

Understanding Revelation – Topic 16

# **The beast from the bottomless pit**

**Two witnesses slain**

**An exposition of Revelation Chapter 11:3-13**

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## The two witnesses

The prophecy found in Revelation 11 commences with the third verse of the chapter as the first two verses belong to the prophecy of Chapter 10.

Scholars admit that this chapter is the most difficult of the whole book of Revelation and many and varied attempts have been made to interpret its meaning. However the majority of interpretations have proved unsatisfactory. To arrive at a correct understanding, therefore, it is essential that we adhere strictly to the basic Bible principles of interpretation.

***And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. Revelation 11:3***

There appear to be three main interpretations for the identity of the two witnesses:

1. Moses and Elijah
2. The Christian Church
3. The Word of God in the Old and New Testaments.

## Invalid interpretations

The first two applications cannot be valid for the following reasons:

1. The two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth for 1260 prophetic days or 1260 years. The 1260 years have already been established as the period of Papal supremacy which lasted from 538 to 1798 AD. While Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration in their glorified, immortal state (Luke 9:28-36) there is no evidence that they appeared to anyone at all during the 1260 year time period. How then could they be said to be slain with their bodies lying exposed for the three and half prophetic days, equating to three and a half years? In their glorified immortal state they would not be subject to death.
2. It is true that in Revelation the seven lampstands represent the Church of God (Revelation 1:20) but this is when they are presented in the setting of the heavenly temple, or sanctuary. In Revelation 11, however, the two lampstands are not presented within the setting of the heavenly temple but rather in the context of the *earthly* conflict between good and evil.

The church of God was attacked during the whole of the 1260 years, not just at the close of that period. In Revelation 11:2 the church is referred to under the symbol of *the holy city* which was trodden down for forty-two prophetic months - 1260 literal years.

3. How could the Christian church be overcome and killed (v7) when Jesus had declared that *the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it?* (Matthew 16:18).
4. How could it be truthfully said of the Christian church that *fire proceeds from their mouth and devours* the enemies of the church, and that they *smite the earth with all plagues*, when Jesus instructed his church *to love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you ...?* Matthew 5:44.

When did true Christians *torment* people on the earth (see verse 10)?

## A valid interpretation

The only valid interpretation is that the two witnesses represent the Word of God in the form of the two Testaments. Consider the following points:

- Scripture clearly symbolizes the Word of God as a candlestick or lampstand (Psalm 119:105).
- Scripture refers to both the Old Testament and New Testament as *witnesses* (John 5:39, Luke 24:27).
- Jesus Christ designated the Word of God as *the Prophets* (Luke 24:27, 44).

## The Old and New Testaments

***These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. v4***

The book of Revelation is based primarily on the Old Testament and it is from the book of Zechariah that the Revelator borrows the symbols of olive trees and lampstands (Zechariah 4:1-5). Zechariah was shown two olive trees which fed their oil into lamps on stands. In answer to the prophet's question, "What are these, my lord?" the angel responded:

*This is the word of the Lord... 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts. Zechariah 4:6*

A lamp (or lampstand) is a symbol of the Bible.

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105*

*...the entrance of Your words gives light. Psalm 119:130*

It seems quite clear then that the *two witnesses* represent the Word of God and the Word of God consists of two testaments, or witnesses. Alluding to the Old Testament Christ declared:

*... the Scriptures...are they which testify (or bear witness) of me. John 5:39*

Likewise the New Testament is also declared to be a witness

*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached... as a witness to all nations and then the end will come. Matthew 24:14*

Through the centuries numerous scholars of Biblical prophecy have concluded that the two witnesses of Revelation 11 represent the Scriptures. Over twenty such scholars could be listed.<sup>1</sup>

The Anglican scholar, Bishop Wordsworth declared

*The two witnesses, the olive trees, are the two Testaments ministering their testimony to the church of the old dispensation as well as to that of the new, which explains the two witnesses being called also the two candlesticks... The*

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<sup>1</sup> Le Roy Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1954), 2:3

*church in both dispensations has no light in herself, but derives it from the Spirit through the witness of the twofold word, the two olive trees.<sup>2</sup>*

Revelation 11:5 confirms that the two witnesses represent the Word of God.

***And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. v5***

Whoever hurts God's Word – whoever defiles it, perverts it, conceals it or hinders its work – if they do not repent, will ultimately be destroyed by fire in the Judgment.

*For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. Revelation 22:18-19*

### **The two witnesses as prophets**

Elsewhere in Revelation 11 the two witnesses are represented as *two prophets* (see verse 10). The two Testaments are personified and represented as living persons in order to highlight the power and influence of the Bible.

***These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy...***

Elijah declared, by the Word of God, that there would be drought in his day lasting three and a half years. And by the Word of God the drought would also be broken:

*The word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, show yourself to Ahab; and I will send rain on the earth.<sup>3</sup>*

***...and have power over waters to turn them to blood...***

This was illustrated through the experience of Moses while seeking Israel's deliverance from ancient Egypt. One of the ten plagues that fell on Egypt turned water to blood, and it was achieved by the Word of God.<sup>4</sup>

***...and to strike the earth with all plagues as often as they desire. v6***

The Word of God warns that before the Second Advent severe judgments will fall on the unsaved in the form of the seven plagues.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Robert Jamieson et al., *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1871), on Revelation 11:3

<sup>3</sup> 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1

<sup>4</sup> Exodus 7:20

<sup>5</sup> Revelation 16

## The 1260 day prophecy

The two witnesses *will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth* (v3).

*Prophecy* here means to preach or proclaim, but the witnesses are doing this *clothed in sackcloth*. Sackcloth in Bible times was used in connection with affliction, mourning or desolation. Applied to Scripture this signified that the Bible would be under suspicion, stigmatized and deemed illegal. The Bible would *prophecy in obscurity and secrecy*.

The 1260 day period of time is mentioned in seven different places in the books of Daniel and Revelation.<sup>6</sup> It is referred to as *time, times and half* (three and a half years) and also as *forty-two months*. There are thirty days in a biblical month, so forty-two months equals 1260 days. In prophecy one day symbolizes one year, so this period equates to 1260 years.<sup>7</sup>

This was the period in which the Papacy held political supremacy. It commenced in 538 AD and concluded in 1798 when the French Government stripped the Papacy of political power. It is during this period, the prediction states, that the two witnesses are to *prophecy in sackcloth*.

Did the Scriptures prophesy in obscurity during the 1260 years of papal supremacy?

History is clear - whenever the Papacy was supreme, the Scriptures were suppressed. The Bible was preserved solely in the Latin language which only the priesthood understood. The Bible was, as it were, locked up in obscurity and kept from the masses. Translation of the Bible into the ordinary language of the Church's congregations was expressly forbidden by both Church and civil law. The Papacy claimed that only Mother Church could explain Scripture, and that individual interpretation of the Bible turned people into heretics. Thus the Bible had to be protected from the general population.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, wherever the Bible was possessed in the native tongue of the people, the Papacy made war on that people.

*The decree of Toulouse 1229 A.D. (in France) which established the 'Tribunal of the Inquisition' against all the readers of the Bible in the vulgar (common) tongue... was an edict of fire, bloodshed and devastation... it ordained the entire destruction of the houses, the humblest places of concealment and even the subterranean retreats of men convicted of possessing the Scriptures; that they should be pursued to the forests and caves of the earth; and that even those who harboured them should be severely punished. As a result, the Bible was everywhere prohibited; it vanished, as it were, underground; it descended into the tomb. These decrees were followed for five hundred years by innumerable punishments, in which the blood of the saints flowed like water.*<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5

<sup>7</sup> Ezekiel 4:6; Numbers 14:34

<sup>8</sup> J.A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism* (London: Cassell and Co. Ltd., 1878), 1:35; 3:362

<sup>9</sup> L. Gausser, *The Canon of the Holy Scriptures* (Boston, MA: American Tract Society, 1862), Part 2, Book 2, Chapter 7, Section 5, prop.561; chapter 13, Section2, prop 642, paragraph 2

Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1898), 267, 684

In a convocation held at Oxford under Archbishop Arundel in 1408, the following was enacted:

*That no man hereafter by his own authority translate any text of the Scripture into English or any other tongue, by way of a book, booklet, or tract and that no man read any such book, booklet or tract, now lately composed in the time of John Wycliffe or since... publicly or privately upon pain of greater excommunication... He that shall do contrary to this shall likewise be punished as a favourer of heresy and error.<sup>10</sup>*

The following, from the Episcopal Register of Lincoln (England) for the years 1518-1521, illustrates how the Bible prophesied *in sackcloth* - in obscurity and secrecy wherein indictments were issued against those who read and interpreted the Bible for themselves.

*Against John Barret 'because he John Barret was heard in his own house before his wife and maid there present, to recite the epistle of James, which epistle, with many other things, he had perfectly without book'.*

*John Newman was impeached because he was present in the house of John Barret, at the reading of Scripture.*

*William Haliday was detected for having in his custody a book of the Acts of the Apostles in English.*

*One Fredway and several others, because they were heard to recite the Ten Commandments in English.<sup>11</sup>*

### **When they finish their testimony...**

The two testaments, these witnesses, were to testify in sackcloth for 1260 years from the year 538 AD, until they completed their testimony in 1798.

## **The beast**

***...the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. v7***

### **Characteristics of the beast**

The beast of Revelation 11 displays at least nine distinct primary characteristics, as follows.

#### **1. A political power or kingdom**

In prophecy a beast represents a kingdom (Daniel 7:17, 23). Therefore, this beast must represent a political power: it is not a philosophy or ideology such as communism.

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<sup>10</sup> "Gnosticism", in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Edited by (London: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 3:897

<sup>11</sup> W.A. Spicer, *Beacon Lights of Prophecy* (Takoma Park, WA: Review and Herald Publishing Assn, 1935), 252-253

## 2. Rises at the close of the 1260 year period (1798)

This beast cannot represent the Papacy because the Papacy made war on the Bible and on God's people during the whole period of the 1260 years. This beast emerges at the close of the 1260 years, whereas the Papal beast described in Revelation 13:1-10 and Revelation 17 received a deadly wound at the close of the 1260 years.

## 3. Emerges from the bottomless pit

The expression *bottomless pit* or *abyss* is used seven times in the Book of Revelation, which is a book of symbols. Therefore the term *bottomless pit* is symbolic.

In Revelation 9 the term is used to describe the source and inspiration of the symbolic locusts that are inspired by Satan to bring woe to the inhabitants of the earth under the fifth trumpet.

In Revelation 17:8 it is used once to describe the location or condition from which a beast emerges, after it is not (is non-existent or dead). It is a place of death - the grave.

In Revelation 20 the term is used twice to describe the prison house of Satan during the millennium, when the earth will be turned into a world-wide graveyard, a devastated place of death.

In Romans 10:7 the word *deep* (*abussos*) is used to describe the grave or place of the dead.

In the above references to the *bottomless pit* we find two features in common: Satan is the inspirer and controller, and this is a place of death.

Who is the author of death whose territory, whose *prison house* is the grave? The personage involved is Satan. In Scripture the things of God are often described as coming *from above*, while the things of Satan are described as emerging *from beneath*. The bottomless pit is Satan's stronghold, the enclosure of his arsenal. The pit therefore represents Satan's kingdom, and any person or power that arises from the bottomless pit is consequently inspired by him.

*This wisdom does not descend from above but is earthly, sensual, demonic.... But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits. James 3:15*

Often in the Book of Revelation the movements or powers inspired by Satan are described as emerging from the pit, the sea, the earth, etc, always from beneath,<sup>12</sup> whereas the movements inspired by heaven are described as coming from above.<sup>13</sup> Therefore the beast of Revelation 11 that emerges from the bottomless pit is a power that is inspired and controlled by Satan. As one author has commented:

*Here is brought to view a new manifestation of Satanic power.<sup>14</sup>*

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<sup>12</sup> Revelation 9:2, 14; 11:7; 13:1, 11; 17:8.

<sup>13</sup> Revelation 7:2; 10:1; 12:1; 14:1, 6: 18:1.

<sup>14</sup> Ellen G. White, 269.

## 4. Associated with spiritual Babylon

***And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city... v8***

In the Book of Revelation two cities are referred to:

1. *The Holy City* – Jerusalem – which until the Second Advent represents the church of God<sup>15</sup> and after the Second Advent, is the literal city of the heavenly Jerusalem<sup>16</sup>
2. *Babylon*, representing the apostate system or religion, centred in the Papacy.<sup>17</sup>

In Scripture only three earthly cities in Scripture are described as “great”. They are:

*Gibeon* (once) Joshua 10:2

*Nineveh* (4 times) Jonah 1:2; 3:2, 3, 11

*Babylon* (10 times) Daniel 4:30; Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 16, 18, 19, 21.

Our conclusion therefore is that *the great city* of this prediction can only be spiritual Babylon. Other chapters provide more evidence for this conclusion.

The beast of Revelation 11 is connected with spiritual Babylon (the Papacy). It is described as *the street of the great city* in verse 8 and in verse 13 it is described as *a tenth of the city*.

All the beasts representing Roman Babylon in Daniel Chapter 7 and Revelation Chapters 12, 13, and 17 have ten horns, which represented the ten kingdoms of Western Europe. This was the territory that was peculiar to pagan Rome and which was inherited by Papal Rome, spiritual Babylon. Therefore, the beast that rises around 1798 must be one of the ten kingdoms of Western Europe and one which has been an effective component of the Papacy.

## 5. Its rise causes an *earthquake* in the political world

***In the same hour there was a great earthquake... v13***

At the time the only West European kingdom that possessed the five characteristics listed above was revolutionary France. In 1789 the French people arose in awful revenge against the arrogant, corrupt, cruel and selfish aristocracy and the priesthood that had ground them down in poverty and serfdom for so many years.

Describing the terrible outburst of fury exhibited by the French populace, French writers of the period employ parallel terms with the prediction written 1700 years before. Lamartine writes of *the bottomless pit of atheism*<sup>18</sup> and the Abbe Barruel wrote in 1797 of *the dark recesses from whence it burst into being*.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Revelation 11:2; 14:20

<sup>16</sup> Revelation 3:12; 20:9; 21:2, 10-27; 22:2, 14, 19

<sup>17</sup> Revelation 11:8, 13; 14:8; 16:19; 17:18; 18:2, 10, 16, 18-21.

<sup>18</sup> Alfonse de Lamartine, *Atheism among the People* (Boston MA: Phillips Sampson and Company, 1850), John S Mill, *On Liberty*, (London: Longman, Green and Co, 1865), 30.

<sup>19</sup> Abbe Barruel, *Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism* (London: Hudson & Goodwin, 1797), xi

It was a political earthquake that shocked the civilized world. Historians and statesmen have described it as such.<sup>20</sup>

*The time of the eighteenth-century French Revolution, when the 1260 years of the Papal era were closing, was a turning point in the history of the modern world. It brought forth forces that made a permanent change in the thoughts and actions of mankind.*<sup>21</sup>

*The French Revolution was one of the momentous events in the history, not only of France, but of Europe and even the whole world.*<sup>22</sup>

*It threatened a general earthquake in the political world.*<sup>23</sup>

*The minds of men were shaken as by the yawning of the ground during the fury of an earthquake.*<sup>24</sup>

*It destroyed the landmarks of the world in which generations of men had passed their lives.*<sup>25</sup>.

## 6. Likened to Egypt

***... in the street of the great city which spiritually is called...Egypt...***

In Scripture what characteristic was peculiar to Egypt? It was exhibited most outstandingly when the prophet Moses delivered to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, the message from God,

*... ‘Let my people go...’*

and Pharaoh responded

*... ‘Who is the Lord (Jehovah) that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. (Exodus 5:1-2)*

This is the spirit of defiance, a refusal to recognize the existence of the true God. In other words, it is atheism. One commentator stated

*This is atheism, and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God, and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance.*<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Walter Scott, *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* (Edinburgh Adam and Charles Black, 1827), Volume 1, ch17.

Frerick Shlegel, ed. *Ideas*, ed. Frederick C Beiser (London: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought, *The Early Political Writings of the German Romantics*, 122

Alexander Hamilton Papers at the Library of Congress, Philadelphia 1794, Container 25, Reel 22,

<sup>21</sup> Archibald Alison, *History of Europe* (Edinburgue William Blackwood & Son, 1860), 1:47-49

<sup>22</sup> Le Roy Froom, 2:633

<sup>23</sup> Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolutions in France* (London: J. Dodgeley, 1790), par 259.

<sup>24</sup> Archibald Alison,

<sup>25</sup> Lord John Acton, *The Cambridge Modern History* (New York: Macmillan, 1902), article on 'Europe and the French Revolution' (GP Gooch).

<sup>26</sup> Ellen G. White, 269

The lapse into atheism during the French Revolution was both dramatic and tragic. As well as challenging the monarchs of earth, France endeavored to dethrone the King of Heaven.

*The world for the first time heard an assembly of men born and educated in civilization, and assuming the right to govern one of the finest of the European nations, uplift their united voice to deny the most solemn truth which man's soul receives, and renounce unanimously the belief and worship of a deity.<sup>27</sup>*

## 7. Slays/abolishes the Bible

The Papacy had been opposed to making the Scriptures available in the lingua franca of the common people for the 1260 years of her supremacy. However this new beast power is predicted to war against the Bible at the close of the 1260 years. This is done in such a way that the Scriptures are personified as being *slain* for a period of three and a half prophetic days. Taking the prophetic day to represent one year, this means that the Scriptures were slain or abolished for three and a half literal years. Such details as these aid us to pin-point the power that is indicated in the prediction.

Not only did France declare herself to be atheistic during the Revolution, she officially abolished all religion. As far as the French were concerned, the Christian religion was Roman Catholicism which, through the agencies of the priesthood and aristocracy, had sorely oppressed them. Because of the fierce resistance of both the clergy and the royal family to the Protestant faith when it attempted to enter France, the French people failed to distinguish false Christianity from the true faith. Thus in their blind fury they turned against their oppressors, attacking everything that was associated with any religion.

Because the seven-day week originated at creation, as recorded in Genesis, the French abolished the seven-day week and decreed that the week would henceforth be ten days duration. Every church was closed and their lands confiscated. Most of the clergy and the aristocracy were executed.

*The shootings, the drowning, the roasting of the Roman Catholic loyalists, both priests and nobles...had all their prototypes (or models) in the barbarities of another age, practiced under the direction of the Pope and French Papists.<sup>28</sup>*

*The French Revolution slew as many priests and Papists under Louis XVI as the priests and Papists slew Protestants under Louis XIV. Simpson and other good and great writers have truly and justly considered that the latter slaughter was a righteous retribution for the former murders. This event sent an awful shock through the whole empire.<sup>29</sup>*

After mentioning the frauds and deceptions perpetrated by religious leaders prior to the Revolution, this writer continues

*They rose en masse, 'Down with these monsters who have villainously imposed upon our credulity'...Barruel, in his "History of the Revolution" says, '138 bishops and 64,000 curates were driven from their sees or parishes; all the clergy, all the religious...forced from their retreats...300 priests slain in one day in one city; all*

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<sup>27</sup> Walter Scott, 1:17

<sup>28</sup> Edward B. Elliot, *Horae Apocalypticæ*, 5 ed. (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, 1862), 3:321-322.

<sup>29</sup> Moses Stuart, *The Apocalypse* (New York: Allen, Morrill, and Wardwell 1845), 1:113-115.

*the other pastors who remained faithful to their God, were either sacrificed or banished... such is the spectacle exhibited to the world by the French Revolution.*<sup>34</sup>

On November 10, 1793

*The Convention dressed up an ass... loaded it with the symbols of Christianity and tied the Old and the New Testaments to its tail. It was then led in mock procession... The crowd piled books of devotion into heaps and burned them to ashes amid blasphemous shouts... A prostitute was enthroned as 'Goddess of Reason'...*<sup>30</sup>

On November 23, 1793

*The Convention...decreed the abolition of all religion.*<sup>31</sup>

This included the abolition of the Scriptures.

On 17 June, 1797 just over three and a half years later (3 years, 6 months and 20 odd days) the National Assembly voted that religion be restored and toleration be given to the Scriptures, thus fulfilling in remarkable detail this specification of the prophecy.<sup>32</sup> (See Appendix A for a diagrammatic representation of this time period).

## 8. Spiritually like Sodom

***...which spiritually is called Sodom...***

Sodom is mentioned in the book of Genesis. The city was notorious for its immorality and was destroyed by divine intervention (Genesis 18:20-33; 19:1-28).

During the French Revolution marriage was degraded, adultery was legalized, and moral debasement and corruption swept the country.<sup>33</sup>

## 9. Located where true Christians had suffered enormous persecution

***...where also our Lord was crucified. v.8***

Jesus Christ was crucified in Palestine in 31AD. So in what sense could Christ have then been crucified in France? Scripture speaks very clearly about how Christ can be crucified again. Jesus declared

*...inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.*  
*Matthew 25:40*

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<sup>30</sup> Le Roy Froom, 2:738.

<sup>31</sup> W.H. Hutton, *Age of Revolution* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1908), 256.

<sup>32</sup> William M. Sloane, *The French Revolution and Religious Reform* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), 229.

See also: Edmond De Pressens, *The Church & the French Revolution* (London: Hodder & Stoughton 1869), Book 3, ch 3.

<sup>33</sup> Walter Scott, *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* (Edinburgh Adam and Charles Black, 1815), 1:147.

Victor Duruy, *Histoire De France* (Paris: Librairie de L. Hatchette, 1868), 2:421, 541.

Saul, the Jewish Pharisee, was a fearful persecutor of the early Christians. When Jesus Christ confronted Saul on the Damascus road, He introduced Himself saying,

... ‘Saul, Saul why are you persecuting Me?’ Acts 9:4

This shows that whatever is done to Christ's followers, He accepts as having been done to Himself.

France was referred to as *the eldest daughter of the church* because of her fervent support of the Roman Catholic cause. France was foremost in carrying out the Papacy's will in opposing and destroying those who rejected Roman Catholic dogma. It is appalling that in the long period when France was dominated by the Papacy, it was guilty of the slaughter of millions of Christians who refused to follow the Roman Catholic faith.<sup>34</sup> In this manner, France in particular was guilty of crucifying or putting to death Jesus Christ. She did this in the person of Christ's true followers.<sup>35</sup>

Christ was also crucified in another sense during the French Revolution.

*In the scenes of the Revolution, Jesus Christ was declared to be an imposter, and the rallying cry of the French infidels was, ‘Crush the Wretch’, meaning Christ. Heaven-daring blasphemy and abominable wickedness went hand in hand and the basest of men, the most abandoned monsters of vice and cruelty, were most highly exalted. In all this, supreme homage was paid to Satan; while Christ, in His characteristics of truth and unselfish love, was crucified.<sup>36</sup>*

Revolutionary France alone fulfils the above nine specifications accurately. Let us now consider how the remaining specifications in the prediction were fulfilled during the French Revolution.

## 10. Abolition of the Scriptures celebrated

***And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. v10***

This was fulfilled during the Revolution. The Bible reproves evil and its requirements and restrictions are a source of annoyance to the man who is intent on having his own way. When God, religion, and the Bible were abolished, a great sense of relief and freedom was felt by French infidels, while tremendous jubilation swept throughout the country.

*This Revolution, which was to bring forth so many scenes of the bloodiest cruelty and injustice, was also to become memorable for scenes of popular rejoicing which have scarcely been equaled in any other land or at any other period.<sup>37</sup>*

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<sup>34</sup> J.A. Wylie, 3:329-347; 2:140-145, 557-562.

Samuel Smiles, *The Huguenots: Their Settlement, Churches, and Industries in England and Ireland* (New York: Samuel Smiles, 1868), 66, 67,145-148.

<sup>35</sup> J.A. Wylie, , 1:37-46,50.

Ellen G. White, ; J.A. Wylie, , 273.

Zoe Oldenbourg, *Massacre at Montsegur* (London: Repub. Phoenix/Orion Books, 1959),

Eugene Lawrence, *Historical Studies* (Harper, 1876),

<sup>36</sup> Ellen G. White, 273.

<sup>37</sup> E. Henderson, *Symbol and Satire in the French Revolution* (New York: Putnam, 1912), 127.

***Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three and a half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. v9***

In reaction to the shocking experience of the French Revolution, many of the surrounding nations were galvanized into the defense of the Bible and the Christian faith.

*By many voices in different lands and through various vehicles, the end of the Papal period was perceived as due and under way. The sudden shock of the French Revolution sent the Protestant church back to the Scriptures for meaning.<sup>38</sup>*

The world stood aghast at the *Reign of Terror* that had convulsed the French people, most of which was a reaction to Papal policy, carried out by both the French church and state. A league was formed to resist the spread of disorder and anarchy. This attitude adopted by the surrounding nations caused the French leaders to take stock of their country's situation and led them to begin quelling the frenzy and extremism the Revolution had produced.

Robespierre, representing the League before the French Assembly, answering the manifesto of the European kings, endeavored to defend the Revolution.

*They represent us as a mad and idolatrous nation. They lie. The French people and their representatives respect all forms of religious worship and do not proscribe any.<sup>39</sup>*

## 11. The Bible restored

***Now after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. v11-12***

As previously explained, three and a half years after the Scriptures were abolished by the French Government, they were restored again by law. The Scriptures are personified as being resurrected and ascending to heaven in full view of those who abolished them.

The phrase, *ascended to heaven* is used in Scripture to denote great exaltation.

*...your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens.... Daniel 4:22*

This text referred to the power and prestige of the King of Babylon. In Revelation 11 the expression describes how the Scriptures, as a result of the attack on them by Revolutionary France, would gain universal recognition and popularity.

This was strikingly fulfilled in the formation of the great Bible societies: the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1804 and the American Bible Society in 1816. These Societies, along with their auxiliaries, have scattered the Scriptures all over the earth. For many years the Bible had been printed and circulated in less than fifty languages. Since then it has been distributed widely in hundreds of languages. It is the most purchased and read book ever.

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<sup>38</sup> Le Roy Froom, 2:741.

<sup>39</sup> "Record of the Convention," (de L'Imprimerie de Surre, fils., Paris, December 5, 1793)

At the same time there blossomed the great era of foreign missions, wherein the Scriptures were taken to the remotest areas of the world.

*Moreover, the extraordinary circulation of the Scriptures began during the French Revolution. Never should it be forgotten that both missionary and Bible societies had their birth at this very time....*<sup>40</sup>

## 12. Aristocratic titles abolished

***In the same hour...seven thousand men were killed... v13***

The margin reads *names of men*. Undoubtedly, this term refers to the titles which were associated with the aristocracy. Did the French Revolution abolish the titles which had been a divisive feature of French society? Note the decree of June 19, 1790:

*Hereditary nobility is forever abolished: in consequence the titles of prince, duke, count, marquis, viscount, vidame, baron, knight, massive, ecuyer, noble and all other similar titles shall neither be taken by any one whomsoever nor given to anybody.*<sup>41</sup>

Altogether there are at least twelve specifications in this striking prediction of Revelation chapter 11: every one of them was clearly and accurately fulfilled in Revolutionary France. No other power has ever met these specifications. No other interpretation of this chapter provides a satisfactory or meaningful understanding of Revelation 11.

While this interpretation is the one espoused by Seventh-day Adventists it did not originate with them. Scholars have discovered that godly Bible expositors as far back as the 17<sup>th</sup> century discerned that France would probably be the power that would slay the two witnesses of Revelation 11 and deal a death blow to Papal supremacy.

In 1948, as a result of several years of painstaking research, Professor L.E. Froom published a monumental four volume history of the interpretation of Bible prophecy throughout the Christian era. It is titled *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*. In these volumes there is evidence that at least thirty-two scholars, up to the time of the French Revolution, had predicted on the basis of Revelation 11 that France would be the European kingdom that would end the supreme power of the Papacy. These predictions reach back as far as 150 years prior to the Revolution (see Appendix B for a partial list of these prophetic scholars and some of their forecasts.)

Jean Vuilleumier, a veteran French editor in Paris, France, researched the records of the French Revolution to verify the fulfillment of the prophecy of Revelation 11, especially the time period of the three and a half years in which religion and the Bible were legally abolished. His confirmations were published in 1940.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Le Roy Froom, 2:762.

<sup>41</sup> Sir Robert Anderson, "Constitution and Selected Documents," 33.

<sup>42</sup> Jean Vuilleumier(ed), *Ministry*, No. May-July 1940.

## Invalid interpretations

It is claimed by some that the beast of Revelation 11 is identical to the beast of Revelation 17, and that therefore, the prophecy of Revelation 11 has a second fulfillment as outlined in the 17th chapter of Revelation.<sup>43</sup> The chief basis for this assertion is that both beasts are described as ascending out of *the bottomless pit*.

It is also claimed that because the beast of Revelation 11 was Revolutionary France and its philosophy later developed into *International Socialism*, the beast of Revelation 17 therefore applied to Communism in its current form. Let us examine these claims.

Just because a beast or kingdom in prophecy has one point of similarity with another, this is not evidence that it is the same kingdom. In the prophetic symbols of Daniel and Revelation, there may often be points in common, but this does not mean that they are necessarily the same entity. For example, each of the four beasts of Daniel 7 emerges from the sea, but this is not evidence that they are the same identical power. This principle applies in Revelation.

Because two beasts ascend from the bottomless pit, this is not evidence that they are the same power. What Scripture does indicate, however, is that both beasts are inspired from beneath. An analysis the beast of Revelation 17, however, reveals rather that it is identical with the beast of Revelation 13. In fact, the three beasts of Revelation 12, 13 and 17 can be shown to be very similar in character and consequently closely connected.

The following comparisons reveal that the two beasts of Revelation 13 and 17 are identical although in Revelation 17 additional details are given concerning the Roman head of the Beast.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Desmond Ford, *Crisis: A Commentary on Revelation* (Newcastle: Desmond Ford Publication, 1982), 482-483.

<sup>44</sup> A. P. Cooke, *The Riddle of Revelation 17* (Sydney: Self published, 1985).

## Similarities between the beasts in Revelation Chapters 13 and 17

Revelation 13	Revelation 17
...seven heads and ten horns... (v1)	...seven heads and ten horns. (v3)
...on his heads a blasphemous name. (v1)	...full of names of blasphemy... (v3)
...make war with the saints... (v7)	...drunk with the blood of the saints... (v6)
...one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded... (v3)	The beast that you saw was, and <u>is not</u> , ie no longer exists – is dead. (v8)
...his deadly wound was healed... (v3)	The beast...will ascend out of the bottomless pit... (place of death) (v8)
...all the world marveled... (v3)	...those who dwell on the earth will marvel... (v8)
All...will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life...from the foundation of the world. (v8)	...those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world... (v8)
Specifications fulfilled only by the Roman head of the beast.	Specifications fulfilled chiefly by the Roman head of the beast.

On the other hand, notice the contrasts between the beast of Revelation 11 and the beast of Revelation 13 and 17.

## Contrasts between the beast of Revelation 11 and the beast of Chapters 13 and 17

Beast of Revelation 11	Beast of Revelation 13 and 17
Rises about 1798.	Wounded or <i>slain</i> in 1798
Is only one of ten kingdoms	Territory included the ten kingdoms.
Makes war on the Papacy.	Makes war on the saints
Is like Egypt, ie atheistic (anti-religious)	Is controlled by Babylonian religion (scarlet woman)
Under this beast the two witnesses are slain.	Under this beast the two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth

These contrasts clearly show that there can be no connection between the beast of Revelation 11 and the beast of Revelation 13 and 17.

A recent writer has claimed that the two witnesses of Revelation 11 represent the church when in the future it *will prophesy in sackcloth*.<sup>45</sup> On checking the source of this statement,<sup>46</sup> we find that the quoted author, when elsewhere explaining the two witnesses of Revelation 11 clearly states that:

*The two witnesses represent the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament .... During the greater part of this period, God's witnesses remained in a state of obscurity.*<sup>47</sup>

## Latter-day significance of the prophecy

Before discussing a possible latter-day parallel for the fulfillment of the prophecy in Revelation 11, we should emphasize that this prophecy fits only one specific historical situation. A definite time period is involved of forty-two prophetic months, and this can logically have only one legitimate fulfillment in history. Also the beast of Revelation 11 is a specific political kingdom that arose at a specific time. Therefore no attempts should be made to re-apply the historical application.<sup>48</sup>

In considering this remarkable prediction of the French Revolution and the ending of Papal supremacy, in what sense then, could there be significance for us today? In 1903 E.G. White described how the experience of the French Revolution can have significance for us.

*The centralizing of wealth and power; the vast combinations for the enriching of the few at the expense of the many; the combinations of the poorer classes for the defense of their interests and claims; the spirit of unrest, of riot and bloodshed; the world-wide dissemination of the same teachings that led to the French Revolution - all are tending to involve the whole world in a struggle similar to that which convulsed France.*<sup>49</sup>

According to this statement *the whole world* is to experience a *struggle similar to that which convulsed France*. In other words, what occurred in the French Revolution on a local scale is to be repeated on a world-wide scale.

Twelve parallels can be observed between the situation that involved Revolutionary France and what is in process of being fulfilled in our world today.

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<sup>45</sup> Desmond Ford, 485.

<sup>46</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1948), 4:594

<sup>47</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 267.

<sup>48</sup> To take a single phrase from a publication and use it out of context and in contradiction to other statements by the same author, in order to give Revelation 11 a future application, cannot be sustained as a method of Biblical interpretation. This interpretation must be rejected.

<sup>49</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assocn, 1903), 228.

## Parallels between the French revolution and latter-day events

Revolutionary France	Latter-day events
1. Prior to the Revolution, France was called to receive the Gospel of Christ via the Protestant Reformation.	Our world is being called to receive the Gospel in the proclamation of the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14 which will culminate in <i>the loud cry</i> of Revelation 18:1-4.
2. The majority rejected the Gospel and clung to, or accepted the worship of Rome.	The majority will reject the Gospel of the Three Angels and instead worship the beast and his image. <sup>50</sup>
3. The populace was led to believe that Rome alone could dispense salvation and that Protestantism would destroy the peace of the nation. <sup>51</sup>	Similar arguments will be used to secure the union of all society under Rome. The populace will also be deceived by <i>great signs and wonders</i> (Matthew 24:24) until <i>all the world wonders after the beast</i> . (Revelation 13:3)
4. The minority who received the Gospel were driven out, imprisoned or slain. <sup>52</sup>	<i>The Remnant</i> will receive the wrath of the dragon and they will be driven out, imprisoned or slain. Revelation 13:3
5. Revolutionary France was "a tenth" of the spiritual city of Babylon (the Papacy), ie she was one of the ten kingdoms of Western Europe. <sup>53</sup>	End-time events will involve the whole world which will have come under the jurisdiction of spiritual Babylon.

<sup>50</sup> Revelation 13:3, 8, 11-17.

<sup>51</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 277

<sup>52</sup> J.A. Wylie, Bk 22, ch 6; Bk 13, ch 20

Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 271, 278.

Samuel Smiles,

<sup>53</sup> Revelation 11:13, 2 Timothy 3:12; Revelation 12:17; 13:15; 16:5-6. Revelation 18:2, 3, 9, 11, 15.

Revolutionary France	Latter-day events
<p>6. There was a centralizing of wealth and power in the church and state. They united in order to protect each other.<sup>54</sup></p>	<p>We are witnessing a centralizing of wealth and power throughout the world, in which governments and merchants (eg multinationals) are combining with the Papacy to protect and enrich each other.</p> <p><i>...the kings of the earth (rulers) have committed fornication (illicitly united) with her, (Babylon) and the merchants of the earth (multinationals etc) have become rich through the abundance of her luxury. Revelation 18:3</i></p> <p>The same chapter forecasts how the world's financial establishments will be ruined through Babylon's fall.<sup>55</sup></p> <p>Today the vast multinational enterprises are seriously influencing the economies of the world, even in socialist countries. And entwined through all the multinationals, and influencing them, is the greatest multinational of all - the Vatican.<sup>56</sup></p> <p><i>...the vast combinations for the enriching of the few at the expense of the many...</i><sup>57</sup></p>
<p>7. The middle and working classes became impoverished and down-trodden. The burden of supporting the church and the state fell upon the middle and low classes, who were heavily taxed by the civil authorities and by the clergy.<sup>58</sup></p>	<p>We are witnessing the process of the enrichment of the few <i>at expense of the many</i>.</p> <p>Many foresee that the world's middle and working classes are on the path to poverty. Today the rich mostly escape taxation, but the middle and working classes are over-taxed, and employment is becoming increasingly precarious.</p> <p>James 5 forecasts that the rich would be guilty of oppressing the employee. While this has had a partial fulfillment in the past, the prediction clearly refers to the future.</p> <p>Scripture indicates that a form of slavery will prevail as we near the conclusion of human history.</p> <p>When the <i>mark of the beast</i> is enforced, it involves <i>rich and poor, free and bond</i>.<sup>59</sup> At the return of Christ when the unsaved cry in despair, there are included <i>every bondman and every freeman</i>.<sup>60</sup> This may indicate that, because of the enormity of economic problems, certain sections of society may be compelled to surrender personal freedom in order to survive.</p>

<sup>54</sup> Revelation 11:13

<sup>55</sup> Revelation 18:2, 3, 9, 11, 15.

<sup>56</sup> Avro Manhatten, *The Vatican Billions* (Los Angeles: Chick Publications, 1983), 120-187

<sup>57</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education*, 228.

<sup>58</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 280

<sup>59</sup> Revelation 13:6

<sup>60</sup> Revelation 6:15

Revolutionary France	Latter-day events
<p>8. The result was general decline of the nation - intellectually, morally, industrially and economically. Flourishing French industries decayed. Fertile districts became a wilderness. Intellectual dullness developed.</p> <p>Moral decay succeeded a period of unwonted progress.</p> <p>Paris became one vast alms-house. <i>Two hundred thousand paupers claimed charity from the king.</i> The state became financially embarrassed. The populace became brutalized.<sup>61</sup></p>	<p>We are seeing a general decline globally as follows.</p> <p><b>Intellectually</b> – As a result of deficient education, false philosophy, broken homes, drug addiction, unemployment and poverty, etc.</p> <p><b>Morally</b> – Through the literature, entertainment, education, the internet and the mass media, society is losing its morality and becoming brutalized. <i>Moral decay succeeded a period of unwonted progress.</i> This is being repeated on a global scale. The rampant addiction to pornography through the internet is testimony to this trend.</p> <p><b>Industrially and economically</b> – After a period of unparalleled industrial and economic growth, the world now appears to be in decline, especially in the Western world; and because of the various destructive forces in operation, undoubtedly we will see increasing declension.</p> <p><b>Socially</b> - Millions are dependent upon government charity in order to exist, and like France an increasing number of countries are becoming welfare states and this is embarrassing government finances.</p>
<p>9. The down-trodden, poverty-stricken masses combined to defend their interests.</p>	<p>We have witnessed a similar situation in the formation of labour unions to protect the working person. In the future we may witness an intensification of <i>the combination of the poorer classes</i> in the light of the forecast that <i>labour unions will be very oppressive</i> and these unions <i>will rob the poorer classes of the advantages which justly belong to them</i>, and the unions will combine with apostate churches to enforce the <i>Mark of the Beast.</i><sup>62</sup></p>
<p>10. There developed an underground opposition to the corrupt church and government.</p>	<p>The dissemination of the same teachings that led to the French Revolution...are tending to involve the whole world in a struggle similar to that which convulsed France.<sup>63</sup> These teachings have already been manifest in international socialism, or communism. How they will be finally fulfilled is yet to be seen.</p>

<sup>61</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 280.  
Samuel Smiles, 169, 342-349.

J.A. Wylie, 3:334-336.

<sup>62</sup> Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc, 1958), 21:141-143.

<sup>63</sup> Ellen G. White, *Education*, 228 (emphasis supplied).

Revolutionary France	Latter-day events
<p>11. The oppressive course of church and state climaxed in the revolt of the masses, and the slaughter of the priesthood and aristocracy.</p>	<p>After church and state unite, freedom will disappear and oppressive laws will afflict the people, especially the people of God. This will climax in the visitation of the seven last plagues in which all classes that support spiritual Babylon will suffer terribly (Revelation 13:15-17).<sup>64</sup></p> <p><b>The result:</b> The true character of Babylon will be revealed. Instead of being seen as the great Champion of Truth and Right, the judgments of God will expose her as the great deceiver – the enemy of God and man. She will be seen as a self seeker, craving world dominion and self-exaltation at the expense of the people. (Revelation 18:1-8)</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> The masses who will be deluded into supporting Babylon and opposing God's people will finally turn on Babylon and destroy her.</p> <p>In Revelation 17:12-14 we are informed that the ten kingdoms will unite with and support the beast against God and His people, but these same ten kingdoms, or supporters of Babylon,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>these will hate the harlot (Babylon), make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire..vss16-17</i></p> <p>In other words, the supporters of the apostate churches will ultimately turn on their religious leaders and destroy them.</p> <p>As the author of Great Controversy predicted</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. "We are lost!" they cry, "and you are the cause of our ruin;" and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.<sup>65</sup></i></p>

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<sup>64</sup> Revelation 14:9-10; 16:1-21

<sup>65</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 655-656.

<b>Revolutionary France</b>	<b>Latter-day events</b>
12. After the slaughter of priests and aristocrats, the populace turned on each other in <i>The Reign of Terror</i> and fratricide became the order of the day.	<p>The order of events will be similar but on a world-wide scale. After the masses turn on their religious leaders and destroy them, they then will turn on each other in slaughter.</p> <p><i>They shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour. (Zechariah 14:13)</i></p> <p>After the saints had been delivered by the voice of God, the wicked multitude turned their rage upon one another. The earth seemed to be deluged with blood, and dead bodies were from one end of it to the other <sup>66</sup></p>

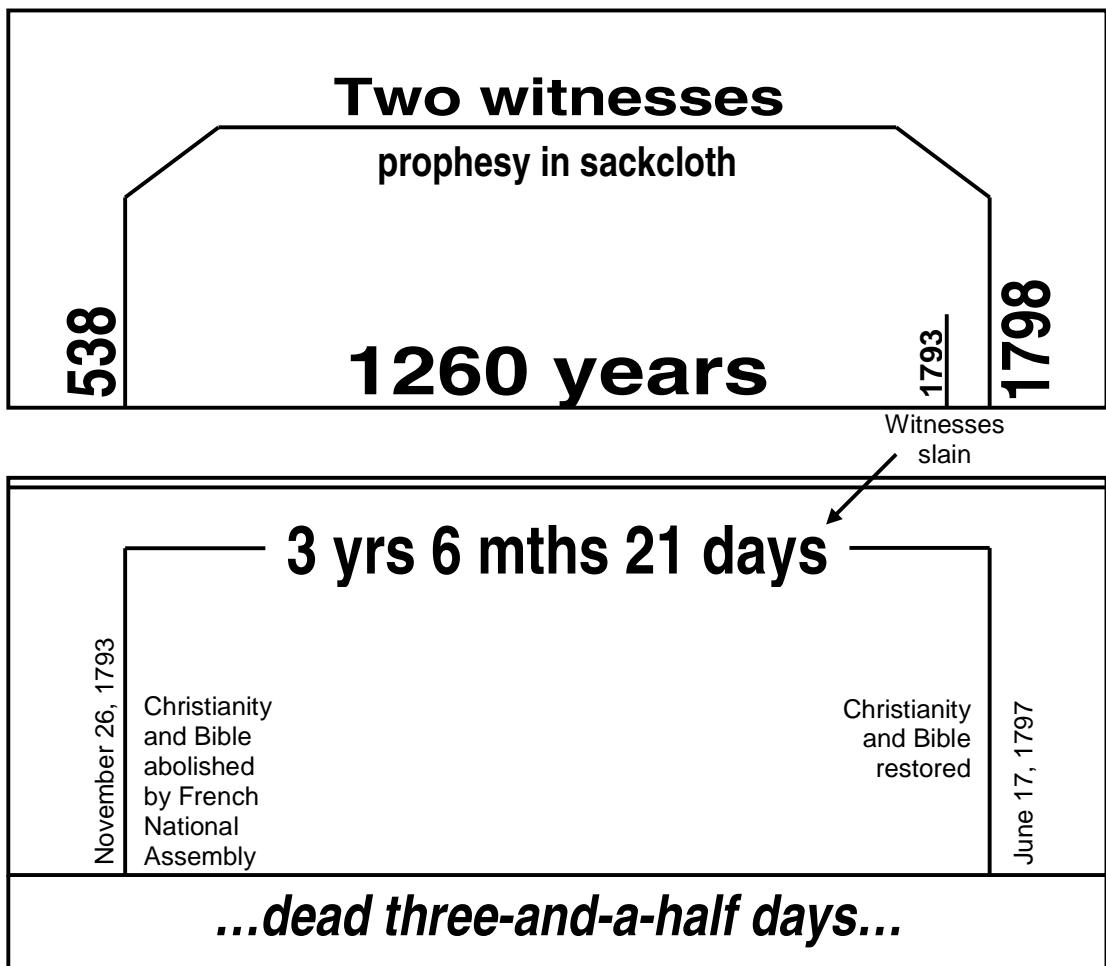
These parallels between Revolutionary France and our day end at this point. Whereas France continued to exist as a nation, our civilization is not to continue. It will end at the Second Advent of Christ.

The events as outlined in the above parallels indicate the probable course that our world will pursue and how it will climax in the return of Christ.

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<sup>66</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* (Washington, DC.: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1882), 290.

## **Appendix A – The 3½ year time period illustrated**



## Appendix B – Supporting scholars

**Drue Cressener** (1638-1718). Prebend of Anglican Ely Cathedral. In 1690 he studied the 1260 year period of Papal supremacy and concluded that it would close *a little before 1800 AD.* (The actual end was 1798).<sup>67</sup> This was 109 years before the event.

**Thomas Brightman** (1562-1607). Puritan scholar. One of the fathers of English Presbyterianism. He ably answered the Preterist and Futurists errors of the Jesuits, Ribera and Bellamine. He was the first to mention that the 1260 years dated from the decree of Justinian in 533 AD.<sup>68</sup>

**George Darnham** Died 1634. English theologian, Professor of Logic, Cambridge University, Chaplain to James I. A refuter of Bellamine and his Futurism. He Published *A Treatise concerning Antichrist*, which became the leader of Protestant works on prophecy in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. He also dated the 1260 years of Papal supremacy from the decree of Justinian.<sup>69</sup>

**Joseph Mede** (1586-1638). Professor of Greek at Cambridge University. He specialized in prophetic study and greatly advanced the science of interpretation. His *Key to the Revelation* was authorized by the British House of Commons.<sup>70</sup>

**Henry More** (1614- 1687). A man of profound learning. A non-conformist educator and philosopher and a distinguished religious leader. He refuted the errors of Futurism and Preterism.<sup>71</sup>

**Thomas Goodwin** (1600-1680). Celebrated non-conformist. Member of Westminster Assembly. Vice Chancellor of Oxford University. In 1639 he declared that *the tenth part of the city of Revelation 11:13 was one of the ten kingdoms of Western Europe under the jurisdiction of Papal Rome and as the kingdom (France) had the first great stroke, so now it should have the honor to have the last great stroke in the ruining of Rome. The earthquake is a mighty commotion.* This was 152 years before the French Revolution.<sup>72</sup>

**Pierre Jurieu** (1637-1713). Distinguished Huguenot leader. Brilliant scholar and Professor of Theology and Hebrew at the Huguenot Seminary at Sedan, France. A great champion of Protestantism against French Jesuit leaders. He ably answered the Futurist and Preterist schools of prophetic interpretation. He authored sixty works, including *Exposition of the Apocalypse* (1685). He taught that the tenth part of the city of Revelation 11:13 was France, which would *shake off the yoke of Rome.*<sup>73</sup> This was 104 years before the Revolution.

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<sup>67</sup> Le Roy Froom, 2:588-596.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 2:512-517, 724.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 2:535-536.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 2:542-549.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 2:563-564.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 2:573-575, 724-725.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 2:625-639.

**Robert Fleming** (1660-1716). A Scottish divine. Pastor of English Church of the Refugees, Holland. Author of ten works. An expositor of prophecy. Very influential. A confidante of King William III of England. In his *Rise and Fall of the Papacy* (1701) when France was at the height of her power, he declared that he hoped for the death of the chief supporters of Antichrist, and perhaps *the French monarchy may begin to be considerably humbled about that time (at least before the year 1794)*. This was forecast ninety years before the Revolution. His conclusions were based on Revelation 11.<sup>74</sup>

**Sir Isaac Newton** (1642-1727). Famous mathematician, philosopher and genius in scientific research. He also studied Bible prophecy for forty two years, resulting in his work, *Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel and The Apocalypse* (1773). He upheld the Historical School of Interpretation and taught that *before primitive Christianity could be restored, the power of infidelity in 'a main revolution' would be used to put a stop to, or block the Papedom that has so long corrupted the Church.*<sup>75</sup> This was twenty years before the Revolution.

**William Whiston** (1667-1752). Baptist theologian and mathematician. He was Newton's successor at Cambridge University. He authored fifty works including a translation of Josephus. His major work was *The Revelation of St. John*. He believed that *infidelity* (such as later occurred in Revolutionary France) *might be the only means of stopping the Papal enslavement before true Christianity could be restored.*<sup>76</sup>

**Bishop Thomas Newton** (1704-1782). Bishop of Bristol and Dean of St. Paul's London. He wrote *Dissertations on the Prophecies* (1754) which ran into eighteen editions, as well as in Danish and German. Concerning the fulfillment of Revelation 11, he wrote, *Rome therefore will finally be destroyed by some of the princes... and as the kings of France have contributed greatly to her advancement, it is not impossible nor improbable that... they may be the principal authors of her destruction. France... may appear more likely to effect such a revolution.*<sup>77</sup> This was written thirty five years before the Revolution.

**John Fletcher** (1729-1785). Excellent scholar and associate of John Wesley. Authored nine works. He held that *the Papacy would fall amid revolutions*. He acquainted Wesley with the knowledge that *10,000 French Protestants in 1755 expect some great revolution, that will result in their being united with 200,000 of their brethren who have been expelled from France.*<sup>78</sup> This was forty four years before the Revolution.

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 2:642-649.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 2:658-6669.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 2:672.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 2:684-687, 724.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 2:687-691.

**Jacques Philipot.** Huguenot pastor driven out of France. In 1685 he wrote *Elucidations on The Apocalypse of St. John*. One hundred and four years before the revolution, he wrote on Revelation 11, *The earthquakes in Scriptures mean great change occurring in the nations.... There will be a surprising change in France of which the whole world will be glad except the clergy, the monks and the Jesuits.... It is France... Which is referred to by this tenth part of the city... the city here is Babylon, i.e. the Papal empire, the Church of Rome...France is one of the ten horns of the beast, one of the kingdoms... France is... a part of the city, i.e. of the Papal empire....Since the death of the two witnesses takes place in France... this tenth part of the city which shall fall is France.*<sup>79</sup>

**John Willison** (1680-1750). Scottish divine. Authored nine principal works. Wrote A Prophecy of the French Revolution (1733) fifty years before the event. He said, Before Antichrist's fall, one of the ten kingdoms which supported the beast (Papacy) shall undergo a marvellous revolution. Revelation 11:13 (quoted) by which tenth part is to be understood as one of the ten kingdoms into which the great city, Romish Babylon, was divided. This, many take to be the kingdom of France.<sup>80</sup>

**George Bell.** In 1796, in the *London Evangelical Magazine* he declared on the basis of Revelation 11, that *the Gentiles* of verse 2 were the papacy; that the *earthquake* of verse 13 was the French Revolution and the *tenth part* of verse 13 was France. He continued, *Have we not seen, in one of the ten kingdoms, a most astonishing revolution? Have we not also seen that kingdom fall off of the Papal jurisdiction? Have we not good ground to hope that the accomplishment of the prophecies respecting the rising of the witnesses and the fall of Antichrist is near at hand?* One year later, Revolutionary France restored the Scriptures (resurrected the witnesses) and two years later, France *delivered the deadly wound to the Papacy*.<sup>81</sup>

**Joseph Priestley** (1733-1804). English clergyman, philosopher and scientist. Authored eighty works. In February, 1794, he declared on the basis of Revelation 11, that France was currently fulfilling the prediction in the French Revolution.<sup>82</sup>

**James Bicheno** (Died 1831). Dissenting minister and schoolman. Authored numerous works. Taught that Revolutionary France was the fulfillment of Revelation 11.<sup>83</sup>

**George Croly** (1780-1860). Classical scholar, author and Bible Expositor. Anglican Rector. In *The Apocalypse of St. John*, he held that *the two witnesses* were the two Testaments, slain in the French Revolution, the *political earthquake* in France, *the tenth part of the city*. The 3 ½ days were the 3 ½ years from November 1793 to June 1797 when religion was abolished. He forecast that the Bible would have *stupendous triumph*.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 2:726-728.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 2:728-730.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 2:742-743.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 2:744.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 2:746-748.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 3:544-548.

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