

Appendix 2

Ellen G. White on the 1260 Days

Spelled as Days (1260 Days)

In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. Paganism had given place to the papacy. The dragon had given to the beast "his power, and his seat, and great authority." [Revelation 13:2; SEE APPENDIX, NOTE 2.] And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. [Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5-7.] Christians were forced to choose, either to yield their integrity and accept the papal ceremonies and worship, or to wear away their lives in dungeons or suffer death by the rack, the fagot, or the headsman's ax. Now were fulfilled the words of Jesus, "Ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." [Luke 21:16, 17.] [55] Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battle-field. For hundreds of years the church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity. Thus says the prophet: "The woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." [Revelation 12:6.] {GC88 54.2}

The periods here mentioned—"forty and two months," and "a thousand two hundred and threescore days"—are the same, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to suffer oppression from Rome. The 1260 years of papal supremacy began with the establishment of the papacy in A. D. 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798. At that time a French army entered Rome, and made the pope a prisoner, and he died in exile. Though a new pope was soon afterward elected, the papal hierarchy has never since been able to wield the power which it before possessed. {GC88 266.2}

The persecution of the church did not continue throughout the entire period of the 1260 years. God in mercy to his people cut short the time of their fiery trial. In foretelling the "great tribulation" to befall the church, the Saviour said, "Except those days should be shortened, there [267] should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." [Matthew 24:22.] Through the influence of the Reformation, the persecution was brought to an end prior to 1798. {GC88 266.3}

Twenty-five years later appeared the next sign mentioned in the prophecy,—the darkening of the sun and moon. What rendered this more striking was the fact that the [306] time of its fulfillment had been definitely pointed out. In the Saviour's conversation with his disciples upon Olivet, after describing the long period of trial for the church—the 1260 years of papal persecution, concerning which he had promised that the tribulation should be shortened—he thus mentioned certain events to precede his coming, and fixed the time when the first of these should be

witnessed: "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." [Mark 13:24.] The 1260 days, or years, terminated in 1798. A quarter of a century earlier, persecution had almost wholly ceased. Between these two dates, according to the words of Christ, the sun was to be darkened. On the 19th of May, 1780, this prophecy was fulfilled. {GC88 305.3}

The apostle Paul warned the church not to look for the coming of Christ in his day. "That day shall not come," he says, "except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed." [2 Thessalonians 2:3.] Not till after the great apostasy, and the long period of the reign of the "man of sin," can we look for the advent of our Lord. The "man of sin," which is also styled the "mystery of iniquity," the "son of perdition," and "that wicked," represents the papacy, which, as foretold in prophecy, was to maintain its supremacy for 1260 years. This period ended in 1798. The coming of Christ could not take place before that time. Paul covers with his caution the whole of the Christian dispensation down to the year 1798. It is this side of that time that the message of Christ's second coming is to be proclaimed. {GC88 356.1}

"Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." And, says the prophet, "I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death." And again, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword." The forty and two months are the same as the "time and times and the dividing of time," three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7,—the time during which the papal power was to oppress God's people. This period, as stated in preceding chapters, began with the establishment of the papacy, A. D. 538, and terminated in 1798. At that time, when the papacy was abolished and the pope made captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity." {GC88 439.2}

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"They shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth." During the greater part of this period, God's witnesses remained in a state of obscurity. The papal power sought to hide from the people the word of truth, and set before them false witnesses to contradict its testimony. (See Appendix.) When the Bible was proscribed by religious and secular authority; when its testimony was perverted, and every effort made that men and demons could invent to turn the minds of the people from it; when those who dared proclaim its sacred truths were hunted, betrayed, tortured, buried in dungeon cells, martyred for their faith, or compelled to flee to mountain fastnesses, and to dens and caves of the earth—then the faithful witnesses prophesied in sackcloth. Yet they continued their testimony throughout the entire period of 1260 years. In the darkest times there were faithful men who loved God's word and were jealous for His honor. To these loyal servants were [268] given wisdom, power, and authority to declare His truth during the whole of this time. {GC 267.2}

Twenty-five years later appeared the next sign mentioned in the prophecy—the darkening of the sun and moon. What rendered this more striking was the fact that the time of its fulfillment had been definitely pointed out. In the Saviour's conversation with His disciples upon Olivet, after describing the long period of trial for the church,—the 1260 years of papal persecution, concerning which He had promised that the tribulation should be shortened,—He thus mentioned certain events to precede His coming, and fixed the time when the first of these should be witnessed: "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." Mark 13:24. The 1260 days, or years, terminated in 1798. A quarter of a century earlier, persecution had almost wholly ceased. Following this persecution, according to the words of Christ, the sun was to be darkened. On the 19th of May, 1780, this prophecy was fulfilled. {GC 306.1}

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The suppression of the Scriptures under the dominion of Rome, the terrible results of that suppression, and the final exaltation of the word of God, are vividly portrayed by the prophetic pencil. To John the exile on lonely Patmos was given a view of the 1260 years during which the papal power was permitted to trample upon God's word and oppress his people. Said the angel of the Lord: "The holy city [the true church] shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." [Revelation 11:2, 3.] The periods here mentioned are the same, alike representing the time in which God's faithful witnesses remained in a state of obscurity. {4SP 188.1}

Notwithstanding the Lord's witnesses were clothed in sackcloth, they continued to prophesy throughout the entire period of 1260 years. In the darkest times there were faithful men who loved God's word, and were jealous for his honor. To these loyal servants were given wisdom, power, and authority to declare his truth during the whole of this time. {4SP 190.2}

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Spelled as Months (42 Months)

Said the angel of the Lord: "The holy city [the true church] shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. . . . And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. . . . And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them." [Revelation 11:2-11.] {GC88 266.1}

The periods here mentioned—"forty and two months," and "a thousand two hundred and threescore days"—are the same, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to suffer oppression from Rome. The 1260 years of papal supremacy began with the establishment of the papacy in A. D. 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798. At that time a French army entered Rome, and made the pope a prisoner, and he died in exile. Though a new pope was soon afterward elected, the papal hierarchy has never since been able to wield the power which it before possessed. {GC88 266.2}

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same, alike representing the time in which God's faithful witnesses remained in a state of obscurity. {4SP 188.1}

Spelled as Years (A Time, Times and Half a Time)

"Another evidence that vitally affected my mind," he [Miller] says, "was the chronology of the Scriptures. I found that predicted events, which had been fulfilled in the past, often occurred within a given time. The one hundred and twenty years to the flood, Genesis 6:3; the seven days that were to precede it, with forty days of predicted rain, Genesis 7:4; the four hundred years of the sojourn of Abraham's seed, Genesis 15:13; the three days of the butler's and baker's dreams, Genesis 40:12-20; the seven years of Pharaoh's, Genesis 41:28-54; the forty years in the wilderness, Numbers 14:34; the three and a half years of famine, 1 Kings 17:1; [See Luke 4:25.] the seventy years' captivity, Jeremiah 25:11; Nebuchadnezzar's seven times, Daniel 4:13-16; and the seven weeks, threescore and two weeks, and the one week, making seventy weeks, determined upon the Jews, Daniel 9:24-27; the events limited by these times were all once only a matter of prophecy, and were fulfilled in accordance with the predictions." {GC88 323.2}

"Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." And, says the prophet, "I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death." And again, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword." The forty and two months are the same as the "time and times and the dividing of time," three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7,—the time during which the papal power was to oppress God's people. This period, as stated in preceding chapters, began with the establishment of the papacy, A. D. 538, and terminated in 1798. At that time, when the papacy was abolished and the pope made captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity." {GC88 439.2}

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He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. Daniel 7:25, R.V. [Heading]

During the Christian dispensation, the great enemy of man's happiness has made the Sabbath of the fourth commandment an object of special attack. Satan says, "I will work at cross purposes with God. I will empower my followers to set aside God's memorial, the seventh-day Sabbath. Thus I will show the world that the day sanctified and blessed by God has been changed. That day shall not live in the minds of the people. I will obliterate the memory of it. I will place in its stead a day that does not bear the credentials of God, a day that cannot be a sign between God and His people. I will lead those who accept this day to place upon it the sanctity that God placed upon the seventh day. {Mar 162.1}

Daniel writes: "I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And He said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." {BTS, February 1, 1903 par. 2}