

Apocalyptic Timing Prophecies

(We are now entering)

Introduction

One of the key issues that has created much ridicule within and without the Christian world relates to “time” in end-time Bible prophecy. Since the era of the apostles there have been over two hundred major predictions as to when Christ would come. They’ve all failed.

- Many have come from respected religious leaders.
- No wonder there is and has been so much skepticism.

Typically, those who know some Bible prophecy will throw out two texts in warning about time and prophetic resistance:

- *“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only”* (Matthew 24:36).
- *“And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power”* (Acts 1:7).

The context is rarely discussed, and many have such an emotional reaction that they minimize interest in the details of end-time prophecy (eschatology). In fact, a recent study suggests that 90% of Protestant churches now avoid talking about prophecy related to the Second Advent.

“We aren’t to know!” is the attitude, even among pastors. Yet, everyone is convinced His coming is near – but can’t say why unless it is the same “mantra” used for the last hundred and fifty years.

This “barrier view,” “secret view,” creates tension with Matthew 24:32-33, where the parable of the fig tree informs us of the approaching harvest “season” and that **one might know** when the *parousia* (Second Coming) is “*even at the doors.*” Jesus actually gave anticipatory details in verses 37-44, revealing that Noah’s day carries additional clues for observing the approaching end.

The Issue

The great end-time prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7 through 12 end with two warnings:

From Gabriel: *“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).

From Christ: *“And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed **till the time of the end**”* (Daniel 12:9).

Those prophecies are discussed openly in Revelation. But not until a point in time was reached – the “time of the end” – could they be understood. For nearly forty years there has been rapid awareness of what those Danielic prophecies meant. That time of understanding has arrived!

- Though having a broad spiritual application, Christ’s words regarding this time (recorded by Luke) have a resonating appeal:
- *“For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad”* (Luke 8:17).

Daniel even says:

- *“Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and **none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand**”* (Daniel 12:10).
- Interesting! Until that point in time would arrive, interpretive views remained in the realm of assumptions. But, at the end the “wise,” God’s devoted saints, will understand.

A provocative verse is found in John’s Revelation:

- *“Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. **But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you**”* (Revelation 3:3 – NIV).
- A lethargic condition, even of being asleep, will characterize the end-time church as His Second Coming approaches.
 - *“**If** the church doesn’t watch”*¹
 - *“**If** they should fail to maintain watchfulness, the same fate will happen to them as happened to Sardis, with attacks from both Cyrus and Antiochus III: a ‘thief’ will come and destroy them.”*²
 - *“**If** you don’t wake up, the coming of the Lord will be a surprise – like a thief.”*³

¹ Stefanovic, Ranko; *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, p. 136.

² Osborne, Grant R.; *Revelation* (Baker Book House; Grand Rapids, MI), p, 177.

³ Thomas, Robert L.; *Revelation 1–7 – An Exegetical Commentary*, vol. I (Moody Press, Chicago – 1992), p. 253.

This imagery/narrative reveals that **by waking up** and maintaining alert watchfulness, the advent **would not** be as a thief.

It is significant to note that in the parables Christ gave in the Olivet discourse, “time” is the central issue. Reflect:

1. The unprepared – “*ye know not what hour*” (Matthew 24:42)
2. Unfaithful servant – “*my Lord delays his coming*” (Matthew 24:48)
3. Ten sleeping virgins – “*at midnight there was a cry*” (Matthew 25:6) (someone knew)
4. Talents – “*after a long time*” (Matthew 25:19)

Why did Christ have concern that the spiritual themes within these illustrations be embedded in a framework of time? Because the anticipatory excitement of tomorrow is to be understood today! Preparation must move into the realm of animated elation when it is truly approaching!

- There is a saying attributed to Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (book eleven – Confessions) that unravels the thinking of the unwise⁴:
- Paraphrased:
 - “*If we aren’t asked to tell why Jesus is coming soon, we know.*”
 - “*If we are asked to explain why – we can’t.*”
- Interesting! That “reality” has reverberated for centuries – until recently.

Paul desperately sought to modify even the timing ignorance of the Thessalonians. What he advised is eschatologically informative and apropos for us today.

- “*But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you*” (I Thessalonians 5:1). Why?
- “*But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief*” (I Thessalonians 5:4).
- “*Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness*” (I Thessalonians 5:5).

If one knows prophecy, Christ’s coming will not be as a thief.

This is now what we know about time related to our day to be “*children of the light*”:

⁴ Jackelén, Antje; *Time & Eternity* (Templeton Foundation Press, Philadelphia; 2005), p. 1.

God's Great "Week" of Redemptive Time

The 6000-Year Apocalyptic Cycle:

At creation God introduced the number "**seven**" as the last day of the week, a sacred time. That number was later "codified" in the Old Testament in numerous ways to illustrate **redemptive history**: e.g., seven years ending in a Sabbath year, seven months for the Jewish sacred year (Abib through Tishri – when the Atonement was completed). The number "**seven**" always had a **holy** purpose.

The Jewish Talmud often referred to God finishing His saving work in 6000 years from Adam's fall. During the seventh millennium it would be a time of "release" or the "Messianic millennium." Early "Christian" writers often referred to man's probation as lasting 6000 years – then God's kingdom would come.⁵

That 6000 years, plus that kingdom 1000 years, is 7000 years, which came to be known as God's Great Week of Time.

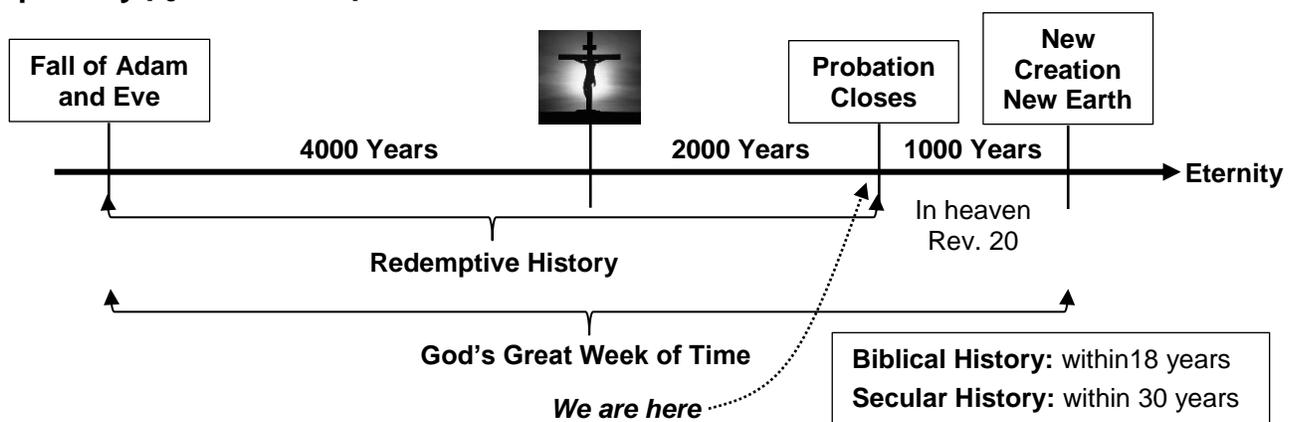
Many expositors and scholars from the second century on have affirmed this period.

Duration of the Great Controversy: *For six thousand years* the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men.⁶

Redemptive history will end as the 6000 years close: Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. *For six thousand years* he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe and causing grief throughout the universe.⁷

God's "prophetic plan" shows that He will come at the end of 6000 years from Adam and Eve's fall. Then He takes the saints to heaven for 1000 years.

Graphically [figures rounded off]:



⁵ <http://www.end-times-prophecy.org/6000-7000-year-timeline-prophecy.html>

⁶ *The Great Controversy*, p. 656.

⁷ *The Great Controversy*, p. 673.

concluded that this was when Jesus would come. That is an amazing story. He didn't come. But out of this came many new churches.

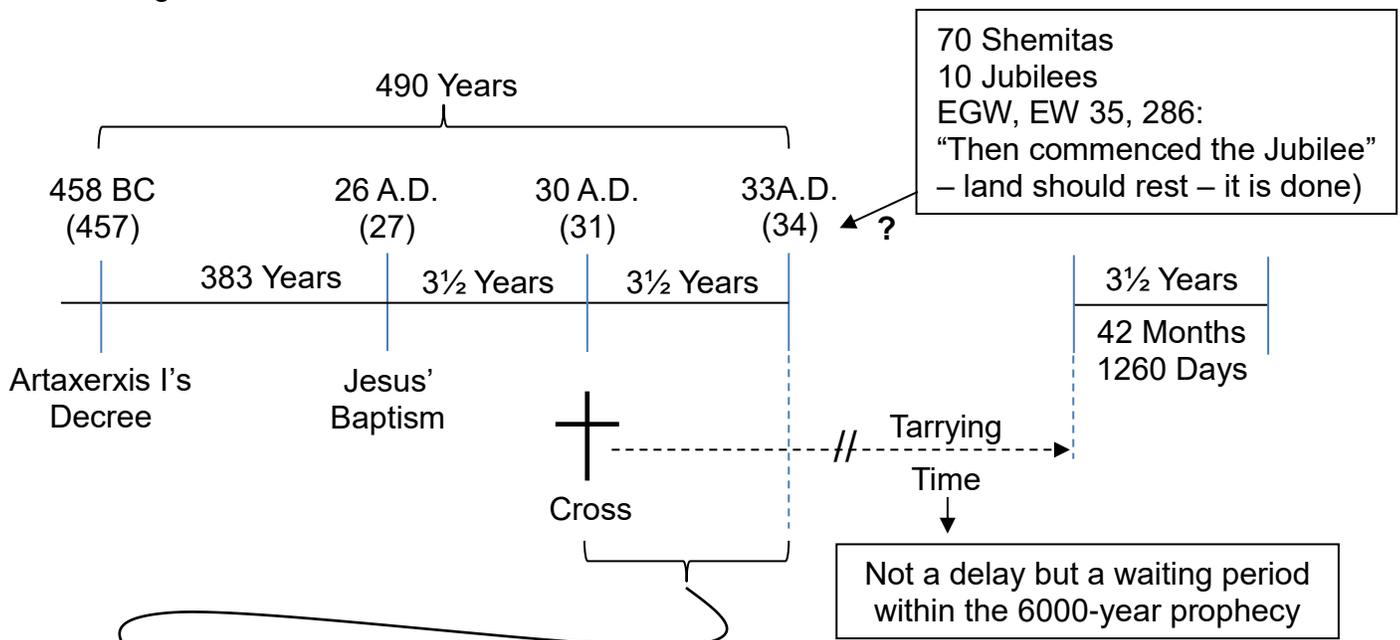
The 490-Year Prophecy Begins the “End.” But – it has not been completed yet.

Daniel 9 *begins* the timing prophecies that forward messages linking to the *end of time*.

- Daniel warns his people (really all of God’s people) that they had 70 “weeks of years” to give up sin – that is, 490 years (i.e., 70 x 7) (Daniel 9:24).
- That time period would begin: “*Know therefore and understand, that **from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks***” (Daniel 9:25).

Most expositors believe that the rebuilding of Jerusalem was the “rebuilding” of the literal or physical city – but the whole chapter is in the context of *spiritual restoration*. When this decree was given, the city was already built 520 B.C. (Haggai 1:4) (515 B.C. → Temple).

- Artaxerxes I made that spiritual decree in 458 B.C. (457 according to some).
- It is given word for word in Ezra 7:11-26. It relates to the temple and reestablishing the Hebrew theocracy – not the city of Jerusalem. It is a spiritual directive from a pagan king!



This part is now in question. At the end of 490 years (1) everlasting righteousness would be brought in, (2) Satan’s work would be ended (“sealed up”) and (3) the heavenly sanctuary would be cleansed (Daniel 9:24). **These things have not yet occurred!**

This is why there are so many 3½-year prophecies yet to be fulfilled. We are “waiting” in a “*tarrying time*” (Habakkuk 2:2-3, Hebrews 10:36-37) for that last period to finish the 490-year period!

The Year 1929 in Prophecy

Prophetic Symbols: A “*beast*” represents a kingdom/nation/country or at times a church that has a nation; a “*woman*” represents a church or body of “believers;” “*sitting on*” or “*riding on*” symbolizes ruling over.

Important History: Pepin the Short of France became its first civil ruler appointed by a pope (Pope Stephen III – ±751 A.D.). In turn, Pepin gave to the papacy a large segment of land within what we know today as Italy (between 754 and 756 A.D.). This became known as the **Donation of Pepin**. The **land** became known as the **Papal States**.



The Roman Church now had a nation – it was a true **Church and State**.

Though Pope Pius VI was taken prisoner in 1798 by French General Berthier, who proclaimed he conquered a Roman Republic, Berthier’s control and its meaning was limited. The arrest of that Pope was mainly an ecclesiastical blow to the papacy. A new pope was ruling within two years.

Amazing Church–State Prophecy:

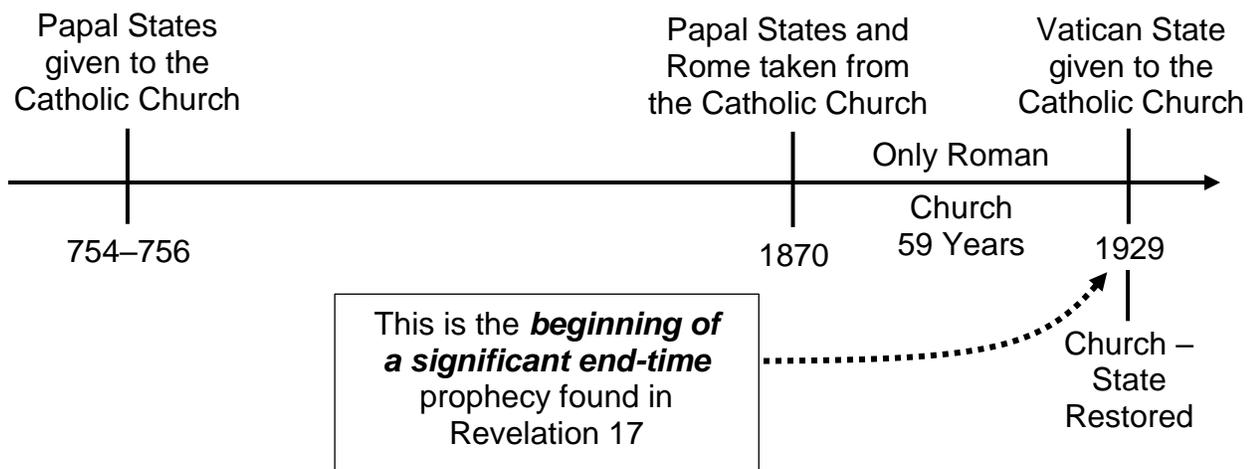
The apostle/prophet John said that there would be a “***beast who had been wounded by the sword, but still lived***” (Revelation 13:14 – NET).



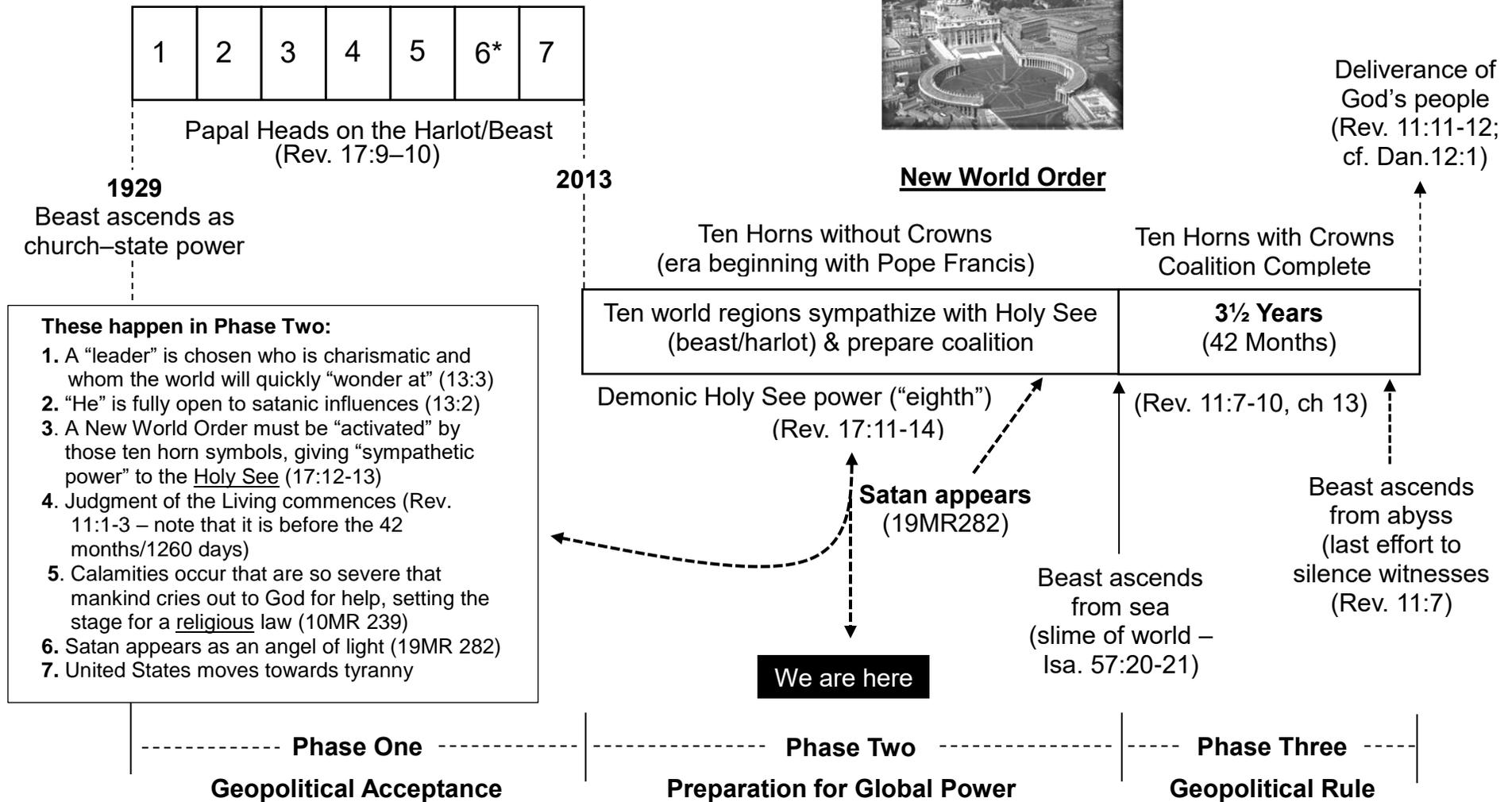
That is referring to the papal Church–State noted above. When did the Roman Catholic Church receive that “*beast*” wound? The unified *kingdom of Italy* was established in 1861. By September 20, 1870, all of the Papal States and the City of Rome were taken from the Church by Italy’s forces. ***It was no longer a church–state!***

John had more to say regarding this in an end-time prophecy: “*I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns*” (Revelation 17:3 – KJV).

In 1929, through the Lateran Accords and Treaty, the Vatican State was given to the Catholic Church. It was once again a **church–state**; the “*woman*” was again “*riding the beast*”!



The Three Beast Prophecies of Revelation



- * - 1976 Cardinal Wojtyla (later, Pope John Paul II) announced that the New World Order was about to begin (Barbêlôn, vol. 1, p. 154)
- 1978 Pope John Paul II inaugurated
 - 1978 Calamities begin to fulfill the "time of sorrows"
 - 1978 Began the last generation (Luke 2:28, 32; cf. Matt. 24:8) (Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21) - related to calamities
 - 1978 Onset of "spiritual formation" movement - began great apostasy within Christianity
 - 1978 Leadership of the United States quickly identified with the new pope
 - 1978 When signs of Matthew 24:7, Luke 21:10-11 became statistically significant
 - 1979 Billy Graham promoted pope as the world's spiritual leader
 - 1979 Iran becomes a tyrannical state - the King of the South forms

Jesus Posted an End-Time Clock!

When on the Mount of Olives:

In speaking about the end: *“Then he said to them: ‘Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.’ ‘There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven”* (Luke 21:10-11 – NIV). *“All these are the beginning of birth pains”* (Matthew 24:7, 8 – NIV). (Note: We’re using various references because of how they complete the full Olivet Discourse message.)

Interesting – the gospel writers make this list:

1. Wars
2. Earthquakes
3. Famines
4. Pestilences
5. Fearful events
6. Signs in the sky

“When ye see these things come to pass ...” “When these things begin to come to pass ...”

- **“look up”** your redemption is very near
- **“know”** the kingdom of God is at hand

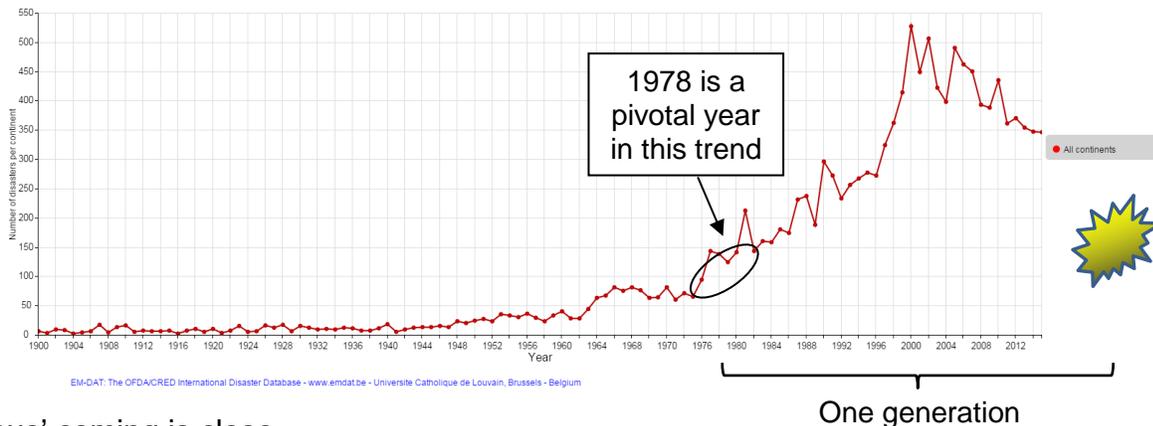
Luke 21: 31, 28

Luke then says: *“Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened”* (Luke 21:32 – NIV).

Amazingly, scholars have described this as meaning: **“the generation that sees these things begin, will see them end!”** !!! That’s serious!

- That means that we should be able to know which calamities represent that end – they will come together.
- That means that they accelerate like a woman in labor (more frequent and more severe).
- That means that these prophecies will be completed in one generation (approximately 40 years).

A major international database, constantly updating information on natural disasters, located in Brussels, Belgium, has followed these “signs” (excluding war). A “Biblical lady-in-labor” trend developed in the area of the ovoid circle:

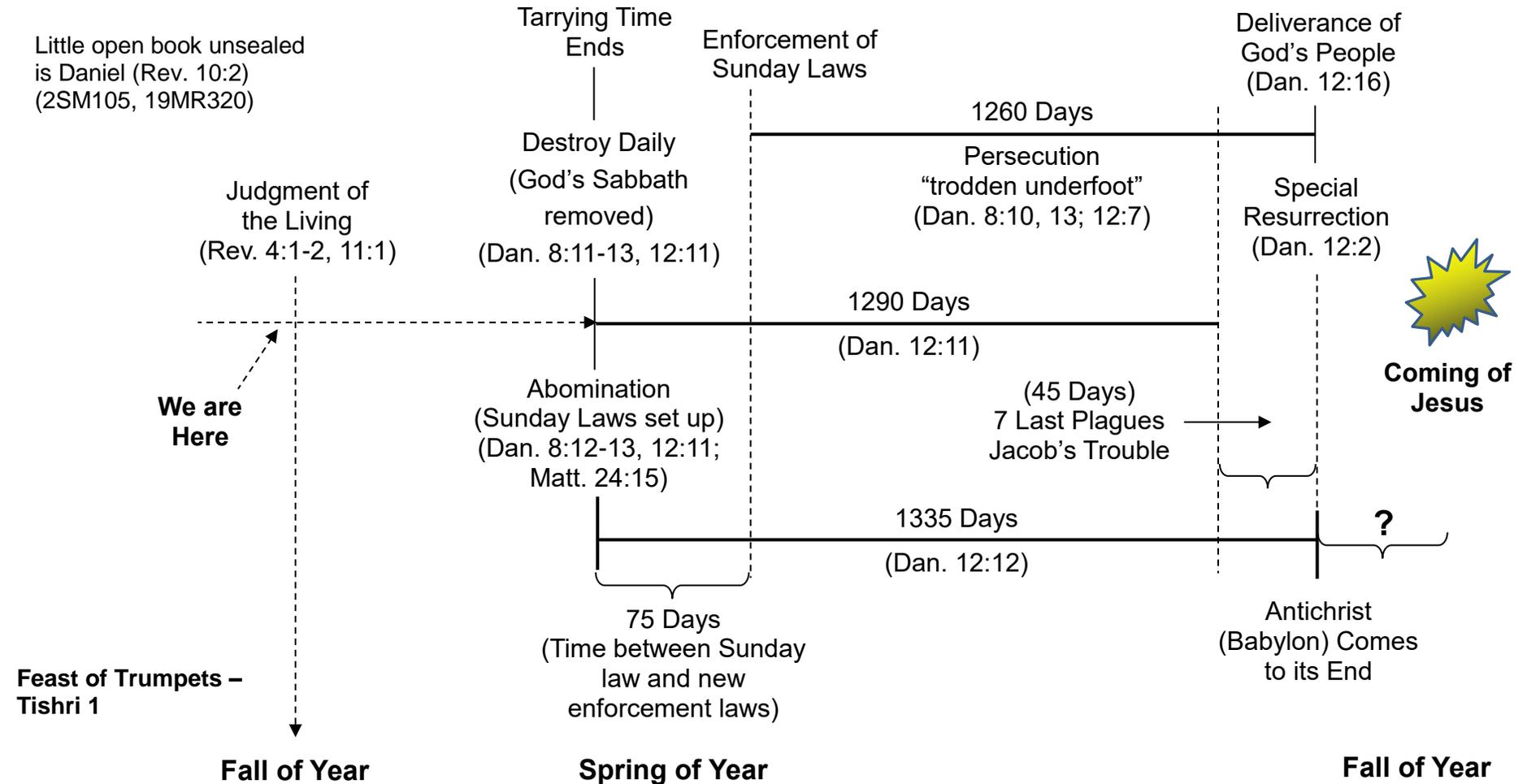


Jesus’ coming is close

The Appointed Time (Habakkuk 2:3, Daniel 8–12)

The final period of earth's history. This is when the "tarrying time" ends.

Ref. Matthew 24:15



"The prophetic periods of Daniel [12], extending to the very eve of the great consummation [the Second Coming of Jesus], throw a flood of light upon events then to transpire." *The Review and Herald*, September 25, 1883.

"The people of God need to study what characters they must form in order to pass through the test and proving of the last days. Many are living in spiritual weakness and backsliding. They know not what they believe. Let us read and study the twelfth chapter of Daniel. It is a warning that we shall all need to understand before the time of the end. There are ministers claiming to believe the truth who are not sanctified through the truth. Unless a change comes in their lives, they will say, 'My Lord delayeth His coming.'" *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 15, p. 228.

"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 [in the time periods of Daniel 12]." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, p. 20.

The Rise of Papal Power

A “Beast” (the Vatican State with its ruling Roman Catholic Church) is in a coalition with its own “ten horns” (Revelation 7)!

The texts relative to this stunning prophecy:

*“And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received **no kingdom** as yet; ... These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.” (Revelation 17:12-13). **Have no kingdoms yet.***

Later we are told:

*“A beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns” (Revelation 13:1). **Now the horns have kingdoms.***



Expositor White insightfully noted: “Prophecy foretells a restoration of her power.”⁹ She will “regain control of the world.”¹⁰



Stunning – the world was divided into ten regions, first in 1941, then formally, in 1973 (initially by the U.S. State Department, then the second by the Club of Rome – a papal “think tank).”

Intriguingly, ever since the establishment of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, in the 16th century, the Roman Catholic Church has fiercely

wanted to rule the world. Its “legal” appeal was fittingly couched within their “social doctrine,” initially by Pope Leo XIII in 1891. Each pope since has bolstered its allurement by appealing to citizenry greed (“leaders should be giving you ... !”) April 9, 2013, Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, flew to the Vatican to meet Pope Francis. He praised him for his global moral leadership,



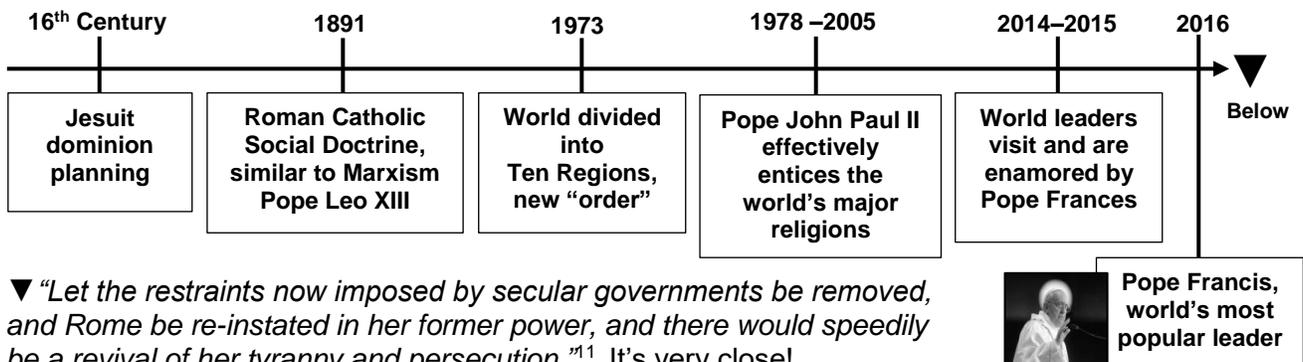
especially toward environmental issues. ***So impressed*** was this Secretary General that on May 9, 2014, he brought **all the key leaders** of the United Nations to the Vatican to meet Pope Francis!



In September, 2015, Francis addressed the U.S. Congress and the United Nations. Then on March 24, 2016, BBC News reported that Pope Francis was the world’s most popular leader, based on Gallup studies.



“The whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast” (Revelation 13:3 – NAS).



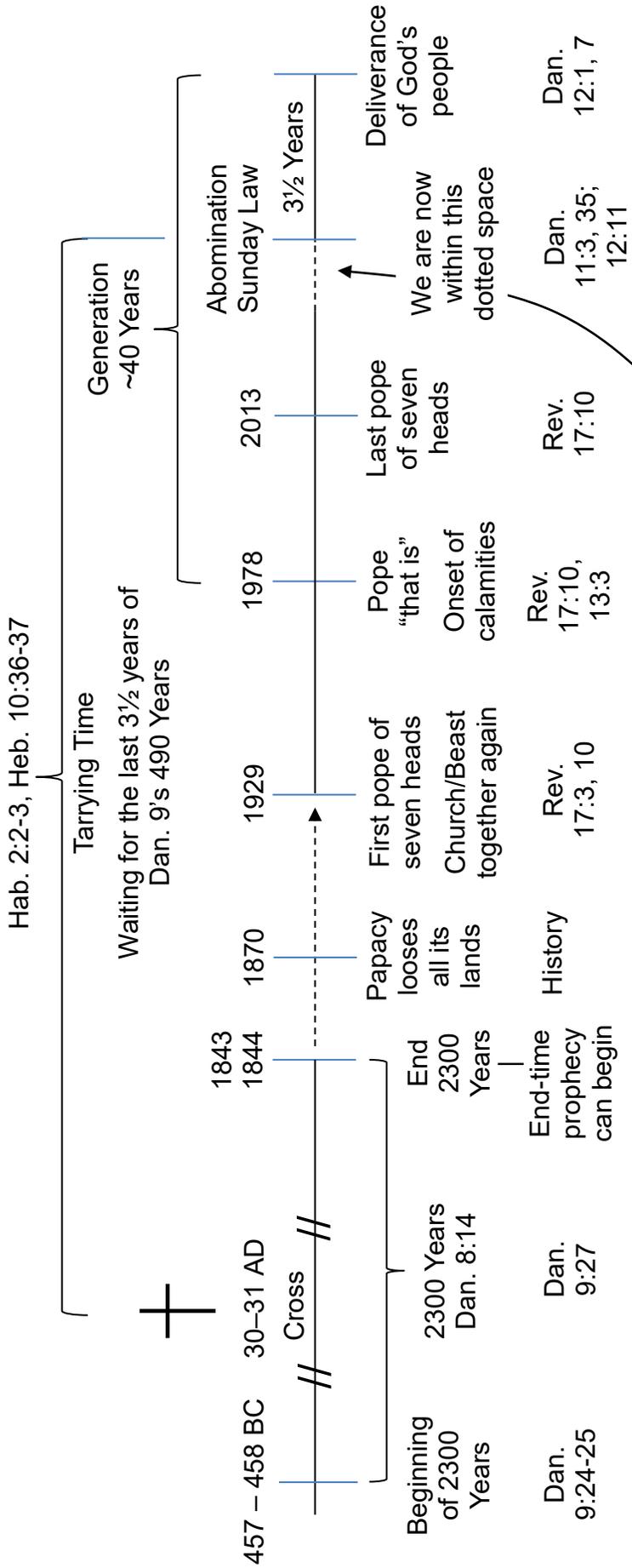
▼ *“Let the restraints now imposed by secular governments be removed, and Rome be re-instated in her former power, and there would speedily be a revival of her tyranny and persecution.”¹¹ It’s very close!*

⁹ *The Faith I Live By*, p. 329.

¹⁰ *The Great Controversy*, p. 565.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 564.

Overview of Significant End-Time Periods



Must happen before the Sunday law and the last 3½ years:

1. Coalition of ten world regions collectively give authority to the papacy – New World Order (Rev. 17:12-13).
2. Calamities in the United States reach a point of major devastation:
3. Blame is sought for. Not keeping Sunday holy is the secular and religious conclusion [10MR 239 (1899); RH Sept. 17 (1901); LDE, p. 256], leading to laws. For this to occur, tyranny must assume leadership in this country – it must begin to speak as a dragon (Rev. 13:11).
4. Satan appears as an angel (EGW 19MR282)