

# The Beast From The Abyss

That Slays The Two Witnesses!

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An Exposition of Revelation 11:3-13

The prophecy of Revelation 11 commences with the third verse of the chapter. The first two verses actually belong to the prophecy of chapter 10. Many and varied attempts have been made to interpret Revelation 11, but the majority of them have been most unsatisfactory. Scholars admit that this chapter is the most difficult of the whole book, therefore it is essential that we adhere strictly to the basic Bible principles of interpretation.

“And I will give power to my two witnesses and they shall prophesy a thousand, two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth.” Verse 3.

## WHO ARE THE TWO WITNESSES?

There appear to be three main interpretations.

1. They represent Moses and Elijah.
2. They represent the Christian church.
3. They represent the Word of God in the Old and the New Testaments.

The following reasons are presented as to why the first two applications should be rejected.

1. The two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth for 1260 prophetic days or 1260 years. This was the period of Papal supremacy from 538 to 1798 A.D. There is no evidence that Moses and Elijah appeared during that period. Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36) in their glorified immortal state. How then could they be slain and their bodies lie exposed for three and half prophetic days or three & half years? In their glorified immortal state they would not be subject to death.

2. It is true that in Revelation the 7 candlesticks represent the Church of God. (Revelation 1:20.) But this is when they are presented in the setting of the heavenly temple or sanctuary. However in Revelation 11 the two candlesticks are not presented in the setting of the heavenly temple but in the earthly conflict of good and evil.

(a) During the period of the 1260 years, the church of God was attacked not just at the close of that period, but during the whole of the 1260 years. In Revelation 11:2 the church is referred to under the symbol of “the holy city” which was trodden down for forty-two prophetic months or 1260 years.

(b) How could the church be overcome and killed (v.7.) when Jesus declared that “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”. (Matthew 16:18.)

(c) How could it be truthfully said “that fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours” the enemies of the church, “and to smite them with plagues” when Jesus instructed his church “to love your enemies, bless them that curse you and do good, to them that despitefully use you.” (Matthew 5:44.)

(d) When did true Christians “torment people on the earth?” Verse 10.

We therefore conclude that the two witnesses represent the Word of God in the form of the two Testaments, for the following reasons:

1. Scripture clearly symbolizes the Word of God as a candlestick or lamp.
2. Scripture speaks of both the Old Testament and the New Testament as “a witness”.

Jesus Christ designated the Word of God as “the prophets”. Verse 10. (Luke 24:27, 44.)

“These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.”

The book of Revelation is based mostly on the Old Testament and it is from the book of Zechariah that the Revelator borrows the symbols of the olive trees and candlesticks. Zechariah was shown two olive trees which fed their oil into the candlestick. In answer to the prophet’s question,

“What are these, my lord?” The angel answered,

“This is the word of the Lord saying, ‘Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit’ said the Lord.” (1)

The candlestick is a lamp stand and the lamp or lamp stand is a symbol of the Bible.

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” and, “The entrance of thy words gives light.” (2)

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

“Search the scriptures for they are they which testify [or bear witness] of me.” (3)

Likewise the New Testament is also declared to be a witness.

“This gospel shall be preached as a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come.” (4)

Through the centuries numerous scholars of Biblical prophecy have concluded that the two witnesses of Revelation 11 represent the Scriptures. Over twenty such scholars could be listed that this writer is aware of. (5) Bishop Wordsworth, the noted Anglican scholar declared,

“The two witnesses, the olive trees, are the two Testaments ministering their testimony to the church of the old dispensation as well as to that of the new, which explains the two witnesses being called also the two candlesticks. The church in both dispensations has no light in herself, but derives it from the Spirit through the witness of the twofold Word, the two olive trees.” (6)

Verses 5-6 confirm that the two witnesses represent the Word of God.

“And if any man will hurt them, fire proceed out of their mouth, and devours their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this member be killed.”

Whoever hurts God’s Word - whoever defiles it, perverts it, conceals it or hinders its work, if he does not repent, he will ultimately, in the judgment, be destroyed by fire.

“If any man shall add to these things God shall add to him the plagues that are written In this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life.” (7)

Elsewhere in this chapter, it declares that the two witnesses are also “two prophets.” (Verse 10) The two Testaments are personified, or represented as living persons in order to highlight the power and influence of the Bible.

“These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy.” Verse 6.

In Elijah’s day he declared, by the Word of God, that there would be drought for three & half years. By the Word of God also, the drought was broken,

“The word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, ‘Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.’” (8)

“And have power over waters to turn them to blood.”

This was illustrated in the experience of Moses when seeking Israel’s deliverance from ancient Egypt. One of the ten plagues that fell on Egypt was the turning of waters to blood, and it was done by the Word of God. (9)

“And to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will.”

The Word of God warns that before the Second Advent, severe judgments will fall on the unsaved in the form of seven plagues. (10)

The two witnesses “shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth.” Verse 3.

“Prophecy” here means to preach or proclaim, but “in sackcloth”. Sackcloth in Bible times was used in connection with affliction, mourning, desolation. Applied to the Bible it signified that it would be under suspicion, stigmatized, made illegal. The Bible would prophesy in obscurity and secrecy.

“A thousand two hundred and three-score days”, (1260 days): This period of time is mentioned in seven different places in Daniel and Revelation. (11). It is referred to as “time, times and a half”, i.e. three and a half years, and also “42 months”. There are 30 days in a Bible month, so this equals 1260 days. In prophecy one day equals one year, so this period equals 1260 years. (12)

This was the period in which the Papacy held political supremacy. It commenced in 538 A.D. and concluded in 1798 when the French Government stripped the Papacy of political power. In this period, then, the prediction states that the two witnesses are to “prophesy in sackcloth”.

### **DID THE SCRIPTURES PROPHECY IN OBSCURITY?**

It is indisputable that wherever the Papacy was supreme, the scriptures were suppressed. The Bible was preserved in the Latin language which mostly, only the priesthood understood. The Bible, was, as it were, locked up - kept from the people. It was in obscurity. The Bible, in the common language of the people, was expressly forbidden by church and civil law. Only Mother Church could explain Scripture, was the Papacy’s claim. Bible reading turned people into heretics, so the Bible must be kept from the people. (13)

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

“The decree of Toulouse 1229 A.D. [in France] which established the ‘Tribunal of the Inquisition’ against all the readers of the Bible in the vulgar [common] tongue was an edict of fire, bloodshed and devastation. It ordained the entire destruction of the houses, the humblest places of concealment and even the subterranean retreats of men convicted of possessing the scriptures; that they should be pursued to the forests and caves of the earth; and that even those who harbored them should be severely punished. As a result, the Bible was everywhere prohibited; it vanished, as it were, underground; it descended into the

tomb. These decrees were followed for five hundred years by innumerable punishments, in which the blood of the saints flowed like water.” (14)

In a convocation held at Oxford under Archbishop Arundel in 1408, it was enacted.

“That no man hereafter by his own authority translate any text of the scripture in to English or any other tongue, by way of a book, booklet, or tract and that no man read any such book, booklet or tract, now lately composed in the time of John Wycliffe or since publicly or privately upon pain of greater excommunication. He that shall do contrary to this shall likewise be punished as a favorer of heresy and error.” (15)

The following, from the Episcopal Register of Lincoln (England) for the years 1518-1521, illustrates how the Bible prophesied in sackcloth or obscurity and secrecy. Indictments were issued against Bible believers.

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

“John Newnan was impeached because he was present in the house of John Barret, at the reading of scripture.”

William Halliday “was detected for having in his custody a book of the Acts of the Apostles in English.”

“One Fredwey and several others, because they were heard to recite the Ten Commandments in English.” (16)

“When they [two witnesses] shall have finished their testimony.” Revelation 11:7.

The Two Testaments or Witnesses were to testify in sackcloth for 1260 years, i.e. from 538-1798. And when they are finishing their testimony, that is, around 1798:

“The beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them.” Verse 7.

There are at least nine specifications of the beast of Revelation 11:

1. It is a political power or kingdom.
2. It rises at the close of the 1260 year period, i.e. 1798.
3. It emerges from the bottomless pit, or the abyss.
4. It is connected with, or is a part of spiritual Babylon.
5. It causes an earthquake or political upheaval.
6. It is likened to Egypt.
7. It slays or abolishes the Bible.
8. It is likened also to Sodom.
9. It was located where true Christians had suffered enormous persecution.

### **1. IT IS A POLITICAL POWER OR KINGDOM**

In prophecy a beast represents a kingdom. (17) Therefore, this beast represents a political power. It is not a philosophy or ideology such as Communism.

### **2. IT RISES AT THE CLOSE OF THE 1260 YEAR PERIOD**

(1798) - This beast cannot represent the Papacy because the Papacy made war on the Bible and on God's people during the whole period of the 1260 years. This beast emerges at the close of the 1260 years, whereas the Papal beast of Revelation 13:1-10 and Revelation 17 received a deadly wound at the close of the 1260 years.

### **3. IT EMERGES FROM THE BOTTOMLESS PIT**

What is the Bottomless Pit or Abyss? This expression is used seven times in Revelation, which is a book of symbols; therefore, the "bottomless pit" is a symbolic term.

(1) In Revelation 9 it is used three times to describe the source and inspiration of the symbolic locusts that are inspired by Satan to bring woe to the inhabitants of the earth under the fifth trumpet.

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

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

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

All the above usages indicate two things in common: Satan is the inspirer and controller, and it is a place of death. Now whose territory is the grave? Who is the author of death? Whose prison-house is the grave? It is the realm of Satan. It is his stronghold or arsenal. The bottomless pit represents Satan's kingdom, and any person or power that rises from the bottomless pit is inspired by him. In scripture the things of God are often described as coming "from above", while the things of Satan are described as emerging "from beneath."

"This wisdom descends not from above but is earthly, sensual, devilish. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits." (18)

In the book of Revelation, often the movements or powers inspired by Satan are described as emerging from the pit, the sea, the earth, etc, i.e. from beneath, (19) whereas the movements inspired by heaven are described as coming from above. (20) So then the beast of Revelation 11 that emerges from the bottomless pit is a power that is inspired and controlled by Satan.

"Here is brought to view a new manifestation of Satanic power." (21)

### **4. THIS BEAST IS A PART OF THE GREAT CITY**

SPIRITUAL BABYLON (Verses 8, 13)

In the book of Revelation two cities are brought to view:

(1) The Holy City, Jerusalem - representing until the Second Advent, the Church of God, and secondly, after the Second Advent, the literal city of the heavenly Jerusalem. (23)

(2) The other city is Babylon, representing the apostate system of religion centered in the Papacy. (24)

Only three earthly cities in scripture are described as “great”. They are:

Gibeon (Once)	Josh 10:2.
Nineveh (4 times)	Jonah 1:2; 3:2, 3, 11.
Babylon (10 times)	Daniel 4:30; Revelation 14:8; Revelation 16:19; 17:5;

Revelation 18:2, 10, 16, 18, 19, 21. The only conclusion then is that “the great city” of this prediction can be none other than spiritual Babylon. Other chapters present more detail on this point. The beast of Revelation 11 then is a part of, or connected with spiritual Babylon - the Papacy. It is described as “the street of the great city”, (Verse 8), and in verse 13, it is described as “the tenth part of the city”. All the beasts representing Roman Babylon in Daniel 7, Revelation 12, 13 & 17 have ten horns, which represented at least the ten kingdoms of Western Europe. This was the territory that was peculiar to Pagan Rome and which was inherited by Papal Rome, or spiritual Babylon. Therefore, the beast that rises about 1798 must be one of the ten kingdoms of Western Europe and one which has been an effective part of the Papacy.

## 5. CAUSES AN “EARTHQUAKE” IN THE POLITICAL WORLD -

“The same hour was there a great earthquake.” (Verse 13.)

The one and only West European kingdom that fulfills the above five points was Revolutionary France. In 1789 the French people arose in awful revenge against the arrogant, corrupt, cruel and selfish aristocracy and priesthood that had ground them down in poverty and serfdom for so many years. French writers of the period, in describing the terrible outburst of fury of the French populace, employ almost the identical terms of the prediction written 1700 years before. Lamartine writes of “The bottomless pit of atheism” and the Abbe Burrueil wrote in 1797 of “the dark recesses from whence it burst into being.”

It was a political earthquake that shocked the civilized world. Historians and statesmen have described it as such. (25)

“The time of the eighteenth-century French Revolution, when the 1260 years of the Papal era were closing, was a turning point in the history of the modern world. It brought forth forces that made a permanent change in the thoughts and actions of mankind.” (26)

“The French Revolution was one of the momentous events in the history, not only of France, but of Europe and even the whole world.” (27)

“It was an earthquake in the political world.” Burke.

“The minds of men were shaken as by the yawning of the ground during the fury of an earthquake.” Alison.

“It destroyed the landmarks of the world in which generations of men had passed their lives.” Cambridge Modern History.

## 6. THIS POWER IS LIKENED TO “EGYPT”

“Their dead bodies shall lie in the street which spiritually is called Egypt.” (Verse 8.)

What is the characteristic that scripture brings to light that was peculiar to Egypt? Probably the most outstanding experience in connection with Egypt was when the prophet Moses delivered to Pharaoh, King of Egypt, the message from God:

“Let my people go” and Pharaoh said “Who is the Lord [Jehovah] that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I KNOW NOT THE LORD, neither will I let Israel go.” (28)

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

“This is atheism, and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims -of the living God, and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance.” (29)

In the French Revolution the lapse into atheism was dramatic and tragic. France endeavored “to dethrone the King of Heaven as well as the monarchs of earth”.

“The world for the first time heard an assembly of men, born and educated in civilization, and assuming the right to govern am of the finest of the European nations, uplift their united voice to deny the most solemn truth which man’s soul receives, and renounce unanimously the belief and worship of a deity.” (30)

## **7. IT SLAYS OR ABOLISHES THE BIBLE FOR 3.5 YEARS**

The Papacy had been opposed to the scriptures in the common tongue for most of the 1260 years of her supremacy. But this power is to war against the Bible at the close of the 1260 years and in such a way that the scriptures are personified as being “slain” for a period of 3.5 prophetic days. Taking the prophetic day to represent one year, this means that the scriptures were slain or abolished for 3.5 literal years. Such details as these aid us in pin-pointing the power that is indicated in the prediction.

Did revolutionary France abolish the scriptures for a period of three and a half years?

It is an established fact that not only did France in the Revolution declare herself atheistic but she officially abolished all religion. The Christian religion to the French, was Roman Catholicism which, through the priesthood and aristocracy, had sorely oppressed them. Because of the fierce resistance of clergy and royalty to the Protestant faith when it tried to enter France, the French people failed to discern false Christianity from the true. Thus when they in their blind fury turned against their oppressors, they attacked everything that was associated with religion.

Because the seven day week originated at creation, as recorded in Genesis, they abolished the seven-day week and decreed that the week be of ten days duration. All churches were closed and their lands confiscated. Death was pronounced an eternal sleep. Most of the clergy and the aristocracy were executed.

“The shootings, the drowning, the roasting of the Roman Catholic loyalists, both priest and nobles, had all their prototypes [or models] in the barbarities of another age, practiced under the direction of the Pope and French Papists.” (31)

“The French Revolution slew as many priests and Papists under Louis XVI as the priests and Papists slew Protestants under Louis XIV. Simpson and other good and great writers have truly and justly considered that the latter slaughter was a righteous retribution for the former murders. This event sent an awful shock through the whole empire.” (32)

After mentioning the frauds and deceptions perpetrated by religious leaders preparatory to their slaughter in the Revolution, this writer continues,

“They rose en masse, ‘Down with these monsters who have villainously imposed upon our credulity.’ Baruel, in his ‘History of the Revolution!’ says, ‘138 bishops and 64,000 curates were driven from their sees or parishes; all the clergy, all the religious forced from their retreats. 300 priests slain in one day in one city; all the other pastors who remained faithful to their God, were either sacrificed or banished. Such is the spectacle exhibited to the world by the French Revolution.’” (32)

On November 10, 1793

“The Convention dressed up an ass... loaded it with the symbols of Christianity and tied the Old and New Testaments to its tail. It was then led in mock procession. The crowd piled books of devotion into heaps and burned them to ashes amid blasphemous shouts. A prostitute was enthroned as ‘Goddess of Reason.’” (33)

On November 23, 1793, “The Convention decreed the abolition of all religion.” (34)

This included abolition of the scriptures.

On June 17, 1797, just over 3.5 years later (i.e. 3 years, 6 months and 20 odd days), the National Assembly voted that religion be restored and toleration be given to the scriptures, etc., thus fulfilling in remarkable detail this specification of the prophecy. (35)

## **8. THE KINGDOM WOULD BE SPIRITUALLY LIKE SODOM**

“Which spiritually is called Sodom.” Sodom is mentioned in the book of Genesis.

The city was notorious for its immorality and was destroyed by divine intervention. (36)

In the French Revolution marriage was degraded, adultery was legalized, and moral debasement and corruption swept the country. (37)

## **9. WHERE TRUE CHRISTIANS HAD SUFFERED PERSECUTION**

“Where also our Lord was crucified.” Verse 8.

Jesus Christ was crucified in Palestine in 31 A.D. In what way then could Christ have been crucified in France? Scripture speaks very clearly as to how Christ can be crucified or slain again. Jesus declared:

“In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

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

“Saul, Saul why do you persecute me?” (38)

In other words, whatever is done to Christ’s followers, He accepts that, as having been done to Him. It is an appalling fact that France in the long period when it was dominated by the Papacy, was guilty of the slaughter of millions of Christians who refused to follow the Roman Catholic faith. (39) France was foremost in carrying out the Papacy’s will in opposing and destroying those who rejected Roman Catholic dogma. France was called “The eldest daughter of the church” because of her fervent support of the Roman Catholic cause. In this manner, France in particular was guilty of crucifying or putting to death Jesus Christ. She did this in the person of Christ’s true followers. (40)

In another sense, Christ was also crucified in the French Revolution.

“In the scenes of the Revolution, Jesus Christ was declared to be an imposter, and the rallying cry of the French infidels was, ‘Crush the Wretch’, meaning Christ. Heaven-daring blasphemy and abominable wickedness went hand in hand and the basest of men, the most abandoned monsters of vice and cruelty, were most highly exalted. In all this, supreme homage was paid to Satan; while Christ, in His characteristics of truth, purity and unselfish love, was crucified.” (41)

Of these nine specifications, Revolutionary France alone fulfils them and fulfils them to the letter. Let us now notice how the remainder of the prediction was fulfilled in the French Revolution.

“And they shall rejoice over them and shall make merry and shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them.” Verse 10.



This was fulfilled in the Revolution. The Bible is a reprovener of evil. Its requirements and restrictions are a source of annoyance to the man who is intent on doing evil. When God, religion and the Bible were abolished, a great sense of relief and freedom was felt by the French infidels, and tremendous jubilation swept over the country.

“This Revolution, which was to bring forth so many scenes of the bloodiest cruelty and injustice, was also to become memorable for scenes of popular rejoicing which have scarcely been equaled in any other land or at any other period.” (42)

“And they of the people and kingdoms and tongues and nations-shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.” verse 9.

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

“By many voices in different lands and through various vehicles, the end of the Papal period was perceived as due and under way. The sudden shock of the French Revolution sent the Protestant church -back to the scriptures for meaning.” (43)

A league was formed to resist the spread of disorder and anarchy. This attitude of the surrounding nations caused the French leaders to take stock of France’s situation. It led them to begin to check the frenzy and extremism that the Revolution had produced. The world stood aghast at “The Reign of Terror” that had convulsed the French people, most of which was the result of Papal policy as carried out previously by the French church and state. In answer to the manifesto of the European kings representing the league, Robespierre, before the French Assembly, endeavored to defend the Revolution.

“They represent us as a mad and idolatrous nation. They lie. The French people and their representatives respect all forms of religious worship and do not proscribe any.” (44)

“And after three days and an half, the spirit of life from god entered into them. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.” verses 11, 12.

As we have previously shown, 3.5 years after the scriptures were slain or abolished by France, they were restored again by law. The scriptures are personified as being resurrected and ascending to heaven in full view of those who abolished them.

The phrase, “ascended up to heaven” is used in scripture to denote great exaltation.

“Pty greatness is grown, and reaches unto heaven.” (45)

This referred to the power and prestige of the king of Babylon. In Revelation 11 it represents how the scriptures, as a result of the attack on them by Revolutionary France, would gain universal recognition and popularity. This was strikingly fulfilled in the formation of the great Bible Societies: The British and Foreign in 1804 and the American Bible Society in 1816. These with their auxiliaries have scattered the scriptures all over the earth. For many years, the Bible has been the world’s best seller. At the time of the French Revolution, the Bible had been printed and circulated in only fifty languages. Since then it has been annually distributed by the millions and in hundreds of languages.

At the same time there blossomed the great era of foreign missions, by which the scriptures were taken to the remote areas of the world.

“Moreover, the extraordinary circulation of the scriptures began during the French Revolution. Never should it be forgotten that both missionary and Bible societies had their birth at this very time.” (46)

“The same hour was there slain of men seven thousand.” Verse 13.

The margin reads “names of men”. Undoubtedly, this term refers to the titles of men that were associated with the aristocracy. Did the French Revolution abolish the titles of men that were so divisive in French society? Note the decree of June 19, 1790:

“Hereditary nobility is forever abolished: in consequence the titles of prince, duke, count, marquis, viscount, vidame, baron, knight, messive, ecuyler, noble and all other similar titles shall neither be taken by any one whomsoever nor given to anybody.” (47)

### **ANY ALTERNATIVE INTERPRETATION OF REVELATION 11?**

Altogether there are at least twelve specifications in this striking prediction of Revelation 11, and every one of them has been clearly and accurately fulfilled in Revolutionary France. No other power has ever met the specifications of the prediction. Search where you may, you will not find any other interpretation of this chapter that is satisfactory and meaningful.

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

In 1948 Professor L. E. Froom, as a result of several years of painstaking research, published a monumental four volume history of the interpretation of Bible prophecy throughout the Christian era. It is entitled, “The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers”. In these volumes the writer has counted at least thirty-two scholars who, up to the time of the French Revolution, had predicted on the basis of Revelation 11 that France would be the European kingdom that would end the supreme power of the Papacy. These predictions reach back to 150 years prior to the Revolution. On page 31 is a partial list of these prophetic scholars and some of their forecasts.

Jean Vuilleumier, a veteran French editor of Paris, France, researched the records of the time of the French Revolution to verify the fulfillment of the prophecy of Revelation 11 especially the time period of the three and a half years in which religion and the Bible were legally abolished in France. His confirmations were published in 1940. (48)

### **IS THERE A SECOND APPLICATION TO THE LAST DAYS?**

It is claimed by some that the beast of Revelation 11 is identical to the beast of Revelation 17, and that therefore, the prophecy of Revelation 11 has a second fulfillment as outlined in the 17th chapter of Revelation.(49) What is the truth of this contention? The chief reason that the two beasts of Revelation 11 and Revelation 17 are claimed to be identical is because both are described as ascending out of “the bottomless pit”. It is also claimed that because the beast of Revelation 11 was Revolutionary France and that its philosophy later developed into “International Socialism”, that therefore the beast of Revelation 17 applies to Communism in its current form. Let us examine these claims:

Because a beast or kingdom in prophecy has one point of similarity with another, is no evidence that it is the same kingdom. In the prophetic symbols of Daniel and Revelation, there are often similar points listed, but they are not necessarily the same powers; e.g. each of the four beasts of Daniel 7 emerge from the sea, but this is no evidence that they are identical. The same applies in Revelation. Because two different beasts ascend from the bottomless pit, this is not evidence of their being identical powers. It does indicate, however, that they are both inspired “from beneath”.

When one analyzes the beast of Revelation 17 he soon discovers that it is identical with the beast of Revelation 13. In fact, the three beasts of Revelation 12, 13, and 17 can be shown to be very similar in character and closely connected.

The following points reveal that the two beasts of Revelation 13 and 17 are identical, although in Revelation 17 additional details are given concerning the Roman head of the Beast. (50)

## REVELATION 13 AND 17

### REVELATION 13

1. 7 Heads & 10 Horns (Verse 1.)
2. The names (margin) of blasphemy. (Verse 1.)
3. Make war with the saints. (Verse 7)
4. Receives deadly wound, slain. (Verse 3.)
5. His deadly wound was healed. (Verse 3.)
6. All the world wondered (Verse 3.)
7. Whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. ( Verse 8. )
8. Specifications fulfilled chiefly by the Roman head of the beast.

### REVELATION 17

1. 7 Heads & 10 horns (Verse 3.)
2. Full of names of blasphemy. (Verse 3.)
3. Drunken with the blood of the saints. (Verse 6.)
4. "The beast which thou saw was, and is not." i.e., no longer exists - is dead. (Verse 8.)
5. "The beast shall ascend out of the bottomless pit", (place of death.)
5. "The beast that was, and is not, and yet is." (Verse 8.)
6. They that dwell upon the earth shall wonder. (Verse 8.)
7. Whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. (Verse 8.)
8. Specifications fulfilled chiefly by the Roman head of the beast.

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

## REVELATION 11

### REVELATION 13 and 17

1. Beast wounded or slain in 1798.
2. Beast's territory included the ten kingdoms.
3. Beast makes war on the saints.
4. Beast is controlled by Babylonian religion [scarlet women].
5. Under this beast the two witnesses to prophesy in sackcloth".

### REVELATION 11

1. Beast rises about 1798.
2. Beast is only one of the ten kingdoms.
3. Beast makes war on the Papacy.
4. Beast is "Egypt" i.e. atheistic - [anti-religious],
5. Under this beast the two witnesses are slain.

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

A recent writer has claimed that the two witnesses of Revelation 11 apply to the church when in the future it "will prophesy in sackcloth". (51) On checking the source of this statement, (52) we find that the quoted author, when elsewhere explaining the two witnesses of Revelation 11 clearly states that:

“The two witnesses represent the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. During the greater part of this period, [the 1260 years of Papal supremacy] God’s witnesses remained in a state of obscurity.” (53)

Before we suggest a latter-day parallel of the fulfillment of this prediction of Revelation 11, we should state with emphasis that this prophecy fits only one specific historical situation. A definite time period is involved of forty-two prophetic months, and this can logically have only one legitimate fulfillment in history. The beast of Revelation 11 is also a specific political kingdom that would arise at a specific time. Therefore no attempts should be made to reapply the historical application.

In what way, then, could there be significance for us today regarding this remarkable prediction of the French Revolution and the ending of Papal supremacy? In the book, “Education” by Ellen G. White (1903) it is shown how the experience of the French Revolution can have significance for us.

“The centralizing of wealth and power; the vast combinations for the enriching of the few at the expense of the many; the combinations of the poorer classes for the defense of their interest and claims; the spirit of unrest, of riot and bloodshed; THE WORLDWIDE DISSEMINATION OF THE SAME TEACHINGS THAT LED TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION - all are tending to involve the WHOLE WORLD in a struggle SIMILAR to that which convulsed France.” (54)

According to this statement “the whole world” is to experience “a struggle similar to that which convulsed France”. In other words, what occurred in the French Revolution on a local scale is to be repeated on a world-wide scale. The writer suggests that there are twelve parallels between the situation that involved Revolutionary France and what is in process of being fulfilled in our world today.

## **THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND END-TIME EVENTS**

1. FRANCE - Prior to the Revolution, France was called to receive the Gospel of Christ in the Protestant Reformation.

TODAY - Our world is being called to receive the Gospel in the proclamation of the Three Angels’ Messages of Revelation 14 which will culminate in “the loud cry” of Revelation 18:1-4.

2. FRANCE - The majority rejected the Gospel and clung to, or accepted the worship of Rome.

TODAY - The majority will reject the Gospel of the Three Angels and instead “worship the beast and his image”. (55)

3. FRANCE - The populace were led to believe that Rome alone could dispense salvation and that Protestantism would destroy the peace of the nation. (56)

TODAY - Similar arguments will be used to secure the union of all society under Rome. The populace will also be deceived by “great signs and wonders” until “all the world wonders after the beast.” (57)

4. FRANCE - The minority who received the Gospel were driven out, imprisoned, or slain. (59)

TODAY – “The Remnant” will receive the wrath of the dragon and they will be driven out, imprisoned or slain. (60)

5. FRANCE - Was one-tenth of the spiritual city of Babylon, the Papacy, i.e. she was one of the ten kingdoms of West Europe. (61)

TODAY - It will involve the whole world which will have come under the jurisdiction of spiritual Babylon.

6. FRANCE - There was a centralizing of wealth and power in the church and state. They united in order to protect each other. (62)

TODAY- We are witnessing a centralizing of wealth and power throughout the world, in which governments and merchants (e.g. multinationals) are combining with the Papacy to protect and enrich each other.

“The kings of the earth (rulers) have committed fornication (illicitly united) with her (Babylon) and the merchants (multinationals, etc) are waxed rich through her.” The same chapter forecasts how the world’s financial establishments will be ruined through Babylon’s fall. (63)

Today the vast multinational enterprises are seriously influencing the economies of the world, even in socialist countries. And entwined through all the multinationals, and influencing them, is the greatest multinational of all- the Vatican. (64)

“Vast combinations to enrich the few at the expense of the many.”

7. FRANCE - The middle and working classes became impoverished and down-trodden. “The burden of supporting the church and the state fell upon the middle and low classes, who were heavily taxed by the civil authorities and by the clergy.”

TODAY - We are witnessing the process of the enrichment of the few “at the expense of the many.”

Many foresee that the world’s middle and working classes are on the path to poverty. Today the rich mostly escape taxation, but the middle and working classes are over-taxed, and employment is becoming increasingly precarious.

The fifth chapter of James forecasts that the rich would be guilty of oppressing the employee. While this has had a partial fulfillment in the past, the prediction undoubtedly refers to the future.

Scripture appears to indicate that a form of slavery will prevail as we near the conclusion of human history. When the “mark of the beast” is enforced, it involves “rich and poor, free and bond”. (66) At the return of Christ when the unsaved cry in despair, there are included “every bondman and every free man”. (67) This may indicate that, because of the enormity of economic problems, certain sections of society may be compelled to surrender personal freedom in order to survive.

8. FRANCE - The result was general decline of the nation - Intellectually, morally, industrially and economically. Flourishing French industries decayed. Fertile districts became a wilderness. Intellectual dullness developed.

“Moral decay succeeded a period of unwonted progress.”

Paris became one vast alms-house. “Two hundred thousand paupers claimed charity from the king.” The State became financially embarrassed. The populace became brutalized. (68)

TODAY - We are seeing a general decline throughout the world:

a) Intellectually - As a result of deficient education, false philosophy, broken homes, drug addiction, unemployment and poverty, etc.

b) Morally - Through the literature, entertainment, education, and the mass media, society is becoming immoralized and brutalized. “Moral decay succeeded a period of unwonted progress.” This is being repeated on a world scale.

c) Industrially and Economically - After a period of unparalleled industrial and economic growth, the world now appears to be in decline, especially in the Western world; and because of the various destructive forces in operation, undoubtedly we will see increasing declension.

d) Social Decline - Millions are dependent upon government charity in order to exist, and like France an increasing number of countries are becoming welfare states and this is embarrassing government finances.

9. FRANCE - The down-trodden, poverty-stricken masses combined to defend their interests.

TODAY - We have witnessed a similar situation in the formation of labor unions to protect the working man. In the future we may witness an intensification of “the combination of the poorer classes” in the light of the forecast that “labor unions will be very oppressive” and these unions will “rob the poorer classes of the advantages which justly belong to them”, and the unions will combine with apostate churches to enforce the “Mark of the Beast”. (69)

10. FRANCE - There developed an underground opposition to the corrupt church and government.

TODAY - “The dissemination of the same teachings that led to the French Revolution are tending to involve the whole world in a struggle similar to that which convulsed France. (70) These teachings are manifest in “international socialism”, or Communism. While Communism will not succeed in its quest for world control (for spiritual Babylon is to gain world power), nevertheless its philosophy could ultimately influence the masses to fulfill the events outlined in number 11 and 12 below:

11. FRANCE - The oppressive course of church and state climaxed in the revolt of the masses, and the slaughter of the priesthood and aristocracy.

TODAY - After church and state unite, freedom will disappear and oppressive laws will afflict the people, especially the people of God. This will climax in the visitation of the seven last plagues in which all classes that support spiritual Babylon will terribly suffer. (71)

The Result: The true character of Babylon will be revealed. Instead of being seen as the great Champion of Truth and Right, the judgments of God will expose her as the great deceiver - the enemy of God and man. She will be seen as a self seeker, craving world dominion and self-exaltation at the expense of the people. (72)

Outcome: The masses who will be deluded into supporting Babylon and opposing God’s people, will finally turn on Babylon and destroy her. In Revelation 17:12-14 we are informed that the ten kingdoms will unite with and support the beast against God and His people, but in verses 16 and 17, the same ten kingdoms, or supporters of Babylon, “shall hate the whore (Babylon) and shall make her desolate and naked and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire.” In other words, the supporters of the apostate churches ultimately will turn on their religious leaders and destroy them.

“The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. ‘We are lost!’ they cry, ‘and you are the cause of our ruin,’ and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most, will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels, will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God’s people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.” (73)

12. FRANCE - After the slaughter of priests and aristocrats, the populace turned on each other in a “The Reign of Terror” and fratricide became the order of the day.

TODAY - The order of events will be similar but on a world-wide scale. After the masses turn on their religious leaders and destroy them, they then will turn on each other in slaughter.

“They shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor.” (74)

“After the saints had been delivered by the voice of God, the wicked multitude turned their rage upon one another. The earth seemed to be deluged with blood and dead bodies were from one end of it to the other.” (75)

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

The events as outlined in the above parallels indicate, we suggest, the course that our world is to pursue and how it will climax at the return of Christ.

## **WHO BELIEVED THE PREDICTION OF REVELATION 11**

### **DRUE CRESSENE**

(1638-1718) Prebend of Anglican Ely Cathedral. In 1690 he studied the 1260-year period of Papal supremacy and concluded that it would close “a little before 1800 AD” (The actual end was 1798). From, Volume 2, pages 588-596. This was 109 years before the event.

### **THOMAS BRIGHTMAN**

(1562-1607) Puritan scholar. One of the fathers of English Presbyterianism. He ably answered the Preterist and Futurist errors of the Jesuits, Ribera and Bellarmine. He was the first to mention that the 1260 years dated from the decree of Justinian in 533 AD. From, Volume 2, pages 512-517, 724.

### **GEORGE DARHNAM**

Died 1634. English theologian, Professor of Logic, Cambridge University, Chaplain to James I. A refuter of Bellarmine and his Futurism. He published “A Treatise concerning Antichrist”, which became the leader of Protestant works and prophecy of the 17th century. He also dated the 1260 years of Papal supremacy from the decree of Justinian.” From, Volume 2, pages 535, 536.

### **JOSEPH MEDE**

(1586-1638) Professor of Greek at Cambridge University. He specialized in prophetic study and greatly advanced the science of interpretation. His “Key to the Revelation” was authorized by the British House of Commons. From, Volume 2, pages 542-549.

### **HENRY MORE**

(1614-1687) Of profound learning. A non-conformist educator and philosopher and a distinguished religious leader. He refuted the errors of Futurism and Preterism. - From, Volume 2, pages 563, 564.

### **THOMAS GOODWIN**

(1600-1680) Celebrated non-conformist. Member of Westminster Assembly. Vice Chancellor of Oxford University. In 1639 he declared that “the tenth part of the city” of Revelation 11:13 was one of the ten kingdoms of Western Europe under the jurisdiction of Papal Rome and “as that kingdom (France) had the first great stroke, so now it should have the honor to have the last great stroke in the ruining of Rome.” “The earthquake is a “mighty commotion.” (This was 152 years before the French Revolution) - From, Volume 2, pages 573-575; 724, 725.

### **PIERRE JURJET**

(1637-1713) Distinguished Huguenot leader. Brilliant scholar and Professor of Theology and Hebrew at the Huguenot Seminary at Sedan, France. A great champion of Protestantism against French Jesuit leaders. He ably answered the Futurist and Preterist schools of prophetic interpretation. He authored sixty works, including “Exposition of the Apocalypse” (1685). He taught that the tenth part of the city of Revelation

11:13 was France, which would “shake off the yoke of Rome”. Froom, Volume 2, pages 625, 636-639, 726. (This was 104 years before the Revolution.)

### **ROBERT FLEMING**

(1660-1716) A Scottish divine. Pastor of English Church of the Refugees, Holland. Author of ten works. An expositor of prophecy. Very influential. A confidante of King William III of England. In his “Rise and Fall of the Papacy” (1701) when France was at the height of her power, he declared that he hoped for the death of the chief supporters of Antichrist, “and perhaps the French Monarchy may begin to be considerably humbled about that time (at least before the year 1794)”. This was forecast ninety years before the Revolution. His conclusions were based on Revelation 11. Froom, Volume 2, pages 642-649.

### **SIR ISAAC NEWTON**

(1642-1727) Famous mathematician, philosopher and genius in scientific research. He also studied prophecy for forty-two years, resulting in his work, “Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel and The Apocalypse” (1773). He upheld the Historical School of Interpretation and taught that ‘before primitive Christianity could be restored, the power of infidelity in ‘a main revolution’ would be used to put a stop to, or block the Popedom that has so long corrupted the Church.” - Froom, Volume 2, pages 658-669. This was twenty years before the Revolution.

### **WILLIAAM WHISTON**

(1667-1752) Baptist theologian and mathematician. He was Newton’s successor at Cambridge University. He authored fifty works including, a translation of Josephus. His major work was “The Revelation of St. John”. He believed that “infidelity” (such as later occurred in Revolutionary France) “might be the only means of stopping the Papal enslavement before true Christianity could be restored.” - Froom, Volume 2, pages 672.

### **BISHOP THOMAS NEWTON**

(1704-1782) Bishop of Bristol and Dean of St. Paul’s, London. He wrote “Dissertations on the Prophecies” (1754) which ran into eighteen editions, as well as in Danish and German. Concerning the fulfillment of Revelation 11, he wrote, “Rome therefore will finally be destroyed by some of the princes and as the kings of France have contributed greatly to her advancement, it is not impossible nor improbable that-they may be the principal authors of her destruction. France may appear more likely to effect such a revolution.” - Froom, Volume 2, pages 684-687, 724. This was written thirty five years before the Revolution.

### **JOHN FLETCHER**

(1729-1785) Excellent scholar and associate of John Wesley. Authored nine works. He held “that the Papacy would fall amid revolutions”. He acquainted Wesley with the knowledge “that 100,000 French Protestants in 1755 expect some great revolution, that will result in their being united with 200,000 of their brethren who have been expelled from France.” From, Volume 2, pages 687-691. This was forty-four years before the Revolution.

### **JAQUES PHILIPOT**

Huguenot pastor driven out of France. In 1685 he wrote “Elucidations on The Apocalypse of St. John”. One hundred and four years before the Revolution, he wrote on Revelation 11, “The earthquakes in scripture mean great changes occurring in the nations.” “There will be a surprising change in France” of which “the whole world will be glad except the clergy, the monks and the Jesuits.” “It is France which is referred to by this tenth part of the city-the city here is Babylon, i.e. the Papal Empire, the Church of Rome, France is one of the ten horns of the beast, one of the ten kingdoms. France is a part of the city, i.e. of the Papal Empire.” “Since the death of the two witnesses takes place in France this tenth part of the city which shall fall is France.” Froom, Volume 2, pages 726-728.

### **JOHN WILLSON**

(1680-1750) Scotch divine. Authored nine principal works. Wrote “A Prophecy of the French Revolution!” (1733) fifty years before the event. He said, “Before Antichrist’s fall, one of the ten kingdoms which supported the beast (Papacy) shall undergo a marvelous revolution! Revelation 11:13 (quoted) “by which



tenth part is to be understood as one of the ten kingdoms into which the great city, Roman Babylon, was divided. This many take to be the kingdom of France.” Froom, Volume 2, pages 728-730.

**GEORGE BELL**

In 1796, in the “London Evangelical Magazine” he declared on the basis of Revelation 11, that “the Gentiles” of verse 2 were the papacy; that the “earthquake!” of verse 13 was the French Revolution and the “tenth part of verse 13 was France. He continued, “Have we not seen, in one of the ten kingdoms, a most astonishing revolution? Have we not also seen that kingdom fall off the Papal jurisdiction? Have we not good ground to hope that the accomplishment of the prophecies respecting the rising of the witnesses and the fall of Antichrist is near at hand?” One year later, Revolutionary France restored the scriptures (Resurrected the witnesses) and two years later, France delivered “the deadly wound” to the papacy. Froom, Volume 2, pages 742, 743.

**JOSEPH PRIESTLY**

(1733-1804) English clergyman, philosopher and scientist. Authored eighty works. In February, 1794, he declared on the basis of Revelation 11, that France was currently fulfilling the prediction in the French Revolution. - Froom, Volume 2, pages 744.

**JAMES BICHENO**

(Died 1831) Dissenting minister and schoolman. Authored numerous works. Taught that Revolutionary France was the fulfillment of Revelation 11. - Froom, Volume 2, pages 746-748.

**GOERGE CROLY**

(1780-1860) M.A., Classical scholar, author and Bible Expositor. Anglican Rector. In “The Apocalypse of St. John”, he held that “the two witnesses” were the two Testaments, slain in the French Revolution, the “political earthquake” in France, “the tenth part of the city”. The 3.5 days were the 3.5 years from November 1793 to June 1797 when religion was abolished. He forecast that the Bible would have “a stupendous triumph.” - Froom, Volume 3, pages 544-548.

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