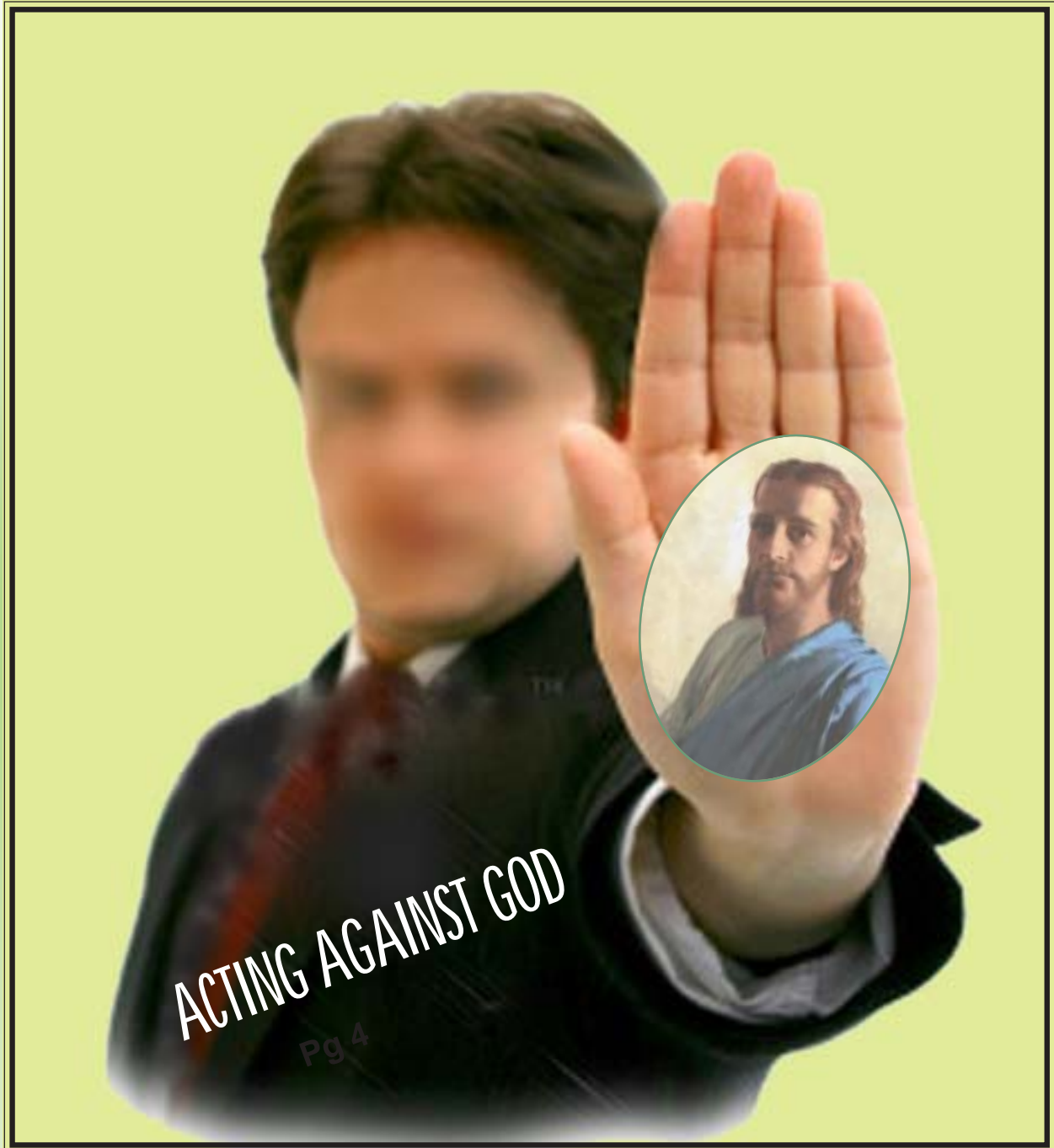


EndTime Issues....

CHRISTIAN RESOURCE – MINISTERS, TEACHERS, BIBLE STUDENTS

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ACTING AGAINST GOD

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EndTime Issues... Magazine

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Manuscripts are welcomed for consideration. They should relate to end-time events that have recently been occurred to a clearer view of prophetic truth or have a deep spiritual concern, be simply written and well documented with a focused interest to Christians. Length should be limited to 10 double-spaced pages. The ongoing appeal: "Issues of concern to the last generation."

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Acting Against God

Meaning of Resisting God

It is impossible to fathom the terrible depth one falls into when rebelling against God. Its mystery deepens when one ponders that its inception was with the created being highest in rank and closest to God – Lucifer. The Bible says that he was *perfect* in his beauty and actions “till iniquity [*awe!*] was found in thee” (Ezekiel 28:12-15, 17).

The Hebrew word used there for *iniquity* is used in several ways to describe how God can be resisted. It refers to:¹

1. Deviating from a right standard
2. Behavior contrary to God’s character
3. Together – self becomes the new standard

This contrasting concept describes a created being competing with his Creator.

“So long as all created beings acknowledged the allegiance of love, there was perfect harmony throughout the universe of God. It was the joy of the heavenly host to fulfill the purpose of their Creator. They delighted in reflecting His glory and showing forth His praise. And while love to God was supreme, love for one another was confiding and unselfish. There was no note of discord to mar the celestial harmonies. But a change came over this happy state. There was one who perverted the freedom that God had granted to His creatures.”²

Created beings were given the freedom to choose. James had keen insight into this when he called it the “law of liberty.” He even went on to say that “whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth [therein], he being not a

forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed” (James 1:25).

In heaven as well as on earth, exercising that free choice consistent with God’s character and standard brought harmony, peace and happiness. When the choice is against God and towards pleasing self, a scapegoat is sought after to transfer guilt elsewhere. For Lucifer, it was Christ.

“Little by little Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. The Scripture says, ‘Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.’ Ezekiel 28:17. ‘Thou hast said in thine heart, ... I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.... I will be like the Most High.’ Isaiah 14:13, 14. Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. Not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to covet homage due alone to the Creator. Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of all created beings, it was his endeavor to secure their service and loyalty to himself. And coveting the glory with which the infinite Father had invested His Son, this prince of angels aspired to power that was the prerogative of Christ alone.”³

Rebellion against God began with a desire. It grew into feelings of resistance. Then Lucifer began to act in a way that undermined the order of heaven.

“The spirit of discontent and disaffection had never before been known in heaven. It was a new element, strange, mysterious, unaccountable. Lucifer himself had not at first been acquainted with the real nature of his feelings; for a time he

¹Harris, R. Laird; *Theological Word Book of the Old Testament*, (Moody Press, Chicago, 1980), vol. II, pp. 652-653.

²*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 35.

³*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 35.

had feared to express the workings and imaginings of his mind; yet he did not dismiss them. He did not see whither he was drifting."⁴

Consistent with God's character, He sought to bring understanding to Lucifer and the angels as to where rebellion would lead. Tragically, a revolt followed. "And there was war in heaven" (Revelation 12:7-8). It actually says that the two sides "fought."

Lucifer, now Satan, entered the next phase of his resistance movement. He had to bring others to defy God also. This was step two in trying to pacify guilt. First blame, then recruit.

In the Garden of Eden an objective standard was made. A tree was not to be touched. Adam and Eve were educated regarding Satan's devices and given a special law:

1. Eating of that tree would lead to death.
2. That process would start the moment of indulgence.

Eve, as with Lucifer, indulged self. It began with the spirit that she could "do it alone" and ended with a desire to be elevated like God. She believed in another law of possibilities because it pleased self.

"Eve really believed the words of Satan, but her belief did not save her from the penalty of sin. She disbelieved the words of God, and this was what led to her fall. In the judgment men will not be condemned because they conscientiously believed a lie, but because they did not believe the truth, because they neglected the opportunity of learning what is truth. Notwithstanding the sophistry of Satan to the contrary, it is always disastrous to disobey God. We must set our hearts to know what is truth. All the lessons which God has caused to be placed on record in His word are for our warning and instruction. They are given to save us from deception. Their neglect will result in ruin to ourselves. Whatever contradicts God's word, we may be sure proceeds from Satan."⁵

God's Response to Apostasy

From the Garden to the end of time, God has used various methods to convince mankind how serious rebellion is. The outcome is always (1) death and (2) desolation of assets. Those are God's irrevocable responses to apostasy, now known as "sin." But – and this is the creature's first appeal to return to Him, He is patient and longsuffering. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (II Peter 3:9).

God chooses three ways to educate sinful man (Romans 5:12-21) that sin has a negative outcome:

1. By God-directed punishment
2. Negative consequences man would experience
3. Verbal or written predictions of what the results would eventually lead to.

The generation that lives just prior to Jesus' return, and that is us, has a unique vantage point. The history of how God deals with sin and its consequences is fully revealed from the world's history. There are fascinating waymarks in that story. Each has a unique mission, and thus is a reference point God wants understood.

These events include (but are not limited to):

1. Adam and Eve losing paradise
2. Loss of human life with Cain's murder
3. Destruction of apostates (death) and desolation of the earth at the flood by an act of God (representing the finality of resistance)
4. Israel's repetitive experiences of bondage, loss and pain through apostasy. Their captivity in Babylon became a metaphor for apostasy in the end of time. People are captive to falsehood and tradition.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 55.

5. A suffering Savior taking the consequences of sin for man. This revealed the ultimate willingness of divinity to suffer to reclaim a rebel.
6. Dark annals of history revealing the nature of satanic control over the human heart.
7. Prophecy – one of God’s great acts of mercy – that reveals in great detail how the conflict between right and wrong will conclude.
8. God’s final response to sin – death of all apostates, desolation and, finally, annihilation of the earth.
9. Recreated earth with promised peace and harmony once again.

This is all amazing! Man can, if – and here it is again – he chooses to understand the meaning of being at variance with God. And that’s why these articles are being written. The Bible especially describes the consequences of resistance and God’s eventual response. The Christian world has lost interest in educating the “populace” relative to what sin is. This is a consequence of many factors. A few being:

1. Growing guilt among those claiming to be Christians because of sin. The bar of what is right is being repetitively dropped.
2. Salvation is being redefined from a psychological perspective to appeal to a humanistic view of love.
3. A serious misapplication of what God’s love means. Love does not excuse sin. It will conditionally forgive it.
4. A dismissal of the urgency of the hour we now live in
5. A trend towards a humanistic worship that pleases more than it convicts.
6. A refusal to accept a progressive understanding of prophecy and the Scriptures.

Sin is more than a mistake. Sin pollutes the sinner and offends God. Its root is rebellion against

Him (Romans 7:7-25). Its meaning has not changed since Lucifer’s first claim to honor self. It will remain an offense to God to the moment the earth is destroyed by fire. God hates sin, and anyone who wants a loving friendship with Him will too (Proverbs 8:13).

Hebrew Reminders

In a fascinating Hebrew trilogy God chose to define behavior that circles outside the borders of His wishes. In the special word for “iniquity” (*aweil*), that we discussed at the beginning of this article is one of His expressions. But there are three special words that make a statement as to what breaks the marriage covenant – what causes a “divorce.”

In beautiful typology, the seven sacred feasts of Israel, told a story of the plan of redemption. That plan calls for deliverance from sin and restoration to the Promised Land when we possess characters just like Jesus. That deliverance occurred once per year in symbol and, for them, in reality, on the Day of Atonement. The removal of all confessed sins from the sanctuary record was the last act in that day’s drama.

This is how God instructed the High Priest (who symbolized Jesus) to carry that out:

“And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send [him] away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness” (Leviticus 16:21).

There’s the trilogy – transgression, iniquity and sin. God is not repeating Himself simply to emphasize a point. Each expression contains a separate message about apostasy. All three were to be removed from the sanctuary, out of the camp and forever banished!

During Israel’s slide farther away from God, Isaiah lamented in graphic language how hideous their rebellion was. Then he said: “We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but [there is] none; for salvation, [but] it is far off from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions [are] with us; and [as for] our iniquities, we know them” (Isaiah 59:11-12).

Though used individually and in couplets in numerous Old Testament passages, when the action surpassed God's boundaries, he drew all three together. If His people would repent of these, then true deliverance would come. Indeed, in covenant language those divine cries are followed by beautiful deliverance promises: "So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them *that turn from transgression* in Jacob, saith the LORD" (Isaiah 59:19-20).

"For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isaiah 60:2).

What are those three words?

Transgression (*peshah*) – means rebellion or revolting. It is a breach of a relationship. Allegiance is destroyed. This is especially apropos to the covenant ties God had with His people (Ezekiel 2:3, Hosea 8:1). Behavior goes beyond the limits of His law, functioning independent of God (Amos 4:4). It can be summarized by rejection of God's **authority, covenant and law**.⁶

Sin (*chattham*) – means sinning or willful disobedience. It denotes acts that are known to be at variance with God's will, which may produce guilt. It usually is associated with sins directed against man or God. It is considered outright "disobedience." Its remedy could come only through God's forgiveness and mercy. Restoration to a new life without sin was His provision.⁷

Iniquity (*avon*) – It is a collective word encompassing all perverse behavior and misdeeds. It may even refer to the consequences of those actions.⁸

Together these can be simply described as rebellion against God's authority, His covenant and

His laws – purposefully disobeying His specific commands and acting at variance with His will. They encapsulate all behavior, thought and being, which is at variance with God's elevated ideals of excellency for man. God wants everyone to be just like Jesus. The harmony of the universe depends on it. Anyone who resists the opportunity to change, which is wide open to every person, will be lost. That is what God in a thousand ways is trying to illustrate. Apostasy is a foreign element that would be in conflict with His loyal friends.

A dramatic vision came to Daniel towards the end of the Babylonian captivity. God gave His people a specific probationary period to – and here is an amazing lesson – cease *transgression*, terminate *sins* and make reconciliation for *iniquity*. Israel's history was one of rebellion and apostasy. They were in captivity for over a generation because of that. A final chance to reconcile the past and come into harmony with God was given. Daniel 9 represents a prophecy distinctly apropos to God's final church.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people [all those written in the Lamb's book of life (Daniel 12:1)] and upon thy holy city [God's church], to finish the *transgression*, and 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" (Daniel 9:24).

God's response promises to bring in everlasting righteousness, bring to an end all opposition and, once again, cleanse and make holy His sanctuary – His church.

If we are to know God and be part of His family, it is of utmost importance to understand what pleases Him and what He will reject coming into His household.

⁶Harris, R. Laird; *Theological Workbook of the Old Testament*, (Moody Press, Chicago, 1980), vol. II, pp. 741-742.

⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 278-279.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 650-651.

Prophecy's Pathway to the Marriage Supper

By Norman Bradley

(Retired worker, student and friend of Jesus')

[This was presented to a group of believers at a special campmeeting in April of 2006. Its foundation is built on wonderful prophecies. Ed.]



Norman Bradley

This study is about a love story.

How many of you have read a good love story lately? All of you should have raised your hand, if you have read your Bible. The Bible is about the greatest love story ever told. This love story encompasses six thousand years. We get glimpses of it in the story of Isaac and Rebecca – love at first sight, and also in the story of Jacob and Rachel. Think of how long he worked for her hand in marriage.

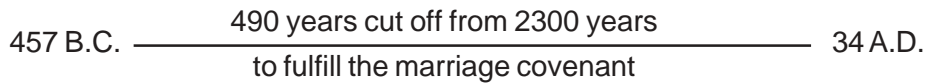
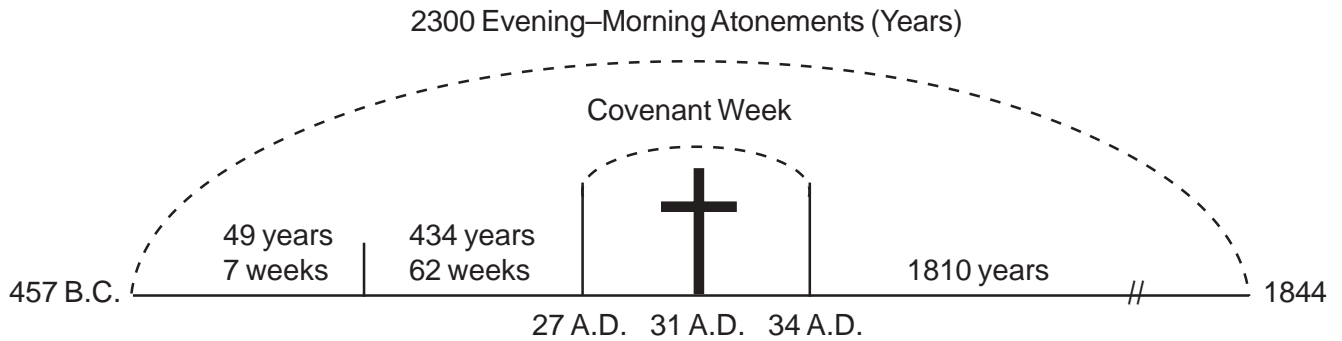
Then there are mountaintop experiences, such as the Song of Solomon, where two hearts are merged together. In contrast we read the book of Hosea and see the bride going off committing adultery and then bringing home an illegitimate child, not once but twice. The third time she left, she never came back. So the prophet went searching for her and found her ready to be sold as a slave. He paid the price of a slave and bought her back. The story of Hosea does not have an ending, but we do see the ending in the Gospels where the Prophet changes places with her and is sold for the price of a slave to set her free.

But even then her hard heart was not broken. We see him standing on the Mount of Olives weeping, heart broken, saying, "Jerusalem, my bride, how often would I have gathered you together as a mother hen gathers her chicks under her wing. But you would not. I must leave you to your fate." Matt. 23:37-39 (paraphrased).

So he turns to some of the daughters of Jerusalem and takes out a bride to be. The love story continues for a time. Later she plays the part of a harlot and becomes the mother of harlot daughters. Some of these daughters, however, did not become harlots, instead they laid themselves down at the foot of the bridegroom, and he covered them with the wedding garment, His cloak of righteousness. They have determined to remain virgins with no guile in their mouths and follow Him wheresoever He goes. In spite of the time of trouble "such as never was," they are committed to remain pure. Let's get on with the rest of the story and tie this all together. Let's discover the prophetic pathway to the marriage supper.

We will pretend this is a Sabbath School class and we are studying Daniel chapters 8–12. I would like to start with two quotes from *The Great Controversy*:

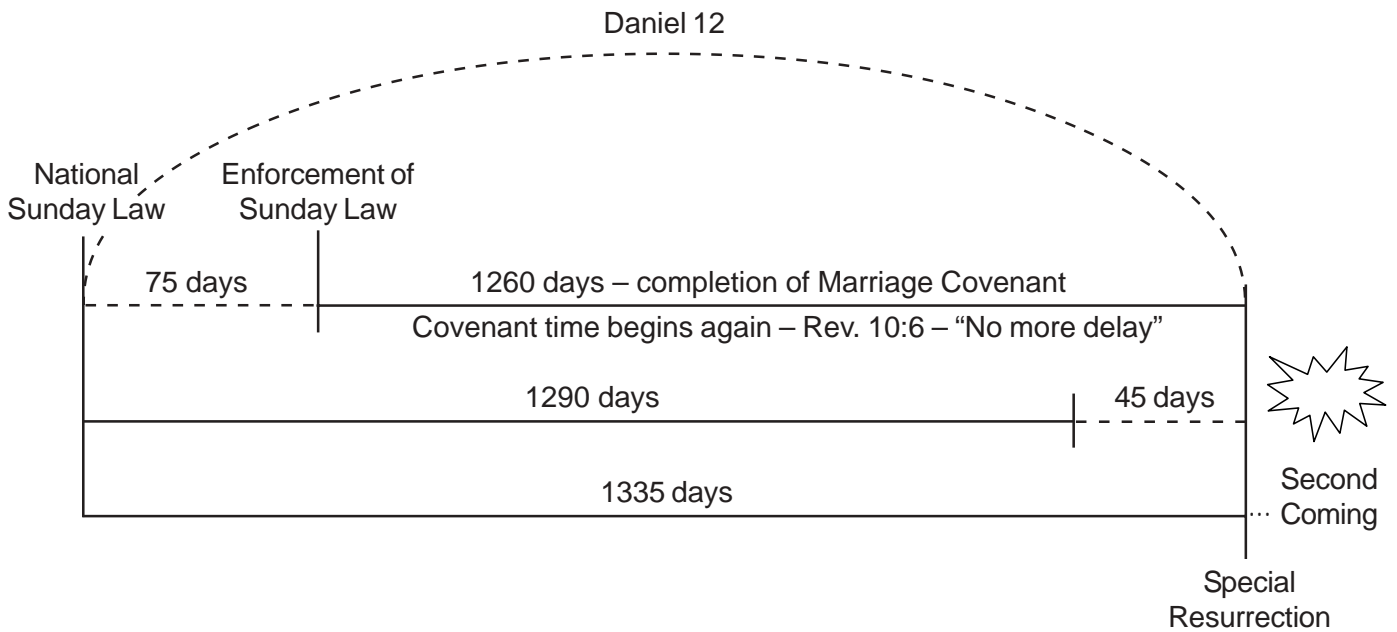
"The scripture which above all others had been both the foundation and the central pillar of the advent faith was the declaration: 'Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.' Daniel 8:14. 'The subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God's hand had directed the great Advent movement, and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of his people.'" (G.C.409 and 423)



Marriage Covenant Timeline Failed – Stopped at Cross – Put on Hold (Exodus 19:5-8)



Daniel 9:24 was never completed from the Cross to 34 A.D.
To be completed during the 3-1/2 years just before Christ Comes



I'm sure we all understand this prophecy. I would like to draw your attention to the 490 years or 70 prophetic weeks which were cut off from the 2300 day/years. These 70 weeks or 490 years of Daniel 9:24 were allocated to the Jewish nation to complete the covenant to become Christ's kingdom of priests and kings. The last week of the 70 was called the covenant week.

Dan.9:27 – "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, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make [it] desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

Later we will see how the three time prophecies of Daniel 12, the 1260, 1290 and 1335 days, are connected to the covenant week.

Read Daniel chapter 12.

Remember the quote about "the system of truth, connected, and harmonious." We will see this happen as we connect all these prophecies together. There is one common thread that ties them all together. This also ties them with the book of Revelation. The book of Daniel is the foundation upon which the book of Revelation builds.

The common thread that ties them together is the marriage covenant that God made with the Hebrew nation at Mt. Sinai.

Ex.19:5 – "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine:

19:6 – And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These [are] the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

19:7 – And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him.

19:8 – And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people, unto the LORD.

Can you see a marriage proposal taking place here? Christ *proposes* and they say, "Yes, we accept your proposal." This covenant was based on

keeping the Ten Commandments, the Statutes, and the Judgments, according to Deuteronomy 5:1-3.

5:1 – And Moses called all Israel and said to them, "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them.

5:2 – The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.

5:3 – The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, [even] us, who [are] all of us here alive this day."

He had already given them the Sabbath, as a sign of betrothal and loyalty to Him, which was like an engagement ring.

"The Sabbath is a golden clasp that unites [*binds*] God and His people." 6T p.361.

Later we see a wedding band put around the bride just before the consummation of the marriage.

Ellen white has some things to say about this covenant.

"And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." (1BC 1103.9)

"This covenant is of just as much force today as it was when the Lord made it with ancient Israel" (SW March 1, 1904). (1BC 1103.10)

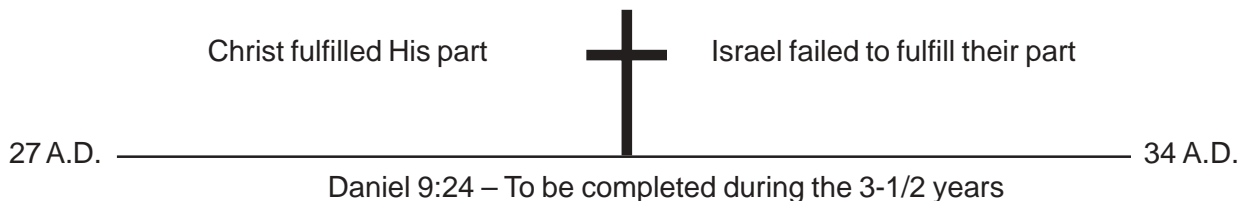
"Ex.19:7, 8 (Isa. 56:5) (quoted) . A Pledge to the Covenant.—This is the pledge that God's people are to make in these last days. Their acceptance with God depends on a faithful fulfillment of the terms of their agreement with Him. God includes in His covenant all who will obey Him." (RH June 23, 1904; 1BC 1103.11)

"That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth today. He has 'let out His vineyard unto other husbandmen,' even to His covenant-keeping people, who faithfully 'render Him the fruits in their seasons.' Never has the Lord been without true representatives on this earth who have made His interests their own. These witnesses for God are numbered among the spiritual Israel, and to them will be fulfilled all the covenant promises made by Jehovah to His ancient people." (PK 713.1)

This means the marriage covenant is as much ours today as it was when given at Mt. Sinai. This marriage covenant is the golden thread that connects the 2300 day/years, the 490 years (the 70 weeks) to the 1260, 1290 and 1335 days of Daniel 12 and then to Revelation 10. Revelation 10 unlocks the sealed part of Daniel. Christ had told Daniel in chapter 12, verses 4 and 9 to seal up this part of his book until the time of the end. The 1260, 1290 and 1335 days in Daniel 12 are literal days and not prophetic days. There are two reasons that these are literal days. First, verses 1 and 2 are still future, so the remainder of the chapter should relate to that time (after Daniel is unsealed). Another reason is that every time Daniel used the Hebrew word "yowm" with a number, it referred to literal days, not prophetic.

declared: 'It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.' [RH March 10, 1896]. Luke 19:44 says, 'They knew not the hour of their visitation.' *They failed their marriage agreement.*

Daniel 9:24 lists the six requirements that were needed to be completed by the bride to be, but she broke off the engagement. As a result, the marriage covenant had to be put on hold – until a new bride could be found that would make herself ready for the marriage. The events of the last 3½ years of the covenant week will come to pass during the last 3½ years of this earth's history. Daniel 12:7 tells of the time, times, and the dividing of time in which this will happen. These things will be com-



We will be concentrating on the covenant week or the last week of the 70-week period. This week or 7-year period began with the baptism of Christ in the autumn of 27 A.D. and ended with the stoning of Stephen in the autumn of 34 A.D. with the cross in the middle of the week on Passover. The first two, Christ's baptism and the stoning of Stephen, were most likely on days of Atonement, as are all the other important dates (events) in the 2300-year prophecy. If it ended on a Day of Atonement in 1844, then it began also on a Day of Atonement in 457 BC.

The first 3½ years of this covenant week was when Christ did his part in preparing for the marriage to be completed. The last 3½ years were given as probationary time to the Jewish nation to fulfill their part of the covenant.

"Mercy was extended to them, and their probation was *lengthened*, until three years and a half after the death of Christ, when the apostles

pleted before Christ comes or there would be no bride to come for.

God's original purpose with Israel was to make them the head of all the nations so they could teach them the plan of salvation. Deut. 15:6 – "For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee." They were to be priests and kings to govern those saved nations. Some would not accept and come against Israel and God would fight for them during the Battle of Armageddon. That would have been fought in the Valley of Jehosaphat (Joel 3: 2 & 12).

Christ would have died and paid the redemption price in the process. This was plan A. But the conditions were not met, so now we are in plan B which includes the New Testament church.

Listen to what Vol. 4 of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary (pages 25-38) says:

"It is a known fact that the majority of the predictions about ancient Israel have not been fulfilled. SDA's believe that generally speaking, the promises and predictions given through the Old Testament prophets originally applied to literal Israel and were to have been fulfilled to them on the condition that they obey God and remain loyal to Him. But the Scriptures record the fact that they disobeyed God and proved disloyal to Him instead. Accordingly, what He purposed to do for the world through Israel of old He will finally accomplish through His church today, and many of the promises originally made to Israel will be fulfilled to His remnant people at the close of time." (4BC 25.7, 26)

"If the nation had been faithful to its trust... He [Christ] would have come, He would have died, and He would have risen again." (4BC 29.3)

Other than this interpretation, I don't know how to understand many of the things the Old Testament prophets predicted.

"Had Israel as a nation preserved her allegiance to heaven, Jerusalem would have stood forever, the elect of God. But the history of that favored people was a record of backsliding and rebellion. They had resisted heaven's grace, abused their privileges and slighted their opportunities." (GC 19.1)

Not only did Israel fail to fulfill their part of this covenant during the 490 years allotted to them, they killed the Bridegroom half way through the 70th week. Also, they failed to complete their part during the last 3½ years of that week. That was a special probationary time given to them for that purpose.

Since the marriage covenant was put on hold until the end of time, just when will it be completed? When will the Bride make herself ready? We know from Rev.19, He will have a Bride when He comes. What are the requirements that Israel of old failed to do and must be fulfilled by the NT bride in order to be ready for the coming of the Bridegroom? They are listed in Daniel 9:24, where the 70-week prophecy is introduced.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in ever-

lasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."

Six requirements are listed that are required of the bride-to-be to fulfill, before she is ready to meet the Bridegroom.

Item # 1. "To finish the transgression." The transgression or rebellion against God's law must stop. How will it stop? When we fully surrender our will to Him, we will let the law be written in our hearts so that we will not sin against Him. We must become sinless.

"Those only who through faith in Christ obey all of God's commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression. They testify to their love of Christ by obeying all His precepts (MS 122, 1901). (6BC 1118.10)" 1John 3:9 – "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." "Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble." (GC 623.1) *Then the transgression will be finished. Those who believe that they will continue to sin until Jesus comes cannot fulfill this specification of the bride of Christ.*

Item#2. "To make an end of sins." The Hebrew word *khaw-tham* means to seal up, to authenticate, or validate that sin is sin!! To stop sinning or to become sinless is necessary before you can be sealed. Until this is manifested among God's people there cannot be a sealing up or authentication that sin is really sin, and should be stopped. Christ did fulfill His part in all six items but the bride has to fulfill her part before the marriage can be completed. The 144,000 will be the ones to complete this.

Item #3. "To make reconciliation for iniquity." *Kaphar* means atonement, cleanse, or purge. *Kaphar* is from *Kippur* or *Yom Kippur* (the Day of Atonement). Your sins must be purged or cleansed before there can be a reconciliation. Christ made it possible by His death on the cross, but we must do our part and claim this gift by faith.

Item #4. "To bring in everlasting righteousness." Hebrew wording means to "bring in Righteousness of everlasting ones." Only when we accept His righteousness to be ours, so that both He and we are fully righteous can there be an everlasting righteousness for eternity. The term "everlasting ones indicates that we have a part to play in making this become a reality. None of this is meant to be construed that we are earning our salvation. Ellen White urges us to cooperate with heaven in order to bring in everlasting righteousness. (1SM 374)

Item #5. "Seal up the vision and the prophecy." Seal= *chathan* – "to authenticate."

This is speaking of the visions of Daniel 8–12. This includes the 3 time prophecies of 1260, 1290 and 1335 days. Only when these things are completed by the bride-to-be in these last days, will this vision containing this prophecy be proven to be authentic. Then the seal of completion can be put on this vision and prophecy.

Item #6. "To anoint the most holy." This is the most misunderstood, most needed and the most interesting of all. The true meaning is "the Holy of Holiest, Most Holy." This does not apply to the anointing of Christ at His baptism. It does apply to an anointing of a High priesthood in the last days. A special priesthood, a Melchisedec type, just like Christ has. This applies to the anointing of the 144,000 to the High Priesthood office.

Do you find this hard to believe? Do you want proof? I'll let the Hebrew scholars and the insights of E. G. White tell you. William Shea, well-known theologian, recognizes this phrase as not applying to Christ's anointing but to the sanctuary or something connected to it (see Daniel and Revelation Series, 1986, pages 82-83). The article is too long to reproduce here. But I will read much of an article by Jacques Doukhan, another SDA theologian, and editor of the Shabbat Shalom SDA magazine. "It is highly significant that the same associations of these three notions of atonement (*Kpr*), anointing (*Meh*) and the Holy of Holies (*qodes qodasim*) is found in Exodus 29:36-37. The only other Biblical reference to use these expressions in conjunction. This passage deals with the conse-

cration of Aaron and his sons to their High priesthood.... The accumulation of common patterns and wording between the prophecy of the 70 weeks and this passage in Exodus is most striking indeed. We may now see the relationship expressed in the parallism between the atonement and the anointment of a "Holy of Holies," i.e., such as the consecration of a new High priesthood. ("The Seventy Weeks of Daniel," page 259 as quoted in RH 1981)

Apparently a higher order of priests are scheduled for the last days, which will be composed of the 144,000.

That quote by Jacques Doukhan is beginning to back up what I said earlier, but it is not enough. He did not carry it through to its last day conclusion. For this we must turn to Ellen White. In the chapter "The Vision of Joshua and the Angel" in 5T (page 472), based on Zechariah 3, she says, "Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement." What does peculiar force mean? As we proceed we will find out. Have you read the third chapter of Zechariah and this chapter in volume 5 of the Testimonies? It is a most revealing commentary of the work and office of the 144,000.

Quoting again from 5T, "As the intercession of Joshua is accepted, the command is given, 'Take away the filthy garments from him,' and to Joshua, the Angel declares, 'Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.' 'So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments.'" His own sins and those of his people were pardoned. Israel was clothed with a 'change of raiment'—the righteousness of Christ imputed to them. The miter placed upon Joshua's head was such as was worn by the priests and bore the inscription, 'Holiness to the Lord,' signifying that, notwithstanding his former transgressions, he was now qualified to minister before God in His sanctuary. (5T 469.2) *I want to remind you that this should take place in the closing up in the great Day of Atonement.*

After thus solemnly investing him with the dignity of the priesthood, the Angel declared: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If thou wilt walk in My ways, and if thou wilt keep My charge, [the covenant], then thou shalt also judge My house, and shalt also keep My courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." He would be honored as the judge or ruler over the temple and all its services; he should walk among attending angels, even in this life, and should at last join the glorified throng around the throne of God. (5T 469.3)

"Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth My servant the Branch.' Here is revealed the hope of Israel. It was by faith in the coming Saviour that Joshua and his people received pardon. Through faith in Christ they were restored to God's favor. By virtue of His merits, if they walked in His ways and kept His statutes, they would be 'men wondered at,' honored as the chosen of heaven among the nations of the earth. Christ was their hope, their defense, their justification and redemption, as He is the hope of His church today." (5T 469.4)

If this comment applies with "peculiar force" to these last days, then we had better do some heavy praying and thinking about this if we intend to be among the 144,000. Because as you read on in that chapter, you will quickly see that this is referring to the 144,000. Consider this, there will be no temple here on the earth at that time. There is much more that could be said on this subject, but I must get back to my task of tying it all together to find the path to the marriage supper. But it is extremely important to discuss these six items. You see, if these six items are not fulfilled, there will never be a bride for Jesus to come back for.

Now the key to unlocking the sealed time prophecies of Daniel 12 is found in Revelation 10:6. This chapter starts with Christ holding the little book of Daniel open in His hand. Verse 4 tells of the seven thunders. Ellen White calls them "a delineation of events that will transpire under the first and second angels messages." (7BC 971) These

thunderous events will take place during these three time prophecies of Daniel 12. These are all future events. No further comment on them at this time.

In Revelation 10:6 the phrase "time should be no longer" [KJV] should read "there shall be no more delay" [NKJV]. No more delay of what? What part of the book of Daniel was put on hold? The last 3½ years of the marriage covenant. It was put on hold at the cross because Israel broke off the engagement and the marriage did not take place.

The events of these 3½ years must happen, and they will happen during the "time of trouble such as never was."

Dan. 12:1 – "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation [even] to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

12:2 – And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame [and] everlasting contempt." *For 3½ years God's people will come under the control and persecution of the papacy again.* Dan. 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."

Rev. 11:2 – "But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty [and] two months" and Rev. 13:5 – "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty [and] two months." 13:7 – "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." In Manuscript 88, 1897, it says this about Revelation 13. After quoting vers-

es 4-8 she says, “This whole chapter is a revelation of what will surely take place.” This includes the forty-two months of verse 5 of papal control in the future.

So far the New Testament church has failed, almost as badly as the Old Testament church.

But out of this a remnant church will come, the 144,000 priests-kings that will fulfill all of these requirements and become the true bride of Christ. We see a symbol of her in Revelation 12. The sun over her head and the moon under her feet, a crown of twelve stars, and dressed in the wedding garment. In Revelation 19:7, 8 she is ready for the wedding, dressed in the white garment the Bridegroom covers her with. A beautiful illustration of this is in the story of Ruth and Boaz where she lies down at his feet and he covers her with his robe. Ruth 3:7-14.

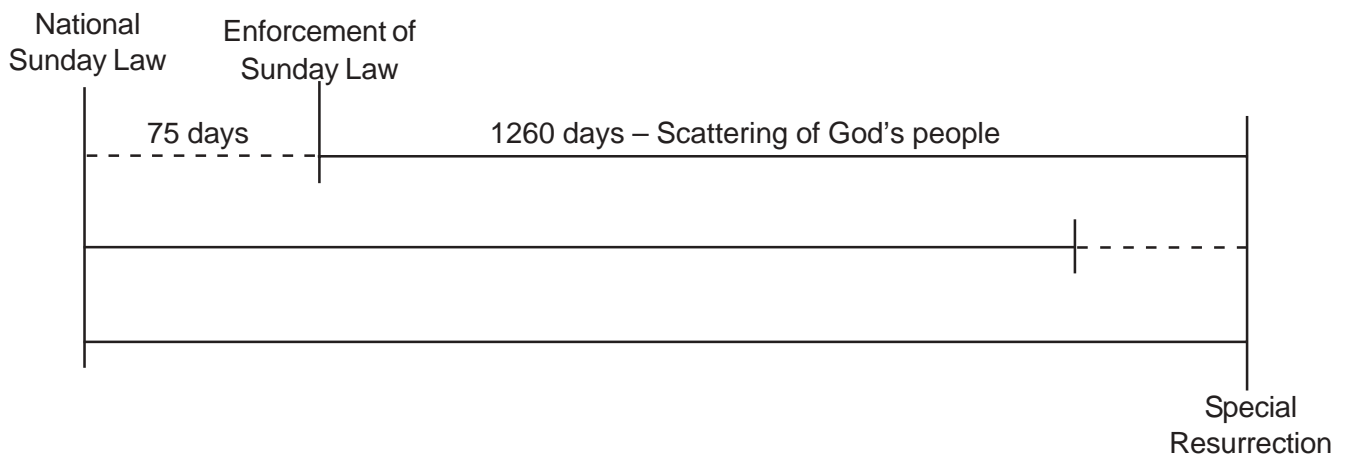
When is the timing for this to happen? When will this 3½ years take place? We have examined several interpretations of these three time prophecies of Daniel 12 and have accepted the one by Dr. Franklin Fowler, Director of the Prophecy Research Initiative of the Christian Heritage Foundation, as being the one that is the most correct. All these interpretations have agreed on one thing, that the Sunday law is the trigger event that begins the countdown to the end of time. Let’s look at the three time prophecies of Daniel 12.

Dan. 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.”

What things will be finished? Daniel’s prophecies concerning the time of the end. Dan. 12:1, 2 – “**And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation [even] to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame [and] everlasting contempt.**”

This includes the special resurrection. It is during this time that the power of God’s people will be scattered. It appears that Satan has triumphed, but at the end of the 1260 days God delivers His people. That is the ending event for the 1260 days. In order to find a beginning event for the 1260 days we must study the 1290 days first.

The 1290 has a beginning event but no ending event. Dan. 12:11 – “**And from the time [that] the**

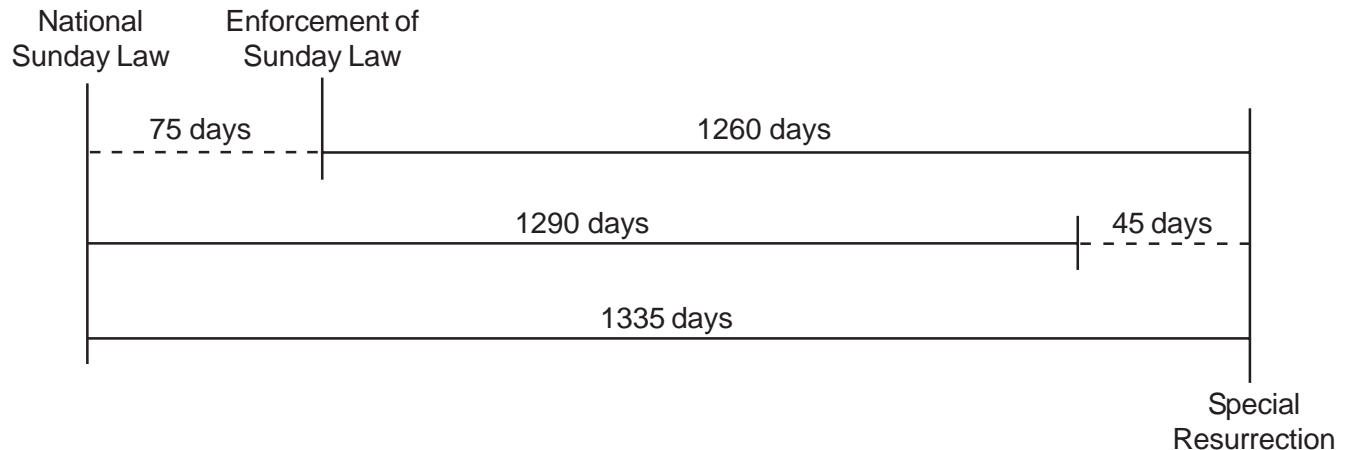


The 1260 days does not have a beginning date but does have an ending event. Daniel asked, “How long [shall it be to] the end of these wonders?”

daily [sacrifice] shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up [Sunday Law] there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety

days." That gives us a beginning event. Dan. 12:12 – "Blessed [is] he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." The 1335 days have neither a beginning nor an ending event, until you put the other two inside that timeframe.

He who chanced to be upon the housetop must not go down into his house, even to save his most valued treasures. Those who were working in the fields or vineyards must not take time to return for the outer garment laid aside while they should be toiling in the heat of the day. They must not



There is not a single quote in the Spirit of Prophecy that says the abomination of desolation is the Sunday Law. But by merging several quotes together the evidence becomes very clear that they are the same. Proof that the Sunday Law is the "abomination that maketh desolate" in the last days is found in GC 25-26, 5T 564 and 451.

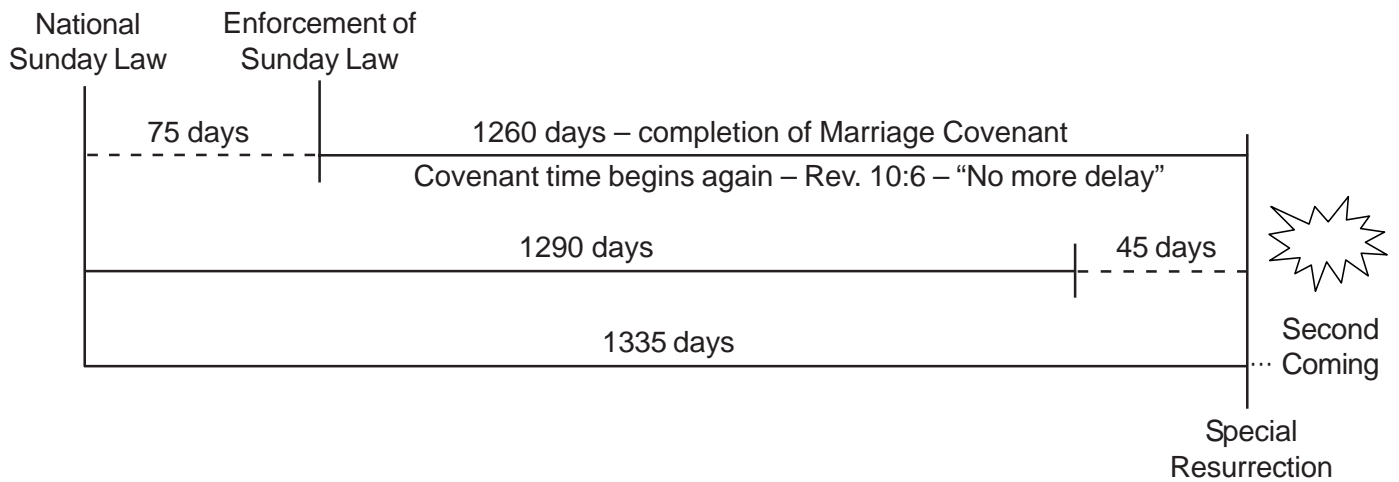
As we view these quotes, watch how E. G. White ties the abomination of desolation spoken by Christ and Daniel to the Roman army standing in the holy grounds, as a sign, or signal, or warning sign, to the time when the U.S. government will pass a Sunday law in our day. This is proof that the abomination of desolation must be the Sunday Law.

"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 Judea flee into the mountains." Matthew 24:15, 16; Luke 21:20, 21. When the idolatrous standards of the Romans should be set up in the holy ground, which extended some furlongs outside the city walls, then the followers of Christ were to find safety in flight. When the warning sign should be seen, those who would escape must make no delay. Throughout the land of Judea, as well as in Jerusalem itself, the signal for flight must be immediately obeyed.

hesitate a moment, lest they be involved in the general destruction. (GC 25.4)

It is no time now for God's people to be fixing their affections or laying up their treasure in the world. The time is not far distant, when, like the early disciples, we shall be forced to seek a refuge in desolate and solitary places. As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation in the decree enforcing the papal sabbath will be a warning to us. (5T 464)

By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near. (5T 451.1)



“As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy [*Sunday Law*] be a sign to us that the limit of God’s forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation’s iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob’s trouble. The cries of the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to heaven. And as the blood of Abel cried from the ground, there are voices also crying to God from martyrs’ graves, from the sepulchers of the sea, from mountain caverns, from convent vaults: ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?’” (5T 451.2)

If this is correct, then the 1290 days begin at the Sunday Law, and 75 days later it has enforcement laws with it. That will start the 1260-day timeline of the last 3½ years to complete the marriage covenant that was put on hold at the cross. Revelation 10: 6 says, “no more delay” [after the Sunday Law]!

“A time is coming when the law of God is, in a special sense, to be made void in our land [*the United States*]. The rulers of our nation will, by legislative enactments, enforce the Sunday law, and thus God’s people will be brought into great peril. When our nation, in its legislative councils, shall enact laws to bind the consciences of men in regard to their religious privileges, enforcing Sunday observance, and bringing oppressive power

to bear against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the law of God will, to all intents and purposes, be made void in our land.” (Mar 179.1, 7BC 977)

We have been taught that the three time prophecies of Daniel 12 had their fulfillment in time past. According to Ellen White they are still in the future. “The prophetic periods of Daniel extend to the eve of the great consummation” RH9/25/1883. There are many dual fulfillments of some of these prophecies. The major fulfillment of these are yet future.

“The book that was sealed was not the book of Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days. The Scripture says, “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased” (Daniel 12:4). When the book was opened, the proclamation was made, “Time shall be no longer” (see Revelation 10:6) (*no more delay*). “The book of Daniel is now unsealed, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come to all the inhabitants of the earth. By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared to stand in the latter days.” (2SM 105.1) (See TM 114-115; RH Dec. 18, 1888; and 7BC 977.2.)

These quotes are added proof that these prophecies are last day events.

Daniel 12 speaks of a time of trouble “such as never was,” which is yet future.

“It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who shall be alive upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of

the persecutions of the past are blended. They will walk in the light proceeding from the throne of God. By means of the angels there will be constant communication between heaven and earth.” (LDE 266.3)

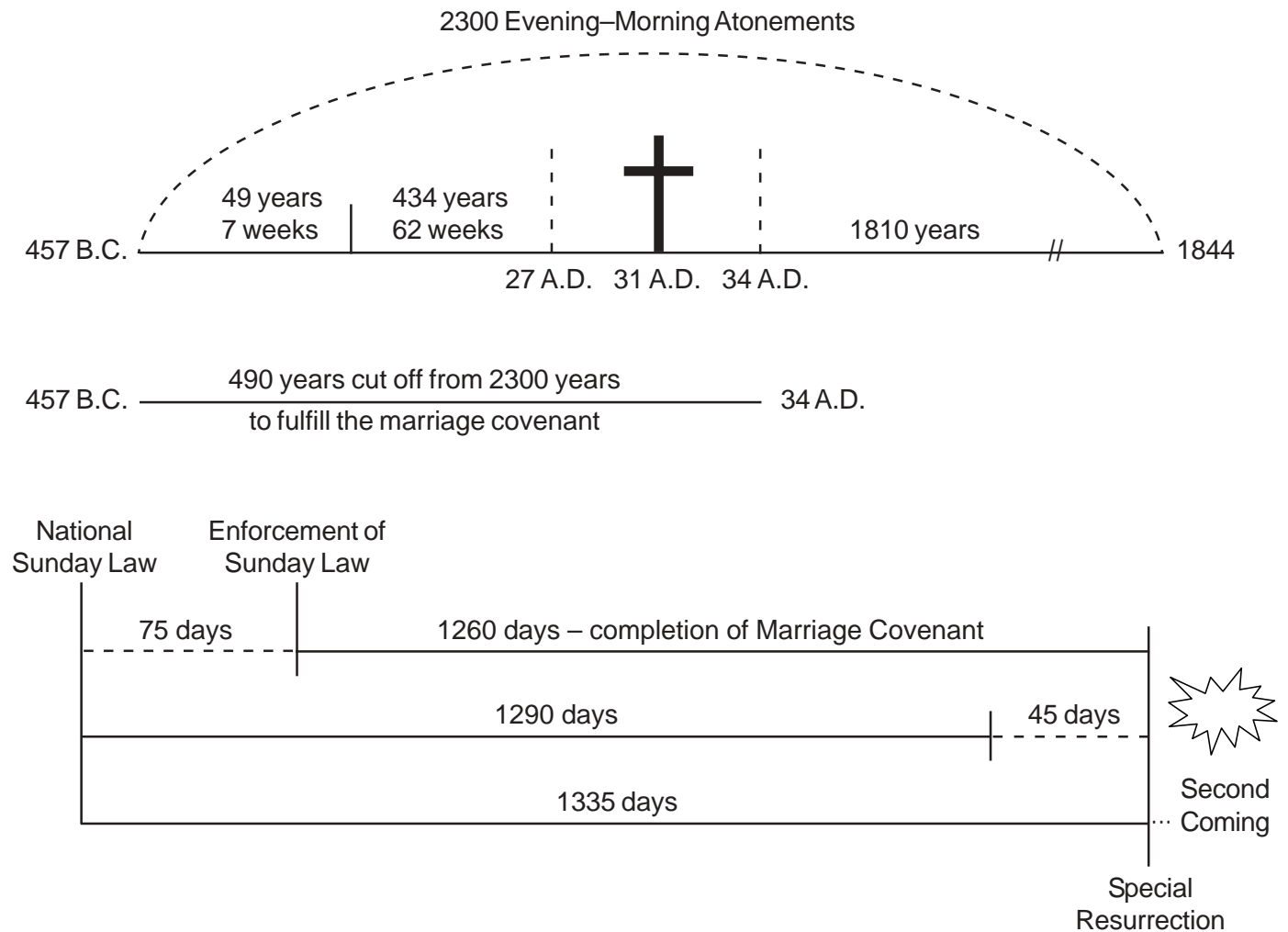
“In the midst of the time of trouble that is coming—a time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—God’s chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his host cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them.” (9T 16, 17 (1909); LDE 267.1)

The saints will stand true as the needle to the pole, even while the heavens are falling around them. The seventh plague of hail will literally fulfill that saying.

So let’s tie it all together. The 2300-year prophecy was like a road map, showing the work of God’s people and the devil’s forces at work down through history. In that timeframe we see the 490 years cut off for God’s people to fulfill the covenant.

In the 70 weeks or 490 years, we concentrated on the last week, called the covenant week. This was the most crucial part of this prophecy up until that time. Since the marriage covenant of the last 3½ years of that week was put on hold because of the failure of Israel to do their part, then we will see a repeat of the last 3½ years of the covenant week come back into focus in the closing events of this earth’s history. At that time the marriage covenant will be fulfilled or completed by a last-day people.

It is then that the three time lines of Daniel 12 begin to take place. Revelation 10 is the key to unseal this sealed part of Daniel. In turn, this unsealed part of Daniel unseals the sealed part of Rev.10:4, the Thunders. It appears that almost all of the book of Revelation from at least chapter 8 onward will take place within the timeframe of the 1335 days, except for the first part of Revelation 12 which is an interlude (see verses 1-11).



The Sunday Law or the abomination that makes desolate is the event that begins all these last day fulfillments (see Mar. 180; 7BC 977; and 5T 451). If we are planning to have a part in making this happen, we need to look at the 6 requirements again. Are we preparing to become the anointed High Priests of Item #6? If so, then are we fulfilling the first 5 items? That will mean we are finishing the transgression of all of God's laws, including the statutes and feasts. Then we will be making an end of sins in our lives. We will become fully reconciled from our iniquity and rebellion. We will help to bring in the everlasting righteousness. Then we can put a seal on the vision and prophecy as being validated.

"That God who reads the hearts of everyone, will bring to light hidden things of darkness where they are often least suspected, that stumbling blocks which have hindered the progress of truth may be removed, and God have a clean and holy people to declare His statutes and judgments." (1T 332.3)

"The Captain of our salvation leads His people on step by step, purifying and fitting them for translation, and leaving in the rear those who are disposed to draw off from the body, who are not willing to be led, and are satisfied with their own righteousness." (1T 333.1)

When this happens, our heavenly Father will look down and say, "Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Rev.14:12). They are the ones I have been waiting for. They have vindicated my law and my character, and made void the charges Satan has made against me. Son, they will be a fitting bride for you. Why don't you go and rescue her and bring her to our house to be with us for eternity? So Christ leaves heaven and comes to earth to rescue His bride.

"In both the Old and the New Testaments, the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people. To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall bring home His bride to the Father's house, and the redeemed with the Redeemer shall sit down to the marriage sup-

per of the Lamb. He says, 'As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.' 'Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; . . . but thou shalt be called My Delight; . . . for the Lord delighteth in thee.' 'He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing.' Isa. 62:5, 4, margin; Zeph. 3:17." (DA 151)

At this time the Bride is going through a serious time of trouble. The death decree is upon them. They are being assaulted by the devil's followers—they are being met "**With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. . . . they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant.**" (GC 635.3)

This is when Christ is seen in the clouds, coming to take His bride home. He has just placed the wedding band, the rainbow, around them.

The rainbow is also a symbol of the everlasting covenant between the Father and Son, that Christ would come and rescue His bride and take her home. This is the time where the Marriage Covenant and the Everlasting Covenant unite.

Gen. 9:16 – "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that [is] upon the earth."

To us it is a covenant that there will never be another worldwide flood again. But to God, He remembers the everlasting covenant between Himself and His Son that they will save mankind.

This is where the Everlasting Covenant was introduced, but it was made in heaven long before creation.

"There is the throne, and around it the rainbow of promise.... Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped Their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race. This pledge Christ has fulfilled." (DA 834)

When Christ takes His bride home, she follows Him wherever He goes. Can you imagine sometime in the great beyond when you are visiting an un-fallen world with Him and someone sees the scars and asks Him, "What happened to your hands? He will say, "I got them in the house of my friends" [Zechariah 13:6 (paraphrased)]. And then He would turn to you or me and say, "You tell them how it happened." What an awesome privilege to say "He

got those scars while rescuing me from eternal death."

Do you still want to be among the 144,000 and become one of the priests that shepherd the great multitude that comes out of Babylon during the great time of trouble? If so, you now know what is expected of you – you must fulfill the marriage covenant of Daniel 9:24. Read Revelation 19:6-9.

See you at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb!



Prophecy Unfolds

The Seven Trumpets of Revelation

CHAPTER 15

Judgment comes to the Living

John was given the world's last timing prophecies tied directly to Daniel. Eating them (a divine order) signals that he understood those astonishing revelations. God then charges him to "prophecy" or preach those truths. Daniel's prophecies found in that little book relate to the end of time and are to become part of the Loud Cry. When this interlude began, Jesus was seen in end-time imagery, speaking with "a loud voice" (10:3). Everything in chapters 10 and 11 are to be heard by the whole world!

"John sees the little book unsealed. Then Daniel's prophecies have their proper place in the first, second, and third angels' messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to *time*."¹

"A great work will be done in a short time. A message will soon be given by God's appointment that will swell into a loud cry. Then Daniel will stand in his lot, to give his testimony.

"The attention of our churches must be aroused. We are standing upon the borders of the greatest event in the world's history, and Satan must not have power over the people of God, causing them to sleep on. The Papacy will appear in its power. All

must now arouse and search the Scriptures, for God *will make known to His faithful ones* what shall be in the last time. The word of the Lord is to come to His people in power."²

The counsel to John:

1. Receive what was sealed in Daniel
2. Assimilate its end-time truths
3. Share it as part of the three angels' messages in the Loud Cry

Chapter 10 details the submissive spirit and cognitive action the remnant will take to prepare for that mission! Because part of the messages were sealed, it has to do with *new light*. Because the communiques were associated with timing prophecies, urgency underscores every utterance. They are short periods.

Chapter 11 flows naturally from chapter 10. The break is artificial. Though new scenes unfold, the understanding of the little book, the judging of the church and the prophesying of the two witnesses, all follow each other in rapid sequence.

¹*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, p. 99 (emphasis added).

²*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 20.

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein” (Revelation 11:1).

John is now asked once again to perform a “prophetic activity” – the first was eating the little book. God gave him a reed like a straight rod. This divine request continues to convey a close association between God and man in earth’s final acts.

This “reed” was a hollow, straight stick used often to measure short distances. This marsh plant grew in the Jordan valley to a height of 15 to 20 feet. Some commentators note that it was usually cut just over ten feet long.

The imagery here is most fascinating. It recreates Ezekiel’s vision where a bright being measured the temple (Ezekiel 40–42). There it signified God’s ownership and protection of His people. It echoes Zechariah 2:1-5 where he sees a man going out to measure Jerusalem. In all these illustrations, God’s people, His church, are being “measured” against a standard. All bear eschatological themes. What then is John doing with the reed? Let’s look more closely.

John is told to take it and use it to measure the temple, the altar and the worshipers. To “measure” with a “ruler” means information gathering. Where it says “the angel stood” adds some contextual confusion. This was apparently added by scribes in latter manuscripts.³

Is John to gather data on the size of the temple? Hardly! No physical dimensions are forthcoming. To measure, it must be against a *spiritual standard*. The task is to evaluate the “place of God’s presence” – the temple and its contents. It means judgment.

Let’s now step back and look carefully at this. A new message is open to John (the open book). Its new light relates to the Daniel 8–12 prophecies that usher in the finishing of everlasting righteousness (Daniel 9:24) – God’s marriage covenant of grace. It is declared to begin *after* 2300 years (Daniel 8:14) at an appointed time (8:17, 19; 12:5-

11) when incredible opposition and persecution comes to God’s people (Daniel 8, 11–12). God promised that a holy people would be found at that time (8:14) [holiness is vindicated or adjudicated (*qodesh nisdaq*) through His people]. The time period of this measuring rod can mean none other than when God chooses those who will be His holy witnesses! This wonderful event is when He makes up His church – even more, His kingdom!

Where does He direct John to go in this great metaphor of judgment? Where holy people should be found – in His church, His temple. This is a process of finding those who overcame the world (Revelation 2–3), who conquered by “the blood of the Lamb and by the word of His testimony” (12:11) – those who “keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus” (12:17, 14:12)! These are the standards, the remnant characteristics, that God said would distinguish His people.

Strengthening this position comes from a deeper look at the word for “measure” – *metreson*. The noun and the verb in the New Testament are used particularly in the context of judgment (Mark 4:24; Luke 6:38; Matthew 7:11, 23:32; Romans 12:3; Ephesians 4:13).⁴ The image is one of being weighed in the balances. Old Testament ties to such measuring are most beautifully portrayed in Leviticus 16 where the Day of Atonement ritual, which brought finality to Israel’s relationship with God.⁵

John is obviously not acting as a divine judge over the church. His activity of eating the book represents the 144,000 preparing to give the last message. This “judgment” picture is what goes on in the heavenly courts while the gospel work is being finished. Note that it is called the “Temple of God.” His people are being evaluated in the heavenly courts.

“Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon – none know how

³Thomas, Robert L., *Revelation 8–22 – an Exegetical Commentary*, p. 79.

⁴Brown, Collin; *New International Dictionary New Testament Theology*, vol. 3, pp. 402-205.

⁵Stefanovic, Ranko, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, p. 336.

soon – it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour's admonition: 'Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.' Mark 13:33. 'If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.' Revelation 3:3."⁶

"The lives of all who have believed on Jesus pass in solemn review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate examines the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. From age to age, all who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon written against their names in the books of Heaven, and in the closing work of Judgment their sins are blotted out, and they themselves are accounted worthy of eternal life."⁷

John is asked to measure three things:

1. Temple of God – symbolizing here His church
2. The altar – where intercession is made by His leaders
3. Those who worship – the living congregation, those claiming to belong to God

The New Testament often refers to the church as the temple of God (I Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; II Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:19-22; I Peter 3:5; Hebrews 3:6). Jesus referred to the temple as His Father's house (Mark 11:17, Matthew 21:13; Luke 19:46, John 2:16). There are expositors who reject the thought that this alludes to judgment at the house of God. Literalism captivates this thinking, and a mixed bag of views is presented. Throughout *this book* the temple (*naon*) relates to the heavenly. God's church is being reviewed.

The altar is referenced elsewhere in this book. In each of those settings it refers to the Altar of Incense in the heavenly sanctuary (Revelation 6:9;

8:3, 5; 9:13; 14:18; 16:7). There they symbolize either Jesus' intercessory ministry before the throne or from where justice and judgment emanate. The picture here describes *living worshipers* in God's church when this Altar is referenced. That is where the worshipers focus their attention. The "altar" refers to the way God's people worship; that, in turn, reflects on the "priest" who ministers before it. It is the place where worshipers direct their attention. It was at the center where the blood of Jesus, mingled with the incense, drew upon God's mercy and grace. Since the church and its worshipers are distinct in this judgment process, the separate mention of the Altar is an unequivocal review of the leadership that functions at that place. Since the worshipers are mentioned as a separate item, individual worshipers are being reviewed.

"The work is going on in the heavenly court. In vision on the Isle of Patmos John said: 'And there was given me a reed like unto a rod, and the angel stood, saying, Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.' This solemn work is to be done upon the earth. Look and see how stands your measurement of character as compared with God's standard of righteousness, his holy law. The worshipers are to pass under the measuring line of God. Who will bear the test? Christ says, 'I know thy works.' Nothing is hid from him of whom John says, 'His head and his hair were white like wool, white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire.' How many are purifying their souls by obeying the truth? How many are now in this time wholly on the Lord's side? How many are seeking to be a blessing to those around them? Many need help, kind words, thoughtful attentions; and if you pray with such, you may be a blessing to them."⁸

When "time is no longer delayed, when the Loud Cry is to go out to the world, when a time period about to be introduced begins (which parallels exactly the message of Daniel 8–12), the judgment of the church and those who claim loyalty to God begins. For some, it is called "judgment of the living."

⁶*The Great Controversy*, p. 490.

⁷*Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 309.

⁸*Youth Instructor*, August 25, 1886.

Little Time of Trouble Begins

“But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty [and] two months” (Revelation 11:2).

By the time John receives this vision, Jerusalem has been sacked and the Herodian temple destroyed. Continuing with the wonderful typological themes in this interlude, God’s church is symbolized by this temple (*naon*). The figurative language directs our thinking to a time far into the future when this is applicable. When is that? Revelation 1 (1:1-3, 6-7) introduced us to the *period to which this apocalyptic book* (the whole book!) applies.

- Show things which must shortly come to pass (*in the context of the unfolding events described*) (vs 1)
- Time is at hand (*in the context of the unfolding events described*) (vs 3)
- Behold, he cometh with clouds (*Revelation is event driven within the time framework of the eschaton*) (vs 7)

Our attention is drawn to God’s church – at the end of time.

The temple was surrounded by two main courtyards called an “outer” and an “inner” court. The two times Christ cleansed the temple it was the “outer” courtyard where the unholy trafficking had occurred. In Solomon’s, Ezekiel’s and Herod’s temples, the sanctuary, inner and outer courts, were all considered sacred, belonging to God.

Herod, who helped build and embellish the last temple the Jews would ever have, divided the inner court into a court for priests, another for the Jews in general and one for women. In Christ’s day those three inner courts were off limits to Gentiles (anyone not Jewish). But the outer court was open to all. It was colloquially called the *Court of the Gentiles*. This prophecy relates to that court. In

turn, Gentiles in prophecy are symbolic of those who have not become part of God’s church. It can also refer to the wicked. To Jesus, these people were a vast mission field yet to be worked.

“In the temple at Jerusalem a low wall separated the outer court from all other portions of the sacred building. Upon this wall were inscriptions in different languages, stating that none but Jews were allowed to pass this boundary. Had a Gentile presumed to enter the inner enclosure, he would have desecrated the temple, and would have paid the penalty with his life. But Jesus, the originator of the temple and its service, drew the Gentiles to Him by the tie of human sympathy, while His divine grace brought to them the salvation which the Jews rejected.”⁹

A deeper spiritual meaning from this imagery comes from Paul: “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [*which is*] in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” (I Corinthians 6:19).

“All who are partakers of the divine nature will realize that the Holy Spirit works with them, taking the truth from the sacred Word, where Christ has placed it, and stamping it upon the soul. But we are in great peril of keeping the truth in the outer court, neglecting to bring it into the sanctuary of the soul. Earnestly and solemnly we should prepare ourselves for the cleansing of the soul-temple, remembering that we are a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. This work, when thoroughly done, will cleanse the heart from all disunion, all strife, all desire for the supremacy.– Ms 14, 1901, pp. 1, 2, 21; Feb. 21, 1901.”¹⁰

John’s instructions – the counsel to the 144,000, God’s remnant – don’t worry about the outer court. All those who make up the “inner temple” is what your attention should be on. The judgment of the wicked represented here by the *outer court* of the Gentiles will come later. The

⁹*The Desire of Ages*, p. 193 (emphasis added).

¹⁰*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, p. 42.

picture is one of exclusion from God's favor. Two classes are emerging. That will fulfill an end-time prediction (Daniel 12:10, Matthew 25:32).

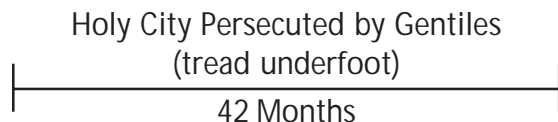
"In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the *professed people of God*. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period. 'Judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?' 1 Peter 4:17."¹¹

Through these divine decrees given to John, we can see that expositor White also understood and portrayed accurately how God's people are set apart. Now, another dramatic issue is introduced. Those outer court Gentiles represent the wicked because they persecute God's people, who are represented here as "the holy city."

The word for "Gentiles" (*ethnesin*) is interpreted elsewhere as "nations" and seems to encompass the whole world in its broadest sense. John was just told that he must prophesy again before many peoples and "nations." In its simplistic view, it represents all non-Jews; in a greater sense, all those who oppose God's people, especially at the end of time. In this larger view, the whole wicked world is involved in hurting God's remnant few.

The wicked are described another way in Revelation: "those who dwell on the earth" (Revelation 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 14; 17:2).

There is an important link between "Gentiles," "tread underfoot," "holy city" and "forty-two months."



This is a very fascinating message. Jesus said of Himself: "The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men ... [then] he *shall rise*" (Mark 9:31). He

suffered for three and a half years from His own people. God's people are delivered here into oppressive hands. They, too, will suffer. How long? Forty-two months or three and a half years! Isn't that amazing! Later in the chapter they "*will rise*" to heaven at Christ's return (11:12). What hope!

Within the context of this persecution, "tread underfoot," it implies that the saints who are measured, judged and chosen will spiritually withstand these ultimate trials. God's ruling power has infiltrated their hearts. They have irrevocably adopted the principles of the heavenly kingdom. One can almost hear the concluding response of Jesus: "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, [which is] new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and [I will write upon him] my new name" (Revelation 3:12). This ties together such beautiful language and promises us that we will be restored into the family of God.

"If we can bear persecution for His dear name's sake, His love becomes a ruling power in our hearts, for we have the assurance that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Never is the tempest-ried soul more dearly loved by his Saviour than when he is suffering reproach for the truth's sake. When for the truth's sake the believer stands at the bar of unrighteous tribunals, Christ stands by his side. All the reproaches that fall upon the human believer fall upon Christ in the person of His saints. 'I will love him,' said Christ, 'and will manifest myself to him' (John 14:21). Christ is condemned over again in the person of His believing disciples. When for the truth's sake the believer is incarcerated in prison walls, Christ manifests Himself to him and ravishes his heart with His love. When he suffers death for the sake of Christ, Christ says to him, They may kill the body, but they cannot hurt the soul. 'Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world' (John 16:33).

"The apostle says to us, '... If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.' Ask yourself, 'Is my Redeemer thus magnified

¹¹ *The Great Controversy*, p. 480 (emphasis added).

in me before the universe of heaven, before the satanic agencies, and before the world?"¹²

As with the Assyrians of old, in the end the judgments of God are turned against the oppressor and will "tread" *them* "underfoot" (Isaiah 14:24-28, Zechariah 12:9). There are timing and functioning parallels between this verse and the "little horn" trampling the "host of heaven" (God's people) in Daniel 8:9-10. This, in turn, ties to the "holy people" being "scattered" for a time, times and half of Daniel 12:7 (cf. Daniel 11:33-35). They *all* speak of the same time.

Another image of persecution that templates right over this period is from the sea-beast of Revelation 13: "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty [and] two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations*" (Revelation 13:5-7).

Jesus spoke about this time in Luke 21:24: "And they [God's people] shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem [God's people] shall be trodden down of the Gentiles [wicked], until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Those who will spend eternity with Jesus must prove their loyalty "even unto blood" (Hebrews 12:4).

The universe becomes a witness to the evil and violence of the unfettered wicked in this *last period of time*. It will also, and this is so personal, see how you relate, react and feel about Jesus under ultimate adversity – just as it did when our Savior went through the agony of a mock legal process and then the Cross.

This is why John noticed at first the sweetness of the "little book." The unsealed truths he grasped were wonderful and brought the deepest satisfaction. But it was followed by a bitter experience.

The "forty-two months" duration of this experience ties to the "forty-two months" of Revelation

13:5. That, in turn, represents the same time period of "1260 days" in Revelation 11:3 and the "time times and half time" of Revelation 12:14 and Daniel 12:7. All of these represent the same declared period that Habakkuk and Daniel called the "appointed time," when the gospel work will also be finished – during which God's people will suffer persecution: "and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood" (Daniel 9:26).

"In [Daniel] 12:7 the number refers to the time before the 'accomplishment' of the eschaton; and in 12:11-12 it refers to the time between the setting up of the 'abomination that causes desolation' and the eschaton. Therefore, the period refers to [a] limited time in which God allows the antichrist and his followers to triumph (see also Rev. 13:5-8) and the people of God to be persecuted and martyred."¹³

Measuring the church is a variant expression of setting it apart or sealing it. "Trampling underfoot" is an alternative expression for the time of tribulation. Here a great paradox is presented. God's people will be spiritually preserved. But their physical being is yet subject to even martyrdom. Mentally, they will experience anguish.

Does this sound unfair? Does your heart question how a loving Jesus would even think of letting His friends suffer? But it's an end-time must. He needs to see who really are His friends. Our response in difficult trials and extremely painful times reveal just that. It is one of the final acts in the drama involving everyone before He returns. One of the 24 heavenly elders who experienced all this talked with John about the great multitude standing before the throne. Note what he said: "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:14). Before the crown comes the cross. No matter how difficult the path, multitudes will be near who refuse to succeed their friendship with Jesus.

¹²*That I May Know Him*, p. 275.

¹³Osbourne, Grant R.; *Revelation*, p. 414

One is reminded of a similar irony that Paul gave: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset [us], and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.... For they verily for a few days chastened [us] after their own pleasure; but he for [our] profit, that [we] might be partakers of his holiness" (Hebrews 12:1-6, 10).

"Yet to human sight it will appear that the people of God must soon seal their testimony with their blood as did the martyrs before them. They themselves begin to fear that the Lord has left them to fall by the hand of their enemies. It is a time of fearful agony. Day and night they cry unto God for deliverance. The wicked exult, and the jeering cry is heard: 'Where now is your faith? Why does not God deliver you out of our hands if you are indeed His people?' But the waiting ones remember Jesus dying upon Calvary's cross and the chief priests and rulers shouting in mockery: 'He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from

the cross, and we will believe Him.' Matthew 27:42. Like Jacob, all are wrestling with God. Their countenances express their internal struggle. Paleness sits upon every face. Yet they cease not their earnest intercession.

"Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ's patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress and have heard their prayers. They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them from their peril. But they must wait yet a little longer. The people of God must drink of the cup and be baptized with the baptism. The very delay, so painful to them, is the best answer to their petitions. As they endeavor to wait trustingly for the Lord to work they are led to exercise faith, hope, and patience, which have been too little exercised during their religious experience. Yet for the elect's sake the time of trouble will be shortened. 'Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him? ... I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.' Luke 18:7, 8. The end will come more quickly than men expect. The wheat will be gathered and bound in sheaves for the garner of God; the tares will be bound as fagots for the fires of destruction."¹⁴

We are now going to embark on an information journey of how the gospel will go to the world in its last three and a half years. The narration will follow a similar story of Christ's three and a half year ministry (John 15:20) of proclaiming truths, signs and satanic opposition, persecution and martyrdom in the "city where Christ was crucified."

¹⁴*The Great Controversy*, pp. 630-631.

Being Chosen – That’s What It’s All About

“And I will give [power] unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days, clothed in sackcloth”
(Revelation 11:3).

It is interesting that in the previous verse it notes that the outer court had been given to the Gentiles. The apostate church, the wicked, those hurting God’s people (i.e., the red and pale horses of the second and fourth Seals), within an end-time setting, are those “Gentiles.” Since it is attached to the temple as one of its courtyards, they claim to be God’s people. They are Christian in name, but God gives or assigns the outer court – not part of the true work going on within the temple – to that people. Later in Revelation, that group will be called by the name “Babylon!”

Here in verse 3 God “gives” again. But now a beautiful and endearing contrast is portrayed: “I will give” (*doso*) power to “my” witnesses. This expression is made in strong and emphatic language – as if to say, “You’re going to persecute my people for three and a half years? I’ll give them special power for three and a half years!”

I’m awed and really want that kind of God, don’t you? He is permitting sin to reveal its true colors in this very end-time setting, but His special attention is on those loyal to Him – His two witnesses. Though He permits persecution and even martyrdom, He will soon come and remove them from this terrible world. His temple people, in spite of what they are going through, still speak or prophesy for Him. That’s the focus of the next several verses. They bravely represent the Daniel prophecy from that *little open book!*

Jesus notes that He has two witnesses. Why two? The Jewish theocracy required two witnesses to validate any testimony (Deuteronomy 17:6,

19:15; Numbers 35:30; cf. Hebrews 10:28). That represented a legal metaphor within a spiritual setting. Most fascinating is the tie this has to a similar legal/spiritual setting in, yes, Daniel. It is in the area of the “little book.”

Gabriel had asked when the end-time issues of sin and rebellion of the Daniel 8 little horn would happen (Daniel 8:13). Jesus, in His first personal appearance to Daniel, said that holiness would be vindicated or even be adjudicated after 2300 atonement years (Daniel 8:14). Contextually, only a part of Gabriel’s questions were answered. In Daniel 12 the rest of his queries were answered, including a new question by Daniel when he asked when the deliverance of God’s people and special resurrection would occur. Jesus, in a third appearance to Daniel, said at the *end* of “time times and half [time]” (three and a half years)!

Verses 2 and 3 here in Revelation present an end-time three and a half year period which, again, Daniel called the “appointed time” (cf. Habakkuk 2:2-3). They are all the same time period! As we saw in our discussion of the tenth chapter, that little open book was that unsealed portion of Daniel. It is *that* message that is to go to the world by the two witnesses.

What makes it a legal matter? A courtroom drama is underway. The hour of judgment of the living has come [first angel’s message (Revelation 14:6-7), especially over the Sabbath issue]. That is the meaning of measuring the temple (Revelation 11:1). God has given a time limit for these legal proceedings to be completed. Satan and his representatives are trying to hurt their case by persecuting and tampering with God’s witnesses. We know that will not set well with the Judge.

Part of the little book of Daniel involves the

Sabbath (related to the daily) and a false Sabbath (the abomination and transgression). Jesus' declaration in 10:6 that time would no longer be delayed had Sabbath language within its context. All these amazing links tell us, unequivocally, that when the three and a half years begin, the pivotal issue will be over the Sabbath. In 10:6 Jesus is decreeing, "Let that time period begin."

The second angel's message declares that Babylon is fallen (a carry-through issue from Daniel 8). That coincides with the Gentiles in the outer court theme here! The third angel's message in Revelation 14 ties to the legal covenant theme of Daniel 8–12 – *but* it begins by a "woe" on all who identify with the false Sabbath – a "mark" of the beast.

The Sabbath recalls the Creator and His creation. But – after sin came it also represented deliverance and rest from sin. This was embellished in a broader view of the Ten Commandments presented in Deuteronomy 5. Now we can see as never before the incredible links throughout Scripture, all pointing to the great restoration that comes in God's redemptive plan right at the end of that three and a half year appointed time.

In this wonderful prophetic book, Jesus is introduced as the model "witness," called a "faithful witness" (1:5, 3:14). Then the church is seen as a persevering witness (6:9, 12:11, 17:6, 20:4), bearing the "testimony of Jesus." Intriguingly, John earlier talked of a forensic ministry of the Spirit (John 16:8-11) that especially ties with all these end-time judicial issues unfolding in this apocalyptic setting.

Because the persecution and witnessing is for three and a half years, it is not a long interim legal message between the two Advents of 1260 years plus. It is final-period history when the antichrist,

the beast and its harlot rider will "conquer" the church (13:7) – and then be "conquered" by the church (12:11).

The witnesses are to "prophecy" with the most important message ever given to mortals. It contains the everlasting gospel, the three angels' themes and very specifically what is in the "little scroll." That contains a timing message that explicitly states that probation will be closed within three and a half years – forever. No mortal voice will have been asked to notify the world of a more solemn message than this. That is why they are clothed in sackcloth! Elijah (II Kings 1:8) and John the Baptist (Mark 1:6) did the same when mourning for the sin of the nation and anticipating the judgment that was pending (cf. Joel 1:8, Amos 8:10). No wonder that right after the close of probation the sun turns "black like sackcloth" (Revelation 6:12). There is then no more light that will ever shine on the rebellious world again. Sackcloth also is symbolic for being sorrowful for sin [I Chronicles 21:16, Jonah 3:5-9, Matthew 11:21 (cf. Isaiah 3:24, 22:12; Jeremiah 4:8, 6:26)].

This imagery draws on the spirit of those who are sealed in Ezekiel 8:4, who sigh and cry over the sins of the people. Drawing all the Scriptural themes of sackcloth together, it is clear that these two witnesses are fearless, calling all to repentance and addressing the sin issue among God's people.

Who are these two witnesses? Scholars with profound insight into the symbolic imagery of Revelation 10 and 11 so often revert to literalism, assigning these two especially as the returned men, Moses and Elijah. We will explore in greater detail its meaning, beginning with the next verse in our next issue.



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