

Chapter 11

The Two Witnesses

11 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, “Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. ² But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot *for* forty-two months. ³ And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.”

The events of Chapter 11 follow seamlessly from Chapter 10, with John in the same frame of mind and the same vision until Verse 15. The Mighty Angel, which was previously identified with the Holy Spirit, is the one who gives instructions to John to take up a measuring rod and inspect the Temple.

Which temple are we talking about here?

It cannot be the Earthly, Temple; Herod’s Temple, because this is around 100AD. The Romans had destroyed it. When we remember that John has experienced his visions in or of heaven, it is logical to believe that this is the Heavenly Temple. Indeed, there is nowhere else that it can be. But what makes this conclusion interesting is the connection to Daniel 7 where the Temple was also referenced. As the Mighty Angel has invoked Daniel in Chapter 10, it is appropriate for us to bring an analysis of Daniel into this chapter too.

NB: For clarity, I will colour Daniel 7 references in Purple and keep Revelation references in Blue.

Daniel 7

¹⁹ “Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, *with* its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, *which* devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; ²⁰ and the ten horns that *were* on its head, and the other *horn* which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance *was* greater than his fellows.

²¹ “I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, ²² until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made *in favor* of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

²³ “Thus he said:

‘The fourth beast shall be
A fourth kingdom on earth,
Which shall be different from all *other* kingdoms,
And shall devour the whole earth,
Trample it and break it in pieces.

²⁴ The ten horns *are* ten kings
Who shall arise from this kingdom.
And another shall rise after them;
He shall be different from the first *ones*,
And shall subdue three kings.

²⁵ He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High,
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,
And shall intend to change times and law.
Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand
For a time and times and half a time.

²⁶ ‘But the court shall be seated,
And they shall take away his dominion,
To consume and destroy *it* forever.

It would be too time consuming to review the entirety of this chapter here, but it’s important to summarise the primary points.

- Daniel had seen these 4 beasts, was told that they related to 4 great nations and identified that this beast was very much different from the rest.
- Daniel inquired about this particular beast because of how different it was from the others, how brutal and vicious it was and this unusual small horn that rose out of it, speaking arrogantly that it was greater than everyone else.
- The beast has been universally identified with Rome, Republic and then Empire
- The 10 horns were the 10 divisions of Rome after it’s separation and final fall.
 - Unfortunately there is much misunderstanding at this time around the difference between kingdoms, tribes and Nations. For example, the Ostrogothic
 - tribe included the kingdoms of Odoacer, the Rughs, the Gepids and Nepos which can rightly be treated as separate kingdoms or as a single kingdom as the others typically paid tribute to Odoacer. To that end, the following list are almost always included, although not always under these names;

▪ The Byzantine Empire	▪ Angles, Saxons and Jutes
▪ Visigoths	▪ Britons
▪ Ostrogoths	▪ Franks
▪ Suebi	▪ Burgundians
▪ Lombards	▪ Alamanni

- The 'little horn' that arose out of Rome was the Papacy which attached itself to the Byzantine Empire but
 - influenced all these states to some extent. See Chapter 2 for more detail.
 - The 3 powers it evicted were the Visigoths, Ostrogoths and Lombards as we discussed in Chapter 2.
 - The persecution, pompous heresy and changing of times and laws is similarly detailed in Chapter 2 and 3.
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- The 1,260 Day prophecy started in 538 when Emperor Justinian I's (527–565) decree that Roman Catholic Popes took full control over the other patriarchs of the Church and was empowered to give spiritual instructions to earthly monarchs. The decree was given in 533 and took effect with the opening of the Third Council of Orléans under Pope Vigilius in 538, reinforced formally in the Quinisext Council (held in Constantinople) of 692.

This coincided with Justinian conveying on the Pope his own title of Pontifex Maximus, a title had come to the Roman Emperors in 133 B.C. when it was bequeathed to him by the King of Pergamon, Attalus III along with the rest of his territory. Pergamon was where the Babylonian priests had escaped too after Xerxes, the Persian King, had expelled them around 484BC, and they took their religion and titles with them.

The Title 'Pontifex Maximus' – which means 'Great Bridge', was originally the Babylonian senior priest with the worship style and structure being transferred to Pergamon before Rome and finally being adopted as the senior title of the Roman Catholic Church. Obviously this title changed languages between each version but meant the same thing.

For more information, see Chapter 2: The Church of Pergamos

This control ended in 1798 when Berthier, one of Napoleon's Generals, arrested Pope Pius VI in Rome and took him back to France where he died the next year. As this was the height of the Reformation, few even spoke to support the papal states, so the pope was, effectively, left out in the cold. Although Napoleon reversed the Revolutions anti-religion stance, he humiliated the papacy through his coronation and other political matters and the influence of the Papacy never recovered.

- Verse 26 refers to the Court of Heaven supporting the Saints and never permitting the Papal power to recover.

Back to Revelation

11 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, “Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. ² But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot *for forty-two months*. ³ And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.”

So John is given a rod to measure the size of the temple and its elements, but interestingly he is told not to have any interest in the outer court. That “*has been given to the Gentiles(. and they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.*” This is a very unveiled reference to the destruction of the Temple in AD 70, as the majority of Roman Soldiers didn’t get into the main temple structure during the conquest as the fire was too hot. It is also a derogatory reference to the Temple in Daniel chapter 8. If we remember that the question was asked. “¹³ *How long will ... the host to be trampled underfoot?*” asked the Holy watcher. John is told that the temple will be disrespected for 42 months which also equates to 1,260 days; 42 times 30 = 1,260. But John is then told that God will have 2 witnesses prophesying for those 1,260 days while clothed in sackcloth.

Sackcloth, better recognised as a ‘hairshirt’ was a thick, very prickly material still used today in some communities for mourning and self-punishment. It’s typically made from horse or camel hair and is designed to be rough on the skin to cause irritation and make the person as unhappy as possible. It’s a demonstration of mourning in Israel so these 2 witnesses are clearly unhappy about both what the temple has been doing – through its pollution in Daniel – and what has been done to it as John has seen.

But who are these 2 witnesses?

When we consider who is speaking here – the Mighty Angel of Revelation 10; i.e. the Holy Spirit, these two witnesses must be pretty important characters. One key thing to note before evaluating their identity is the way that the Mighty Angel says that “*they will prophesy*”. This indicates that their prophecy – that is the 1,260 day prophecy as referred to in Daniel 7 and the 42 months here, has not started at the time John is writing. It is yet to come, further reinforcing our 538->1798 conclusion.

Prior to this reference to two prophecies, the only reference in John’s interaction with the Mighty Angel that has a pairing is the idea of prophesying itself. If we remember from Chapter 10, the “*Mighty Angel*” “*had a little book open in his hand*” and it was opened so that “*the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.*” John “*took the little book out of the angel’s hand and ate it*”, ingesting it into his own teachings before the Mighty Angel “*said to (John), ‘You must prophesy again about many*

peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.’ ” At first, that sounds very convoluted but let us not forget what the entire concept of a prophecy is. A prophecy is a testimony about something that has not happened but will come to pass. The book of Daniel includes extreme detail about events that were proven true by history and can be reviewed and tested even today – as we have done.

As we have seen at the beginning of Chapter 10, John was shown – or was a witness – to a lot more than he was permitted to write. These two witnesses are told that they will have power to prophecy for the entirety of that 1,200 days... yet by the time John was writing this, Daniel had been dead at least 600 years. Yet his words still had and have power. Even Jesus recognised Daniel’s authority in Matthew 24 when he said “¹⁵ Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”

Daniel was still testifying through Jesus some 500 years after he had died. Both he and John are still testifying to us today some 1,900 years after the latter died. Their writings are the testimony, but if we keep reading, we find they are not alone...

⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. ⁵ And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. ⁶ These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

These passages are easily applied to not just the prophecies of Daniel and John, but to the scriptural writings and experiences of all parts recorded in the bible. We can break the elements down to this:

There were 2 covenants that governed the timeframes;

- The covenant with Adam that foretold the coming of Christ
 - “I will put enmity between (Satan) and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He (Christ) shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”
 - Satan’s effects on the earth – the introduction of death - was responsible for killing Jesus, but Jesus, being God did not stay dead for long. On the other hand, as we read in Daniel and Corinthians, Jesus will ultimately defeat all enemies, including death itself. (Daniel 12, 1 Corinthians 15:20-28)

- The covenant with Christ that will lead to his Second Coming
 - Jeremiah 31:31-34:

³¹ Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— ³² not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."
 - Paul explained this in great detail as Jesus being the establishment of the new covenant in Hebrews 8:

⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. ⁸ Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— ⁹ not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. ¹⁰ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹¹ None of them shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. ¹² For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

¹³ In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. "

It is no surprise the Paul quotes Jeremiah here.
 - And Jesus himself at his last supper that he was establishing the new covenant with his blood:

"The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "**This cup is the new covenant in my blood**; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." (1 Corinthians 11)

If we take these 2 witnesses to have both the qualities of the 2 Covenants and the 2 greater prophets, then we should be able to specify that the best demonstration of the experiences – the witnessing – of these 2 groups is found in the Old and New testament of the Bible. This may seem highly self-referencing but these collections of stories are reminiscent of what they contain – the experiences of the Jews walking with Christ and Christ's own words.

From here on, we will reference these 2 witnesses as referring to the Old and New Testament as a broad catch-all. For explicitly sake, we must remember that this broad title should also include;

- The Jewish and Christian experience,
- The old and new covenants themselves,
- The old and new covenant peoples,
- The Daniel and John Prophecies,
- Those who were spoken to through the Shekinah Glory and Prophets and those spoken to by Jesus himself and those who experienced him directly

And we can also stipulate, for the sake of repetition, all these groups were Sabbath keeping on both sides.

But, does this analysis fit the text? Lets go back to the verses.

⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. ⁵ And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. ⁶ These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

Olive Trees produce olives and olive oil, which was one of the highest value commodities in the ancient world. Most of the references to 'oil' in the bible, like when Elijah asked the Widow at Zarephath to use what little oil and flour she had to make him dinner in 1 Kings 17, are most likely olive oil. Grain, wine and oil were the basic staples of any household and were often given as payment rather than coinage as measures of subsistence for labourers and unskilled workers. The 2 olive trees that stand before God are demonstrations of his wealth – and all those he has saved recorded in the Old and New Testament certainly fit that bill.

The Lampstands show light to Earth which again is what both the texts, the people who spoke and lived them and the prophecies contained in them is all about.

Anyone that tries to harm the scriptures or the people in them face Judgement; the Judgment of God. The fires of heaven will rain down on all those who oppose the covenant peoples and who tried to do harm to the people of God. The Israelites never fell to an outside force before they had destroyed themselves from within. Despite the absolute destruction of their Jewish ancestry, the Christians somehow thrived as their own force. Despite their own persecution, they held out and thrived. Indeed, if one considers Abraham as being the earliest ancestor of both the Jewish And Christian – and, naturally, Islamic – peoples, then their existence and practiced have continued for not less that 4,200 years despite many attempts to exterminate all three.

The fire that is used to destroy them is the holy destruction that comes from God. This destruction is promised in the very text that we are describing as a witness. As we will read later in Chapter 20 of Revelation; [“⁹...And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”](#)

Indeed the other 3 references are unambiguously associated with other prophetic stories found in the Old Testament:

- [“power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy;”](#)
 - Elijah stopped the rain in 1 Kings 17:1 [“As surely as the Lord lives, no rain or dew will fall during the next few years unless I command it.”](#)
- [“power over waters to turn them to blood”](#)
 - Moses turned the Nile River to blood in Exodus 17 [“²⁰ And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the Lord commanded. So he lifted up the rod and struck the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants. And all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.”](#)
- [“strike the earth with all plagues”](#)
 - Moses, Elijah, Isaiah and others all called plagues on the earth at God’s command.

These 2 witnesses relate to all these different interpretations through the record contained in the Bible’s Old and New Testaments. The Two Witnesses will be referred to as the Bible from this point forward as a measure of clarity.

One last thing to note is that the witnesses testify for the 1,260 days between 538 and 1798 [“clothed in sackcloth”](#) – i.e. in mourning. We can remember from our study of Chapter 2 and 3 that this was the long period when the Papacy controlled access to the scriptures and to much knowledge broadly. Yet there was always a group that tried to keep themselves separate and who lamented the Roman Catholic Church’s apostacy, hoping that they would see the light and reform. Finally this came to a head with Martin Luther amongst others in the protests against indulgences and other doctrinal disagreements which eroded Papal power and authority. This would be the downfall of the Papacy, as we have discussed, in 1798.

The Witnesses Killed

⁷ When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. ⁸ And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. ⁹ Then *those* from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. ¹⁰ And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

The witnesses only need to testify for a certain amount of time. They said their piece and it was through the Protestant Reformation that their victory was achieved. But then these witnesses were killed?

Before we can establish their death, we need to work out who killed them, who is this new “beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit”? This is a power we have not seen before but it evidently lives in “the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.”

So, who crucified Jesus? Despite everyone wanting to believe it was the Jews, it actually was the Pagan Roman empire – a completely indifferent group. A group could be charitably referred to as ‘non believers’ or ‘gentiles’.

This frame of unbelief was another side effect of the rise of Mohammedanism as it permitted an alternative to those who were not convicted by the merits of either Christian faith. At the time that the Protestant Reformation started to get the fire in its belly, people were quickly being exposed to Islamic ideas and new philosophies as well, which was making people think far outside of the tight and highly legalistic ideas that the Roman Church wanted them to stick with.

The most remembered first ‘scientist’ that stepped away from the Church but not religion is arguably Galileo Galilei (1564 - 1642). Called the father of observational astronomy, modern physics, the scientific method, and modern science altogether, he came into early conflict with the Roman Inquisition in 1615 over his observations of moons of other planets. The Inquisition claimed he was foolish, absurd, and heretical, but Galileo is quoted as making the claim statement:

“I do not feel obliged to believe that the same God who has endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect has intended us to forgo their use and by some other means to give us knowledge which we can attain by them.”

Galileo was never associated with the Protestant Reformation and remained part of the Catholic Church until his death, but his struggle forced others to examine the motives and authority of the establishment church on matters outside their religious remit.

For example, René Descartes' (1596 – 1650) best known philosophical statement is “cogito, ergo sum” (“I think, therefore I am”) which he claimed to have received from a divine revelation around 1619. Following on from his treatise on the Creation where he expounded the idea that the very essence of creation is a demonstration of absolute free will, and that it similarly endowed the creation with free will, Descartes established with this principal that the fact he is able to think proves that he is able to doubt and therefore test the established laws and principals around him. This included the fundamental aspects of God and Creation that were not disputed between the Protestant and Catholic debaters.

Baruch Spinoza (1632 –1677) would expand on this philosophy widely into the fundamentals of Rationalism while keeping it blended with religion. From this point forward, intellectual sciences were unified to philosophy with varying levels of religion and some of the greatest names of the time like Isaac Newton (1642 – 1727), Gottfried Leibniz (1646 – 1716),

By the time David Hume (1711 – 1776) and Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804) started their famous debate about if all knowledge is by experience or if there is some independent knowledge that all people share, the idea that this experience was or could be from God was only given lip service, and almost no sincere respect. Reason and rationality had replaced the divine absolutely and while ‘atheism’ was still a future concept, God’s place in society was most certainly on the way down.

The effect of the rise of Islam and especially the pushing back of the Crusades, caused a massive introspection across Europe that, arguably, led to the Protestant Reformation through a review of the place of the Papacy in politics, but that reformation led to a reinvention of ‘paganism’ where reason overtook Christ as the primary God of the philosopher and scientist. This is not ‘atheism’, per se, as that requires a resistance to belief in deities altogether, but rather a replacement of theistic dominance with more scientific styles of thinking.

So “[the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit](#)” was the removal of God as the primary source of belief and authority, and the “[great city](#)” where he lives, is what we will refer to as the ‘Gods of Reason’.

NB: To be clear, God has always directed his people to use their minds and reason, and I certainly don’t want to diminish this, but we can never forget who gave us the gift of reason.

So, when, after the protestant reformation was established, did Reason kill the Bible? Well, the French Revolution, that would ultimately inflict a deadly wound in the Papacy also had a lot of trouble with the bible, taking the worship of reason to the absolute extreme. The Church in France was subjugated to the state on 12 July 1790 with the establishment of the ‘Civil Constitution of the Clergy’. After the revolution in 1792, Maximilien Robespierre (1758 –1794) established the ‘Cult of Reason’ where religion in its near entirety was replaced with as close to worship of reason as was possible as an atheistic alternative to the Catholic Church. Robespierre solidified the anti-clerical attitudes into official government policy in

1792 and the 'Cult of Reason' became the official state religion for the 'Festival of Reason' in 1793, the Christian altar in the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris was dismantled and an altar to Liberty was installed. The inscription "To Philosophy" was carved in stone over the cathedral's doors. Festive girls in white Roman dress and tricolour sashes milled around a costumed Goddess of Reason who "impersonated Liberty". A flame burned on the altar which was symbolic of truth. To avoid statuary and idolatry, the Goddess figures were portrayed by living women. During this festival, there are many reports about the burning of Bibles.

By 1794, the political situation required a review and the 'Cult of Reason' was replaced by the 'Cult of the Supreme Being' but the reliance on reason over God did not diminish.

These dates are important when considering if Reason actually killed the bible. On 5 October 1793, the law for a new calendar was passed replacing the seven-day week with a ten-day one, removing the sabbath as a concept entirely. On 21 October another law was passed making all priests remaining true to their God and all persons who harboured them liable to death on sight. The Festival of Reason began on 10 November. By the 24th, all Churches in France had been closed and Reason ruled as the supreme, before being replaced by a 'supreme being'. A law was passed on 21 February 1795 legalized public worship, albeit with strict limitations such as forbidding the ringing of church bells, religious processions and displays of the Christian cross. Some elements of religious toleration had returned but it was to be kept secret with more being permitted in September of that year.

A new religion, Theophilanthropy, had been founded in 1796 by a Freemason printer-bookseller named Jean-Baptiste Chemin-Dupontès (1760 – ~1852) which sought to marry the ideals of the Revolution to a deistic ideology. This was established as the new state religion, replacing the 'Cult of the Supreme Being', but generally led to more religious toleration on the grounds that to worship in a deistic, highly Calvinistic form required the singing of hymns and saying of prayers to a God. Religious persecution continued in forms but more important matters were now taking centre stage.

Full restoration of the Roman Catholic Religion happened with the Concordat of 1801, an agreement between Napoleon Bonaparte and Pope Pius VII, signed on 15 July 1801 in Paris. It did not, however, restore Catholicism to the state Religion, merely to permit its practise at the will of the people.

When we consider the timeline, the clergy and liturgical events were outlawed when the republic was declared on 21 September 1792. Religious Toleration became a factor – albeit a very repressed one – in September, 1795 and in mid 1796, a form of Christianity was formally restored. 1792 – 1795 is 3 years and mid 1796 can easily add the other 6 months. To say that “[nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves](#)” is clearly what happened here as the debate on religion in France was watched and amazed at all around the world. And it was certainly right that the French nation rejoiced over the situation because of the brutal oppression that the Catholic Church had wrought in France prior to the Revolution.

Although you can take any 3.5 years between 1792 and 1801, it is incredible how the period 21 September 1792 - mid 1796 fits so perfectly into this prophecy.

The Witnesses Resurrected

¹¹ Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. ¹² And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. ¹³ In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴ The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

The restitution of the Christian Church in France happened as we described above and with Napoleon and the Pope signing the Concordat of 1801, any formal persecution of Christianity in France was finally concluded. But those described as watching here were said to have experienced a "[great fear](#)". Why were they afraid?

When we look at the reasons behind the French Revolution – the Aristocracy and Catholic domination of the peasant classes in France – and we look at the reaction to it across Europe – the majority of countries going to war explicitly to prevent the spread of egalitarian views – then we can understand this fear better.

The atheistic obsession with Reason of the French Revolution was then countered by the resurrection of Christianity and a need, in order to control the populace, of some frame of religious toleration in France. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, 1789, was the formal outlaying of the individual's rights and liberties compared to the government, such as;

- Article I – Human Beings are born and remain free and equal in rights.
- Article IV – Liberty consists of doing anything which does not harm others
- Article X – No one may be disquieted for his opinions, even religious ones
- Article XII – The guarantee of the rights of man and of the citizen necessitates a public force

These rights permit the individual to choose whatever they wish to do regarding most aspects of their life, and especially religion. Such freedom was the natural evolution of the writing and development of the philosophers, amongst many others, stated above. Now, this freedom was turned on its head as the French Government's concordat with the Catholic Church also had a major impact on Protestants in France.

After the Concordat was signed in 1801, in April 1802, Bonaparte unilaterally promulgated the Organic Articles, a law designed to implement the concordat's terms. It formally recognised the Lutheran and Reformed churches in France, provided state salaries for their ministers to and granted them several previously Catholic churches as compensation for Protestant churches destroyed during the persecutions of the reign of Louis XIV. Bonaparte did this himself, and neither Catholics nor Protestants were involved in the development of the arrangements. The first Reformed church was legally established in Paris in 1802, and by 1804 there were 120 Reformed ministers on the state payroll compared to 48 protestant ministers in all of France in 1750, who had to practise underground because it was a capital offence to preach in a Protestant church. The presidents of twenty-seven Reformed consistories were present when Bonaparte was crowned Emperor Napoleon I in 1804 and by the end of his reign, Napoleon had 137 Reformed pastors in his pay.

This was such a dynamic shift in the running of a country that had not been seen, in that form, before throughout Europe, some parts of which were still persecuting Catholics or Protestants. Instead, an Atheistic National Government allied itself to a Catholic power and employed and empowered Protestants to spread widely through its lands. People were free to make a choice about which religion they wanted to take part in – or none – which was not unusual but was almost never state-sponsored at this time. States declared some form of toleration but they rarely encouraged an active choice while Napoleon did just that.

Napoleon offered to his people the choice of following God or following nothing and they were given free reign to read and study the bible as they chose. Both testaments were presented before man and the right of man, which we know are described in the bible, were presented as the highest ideals as if “[ascend\(ing\) to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.](#)” All atheistic France and both the protestant and catholic worlds had to reconcile the free existence of the Bible in France with their own points of view.

But it was not to last.

[“In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.”](#)

On 24 June 1812, at the height of his influence and power, Napoleon invaded Russia with an army of around 700,000 men. Making it to Moscow on September 14, he found the city in ashes and ruins and had little choice but to turn his army around and retreat to Austria through the snow and ended up with fewer than 100,000 men. The greatness of Revolutionary France and the dictator that had made it mighty was shattered on the icy planes of Ukraine and Belarus. In other words, at the height of the toleration and freedom of Religion seen in France, an earthquake brought the entire complex crashing to the ground and on 11 April 1814, Napoleon and representatives of Austria, Russia and Prussia signed the treaty of Fontainebleau, exiling Napoleon to Elba. The Bourbon Monarchy was restored and with it came the Catholic Church who the Bourbons – and Louis XVIII in particular – were extremely closely aligned to.

But as we all know, the story does not end there. The earthquake had a massive aftershock when, on 26 February 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte escaped Elba with 1,000 troops and landed near Cannes on 1 March. Moving quickly, Napoleon secured France and by 13 March had declared again the establishment of a new French Empire. The European powers declared him to be an outlaw – not France but Napoleon himself. Taking quick note of the situation, he gathered troops and moved north to drive a wedge between the constituent armies, as he had done in previous campaigns. A series of battles was fought over about a month in Belgium, the most famous of which being the Battle of Waterloo where Napoleon fielded 72,000 troops against Wellington's 68,000 and Blücher's 50,000 Prussians who arrived in the nick of time. Napoleon had around 110,00 troops in total but of the 6 or 8 pitched battles that took place during the campaign, only the Battle of Ligny could seriously be called a French Victory. Napoleon returned to Paris, abdicated again and was exiled to St Helena.

The second restoration of the Bourbon Monarchy again brought back with it a Catholic attitude and, with abject disdain for Napoleon's Atheism, Catholicism was again reinstated as the state religion. France joined the remainder of powers throughout Europe who had some form of state religion, at least until its next restoration.

2 numbers need to be thus dealt with in this passage before we can move forward. The verse stipulates that “a tenth of the city fell” and “(i)n the earthquake seven thousand people were killed.” Estimates vary widely throughout history but a good number is that during the Napoleonic Wars, a tenth of the French Population died during the Revolution and Napoleonic wars, and about that number again in non-French deaths. The number 7,000 in the ‘earthquake’ would naturally refer to those who died during the Hundred Days campaign, although why the number is so specific, I am not sure.

To be clear, the City being a spiritual city, would rule out the possibility that is a literal earthquake.

¹⁴ The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

The Second of the great impacts, the great rallying cries of the trumpets is completed. The Mohammedan assault on Christianity has been repelled. The Atheist assault on Christianity has been repelled. Any free-thinking individual who lives through either of those periods should look at what they have experienced and asked themselves what was going on? Is there any value in the Bible or in the teachings of Kant or Mohammed? Is there anything good in this structure.

When we remember the trumpets are to inspire repentance and reconciliation, these events make more sense. The atheistic option is a cold, methodical one that needs to be taken carefully and to reject God in all aspects of your life is not easy in any measure. Yet, it is the free gift of God to choose to follow him or reject him.

Seventh Trumpet: The Kingdom Proclaimed

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" ¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ saying:

"We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty,
The One who is and who was and who is to come,
Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.

¹⁸ The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come,
And the time of the dead, that they should be judged,
And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints,
And those who fear Your name, small and great,
And should destroy those who destroy the earth."

¹⁹ Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.

The Seventh Trumpet separates itself from the events of the 2 witnesses and returns to what they are witnessing about. With the conclusion of the 1,260 day prophecy, the full and absolute domination of the Papacy over the Earth was once and forever destroyed. With the innovation of Atheistic democracy, people were, and are, free to choose who they will follow free from outside influence. Jesus's extended the kingdom of Heaven to all who would choose to accept it, and since the end of the 18th Century, the nations of the world had been extending this freedom to their populaces with ever-broadening implications.

To give just one recent example, in 2018, the Colorado Civil Rights Commission was sued in the US Supreme Court by Masterpiece Cakeshop over the right to exercise their religious right... to not make a cake. In 2012, Charlie Craig and David Mullins visited Masterpiece Cakeshop in Lakewood, Colorado to order a wedding cake to celebrate their upcoming gay marriage. Masterpiece's owner Jack Phillips, who is a Christian, declined their cake request, informing the couple that he did not create wedding cakes for marriages of gay couples owing to his Christian religious beliefs. He did not, however, deny them all service as he said the couple could purchase other baked goods in the store, but as this would be a personal commission, he would not undertake the job. After 6 years of litigation, the US Supreme Court upheld that the individual had a right to express his religion and that the state has an "obligation of religious neutrality", meaning they cannot infringe on the personal rights of an individual to practise their religion.

The Bible does not include references to; cake decorating, gay marriage or freedom of religious expression, and in fact is heavily against the last of these, yet modern jurists consider the freedom of the individual to express their religion as they wish as a near

absolute. “The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!*” The freedom to chose how to follow God has been complimented by the renewed understanding of the Sabbath and an exposure of just how much the Catholic Church has led people astray. Jesus’ greatest gift to the earth was the freedom to reject him, and the kingdoms of the earth have been given the right to exercise that gift at their will.

¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ saying:

“We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty,
The One who is and who was and who is to come,
Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.
¹⁸ The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come,
And the time of the dead, that they should be judged,
And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints,
And those who fear Your name, small and great,
And should destroy those who destroy the earth.”

One of the Elders follows the pattern that when Jesus is exalted, they all bow down and worship, giving thanks for his mercy and that he is the one who reigned. But if we remind ourselves of Daniel 7, “²⁶ *‘But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away (the Roman Catholic Church’s) dominion, To consume and destroy it forever.’*” When the nations finally got fed up with the Catholic Church, Jesus wrath came and destroyed it. Jesus used the Atheistic power, the same as he used the Pagan Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman powers to accomplish his will in times of old.

But the Elder opens a new door with this conclusion. The end of the 1,260 day prophecy is the sounding of the 7th Trumpet, and therefore heralds the start of the Day of Atonement in Heaven when the Judgement can start. This is a doctrine known as the ‘investigative judgement’, that is about ready to begin as the elder states that “*the time of the dead, that they should be judged*” is now. We will go further into this judgement doctrine next week.

What is clear, however is that this trumpet absolutely heralds the Judgement.

“And the time of the dead, that they should be judged,
And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints,
And those who fear Your name, small and great,
And should destroy those who destroy the earth.”

This 7th Trumpet is the final announcement for the heavenly Day of Atonement to begin. It is the final clarion call for those to get ready to make their decision for or against Jesus and for or against his word. The rewards for the prophets and saints, for those who fear him and

those who want to destroy the earth, are all given out through the Judgement as we have already seen, and it is this trumpet that announces its start.

¹⁹ Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.

The Ark of His Covenant?? What Ark of His Covenant? This highly dramatic event being shown to Heaven results in much noise and fireworks, but what is being shown here? It's clearly not the Ark of **the** Covenant, that box no longer has any value – this is the Ark of **His** Covenant. This is the exposure of the Most Holy Place in the Heavenly Temple, open for all to see.

What would be the emblems of the New Covenant between Christ and Humanity? What is in that box that represents the connection between us and Heaven today? Bread and Wine from the Last supper? Fragments of the cross? Stones from his tomb? What about Paul's glasses? Or fragments of his shoes?

They are not explained here, nor should they be. They are personal. The opening of the ability for all men to choose their relationship with God and not blindly follow their parents and ancestors experiences means that the effects in this Ark are not explicit in any form. They are, indeed, highly personal to the individual and known only to that individual and God. Again, as Jeremiah and Hebrews stated, Jesus “[will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people](#)” and they would be in a relationship with one another. The only ones who know what is contained in that ark is You and Christ.

At the conclusion of the 7th Trumpet, the clarion call, as it has been for 4 Chapters now, is, as Joshua said, to “[choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.](#)”