarence. *Dispensational Truth, Or God’s Plan and Purpose in the Ages*. 1918. p. 71.

which is seen when we remember that the last week of the "Seventy Weeks" must be on the same scale as the "Weeks" of the 69 Week Period, which we proved from history were only 7 years long.

If the claim that the "Times of the Gentiles" is 2520 years long is correct, then we must not forget that those years are years of 360 days each. Now 2520 years of 360 days each, make 907, 200 days. But exactly 2523 Julian or "Astronomical Years" of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days each, or 921,516 days, have elapsed since B.C. 606 up to the present time (A.D. 1917), a difference of 14,316 days. If we reduce these 2523 years of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days to years of 360 days, then we must divide 921,516 by 360, which gives us $2559\frac{3}{4}$ years, which is $39\frac{3}{4}$ years more than 2520 years, so that the 2520 years of the "Times of the Gentiles" ran out $39\frac{3}{4}$ years ago, or in A. D. 1877.

As further proof that the "Seven Times" of Leviticus are not Prophetic "Times," we have the fact (shown on the chart on "Prophetical Chronology"), that the Children of Israel have been punished, or given over to "Servitude" and "Captivity" exactly SEVEN times. Their present "Dispersion" is neither a "servitude" or "Captivity," and does not count.

If the "Seven Times" of Leviticus are Prophetic "Times" and a "Time" is one year, then "Seven Times" would be seven years, the length of the "Last Week" of Daniel's "Seventy Weeks," and would make the statement of Leviticus a Prophetic reference to the length of the "Tribulation Period" through which the Jews must go as a punishment for their sins. The 1000 years of Rev. 20:2-4 are ordinary years, just as the 70 years of the Babylonian Captivity were. The context will show whether ordinary or prophetical years are meant. It is this confusion in interpreting "Prophetical Chronology" that has led to the "time setting" that has brought discredit upon the whole system of Premillennial Truth.

The "Times of the Gentiles" will end with the end of Daniel's "Seventieth Week." When that will begin and end no one knows, for the Scriptures teach that it is not for us to know the "Times and Seasons."

Why must the units for the word "time" in prophecy be limited to one kind? If Daniel's 1,290 days, and 1,335 days are broken down into months of 30 days, they fit the pattern of "a time, times, and a half," each expression having two different *kinds of units*, regular years of 12 months, and leap years of 13 months. For each number, the units for the first "time" differ from the rest.

$$1,290 \text{ days} = 13 \times 30 + 2 \times 12 \times 30 + \frac{1}{2} \times 12 \times 30$$

$$1,335 \text{ days} = 12 \times 30 + 2 \times 13 \times 30 + \frac{1}{2} \times 13 \times 30$$

Similarly, the units for the three sections of the 70 weeks, also, may be different, or else, why would they be expressed in three parts, 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and one week? The 70th week itself may be composed of two parts; the first half-week, the earthly ministry of Jesus, and the last half-week being a symbolic three and a half years, representing the age of the church, when Christ confirms his covenant with his saints.

It is absurd to insist that the four periods of "seven times" mentioned in Leviticus 26 are not "prophetic times."

James said, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."¹

This applies to the prophecy of Leviticus 26; they provide an overview of history. Daniel said that the *curse* written in the law of Moses had come upon Israel.²

Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.

This must refer to the four periods of seven times in Leviticus 26. This shows that the first of the four periods of seven times had already been poured out; there were three yet to come. And in the 70 weeks prophecy, there are three sections.

The seventy weeks are three separate periods, seven weeks, sixty and two weeks, and one week. Since all of these are "weeks," they are also "seven times."

The first is seven weeks so it is "seven times" where the units for *times* are *sevens*. The second is "seven times" where the units for *times* are *62 years*, which was also the age of Darius the Mede (who some identify with Cyrus) when he became king of Babylon.³ The third is "seven times" since it is *one week*. So the 70 weeks of Daniel 9:24-27 explain how the four periods of Leviticus 26 are working out. Since this entire period is called a "curse," there are no gaps in it, as that would imply a *temporary* lapse in the curse, and a *temporary* reconciliation of Israel to God, and of God to Israel, which has not happened. The last of the four periods of *seven times* is when God remembers his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and is reconciled to Israel.

The promise given to Abraham that in his seed, all nations will be blessed, was called the gospel by Paul.⁴ The ministry of Jesus, plus the church age, represented by the time, times and a half, or 1,260 days, is seven times. It is the "week" in which Christ confirms the covenant with many. This 70th week corresponds to the last of the four periods of seven times in Leviticus 26, when God remembers his covenant and is reconciled to his people.

¹Acts 15:18

²Daniel 9:11-13

³Daniel 5:31

⁴Galatians 3:8

Joseph Franklin “Judge” Rutherford (1856-1942)

1914 AD – 1918 AD

Rutherford said the “three and a half times” is the 1,260 day period that began in 1914, and ended in mid-1918, when the Watch Tower Society’s preaching work was suspended. This was immediately followed by the 1,290 days, which extended to the Bible Students’ convention, held September 5-13, 1922, at Cedar Point, Ohio. This event, it was claimed, began the 1,335 day period (1922-1926).¹

George D. Chryssides wrote:²

The “three and a half times” prophecy remains to be considered. Rutherford holds that this 1,260 day period is to be calculated from 27 March 1919, the date of the Watch Tower leaders’ release from prison. The “three and a half times” therefore culminate on 10 September 1922. This date’s significance lies in the Convention at Cedar Point, Ohio on that date, when ten thousand Watch Tower supporters unanimously adopted a resolution stating that God’s kingdom had now come.

The Watchtower Society has since made numerous adjustments to Rutherford’s interpretation, and the dates Oct. 4th, Nov. 7th, and Dec. 28th in the year 1914 have each been said to begin the 1,260 days.³

Philip Mauro (1859-1952)

c.30 AD – c.34 AD

Mauro was a successful patent lawyer, and a member of the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States. He was a preterist, and wrote an exposition of Daniel’s prophecy of the 70 weeks, in which he suggested that the last half-week of the 70 weeks, and the 1,260 days of Revelation 11:3 and 12:6, and the time, times and a half, refer to the three and a half years that followed the crucifixion, when the gospel was preached to Jews by the apostles. He quoted Dr. Taylor:⁴

¹Gruss, Edmond C. *Jehovah’s Witnesses: their claims, doctrinal changes, and prophetic speculation: what does the record show?* Xulon Press, 2001. p. 184.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=kSZL8BWc9KcC>

²Chryssides, George D. *How Prophecy Succeeds: The Jehovah’s Witnesses and Prophetic Expectations.* 2010. p. 39.

<http://www.equinoxjournals.com/IJSNR/article/viewFile/8147/pdf>

³<http://www.jwfacts.com/watchtower/revelation-daniel-prophetic-interpretation.php>

⁴Mauro, Philip. *The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation: A Study of the Last Two Visions of Daniel, and of the Olivet Discourse of the Lord Jesus Christ.* 1921. p. 71.

http://www.preteristarchive.com/Books/pdf/1921_mauro_seventyweeks.pdf

We cannot pass this note of number without remarking on the singular coincidences presented by its frequent occurrence both in history and prophecy. The drought in the days of Elijah lasted three years and six months. The little horn which appeared on the head of the fourth beast was to have the saints given into his hands 'until a time, and times, and the dividing of time.' The public ministry of the Messiah was to continue for half a week (or heptad) of years; that is, for three years and a half. His Gospel was to be preached to the Jews after His ascension for another half heptad before it was proclaimed to the Gentiles. Then, in the Book of Revelation, it is said that the woman shall be nourished in the wilderness 'for a time and times and a half a time,' and that the holy city should be trodden under foot forty and two months, which are three and a half years.

Mauro applied the 1,290 days and 1,335 days of Daniel 12:11-12 to the period of the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies leading to the destruction of the city in 70 AD. He dismissed the dispensational theory of a gap between the sections of the 70 weeks. He wrote:¹

In the foregoing pages we have sought to give the true interpretation of the last four chapters of Daniel. In so doing we have endeavored to show that "the latter days," wherein the last of those prophecies was expressly to be fulfilled, was that final period of Jewish history which stretched from the return from Babylon in the days of Cyrus, to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; and also to show that "the time of the end" spoken of in Daniel 12:4 was *the very last stage of that period*, including the days of Christ, and the time of gospel preaching which followed.

But the subject should not be left without some reference to the question whether these prophecies have any application at all to the present dispensation. We are deeply convinced that there is no warrant whatever for breaking off the last parts of these prophecies, and carrying the detached portions across the intervening centuries to the end of this gospel dispensation. This freakish system of interpretation has nothing in the Scripture to support it, so far as we can discover. But is it not a possibility nevertheless that the prophecies, or parts of them at least, may have a secondary and final fulfillment in the last days of our era?

This question cannot be dismissed as unworthy of serious consideration, seeing that many expositors of the highest ability have elaborated systems of interpretation wherein the time measures of Daniel are taken, on the scale of a day to a year, to measure from various epochs in the past to various critical events in this dispensation. Especially have those time measures been used to locate the second coming of Christ, and other events which pertain to the time of the

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

end of this present age. Sometimes the periods are measured on the scale of a lunar year, sometimes on the scale of a solar year, sometimes on the scale of a calendar year (counting 360 days to a year). Mr. H. Grattan Guinness, in his well known books, *The Approaching End of the Age*, and *Light for the Last Days*, uses all three scales, and he seems to obtain remarkable results whichever scale he employs. Thus these figures appear to give, in many cases, the measures of time between important historical events of old, and corresponding events in our own era. All this suggests the possibility that the figures given in the 12th chapter of Daniel may, when made to mean years instead of days, be found to measure accurately from some selected starting point to say the rise (or the fall) of the Papacy as a temporal power, or of Mohammedanism, or to the French Revolution, or to the outbreak of the World War, or to the taking of Jerusalem from the Turks. Such studies are not without interest and value; but they do not, in our opinion, supply us with a basis upon which the date of any future event can be predicted; and most emphatically do we declare it as our judgment, that *neither these figures nor any others have been given as a means whereby the date of the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ can be calculated*. To that judgment we are driven by His own definite statements in His Mount Olivet prophecy, which we are now about to examine. From those statements it will be clearly seen that, while on the one hand the Lord warned His disciples most explicitly concerning the exterminating judgments which were to fall upon the people, the city and the temple in that generation, and while He gave them an unmistakable sign whereby they might be warned of the approach thereof in time to escape, He took the greatest pains on the other hand to impress upon them that His own coming again would be at an unexpected season, and without any premonitory signs whatever.

Furthermore, it is obvious that, in order to measure long time intervals from a starting point in Old Testament days, it is necessary to have a *correct chronology*; and the practice of all who have made calculations of the sort referred to has been to assume some one or other of the existing chronological systems based upon the canon of Ptolemy, which Anstey has shown to be erroneous, or at least untrustworthy. And in this connection we would say that our confidence in all calculations of the sort referred to is much shaken by the fact that each scheme of interpretation yields equally remarkable results whether one system of chronology be chosen or another, and whether the "year" be taken as containing 365 days, or 360, or 354 (the last being the length of the lunar year). Now, inasmuch as it is manifestly impossible that all the different chronologies based on Ptolemy's canon should be equally correct, or that it is a matter of indifference whether the year, which is the time unit in all these calculations, be of one length, or another, we are unable to find in such systems of interpretation any basis solid enough to support settled conclusions. Therefore, as to the time of any of the as yet unfulfilled prophecies, we have no means for fixing, or even closely approximating, the year in which it will occur; and this statement applies in a special way to the

coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And finally we would say, after much consideration of the matter, and with the desire (which must be common to all) that we might have a divinely revealed measuring line and a starting point whereby future events could be accurately located on the chart of the years, yet we cannot see sufficient warrant for assuming that the "days" mentioned in these prophecies are really "years." We shall not take the time to examine the reasons usually given in support of that assumption, it being enough to say that we know of no proof that the word "day," in any time measure given in the Bible, means "year;" nor can we conceive of any reason why, if a year were meant, the word "day" should be used instead.

If the last half-week of the 70 weeks was the three and a half years that followed the crucifixion, wouldn't the apostles have noticed?

Arno Clemens Gaebelin (1861-1945)

Gaebelin was a Methodist minister who was involved with Jewish evangelism among newly arrived immigrants in New Jersey. He was the editor of *The Hope of Israel* magazine and later *Our Hope*, which featured articles on biblical prophecy. He was associated with James H. Brookes, and James M. Gray, and he wrote many of the notes for C. I. Scofield's *Reference Bible*. In his *The Annotated Bible* he commented on Revelation 11:2-3:

Much has been written on these two witnesses who will appear in Jerusalem. It is clear they are still future and their work will be in that city. Some make them Enoch and Elijah and others think they will be Moses and Elijah returned in person. Some have claimed to be a reincarnation of Elijah. Such claims are fanatical. No second coming of Moses is anywhere promised in the Word. Something, however, is said about the work of Elijah in the future (Mal. 4:5-6). But the words of our Lord in Matt. 11:14, speaking of John the Baptist, and Matt. 17:12, seem to make clear that no literal coming of the same Elijah, who went into glory, without dying, is meant. Yet the deeds of these two witnesses clearly link them with the work of Moses and Elijah. They each do both the things Moses and Elijah did separately. We take it then that these two witnesses represent the great testimony to be given in Jerusalem during the 1,260 days of the great tribulation. Perhaps the leaders will be two great instruments, manifesting the spirit of Moses and Elijah, endowed with supernatural power, but a large number of witnesses is unquestionably in view here. They maintain in the midst of the Satanic scenes a powerful testimony for God.

The period of the great tribulation was mentioned in verse 2. Here for the first time the beast is mentioned. This beast coming out of the pit of the abyss, the deep, is the revived Roman empire under the little horn, seen by Daniel on the four-horned beast (Dan. 7:8). While he dominates over the Gentiles, he will turn in fury against these Jewish saints, and the two witnesses will be slain. He makes war with the godly remnant (Dan. 7:21). A part of that remnant will

be killed. The vileness of these coming days of Satan's rule on earth is seen in the treatment of the bodies of Jehovah's servants. The wicked are so elated over the silencing of the testimony that they refuse to permit their burial so that they may feast their eyes upon the sickening spectacle. They rejoice and make it a festive occasion, because torment had come to their consciences through the testimony of the slain.

Gaebelein clearly struggles to understand and interpret the prophecy of the two witnesses. While asserting that they are "two Jewish saints," Gaebelein ignores their identification with two olive trees, and with two candlesticks. He also suggests they represent a large number of witnesses, but how can a large number of individuals possess the power to "smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will"?

Gaebelein provided no supporting scripture reference to support his interpretations. I suggest they are not human individuals at all, but they represent the Scriptures and the Spirit of God. No humans have the power attributed to the witnesses. The killing of the witnesses is accomplished by flawed interpretations, and it is these that are represented by corpses that lie unburied in the street.

On the 1,260 days of Revelation 12:6 Gaebelein wrote:¹

The flight of the woman, Israel, has been taken by some to mean the dispersion of that nation during this age and Israel's miraculous preservation. But this is incorrect. It is true Israel has been miraculously preserved and Satan's hatred, too, has been against that nation. But here we have a special period mentioned, the 1,260 days, the last three and one-half years of Daniel's seventieth week. It means, therefore, that when the Dragon rises in all his furious power to exterminate the nation, God will preserve her. However, before we are told the details of that preservation and Satan's hatred, we read of the war in heaven. Satan is cast out of heaven, down upon the earth. Verses 15-17 and the entire chapter 13 will tell us what he will do on the earth.

Harry A. Ironside (1876-1951)

Ironside was a Bible teacher, preacher, pastor, and author. He is known for popularizing the theory of dispensationalism in North America. In his commentary on Revelation, he said that the 1,260 days represent the first half of a future seven-year tribulation, and he argued that the woman who flees to the wilderness in Revelation 12:6 is not the church, but represents the Jews. The man-child in verse 5, who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron, is Christ, but Ironside wrote:²

¹ *Ibid.*

² Ironside, H. A. *Lectures on the Book of Revelation*. 1919.

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/NTStudies/LecturesonRevelationsHAIronside1920/tabid/325/Default.aspx>

This, clearly enough, is our Lord Jesus Christ, who is soon to reign over all the earth, and undoubtedly He is primarily the Man-child who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and the special object of Satan's malignity. But we have already seen, in Revelation 2:26-28, that when He reigns He will not reign alone, for His promise to the faithful overcomers in the church period is, "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star."

The church, he said, is the body of Christ which is caught up to heaven in verse 5. The present dispensation, he said, is "passed over in silence." He wrote:

Now I apprehend that in the vision before us this is in view; but there is more than that, for we have seen that the man-child symbolizes both Head and body—the complete Christ. Therefore, as in other prophecies, the entire present dispensation is passed over in silence, and the church is represented in its Head, caught up with Christ. For immediately after this, Satan, again acting through the Roman Empire which is to be revived in the last days, turns upon the woman Israel and seeks to vent his wrath and indignation against her. But God prepares a place for her, and she is hidden in the wilderness—possibly the wilderness of the peoples, as Ezekiel (chap. 20:35) so graphically puts it. There she will be protected during the 1260 days, which, as we have already seen, appear to refer to the first half of the 70th week—"the beginning of sorrows."

Why did Ironside insert a gap between the ascension of Jesus described in Revelation 12:5, and the woman fleeing to the wilderness described in the following verse? Only by inserting such a gap, that separate the 1,260 days from the ascension, could he argue that "the entire present dispensation is passed over in silence." Ironside's interpretation of the manchild in Revelation 12:5 violates Henry Alford's fourth "landmark" on page 89. Flawed interpretations of prophecy are included in the "flood" from the serpent's mouth,¹ as explained on page ??.

Herman Hoeksema (1886-1965)

Hoeksema was a Dutch Reformed pastor and theologian. He often taught from Revelation. Following his death his sermons were compiled into a commentary by his son. He wrote on the "time, times and a half" of Revelation 12:14:²

The measure of time here indicated need not detain us very long. It is plain from the context that time, times, and half a time is the same period as the

¹Revelation 12:15

²Hoeksema, Herman. *Behold He Cometh*. Reformed Free Publishing Association, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1969. p. 436ff. <http://www.spindleworks.com/library/hoeksema/behold31.htm>

twelve hundred sixty days mentioned in the first portion of this chapter. This leads us to the conclusion that time, times, and half a time indicates three and one-half symbolic years. One symbolic year, and two symbolic years, and half a symbolic year. One symbolic year is calculated to be three hundred sixty days, which, multiplied by three and one-half, gives us the twelve hundred sixty days. And again, this is evidently the same period as the forty-two months of the two witnesses. For, taking a symbolic month to contain thirty days, forty and two months would again give us twelve hundred sixty days, or three and one-half years. All these indications of time refer, therefore, to the time of the new dispensation, from the exaltation of Christ to the very end, as has become plain before.

Only, the three and a half times indicate this period, in the first place, from the point of view that the history of the world is divided, as it were, into two halves, because of the coming of Christ. If seven is the symbolic number indicating the completion of all that God does in time, and therefore also indicating the complete period of the history of the present world, both before and after Christ, then it is plain that three and one-half must indicate the period of one dispensation, in this case that of the dispensation after the coming and exaltation of Christ Jesus. And, in the second place, this number also indicates that the period of the church's being in the wilderness shall be cut short. The days shall be shortened for the elects' sake. But whatever this number, which also occurs in Daniel, may indicate, certain it is from a comparison of the different places in which it occurs, that it points to the entire period of the new dispensation, even to the end. In this entire period the church has to suffer from the attacks of the dragon. In this entire period God has prepared her a place in the wilderness in separation from the powers of the world, and that too, to her own safety.

William Hendriksen (1900-1982)

Hendriksen was pastor to several Christian Reformed churches, and professor of New Testament literature at Calvin Theological Seminary. In his commentary of Revelation, he said the two witnesses represent the Church, and the 1,260 days in which they prophesy represents the entire dispensation of the Church. He wrote:¹

The true Church is now represented under the symbolism of two witnesses. These witnesses symbolize the Church militant bearing testimony through its ministers and missionaries throughout the present dispensation. The fact that there are two witnesses emphasizes the missionary task of the Church (cf. Lk. 10:1). The Lord sends his missionaries two by two; what the one lacks the other supplies. Now the Church as an organization, functioning through its ministers and missionaries, will carry on this work for twelve hundred and sixty days. This

¹Hendriksen, William. *More Than Conquerors: An Interpretation of the Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Baker. 1939. p. 129.

is the period that extends from the moment of Christ's ascension almost until the judgment day (cf. Rev. 12:5, 6, 14). It is, of course, exactly the equal of forty-two months, for forty-two times thirty is twelve hundred and sixty—and of 'a time, and times, and half a time,' which is three years and a half (Rev. 12:14). It is the period of affliction; the present gospel age. The question may arise, why is that period expressed now in terms of months (verse 2) then in terms of days (verse 3)? Here our answer is a mere guess: in verse 2 we have the picture of a city that is being besieged and finally taken and trampled upon. Now, the duration of the siege of a city is very often expressed in terms of months. In verse 3, however, the two witnesses are described as prophesying; this is a day-by-day activity. Every day they bear witness, throughout the entire dispensation. They preach repentance and for this reason they are clothed in sackcloth.

Charles D. Alexander (1904-1991)

Alexander was a Baptist pastor in Liverpool, England. On the 42 months and 1,260 days in Revelation 11:2-3, he wrote:¹

Forty and two months

All the numbers in Revelation are symbolic. They cannot be fitted into the framework of world history, though there are many startling coincidences which embolden the unwary and create an enthusiasm for chronological interpretation. The spiritual interpretation of this great book must be maintained at all costs, for the past history of chronological investigation is strewn with the carcasses of confident predictions which now have no relevance to contemporary events. Historicism has run out of time and has almost disappeared in the vagaries of post-millennialism presently revived by the contemporary situation in Palestine while ignoring the contemporary state of the church and the revival of heathenism. Some day soon, perhaps, many of our friends may awake to the realities of the Latter Day apostasy, and the realisation that the Millennium is past!

If not a measurable period of time in the realm of historical chronology, what then does the figure of 42 months signify? We have already said in a previous chapter that the numbers in Daniel and Revelation of 1260 days, 42 months, 3¹/₂ years and 'time, times, and half a time' all correspond with each other and are to be interpreted in terms of the most indefinite of them—'time, times, and half a time'. Thus we are dealing with an indefinite period of time, known only to God and not intended to be measured by man. If it could be measured in advance what consolation would it be for those who were able to calculate that no deliverance was to be expected in their day or perhaps for centuries to come? Or what office would be left to faith, if it could be ascertained that in the period

¹Alexander, Charles D. *Revelation Spiritually Understood*.
<http://www.allbygrace.com/alexrev047-12.html>

of one's own lifetime all would be consummated and the Lord would return? What becomes of the Saviour's warning that of the day and hour of His return no man knows, nor yet is it a part of the Son's commission from the Father to make it known?

The broken seven

In place of these speculations we find it much more comforting to see all these strange figures in the Apocalypse as being signs of THE BROKEN SEVEN (the 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years). Seven being the number of divine completeness, and being so used throughout the Apocalypse, the broken seven must relate to judgment and is a warning to the world and an assurance to the people of God of the steadfastness of the divine purposes in commanding a limited period only for the power of this world. The enemy will not endure one day beyond the divine decree.

The 42 months we regard therefore as the whole period of time from Patmos to the Second Advent of our Lord. It began with John's imprisonment, and the Book of Revelation is concerned with that event and the interpretation of it in terms of the prolonged sufferings and probation of the church typified in the afflictions of "John our brother".

During that immense period of time, the church is comforted in the knowledge that the onset and the termination of the 1260 days (and its other numerical equivalents) are fixed by the Lord's sovereign determination. The arbiter of time is the Mighty Angel of chapter 10: the true Michael, the Angel of the Covenant, Christ, the Son of God, the Conqueror of sin, death and hell, the Woman's Seed, the Bruiser of the Serpent's head. It is not for us to know the times and the seasons which forever remain in the Father's own power (Acts 1:7); our part is to preach the Word of God and hold forth the testimony of Christ in a hostile world in which all power appears to be given to the enemies of the kingdom of God.

James Burton Coffman (1905-2006)

James Burton Coffman was a preacher, teacher, and scholar, and an influential minister of the Manhattan Church of Christ in New York City; he was previously the minister of the Central Church of Christ in Houston. In 1992 he finished a 37-volume commentary of the entire Bible which was published by ACU Press.

Coffman identified the "time, times and a half" with "the whole Christian dispensation" in his commentary on Daniel. In his commentray on Revelation he said, on the 1,260 days of Revelation 12:6:¹

A thousand two hundred and threescore days ...
What can this mean? Is there a certain time-period only when Christ will be with his church? No indeed! This time-period represents every minute of the

¹<http://www.searchgodsword.org/com/bcc/view.cgi?book=re&chapter=012>

whole Christian dispensation. This is given in exactly the same form as in Rev. 11:3; and there it was understood as all of the time between the two Advents of Christ, and so it must be understood here. "It describes the period of this world's existence during the whole of which the devil persecutes the church." It is also called forty-two months; and someone has suggested that this was the number of the forty-two stations of the Israelites in the wilderness. Hendriksen called this time-period "the millennium of Rev. 20"; and we believe this understanding of it to be correct, despite the description of it there by use of a different figure. The saints of Christ are reigning with him now in his kingdom; and Christ already has the authority in heaven and upon earth (Matthew 28:18-20). His rule is not accepted by many, due to the freedom of the will of man; but that does not contradict the higher truth that Christ is truly reigning today in the hearts of those who love and serve him.

John F. Walvoord (1910-2002)

Walvoord was president of Dallas Theological Seminary and an evangelical scholar, who promoted dispensationalism. In his commentary on Revelation, his discussions of the time periods in Revelation 11, 12, and 13 are mainly concerned with whether they are in the first or last half of a future seven year tribulation. He wrote about the forty-two months of Revelation 11:2:¹

The second verse adds further light to the situation in that instruction is given not to measure the outer court because it is given to the Gentiles along with the holy city for a period of forty-two months. Here again is the familiar three-and-one-half-year period or half of the seven-year period predicted by Daniel the prophet (Dan. 9:27) in which Israel's history will be consummated with Christ's returning at its close.

Expositors have differed as to whether the forty-two months are the first half of the seven years or the second half. The decision is complicated by the fact that in verse 3 another reference is made to the three and one-half years as the period during which the two witnesses give their testimony. On the basis of the evidence, it is not possible to be dogmatic. If the point of view is adopted, however, that Revelation is primarily concerned with the latter half of Daniel's seventieth week, this perspective would seem to give weight to the conclusion that this is the latter half of the week or the last three and one-half years prior to the second coming especially in light of the details of judgments portrayed in the seals, trumpets, and vials.

Walvoord addressed the issue of the time of the two witnesses.²

¹Walvoord, John H. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*. Moody Publishers, 1966. p. 177.
http://www.walvoord.com/page.php?page_id=270

²*Ibid.*, p. 178.

In verse 3, two unusual characters are introduced, described as two witnesses who shall prophesy 1,260 days. This is exactly three and one-half years or forty-two months of thirty days each, and is unquestionably related to either the first three and one-half years or the latter three and one-half years of the seven years of Daniel 9:27. Expositors have differed as to which of the two periods is in view here. From the fact, however, that the two witnesses pour out divine judgments upon the earth and need divine protection lest they be killed, it implies that they are in the latter half of the seven years when awful persecution will afflict the people of God, as this protection would not be necessary in the first three and one-half years. The punishments and judgments the witnesses inflict on the world also seem to fit better in the great tribulation period.

In Chapter 12, Walvoord denied that the woman in heaven represents the church in general, as most Christian scholars have said throughout its history. Instead, he claimed she represents a "godly remnant of Israel," which apparently means ethnic Jews, who convert during the tribulation. He wrote:¹

Many explanations have been offered for the identity of this woman. The woman does not represent Christ, nor the church in general, but rather Israel as the matrix from which Christ came. By contrast, other representative women are mentioned in the Apocalypse such as Jezebel (2:20), representative of false religion as a system; the harlot (17:1-7, 15-18), the apostate church of the future; and the bride, the Lamb's wife (19:7), the church joined to Christ in glory. In the Old Testament, Israel frequently is presented as the wife of Jehovah, often in her character as being unfaithful to her husband. Here is the godly remnant of Israel standing true to God in the time of the great tribulation.

Although Walvoord says, "obviously there is a tremendous time lapse between verses 5 and 6," in the paragraph below, such a gap is not obvious to me. The more obvious interpretation, I think, is that Christ ascends to heaven, verse 5, and the church then flees to the wilderness, immediately after. But Walvoord manages to make the entire church age disappear from the prophecy, in his interpretation.²

Attention is then directed, however, to the mother of the child, again represented as Israel. Here she is seen in the time of great tribulation as fleeing into the wilderness to a place prepared of God where for 1,260 days she is cared for (again the exact length of three and one-half years). There is obviously a tremendous time lapse between verses 5 and 6, but this is not an uncommon occurrence in prophecy; the first and second comings of Christ are frequently spoken of in the same sentence. Inasmuch as Israel is in comparative tranquillity and safety in the first three and one-half years of Daniel's seventieth week (Dan.

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.*

9:27), the reference must be to the preservation of a portion of the nation Israel through the great tribulation to await the second coming of Christ.

Into this scene of satanic persecution is injected the divine intervention of God. The woman is described as being given two wings of a great eagle in order to enable her to fly into the wilderness into her place. This figure of speech seems to be derived from Exodus 19:4 and Deuteronomy 32:11-12 and similar passages where God uses the strength of an eagle to illustrate His faithfulness in caring for Israel. The same flight is indicated in Matthew 24:16 where Christ exhorts those in Judea to flee to the mountains. Some have felt that the reference here is to some specific place such as Petra, where at least a portion of Israel might be safe from her persecutors. Verse 14 implies that there is some supernatural care of Israel during this period such as that which Elijah experienced by the brook Cherith, or that which Israel experienced during the forty years she lived on the manna in the wilderness. Whether natural or supernatural means are used, it is clear that God does preserve a godly remnant, though according to Zechariah 13:8, two-thirds of Israel in the land will perish.

The time element of Israel's suffering is described as "a time, and times, and half a time." This again seems to be a reference to the three and one-half years, the mention of time being one unit, the second reference to times, being two units, which the addition of one-half a time would make three and one-half units. A parallel reference is found in Daniel 7:25 and 12:7 referring to the same period of great tribulation. The dragon is here called a serpent (Gr., ophis; cf. Matt. 10:16; John 3:14 where the word is used in other contexts; Rev. 12:9, 14-15; 20:2 where "serpent" is used in connection with the devil).

The war in heaven that is described in Revelation 12, between the two accounts of the woman fleeing to the wilderness, is very much about the question of the true identity of the woman who is the subject of this chapter, and the right interpretation of her flight to the wilderness, and the 1,260 days, and the time, times and a half. The wilderness is a place where she is nourished; her nourishment is spiritual, as Jesus explained in John 6:51, where he identified himself as the "living bread which came down from heaven."

The two accounts of the woman's flight to the wilderness, in Revelation 12:6 and 14, are very similar, except that in the second account, her flight to the wilderness encounters the flood from the mouth of the serpent. This represents a flood of flawed interpretations of prophecy, that have proliferated in the last two centuries, with the rise of tens of thousands of sects, cults, and denominations, and the opposite schools of interpretation of prophecy, preterism and dispensationalism.

In the second flight to the wilderness the woman is given two wings of an eagle, which is likely the eagle of 8:13, where a prophesying eagle (an angel in the KJV) pronounces woe on the earth's inhabitants. The wings of the eagle, I think, represent *understanding prophecy*, because a flying eagle soars high in the air, and views the earth from above, which pictures the *divine* viewpoint, as opposed to the *human* point of view. The human viewpoint is represented by the "eyes like the eyes of a man" of the little horn in Daniel 7. Possessing the divine viewpoint is correctly interpreting prophecy. It is one of the results of the warfare,

in which the saints eventually overcome the dragon, “by the word of their testimony.”¹ This is one of the promises Jesus has given to the church; it is represented by the mountains of Israel, to which he said we should *flee*.² See page ??.

George Eldon Ladd (1911-1982)

Ladd was an evangelical New Testament scholar and Professor of New Testament exegesis and theology at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. He wrote of the 42 months and the 1,260 days:³

The figure “forty-two months” harks back to the prophecy in Daniel 9, where the forecast of time down to the confirming of the covenant is said to be “seventy weeks of years” (Dan. 9:24). This cannot be interpreted by anyone’s calculation as an exact prognosis of time. Three and a half years is the time of the domination of evil before the end. The little horn in Daniel 7 will oppress the saints of the Most High for “a time, two times, and half a time” (Dan. 7:25; see also 12:7). In the Revelation, this figure is the time of the oppression of the holy city (Rev. 11:2), of the mission of the two witnesses (11:3), the time of the preservation of the heavenly woman (the church) in the wilderness (12:6, 14), and the time during which the beast is allowed to exercise his authority (13:5). We must recall that John wrote the Revelation probably some sixty years after the ministry of our Lord, which makes it obvious that this interval cannot stand in John’s mind in any kind of direct continuity with the seventy weeks of Daniel.

On this point, the “time, times, and a half” corresponds to the last half of the 70th week in which Christ confirms his covenant with his church. Each of the numbers, 1,335 days, 1,290 days, 1,260 days, 42 months, and 3.5 days, fit the pattern of “a time, times, and a half.” The 1,335 days of Daniel 12:12 is one year of 12 months, plus two and a half years of 13 months; the 1,290 days of Daniel 12:11 is one year of 13 months, plus two and a half years of 12 months, where the months are taken to be 30 days. The 1,260 days of Revelation 11:3 and 12:6 also fit the pattern of three years and a half, where all the years are 12 months of 30 days. Therefore, they are representations of the “time, times, and a half,” but they are progressively shorter, and so the smaller the period, the later the start point of it. The different periods may represent the *diminishing time remaining for the gospel age*, the longest may span the entire period from the ascension of Jesus to the end of the age, while the others span portions of it that began progressively later. Thus the 1,260 days would represent that time which began after the writing of Revelation; the shortest period, the three days and a half, represent a brief period of time near its close. At some point, for example, the remaining time of the church could be represented by “*three hours and a half*.”

¹Revelation 12:11.

²Matthew 24:14.

³Ladd, George Eldon. *A Commentary on the Revelation of John*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1972. p. 153. <http://books.google.com/books?id=V1RCZ94.HwwC>

Ladd continues:

We must conclude that the forty-two months (1,260 days) represent the period of the satanic power in the world, with particular reference to the final days of the Antichrist. All that God's people are to suffer at the hands of satanic evil throughout the course of the age is but a preview of the final convulsive oppression by Antichrist in the time of the end. In this sense, the entire course of the age may be viewed as the time of the end.

Ladd included the following as a footnote:

The eschatological expression "the last days" is used in the New Testament of the age of the gospel of Christ (Heb. 1:2), the age of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:17) as well as the last days of evil (ii Tim. 3:1).

J. Dwight Pentecost (1915-)

Pentecost taught on biblical subjects at Philadelphia College of Bible, 1948-55; and at Dallas Theological Seminary, since 1955. He is best known for his book *Things to Come*, in which he said the 1,260 days is one half of the future 7-year tribulation, and has nothing to do with the church in this age. He quoted the following by John F. Walvoord:¹

The seventy weeks of Daniel, properly interpreted, demonstrate the distinct place of the Christian church and Israel in the purposes of God. The seventy weeks of Daniel are totally in reference to Israel and her relation to Gentile powers and the rejection of Israel's Messiah. The peculiar purpose of God in calling out a people from every nation to form the church and the program of the present age are nowhere in view in this prophecy.²

Pentecost wrote: "This gives supporting evidence that the church is not in Revelation four through nineteen, but must have been raptured before Israel's program began again." He quoted Alva J. McClain, another dispensationalist, in *Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks*.³

In the predictions of the Seventy Weeks, we have the indispensable chronological key to all New Testament prophecy. Our Lord's great prophetic discourse in Matthew and Mark fixes the time of Israel's final and greatest trouble definitely within the days of the Seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15-22; Mark 13:14-20). And the greater part of the Book of Revelation is

¹Pentecost, J. Dwight. *Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology*. Zondervan, 1965. p. 240. <http://books.google.com/books?id=2k6jJ12en1cC>

²Walvoord, John F. Is Daniel's Seventieth Week Future? *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 101:30, Jan. 1944.

³Pentecost, J. Dwight. *Op. Cit.*

simply an expansion of Daniel's prophecy within the chronological framework as outlined by the same Seventieth Week, which is divided into two equal periods, each extending for 1260 days, or 42 months, or 3¹/₂ years (Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). Therefore, apart from an understanding of the details of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel, all attempts to interpret New Testament prophecy, must fail in large measure.

Pentecost rejected the idea that the woman in the prophecy of Revelation 12 is symbolic of the church. He said, "Others have held that this woman is the church that is travailing to bring Christ to the nations. This, however, is built on the allegorizing principle of interpretation and must be rejected. The church did not produce Christ, but Christ the church. Since the church is not seen on earth in chapters four through nineteen of Revelation, the church can not be represented by this woman."

Pentecost supported the dispensationalist view that the woman represents Israel or ethnic Jews. One of the reasons he cited was that the woman flees to the wilderness for 1,260 days. He wrote:¹

The thousand two hundred and threescore days. Twice in this passage reference is made to the period of three and a half years (Rev. 12:6, 14) This has reference to the last half of the seventieth week prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27). This prophecy is specifically addressed to "thy people and thy holy city" (Dan 9:24). Inasmuch as this is addressed to Daniel it could only refer to Israel and Jerusalem. Each time this period is mentioned in Scripture, whether as a thousand two hundred and threescore days, or forty-two months, or three and a half years, or time, times, and half a time, it always refers to Israel and a period in which God is dealing with that nation.

Pentecost's interpretation of the manchild in Revelation 12:5 violates Henry Alford's fourth "landmark" on page 89.

Mathias Rissi (1920-2006)

Rissi was a pastor in Switzerland, and he became professor of New Testament at Union Theological Seminary. He was the author of several books on the early church and on Revelation. In his book *Time and History*, Rissi commented on the vision of Revelation 12, and the woman giving birth to the man child, who was caught up to God's throne in heaven:²

As in Philippians 2:5-11, all statements about the details of the Incarnation of Jesus which might be accessible to the historical observer are avoided, and only that hidden, underlying meaning of the event which is pertinent to salvation history is made apparent.

¹Pentecost, J. Dwight. *Op. Cit.*, p. 287.

²Rissi, Mathias. *Time and History, a study on the Revelation*. Tr. Gordon C. Winsor. Richmond: John Knox Press, Richmond Va. 1966. p. 38.

On the significance of the three and a half years, he wrote:¹

The victory and coming to authority of Christ is yet hidden from the world, a reality only for the faithful who are bound to the heavenly Christ. The puzzling brevity with which the historical Christ event is shown is thus explained by the metaphorical formulation of this paradoxical truth about Christ.

From all this comes the following result: Revelation 12–14 begins with the historical Christ and ends with the Parousia and obviously gives an explanation for the entire intermediary time. That gives now the possibility of confirming the interpretation of the Danielic number 3¹/₂ (and its variations) in the Revelation. In Daniel it designates the duration of the last stretch of time directly prior to the great final judgment and the appearing of the Son of Man (Dan. 7:13, 26). In the Revelation it is no longer meant concretely, as it is in Daniel, while the great distinction from Daniel remains in the new designation of the point of departure of the last time before the End. Daniel, and with it the Jewish apocalyptists, takes the actual point of time of the writing of the book as the point of departure of the last time because he is convinced that he will witness God's world plan in his own decisive hour. However, the refusal of these prophecies to be more specific is always obvious, so that the "later apocalyptic becomes more cautious in its numbers in comparison with Daniel." The new thing found in the Revelation (and in the whole of primitive Christianity) is that it recognizes positively the precise point of the beginning of the final time, this on the basis of the most infallible divine attestation through the appearance of Jesus Christ on earth in the past (12:6). The Danielic number thus serves in the Revelation as a designation of the intermediary time. This last time is the time of the *gynē* (12:6, 14) and the two witnesses (11:3), although it is also the time of the beast and the *ethnē* who believe in him (11:2; 13:5). In these passages it is always the same End time between the two Parousias that is meant.

In 11:2 is found the point of departure for the 3¹/₂ times, the End time, the *patein* of Jerusalem, the desecration by the nations. The inner ground of the profanation is, according to Revelation 11:8, the crucifixion of Jesus.

Thus both of these starting points in chapters 11 and 12 stand in the innermost connection, they clearly synchronize; the End time begins with the Christ event. We shall see later that 11:1-13 concludes the intermediary time with a vision of the End. Thus even this view of the temple and the witnesses in chapter 11 includes an overview of the whole time interval.

John C. Whitcomb (1924-)

Whitcomb is a minister in Conservative Grace Brethren Churches, International. He taught at Grace Theological Seminary from 1951 to 1990, and he is the author of several books supporting young Earth creationism.

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 39-41.

Whitcomb claimed that the 1,260 days in Revelation 11:3 are literal days. In 1982 he wrote:¹

What, then, are the “one thousand two hundred and sixty days” during which “My two witnesses” will receive authority to “prophesy...clothed in sackcloth” (Rev. 11:3)? Time indicators, such as “1,260 days” are to be understood literally. John F. Walvoord explains: “Very prominent in the book of Revelation is the use of numbers, namely, 2, 3, 3^{1/2}, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 24, 42, 144, 666, 1,000, 1,260, 1,600, 7,000, 12,000, 144,000, 100,000,000, 200,000,000... The general rule should be followed to interpret numbers literally unless there is clear evidence to the contrary.”

For several reasons, I suggest that *this is the first half of the Seventieth Week*. First, there seems to be an intentional distinction between the time of the Gentile occupation of the Temple’s outer court and the city, and the time of the two witnesses, by means of the different time-units used: 42 months for the Gentile domination and 1,260 days for the two witnesses. If the same time period is intended for both groups, why is not the 42-month time-block sufficient to cover both?

Whitcomb contends that in the midst of Daniel’s 70th week, the Antichrist will put an end to sacrifices, implying that Levitical sacrifices will be restored. He suggested that a temple does not need to be built for this to occur. The Jewish system of worship will be restored by the two witnesses, he said, quoting J. Dwight Pentecost:²

The reason why this will happen during the first half of the seventieth week is that “in the middle of the week He [the Antichrist] shall bring an end to sacrifice [zevach = bloody sacrifices] and offering [*minchah* = non-bloody sacrifices]” (Dan. 9:27). As J. Dwight Pentecost explains, “This expression refers to the entire Levitical system, which suggests that Israel will have restored that system in the first half of the 70th ‘seven.’” Antichrist will replace the legitimate, God-honoring Jewish worship system, which only the two witnesses can inaugurate, with his own system, namely, *the abomination of desolation* (cf. Dan. 9:27b, 12:11; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:14-15). *But the Antichrist cannot do this until the 1,260 days of ministry allotted by God to the two witnesses has been completed* (cf. Rev. 11:7).

Whitcomb said that the two witnesses (one of whom is Elijah) will prophesy for the first half of the seven year tribulation because “if the 1,260 days occur during the last half of the Week, then the entire world would be celebrating the death of the two witnesses for three-and-a-half days after the Battle of Armageddon and the destruction of the Antichrist! This

¹Whitcomb, John C. *The Two Witnesses of Revelation 11*.
<http://www.pre-trib.org/data/pdf/Whitcomb-TheTwoWitnessesFirst.pdf>

²*Ibid.*, p. 3.

is very difficult to imagine.” Referring to the Antichrist, he asked, “How can he bring fire from heaven upon his enemies (through the False Prophet, Rev. 13:13) if the two witnesses are simultaneously bringing fire from heaven upon their enemies (Rev. 11:5)?”

While Whitcomb claimed that the 1,260 days of Revelation 11:3 occur in the first half of the 7-year tribulation, he put the 1,260 days of Revelation 12:6 in the last half of the 7 years:¹

Furthermore, the basically regenerated nation, called “the woman” in Rev. 12, will flee into the wilderness and be nourished by God for 1,260 days (Rev. 12:6, 14; cf. Isaiah 26:20-21), namely, the last half of the week. “The dragon,” Satan, will then “make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (12:17), presumably the 144,000 witnesses from the 12 tribes of Israel and multitudes of their Gentile converts.

The 1,260 days does not correspond to the 42 months, and so it is not a literal three and a half years, as the number of days does not fit a three and a half year period, in any calendar. Three and a half lunar years is about 1,240 days, or 1,270 days if a “leap year” of 13 months is included. In three and a half solar years the number of days is about 1,278. This shows that the 1,260 days is symbolic; the numbers in prophecy are not meant literally.

Herman L. Hoeh (1928-2004)

Hoeh was the Managing Editor of *The Plain Truth* magazine, published by the Worldwide Church of God. In an article in *The Good News*, a magazine intended for the church membership, he suggested that Petra, in Jordan, would be the location of a place of safety, where church members would be protected during the future great tribulation. He referred to the prophecies in Revelation 12 about the woman fleeing to the wilderness for 1,260 days. Hoeh wrote:²

Why the Mystery? Cities other than Petra have remarkable histories-but only Petra remains a mystery! Not so much because of its past, as for its future! Over the centuries students of the Bible have puzzled over references to Petra in the Bible-and especially to verses revealing a place of escape. Yet none of the scholars of this world seem to understand. Has the real meaning of Petra been purposely hidden from the world-even though archaeologists are preparing the area for visitors? Are Petra's caves again to hide refugees from their enemies in a world where there is no other place to hide?

Hoeh said the location of the church’s “place of safety” has previously been hidden; at the appropriate time, he said, Christ will reveal it:³

¹*Ibid.*, p. 5.

²Hoeh, Herman L. This is Petra! *Good News*, Vol 11. No. 4. April 1962.
<http://www.herbert-armstrong.org/GoodNews.html>

³*Ibid.*

Remember, if the Christians in Jerusalem in apostolic days had quit their work and prematurely escaped to Pella before A.D. 69, they would have been destroyed by the Roman armies who devastated the city. It was only those who completed the work of God who reached safety in A.D. 69 after the Romans destroyed Pella!

That is why God has veiled the exact place of escape from human eyes all these years. But as the days draw closer to the time of the end, the light of prophecy shines ever more clearly! When the moment comes that we need to know where that place of safety is, Christ will make it known. Meanwhile we need to keep our eyes open and our minds yielded—drinking in the implications of prophecy for this Church today! But where does Petra fit in all this?

Hoeh cited several prophecies from Isaiah and Jeremiah in support of his “place of safety” theory.¹ He commented on Isaiah 16:5, “Christ is now pictured as seated on the throne of David! Surely this indicates that God’s outcasts in Isaiah 16 are the same as those mentioned in Revelation 12 who escape to the wilderness—shortly before the return of Christ!”

The “place of safety” theory in the Worldwide Church of God had a role similar to the rapture theory of dispensationalism.

Hal Lindsey (1929-)

Lindsey is an American evangelist and dispensationalist author. He is the author of the best selling book, *The Late, Great Planet Earth*, published in 1970. A Christian Zionist, Lindsey anchored his eschatological interpretation of a final seven-year tribulation to the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948. He wrote:²

The one event which many Bible students in the past overlooked was this paramount prophetic sign: Israel had to be a nation again in the land of its forefathers.

Israel a nation—a dream for so many years, made a reality on 14 May 1948 when David Ben-Gurion read the Declaration of Independence announcing the establishment of a Jewish nation to be known as the State of Israel.

In 1949, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion said that Israel’s policy “consists of bringing all Jews to Israel... we are still at the beginning.”

This seven-year period we have called the “countdown” is a period of unique events. There is more prophecy concerning this period than any other era the Bible describes.

The apostle John counted out seven years for this period when he spoke of the second half being forty-two months (i.e., 3½ years), and the first half being 1260 days (i.e., 3½ x 360 days, which is the Biblical year) (Revelation 11:2, 3).

¹Isaiah 16:1-5; 33:13-17; 42:10-13; Jeremiah 48:28.

²Lindsey, Hal, Carole C. Carlson. *The late great planet earth*. Zondervan. 1970. p. 44.

The prophet Jeremiah spoke of the time when God would return His people of Israel and Judah from a captivity and dispersion. He calls this period "the time of Jacob's trouble."

As Christ told of the world conditions that would immediately precede his coming, He said, "For then there will be great tribulation [affliction, distress and oppression] such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. And if those days had not been shortened, no human being would be saved." (Matthew 24:21, 22).

In other words, this period will be marked by the greatest devastation that man has ever brought upon himself. Mankind will be on the brink of self-annihilation when Christ suddenly returns to put an end to the war of wars called Armageddon.

Lindsey believed that the generation alive in 1948 would be the one in which the prophecies about the climax of the end of the age would occur. Citing Jesus' statement, "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place,"¹ Lindsey commented:²

What generation? Obviously, in context, the generation that would see the signs – chief among them the rebirth of Israel. A generation in the Bible is something like forty years. If this is a correct deduction, then within forty years or so of 1948, all these things could take place. Many scholars who have studied Bible prophecy all their lives believe that this is so.

Lindsey concluded that the end time events of prophecy would occur in the decade of the 1980's. In *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* he wrote: "The decade of the 1980's could very well be the last decade of history as we know it."³

Lindsey's interpretation of "this generation" overlooks the fact of the resurrection of Jesus. Since Jesus remains alive, his generation has not passed away. It is a unique generation.

Roderick C. Meredith (1930-)

554 AD – 1814 AD

Meredith is the leader and founder of the Living Church of God. Previously he was one of the leaders in the Worldwide Church of God and a professor at the church's Ambassador College.

In an article in *Tomorrow's World*, Meredith reviewed *Revelation Unveiled* by Tim LaHaye, and attacked the dispensational "rapture" theory that was supported by LaHaye.

¹Matthew 24:34

²*Ibid.*, p. 54.

³Lindsey, Hal. *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon*. New York, Bantam, 1980. p. 8.

Meredith interpreted the wilderness where the woman flees in Revelation 12:6 as “the flight of God’s true Church from the centralized areas of the Roman Empire—and from the persecutions of the great false church,” suggesting the true church existed during that period in the region of the Italian and Swiss Alps.¹

Citing the day-year principle of Ezekiel 4:6 and Numbers 14:34, he declared the 1,260 days to be the 1,260 year interval from 554 to 1814 AD. The year 554 was the rise of the Roman Emperor Justinian, and in 1814, he said, “the final Holy Roman Emperor, Napoleon,” was removed from office.

Meredith wrote: “It was during this 1,260-year period that true, Bible-believing Christians were in the greatest physical danger from this foul system which God calls ‘MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.’²

In his interpretation of the spiritual warfare in Revelation 12, which is set between the two accounts of the woman fleeing to the wilderness, Meredith mixes physical and spiritual events. The warfare that John describes is between angels, rather than between humans. It occurs in heaven, and the result is a great victory for the saints, and they are told to rejoice because of it. Meredith’s account does not mention the benefits of the victory, only things that are gloomy, and dark. He wrote:

Then, at the very time of the end, a spiritual war breaks out between Satan and his demons and the angels of God. This awesome spiritual war will probably take place within the next several years! Satan is defeated and is “cast to the earth... having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time” (12:9-12). Suddenly, inexplicably, an evil spirit will descend upon the area of the Beast Power in Europe and upon the leaders of the false church. Shortly, they will begin in earnest to plan the destruction of the United States, Canada and Britain! And they will swiftly begin to crack down on anyone who dares to preach the real Truth of the Bible. This will be the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

The attack by Europe and the destruction of the United States, Canada and Britain that Meredith predicts is not in Revelation 12. Rather, the war is between angels, so it is a war of words, and ideas or interpretations, rather than war between nations. “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”³

Meredith interpreted the second account of the woman’s flight to the wilderness in Revelation 12:14-16 as a prophecy about the church fleeing from persecution, to a place of safety. He wrote:

As in the typical fulfillment described in verse 6, the Church once again is guided by God to flee to a Place of Safety here on earth. For “the earth helped

¹Meredith, Roderick C. *Will You Be Left Behind?* Tomorrow’s World. Volume 5, Issue 3. 2003 May-June. <http://www.tomorrowworld.org/media/magazine/twmayjun03.pdf>

²Revelation 17:5

³Revelation 12:11

the woman, and swallowed up the flood which the Dragon (Satan, v. 9) had spewed out of his mouth" (v. 16).

The flood from the mouth of the serpent could be nothing else but an information flood. It is swallowed up when the saints take possession of the promises that belong to the church, foreshadowed by the Israelites taking possession of the promised land under Joshua. The "land" or earth swallowing up the serpent's flood occurs when the saints discover the truth. In the second account of the woman fleeing to the wilderness, she is equipped with two wings of an eagle. If it is the eagle of Revelation 8:13 it is a prophesying eagle. This suggests the woman now has a different perspective; like an eagle, she can view things from above, and so she has a divine perspective, rather than a human one, pictured by the "eyes like the eyes of a man," which characterize the little horn of Daniel 7. This perspective requires understanding and properly interpreting prophecy.

Meredith wrote:

So, if you wish the divine protection of Almighty God in the traumatic months and years just ahead, be assured that it does not lie in getting all hyped up about being suddenly "raptured" off to heaven at any moment. Rather, as God's Word makes clear, our Creator will guide His faithful Church to know when and where to flee just before the Great Tribulation begins. They will be supernaturally protected in a place of God's choosing here on earth.

The mind-set of fleeing, belongs to those who see with "eyes like the eyes of a man," not the divine perspective. When Jesus said that the saints should "flee to the mountains," I suggest, he meant the "mountains of Israel," which are metaphors, and they represent the promises of God!

Meredith's interpretation of the second account of the woman's flight to the wilderness fails to appreciate or notice that the period during which the woman is nourished in the wilderness is called *a time, times, and a half*, which corresponds to the period mentioned in Daniel 7:25, and also the time mentioned by the swearing angel in Daniel 12:7.

In Daniel 7:25 this time period is not connected with an escape, or hiding by the saints, but is the time in which they have to contend with the little horn, which uproots three horns of the fourth beast, and has "eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."¹ The fourth beast was invariably identified with the Roman Empire by the Protestant Reformers and historicists. The eyes like the eyes of a man suggest a human viewpoint, that contrasts with the divine viewpoint.

This little horn, Daniel said, "shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."²

In Daniel 12:7, the *time, times and a half* is associated with the scattering and destruction of the saints, not with hiding or escape; "...it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and

¹Daniel 7:8

²Daniel 7:20

when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."

The second account of the woman's sojourn in the wilderness has an obvious connection to Daniel 7, and with Daniel 12:7, that Meredith seems to have missed. His interpretation of the time periods in Revelation 12 is inconsistent; for one of the periods he invoked the year-day principle, and for the other he opted for a literal three years and a half; clearly an arbitrary approach, of the kind depicted by "eyes like the eyes of a man."

Ernest L. Martin (1932-2002)

2020 AD – 2024 AD

Martin was a minister and college professor at the Worldwide Church of God's *Ambassador College*. In cooperation with Hebrew University, he participated extensive archaeological excavations near the Western (Wailing) Wall in Jerusalem from 1969 through 1973. In 1974, he set up the *Foundation of Biblical Research*, of which he was Chairman from 1974 to 1985. He then founded *Associates For Scriptural Knowledge*.

Martin taught that the two witnesses of Revelation 11 will be two Jews, whose roles are to be very much like those of Moses and Elijah. They minister in Jerusalem during the first half of the seven year period before the return of Christ. He wrote:¹

No Gentile of any race—nor any Israelite unless he is a descendant of Levi—could possibly be one of the Two Witnesses. This rule completely disqualifies all modern Americans, British, or Italians that might think they are (or might become) one or both of the Two Witnesses. Only those who can show Levitical (priestly) descent could stand next to the seven branched candlestick in the holy place of a temple in Jerusalem.

The Bible shows very clearly that a new temple be in existence just prior to the Second Coming of Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:4-8), it then stands to reason that the man ordained of God to "restore all things" will be a prophesied Elijah to come just before the great and dreadful day of the Lord (Malachi 4:5). Thus, there will be a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, with sacrifices, just before the Second Coming. Those animal sacrifices will last for the first half of a seven year period (Daniel 9:27)—during the precise time when the Two Witnesses are prophesying for 3¹/₂ years (Revelation 11:2-3).

The Two Witnesses, however, will then be killed, and the Beast (the Antichrist) will soon emerge (Revelation chapter 13), abolishing the ordained sacrifices in the rebuilt temple. He will proclaim himself God (as Christ returned from heaven—falsely, of course, 2 Thessalonians 2:4-8). This evil will last almost 3¹/₂ years. The true Christ will then return from heaven (Revelation 19:1-21).

¹Martin, Ernest L. & David Sielaff, *The Two Witnesses - Who Are They?* July 2, 2005. <http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p050702.htm>

However, when the Two Witnesses are here on earth, the outer court of the holy temple will have Gentiles approaching it (Revelation 11:2). All of the Gentiles will have access to the altar—it will be given up to them while they tread under foot the city of Jerusalem. Such activities cause the Two Witnesses to be clothed in sackcloth (verse 3). These are illegal actions. No uncircumcised Gentile should ever come near the altar in the outer courts of the temple at Jerusalem. It is hoped that no Gentile Christian (if one were in Jerusalem at the time) would ever think of violating such precincts because no Christian needs any physical temple with its sacrifices as a means to worship God (John 4:21-23). The restoration of the Mosaic type of worship—even though reestablished by the “Moses and Elijah to come”—will be intended for Israelites who will then “remember...the law of Moses...” —Malachi 4:4-6

Thus, according to Martin, the two witnesses are to appear seven years before Christ returns. In another article he estimates that 2027 is a likely year for the return of Christ, so in his scheme, the 1,260 days of the ministry of the two witnesses would begin 7 years before that, or about the year 2020. In his article *New Discoveries in Chronology and Prophecy* Martin says:¹

If the 483 years from the time of Daniel (when a “going-forth” was given to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and that was in the 1st year of Cyrus, King of Persia), and 483 years of the 70 weeks prophecy was fulfilled up to the coming of Christ, when He began to preach His gospel in Nazareth, and that was clearly demonstrated as the year that bridges into the New Testament period because the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar is the only time indicator, we have with secular chronology, from a biblical point of view, we can know then that the 4,000 years ended at that time. There should be 2,000 more years from 27-28 C.E. until the start of the millennium, and if we are adding our figures correctly—and I believe we are—somewhere in the early part of the next century, somewhere around 2027 to 2028 C.E.²

Vern S. Poythress (1946-)

Poythress is Professor of New Testament Interpretation Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. In *The returning King: a guide to the book of Revelation* he wrote, referring to Revelation 11:2-3,³

¹Martin, Ernest L. *New Discoveries in Chronology and Prophecy*.
<http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p021102.htm>

²**Martin’s footnote:** Again, I am not setting dates. All I am doing is explaining what the biblical revelation has to say about chronology. ELM.

³Poythress, Vern S. *The returning King: a guide to the book of Revelation*. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, P.O. Box 817, Phillipsburg, New Jersey. 2000.
http://www.frame-poythress.org/combined_books.htm

What about the 42 months? It is a limited time of distress and intense conflict between God's people and their opponents (13:5). It is also described as 1260 days (11:3; 12:6) or a time, times, and half a time (three and a half years; 12:14). (In a symbolic context like this one, months are reckoned as consisting of 30 days each.) It is half of seven years, which from a symbolic point of view suggests a complete period of suffering, cut short by half. The main background is found in Daniel 7:25, which in turn is related to other passages in Daniel (9:27; 12:7, 11-12). Some futurist interpreters look for a period of time of this length shortly before the Second Coming. But like other numbers in Revelation, this one is symbolic in character, and related to the three and a half days in 11:9, 11. It then designates a period of persecution of limited length.

The most significant clue comes from Daniel 9:27. In Daniel 9 God sets out a period of 70 weeks or 490 years or 10 jubilee cycles during which he will accomplish his purposes for worldwide redemption (Dan. 9:24). This period of 70 weeks builds on the earlier period of 70 years of exile prophesied by Jeremiah (Dan. 9:2; Jer. 25:12; 29:10). Each of Jeremiah's 70 years is a sabbatical year in which the land rests (2 Chron. 36:21; Lev. 26:43; 25:1-7). Hence, symbolically speaking, it represents a total of 490 years. At the end of this period God favors Israel again and restores them to the land and to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4; 2 Chron. 36:22-23). But this restoration is only preliminary. The final restoration takes place at the conclusion of a second cycle of 490 years. And since the whole sabbath pattern symbolizes final rest, it is fitting that this second cycle consists of symbolical years, symbolizing the way to the consummation. The consummation occurs at the end of 490 symbolical years. The last week of years, 7 symbolical years, stands for the time of inaugurated eschatology, after the Messiah has come and accomplished redemption (Dan. 9:26a). In the middle of the last week the sanctuary is destroyed (Dan. 9:27), which took place in 70 A.D. The period from 70 A.D. to the Second Coming is the last half week of Daniel's prophecy, a period of trouble and persecution as in Daniel 7:25. The 1260 days is thus the entire interadvent period, viewed as a time of persecution and distress (cf. 2 Tim. 3:1-13; 2 Thess. 1:4-8).

Dr. Poythress claimed the last week of the 70 weeks of Daniel 9:24-7 began at the *end* of the ministry of Jesus, rather than at the *beginning* of it; his interpretation, I think, has missed the significance of the symbolism of the $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, which is connected to the period of Jesus' ministry, completing the week. The various numbers used to represent the half-week, 1,290 days, 1,335 days, and 1,260 days, may signify a *progressively smaller time remaining for the Church*. The greater numbers encompass the smaller ones. John's 1,260 days, being less than Daniel's numbers, began with a later event. That is, the larger numbers of Daniel 12:11-12 represent a greater time span; the 1,260 days of Revelation 11:3 and 12:6 may be related more specifically to that time remaining to the Church, after the end of age of the apostles, while the 1,335 days encompasses *all* of the Church age, the difference representing the first age of the Church, the apostolic era. The "three days and an half" of Revelation 11:9, 11 is the smallest, so represents a period very near to the end of the Church age. It still

fits the pattern of “a time, times and a half,” signifying *the remaining time of the Church*.

David C. Pack (1948-)

Pack is Pastor General of “The Restored Church of God,” one of several hundred groups that arose from the former members of the Worldwide Church of God, from which he inherited the belief in a “place of safety” where faithful members will be protected from the horrors of the future great tribulation.

The location of the place of protection, where believers will live for three and a half years, Pack thinks, will be Petra, in Jordan. He wrote:¹

Let’s look at three critical time periods. The Tribulation and Day of the Lord together last 1,260 days, or three and a half years before Christ’s Return. The others are “1,290 days” and “1,335 days.”

The 1,290 appears in Daniel 12:11: “And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.” These are obviously also literal days, beginning with the setting up of the abomination of desolation—which is armies around Jerusalem. So then, with the Church to be protected for only 1,260 days, there are 30 days before it arrives at its designated place.

The 1,335-day period is introduced one verse later: “Blessed is he that waits, and comes to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days” (vs. 12). What is this?

Starting 45 days before the 1,290-day mile-marker, the 1,335 date also counts down to the Return of Christ. This moment signals the end of God’s Work of preaching the true gospel for this age—the completion of the Matthew 24:14 commission—and the warning of the world’s greatest nations. The 1,335 is when the “call” goes out to God’s people to assemble for flight to safety. Then, when the abomination is set up—45 days later—events culminate in Jerusalem and the Church flees. The 45-day period permits the Church time to gather from around the world in what we will see to be Judea.

These periods begin with different events, but end with the same event—Christ’s Return! The following graph illustrates how these three durations of time overlap.

1,335 Days–1,290 Days–1,260 Days

Since Daniel prefixes the event beginning the 1,335 days with “blessed is he that waits,” this is designated as the signal, with a possible accompanying event—at this specific time—for which the Church has patiently waited.²

¹Pack, David C. *Promised Protection—Secret Rapture or Place of Safety?*
<http://www.thercg.org/books/gpp.html>

²Matthew 24:13; 10:22; Luke 21:19; Revelation 14:12

The arrival of the critical 1,335 moment is something that will only be known to those in God's one, undivided Church.

Pack included the following, perhaps sensing that his position might appear strange:

Fanatical Belief?

Some may find it embarrassing to believe in a literal place of safety. They associate it with religious fanaticism, such as the Jim Jones cult, who retreated to Guyana in the late 1970s, and the crisis at Waco, Texas in the 1990s, and other religious groups with fanatical or bizarre conduct.

The actions of such leaders, and the groups following them, distort and taint the Bible's teachings, repelling many from the truth. Such fanatics personify this prophetic scripture: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you...And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."¹

Gregory K. Beale (1949-)

Beale is professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary. He considers the *time, times and a half* of Daniel and the related numbers as representing the inter-advent age beginning from Christ's resurrection and leading up to the final judgment. He wrote:²

John views the 'time, times and half a time' of Dan. 12:7 as the inter-advent age beginning from the time of Christ's resurrection and leading up to the final judgment. The identification of the threefold time formula from Daniel is deducible especially from 12:4-6, where the period begins from the time of Christ's ascension and refers to the church's time of suffering (so also 12.14). The same meaning is apparent for the equivalent phrase 'forty-two months' in 13.5, which describes the time of the beast's blasphemous and persecuting activities.

In his Revelation commentary Beale wrote:³

¹2 Peter 2:1-2

²Beale, G. K. *John's Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*. Sheffield Academic Press. 1999. p. 263.

³Beale, G. K. *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text. New International Greek Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999. p. 574.

The two witnesses prophesy for three and a half years, the same length of time that “the holy city,” “the woman,” and “those that tabernacle in heaven” are to be oppressed (11:2; 12:6, 14; 13:6). If these texts speak of the persecution of a community, then it is plausible to identify the witnesses likewise. If the image of an individual woman signifies the community of faith existing during the three and a half years, then the image of two individual prophets might also represent the same reality during the same time period (similarly an individual harlot represents the ungodly community in ch. 17). If it is correct to see 11:3 continuing what is in the preceding two verses, then the two witnesses are another depiction of the true Israel, “the holy city,” during its time of distress. As already noted, the period of three and a half years is based on Dan. 7:25; 12:7, 11 (and perhaps Dan. 9:27), which prophesies a time of tribulation for Israel as a *community*. The number represents a concept rather than a literal enumeration, as with other numbers throughout the Apocalypse (see the comments on, e.g., 1:4, 12, 16, 20; 2:10; 3:10; 4:4-7; 5:1, 6; 6:1-8; 7:1-9; 9:5, 10, 14-15). Here the figurative emphasis is on the true covenant community experiencing tribulation, irrespective of how long the tribulation lasts in literal time.

In Beale’s view, the prophetic three and a half year period commenced at Christ’s ascension and continues until his return.¹

The “three and a half years” have been established as the time of tribulation predicted by Daniel 7, 9 and 12, which commences at Christ’s ascension and continues until his return. Of all John’s references to this time period, Rev. 12:6 is the clearest in identifying the temporal boundaries of the period (cf. 11:2-3; 13:5). Undoubtedly, here the limited age extends from the resurrection of Christ (v 5) until his final appearance (14:14-20). This is a conclusion similar to that of Rissi, who also argues that Christ’s death, cited in 11:8, is the beginning point of the period in 11:2 (for Christ’s death as commencing the same period in 13:5 see on 13:3). We have also seen that this period is a time of harm to believers in the earthly sphere but protection for them in the invisible realm of the divine sanctuary.

Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr. (1950-)

67 AD – 70 AD

Gentry is a minister in the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, and the author of several books supporting partial preterism. In *Before Jerusalem Fell: Dating the Book of Revelation*, he claimed that the 42 months of Revelation 11:2, when the holy city is trampled by Gentiles, as the period from Spring of the year 67 to September 70. He wrote:²

¹*Ibid.*, p. 646.

²Gentry, Kenneth L., Jr. *Before Jerusalem Fell: Dating the Book of Revelation*. 1998. p. 250.

Revelation 11:2

This verse has been dealt with rather extensively previously, nevertheless, we will now address the time-frame element contained within it. The verse reads: "And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months." (i.e., Jerusalem, the historical capital and geographical center of Israel) will be down-trodden. This periodic statement is followed up by its equivalent in the next verse, which speaks of 1260 days (42 months x 30 days each = 1260 days). If, indeed, the pre-A.D. 70 date is correct, then this time-frame must somehow comport with the Jewish War.

Now a most interesting historical fact throws light upon this passage, if we hold the pre-A.D. 70 date. And that fact is that it took almost exactly forty-two months for Rome to get into a position to destroy the Temple in the Jewish War of A.D. 67-70.

Gentry discussed the events leading up to the siege in 70 AD, quoting Josephus. He wrote:¹

"Vespasian received his commission from Nero, i.e., the war was declared..., the first part of Feb., A.D. 67." This was the formal declaration of war by Rome against Israel. Shortly thereafter, Vespasian entered northern Israel on his march to Jerusalem going forth "conquering and to conquer" (Rev. 6:2). According to Bruce,² Vespasian "arrived the following spring [i.e., the spring of A.D. 67] to take charge of operations." This marked the official entry of Roman imperial forces into the campaign. Jerusalem and the Temple finally fell and were utterly destroyed by Titus, Vespasian's son, in late summer, A.D. 70: "Titus began the siege of Jerusalem in April, 70. The defenders held out desperately for five months, but by the end of August the Temple area was occupied and the holy house burned down, and by the end of September all resistance in the city had come to an end."

Gentry's search for events that fit a three and a half year time span in the context of the Jewish War in the first century, and applying them to the time periods in Revelation, is similar to the efforts by historicists, who searched diligently, over a period of several centuries, for events in history that fit a time span of 1,260 years, to fulfill the same prophecy. Gentry wrote:³

Now from the time of this official imperial engagement in the Jewish War (early Spring, A.D. 76) until the time of the Temple's destruction and Jerusalem's fall (early September, A.D. 70) is a period right at the symbolic figure of 1260

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

² Bruce, F. F. *New Testament History*. Doubleday, 1969. p. 381.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

days (or 42 months or 3½ years). Indeed, counting backward from early September, A.D. 70, we arrive 42 months earlier at early March—in the Spring of 67! Surely this figure cannot be dismissed as sheer historical accident. Though the time-frame undoubtedly carries with it the foreboding spiritual connotation associated with a broken seven (3½ is one-half of the perfect number 7), nevertheless, we are also driven to recognize the providence of God in these historical affairs. In keeping with divinely ordained symbol, in fulfillment of divinely inspired prophecy, it did, in fact, take Rome 3½ years to trample Israel and the city of Jerusalem totally. Under the providence of God the symbolic “broken seven” became the literal time-frame of Jerusalem’s doom. Stuart surmises: “After all the investigation which I have been able to make, I feel compelled to believe that the writer refers to a literal and definite period, although not so exact that a single day, or even a few days, of variation from it would interfere with the object he has in view. It is certain that the invasion of the Romans lasted just about the length of the period named, until Jerusalem was taken.”

O. Palmer Robertson

Robertson is the director and principal of Africa Bible College, Uganda. He has taught at Reformed, Westminster, Covenant, and Knox Theological Seminaries. Referring to dispensationalist John F. Walvoord’s interpretation of the 70 weeks prophecy, and the gap of two thousand years that is inserted before the 70th week, Robertson wrote:¹

Two rather obvious considerations argue against this gap theory regarding the seventieth week of Daniel. First and foremost, the complete absence of any hint of a gap in the passage itself argues against the theory. Nothing in Daniel 9:24-27 even implies, much less establishes, this kind of gap in the progress of the seventy sevens. Kaiser proposes that the phrase after the sixty-two sevens “seems to suggest a gap.” But the minute exegetical possibility resting on an unusual interpretation of the common word after appears as a rather precarious base for establishing a two-thousand-year-long gap in world history. Everything in the context suggests a normal succession of the seventieth week following the sixty-ninth. It is somewhat difficult to imagine how the writer might have indicated that the seventieth week followed the completion of the sixty-ninth week without saying that the seventieth week came “after” the previous weeks.

On the distinctive nature of the 70th week, Robertson wrote:²

This final week, unlike all the previous weeks, is divided into two halves: “In the midst of the seven [i.e., at the halfway point of the seven; *khatsi*], he will

¹Robertson, O. Palmer. *The Christ of the Prophets*. P & R Publishing. 2004. pp. 344-345.

²*Ibid.*, p. 345.

cause sacrifice and offering to cease" (9:27). This cessation of sacrifice corresponds with the atoning of iniquity and the bringing in of eternal righteousness (9:24) accomplished earlier in the seventy sevens. Once iniquity has been covered by a proper atonement, there can be "no more sacrifice for sin" (Heb. 10:26). This climactic event, according to Daniel 9:27, is to occur at the halfway point of the seventieth week of seven years, or 3.5 years into the last week.

The figure of 3.5 years receives further development in the final chapter of the book of Daniel and even more extensively in the book of Revelation. In his final interview with the revealing person, Daniel overhears the question, "How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?" (Dan. 12:6 NIV). The man clothed in linen takes a solemn oath that the period will be "for a time, times, and half a time," reflecting the same earlier measurement of the time that the saints will suffer at the hands of the little horn of the fourth beast of Daniel 7 (12:7; see also 7:25). This same measurement recurs in the form of 1,290 (or 1,335) days that are to expire between the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up (12:11-12).

The 1,290 day period, I think, is not the time **unto** the setting up of the abomination of desolation, but the time that extends **from** that event, which therefore occurs early in the church age. Both the 1,290 days and the 1,335 days run to the end of the age, and are symbolic. The 1,290 days, being the smaller number, is a portion of the greater period. Similarly, the 1,260 days in Revelation are a yet smaller portion of the same period. John declares that there were already many antichrists in his time.¹ Robertson continues:²

The various ways in which this last half of the final week is designated in Daniel suggest that the time measurement has been modified from the chronological/symbolical to the purely symbolical. The book of Revelation reflects the same diversity in referring to an identical period as a symbolical device: the 1,260 days, 42 months, and "time, times, and half a time" (Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). The last half of the seventieth week of Daniel may thus be regarded as a different form of time measurement. This last half-week symbolically represents a longer period of time, indefinite in length, which extends from the ending of sacrifice until the destruction of the antichrist at the consummation of the present age. During this last epoch of time, if the book of Revelation is allowed to provide some insight, the true people of God will be persecuted relentlessly as they bear witness throughout the world. But they will also be protected by the providential orderings of the Lord (11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). At the end, all enemies of the Lord will be destroyed at his coming.

¹ John 2:18

² *Ibid.*, p. 345-346.

Kim Riddlebarger

Riddlebarger is the senior pastor of Christ Reformed Church in Anaheim, California, and visiting professor of systematic theology at Westminster Theological Seminary. He identified the 1,260 days of Revelation 11:3 and 12:6 and the 42 months with the inter-advental age. On the forty-two months of the reign of the beast in Revelation 13:5, he wrote:¹

The overtly anti-Christian nature of this beast's reign can be seen in what follows: "The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months" (Rev. 13:5)—the forty-two months are most likely a reference to the inter-advental age. Taken from Daniel 7:25 ("a time, times, and half a time," see also Dan. 12:7), this same period of time appears in the preceding chapters of the Book of Revelation. In Revelation 11:2-3, the Gentiles are said to "trample the holy city" (the church—i.e., the dwelling place of God in the new covenant) for forty-two months or 1,260 days. This is the same time period in which the two witnesses proclaim the gospel (Rev. 11:3). In Revelation 12:6, John refers to the time of the protection of the woman in the wilderness (the church) as spanning 1,260 days and then again later as "a time, times, and half a time" (Rev. 12:14). As Beale points out, these are all references to the same period of time, indicating that the manifestation of the beast likewise "spans the time from Christ's death and resurrection to the culmination of history."

James L. Resseguie

Resseguie is a minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and a professor of New Testament at Winebrenner Theological Seminary. In his commentary on Revelation he wrote:²

The woman's place on earth is the wilderness, a "place" prepared by God where she is nourished just as the Israelites were nourished in the wilderness on their exodus. In contrast to the great city Babylon, which is the spiritual home for those who follow the beast, the wilderness is the spiritual home for the believing community. Although Christians inevitably live in the city of this world, Babylon (cf. 18:4), their home is not the great city. Rather, the wilderness, the margins of society, and place of spiritual detachment from the blandishments of the great city, is where Christians dwell; the wilderness represents the antisociety of the counterculture to Babylon and the beast.

The woman's time in the wilderness is 1,260 days (12:6; cf 11:3), which is identical to "time, and times, and half a time" (12:14) and the forty-two months

¹Riddlebarger, Kim. *The man of sin: uncovering the truth about the Antichrist*. Baker Books, 2006. p. 97. <http://books.google.com/books?id=3LdpWDEtPScC>

²Resseguie, James L. *The Revelation of John, A Narrative Commentary*. Baker Academic, 2009. p. 172.

of the beast's autarchy (13:5; cf. 11:2). The period of domination by chaos and evil corresponds to God's protection and succor for believers. The equal period of time is a symbolic way of showing that there is no imbalance between persecution and protection. Evil does not have the upper hand despite appearances.

Harry O. Maier

Maier is professor of New Testament Studies, Vancouver School of Theology. His book on the Apocalypse explores the connection between time to which it applies, and the time of narration—the time that John takes to relate his Apocalypse. He wrote:¹

Heavenly bodies may mark the 1,260 days of Rev. 11:3 and 12:6, or the forty-two months of 11:2, and the thousand years of 20:2, 7, but these numbers do not measure solar/linear time. They mark theological time, as the halved seven (three and a half years) these numbers represent indicates.

The Apocalypse suspends the time that readers and listeners inhabit. But such suspension paradoxically depends on the unremarkable beatings of the everyday clock in order to attain this end. Quotidian time conspires with the words, phrases, and sentences of the Apocalypse to make up the episodes that in turn restitch time into a theologically charged pattern.

Hank Hanegraaff (1950-)

Hanegraaff is an American author and radio talk-show host. He became president of the Christian Research Institute, a conservative Protestant countercult and apologetic ministry in 1989 after the death of Walter Martin.² In his book "The Apocalypse Code," Hanegraaff was critical of dispensationalism, as presented by Tim LaHaye. In a book review, Thomas Ice complained that in his radio broadcasts during the past fifteen years "Hanegraaff has been treating dispensationalism as if it were a cult. ... The great majority of the book is a rant against Hanegraaff's distorted view of dispensationalism in general and Tim LaHaye in particular. There is precious little actual exegesis, if any at all, to support his preterist/idealist eschatology; however, there are great quantities of some of the most vicious tirades against LaHaye and many other Bible prophecy teachers that I have ever read in print."³ Hanegraaff wrote:⁴

LaHaye's deduction is that there is a secret coming during which *only* the church will be raptured. Conversely, as our Lord declares, "a time is coming

¹Maier, Harry O. *Apocalypse recalled: the Book of Revelation after Christendom*. Fortress Press, 2002. p. 157. http://books.google.com/books?id=bwg91o_TtTMC

²<http://www.waltermartin.com/cr.html>

³<http://www.pre-trib.org/articles/view/review-of-hank-hanegraaffs-apocalypse-code>

⁴Hanegraaff, Hank. *The Apocalypse Code*. Thomas Nelson Inc. 2008. pp. 60-62. <http://books.google.com/books?id=ChEKSDYujewC>

when *all* who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned” (John 5:28-29; cf. Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 12:35-48). LaHaye’s theology therefore stands in stark contrast to Jesus’s teachings. The plain and literal sense of our Lord’s words suggests a moment in the future when both the righteous and the unrighteous will be resurrected and judged together. The notion that believers will be raptured during a secret coming of our Lord 1007 years prior to the resurrection of unbelievers is thus an imposition on the text.

Even given pretribulation presuppositions, the literal sense of the parable of the weeds suggests that the wicked will be judged prior to the wheat being gathered, not the other way round (Matthew 13:24-30). Likewise, in the Olivet Discourse, the unjust are “taken” in judgment while the righteous are left behind, not vice versa (Matthew 24:36-41). During his earthly sojourn, our Lord fervently petitioned his heavenly Father not to rapture his bride out of the world, but to protect them from the evil one while they were in the world (John 17:15).

Furthermore, search as you may, you will not find a *seven-year Tribulation* in the biblical text. In fact, the future seven year Tribulation trumpeted by LaHaye is conspicuous by its absence in the whole of Scripture. LaHaye avows that “there is little doubt as to when this Tribulation occurs or how long it will last.” He provides, however, precious little by way of evidence. He pretends a single pretext from the prophecy of Daniel, and from Revelation he produces no proof text at all. Instead, he simply pontificates that John’s revelation divides the Great Tribulation into “two periods of three and one-half years each or 1,260 days each, a total of seven years. During the first three and one-half years more than one-half of the world’s population dies. During the second half, conditions get even worse after Satan is cast out of heaven and indwells the Antichrist’s body and demands the world worship him.”

It is foolhardy at best to subtract from, add to, or divide “the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place” (Revelation 1:1). Nowhere does the revelation of Jesus divide the Tribulation into “two periods of three and one-half years each or 1,260 days each.” And if one were to add together John’s references to three and a half years, forty-two months, or 1,260 days, they would greatly exceed the number seven. From the perspective of history, there was a three-and-a-half-year period of tribulation during the Jewish War beginning in the spring of AD 67 and ending in the fall of AD 70; however, there is no biblical precedent for doubling that time and driving it into the twenty-first century. Moreover, the biblically astute are well aware of the rich biblical symbolism invested in the number seven—and its half.

If there is any symbolic import to the number three and a half, surely it is the want of *another* three and a half, to make a *complete seven*. This underlies all of the various representations of the three-and-a-half-year time periods in Scripture. Hanegraaff’s argument is weakened by the “rich biblical symbolism invested in the number seven—and its half.” His

statement that there was a three-and-a-half-year period of tribulation ending in 70 AD is historically untrue, as tribulation for Jews did not end in 70 AD. Instead, survivors of the siege became slaves, and many Jewish rebels faced further tribulation in the siege of Masada by the Roman governor of Judaea Lucius Flavius Silva, in 72 AD.

Hanegraaff wrote:

Despite evidence to the contrary, LaHaye persists in dragging the seven-year tribulation into the twenty-first century and describing it as the time of Jacob's trouble or the time of Jewish Tribulation. What he fails to disclose is the seminal fact that neither Jeremiah's reference to "a time of trouble for Jacob" (Jeremiah 30:7) nor Jesus's reference to a time of "great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again" (Matthew 24:21) refer to a holocaust in the twenty-first century that was precipitated by a Jewish rebellion against Jehovah in the sixth century BC or a Jewish rejection of Jesus in the first century AD. Both references incontrovertably point to times past in which the very temple that gave Israel its theological and sociological identity was decimated.

Hanegraaff tries to promote his preterist views, by destroying dispensationalism, but preterism is a flawed and unsatisfactory alternative.

Felise Tavo

Tavo presented his Ph.D dissertation on the 'Woman Clothed with the Sun' of Revelation 12 in June 2005 at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium. He recognized the symbolic nature of the two witnesses of Revelation 11, and referred to the 1,260 days of their prophesying as symbolic. He wrote:¹

If no two historical figures seem to fit the description of the two witnesses in every detail as has been observed, this is because the seer did not intend it to be so. Apart from previous indications as to the symbolic nature of 11:3-13, other clues may now be set forth which should confirm the figurative nature of our narrative. First, as has been correctly pointed out, the two witnesses do not function as distinct individuals and hence less likely to be historical figures but always together for the same unit. In other words, they prophesy together for the same duration (1260 days, v. 3b); they stand together before the Lord of the earth (v. 4b); they shut the sky and are to smite the earth together (v. 6); and together they are killed (v. 7b), raised (v. 11), and ascend into heaven (v. 12c). And to drive the point home, even their 'dead bodies' are referred to with the singular ... in v. 8a and v. 9a and that in spite of the fact that the seer

¹Tavo, Felise. *Woman, mother, and bride: an exegetical investigation into the "ecclesial" notions of the apocalypse*. Volume 3 of Biblical tools and studies. Peeters Publishers, 2007. pp. 199-200. <http://books.google.com/books?id=b7LOpsyPgZQC>

shows accurate knowledge of the expected plural form ... which is used in the following v. 9b. Second, the 'great city' (v, 8a) upon whose street their corpses will be laid bare is clarified in v. 9a as no historical city but one that encompasses the length and breadth of the earth as indicated by the fourfold formula And thus, "11:8 warns us that the interpretation of the entire passage must be symbolic." And if we may further note the symbolic character of time indicators such as the '1260 days' during which the two witnesses are to prophecy (v. 3b), the figurative character of 11:3-13 is to all intents and purposes certain.

Tavo described the 1,260 days as a "symbol for the church age." He wrote:¹

The church as a persecuted community is ironically its most propitious opportunity to bear witness to its crucified Lord and in so doing subject its enemies before God (two witnesses-two prophets).

However, we must not for a moment think that these two aspects of the church, i.e. being spiritually preserved through worship while having to meet persecution with witness, are not in anyway linked even if such a link is not being made explicit. After all, we are dealing here not with different realities but with different dimensions of the same church reality. But these dimensions have at least been knitted together in the fact that they all without exception concern the same timing of "three and a half," symbol for the church age (= 42 months; 1260 days; 3¹/₂ days). In other words, the seer's overriding concern in this key narrative is solely the church as it must struggle with the great tribulation while awaiting the return of its crucified Lord (cf. 19:11). Not only is the church to overcome such tribulation by its worship and witness, these will also be the means by which its enemies will be brought to repentance which all along has been the seer's motive for intercalating 11:1-13 into the trumpet series.

Discussion

The Church in the wilderness

Understanding the symbolic import of the wilderness, where the woman flees for 1,260 days², and for *a time times and a half*³, is needed in order to interpret those time periods. After his baptism, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.

¹*Ibid.*, p. 223.

²Revelation 12:6

³Revelation 12:14

The place of this period of trial was the wilderness. Similarly, believers experience trials and temptations, when they have escaped from the world. Paul said the experience of the Israelites in the wilderness was for “our examples.” It was a type of the sojourn of the saints in this life. Jesus said, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven.”¹ The manna that the Israelites gathered in the wilderness for food foreshadowed Christ, who is called the Word. The wilderness represents the church’s place or condition, where members are taught from the scriptures, to prepare them for receiving their promised inheritance.

The *time, times, and a half* of Revelation 12:14 links to Daniel 7:25, and 12:7, where that phrase designates the last age, at the end of which all of the events described in Daniel’s prophecies would be fulfilled. The period applies especially to the saints, and the “wise” who will understand.²

The saints, Daniel said, would be overcome by the *little horn* which arises among the ten horns of the fourth beast, and they would be given into his hand.³ This corresponds to John’s prophecy, which describes the beast which ascends from the bottomless pit to make war with the saints, and overcome them.⁴ Daniel refers to the saints as those whose names are “written in the book,”⁵ which also applies to the saints in the New Testament.⁶

Tyconius, in his commentary on the Apocalypse, viewed its prophecies as mysterious, and its language was seen as cryptic, and symbolic. The 1,260 days were not meant to be understood literally. He thought they represent the entire age of the Church, and he apparently also believed he was living in the time of the end.

Bede, writing about the symbolic meaning of the 1,260 days, astutely stated: “In this number of days, which makes three years and a half, he comprehends all the times of Christianity, because Christ, Whose body the Church is, preached the same length of time in the flesh.” The time of Jesus’ ministry, plus the symbolic 1,260 days, make a prophetic “week.” This is the 70th week in Daniel’s prophecy of the 70 weeks.

In the 9th century, Benjamin ben Moses Nahawendi, a Jewish scholar in Persia, interpreted the mysterious numbers in Daniel’s prophecies as referring to years. Taking the word *yamin* to mean years, he interpreted the 1,335 days of Daniel 12:12 as so many years, and computed the date of the arrival of the Messiah at 1012 AD, about a century and a half after his own time. He is thought to be one of the first to interpret the numbers in Daniel’s prophecies as referring to years.

The idea that the 1,260 days represent years was given a new life by Joachim of Fiore in the 13th century. He identified the 42 months as 42 generations of 30 years each, or 1,260 years, the period between the advent of Christ and the year 1260. In later centuries, Protestant historicist interpreters applied the prophecy of the 42 months, in which the beast overcomes the saints, and the 1,260 days, interpreted as years, to the papacy and the Roman

¹John 6:51

²Daniel 12:10

³Daniel 7:21, 25

⁴Revelation 13:7

⁵Daniel 12:1

⁶Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8

Catholic Church.

The widening gap

Because the time since the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ was now well past the 1,260 years, the year-day interpretation introduced an ever-growing *gap* between the apostolic age, and the beginning of the apostasy, which they believed began the 1,260 years. It implied that the saints who had lived during the period of the alleged gap were not dwelling in the wilderness, and so had not been nourished spiritually, in the place that was “prepared by God.”¹ The *martyrs* and saints of the early Church would probably have been shocked and amazed by such claims.

The idea of a gap that separated the *time, times, and a half* or the 1,260 days from the period of Christ’s ministry was promoted by the historicists, who sought to set dates for the start and the end of the 1,260 days and 42 months, that corresponded with the history of the papacy, or with political events. Events of different kinds were often paired together, to obtain the 1,260 year intervals.

Some historicists applied the 1,260 years to political events, involving worldly kingdoms, and to national interests that were unrelated to the church of God. John Foxe unwisely identified the woman of Revelation 12 with Britain. The 1,260 years, he said, was the time since the gospel came to Britain, in the second century. German princes embraced Luther’s teachings, believing that the Protestant religion would lead to their independence from the Holy Roman Empire. Thomas Brightman related the 1,260 days to the Counter Reformation, and the Council of Trent, convened by pope Paul III in 1545. Johann Heinrich Alsted connected the 1,260 years with the sack of Heidelberg in 1622.

In fact, the 1,260 days in Revelation 11:3 and 12:6 do not apply to any worldly events whatsoever. John was told to *exclude* the Gentiles who occupy the outer court, and not to measure them. And so the 1,260 days could not apply to them. The same applies to the Gentiles who trample the holy city. The measuring of the temple was not to determine its length and breadth and height, but relates to the limited *time* for which the two witnesses prophesy, and to the *effects* of their witnessing. And so the attempts by historicists to relate the 1,260 days to the papacy, or to political developments in Europe, are misguided.

A similar criticism applies to the theories of preterists such as Philip S. Desprez, who limited the 1,260 days of prophesying by the two witnesses to the period of the siege of Jerusalem, and its destruction by the Romans in 70 AD. The temple of God which John was to measure was not the one made with human hands.

Joseph Mede said the 1,260 days, and 42 months, and the *time, times and a half* all refer to the same time period. Thomas Brightman said the plagues associated with the trumpets were brought by the two witnesses, who “smite the earth with all plagues,” and so the period of their ministry must apply to the previous history of the Church. Many historicist interpreters, like Puritan scholar Thomas Goodwin, thought they were living near the end of the 1,260 days. They expected to see the prophecy fulfilled in their own time,

¹Revelation 12:6, 14

or said that the time would be fulfilled soon after. They expected its imminent fulfillment; the Reformation, the scientific revolution, and the enlightenment were great changes, they believed that they must somehow be fulfilling prophecy. In the late 18th century, the turmoil of the French Revolution, and the events of that period were so appalling, they cast a dark shadow over the 19th century, and several scholars claimed the 1,260 days ended then.

The historicist scholars diligently researched the history of the Catholic church, the papacy, and the history of Europe, to determine what events might have begun the 1,260 years, and when they might have ended. Sir Isaac Newton was reluctant to propose any dates for the end of the 1,260 days, but he did mention some possible start dates. He wondered whether allowance should be made for the 18 day discrepancy between the real number of days in three and a half years; 1,278, and 1,260 days. In his private notes, he said the 1,260 days were to be fulfilled between years 800 and 2060.

Other interpreters found what must have seemed to them several fairly plausible pairs of dates, including the following multiple date pairs:

Robert Fleming

552 *AD* – 1794 *AD*

606 *AD* – 1848 *AD*

758 *AD* – 2000 *AD*

William Whiston:

455 *AD* – 1715 *AD*

476 *AD* – 1736 *AD*

606 *AD* – 1866 *AD*

Bishop Thomas Newton:

533 *AD* – 1793 *AD*

606 *AD* – 1866 *AD*

727 *AD* – 1987 *AD*

David Simpson:

538 *AD* – 1798 *AD*

606 *AD* – 1866 *AD*

666 *AD* – 1926 *AD*

756 *AD* – 2016 *AD*

Albert Barnes:

533 *AD* – 1793 *AD*

606 *AD* – 1866 *AD*

752 *AD* – 2012 *AD*

1073 *AD* – 2333 *AD*

Michael Paget Baxter:

537 AD – 1797 AD
1867 AD – 1871 AD

H. Grattan Guinness:

533 AD – 1793 AD
606 AD – 1866 AD

There was no lack of apparently plausible dates, the problem was to find a consensus. But that was quite a problem, because there was obviously very little agreement between the expositors. Some were vague about which specific events began and ended the 1,260 years. To skeptics, their methods seemed *ad hoc*.

Joseph Augustus Seiss, a futurist, criticized historicist expositors for being inconsistent. Futurism and preterism were reactions to the proliferation of dates, and were seen as alternatives to historicism, which had become discredited.

The interpreters who said the *time, times and a half* and the 1,260 days refer to the whole age of the church, Bede, Alcuin, John Bale, William Fulke, George Gifford, Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg, and more recently James Burton Coffman, Gregory K. Beale, and others, were more consistent. They proposed no gap between the ministry of Jesus and the beginning of the 1,260 days, and specified no dates for its end. The criticisms by Seiss and Bellarmine about lack of agreement amongst the date-setters, do not apply to them.

The idea of a gap, as introduced by historicists, and as adopted in futurism, and especially in dispensationalism, and also in preterism which sees the entire age of the church as a “gap,” signifying a period to which prophecy does not apply, implies that during the period for which such a gap applies, which is some part, or all, of the history of the church, the saints have not been nourished spiritually in the place “prepared by God.” But Jesus said, “lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”¹ Preterists say that the end happened in 70 AD. Their opinions are founded on the idea that the generation of Jesus Christ has passed away, which could not be, if Christ indeed rose from his grave and remains alive.

Daniel 7 says the little horn of the fourth beast will “speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws.”² The *times* mentioned here, I think, must include the “times” in Daniel’s prophecy; the 70 weeks and the time, times and a half in which the saints are “given into his hand.” The little horn has “eyes like the eyes of a man,” and so represents the human viewpoint, as opposed to the divine viewpoint.

During the history of the church, the position of the saints has been unsettled, shifting among various positions. They have been in a wilderness; any interpretations that set dates proved to be only temporary. As the predicted dates for the fulfillment of the prophecy passed, one by one, it became evident that the interpretations had failed. This illustrates the wilderness condition in which the church has been nourished. Her place is not fixed, but like the Israelites in the wilderness shifted their camps, from place to place, dwelling in forty-two

¹Matthew 28:20

²Daniel 7:25

different places, the church's interpretation of the 1,260 days of prophecy has not remained fixed and constant.

The historicists sought to "establish the vision," by their date setting; "the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall."¹ During this time, there has been a "famine of hearing the word."²

The words are sealed

Daniel was told, "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end."³ The two witnesses have "shut heaven."

The words were *sealed* till the end time, which explains why so many who lived in previous centuries failed to fully understand them, even though expositions of these prophecies were produced by some of the world's greatest minds, such as Sir Isaac Newton; it was not yet the "time of the end." But since Daniel also said, "the wise shall understand," the saints should expect to fully understand these time prophecies at the appropriate time.

The 42 months, the *time, times and a half*, and the 1,260 days all represent half of a prophetic week, the 70th week of Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy; it is the week in which Christ confirms his covenant with his saints. Jesus began his ministry when that 70th week began; the prophetic half-week is the completion of it. And the entire *week* is *seven times*, and the fulfillment of the last of four periods of *seven times* in Leviticus 26, when God is to be reconciled to his people. It is the time that was foreshadowed in the life of Jacob, who labored for seven years under Laban, for his bride Rachel, but that seven years turned out to be a bit longer than was expected.

In Daniel 12:11, the 1,290 days extend from the setting up of the abomination that causes desolation, which is a desolation of the spiritual temple of God. That number is a little more than the time in which the two witnesses prophesy, and the time when the woman flees to the wilderness, where she is nourished. It encompasses the 1,260 days.

Jesus said: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:"⁴ The "mountains" that Jesus referred to must be symbolic of the promises and the prophecies in scripture, which are the spiritual nourishment, that has been provided for the saints.

The variety of interpretations that have been proposed for the 42 months, the *time, times and a half*, and the 1,260 days illustrates the sackcloth clothing of the two witnesses, which can be identified as the Scriptures, and the Spirit. Several expositors identified the Scriptures as one of the witnesses, or both; these include Tyconius, Bede, John Napier, Joseph Mede, William Miller and others. William Fulke, James Brocard, Thomas Parker, Hanserd Knollys, Isaac Williams, Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg, Christopher Wordsworth, William Milligan,

¹Daniel 11:14

²Amos 8:11

³Daniel 12:9

⁴Matthew 24:15-16

William Hendriksen, and others, identified one or both of the witnesses as the assembly of the saints. James Brocard suggested that prophecy is one of the witnesses. Some of these authors limited the duration of the prophesying by the witnesses to 1,260 years or less. The idea that scriptures remain in the world for only 1,260 years was disputed by Seiss, who wrote: ¹

It is not true that the Old and New Testaments are preached to the world only 1260 days, or years, and then end their testimony;—that they are arrayed in sackcloth all the days they are preached;—that fire issues out of their mouths and kills those who will to injure them;—that there is no rain upon the earth during the days of their prophesying;—that they have power over waters to convert them into blood, or at will to smite the earth with plagues;—that they are capable of being killed by man;—or that indignity can be offered them, being dead, by refusing to allow them to be put into a sepulcher. Yet all these things are affirmed of these Witnesses.

The literalism expressed in these comments by Seiss, and similar criticisms by Robert Bellarmine, is in a way a fulfillment of the prophecy about the two witnesses; literalism “kills” the “Spirit,” and exalts the “letter.” It misses or denies the spiritual intent of the word of God. This was the point of view adopted by atheists, and skeptics, and the rationalist higher critics.

Bellarmino claimed the 42 months of Revelation 11:2 and 13:5 can only mean a *literal* three and a half years; the reign of the beast and the time that the two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth is for a literal three years and a half, which must be yet future. Bellarmine resorted to literalism, and the popular myths promoted by the writings of Adso of Montier-en-Der (died 992) and of Hugo Ripelin (1205-1268). Literalism was employed to overcome and defeat the two witnesses. Literalism is one of the ways the beast from the bottomless pit wars against them, deceiving the saints, and destroying the witness of the Scriptures to the truth. Jesus warned his disciples about the “leaven of the Pharisees,” in a context which showed that he referred to literalism.²

Bellarmino's claim that the 1,260 days and the 42 months can only mean a *literal* three and a half years conflicts with the statement by Thomas Aquinas: “*The thousand two hundred sixty days mentioned in the Apocalypse (12:6) denote all the time during which the Church endures, and not any definite number of years.*” One of the learned doctors must be wrong. Bellarmine probably knew what Aquinas had previously taught. In the debate with Protestants, literalism and popular tradition were embraced rather than truth.

Bellarmino's comments, intended to defend the papacy against the rhetoric of Protestant expositors, implied that Aquinas was wrong; it was as if the Roman Catholic Church had shot itself in the foot. He also contradicted fellow Jesuit Luis de Alcazar. Bellarmine's opinions are flawed, because 42 months is not 1,260 days; a literal 42 months is about 1,240 days, if

¹Joseph Augustus Seiss. *Op. cit.*

²Matthew 16:5-12

they are *lunar* months. And a literal three and a half *solar* years is about 1,278 days, not 1,260 days.

The serpent's flood

In Revelation chapter 12 there are several allusions to Genesis 3:13-15. The prophecy is about the woman in heaven, clothed with the sun, and her manchild who is caught up to the throne of God, and the serpent, and the earth. The sun which clothes the woman represents the gospel; the woman is the church of all ages. In Genesis 3 there is enmity put between the serpent and the woman, and his seed, and her seed.

The woman's seed are those who keep God's commandments, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.¹ They are those who dwell in heaven, while the serpent's seed are those who dwell in the earth. And there are some who dwell in heaven, pictured by stars, who are drawn by the tail of the dragon, and are cast down to the earth.² They are the failed Christians; they include people who are deceived by false teachers, who return to the world.

In Genesis 3:17 the ground is cursed; it produces thorns and thistles and weeds. In Revelation 12:6 the woman flees to a wilderness, a barren land, which is unfruitful. In Genesis 3:14 the serpent has to go on his belly, upon the dust of the earth. The wilderness where the woman flees is full of serpents. Satan deceives men, so they misunderstand, and don't believe the words of God. The place where the saints sojourn is like the land that is cursed; it is like the field with tares sown in it, in the parable of Jesus.³

The serpent casts a flood out of his mouth, to carry away the woman; this is a flood of false teachings, and flawed interpretations, a spiritual flood, not a flood of literal water. It is a flood of deceit and lies. It threatens to carry away the woman, but the earth or *land* opens her mouth, and swallows up the flood.

The *land* referred to, which swallows up the serpent's flood, should be understood in the context of the woman's sojourn in the *wilderness*, and the cursed ground in Genesis 3:17. The wilderness alludes to Israel's sojourn before entering *the promised land*; similarly the church is nourished in the wilderness for a symbolic 1,260 days, and looks forward to inheriting the promise, not of a literal territory on earth, but of things eternal and spiritual, in heaven; "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly."⁴

There is only one *land* that can swallow up the serpent's flood. It is a metaphor, that alludes to the promised land, and the promises of God to the church; as God promised the woman in Genesis 3:15: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," the head of the serpent is to be bruised; the saints overcome him and his delusions. The promised land is a figure of the promises made to the church. Jesus promised his disciples, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth ... and he will shew you things

¹Revelation 12:17

²Revelation 12:4

³Matthew 13:36-43

⁴Hebrews 11:16

to come.”¹

It is the truth that swallows up the serpent's flood. So the land where the woman sojourns becomes fruitful. It is foreshadowed by the land of promise; the land that God promised to give to Jacob and his seed. But, Paul said, all the promises of God are in Christ “yea,” and “Amen,” which includes the *land* promise.²

The promised land, in the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was a metaphor, which pictures invisible things, that are the *eternal* inheritance of the church which is *nourished in the wilderness*. So the *land* which swallows up the serpent's flood, represents a right interpretation of prophecy, and understanding the truth. The angel said to Daniel, “The wise shall understand.”³

The angel in Revelation 8:13, in the JKV, who flies through the midst of heaven, and foretells woe to the inhabitants of the earth, is an eagle.⁴ But it is an eagle who *prophesies*.

With the perspective that comes from above, that is provided by an understanding of prophecy, represented by the two wings of the *prophesying eagle* that are given to the woman, we can see the hand of God that works out his plan in the world for the benefit of his Church.

Victorinus, discussed on page 6, in his Commentary on the Apocalypse, associated the two wings of an eagle that are given to the woman with prophets. He wrote:

“But the woman fled into the wilderness, and there were given to her two great eagle's wings.” The aid of the great eagle's wings—to wit, the gift of prophets... “Two great wings” are the two prophets—Elias, and the prophet who shall be with him.

John Napier said the sackcloth in which the witnesses are clothed represents “the obscurity of man's traditions;” and the light of the gospel has been veiled by human interpretations and tradition. The two witnesses, the *Scriptures* and the *Spirit of God*, have *tormented* men through the centuries, because their message has not been understood.

The variety of opinions about the 1,260 days, is also a fulfillment of Daniel 12:7, “when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.” The “scattering” of the saints' power is fulfilled by the diversity of interpretations, and the tens of thousands of denominations, and cults, and sects. It is the Antichrist spirit that causes it! It is the human point of view, represented by the “eyes like the eyes of a man.” And it happens during the *time, times and a half*, and the 1,260 days, which are best understood as representing the entire age of the Church.

¹John 16:13

²2 Corinthians 1:20

³Daniel 12:10

⁴The NIV has: As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: “Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!”

Clouds of witnesses

The two witnesses who prophesy for 1,260 days are said to have the power to “shut heaven,” so no rain falls during the time of their prophesying. But this is “rain” of a spiritual kind; it represents the word of God, and gifts of the Spirit of God, such as wisdom, and understanding. The word of God is compared with rain and snow by Isaiah.¹

Eucherius of Lyons said, “The clouds are the prophets and the saints, which rain the word of the Lord; in Isaiah: I shall order the clouds above to rain.”² Clouds are the main source of rain, and in the long history of exposition of the meaning of the 1,260 days, the expositors are clouds.

Some clouds are dark, others are bright; some are lofty, others close to the earth; some bring rain, others do not. In the New Testament, false teachers are likened to “clouds without water, carried about of winds,”³ and “clouds that are carried with a tempest.”⁴

Zechariah wrote, “Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.”⁵ This also alludes to a spiritual sort of rain.

The prophet Joel wrote of a time of “darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness” in the day of the Lord. They seem to be associated with a “great and strong people.”⁶

In the many expositions of the 1,260 days, there are examples of “clouds without water,” “dark clouds,” and of “clouds carried with a tempest.” The ever-changing dates that historicists assigned to the 1,260 days from the time of the Reformation to the end of the 19th century illustrates this.

As the rainbow is seen against a backdrop of dark clouds, the truth that underlies the prophetic time period of 1,260 days becomes evident, when it is connected with the ministry of Christ, who continues to confirm his covenant with his church throughout its history. The ministry of Jesus plus the prophetic three and a half years, that represents the entire age of the Church, is the 70th week of Daniel 9:24-27, and the last “seven times” of Leviticus 26, when God is reconciled to his people.

The desolation of Jerusalem

Daniel’s prayer in chapter 9 was about the desolation of Jerusalem, and of the temple, but in the New Testament, both Jerusalem and the temple of God are labels applied to the church. Just as Paul said Jews who reject the gospel of Christ have their minds blinded, and a veil is upon their hearts, dispensationalists also have their minds blinded, and a veil on their

¹Isaiah 55:6-11

²<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/eucherius/formulae.toc.html>

³Jude 12

⁴2 Peter 2:17

⁵Zechariah 10:1

⁶Joel 2:2

hearts.¹

The “veil” and “blindness” of dispensationalists is especially evident in their misuse of the 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel; they invoke a huge gap, between the 69th and 70th weeks! They fail to notice that although the prophecy of Daniel begins with a decree to restore Jerusalem and the temple, it is really concerned with the accomplishment of certain spiritual things having to do with the eternal temple of God, and the holy city of the saints which is located in heaven; the things mentioned by the angel, that are to be accomplished in the 70 weeks period, have to do with the gospel.

- finish the transgression
- make an end of sins
- make reconciliation for iniquity
- seal up the vision and prophecy
- anoint the most Holy

None of these have to do with rebuilding the *earthly* temple or the *earthly* city, but all of it relates to the church, and the gospel of Christ. Dispensationalists, though, like the Jews, are evidently blind to this, and have a veil upon their heart.

Daniel's prayer in chapter 9 was about the restoration of the city of Jerusalem which was in ruins. He said, “let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.”²

The “holy mountain” mentioned in Daniel 9:16 was the stone that smote the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw, which “became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”³

This is no ordinary mountain; it grew from a stone cut without hands! And it continues to grow, till it fills the earth! So it is no natural mountain.⁴

Isaiah wrote about the same holy mountain of the saints, the mountain of the Lord's house, which he said would be raised up, and established “in the top of the mountains” and “exalted above the hills.”⁵

It would be ridiculous to say this means some tectonic movement will literally raise Jerusalem and Mount Zion up higher than all other mountains! But, in the New Testament, Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled, as Paul refers to the “Jerusalem above” which means the church.⁶ And in Hebrews, the church is referred to as “Mount Sion” and the “heavenly Jerusalem.”⁷

¹2 Corinthians 3:14-16

²Daniel 9:16-17

³Daniel 2:34-35

⁴Daniel 2:44-45

⁵Isaiah 2:1-3

⁶Galatians 4:26

⁷Hebrews 12:22-24

The angel who appeared to Daniel said the 70 weeks apply to “thy people and upon thy holy city.”¹

The “holy mountain,” that both Isaiah and Daniel referred to is the church that Jesus said he will build, and even “the gates of hell will not prevail against it.”²

This is what the 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel is about; the literal city in Palestine was a mere type and shadow of it, along with other things in the Old Testament.³

In Daniel’s prophecies, his people are spoken of as “saints” in chapter 7, and those who are “written in the book” in Daniel 12:1. This is the same language or terminology John used in Revelation, for those who believe in Christ. They are those people whose names are written in the book of life.⁴

In Ephesians 2:20, Paul says the prophets and the apostles are the foundation of the church.

Because it denies that the prophets wrote about the church, which is the “holy mountain” that Christ came to establish, dispensationalism attacks the very foundation of God’s church.

Old Testament saints and prophets are no doubt the “just men made perfect” mentioned in Hebrews 12:23, who together with all those who believe in Christ, are included in the holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem. Who else could they be?

The prophet and founder of dispensationalism was J. N. Darby, who thought the Jewish people had an “earthly” promise, and destiny, while the church had “heavenly ones.” He supposed the Old Testament prophecies applied to the Jewish hopes of an earthly Messianic kingdom. Darby wrote:⁵

Prophecy applies itself properly to the earth; its object is not heaven. It was about things that were to happen on the earth; and the not seeing this has misled the Church. We have thought that we ourselves had within us the accomplishments of these earthly blessings, whereas we are called to heavenly blessings. The privilege of the Church is to have its portion in the heavenly places; and later blessings will be shed forth upon the earthly people. The Church is something altogether apart—a kind of heavenly economy, during the rejection of the earthly people, who are put aside on account of their sins, and driven out among the nations, out of the midst of which nations God chooses a people for the enjoyment of heavenly glory with Jesus Himself. The Lord, having been rejected by the Jewish people, is become wholly a heavenly person. This is the doctrine which we find peculiarly in the apostle Paul. It is no longer the Messiah for the Jews, but a Christ exalted, glorified; and it is for want of taking hold of this exhilarating truth, that the Church has become so weak.

¹Daniel 9:24

²Matthew 16:18

³Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 8:5, 10:1

⁴Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27; 22:19.

⁵From: J.N. Darby, *The Hopes of the Church of God*, Collected Writings. (William Kelly, editor; 35 volumes; second edition; London: G. Morrish, n.d.), 2:571-572. Quoted by Grover Gunn: <http://grovergunn.net/andrew/disp02.htm>

This doctrine about prophecy became a *tempest* that carried away many, especially in America, who became promoters of dispensationalism, and false teachers, who fulfil Peter's prophecy: "These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error."¹

Dispensationalism was preached by Darby not to the world, but in churches. Similarly it has spread like a disease and a plague throughout the churches in America.

In the New Testament, where Jerusalem has become the heavenly city, and the saints are the temple of God, not made with hands, and are described as seated together in "heavenly places,"² it does seem that Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled; Jerusalem is "raised up" to heaven, above the mountains and hills. So Isaiah 2:1-3 has been fulfilled. When was it raised up? In New Testament times.

Therefore, Darby's statement that "Prophecy applies itself properly to the earth; its object is not heaven" is clearly false. The prophecy of Isaiah 2:1-3 applies to the church of the New Testament, the heavenly Jerusalem. Similarly, the holy city and the people in Daniel 9:24-27 begin with the earthly city and become the heavenly city, the church, after Christ ascends to heaven. The last half-week, also is not a literal three years and a half, but is symbolic and figurative of the whole age of the church; it is in the last half-week that the spiritual temple of God, the bride of Christ, the church, is to be completed. It is a temple "not made with hands."³

The dispensationalist doctrine about prophecy is one of a number of things that tend to destroy and make the church desolate; it has given rise to thousands of sects and cults!

Seven times in prophecy

In many prophecies of the Bible, time is organized into sevens.

The first chapter of Genesis introduces us to the idea of sevens. The heavens and earth and everything in them are said to have been formed in seven days. The last of these is called the sabbath, the day when God rested from his work.

In the law of Moses, all things are said to have been made in the six days,⁴ which includes heaven and earth, and the sun and moon, and even things like supernovas, sunspots, and meteorites. So they were not literal earth-days! But the weekly cycle is a memorial of the fact that God is the Creator of all.

Also in the law, there are cycles of seven years, and in the seventh year, a Hebrew bondservant was to be set free, debts were to be forgiven, and the land was not to be plowed, but was to rest.

There were also cycles of Jubilees, which consisted of seven sabbatical cycles.

¹2 Peter 2:17-18

²Ephesians 2:6

³Hebrews 9:11

⁴Exodus 20:11

The law also specified a series of “seven times” of punishment, if Israel failed to remain faithful to the covenant. There were four of them, described in Leviticus 26. In the last one, God was to be reconciled to Israel and would “remember” his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

In his prayer of confession on behalf of his people, Daniel acknowledged that the curse described in the law of Moses had been poured out; that was in the captivity in Babylon. It represents the first of the four periods of “seven times.” And there remained three more yet to come.

The prophecy of the 70 weeks, I suggest, outlines these last three periods of seven times in Leviticus 26, as there are three sections in the seventy weeks. Two of them were fulfilled in the period between the captivity in Babylon, and the appearance of Christ.

Those two periods are: first, the seven weeks or “sevens,” and second, the sixty two weeks, which are both periods of seven times, where in the first one, the units for a “time” is sevens of some kind, and in the second period, a “time” has the units of 62 years. That number, 62, was the age of Darius, or Cyrus, when he became king of Babylon. Donald J. Wiseman suggested in 1965 that Darius was in fact Cyrus, and Cyrus had both Persian and Median heritage.¹

The first of these periods, of seven “weeks” or sevens, began at the end of the captivity in Babylon, and here, the units of a “time” need not be taken as seven year cycles, but I suggest, they are seven leap years, which span 19 years, as there are seven years having an extra month in 19 years. This is true in a lunar calendar such as the ancient calendar of the Babylonians and of the Hebrews.

Seven of these cycles of 19 years spans 133 years; the 62 “sevens” spans 434 years; $133 + 434 = 567$ years; this is the time from the decree of Cyrus, 538 BC, to the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, 28 BC.

These are the first two of the three sections of the 70 weeks of Daniel 9, which correspond to the second and third of the four periods of seven times in Leviticus 26.

The remaining week, which is the 70th week of Daniel’s prophecy, is the week in which Christ confirms his covenant with many; this is what he came to do. Paul said, “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.”² This alludes to Daniel 9:27.

We can see that there are no gaps in the 70 weeks, as such a gap would imply that the curse of Leviticus 26 had ended temporarily, and that God was temporarily reconciled to his people; of course, that has not happened. The reconciliation must be permanent.

The final week in the 70 weeks spans all the time, from the day that Jesus began his ministry, to the end of the age; Jesus still confirms his covenant with many, by building his church in this present age. It is this work that the prophets of old were interested in. Some of the prophetic writings were composed at the time the Jews returned from Babylon to

¹D. J. Wiseman, *Some Historical Problems in the Book of Daniel*, D. J. Wiseman, ed., *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel*. London: The Tyndale Press, 1965. pp. 9-18. http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/daniel_wiseman.pdf

²Romans 15:8

rebuild their temple; that temple was a type and figure of the true temple, the church, which Christ said he will build. The prophets and apostles were its foundation.¹

In the early church, when the apostles met to discuss the issue of whether Gentiles should be circumcised, James quoted from an Old Testament prophecy, referring to the “tabernacle of David,” which was broken down, which was to be rebuilt; he identified this with the church.²

The church is not only represented by the temple, but by the “tabernacle of David,” which is Christ’s kingdom, a spiritual kingdom of the saints, who sit together “in heavenly places.”³

This spiritual temple is a creation of God, and so it is fitting that the time span in which it is formed is connected with the number seven, and with “seven times.” It is the last of the four periods of “seven times” in Leviticus 26, and it is the 70th week of Daniel 9.

Today, the church is scattered among tens of thousands of sects and denominations; and Daniel foretold this, in Daniel 12:7, “And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.”

The “time, times and a half” refers to half of “seven times” which is the last half-week in the 70th week. The “time, times and a half” is symbolic of the age of the church, which together with the ministry of Jesus, completes the 70th week when Christ confirms his covenant with many.

Even though the saints are scattered, Christ is their Shepherd, and he promised that he will gather all of them.⁴

The “mountains” where the sheep are scattered can be interpreted as flawed interpretations and doctrines. In the “cloudy and dark day” Christ will seek them and gather his sheep. Christ is against the shepherds who scatter the sheep; they are the false teachers, and false interpretations.

The theory of dispensationalism begins the 70 weeks prophecy not with the decree of Cyrus, but with a commandment that was given in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, 445 BC. This theory claims each week in the 70 weeks is seven “prophetic years” of 360 days each, so the first two sections are 483×360 or 173880 days. They divide this number by 365.25 and get 476 years.

This approach to interpreting the 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel is flawed for the following reasons.

1. Their interpretation fails to begin the 70 weeks prophecy with the very famous decree of Cyrus, who Isaiah would be the one who would give the word to build both the city of

¹Ephesians 2:20

²Acts 15:16

³Ephesians 2:5-6

⁴Ezekiel 34:6-14

Jerusalem and the temple.¹

Instead, they hunt for, and propose some obscure minor “decree,” with a dubious date, issued in order to implement a *portion* of the original decree.

This is demeaning to both Daniel, and to God, since the 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel is one of the most significant revelations of God’s plan relating to establishing his eternal kingdom. Why would the God of Heaven need to begin his great plan of building the heavenly city and his spiritual temple, with some minor, obscure decree, instead of the original, very famous one by Cyrus, that was foretold by Isaiah?

2. Their doctrine implies a gap between the exile in Babylon, identified in Daniel 9:11 with the curse written in the law of Moses, and the beginning of the 70 weeks. Such a gap is not revealed in scripture. It is untenable, because it requires a temporary pause in the curse that is described in Leviticus 26, and so requires a temporary reconciliation between God and Israel, which of course, did not occur.

3. Their proposed dating scheme, beginning from some obscure, minor decree, employs a deceptive scheme of “360 day years.” The scheme is an example of the “private interpretation,” conceived in the mind of Sir Robert Anderson, a detective at Scotland Yard in London. Anderson’s work has been found to be in error, and Dr. Harold Hoehner of Dallas Theological Seminary has revised his calculations and dates. If Anderson was “inspired,” why would his work need to be corrected? Jewish years and months were determined by the moon, and were not based on 360 days, as Anderson claimed.

4. The dating scheme proposed by dispensationalists said that the 69th week of the 70 weeks came to an end about 10 days before the end of the ministry of Jesus, not the beginning of it. But Daniel said “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks...” This points to the *beginning* of his ministry, not the *end* of it. Missing the start of the ministry of Jesus, the dispensationalists are unable to relate the prophecy about Christ confirming the covenant with many to the ministry of Christ, and don’t connect the following three years and a half to the entire time of the church. Instead, they put the whole 70th week far in the future!

5. Their interpretation mistakes Christ for Antichrist. They don’t acknowledge that Christ is the one who confirms his covenant with his saints for the 70th week, instead they invent a fiction about a seven year covenant between an individual human Antichrist and the Jews, that is not found in scripture. This doctrine seems to be associated with “seducing spirits.”² The idea of an individual human Antichrist is connected with utterances by the Tiburtine Sibyl.³

It was also promoted in the *Compendium* by Hugh Ripelin of Strasburg, discussed on page 13, that contributed to superstition and antisemitism in Europe.

6. The dispensationalists invoke a gap of more than 19 centuries between the 69th and 70th week, which of course is utterly false. Such a gap would require a lapse in the curse,

¹Isaiah 44:28

²1 Timothy 4:1-4

³http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiburtine_Sibyl

and that God was temporarily reconciled to his people. It has not happened!

7. They seek to profit by promoting their false doctrines and interpretations! Dispensationalism has been very profitable for the authors and publishers of books and commentaries supporting it and for the professors and Seminaries where it is taught. It is of this world, not of Christ! Dispensationalists also often become involved with worldly politics, and with the Zionist movement. James said, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."¹

The prophet Joel described the "day of the Lord" as "A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness."² The darkness clearly represents delusions and false teachings, as opposed to light and truth and understanding. These are the conditions that exist when Christ seeks out his sheep.

The "the high mountains of Israel" mentioned in Ezekiel 34, where his sheep, or the saints, are to dwell, represent the promises of God, and the revelations that God has provided for his church. These promises include an understanding of prophecy!

Interpreting the 1,260 days

Scripture mentions the 42 months, 1,260 days, and the *time, times and a half* in several different contexts. The 1,260 days is the time that the two witnesses prophesy clothed in sackcloth,³ and the time that the woman is nourished in the wilderness;⁴ the 42 months is the time when the holy city is trampled by Gentiles,⁵ and the time when the beast makes war with the saints, and overcomes them;⁶ the *time, times and a half* is the time that the woman is nourished in the wilderness, equipped with eagle's wings;⁷ and also the time when the saints are dominated by the little horn, which has *eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things*;⁸ it is the time when the power of the saints is scattered; and the time when all the prophecies of Daniel are accomplished.⁹

The phrase "time, times and a half" in Daniel 7:25 is ambiguous, as the word "*time*" may take various units. Possible units of time are hours, minutes, seconds, days, months, years, centuries, etc.

In Daniel's expression, the units for "time" may be of different kinds, in the first and second occurrences of the word. The expression could then be understood as: "one of time unit A, plus two and a half of time unit B." The reason for this is that there must be some

¹James 4:4

²Joel 2:1-2

³Revelation 11:3

⁴Revelation 12:6

⁵Revelation 11:2

⁶Revelation 13:5, 7

⁷Revelation 12:14

⁸Daniel 7:25

⁹Daniel 12:7

explanation for the use of the word "time" twice in the expression; otherwise, it would be simpler to say "three times and a half," rather than "time, times and a half." But if the units differed in the first and second "time," the two kinds of "time" would have to be kept separate and distinct.

This is another defect of the literal interpretations; they offer no explanation for the two uses of the word "time." Any interpretation that says the expression means three and a half years, in a literal sense, implicitly dishonours Daniel, and his prophecy; if the expression "time, times and a half" means we merely have to add one plus two plus one half to get three and a half, the prophecy becomes far too simplistic. Those scholars who insist the units are the same overlooked the possibility that different kinds of units were involved.

John's 1,260 days are based on the pattern of "*a time, times, and a half*," as are the two numbers provided by Daniel, 1,290 days,¹ and the 1,335 days,² as shown on page 115. They all fit the pattern of "*a time, times, and a half*," as the 1,290 days is three and a half years in which one year is 13 months and the rest 12 months, the months being 30 days; 1,335 days is three and a half years in which one year is 12 months and the rest 13 months, the months being 30 days.

So both numbers provided by Daniel represent three and a half symbolic or prophetic years. This is not a literal three and a half years, as it is assigned different numbers of days; nor do the numbers correspond to the number of days in a real three and a half years. The two numbers, and their not conforming to reality, show the *time, times and a half* is a prophetic symbol. The time remaining for the church is represented by a series of symbolic numbers that fit the pattern in the expression *a time, times and a half*.

The use of various numbers also shows this is a *diminishing* period of time. The largest number representing it is 1,335 days, and next is 1,290 days, and after that the 1,260 days, showing a progression in time. They teach us that the *remaining time of the church* is becoming less and less, and the smallest of the numbers, the three days and a half, when the two witnesses are represented by *corpses exposed in the street*, and when the world rejoices over their demise, indicates that the remaining time has become *very short*.

Daniel says the 1,290 days is the period from when the abomination of desolation was set up, and the "*tamiyd*" or constant was taken away. The 1,335 day period encompasses the 1,290 days. So if the 1,290 days represents the remaining time after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD, and the 1,335 days spans all of the age of the church, from the beginning of the New Testament church at Pentecost, both periods end at the same time, which is the end of the age. The 1,260 days is smaller than both Daniel's numbers, and so probably begins later, and represents the remaining time, from the date of the writing of the Apocalypse, some time after 70 AD, to the end of the age.

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¹Daniel 12:11

²Daniel 12:12

Latest update: <http://vinyl2.sentex.net/~tcc/dload/1260Days.pdf>

Who are the Two Witnesses? <http://vinyl2.sentex.net/~tcc/dload/WTW.pdf>

The woman in the wilderness <http://vinyl2.sentex.net/~tcc/dload/ww.pdf>