

CHAPTER XI

THE MEASUREMENT OF THE TEMPLE

Text (11:1-18)

1 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. 2 And the court which is without the temple leave without, and measure it not; for it hath been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. 3 And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. 4 These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the Lord of the earth. 5 And if any man desireth to hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man shall desire to hurt them, in this manner must he be killed. 6 These have the power to shut the heaven, that it rain not during the days of their prophecy: and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they shall desire. 7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them. 8 And their dead bodies lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. 9 And from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations do men look upon their dead bodies three days and a half, and suffer not their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. 10 And they that dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and make merry; and they shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth. 11 And after the three days and a half the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them that beheld them. 12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they went up into heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them. 13 And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand persons: and the rest were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second Woe is past: behold, the third Woe cometh quickly.

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said,

The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever.

16 And four and twenty elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, 17 saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast; because thou has taken thy great power, and didst reign. 18 and the nations were wroth, and thy wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, the small and the great; and to destroy them that destroy the earth.

Our attention is drawn in this chapter to the measuring of the temple, or the church as we shall find this temple to be.

vs. 1 "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."

This passage reminds us of a parallel one in the Old Testament, in the book that has been called the Apocalypse of the Old Testament. The parallel is found in (Zechariah 2:1-2) Zechariah was a prophet to the remnant which returned out of Babylon after the seventy years captivity. The prophet sees a man with a measuring line in his hand, who upon being asked, "whither goest thou?" replied, "To *measure* Jerusalem and to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof."

The significance of this parallel lies in the fact that Jerusalem was being rebuilt after its destruction. Likewise in the New Testament revelation the spiritual Jerusalem was being rebuilt after its destruction by the apostasy.

The spiritual Jerusalem of the New Testament is the church. Paul said, "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." (Gal. 4:26) There in the apocalypse of the Old Testament, Zion (Zech. 2:10) is being separated from everything not according to God's word (or Babylon) and in the New Testament Apocalypse God's people or Zion is being called out of the Babylon of confusion of apostasy.

As the temple in Zechariah was being made ready for God's occupancy "I will dwell in the midst of thee"—so in the apocalypse of the New Testament, the living church, the temple of God (I Cor. 3:16 "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God") or Zion—the city of the Living God, "But ye are come to mount Zion, and into the city of the Living God" (Heb. 12:22) is being rebuilt again and made ready for God's occupancy and use.

In the Old Testament apocalypse we read, "And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people," and in the last verse of the tenth chapter of Revelation, just before the beginning of the measurement of the temple, we read, "Thou must prophesy, or teach, again before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

Shall we carefully analyze this verse. We note:

1. *First* Who does this measuring.

It is not an angel who does the measuring but an apostle, even John himself. John is the sole remaining representative of the twelve apostles. In the giving of this little book in the beginning we read, that the church "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching" (Acts 2:42). The apostles, in the beginning did the measuring of the church. Now after the long and terrible apostacy when the little book is again given to the world through the work of translation, John, an apostle measures the temple.

The church for centuries, during the dark ages, had been measured, not by the word of God, but by the decrees of church councils and the pronouncements of the popes. The measurement is committed to a representative of the apostolic group. Originally in the day of regeneration beginning at Pentecost. Jesus said of this body:

"Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration (greek-palingenesio. or "re-creation," "making new" - the word occurs again in Titus 3:5 "not but works of righteousness which we have done, by his own mercy he hath saves us, by the washing of regeneration" etc.)

When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. 19:28)

Now, again, in the regeneration after the apostacy, they, the apostles, shall measure the church of Christ.

2. *Second* shall we consider what measure is used. It is called a reed like unto a rod." A rod is often used as a symbol of correction.

"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron" (Psalms 2:9)

"I will visit their transgression with a rod." (Psalms 89:32)

"A rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding." (Proverbs 10:13)

"A rod for the fool's back" (Proverbs 26:3)

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." (Prov. 22:15)

"And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth." (Isa. 11:4)

So in correcting the departures from the truth a measure was *given* John by which he should measure the temple. The measure then is not a human standard, because it was given John. John did not make or choose this rod, nor did any of the apostolic body. The reed was given him. Therefore, it is a divine measure. A divine standard of measurement was given the apostles by Christ. That measure, or reed was the New Testament.

“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” (John 12:48)

The New Testament, written by the apostles, given to them by the inspiration through the Holy Spirit, “who” shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you,” (John 14:26), is the only divine standard with which the church, her worshippers, and her worship is to be measured.

3. *Third*, shall we consider what is measured. He was to measure the temple. This could not have been the Jewish temple in Jerusalem because it had been destroyed under Titus and his Roman legions in A.D. 70. So this refers, not to a material temple, (because we are still in the realm of symbolism) but a spiritual temple. We have already heard Paul in (1 Cor. 3:16) declare that obedient believers are “the temple of the Living God.”

In Ezekiel the fourteenth chapter, (which is too long to quote in its entirety here), the prophet sees a vision (he, too, is in the realm of symbolism) in which an angel was measuring with a reed a temple unlike any earthly, or material temple. The whole temple itself is exactly *equal* to the *measurement of the reed*, and each of its many chambers of which it is composed is also *exactly equal to the measurement of the reed*.

This strange and mysterious symbolism, representing what is apparently impossible perfectly symbolized the true church of Christ when it attains unto the fullness of the divine measure.

The whole temple is exactly the size, being neither larger nor smaller than the reed. So the true church of Christ corresponds minutely with the divine measurements of the New Testament descrip-

tion of that glorious institution. In other words, the New Testament church, "Speaks where the New Testament speaks, and is silent where the New Testament is silent." It neither adds to where there is silence, nor subtracts from that which is spoken.

Again, as the temple in Ezekiel's vision was made up of many chambers, each of which was the same size of the reed, or of the whole temple itself, so the church of Christ is composed of a multitude of congregations, or called out assemblies, each of which corresponds exactly to the reed of divine measurement, the New Testament.

The individual congregations should all speak the same things, said the apostle Paul. They should not differ in name, creed, worship and observance of the ordinances of Christ as do the denomination-ism of the Sardis period.

Paul gives us the perfect seven of the divine pattern of the New Testament church. (Eph. 4:4-6) He says, "There is—

- 1 - One body - one organism, the church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18);
- 2 - One Spirit - life animating the one body, even the Holy Spirit. (John 14:26) (1 John 4:1-3);
- 3 - One Hope - the certainty of Life eternal (Acts 23:6; 1 Cor. 15:19; Heb. 6:18-20)
- 4 - One Lord - one authority (Matt. 28:18 - Luke 2:11 - Acts 2:25 - Acts 10:36);
- 5 - One Faith - one confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. (Matt. 16:16-18 - John 11:27 - 20:31 Acts 8:37 - 10:43)
- 6 - One Baptism - one common practice, water immersion into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19)
- 7 - One God and Father of all - God by creation and Father by recreation. Father of his one and only begotten Son (John 3:16) and of all baptized believers by adoption (Rom. 8:15 - Gal. 4:6-7)

We must also take note that not only were the temple and its worshippers measured, but its altar. It was on the altar that the sacrifice was offered, so the churches belief in the one atonement made by Christ is to be measured. This is very significant. The apostate

church had taught the resacrifice of the Christ in the mass as conducted at the altar, though they claim it is unbloody. If it is a bloodless sacrifice it is entirely without efficacy, because "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins" (Hebrews 9:22)

Neither was Christ to be re-sacrificed, because we read:

"Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others. For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now *once* in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the *sacrifice of himself*. . . . So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the *second* time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:25-28)

So we see He only returns once, so He could not return in every mass conducted. The Lord's supper is the "*remembrance*" of a "*finished*" sacrifice. Only one absent needs to be remembered.

And does history record such a measurement? The most cursory examination of history will acquaint us with such a measurement. In the last chapter, the tenth, we found that the little Book, the Bible, was given to the world through the translation by the reformers, Wycliffe, Huss, Coverdale, Tyndale and Luther.

These reformers brushed aside the voice of the papacy, the writings of the fathers, tradition and decrees of various church councils as false reeds of measurement and accepted the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice.

Of course history also records that these reformers many times failed to continue to use this divine reed of measurement.

Luther substituted the Augsburg Confession and used it as a measuring reed. John Calvin resorted to the Westminster Confession of Faith; the Wesley's to the Book of Discipline, the church of England and Episcopalianism to the Thirty-Nine articles. But the principle survived and from all these groups there emerged in the dawn of the nineteenth century a movement of Restoration, which took as its divine reed of measurement "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; and where the Bible is silent we are silent." These Christians of the

Restoration movement understood what is involved in the symbol of measuring a building. They well understood that its limits are fixed in every direction. *All that belonged to the church*, as patterned after the New Testament model, was included; and *whatsoever did not belong to that spiritual edifice* was 'excluded'.

Thus we, today are looking back upon a continued searching of the "little Book" for the old landmarks long obscured by the accumulation of the ecclesiastical debris of the centuries.

In this latter movement to restore the church in all her pristine glory and apostolic pattern there has been a seeking after the old paths and the whole church of that movement, as well as the thousands of individual "call-out-assemblies" are all one, each equal to the measurement of the divine reed.

vs. 2. "But the *court* which is *without the temple* leave (or "cast out" margin) and measure it not; for it is given to the Gentiles."

Note the word "cast out", not leave out as in the King James version, is very forceful.

Those within by implication are "Jews". We have already found in this book the word "Jew" is used to designate the true people of God, who are 'within'. By the same token, and in contradistinction, the "gentile" world symbolizes those who are said to be "without". In Rev. 22:15 those that are excluded are spoken of as "without are dogs",—that being the appellation applied to the Gentiles by the Jews, since dogs were ceremonially unclean animals.

In the physical temple of Jesus' day the court without the temple was for the Gentiles, though they had precious little opportunity to enter to worship for the priests filled it with bleating sheep, cooing doves and the barking of venders, accompanied by the jingle of the money changers!

The court without was not to be measured. Here is meant the court of the Gentiles which surrounded the temple itself. This is symbolical of the world, and since the court without is not to be measured then the world with its unregenerate sinners, of which the court was a type, was not to be measured, because it did not and could not come up to the divine standard of measurement.

“And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.” We will not go into the symbolism of the “forty and two months” at this time, but later. Five times this period is referred to in Scriptures.

The “Holy City” is a type of the true church, which is the city of the Living God (Heb. 12:22) and it is to be trodden down or oppressed for a period of forty and two months, or twelve hundred and sixty days. Since a day in prophetic symbolism represents one year, then this time period is one of twelve hundred and sixty years.

The Two Witnesses

vs. 3, 4 “And I will give power unto my two witnesses and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth”.

By this verse and the context in which we find it we are evidently to understand these two witnesses are to testify concurrently during the same period of time that the Holy City is trodden under foot, and since they are to testify in sackcloth, they are to be in great tribulation during that length of time.

We may well pause to ask, “Why two witnesses?” Since we are living in a book of symbolism, the number ‘two’ like other numbers found in this book must be symbolical.

Two, we may say, is the number of *divine sufficiency* in *God’s testimony*. Christ said, “But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established” (Matt. 18:16)

Christ sent his disciples, who went forth witnessing, in pairs. Pairs are frequently encountered in the Scriptures. Moses and Aaron labored before all Israel; Joshua and Caleb brought back a favorable report concerning the land and together declared that “We are more than able to go up and take the land;” Haggai and Zechariah were twin prophets of the time of the rebuilding of the temple. On the missionary journeys Paul took another with him, sometimes Barnabas, at other times Silas and again Timothy.

On the evil side of things we meet with Jannes and Jambres.

Paul declared: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his council, confirmed it by an oath: that by *two* immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation." (Heb. 6: 17-18)

We learn from this verse that they are God's witnesses, so what they speak must be by divine inspiration.

The Two Olive Trees and Two Candlesticks

Furthermore we learn that these two witnesses are the two olive-trees and the two candlesticks.

The purpose of a candlestick is to give light and that light is supplied by the burning of oil; evidently in this case, olive oil. The olive tree furnishes the oil required of the lamp to continue to burn and give light.

This reference to the two olive trees and two candlesticks harks back again to the apocalypse of the Old Testament, the book of Zechariah. They both are mentioned in the fourth chapter. Zechariah saw them, likewise in a vision where symbolism is the order of things. The angel asked Zechariah, "knowest thou not what these be? and I said, no, my lord. Then said he, these are the two anointed ones (literally sons of oil) that stand by the Lord of the whole earth" (Zech. 4:13, 14)

This declares that God's two witnesses are furnished continuously with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as typified by the constant flow of the golden oil through the golden pipes (Zech. 4:12)

I think we have enough information before us to identify the two witnesses. The "little Book" or the Bible is divided into two divisions or the Old and New Testaments. Here then, we have *two* testaments. The word *testament* signifies a "witness." It is derived from the Latin word, "testor", which means, "I testify". The two testaments, then, are the two *witnesses*.

And both *testaments*, or *witnesses* are inspired by the Holy Spirit, the oil of the olive trees. Peter said of the Old Testament prophesy,

“For the prophesy came not in old time by the will of men; but holy men of God spake as moved by the Holy Spirit.” (II Peter 1:21)

Again he declared in II Pet. 3:1-2:

“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior.”

Paul said: “The household of God is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.” (Eph. 2:20)

These two witnesses, the Old and New Testaments, testify of Christ. Jesus said of the Old Testament Scriptures “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me.” (John 5:39)

In the new Testament, John, the author of Apocolypse said in (John 20:31) “These things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life in his name.”

One of the witnesses - the Old Testament - testifies of the Lord in type and shadow, and prophesy; the other - the New Testament - witness of the Christ in fact and fulfilment. These two witnesses are the Lord's.

And to them He gives divine power to testify, because they are fed with the oil of inspiration, which is the Holy Spirit, one of whose names is the Comforter, or one who energizes—gives power. Reading on:

vs. 5 “And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.”

They speak as one, for we read “fire proceedeth out of *their*

mouth." Jeremiah likens the word of God to a fire, and it is quite startling to learn that the fire of God's *anger* is particularly directed against the prophets that speak and claim for their own utterances the authority of God, by saying, "He saith." Hear Jeremiah:

"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces" Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbor.

Behold I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith." (Jeremiah 23:29-31)

Again the Lord said to Jeremiah: "Behold, I will make my words in thy mouth *fire*, and this people wood, and it shall *devour* them."

He here uses the same word "devour" as Revelation employed in describing the destructive power of the fire of His word, or the two witnesses.

Paul says "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (I Cor. 3:13)

So God's word shall try every teacher or prophet and every mans work, whether it be true or false.

Christ, you remember, fought against the teaching of compromise in the Bergamos period with the sword of His mouth, so it is significant that this destroying fire of his two witnesses is said to proceed from the mouth. And it is true that the word of God can both save and destroy. It can both justify and condemn. At the judgment bar of God the fate of all men will be decided by the word. Jesus said in His commission:

"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16)

vs. 6 "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will."

In other words, while this is symbolic language, these two witnesses have the characteristics of Elijah, the prophet and Moses, the lawgiver. Like the former they have "power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and power like the latter over waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with plagues."

They two, collectively, have the power to do both.

vs. 7 "And when they shall have finished their testimony" the thought here is, "when they shall have made their testimony complete." This does not mean when they have ended testifying, but when it is complete or full.

"The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and kill them." Where ever the word is fully, or completely proclaimed the beast will make war against the word to kill it. Did not Jesus tell his followers, "When anyone heareth the word of the Kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart." (Matt. 13:19)

A beast in Revelation is a symbol of a temporal power. The power that comes from the bottomless pit or the abyss we have already found to be Satanic, (Rev. 9:2-11). The beast then represents some devilish power or influence. This era, we shall find represents the great beast government upon which ecclesiastical dominion rides to great heights of power and dominion. According to the symbolism of this book, then, we are to understand that God's two witnesses will be suppressed for a brief time by governmental authority, under the sway of Satan.

vs. 8 "The scene of their being overcome is next given: "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which *spiritually* is called Sodom and Egypt where also our Lord was crucified."

The last six words of this verse have caused some to think it refers to Jerusalem in Palestine, but this is not so, because we read, "*spiritually* is called Sodom and Egypt. So the physical Jerusalem is positively not indicated here.

This term is used eight times in Revelation and is never used referring to the physical Jerusalem. It is used in contrast to the Holy City. Since the Holy City, we have found symbolizes the church, a wicked city would signify an apostate church and a corrupted religion.

The designations "Sodom" and "Egypt" are significant. Sodom with it sins and sorceries is a type of this apostate church, or city. Egypt, the house of bondage, typifies the followers of apostacy, in bondage to false teaching of that great city. Sodom speaks of moral and spiritual corruption, Egypt speaks of spiritual bondage and darkness, as well as cruelty and oppression.

"Where our Lord was crucified" is worthy of special attention. Later on in Revelation, we shall find that the apostate church is likened to a city resting on seven mountains. It is this city church which crucified our Lord!

The outstanding characteristic of the Roman church, whose seat of authority is the city resting on the seven Palatine Hills, is her innumerable crucifixions of our Lord. While she has crucified Him with the apostacy of false teaching and practice, we must ever remember that the heart and center of her worship, both of the living worshippers, the ministrations of her priests, and the burial of her dead is the "Mass."

And in the mass, under the false doctrine of transubstantiation, which claims the bread and wine are the literal body and blood of the Lord, she has Christ crucified millions, yes billions, of times. How well is it then designated, "Where also our Lord was crucified." How much is written in this symbolic expression.

But since the next verse reveals how long these witnesses were to lie unburied, it now becomes the proper and logical time to interpret the expression which signifies how long these two witnesses shall prophesy before they are slain.

Back in Rev. 11:3, these two witnesses were to prophesy in sackcloth for a period of a thousand two hundred and three score days.

The Twelve Hundred and Sixty Days

Sackcloth was in John's day a garment of mourning. It was a symbol of sorrow and tribulation. So we are informed then that the two witnesses, or the Word of God, shall testify in times of mourning

and deep tribulation. There were to be oppositions, hinderances, restraints and efforts to stifle their testimony. Does history bear this out? Let him who runs also read.

The Roman Catholic church buried the manuscripts of the Word in the dust of neglect of its monasteries. Copies that were not thus lost were burned. Tischendorf found a monk at the convent of St. Catherine, as late as 1859 in the act of preparing to burn a manuscript which proved to be one of the three best preserved copies of the Bible. He induced the Czar of Russia to buy it and later it was sold to the British Museum for a quarter of a million dollars, where it now resides.

Besides neglect and destruction the Roman church took the Bible out of the hands of the common people and made it a crime for any one to possess a copy of it. Many martyrs died at the hands of the apostate church because of having read it and daring to preach its truths. Among such, a few names stand like mountain peaks above the plain of common humanity; namely John Huss, Wycliffe, Jerome, Savonarola, Latimer, Ridley etc.

Thousands were consigned to the stake for no greater crime than that of having in their possession the Holy Scriptures.

Then, besides all this, the Bible was buried in Latin, a dead language, which few understood. Even the masses were said in Latin. It has been a standing policy of the Papy to refuse to circulate the "two witnesses" in the common vernacular. Truthfully, the witnesses did prophesy in sackcloth.

And this period of mourning was to be twelve-hundred and sixty days. This span of time is spoken of under various figures of speech, but all refer to the same length of years. In Daniel 7:25, the horn which arose out of the ten horns was "to wear out the saints of the most High for a period of 'a time and times and half a time'." This is generally understood to be a period of three years and a half years, or forty-two months, or 1260 days. Since a day in prophetic symbolism stands for a year, this would mean 1260 years.

In Rev. 11:2, the outer court was to be trodden down by the gentiles for forty-two months, or 1260 days, or years. In Rev. 11:3 the two witnesses were to prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days. The woman was fed of God in the wilderness for 1260 days, or 1260 years (Rev. 12:6). She is said to be nourished there for a time, and times and half a time, (Rev. 12:14) or three and one half years, or 1260 days or years. The same phraseology as used in Daniel.

So here we have five different passages in the Scriptures and all cover the same period of time in the history of the church, and all pertain to a long period of time of bitter persecution.

Since a day in prophetic symbolism represents a year, then horn referred to by Daniel will speak great words against the Most High for 1260 years. For 1260 years the Gentiles, or a world empire shall tread the church under foot. For 1260 years the Bible shall testify in sackcloth and, the woman—a type of the true church—, shall flee into the wilderness, or be in hiding, where God shall feed her for that length of time.

Can we identify this period? History again is our right hand companion. The church suffered at the hands of two great powers, first, of Pagan Rome and second, of papal Rome, which came to preeminence and power upon the decline and fall of pagan Rome.

If the misfortunes of the Empire tended to enhance the prestige and power of the ecclesiastical government seated in Rome, much more did the final downfall of the Empire hasten that religious domination to fruition.

With the removal of the Emperor the bishop of Rome became ecclesiastical and temporal sovereign. The development, while gradual was none the less sure and irresistible. Paul in his time saw the mystery of iniquity already at work. Hear the apostle on this very beginning of departure from the faith once and for all delivered unto the saints and the rise of the man of sin:

“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and bring to naught by the manifestation of his coming, even he whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.” (II Thess. 2:7-9)

Since the development is so imperceptible it is difficult to arrive at the exact year in the growth of papal power, which would be the beginning of the 1260 year period.

Earlier in this discussion of the apocalypse we briefly reviewed the life of Justinian who ascended the eastern throne in 527. He was a man of unusual ability, so much so that the time of his sovereignty became known as the “Era of Justinian.” He became the Restorer of the Empire by conquest, and the law given to civilization by his collection and publication of the “Body of the

Roman Law." But his activities did not end here. He took a strong hand in the affairs of the church also. Says Gibbon:

"The reign of Justinian was a uniform yet various scene of persecution: and he appears to have surpassed his indolent predecessors, both in the contrivance of his laws and the rigor of their execution. The insufficient term of these months was assigned for the conversion or exile of all heretics; and if he still connived at their precarious stay, they were deprived under his iron yoke, not only of the benefits of society but of the common birthright of men and Christians. Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" pages 528, 529—Vol. v

He further described how those who resisted these decrees and acts of persecution conducted themselves, "On the approach of Catholic priests and soldiers, they grasped with alacrity the crown of martyrdom." Page 529, Vol. IV.

Gibbon then proceeds to relate how the church was drenched in the blood of the persecutions instigated by Justinian. Surely our two witnesses were then testifying in sackcloth. By A.D. 531, four years after his ascension to the Eastern throne, Justinian issued a decree which subjected the whole of Christendom to the Roman pope.

D'Aubigne's Reformation, Vol. 1, page 42 informs us that in A.D. 533, Justinian bestowed upon the Roman pope for the first time, the title of Rector Ecclesiae," or Lord of the churches.

Surely Paul's 'man of sin' mentioned in II Thess. 2:3, has now been fully exposed to view and revealed to all history. The papacy, the mystery of iniquity, working from the days of the apostles, after centuries of struggle has come to the full bloom of ecclesiastical power.

The secular power has finally placed its stamp of approval upon the supremacy of the papacy and supported this royal sanction by inflicting persecution upon all who failed to bow the knee to papal Rome. The climax has now been reached in the long series of ecclesiastical encroachments upon the supremacy of Christ and the autonomy of the local church. The word of God is superceded by the word of papal Rome and the two witnesses begin their long period of testifying in the mourning of sackcloth.

At this time Daniel's little horn has risen above its fellow sovereigns, the holy city, the true church begins to be trodden under the feet of Gentile government, both physical and spiritual. The true church is driven into the wilderness of hiding.

Now shall we continue our scriptural unfolding, or uncovering of the experiences of our two witnesses.

vs. 8 "And their dead bodies shall be in the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

vs. 9 "And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

In other words the death of these two witnesses will be such a conspicuous event that all nations shall take note of it and perceive it, and this event will bring rejoicing just as the angel says:

vs. 10 "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice, over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets *tormented* them that dwell on the earth."

These witnesses prophesied, or taught the will of God and their warnings, exhortations, admonitions and denunciations against the apostacy tormented the dwellers of earth.

It has ever been so. The word of these two witnesses, the Old and New Testaments have always been tormenting to the wicked, morally or spiritually speaking.

The Bible may be a 'little Book,' and those who proclaim it, few in number and of lowly mein, yet it is as Paul declares:

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but *mighty through God* to the pulling down of strongholds) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that *exalteth itself against the knowledge of God* and bringing into captivity every thought to the *obedience of Christ.*" (II Cor. 10:4-5)

Now shall we take up the thread of history again. Going back to the date 533 A.D. when the "man of sin" was fully revealed in the ascension of the pope by secular decree to the Lord of the church, instead of Christ as head, we add 1260 years. This brings us up to the year A.D. 1793. Shall we let history tell us what notable event happened in that year. Did the testimony of the two witnesses suffer death at that time?

The church had become so apostatized and corrupt that the world swung like a pendulum to the other extreme, to skepticism, agnosticism and outright infidelity. There came the age of free thinking and infidelity.

There were Voltaire and Rousseau in France; Frederick the great in Germany: Tom Paine, Hume, Bolingbroke and Gibbon in Britain, and Thomas Jefferson and Paine in America.

The head of all this infidelity centered in France. Voltaire predicted that in one hundred years the Bible would become extant. The crest of the storm broke in France. The nation arose in a mighty movement that became a crusade, the object of which was to abolish religion and enthrone atheism. France the mightiest nation on earth at the time, for the first and only time in history, by legislative enactment abolished all religion. The convention met and by law abolished not only the Bible, but God. Not even Russia, with all her infidelity has gone to this legislative extreme.

They abolished the old calendar and inaugurated a new one, the seven day week was suppressed, each month being divided into three periods of ten days each called 'decades' and each day into ten parts. On Nov. 7, 1793 the revolutionists proceeded to abolish Christianity. They had dethroned the kings of earth; they proceeded to dethrone the King of heaven. The guillotine supplanted the cross. On Nov. 10, 1793 this madness culminated in the inauguration of the worship of reason. A mayor, or some popular leader, upon every tenth day would mount the altar and harangue the people concerning the achievements of the revolution and the privilege of living in the new era when no one was oppressed, either by the kings of earth or the King of heaven.

This convention began on Sept. 20, 1792 and ran for three years, to Oct. 26, 1795 or 749 days, to be followed by the "Reign of Terror."

Gradually, saner heads began to take hold of the helm of state. One of the great movers to saner thinking was a deputy of the Third Estate, by the name of Robespierre. He "wished to sweep away christianity as a superstition, but he would stop at deism."

He did not believe a state could be established on atheism. He declared, "If God did not exist it would behoove man to invent him." Shall we hear Myers at this juncture:

"In a remarkable address before the convention on May 7, 1794, Robespierre eloquently defended the doctrines of God and immortality, and then closed his speech by offering for adoption this decree.

- (1) The French people recognize the existence of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul.
- (2) They recognize that the worship most worthy of the Supreme Being is the practice of the duties of man——"

The convention adapted the resolution with the utmost enthusiasm.

The two witnesses were to lie unburied for three days and a half, or three years and a half, since a day prophetically stands for a year. The enthronement of atheism lasted approximately three years and a half, when the French nation began to recover from its satanic madness. The atheistic decrees were repealed and Christianity acknowledged.

vs. 11 "And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon all them that saw them.

This signifies that the two witnesses regain their power and influence to testify. The witnesses were in sackcloth no longer. The age of religious toleration set in.

Summary

Thus we see that the man of sin was fully revealed in A.D. 533, when the pope became Lord of the church, dethroning, as it were the Christ. 1260 years later, the two witnesses were killed by the same legislative power which enthroned the Bishop of Rome as Rector Ecclesiae. "But three years and a half later these atheistic enactments were repealed and an age was inaugurated which gave the two witness freer reign and activity than ever before.

The Bible began to be circulated around the globe. With the nineteenth century began a mighty movement to circumnavigate the globe with the Scriptures, until today they are translated into nearly eleven hundred languages and dialects. And the very house where Voltaire lived, who predicted the Bible would be an unknown book in one hundred years, became a printing house to print the Bible itself! This lends light to our next verse:

vs. 12 "And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, come up higher, and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them."

This is still in the realm of symbolism. To be exalted up to heaven, symbolically, means to experience new power, influence and prosperity. An example of this usage is found in Christ's statement concerning Capernaum:

"And thou Capernaum, which art *exalted into heaven*, shall be brought down to hell." (Matt. 11:23)

And truly the enemies of the two witnesses have had ample opportunity to behold the exaltation of the two witnesses in the world

wide circulation of the Bible throughout all the nations under heaven. Even the soldiers of the armies of the nations are furnished with copies of the Bible and that by the millions in number! Bible Societies date from this period which also marks the era of modern missionary endeavor.

No wonder the next verse follows naturally and logically.

vs. 13 "And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."

Remembering always that the great city referred to is the apostate church in contradistinction to the holy city the true church, we also remember that the Roman Empire in its downfall divided into ten horns, or, kingdoms, of which France was one of the ten. So a tenth part of the city fell from papal domination and inaugurated the age of religious freedom and toleration.

"And the same hour was there a great earthquake." An earthquake symbolized a great change. From a monarchy France changed to a republic. Says Myers:

"The revolution having accomplished its work in France, having there destroyed Royal despotism and abolished class privilege, now set itself about fulfilling its early promise of giving liberty to all peoples. In a word, the Revolution became what has been called "an armed propaganda"—She would make all Europe like herself. Herself a republic, she would make all nations republic."

Myers "Medieval and Modern History page 586

Myers further relates:

"From the coronation of Napoleon in 1804 until his downfall in 1815 the tremendous struggle went on almost without intermission. It was the war of the giants. Europe was shaken from end to end with such armies as the world had not seen since the days of Xerxes."

Myers. Medieval and Modern History page 553.

Then there was another earth shaking event. France's soldiers excited an insurrection in Rome, made the pope a prisoner and proclaimed the Roman Tiberine Republic. Napoleon declared the pope "was no longer a secular prince" and took possession of his domains. Pope pius straightway excommunicated the Emperor, who thereupon arrested him, and for three years held him a state prisoner. He further removed the college of cardinals to Paris. His ambition

was that Paris would become the capital of Christendom and he would govern the religious as well as the political world.

At the same time the two witnesses were exalted in the new birth of freedom, an *earth quake* was shaking Europe. This was a religious and political earthquake.

The slaying of seven thousand men may well represent the wholesale destruction of royalty, of rank and nobility in France. The guillotine speaks eloquently here how thousands fell in the days of the Reign of Terror. Kings, Queens, Dukes—all fell. Paris became hardened to the sound of carts lumbering through the streets, carrying distinguished and insignificant people to the knife.

Around the guillotine gathered the terrible "knitting woman" of whom Dickens tells in his book "The Tale of Two Cities." These knitters stopped in their counting of stitches only long enough to check the heads as they fell from the descending knife.

vs. 14 "The second woe is past; and behold the third woe cometh quickly.

The Seventh Trumpet Sounds

vs. 15 "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

This is the seventh trumpet of the seventh seal, which brings the final victory and consummation of the age. Here is the last great triumph. It is the brightness of Zion's glad morning, which ushers in the reign of Christ and the instrumentality by which this final victory is brought about is the exaltation of the two witnesses, or the world-wide conquest of God's Word.

The heavenly citizens join in the paen of praise.

vs. 16 "The four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell on their faces, and worshipped God."

This is the first we have beheld these princes of heaven since the opening of this great vision of the seven seals and the seven trumpets with its parenthetical interludes. And what is their song? Hear them:

vs. 17 "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and has reigned."

They sing of the eternity of Christ, the great I AM—the self-existent One. While it may have seemed to the Saints that Christ

was not reigning during this long period from Pentecost, when Christ sat down at the right hand of God, to the end of the gospel age, yet he was reigning and was able to bring to pass his will in the end. And now John reveals the distress of the nations at the time of judgment, and the reward of the saints.

vs. 18 "And the nations were angry and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged."

This is a vision of the judgment day. He continues:

"And that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great:"

This the reward for which the saints waited who had cried "How long O Lord, Holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

They are now blessed with the eternal reward while those who persecuted them also received the reward of God's revenge. They are destroyed.

"And shouldest destroy them which should destroy the earth."

The nineteenth verse begins a new series of visions which belongs to our next consideration. We have now studied two series of visions given to John.

The First was of the seven church periods as he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day.

(Rev. 1:10) the history of the spiritual welfare of the church is given, covering her life from Pentecost to the end.

The Second was of the political development of the Roman Empire as it effected the church. This is the period of the seven seals and seven trumpets, which also runs from Christ's enthronement on the right hand of God, as proclaimed by Peter on Pentecost, to the blast of the seventh trumpet "and the time of the dead," or the resurrection of the dead for judgment. Paul referred to this last trump when he spoke of the resurrection. He saw there the resurrection of the righteous:

"Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last *trump*; for the *trumpet* shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptable, and we shall be changed." (I Cor. 15:51-52)

So we see that our first two visions begin at the same starting point—Pentecost, and ends at the same point of time—The Judgment.